

WELFARE CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISMS REQUIRED FOR ENHANCING TVET LECTURERS' JOB EFFECTIVENESS IN AN ERA OF ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES

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Abstract

The study investigated the welfare challenges and coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of economic. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The study adopted descriptive survey research design to achieve the goal of the study. The population of the study was 42 TVET lecturers comprising 29 male and 13 female in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike. The census sampling method was used to select the respondents for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was 0.82 using Cronbach' alpha. The data collected was analysed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions and the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the welfare challenges confronting TVET lecturers in Abia State were: poor work environment, inadequate instructional facilities, excess workload, poor remuneration, delay salary payment among others. Meanwhile, the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of economic uncertainty include: improve working condition for lecturers, wage increment, payment of outstanding arrears, training and retraining of lecturers to equip them with practical experience, recruitment of more lecturers to reduce workload and provision of adequate instructional facilities among others. It was recommended, among others that the Federal and State Government's should endeavour to realise that education is a determinant of a knowledge-based society and ensure adequate welfare of lecturers to enhance quality TVET programme for quality manpower development for economic transformation.

Keywords: Economic Uncertainty, Coping Mechanisms, and Welfare Challenges

Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a system of education that is of utmost value in the attainment of a sustainable development globally. It holds the key to pragmatic industrial growth and development of any economy. Therefore, nations worldwide especially the developing nations are now struggling painstakingly and assiduously in order

to solidly embrace and entrench the culture of viable industrial development through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Sylvester, 2021). TVET is responsible for the systematic and orderly transmission of knowledge, skills and values to foster a workforce that could enhance productivity and sustain competitiveness in the global economy (Sylvester, 2021).

Technical and Vocational Education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) in its education policy document can be described as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is a comprehensive term referring to the education process when it involves, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge relating to occupation in various sector of economic and social life. However, the objectives of TVET include: to meet education demands of the population, support professional, career development and social protection of individuals, feed economy with qualified staff competitive both on local and international labour market and to ensure a match between the fast changing labour market and TVET system, maintain competitiveness of employed be re-training and professional development, foster appropriation of the people's educational capacities with the new social-economic conditions to support self-employment and entrepreneurship among others; (Morebise, 2022).

The actualization of the objectives of TVET in tertiary institutions in Nigeria depends largely on the availability of adequate facilities and qualified and well-trained lecturers and provision of adequate welfare packages for enhancing the job effectiveness of the lecturers. In view of Asogwa et al. (2016), a lecturer can be seen as someone who is professionally trained to stimulate, guide, direct, instruct and encourage the learners towards acquisition of knowledge, skills for the evolvement of a change in behaviour. They are regarded as those who transfer knowledge, skills and attitudes to the learners with the sole aim of knowledge building and production. In the context of this study, TVET lecturers are individuals who had undergone approved professional training in TVET programmes at appropriate levels and are capable of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes to the learners in diverse TVET programmes. These lecturers face numerous challenges in the course of TVET delivery in tertiary institution among which include welfare challenges.

The concept welfare is a comprehensive approach which embraces the various benefits, services and facilities offered by the employers to employees with the aim of enriching the working and social life of workers and to satisfy their needs in order to enhance workers effectiveness (Mishra & Bhagat, 2017). TVET lecturers' welfare according to Sarma, (2019) are various types of activities undertaken for the economic, social and intellectual wellbeing of the lecturers. Similarly, Fozia and Sabir (2016) stated that lecturers welfare are the stimulus for greater action that serves as incentive in addition to wages such as provision of accommodation/housing allowance, provision of medical care, transport allowances, study leave bonus, Christmas bonus among others for enhancing the effectiveness of the lecturers towards ensuring that students acquire the relevant knowledge and skills needed for sustainable livelihood. Welfare provision is vital in determining the success of any school because it is one of the bases of motivation of lecturers.

Meanwhile, challenges in the opinion of Asogwa (2016) are those difficult situations which one encounters in the course of their service delivery or task execution. Welfare challenges according to Nnachi (2023), can be defined as unusually difficult situations which one encounters in the course of the execution of tasks or business activities. It is also seen as the hardship and difficulties faced by the lecturers in the course of instructional activities that lead to dissatisfaction and leaving the job which affected both male and female (gender) TVET lecturers. Gender is viewed as the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioural characteristics pertaining to and distinguishing between the feminine and

masculine (Ezeh, 2018). This implies that to enhance lecturers' job effectiveness irrespective of gender appropriate mechanisms are required to be adopted to ensure that lecturers are dedicated and committed to their instructional delivery.

Lecturers job effectiveness as described by Okogbaa and Igbogi, (2019) as the degree to which the lecturers are committed towards achieving the desired instructional and learning objectives of the students. It also referred to as the extent to which the lecturers ensure that the students acquired the requisite knowledge and skills needed for sustainable livelihood. However, coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness during economic uncertainties in view of Sunday and Ubah (2024) referred to the techniques that can be used by for improvement of lecturers job commitment and dedication to their instructional and research activities in schools. It implies providing comfortable teaching environment for lecturers' instructional roles in the face of economic uncertainties.

Economic uncertainties in the submission of Siavash (2023) referred to as situations in which the future economic environment is challenging to predict, and there is a high degree of risk or unknowns involved. Ebodili and Eze (2022) added that in economic uncertainties, to ensure job effectiveness of the lecturers the welfare challenges have to be addressed since the lecturers hold the key to functional instructional activities in schools and for students' acquisition of prerequisite knowledge and TVET skills required for self-reliance and sustainable employment. Nevertheless, it is on this backdrop that prompted this study to examine the welfare challenges and coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness during economic uncertainties in Abia State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of TVET lecturers' welfare cannot be underestimated because it serves as a motivation to lecturers which may be in form of provision of conducive teaching environment to the lecturers and adequate facilities, regular wage increment and bonus among others needed to enhance the job effectiveness of the lecturers in the period of economic uncertainties.

Despite the relevance of lecturers' welfare packages in Nigeria and particularly in Abia State, the lecturers' welfare are challenging issues leading to brain drain and untimely death of some lecturers due to health factors as a result of poor working condition and neglect of the lecturers in given adequate attention to their welfare needs even in the period of economic uncertainties. This could be seen through poor government attitude towards payment of lecturers outstanding arrears, lack of provision of accommodation allowance to the lecturers, lack of medical allowance, inadequate lecturers' remuneration, inadequate capacity building of lecturers and poor working condition of the lecturers among others.

Hence, lecturers job effectiveness requires their' welfare to be taken into consideration for lecturers' dedication and commitment in delivery of Technical and Vocational Education to the learners since no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers and lecturers will be more effective when he/she is happy. To this end, this study sought to examine the welfare challenges and coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' effectiveness during economic uncertainties in Abia State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study TVET lecturers' effectiveness during economic uncertainties in Abia State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' during economic uncertainties in Abia State
2. Find out coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' effectiveness in economic uncertainties in Abia State.

Research Questions

The research questions raised to guide the study include:

1. What are the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' during economic uncertainties in Abia State?
2. What are the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in economic uncertainties in Abia State?

Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers' on the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in Abia State

H0₂: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers' on the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in economic uncertainties in Abia State.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design to achieve the central aim of the study. This research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. In descriptive surveys, questionnaires or personal interviews are used to provide a relatively complete understanding of what is happening at a given period and time (Nworgu, 2018). The population of the study was 42 lecturers' comprising 29 male and 13 female TVET lecturers in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike. The entire population was adopted since it was manageable by the authors. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire validated by three experts. The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was 0.82 using Cronbach's Alpha Statistic. The data collected was analysed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the Mean cut-off mark of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while the Mean cut off below 2.50 was considered as disagreed. The hypotheses of no significant difference was upheld if the t-calculated value is less than t-table value and rejected on the otherwise.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' during economic uncertainty in Abia State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on the Welfare Challenges Confronted TVET Lecturers' in the era of Economic Uncertainties. N=42

S/N	ITEMS	X_m	SD_m	X_f	SD_f	$\bar{X}_{mf}$	S.D _{mf}	RMKS	
1.	Poor working environment of the lecturers	3.37	0.94	3.3	0	0.63	3.33	0.78	Agreed
2.	Inadequate instructional facilities to ease instructional activities	3.24	0.73	3.1	5	0.98	3.19	0.85	Agreed
3.	Excess workload of the lecturers	3.13	0.95	3.0	7	1.18	3.10	1.06	Agreed
4.	Delay payment of lecturers salaries	3.48	0.50	3.4	6	0.51	3.47	0.50	Agreed
5.	Poor lecturers remuneration	3.41	0.90	3.3	8	0.76	3.39	0.83	Agreed
6.	Inadequate incentive for lecturers	3.27	0.95	3.2	3	0.83	3.25	0.89	Agreed

7.	Lack of medical allowance for improve lecturers health condition	3.34	1.00	3.3	0	0.75	3.32	0.87	Agreed
8.	Teaching of large class	3.51	0.68	3.4	6	0.77	3.48	0.72	Agreed
9.	Poor staff development programme	3.44	0.90	3.3	8	0.76	3.41	0.83	Agreed
10.	Insecurity	3.31	0.96	3.2	3	0.92	3.27	0.94	Agreed
				3.2					
	Cluster Mean	3.35	0.85	9	0.80	3.32	0.83	Agreed	

Keys: X_m =mean of male lecturers, SD_m =standard deviation of male lecturers, X_f =mean of female lecturers, SD_f =standard deviation of female lecturers, $\bar{X}_{mf}$ = grand mean of male and female lecturers, S.D = grand standard deviation of male and female lecturers, Rmks.= Remarks.

Table 1 revealed that the Mean responses of the respondents ranged from 3.10 to 3.48 which are all above the 2.50 mean acceptable benchmark for the study. This implied that the 10 identified items are the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' during economic uncertainties in Abia State. The standard deviation values of the 10 items in the table ranged from 0.50 to 1.06 and cluster mean and standard deviation of 3.32 and 0.83 respectively. This indicated that the responses of the male and female lecturers were close to one another and to the mean.

Hypothesis One

H0₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in Abia State.

Table 2:t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Male and Female TVET Lecturers on the Welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in an era of economic uncertainties.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Male	29	3.35	0.85	40	0.22	2.01	NS
Female	13	3.29	0.80				

Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.22 while the t- critical value is 2.01 at 0.05 level of significant and at 40 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in Abia State.

Research Question 2: What are the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in economic uncertainties in Abia State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on the Coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET Lecturers' Job Effectiveness in Economic Uncertainties.

N=42								
S/N	ITEMS	X_m	SD_m	X_f	SD_f	$\bar{X}_{mf}$	S.D _{mf}	RMKS
1.	Improve working condition for lecturers to enhance their commitment	3.55	0.82	3.53	0.66	3.54	0.74	Agreed
2.	Wage increment for lecturers to make them more active in their instructional tasks	3.68	0.71	3.61	0.50	3.64	0.60	Agreed
3.	Payment of outstanding arrears as motivation to enhance lecturers their effectiveness	3.37	0.94	3.3	0.85	3.33	0.89	Agreed
4.	Training and retraining of lecturers to equip them with practical experience for effective teaching and learning	3.51	0.82	3.46	0.66	3.48	0.74	Agreed
5.	Recruitment of more lecturers to reduce workload	3.58	0.77	3.53	0.77	3.55	0.77	Agreed
6.	Provision of adequate instructional facilities to ease instructional activities	3.48	0.87	3.38	0.65	3.43	0.76	Agreed
7.	Provision of adequate motivation packages to lecturers for enhancing their effectiveness	3.62	0.77	3.61	0.65	3.61	0.71	Agreed
8.	Provision of medical allowance for improve lecturers health condition to enhance their effectiveness	3.65	0.55	3.61	0.65	3.63	0.60	Agreed
9.	Prompt payment of lecturers salary enhance their commitment	3.72	0.64	3.69	0.48	3.70	0.56	Agreed
10.	Payment of 13 th month as bonus to lecturers to enhance their effectiveness	3.58	0.68	3.58	0.77	3.58	0.72	Agreed
11.	Provision of lecturers with accommodation/housing allowance	3.44	0.82	3.38	1.04	3.41	0.93	Agreed
Cluster Mean		3.56	0.76	3.51	0.69	3.53	0.73	Agreed

Keys: X_m =mean of male lecturers, SD_m =standard deviation of male lecturers, X_f =mean of female lecturers,, SD_f =standard deviation of female lecturers, $\bar{X}_{mf}$ = grand mean of male and female lecturers, S.D = grand standard deviation of male and female lecturers, Rmks.= Remarks

Table 3 revealed that the mean ratings of the respondents ranged from 3.41 to 3.70 which are all above the 2.50 mean acceptable benchmark for the study. This implied that the 11 identified items are the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' effectiveness in economic uncertainties in Abia State. The standard deviation values of the 11 items in the table ranged from 0.56 to 0.93 and cluster Mean and Standard Deviation of 3.53

and 0.73 respectively. This indicated that the responses of the male and female lecturers were close to one another and to the mean.

Hypothesis Two

H0₂: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET Lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of economic uncertainties.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Male and Female TVET Lecturers' on the Coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in economic uncertainties.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	DF	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Male	29	3.56	0.76	40	0.21	2.01	Not Significant
Female	13	3.51	0.69				

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.21 while the t- critical value is 2.01 at 0.05 level of significant and at 40 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers' on the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of economic uncertainties.

Discussions

From the findings of the study on research question one, it was revealed that the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in an era of economic uncertainties include: poor working environment of the lecturers, inadequate instructional facilities to ease instructional activities, excess workload of the lecturers, delay payment of lecturers' salaries, poor lecturers remuneration, inadequate incentive for lecturers, lack of medical allowance for improve lecturers health condition, teaching of large class, poor staff development programme and insecurity. The corresponding hypothesis tested indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers' on the welfare challenges confronted TVET lecturers' in Abia State. This finding relates with the study of Nnachi (2023) who maintained that welfare challenges encounter by lecturers were insecurity, poor work load and environment and high cost of transportation among others.

The findings of the study on research question two revealed that the coping mechanisms required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of economic uncertainties include: Improve working condition for lecturers to enhance their commitment, wage increment for lecturers to make them more active in their instructional tasks, payment of outstanding arrears as motivation to enhance lecturers their effectiveness, training and retraining of lecturers to equip them with practical experience for effective teaching and learning, recruitment of more lecturers to reduce workload, provision of adequate instructional facilities to ease instructional activities, provision of adequate motivation packages to lecturers for enhancing their effectiveness, provision of medical allowance for improve lecturers health condition to enhance their effectiveness, prompt payment of lecturers salary enhance their commitment, payment of 13th month as bonus to lecturers to enhance their effectiveness, provision of lecturers with accommodation/housing allowance. Also, the corresponding null hypothesis tested indicated that there is no significant difference between the Mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers' on the coping mechanisms

required for enhancing TVET lecturers' job effectiveness in an era of uncertainties. This finding is in harmony with the study of Sylvester (2021) who found out that welfare strategies for TVET are as a result of adequate facilities and laboratory equipment, improve salary scale for lecturers, payment of leave study leave and other bonuses and provision of security among others.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that TVET holds the key to pragmatic industrial growth and development of any economy and attainment of a robust development through TVET required lecturers job effectiveness in delivery of the TVET programmes but unfortunately the lecturers are confronted with welfare challenges such as poor working environment of the lecturers, inadequate instructional facilities to ease instructional activities, excess workload of the lecturers, delay payment of lecturers' salaries, poor lecturers remuneration, inadequate incentive for lecturers, lack of medical allowance for improve lecturers health condition, teaching of large class, poor staff development programme and insecurity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal Government in general and Abia State Government in particular should endeavour to take the welfare of the lecturers as a priority to ensure lecturers are provided with adequate welfare packages ranging from increment of salary, payment of outstanding, medical and housing allowances among others as mechanisms for enhancing TVET lecturers job effectiveness in
2. an era of economic uncertainties.
3. There is also the need for Federal in general and Abia State Government in particular to ensure that schools are provided with infrastructural and instructional facilities as well as adequate security to make the working environment conducive for enhancing TVET lecturers job effectiveness.

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