

Policy Initiatives for Stakeholders Partnership in Funding Technical Vocational Education and Training in North Central Zone, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study focused on policy initiatives for stakeholders' partnership in funding technical vocational education in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design using a structured questionnaire to collect data from a population of 450 respondents. The questionnaire were validated and utilized to collect data for the study. Kuder-Richardson (K-R21) formula was used in determining the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability of the questionnaire items revealed coefficient of 0.82. It was found out that there was significant difference in the mean rating of the respondents in one out of eleven items at 0.05 level of significance. It was recommended that Government should support stakeholders (cooperatives, industries, enterprises, business groups, occupational organizations and community members) participation in funding technical vocational education and training programmes in the North Central Zone of Nigeria as a matter of policy.

Keywords: Policy, Technical Vocational Education, Stakeholder, Partnership, Funding

Introduction

Adequate funding is a major factor in successful implementation of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes. According to FME (2010), the funding of technical vocational education (TVE) must be a shared responsibility to the maximum extent possible between government, industry, community and business men. Wampmuk (2009) concluded that the provision of sound and qualitative vocational education is not longer the exclusive preserve of the public sector in Nigeria. The concept of partnership funding between government and stakeholders in the development of the TVE sector is widely accepted, Ogbuanya (2013). It is a useful means of mobilizing human organizational resources for the improvement of the education system and the general welfare of all actors-pupils, teachers and administrators. All stakeholders, particularly industry and community must be involved in funding technical vocational education.

Vocational technical education in UNESCO(2012) is defined as a type of education that provide skills for youths, adults and disengaged workers for the purpose of empowering them for employment to enable them earn some worthwhile material benefits to meet their needs. It is a type of education meant for able citizens of a nation to empower them with relevant skills they could use to make vital contributions to the economy of their society. Okoye (2014) observed that technical vocational education is expensive because of its heavy resource inputs

such as tools, equipment and machines; and government alone cannot fund TVET programme for empowering all the unemployed youths in the country. A synergy between government and stakeholders to boost the provision of vocational education and the realization of its objectives become necessary. Although government carry the primary responsibility for TVE in a modern market economy, technical vocational education policy design and delivery must be achieved through partnership between government, trade unions and society, Jung (2010). The government and stakeholders (parents, businessmen, community, industries and learners) must recognize that technical vocational education is an investment and not a cost. It has significant returns including the well-being of workers, enhanced productivity and international competitiveness. Kembe (2014) emphasized that there are opportunities for fund raising and income generating activities through collective effort. The mix will depend on the final policy decision of government, the author added.

Obunadike (2013) stated that the socio-economic progress of any nation is significantly determined by the quality and content of its education industry. However, more often than not, the vocational component of education is scarcely attended to by the policy makers. Undue emphasis is placed on liberal education. This is the common experience of most North Central States in Nigeria where the basic infrastructure to promote vocational education is critically lacking due largely to weak political will. This lack of political will is further worsened by two closely interrelated factors. One of these is acute paucity of resources. The second factor according to Nwankwo, (2011) is poverty of effective planning skills, which characterizes the policy-making community in Nigeria. Policy makers hold the erroneous belief that liberal education provides the foundation for development. While this might be correct to some extent, it is not always the case. Oujer (2009) stated that any society that places overwhelming emphasis on liberal education to a near total neglect of science and technology education cannot lay a solid and credible foundation for industrialization.

Mafwalai (2009) explained that vocational technical education though assumed to be vital to economic development but has been regarded as an inferior type of education. The perception has accorded this important field a very low image. In the North Central States of Nigeria, Ombugus & Angbre (2015) reported that there are little or no research evidences on objectives and organization of VTE to influence the formulation of government policy in their environment. There are many secondary and technical college graduates in the north centre zone of Nigeria that cannot obtain admission into higher institutions for further studies neither could they afford employment in the labour market because of lack of skills. According to Olaitan (2011) these graduates are trapped at the buffer zone between the boarder of secondary school and higher education and are regarded as academic refugees or drop out that depend solely on hand outs from their parents and relatives for survival. In Onjevuu (2013) the population of the academic refugee camp continues to increase annually thereby creating undue pressure on the economy of the nation, i.e the economy is giving out more than it is receiving from the youths which is unhealthy for national economic growth and development.

Technical vocational education is expected to salvage this situation but with the present image and allocation for TVET in the National budget, it will be a difficult task to make it come to the rescue. Therefore its funding must change to accommodate unemployed secondary school graduates who are ready to learn but must be within the school system. A change in any type of education according to Ugbalu (2012) is more rewarding through

policy statement. In Jean (2011), policy is a government programme of action. To the author, it stands for what government intends to do or achieve (goal) and how it intends to do it (implementation). In this study, policy initiatives means new plans identified through research for making stakeholders participate in funding TVET. These initiatives could be used for policy formulation by government.

Technical vocational education as operated today according to Utin (2013), served the interest of junior secondary school graduates which is far below the academic status of the senior secondary school graduates. If this study is carried out to obtain information on stakeholders' participation in funding TVE to accommodate the secondary school graduates, then the funding of TVE would have been improved and the unemployed secondary school graduates will have accommodation in technical college programme for skills empowerment. For the stakeholders to understand the objectives and respond positively towards participating in funding TVET there is need for a policy with research findings/evidences supporting the economic worth of technical vocational education.

Statement of the Problem

In North Central Zone of Nigeria, technical vocational education has been suffering from neglect because of the following:

Since the attainment of independence in 1960, government thought it could shoulder alone the responsibility of giving the qualitative education without cultivating the collaborative efforts of the private sector. Government in the post independence erroneously believed that it did not need the collaboration of other critical stakeholders in the provision of education as an emancipator social tool. Government was misled by the steady flow of petro-dollar from the oil sector into taking over voluntary schools across the length and breadth of the country. The private sector was therefore not carefully mobilized for effective partnership in the provision of education for Nigerians. The evidence supporting the economic worth of VTE has never been collected, analysed and made open to policy makers to attract their substantial support to vocational technical education in education system below mono/polytechnics.

The few studies conducted on vocational technical education in higher institutions are by research trainees whose results were never made available to any government functionary, policy makers or consumers of technical vocational education. They end up in libraries and at times as publications in journals that serve the interest of the author rather than showing concern about the needs of government for developing policies that can promote vocational education towards empowering citizens for work. There is no means of linking technical vocational education in this country with productive skills that resulted into the goods and services imported from foreign countries for people to consume. That is, there is no research evidence made available to policy makers and Nigerian society that technical vocational education skills were involved to produce most of the imported goods and services by host countries. The government cannot finance TVET alone because of her diverse responsibilities and demand for finance. There are speculations that government could be assisted by stakeholders in financing TVE but there has not been concerted research effort to identify the direction of assistance of these stakeholders, what they stand to benefit from the assistance, what type of assistance is required and its limit especially when learning has informed everybody in the society that education is a fundamental human right of the individual and be provided by the government.

The modalities used for allocating financial resources to education by government at the secondary school and tertiary level seem not to give special preference to technical vocational education programmes based on their heavy financial requirement and expected effectiveness on developing skills use for work. The enormity of the cost involved in the provision of vocational education is such that neither government nor private individuals can shoulder the burden without mutual support of each other. This study therefore provided analytical data as evidence that government could use to formulate policies that could help improve the image of TVE and bring the stakeholders into the mainstream of financing TVET with government for mutual benefits in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to identify:

1. Cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders (parents, government, business men, community members, industries, and organizations) participate in funding TVE programmes in North Central Zone of Nigeria.
2. Ways for involving industries, communities, business men, companies, and organizations in participating in funding TVE with government in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following are questions answered by the study:

1. What are the cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders (parents, government, Business men, community members, industries and organizations) participate in funding TVE programmes in North Central Zone of Nigeria?
2. What are the ways for involving industries, communities, business men, companies, organizations in participating in funding TVE with government in North Central Zone of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were tested by the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of TVE teachers /lecturer state and federal government education officials/parastatals and industrialists/community leaders on how Technical Vocational Education be funded.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of TVE teacher, lecturers, state and federal government education officials/parastatals and industrialists, community leaders on what should be the community, industry/company and organization strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical Vocational Education.

Methodology

Design of the study: Descriptive survey was involved in gathering data for the study. A descriptive survey design is a type that studies a sample of a population bearing in mind their characteristics and using questionnaire or interview schedule to obtain data. In this study, the questionnaire was the major instrument used.

Area of the Study: The study was carried out in the North-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, comprising- Nasarawa, Benue, Kwara, Plateau, Niger, and, Kogi states.

Population of the Study: The population for the study is 1500 made up of government officials, industrialists, business men, community members, TVE teachers/lecturers, and members of selected commissions (NERDC, NBTE, NCCE).

Sample and Sampling Technique: The sample for the study is 450 which is 30% of the population, made up of 117 officials of ministry of education / parastatals, 117 technical teachers/lecturers, 99 business men / industrialists and 117 community members.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled: Policy Initiative Questionnaire on funding Technical Vocational Education. Each item in the questionnaire has a 4 - point response scale in the direction of the responses being solicited.

Validation of Instrument: The instrument was validated by 5 experts, two from higher TVE institutions, two from government / commissions and One from industries / business enterprises, i.e employers of labour.

Reliability of the Instrument: The split - half technique and Kuder-Richardson K-R21 formula were utilized in determining the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. A reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained.

Method of Data Collection: The data was collected through the involvement of 6 trained research assistants at 1 per state. A total of 436 copies (92.00%) of the questionnaire were retrieved and analyzed.

Method of Data Analysis: Weighted mean, standard deviation and ranks were utilized in analyzing the data obtained. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

The arithmetic mean of the response scale (4, 3, 2, 1) was computed and it yielded 2.50. An interval scale of 0.05 was used to determine the upper and lower limit of the arithmetic mean. The upper limit therefore was 2.55. Any item with mean value of 2.55 and above is regarded as an initiative to be considered. Any item (initiative) with a standard deviation (SD) of less than 1.96 reveals that the respondents are not too far from the mean and from the responses of one another. This is used to determine the validity of the responses of the respondents and the level of credibility accorded to such initiatives. For the hypotheses tested, any item whose P-value is greater than 0.05 is regarded as not significant and the hypothesis of no significant difference is upheld for such initiative. For any item whose p-value is less than 0.05 is regarded as significant and the hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected for such initiative item

Empirical evidences from the data analyzed and hypotheses tested

Initiative 1

What are the cooperative financing models to be utilized in funding Technical Vocational Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean ratings (\bar{X}), Standard deviation (SD) and Prioritization of the responses of the respondents on the cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders participate in funding Technical Vocational Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

N=436

S/N	Cooperative financing models to be utilized	\bar{X}	SD	Prioritization (Ranking)
1	Government and social control (Financing contributions from firms, industries, organizations, other business enterprises and government to be controlled by government for TVE)	3.24	0.82	2
2	State and occupational control (contributions from firms, industries, business enterprises and government per state to be controlled by government and occupational programmes in the state)	3.26	0.75	1
3	Government, communities and industry/firms (contributions from firms /industries, government and community to be controlled jointly through an independent human resource management commission for TVE)	3.23	0.80	3
4	Indirect partnership under government strict control (contributions from communities, firms, businessmen to be controlled by the government for TVE)	3.09	0.81	5
5	Social control under partnership with government (Government is assisted in training and job placement of graduates through mutual arrangement)	3.21	0.74	4

From table 1, it is observed that the mean values of items 1 – 5 on the cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders participate in funding TVE programmes range from 3.03 – 3.26 and are above 2.55. This implies that all the five items are regarded as cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders participate in funding TVE programmes in North Central States of Nigeria. The standard deviation values of the five items range from 0.74 - 0.82. This shows that the respondents are close to one another and that they are not very far from the mean in their responses.

Initiative 2

What should be the community, industries/companies, and organization strategic cooperation with government in funding TVE in North Central Zone of Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ratings (\bar{X}), Standard deviation (SD) Prioritization of the responses of the respondents on the establishment of community, industries/companies, and organization strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical Vocational Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria. **N=436**

S/N	Community, Industry/Company and Organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding TVE.	\bar{X}	SD	Prioritization (Ranking)
1	Each member of the community should pay additional tax for funding TVE programmes in their environment	2.64	1.00	6
2	Industries/companies should invest some percentage of their annual profit into funding TVE in their environment	3.27	0.75	2
3	Industries/companies should pay special occupational training levy for funding TVE programmes in their area	3.19	0.85	4
4	Organizations/clubs should pay special occupational training levy for funding TVE programmes in their area	2.98	0.87	5
5	Religious organizations should remit certain percentage of their collection monthly for funding TVE programmes for youths especially members of their religious organizations for poverty reduction	3.25	0.85	3
6	Companies and industries should accept the training of youths in their area of specialization and help to employ them for the purpose of expanding their production base nationally and alleviating poverty of youths	3.52	0.73	1

From table 2, it is observed that the mean values of items 1 – 6 on the establishment of community, industries/companies, and organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical/Vocational Education range from 2.64 - 3.52; this indicates that the mean values of the six items are above the cut-off point of 2.55. This implies that all the five items are regarded as ways of establishing community, industries/companies, and organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding TVE in North Central Zone of Nigeria. The standard deviation values of the six items range from 0.73 - 1.00. This shows that the respondents are close to one another and that they are not very far from the mean in their responses. This indicates that the means are dependable.

Ho1:

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the Mean Ratings of the Responses of the Three Groups of Respondents on alternative cooperative financing models to be utilized in funding Technical Vocational Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

S/N	Cooperative financing models to be utilized	Sum of Square	Residual	F-ratio	P-value (sig)	E2	Rmks
1	Government and social control(Financial contributions from firms, industries, organizations, other business enterprises and government to be controlled by government for TVE)	Between Groups 0.32 Within Groups 206.33 Total 206.80	0.85	0.24	0.79	0.99	NS
2	State and occupational	Between Groups	0.48	0.80	0.43	0.65	0.99 NS

	control (Contributions from firms, industries, business enterprise and government per state to be controlled by government and occupational programmes in the state)	Within Groups Total	206.33 206.80						
3.	Government, communities and industry/firms (Contributions from firms/industries, Government and communities to be controlled jointly through an independent human resources management commission for VTE)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	0.45 234.79 235.24	0.86	0.36	0.70	0.99	NS	
4	Indirect partnership under government strict control (Contributions from communities, firms, business enterprises to be decided and strictly controlled by the government for TVE)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	0.24 240.66 240.90	0.77	0.18	0.83	0.99	NS	
5	Social control under partnership with government (Government is assisted in training and job placement of graduates through mutual arrangement)	Between Groups Within Groups Total	0.90 201.37 202.27	0.99	0.83	0.44	0.99	NS	

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows that the P-values of all the five items are less than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the three groups of respondents (VTE teachers / lecturers, state and federal government education officials and industrialists / community leaders) on the items on alternative cooperative financing models to be utilized in funding technical vocational education in North Central Zone of Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference is upheld for all the five model items.

Ho2:

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the Mean Ratings of the Responses of the Three Groups of Respondents on community, industry/company organization strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical Vocational Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Community, industry/company organizations strategic cooperation with government in financing TVE	Sum of squares	Residual	F-ratio	P-values (sig)	E2	Rmk
Member of the community should pay additional tax for financing TVE programmes in their environment	Between Groups 1.21 Within Groups 367.21 Total 368.42	1.60	0.61	0.55	0.99	NS
Families/companies should invest a certain percentage of their annual income into financing TVE programmes in their environment	Between Groups 0.25 Within Groups 207.40 Total 207.65	0.69	0.22	0.82	0.99	NS
Families/companies should pay a local occupational training levy for financing TVE programmes in their area	Between Groups 4.02 Within Groups 264.09 Total 268.10	2.72	2.81	0.06	0.98	NS
Associations/ clubs should pay a local occupational training levy for financing TVE programmes in their area	Between Groups 5.01 Within Groups 273.77 Total 273.78	3.25	2.38	0.55	0.98	NS
Religious organizations should contribute a certain percentage of their income monthly for financing TVE programmes for youths	Between Groups 8.13 Within Groups 261.68 Total 269.81	4.77	5.74	0.03	0.98	S
Businesses and industries should employ the training of youths in their area of specialization and help them for the purpose of strengthening their production base locally and alleviating poverty	Between Groups 1.85 Within Groups 197.31 Total 199.17	1.46	1.74	0.18	0.99	NS

Significant at P<0.05.

Table 4 shows that the P-values of five out of six items are greater than the 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the three groups of respondents on these five items of community, industry/company and

organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical Vocational Education. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference is upheld for the five items. However, the P-value of item 5 is 0.03 which is less than 0.05 indicating a significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the three groups of respondents, therefore, a hypothesis of no significant difference is rejected for this item. The Post-Hoc analysis of item 5 reveals that the TVE teachers/lecturers and state/federal government education officials are more in favor (pro) of the item than industrialists/ community leaders.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings that 5 items with mean values greater than the cut-off point of 2.55 and standard deviation values ranging from 0.74 – 0.82 were regarded as cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders participate in funding TVE programmes in North Central Zone of Nigeria and rated as initiatives for policy formulation. This is supported by the conclusions of UNESCO (2012), Ugbalu (2012 and Jung (2010). In their separate studies, the authors concluded that questionnaire items with mean values above cut-off point scores and standard deviation values higher than 0.66 could be submitted for policy decision/ formulation. In terms of prioritization of the cooperative financing models in the study, it was found out that item 2 which is state and occupational control (contributions from firms industries, business enterprises and government per state to be controlled by government and occupational programmes in the state) ranked first. This implies that the respondents are mostly in favor of the item that ranked first. This finding is in consonance with that of Ombugus & Angbre (2015) where items in their study “Policy Initiatives for Effectiveness of Vocational Technical Education in North Central Zone of Nigeria,” were ranked first to seventh. The hypothesis tested on the cooperative financing models to be utilized in making stakeholders participate in funding TVE programmes in North Central Zone of Nigeria revealed that the three groups of respondents do not differ significantly on all the financing models. This finding is in agreement with that of Olaitan (2011) in a study on Policy initiatives for effectiveness of vocational and technical education on rapid and sustainable national development, where it was found out that there were no significant differences in the mean ratings of the respondents (VTE teachers, Industrialists and community leaders/business men. The finding is also in conformity with Onjevuu (2013), in a study Assessing Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria: A Situation Analysis of Kaduna Polytechnic, where the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

The findings that 6 items with mean values greater than the cut-off point of 2.55 and standard deviation values ranging from 0.73 – 1.00 were regarded as ways of establishing community, industries/ companies and organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding TVE programmes and rated as initiatives for policy formulation. This finding is supported by the conclusions of Kembe (2014) and Utin (2013). In their separate studies, the authors concluded that questionnaire items with mean values above cut-off point scores and standard deviation values higher than 0.70 could be considered for policy making. In terms of prioritization of the ways of establishing community, industries/ companies, and organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding Technical Vocational Education, item 6 rank first, item 2 rank second, 5 rank third, 3 rank fourth, 4 rank fifth and item 1 rank sixth. This finding implies that the respondents are more concerned about item 6 (Companies and industries should accept the training of youths in their area of specialization and help to employ them for the purpose of expanding their production base nationally and alleviating poverty of youths). This is in agreement with Obunadike (2013) in a study

“Entrepreneurship Skill Acquisition for Wealth Creation for Youths in Ihiala, Anambra State” where items were ranked.

Findings from the study on the hypothesis tested revealed that the three groups of respondents differ significantly in their responses on one out of six items of community, industry/ company and organizations strategic cooperation with government in funding TVE in North Central Zone of Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Okoye (2014) in a study on Strategies for Promoting Lifestyls in Families and Communities, where there was significant difference in the mean ratings of the three groups of respondents in one out of seven items. The finding is also in conformity with Utin (2013), in a study “Resources and the challenges of Funding VTE in Nigeria,” where the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected in one out of six items. The finding has also provided information and what the education policy makers could do to improve technical vocational education in the North Central Zone to rapidly improve her economy.

Implications of Findings of the Study

If the recommendations based on the findings from this study are implemented for policy formulation, the following benefits are likely to be realized:

- i. The image of Technical Vocational Education would have been improved because it will become more attractive to every youth or adult in their local environment or elsewhere in the zone for skill empowerment for employment.
- ii. It will drastically reduce unemployment and rural-urban migration of youth since there will be attractive technical vocational education at the local government level that can engage these youths in meaningful and sustainable production activities for living.

Conclusion

From the literature reviewed, it was revealed that financing vocational technical education in north central states is controlled by the various state governments through sources such as the following:

- i. State governments budget for VTE programmes through the ministries of education.
- ii. Assistance from friendly foreign countries.
- iii. Contribution from Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and Education Trust Fund (ETF). The literature revealed that vocational technical education has not developed rapidly despite revenues from these sources into government financing of vocational technical education programmes in North Central Zone. This study has shown that Government alone cannot finance technical vocational education programmes in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. It is only a functional public-private partnerships can guarantee effective and speedy delivery of technical vocational education in a developing economy such as Nigeria’s.

Recommendations

1. It is highly recommended that the findings from this study be utilized by the government for policy formulation in technical vocational education in Nigeria.
2. The cooperatives, industries, business enterprises, occupational organizations and community members should be supported in funding technical vocational education and training programmes through Government policy.

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