ACHIEVING HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTRIBUTING TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE IMPROVEMENT OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Article Info:

Submitted: Sep 1, 2023
Revised: Sep 5, 2023
Accepted: Sep 8, 2023
Published: Sep 11, 2023

Abstract

Human Capital development of every nation is important as it is strongly linked to the economic development of the nation. It is important for every nation to look for ways through which it economy can be developed. This study focuses on how the Human Capital of Nigeria can be develop from the existing situation by improving the status and quality of Technical and Vocational Education (TVET). This is because the TVET is found to have a critical role to play in the Human Capital Development of the nation. The study starts by having an overview of the human capital in Nigeria before going further to study the roles that TVET can play in developing the human capital and curing of some national challenges that generally affects the nation. The study also looks into the benefit that the Human capital development will bring to the nation while also looking into the contributions of TVET in achieving the human capital development. Then the research was finally concluded by identifying the problems associated with the human capital development and ways of improving TVET in Nigeria for the achievement of the Human capital development before finally coming up with recommendations to all the found challenges and problems.

Keywords; Human Capital Development, TVET, National Development
Introduction

The importance of education and technology in the national development of a nation cannot be over-emphasized. It is obvious that the citizens of such country have important roles to play in the national development of their country through the application of knowledge they acquire from schools. Education as well known is the vital tool needed for any national development if properly maintained and utilized. Education is also believed to be the vehicle for accelerated economic and social growth and development (Christina Boateng, 2012). Objectives of educational programmes therefore can be regarded as those generally concerned with a change in behaviour such as a changed attitude, perception or skill level or an increase in knowledge (Okwelle P. Chijioke, 2013) in order to bring about change and development in some certain sector of the economy.

A country can only advance both socially, economically and technologically, when its citizens are productive and creative. It must have a productive citizen majority of which can be job creators rather than job seekers (Isaac & Ayodele, 2020). Again, being technologically educated today is not enough to guarantee job success based on the existing opportunities. The world of work needs experienced, competent, well trained and specialized human beings with the ability to learn quickly and understand sophisticated technology. There is the need for technical vocational education to prepare individual with skills necessary to find and maintain employment especially in the field of more advanced technology (Christina Boateng, 2012).

As TVET systems have strong roots in the national culture of each country (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2011) due to the contributions it expected to offer for the development of the country. (Ojimba, 2013) is of the view that, under critical examination, technical and vocational education have been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact on human resource development, productivity and economic growth (Ojimba, 2013). In Nigeria, Technical and Vocational Education is considered as the form of education perceived to be the greatest weapon that can be used to bring or achieve a quick desirable changes or development in the country’s economic, political, sociological and human resources development (Isaac & Ayodele, 2020). For the sake of this study, development is viewed as an attempt to improve managerial effectiveness through a planned and deliberate learning process (Banka & Okwori, 2019).
(E.O. Enyekit, Ubulom, & Onuekwa,, 2011) in their studies asserts that, Human capital development is something that must exist or happen for development of every nation. In addition, human capital development teaches and makes people to understand how to utilize the power of diverse thinking styles (analytical and intuitive) so that they achieve holistic best practical solution to all problems. Human capital development and training and development are basically the same. It takes human capital to organize and rationalize the contributions of other factors of production before a result oriented productive goal can be achieve in any industrial setting. Therefore human capital development is about supporting cum investing in human capital, coaching, training, internship and human capital management. (E.O. Enyekit, Ubulom, & Onuekwa,, 2011).

**Nigerian Human Capital**

Young people (youths) as we all know constitute the most resourceful, energetic and vibrant labor force and population of any country whose potentials cannot be underrated in the development of the society. The recognition of this fact has necessitated the development of the youths. This is because when youths are developed in all ramifications of life the country is sure to develop from all sector of the economy (Giginyu, Muhammad, Adamu, & Abdullahi, 2021).

Part of the problem with majority of the population is that, the majority of the active population has continued to operate within low productivity and low-earnings sectors. And about 20 percent of the 25–34-year-old population is not in education, employment, or training (NEET), and more than 90 percent of the labor force is employed in the informal sector. Finally, the relatively low unemployment masks high underemployment (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/the World Bank, 2015). Previously in some years back (Nigeria, April 2005) declares that youth unemployment is estimated to be around 1.2% among the 15-19 year age group. Many school leavers have difficulty finding employment in urban areas because they lack adequate job skills, while employers experience difficulties in recruiting skilled workers and production technicians.
Role of TVET In Human Capital Development and Curing National Challenges

Jekayinfa (2011) was cited by (Molagun, 2015) as saying, Nigeria is the most populous, the 8th most populous in the world and the giant of Africa, though very rich, yet ranked among the lowest (number 152) in the human development index. Perhaps, if Nigeria had adopted vocational and technical education rather than general education as an instrument for national stability, economic survival and Human Development the nation would have been better for it. The classic examples of the Asian Tigers such as; South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia etc not to mention the economic giants such as Taiwan, China and Japan come to mind. Invalid source specified.

If more people acquire TVET education in Nigeria this will surely lead to production of more goods and services locally; individuals will become self-reliant, crime rate will drastically reduce, poverty eradication will take place, exportation of goods and services will increase, reduction of capital flight will take place, abundant employment opportunities, increase in standard of living, reduction of inflation rate, more employers of labor, promotion of sustainable development and increase in industrial and manufacturing activities of the country will all come to exist easily (Akployibo & Ezechukwu, 2021).

Role of TVET in Achieving Human Capital Development

Population growth, urbanization, poverty and lack of income generating capacity and failure of graduates to secure employment in Nigeria today, highlights the importance of career development which is easily achievable through proper implementation of TVET (Ogoegbunam & Emmanuel, 2020). Technical and vocational education will surely provide the lead to human capital development that enhances empowerment of people and strengthening economic prosperity of the nation (Tyowuah & Chen, 2019).

(Ogoegbunam & Emmanuel, 2020) asserts that; TVET is:

- An instrument for promoting environmentally sound development.
- A method of alleviating poverty.
- An integral part of general education.
- An aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship
(Ovbiagele, 2015) attested to this by his saying “to alleviate the age long problem of graduate without employment, vocational and technical education plays the role of training the Nigeria youths in the definite skills such that the gap between the labor market and the preparatory courses is bridged”. And also, improving skill acquisition through vocational and technical education will definitely solve the most common Nigerian’s multiple problems regarding human capital development, empowerment, unemployment and economic instability (M.O & Samuel, 2021).

Strategies for Human Capital Development in Nigeria

As it is hoped that in the future, the technical and vocational education will adequately equip students to be more effective in this age of science and technology and to raise a generation of people who can think for themselves and respect the dignity of labor and propel its citizenry into a blossom economic enderado (Uwaifo, 2009) it is important that, the foundations of TVET be re-evaluated and transformed to discover ways through which the negative perceptions often associated with TVET can be expelled and the benefit of the sub-sector of education can be reaped for the benefit of the entire nation (Olayele, 2021).

In addition, since the key purpose of technical and vocational education is pointed towards the development of skilled manpower for self-reliance and economic development, it becomes imperative for teachers to be provided with all necessary material resources and tools to be effective. Workshops need to be adequately fully equipped with modern functional tools, machines in their right quality and quantity and also competent skilled teachers and workshop attendants must also be provided (Offor & Major, 2014).

Relationship of Human Capital Development and TVET

Human capital development as previously defined by (E.O. Enyekit, Ubolum, & Onuekwa,, 2011) as a field that teaches and makes people to understand how to utilize the power of diverse thinking styles (analytical and intuitive) so that they achieve holistic best practical solution to all problems. This show that human capital development when related to TVET in school activities can said to aim at exposing pupils at the basic education level to a range of practical activities in the vocational field in order to make them familiar with,
and stimulate their interest in vocational subjects; This gives pupils at this level equal opportunity to choose their future careers in either the vocational technical or general field. Also, it equips them with basic occupational skills and knowledge that will enable those who do not seek further literary education to enter into gainful paid or self-employment in industry, agriculture and commerce (Christina Boateng, 2012).

Research has proven that investments in human capital by the public sector, by firms and by households have a significant and great impact on economic performances as well as individual and social wellbeing. TVET is therefore a process of life-long learning that undergirds the social and economic well-being of the economy, in as much as it is a key force for human capital formation (Hanni, 2019).

**Human Capital Productivity in Nigeria**

The nation’s poverty level has increased to about 70% that many Nigerians now live on less than one dollar a day. As earlier on stated, higher institutions in Nigeria lack the tools and machines to train students to acquire the skills needed by employers of labor. The challenges of vocational and technical education are quite enormous (Okoye & Arimonu, 2016). And it is obvious that, the economic effectiveness of any nation relies upon the aptitudes of the work power and skilled force in the country (Minna-Eyovwunu, Tene-Omadide, Yahaya, & Orueyegha, 2020). Thus, this shortage of manpower and the continues increase of poverty in Nigeria is alarming and have to be given urgent attention as no nation can rise above it skilled workforce.

**Benefit of Achieving human capital development**

(E.O. Enyekit, Ubulom, & Onuekwa,, 2011) in their study asserts that, comprehensive teaching of Vocational education will help the nation in several aspects of development and management. The aspects noted by them are;

1. Full employment for the youths
2. Technological advancement and economic development
3. International economic and political independent
4. Reduction of crime and social vices
5. Effective supervision and administration of vocational programmes and institutions by vocational experts.

**Contributions of TVET in Achieving the Aims of National Development**

Every government has a set target to achieve within its territory and within a specific context and each policy has its own characteristics and it sets aims and objectives. These also apply to the National Development as outlined in (M.O & Samuel, 2021) that the ultimate aim of Nigeria national development is expected to be bringing about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual citizens of the country and to bestow benefits to all self-reliance and mobilization of domestic resources, the transformation of the structure of rural production, the development of small-scale industries and the acquisition of technological and scientific skills. Though the country is blessed with abundant natural resources inherent in it. But the country has a very poor development of human potentials in the country to effectively harness the resources. The poor development is not limited to only limited to the human potentials but rather, it has transformed to the educational sector. The Nigeria educational system has fallen short of expectation in meeting the needs of the society as expected. This makes the introduction of TVET in the Nigerian education system to still remain unrealistic, due to a couple of these challenges. TVET could be strengthened to achieve its goals and hence drive the transformation of Nigeria economy (Onwusa, 2021) but only if proper attention is given to it by the government.

**Problems of Achieving Human Capital Development Through Improvement of TVET**

Several challenges are found in almost every sector of the Nigeria economy. But the challenges faced by the educational sector are really alarming and need very serious and urgent attention. This is due to the fact that, the educational sector has the capacity and the ability to transform the entire national economy. And it can be said, the educational sector is the most important sector in the development of every nation. It also provides individuals with the opportunity for self-empowerment through intellectual development, skill acquisition, vocational development and training and, environmental awareness (Jonathan C (Ph.D.) Nwosu & Micah, 2017). Realising this great importance and value
attached to TVET, it is heart-breaking to finds that TVET in Nigeria is currently faced with a number of challenges which include: low quality of training/teaching staff; poor perception of the public and bad public image of vocational education; discrimination against graduates of technical and vocational; low turnout and enrolment of trainees in vocational schools; inadequate financing and follow up on the part of the government (Opoko, et al., 2018).

Schools are still largely dilapidated without proper maintenance and supervision. Some schools have also turned out to be centre and are unsuitable to serve as conducive learning environment. It is evident that students do better when they study in a conducive learning environment. And it is a conducive teaching environment that makes teachers to give-out their optimum performance. Despite the general state of total disrepair in which most of the country’s schools are in, teachers are still considered the lowest ranked profession with lowest status among all professional and they enjoyed very poor and a low salary structure which makes them among the lowest paid professionals, in Nigeria (Garba, 2012). They are also considered by the masses as having lower status when compared to other civil servants.

(Christina Boateng, 2012) is of the opinion that there are somethings that makes this vocational education difficult due to it expensiveness. She further asserted that even the methods use in assessing vocational technical subjects, especially the form of assessment require the training of assessors who can assess students’ competence in the classroom and in the workplace. Which all gather to make the vocational technical education more expensive than other types on education.

Following the above revelation, some implications emerge which shows that the Technical and Vocational Teachers require training and re-training in pedagogical skills to enable them put their professional responsibilities into practice (Christina Boateng, 2012) since the educational stakeholders are of the opinion that the overall aims, practices and curriculum of the school must be defined (Shobola, 2022) clearly to guide in the training of students.

Going further on finding this problems, (E.O. Enyekit, Ubolum, & Onuekwa, 2011) in his studies assert that, the studies conducted by Okoroafor (2010) highlighted that there are number factors affecting the Human capital development of Nigeria which he listed as:

1. lack of sponsorship
2. Inadequate infrastructure
3. Inadequate Timing

4. Lack of reward for Excellence

Other problems are found by other scholars such as (Gaines & Oti, 2020) in whose studies he pointed out that “the lack of teachers goes hand in hand with challenges with the TVET curriculum. It has in the past been strongly based on foreign models which have evolved over time and under ideal conditions such as infrastructure, equipment, training opportunities”.

Okwonkwo (2007) reported that students are continuously losing interest in TVE subjects because they are constantly regarded as dirty ones. Though appreciable numbers of students are found in technical colleges, only little development has been recorded as the result of lack of human, material and financial resources. And the lack of needed resources limits curriculum adjustment to changing business and industrial conditions, technology change and the requirements for the labor market (Mohammed, 2013).

Another study by the (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/the World Bank, 2015) identified the following as the main constraints of developing TVET for Human capital development: “the institutional complexity of the education system; the lack of a comprehensive and credible system for certification of competencies; the weak linkage between programs offered by post-basic and tertiary education institutions and the changing needs of the labor market; the poor quality of education and service delivery at all levels (including poor learning outcomes, poor infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers and learning materials); and weak systems governance and quality assurance mechanisms”. The study went further to highlight that, the main challenges of the skills development system in Nigeria are (a) severe constraints on staffing, facilities, and equipment resulting in exceedingly low equitable access and quality; (b) extremely low external efficiency due to the absence of linkages between curriculum design and labor market information (LMI), especially from industry and enterprises; (c) gender inequity; (d) a shortage of well-qualified technical and vocational education teachers and inadequate professional development; and (e) weak institutional capacity at the federal and state levels (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/the World Bank, 2015).

One of the most striking bullet to the development of TVET in Nigeria which can’t be neglected due to the important role it plays in the poor development of TVET is the negative perception of TVET by the society. (Akhuemonkhan, Raimi, & Dada, 2014) in his...
studies highlighted that, the implication of negative perception of TVET is threefold: (a) low societal estimation of TVET in the society (b) gross gender imbalance in TVET implementation, and (c) inadequate human, material and financial resources for TVET institutions.

With all the outlined challenges it is very difficult for achievement of TVET in Nigeria Successfully. So the government needs to put emphasis on revitalizing this sector for achievement of it established aim. As the implications of all the outlines challenges are in their increase, urgent attention is needed for harnessing the benefit of TVET in human capital development for national development.

**Improving TVET in Nigeria**

The government of every nation have the most important role to play in the improvement of the well-being of it citizens and the development of it nation through the establishments of laws and regulations that will enhance the nations development. The good understanding of this by (Kennedy, 2011) makes him to clearly assert that, government intervention in providing human and infrastructural resources will give technical and vocational education a facelift philosophically, sociologically and psychologically (Kennedy, 2011). But for proper intervention in order to resolve this issues, it is of crucial importance to understand the measure problems being faced by TVET in the nation.

(Opoko, et al., 2018) in his study highlighted some number of measures through which TVET can be improved, this factors are;

1. **Tackle Negative Stereotyping**; The continues discrimination between people with TVET qualifications and those with literary education certificates has been one of the major problem accounting to poor development of TVET education. A first step in this direction should be intensive campaign in the media and other fora to popularize TVET and highlighting its benefits to the citizenry and nation at large. There should be policy framework which actively supports TVET and removes the current discrimination it faces (Opoko, et al., 2018).

2. **Improve the Status of TVET to make it more attractive**; TVET in Nigeria has been characterized by several researches to have been considered as inferior to literary education due to poor understanding of the important role the knowledge can play in the National Development of the Country. To clear this and make it
valuable in the face of the nation, the government must do everything possible to improve the understanding of the importance of TVET in the national development. This is why, (Gaines & Oti, 2020) tagged TVET as the ugly duckling of education for successive administrations. He went further to state that, Nigeria education has for a very longtime to date been quite low with TVET receiving the least attention from the policy makers and the stakeholders. And the significant disparity in the remuneration of employees in the different sectors of the economy further emphasizes this in which the remuneration of the TVET sector is poor when compared to several other sectors of the economy. Improving the understanding of TVET importance will surely upgrade the status of TVET within the nation.

3. Sustainable Financing; Funding in almost all sectors of the Nigerian educational system has been a major challenge for sometimes. Though, corruption has been identified as one of the major challenges that continuously causes the deterioration of several sectors if not all developmental sectors of the Nigeria economy. And it plays a vital role in the current and previous financial issues associated with the educational sector. The continues strike of the Nigeria higher institutions are a testimony to this. So the government need to concentrate and give it full support through sufficient funding of TVET to see an effective result that will enhance the economic development of the country. So, realizing the vital roles of TVET in the national development, the government needs to channel sufficient funds towards TVET (Opoko, et al., 2018).

4. Create Synergy between TVET Stakeholders; It is evident that there is no harmony between schools owned by government and the ones owned by private institutions in terms of the curricula used and the quality of the products. (Opoko, et al., 2018) is of the opinion that, in creating harmony in curricula between this different institutions, the content of the curricula and pedagogic approach including all the methods of assessment should be flexible enough to accommodate the variations in the personal characteristics and ability of the trainees.

5. Provision of Adequate Training Facilities and Materials; Nigeria TVET education has been characterized with several challenges such as; insufficient facilities needed for successful teaching of the TVET subjects. Schools facilities are in great level of deterioration and are in a complete state of disrepair. For adequate
discharging of the teacher’s duty, it is important to have a conducive environment that will enhance productivity throughout the learning process.

6. **Staff Training and Welfare Programmes;** Training and retraining of staff in any institution is prerequisite to it development and productivity. To maintain the quality of TVET in our schools, the right choice of staff must be made throughout the recruitment process and the existing staff must be in continuous training to make them conversant with current trend and changes in the technology and vocational world. Seminars and workshops must always be organized to address the challenges faced by the teachers through which they are to be informed about other new teaching strategies and important issues of concerns.

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study conducted by (Ogundele & Oyelade, 2018) on TVET issues in Nigeria, the study put forward some recommendations on how to improve TVET in Nigeria. There recommendations are in agreement with the existing challenges as founded by (Opoko, et al., 2018). The recommendations are;

1. Policy makers responsible for looking into TVET activities should ensure that the philosophy and objectives of vocational and technical education as set by the responsible institutions are realistically pursued for vocational and technological development, development of social life and economic development of Nigeria.

2. The government and the people should pursue greater implementation of VTE curriculum at the senior secondary school level. This could be done by encouraging provision of adequate number of well-equipped workshops in the secondary schools and technical colleges.

3. Moreover, adequate number of well-trained teachers should be emphasized and provided.

4. Government should pay more attention to the remuneration of TVET teachers and funding of the secondary schools and technical colleges with competitive salary to encourage the most-able, qualified personnel in embracing the TVET jobs.

The above recommendations given by (Ogundele & Oyelade, 2018) are in full agreement with all the existing challenges found in this study. It will be of great importance if the government and the stakeholders responsible for implementing new policies consider this recommendation and works towards their implementation.
Conclusions

Technical and Vocational education was found to be one of the most effective ways through which the Human Capital Development of Nigeria can be improved. Even though, just like other sectors of the Nigerian economy, a number of challenges where found to be the reason behind the continuous under-development of Human capital in Nigeria in which TVET has the ability to bring those challenges to an end. But, TVET itself was found to be battling with it developmental challenges. It was found to be the Ugly duckling of the Nigeria economy as it was tagged by some scholars. Solutions based on previous studies were put forward in this research as ways through which the TVET can be improved to enhance the human capital development after the analysis and presentation of the challenges identified by different scholars from different perspective of TVET.

Recommendations

Based on all the literature review and the studies conducted to find out how the Human Capital can be developed in Nigeria through improving Technical and Vocational Education the following recommendations are made;

1. Government must provide all the necessary facilities needed to facilitate the improvement of TVET.
2. The government should ensure the provision of sufficient and qualified teachers in all schools offering the TVET.
3. The government should emphasize more on the importance of TVET as it does in other subjects in order to raise it status on the eyes of the people.
4. The government must consider and modify the remuneration package for TVET teachers in Nigeria. This will encourage qualified personnel to embrace the teaching jobs.
5. Retraining of TVET teachers must be prioritize by government, as this will help in enhancing them with the new skills and expose them to the current trends in the world of technology and development.
References


