

## Public-Private Partnership for Skill Acquisition and Vocational Technical Education Development in Nigeria

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**Abstract** This paper discusses the Private Sector Partnership with Education for Skill Acquisition and Vocational Technical Education Development. The relevance of the partnership on bringing skilled and trained manpower in their area of specialization is for the purpose of national development and self actualization. Strategies were identified for the effectiveness of the programme.

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### Introduction

Public-Private Partnership is becoming an obvious facilitator and approach to sustainable national development of any society. And the conceptual aspect of such relationship is based towards contributing and providing for Technical and Vocational Education for the realization of set goals of Vocational Technical Education in Nigeria. On the emphassy Kareen and Garba (2008), opined that in Nigeria and other developing countries sustainable access to technology development and product are best achieved through Public Private Partnership with Vocational Technical Education.

If Vocational Technical Education is to be meaningful and successful in Nigeria, then relationships are needed between public and private sectors to partners effectively with Vocational Technical Education and skill acquisition programmes. Puyete (2005), stressed that in an ideal situation, as obtainable in developed societies of the world, the training and Education of nations citizenry is a collective effort of both governmental and Non-governmental organizations, private firms, and private individuals or philanthropist.

The concept of Vocational and Technical Education is rooted on preparation of students for acquisition of necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to earn employment as expert assistant to professional in any field of Technology and Engineering (Kareen and Garba 2008 PP.98). The Vocational Technical Education is basically occupational education which makes individuals self-sufficient and reliant. Oladimeji (1995); believed that acquisition of practical skills relating to occupation in various sectors of economic and social life will improve the standard of living of the people, and assist in eradicating poverty in the society. Having critized Technical Education on the ground that it has not been able to produce practical competent graduates who are equipped with problem solving abilities, which is as a result of poor and inadequate training material in the Technical Vocational Tertiary Institutions. The Federal Government of Nigeria decreed, decree No 47 of 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1971 as amended in 1990, highlighted the capacity building of human resources in industry, commerce and government through training and retaining of workers in order to effectively provide the much needed high quality goods and services in a dynamic economy of ours. (Jemerigbo, 2003). Led to the establishment of Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in 1973/74 which also led to the formation of Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) by ITF in 1993/1994.

(Wodi and Dokubo, 2009); Industrial Training Fund (ITF) has as one of its key function, to work as cooperative entity with industry and commerce where students in institutions of higher learning can undertake mid-career work experience attachment in industries which are compatible with students area of study (Okorie 2002, Asikadi, 2003).

## Vocational Technical Education Impact on Society

The society is generally organized into specific vocation, where exist many occupations and jobs. The development and sustenance of the society as a social and economic entity is dependant on education and skill acquisition training of her citizenry, focused on capacity and building a self-reliance nation. According to the National Policy on Education NPE (REVISED 1981), Vocational Technical Education is the aspect of Education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. In other words, Technical Education as a component of Vocational Education (Kareen and Galiyu, 2008); requires the studies of advanced mathematics and pure science to produce semi-professionals or technicians in all areas of vocation.

Lazerson (1979); stressed that Vocational Technical Education as part of general Education programme, essentially constitutes any form of Education with the primary purpose of preparing people for useful employment in a recognized occupation.

Oni (2000); added that Vocational Technical Education induces both Vocation and Technical Education that provides both practical and theoretical instruction, such instruction is usually given to those who need employment in commerce and industry or in any type of enterprise which involves the use of tools and machinery. Oladimeji (1995), believed that skill acquisition of practical skills relating to occupation in various sectors of economic and social life will improve the standard of living of people. Bezanson (2002); observed that the pace and impact of science advances technological innovation, with the result that those with the capacity to absorb, use, and adapt the advances in science and technology will be better placed not only to enrich themselves but also to influence that conduct and evolution of human affairs. Having known these facts, it is believed that economic/technology growth is an index of human development that will enable sustainable national development. (Rabiu, 2006); confirmed, that technology has greatly advanced the learning aids capable of improving human mentality. Today the virtual electronic library being housed by the internet facility is far richer than any physical library in the world. Education also has been greatly enriched with super-information electronic devices to make research and learning possible for a sustainable national development.

## Public Private Partnership (PPP) for Skill Acquisition and Vocational Technical Education Realization.

Partnership with credible and group accepted innovative approaches to funding and mobilization has the potentiality of increasing the overall access to essential services based on Public Private Partnership (PPP) structure already in place (Ibritan, 1994); Ihunda (2001); defined partnership as the second group of unincorporated business organization who tool their resources (Human & Material) for the purpose of doing business. He further posited that partnership is best suited for professional services such as law, medical services, engineering, management, architecture, survey, etc.

For government to deliver the minimum standard of services, product required for public private partnership to thrive, it must put in place, regulations or enhance ones, as well as improve an enabling environment for private sector participation in the realization and development of Vocational Technical Education. Stake-holders commitment to public private partnership would be accomplished through focusing on micro, small and medium-sized operations, involving community leaderships like Community Development Association, Town Unions, and Paramount Chiefs. Included among these, potential partners are municipalities, government companies, and trade association as potential partners.

## Problems of Vocational Technical Education and Skill Acquisition

The needs for Vocational Technical Education Programme with emphasis on skill acquisition are band to face with numerous inadequacy and problems: few includes:

1. **Inadequate Funding:** Babayi (1998); ascertained that funding stands for the source of money gathered, invested or collected for a particular purpose. In Nigeria, funding Vocational Technical Education for skill has ordinarily been the responsibility of the State and Federal Government, Educational funding often resulted in poor management, and mismanagement of educational priorities, failure for the government to announce its budget in time often affect educational activities. (Kareen and Galiyu 2008); sometimes sources of funding such as revenue, school fees and subventions might fall short of expectations thereby rendering the education plan at disarray.

The workshops and laboratories are needed to be equipped with functional machines, tools and ventilated to accommodate a good number of students.

2. **Qualified Personnel:** In the early of Nigeria independence, one of the problems of Vocational Technical Education as it impact acquisition of skill was the limited number of Vocational Technical teacher and administrators to fill the teaching and administrative position in the country's educational system.

Presently, in Nigeria, the number of qualified teachers, instructors, and other supporting staff needed in the workshop is inadequate compare with the students' population. Instructors and lecturers need retraining programme to help them keep abreast with the development in their various fields of discipline.

3. **Non-Functionality Of Vocational Technical Workshop Facilities:** Most of the training machineries and tools are not functional; they littered the school workshop space, no adequate maintenance programme, neither replacement. The deferred machines should be put to order of efficient performance to enable actualization of sets goals of Vocational Technical Education and Skill Acquisition Programme within Nigeria.

## Conclusion

Private Sector Partnership in Education remains a veritable tool for the achievement of development in our nations.

Public Private Partnership (PPP), also known as developmental partnership with the private sector paves the way for entities in the private sector to perform their corporate social responsibility, by extending their services and financial cooperation for substantial development. Finally the working group for international cooperation in skill development Yakubu (2003); posited that cost sharing policies in education and training provision are justified by the recognition that these investment create human capital, leading to enhanced earnings.

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