

REPOSITIONING TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

High unemployment rate amongst the youths in Nigeria has led to increased poverty and serious social problems in Nigeria. Coincidentally there has been a decline in TVET enrolments despite the juicy goals of TVET. As a result, this study was conducted to ascertain ways of repositioning TVET and Entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was conducted in Cross River State. The population for the study was 241. 143 from the Department of Vocational Education, University of Calabar and 98 students from Cross River State University of Technology. The entire population was studied due to the manageable size of the population. A structured questionnaire containing 34 items on a four point rating scale and a response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) with their corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 was used to elicit responses from respondents and generate data for the study. The instrument was face-validated by three experts in the Department of Vocational Education, University of Calabar. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability yielded a coefficient of 0.87 which was high enough to be used for the study. The data collected for the study was analysed using mean to answer the research questions and standard deviation to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses from the mean. In taking decision, any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was considered accepted, while any mean score below 2.50 was taken as rejected. The findings revealed that vocational skills, job creation abilities, and product marketing skills are needed for effective repositioning of TVET and entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended amongst others, the creation of entrepreneurship development support agencies to encourage business interaction between entrepreneurs and TVET students for job creation and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Key words: TVET, Entrepreneurship Education, Self-Reliance

Introduction

Nigeria has a growing youth population with an educational system that turns out millions of graduates every year. A rule of thumb is that youth unemployment rate tends to be approximately twice the adult rate and it is rising sharply across much of the developed and developing countries alike. In countries with

the most severe youth unemployment rates, a quarter of young people are looking for work. Unemployment in Nigeria stands at 23%; it is widely accepted that this is not merely a short-run waste of human resources and a source of unhappiness among youths; it may have long term scarring effects on the working adults and far reaching implications for the next

generation (Blanchflower & Andrew, 2007). The persistence of unemployment problem seems to demonstrate that standard economic policies have been insufficient. The need to create more entrepreneurship opportunities among the youths becomes pertinent. The youth needs exposure in practical entrepreneurial work experience in order to be proficient in their chosen career and be useful to themselves and the society. The only way to empower the youth is to provide them with adequate and qualitative education in order to make them job creators and eradicate poverty (Sekena, 2004). Many countries of the world have considered Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as relevant in equipping young people with technical skills that would enable them engage in productive livelihoods.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an all-inclusive term referring to all forms and levels of the educational process involving, in addition to general knowledge, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, know-how, attitudes and understanding relating to occupations in the various sectors of economic and social life (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013). This definition highlights the importance of the acquisition of practical knowledge, skills and attitudes in any training offered by TVET providers (UNESCO, 2011). Thus TVET is an integral part of all-inclusive education for all types of initiative which helps an individual to become an active citizen and contributes positively to his well-being and to economic growth of his society. This implies that TVET equips the individual with relevant skills for self-reliance. The FRN (2013) enumerated the following as TVET objectives: to provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particularly at sub-professional level; to provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for

agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development and to give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.

Technical Vocational Education and Training is result oriented. It brings about technological advancement and aims to fit new manpower for employment and provide continuing training so that the individuals can keep pace with modern and emerging work environment, thus, equipping such an individual for self-reliance. Self-reliance becomes feasible through entrepreneurship education. Self-reliance, according to Bassey (2009), is that which presupposes the attainment of the individual's financial and economic autonomy without necessarily resorting to begging. Abanyam (2012) posited that self-reliance refers to dependence on one's own abilities, judgments, or resources or independence. It thus means the ability to rely on oneself to do whatever should be done. It entails the development of local markets, local production, local processing of previously imported goods, and greater cooperation amongst local economic entities. Entrepreneurship foster self-reliance among youths, therefore, should be encouraged.

Furthermore, it becomes imperative for entrepreneurs to have some useful knowledge on how to succeed in business. This should be a prerequisite to floating any business venture especially if sustaining the business is the guiding principle. This is where entrepreneurship education comes in. Entrepreneurship education is a form of education which promotes the dignity of labour by entrenching work as the goal of education (Abanyam, 2014). According to Abubakar (2010), entrepreneurship education has led most African countries, including Nigeria to realise that training in TVET is necessary to

alleviate poverty through skill acquisition. Therefore, given the enabling environment, entrepreneurship education enlightens and equips the youth with modalities for operating and managing enterprises. Therefore, as a means of empowering Nigerian youths for sustainable self-employment and wealth creation, the repositioning of TVET and entrepreneurship education for self-reliance constitutes the thrust of this study.

TVET and Entrepreneurship Education for Self-Reliance

The learning experiences may occur in variety of learning context, including educational institutions and workplace. In Nigeria, the teaching of skills in the formal sector exists in two types of institutions (Oziengbe, 2009). These institutions are Technical Colleges and Trade Centres. In these institutions, individuals are provided with needed skills that will empower the youths become proficient in both the public workplace and private employment. With the urgent need to fight unemployment, reduce poverty and promote economic prosperity, the Nigerian government has embarked on reforms in various aspects of the economy. As part of the on-going reforms, Nwaokolo (2005) suggests the promotion of entrepreneurship education at various levels of the tertiary education so that more graduates of the system can set up their own business, create employment and alleviate poverty in the society. Technology education emphasis skill acquisition, while entrepreneurship education emphasizes on the ability to set up and manage small business venture. The entrepreneurial ability will make it possible for the acquired technology skills to be salable (Igweh, 2005).

The relationship that exist between entrepreneurial training with TVET would provide gainful employment (paid or self-employment) to the recipient which is the base for industrialization and technological

development. The UNESCO, (2003), while addressing the need for fostering entrepreneurship mind sets and promoting entrepreneurship education among the youth recommends TVET as a sure way out of poverty facing the youth worldwide today. It is a fact that the society needs men and women that are capable of establishing businesses that would help cushion the adverse effects of mass unemployment and poverty which entrepreneurial skills in TVET affords. Entrepreneurial studies allows the beneficiaries to consider various occupational possibilities that the work required, available rewards, necessary training and relative advantages and disadvantages of each (Nwoye, 2011). The scope of entrepreneurship education according to the UNESCO, (2003) includes creativity, innovations, risk taking and the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. In line with the scope of entrepreneurship education, and by its definition as the ability to turn ideas into action, Entrepreneurship and TVET may serve as a tool for achieving youth empowerment.

It is thus evident that TVET and entrepreneurship foster economic growth, increase productivity, create new technologies, products, and services and also change and rejuvenate market competition. Therefore, if TVET and entrepreneurship education taught in the institutions must meet these laudable objectives, then such programmes should be taught in context. In achieving these, Abanyam and Etonyeaku (2012) suggested ways of repositioning TVET and entrepreneurship education to include equipping the individual with worthwhile knowledge, usable skills and the right aptitude to identify opportunity, evaluate opportunities for choice making, decide on form of enterprise, factors combination, business directorship and risk management, which will ultimately lead to self-reliance. Abanyam (2014) emphasized the need

for TVET graduates to be mandated to develop and implement a viable business plan before graduation as this would bring out their abilities in creating jobs for themselves in particular and the nation at large.

Statement of the Problem

TVET enhances productivity and sustains competitiveness in the global economy. Worldwide countries are renewing efforts to promote technical and vocational education and training, this is because it is the only way to prepare young people for world of work, which reaches out to the marginalized and excluded groups to engage them in income-generating livelihoods. High unemployment has led to increase poverty and serious social problems in Nigeria. Coincidentally there has been a decline in TVET enrolments in Nigerian higher institutions. Less than one percent of students' enrolment in Nigeria is oriented towards technical and vocational skills (Abanyam, 2014). It is even more pathetic to see the few TVET graduates hovering everywhere in search of non available jobs, when they should be at the forefront of job creations. The question that comes to mind is why has this joblessness continue to persist among TVET graduates? It is in recognition of this that the study sought way of repositioning TVET and entrepreneurship education that will lead to self-reliance of the youths in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to determine ways of repositioning TVET and Entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria.
2. Ascertain ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be

repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria.

3. Determine ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria?
2. What are the ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria?
3. What are the ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was conducted in the two universities in Cross River State. They are University of Calabar and the Cross River State University of Technology. The population for the study was 241 made up of 143 students from the Department of Vocational Education, University of Calabar and 98 students from the Department of Vocational Education, Cross River State University of Technology. The entire population was studied due to the manageable size of the population. A structured questionnaire containing 35 items on a four point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) and corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 were used to elicit responses from respondents and generated data for the study. The instrument was face-

validated by three experts from the Department of Vocational Education, University of Calabar. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability yielded a coefficient of 0.87 which was high enough to be used for the study.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions and standard deviation to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses from

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria. N=241

S/NO	ITEMS	X	SD	Remark
1	Emphasis on developing management ability	3.57	.75	A
2	Provision of technical skills	3.45	.73	A
3	Possession of sound communication skills	3.40	.70	A
4	Effective interpersonal skills	3.28	.76	A
5	Effective personal skills.	3.34	.84	A
6	Acquisition of analytical ability	3.45	.73	A
7	Demonstration of critical thinking skills	3.29	.69	A
8	Possession of marketing skills.	3.32	.75	A
9	Interactive accounting skills	3.37	.71	A
10	Emphasis on practical Information technology skills	3.35	.70	A
Grand mean and standard deviation		3.38	.74	A

Key: X= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, A = Agreed

Table 1 presented the mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on the ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria. All the ten items listed had their mean scores ranging from 3.28-3.57 which were above the real limit of 2.50, the

the mean. In taking decision, any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was considered accepted, while any mean score below 2.50 was not accepted.

Presentation of Results

The findings of the study are presented and discussed as follows:

Research Question 1

What are the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria?

standard deviation ranged from 0.69 – 0.84 indicating that the respondents were not far from each other in their opinions.

Research Question 2

What are the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria?

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Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation on the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria N=241

S/NO	ITEMS	X	SD	Remarks
1	Identify business opportunities	2.89	.99	A

2	Generate ideas suitable to the opportunities identified	3.21	.92	A
3	Set appropriate businesses goals	2.80	1.14	A
4	make long and short term planning	2.83	.99	A
5	Take a decision and act upon it	3.54	.87	A
6	Organize resources for goal attainment	2.89	.96	A
7	Implement plans for goal attainment	3.36	.87	A
8	Evaluate all activities based on set goals	2.67	1.09	A
9	Make appropriate use of feedback	2.91	0.91	A
10	Manage time and meet job schedules	2.80	0.88	A
11	Solve both routine and non-routine problems;	2.83	0.99	A
12	Work under pressure	2.63	0.82	A
13	Motivate workers	2.75	0.53	A
14	Cope with uncertainty	2.89	0.99	A
15	Analytical reasoning skills	3.21	0.92	A
16	Critical thinking ability	2.80	1.14	A
Grand mean and standard deviation		2.94	0.94	A

Table 2 presented the mean ratings of respondents on ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria. All the sixteen items recorded mean scores ranging from 2.63-3.54 which were above the cut-off mark of 2.50, the standard deviation ranges from 0.53 – 1.14 indicating that the respondents were not far from each other in their opinions; thus indicating that all the items are ways TVET

and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in creating jobs for self-reliance in Nigeria.

Research Question 3

What are the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria?

Table 3

Mean ratings and standard deviation on the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria.

N=241

S/N	Items Statement	X ₁	SD ₁	remarks
1	Ability to determine the extent to which products will sell	2.76	.93	A
2	Budget and forecast sales	3.10	.99	A
3	Determine current trends in sales of products	3.07	.98	A
4	Determine what customers need and supply of such goods	2.61	.81	A
5	Interpret factors which indicate extent of and strength of competition	2.57	.94	A
6	Appreciate consumer behaviour	3.00	.86	A
7	Advertise a product	2.51	.81	A
8	Determine seasonal fluctuation of goods	2.78	1.08	A
9	Effectiveness in negotiating sales	2.71	.89	A
10	Use of sale promotion tools	2.76	.98	A
11	Set the right price for a product	2.75	.97	A
12	Provide customers with incentives	2.70	0.49	A
13	Identify the right channel of product distribution	2.76	.93	A
14	Identify the target market	3.10	.99	A
15	Use direct selling strategy in marketing a product	3.07	.98	A
Grand mean and standard deviation		2.82	.91	A

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Table 3 presented the mean ratings of respondents on the ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria. It was revealed that all the fifteen items recorded mean scores ranging from 2.51-3.10 which were above the cut-off mark of 2.50, the standard deviation ranges from 0.49 – 1.08 indicating that the respondents were not far from each other in their opinions; thus indicating that all the items are ways TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing product marketing skills for self-reliance in Nigeria.

Discussion

The result of the study revealed that effective repositioning of TVET and entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria demands that Nigerian youths should be empowered with vocational skills, job creation abilities, and product marketing skills to enable them become self-reliant. Research question one revealed that all the 10 items identified are ways in which TVET and Entrepreneurship education can be repositioned in developing vocational skills for self-reliance in Nigeria. The items include: technical skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, personal skills, analytical ability, information technology skills, marketing skills, accounting skills, and critical thinking skills on the students will provide vocational skills that would ensure self-reliance. The findings are in line with the aims and objectives of TVET and Entrepreneurship education as enumerated by UNESCO (2009).

The study further showed that TVET and Entrepreneurship Education have positive relationship in the impartation of job creation skills and knowledge on the youths. This implies that vocational education students of Universities offering entrepreneurship education are being equip with the vocational

skills to identify business opportunities, generate ideas suitable to the opportunities identified, set appropriate businesses goals, make long and short term planning, take a decision and act upon it, organize resources for goal attainment, motivate workers, cope with uncertainty, analytical reasoning skills, and critical thinking ability for self-reliance and sustainable development in Nigeria. It was further revealed that TVET and Entrepreneurship education provide vocational education students with skills to implement plans for goal attainment, solve both routine and non-routine problems; evaluate all activities based on set goals, and make appropriate use of feedback for self-reliance and sustainable development in Nigeria. This finding is in line with Abanyam (2014) who justify the need for promoting entrepreneurship culture on the ground that youth in all societies have sterling qualities such as resourcefulness, initiative, drive, imagination, enthusiasm, zest, dash, ambition energy, boldness, audacity and courage which are all valuable traits for self-reliance.

This study also revealed that TVET and entrepreneurship education inculcate on the youths the ability to determine products that are needed in the market, budget and forecast sales, identify the right channel of product distribution, identify target market, create the right advertising medium and use direct selling strategy in marketing of products. The implication is that, the youths would be successful in marketing their products since they possessed the skills in marketing. It becomes obvious that any business established by these youths would succeed as a result of excellent marketing abilities imparted by TVET and entrepreneurship education for self-reliance, this findings is in line with the suggestion by Osuala (2004) that the few entrepreneurs who intend to establish

businesses, should possess creative thinking, communication, and marketing skills in order to remain in business.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to determine ways of repositioning TVET and Entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was therefore concluded that vocational skills, job creation abilities, and product marketing skills are needed for effective repositioning of TVET and entrepreneurship education for self-reliance in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Creation of entrepreneurship development support agencies to encourage business interaction between entrepreneurs and TVET students.
2. There should be increased partnership between industries and TVET institutions in order to promote work based interaction.
3. TVET Lecturers should make use of interactive teaching techniques such as business games, role playing and ICTs for instruction in entrepreneurship education.
4. Students should be guided into discovering knowledge by themselves to spur their creativity and problem solving skills.

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