

The Economic Impacts of Vocational Training in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Doi:10.5901/jesr.2012.v2n8p43

Abstract

Vocational training can be defined as an instructions intended to equip person's for industrial or commercial occupations. It maybe obtained formally in trade schools, technical colleges and technical secondary schools or in on-the job training programmes or more formally by picking up the necessary skills on the job. This will be an approach to economic planning that attempt to foster economic growth in Nigeria. The focus of this paper is the economic impacts of vocational training in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper gives a brief detail of economic impacts of vocational training nationally and internationally. It also discusses the importance of vocational training in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It also gives the concept of vocational technical education for sustainable development. The paper proffers invaluable suggestions on how the federal government should ensure that the vocational technical education and training for self reliance, as a tool for national development.

Keywords: Vocation training, tertiary institutions, Nigeria

Introduction

Advancement and sustainable development is a very vital issue in a global world. Vocational training or education is focused on acquisition of individual skills and capability for occupation; therefore all the vocational courses involved such as fine and applied arts, agricultural science, Home economics, Automobile engineering and computer science. Just to mention but a few, are packaged to provide knowledge and develop the skills of the future youths for sustainable development. Technological development and advancement revolve around a sound vocational/technical education programme (Bulus 1999:22). Contemporary education globally, whether general or vocational, is very expensive therefore any rightful mind will not envisage of wastage in education. The measure guarantee of eliminating wastage in education and also eliminating the unemployment syndrome, is to provide adequate and functional education especially when such education is vocational (preparation for helpful skill occupation).it is mandatory for the government to preserve and propagate pure and undiluted vocation course/skills whether her nation economy is so depressed or not, Sufficient attention has not been given to educational sector especially vocational skills ,due to poor policy implementation, certificated but poorly skill teaching force and In this regard the noticeable lapses in policy implementation of vocational education/skills for sustainable development for our future youths can be re-visited by gearing them into vocational skills, apprenticeship, and a mandatory industrial attachment.

What is Vocational Training?

Vocational training are instructions intended to equip person's for industrial or commercial occupations. It maybe obtained formally either in trade schools, technical Secondary schools or in on –the Job training programmes or more informally by picking up the necessary skills on the job.

Technological development and advancement revolved around a sound vocational/technical education programme as cited by Otuaga, Mayes (2010) in (Bulus 1991:41) vocational skills in schools is a relative modern development. Akaniwor (1988:41) observes that" the bed rock of any technical break through is the existence of appropriate skill, abilities and competence both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in the society is a dynamic instrument of change" According to Bulus (1991:30).vocational technical education involves the acquisition of skills and competences that can help individuals to function productively in industries and commercial occupation. Until the 19th century such education, except for the professions, was provided only by apprenticeship. This situation was partly due to the low social status associated with such instructions as opposed to a classical curriculum which was considered "necessary for a youth" with growth of individualization during the 19th century, however, several European countries ,notably Germany, began introducing vocational education in elementary and secondary schools. In Great Britain, however, opposition to vocational education persisted into the 20th century. Although a few trade and junior technical schools were established by local authorities before the world war II. By the 19th century, public (common) schools vocational education in he United states consisted of manual training and practical arts. These programmes were generally expanded until 1917 when Federal aid was provided to public schools for trade and industry.

The Importance of Vocational Training in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Vocational technical education has played a vital role in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Vocational technical education is about work and training for work.. Raymond (2007). One of the goals of the technical and vocational education as documented in the National Policy on Education (2004) is to give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self reliant. When this goal is adequately achieved, it would lead to a sustainable technological development. Raymond, (2007). In this regards it will make vocational technical education and training an interesting one by gearing the students towards self reliant to discourage unemployment syndrome.

Self-reliant is one's own efforts and abilities (Merrian, 2006). When somebody aquires skills in any occupation, such person can establish his or her own business and even employ others. Igweh (2008). such person is self reliant. Bassey (2009) declared self-reliance as that which pre-supposes the attainment and autonomy without unnecessary resorting to begging or browning. He opined that, "a self-reliant individual is one that achieves steady supply of his needs, one that diversifies his resources to reduce dependency on other assistance "Thus, self-reliance emphasizes growth and development and development in the life of a citizen, politically, socially and economically.

Therefore, a man who is potently self-reliant will ensure an effective control of his resources over national life for proper national development.eg Adenuga of GLO network. A country's well-being depends on its economic development Nwogu, (2009).Walter Rodwey an economist in Igweh (2004), asserted that development in human society is many sided phenomenon which is complex and means different thinkers. Musa (1985). In his view sees the concept of development as an Euro-American term through culturally based, used to characterize the relative standard of living of the people between the highly industrialized nations of the north and the consumer impart dependent nations of the south.

Igweh (2008), stressed that the most suitable definition of development may be that which is based on the experiences of the developing countries which is cited by Seers in Igweh (2001). He defined development in terms of reduction in the levels of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment and income inequality. However, Faladun, Omogiafor and Ezeaku (1999) in Nwogu (2009) remark that "National development encompasses social and political development as well as economic development which is defined as the attainment of a number of ideas of modernization such as a rise in productivity social and economic equity improved institutions and values". Economic development is thus an important part of general development in any society.

The main objective of economic development is to raise the standard of living and the general well-being of the people in an economy where almost everybody can be self-reliant. It involves changes in the structures of an economy that includes the following:

- Emphasis on developing manufacturing industries as opposed to agriculture;
- Movement of labour from rural to urban industrial areas and;
- Less reliance on imported goods in preference to home produced goods (eg made in Federal republic of Nigeria products).

There are few types of technical and vocational training institutions; National policy on Education recognized outside the university system. Yabam in Igweh(1997) stated that three abroad classifications are recognized by the National Board for technical Education (NABTE) They are vocational schools, technical colleges, colleges of education (technical) or polytechnics, all the above listed are training institutions meant for the productions of graduates who shall be self-reliant and contribute their quota for national development through instrument of vocational technical education and training.

Indeed, vocational technical education and training in Nigeria according to Nwogu (2009) "should emphasize entrepreneurship awareness for it to be relevant in achieving the national educational aim of inculcating the right type of values and attitudes for survival of an individual and Nigeria society" Enahoro (2008) in his concept said vocation training is utilitarianism and it is a concept recognizing the importance of labour. Therefore to train someone in his appropriate field and for him to substantially contribute his quota to the overall good of the nation, he or she has to pass through vocational technical education and training. It is an issue that needs no further investigation to say that when and if it is good with a nation, it is also good with its inhabitants and vice versa. In this regard, any nation or country that gives proper training in one sided area of importance to her citizenry or gives improper training to people in all areas of importance has nothing to gain. People are differently gifted and therefore, should be given equal vocational technical education and training for self-reliance in the different occupational areas. Nigeria should be such that people are trained for the different opportunities or openings that abounds in the country, in compliance with the tedious task of giving suitable and proper training to individuals for optimum productivity amongst others.

Vocational Training for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

These are instructions intended to equip person's for industrial or commercial occupations. It may be obtained formally in trade schools, technical secondary schools or in on-the job training programmes or more informally by picking up the necessary skills on the job. Vocational skills in schools are a relatively modern development.

The Prospects of Vocational Education in Nigeria

Vocational technical education and job training has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact on human resources development, productivity and economic growth Dike (2007). Nigerians do not seem to accord vocational technical education the attention it deserves despite its proven contributions in other nations. Ibeneme (2007). It is important to observe that UNESCO & ILO (2002) comprehend technical and vocational education to be in the following ways: -

- An instrument for promoting a perfect sustainable development amongst others. Indeed every nation, especially developing countries are making efforts to develop industrially, economically and technically. It is of vital importance to note that any kind of developmental effort or initiatives requires human capital amongst others. The development of human capital requires necessarily skilled human capital and appropriate skills, right attitude and good knowledge of retrieving and processing by utilizing national resources. The artisans, craftsmen, technicians and technologies are adequately trained; they will fit well in small scale enterprises, industries, colleges and universities Igweh (2008). There will be less dependence of foreign technical personnel in our cottage and main industries. Indigenous technology will be encouraged. There will be adequate manpower to handle road maintenance, buildings, electrification, mechanical work, and agriculture and computer services. In this regard, production capacity will be increased while the import duties will be decreased.
- It is a means of preparing the youths for occupational skills and for effective participation nation wide.
- It is an aspect of long term learning and preparation for responsible citizenship.

Challenges facing Vocational Education in Nigeria

Some of the challenges facing vocational technical education are numerous, they are as follow:

- Poor elaboration of the practical aspects of vocational technical education as most tertiary institutions in Nigeria charged with the responsibility to teach vocational technical education courses today are poorly equipped with machines and relevant tools.
- Lack of skilled manpower
- Poor remuneration of vocational technical education.
- Lack of follow-up and continuity in government policies.
- Scarcity of vocational technical teachers
- Lack of adequate technical training facilities and modern equipment.
- Lack of entrepreneurship education in vocational technical education and training.

Recommendation / Suggestions

The clamour for technology for self-reliance and vision 20:2020 in Nigeria cannot be realistic without the positive participation of the public and private sector for sustainable development. There is need for government to build cottage industries where various vocational skills could be learnt with minimal cost Otuaga Mayes. (2010:16). Thereafter in conjunction with various financial institutions in the country, soft loans should be granted to the graduands for the establishment of small scale industries.

Moreover, the youths should have intrinsic motivation, There is dignity in labour. Awareness programmes should be organized for the youths at regular intervals on the need to acquire vocational skills for sustainable development.

There should be a consistent policy framework, backed by legislation that makes it mandatory for some percentage of the annual budget for the various levels of vocational technical education training institutions.

The federal government should ensure that the vocational technical education and training for self reliance is a tool for national development, and teachers preparatory programmes should be supported and serving teachers adequately remunerated. No nation can develop more than the standard of her teachers. Training and re-training of teachers in vocational education is paramount, for pragmatic development to take place in Nigeria. Teachers of vocational courses should be sponsored to attend both nationally and internationally workshops and conferences to enable them be abreast of the modern technological world.

Conclusion

The 21st century weather is bright for Nigerian Youths who are equipped with vocational skills. Sufficient attention should be given to educational sector especially vocational skills. In this regards the noticeable lapses in policy implementation of vocational education / skills for sustainable development for our future generations can be revisited by gearing them into vocational skills and a compulsory industrial attachment.

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