



RELEVANCE OF TECHNICAL & VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ON EMPLOYABILITY FACTOR IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

A major challenge to secure a job in Nigeria could be attributed to lack of employable skills. One of the employable skills is technical competence which is based on training obtained either in technical oriented outfit or vocational training institute. This work is anchored to studying the relevance of Technical & Vocational Education Training on employability in Nigeria. This study is quantitative and data based which was gathered through questionnaires administered to groups of people majorly graduates, which were former students who have graduated for about 5 to 15 years with technical and vocational education training (TVET) backgrounds. From the study, the following were found out: that TVET skill has significant effect on the employability in Nigeria. However, there could be additional skill acquisition outside school to further enhance employability of youths. Younger generations were encouraged to acquire automations skills for job placements. TVET training will reduce unemployment if truly harnessed as veritable tool for youth development. It then recommends that private and TVET institutions should collaborate for the enhancement of technical and vocational education training.

Keywords: Technical Competence, TVET, automation skill

Introduction

The population of Nigeria is increasing with the attendant increase in unemployment rate in the country. There are insinuations that there is increasing number of youths and graduates which are unemployable. This could be attributed to lack of requisite skills (Chinedu and Olabiyi, 2015) needed in industries or work environment among other factors. There are several employability factors which include communication skills, ICT skills, technical skills which are among other factors the employers of labour look out for during the search for workers (Ismail and Mohammed, 2015). There is great importance of employability skill and competence among the work force in which the following researchers: Candy and Crebert, (1991); Billing, (2003); Crebert et al., (2004); Hewitt, 2005; and Dunne and Rowlins, (2000) corroborated on getting a job and staying on the job (Ismail and Mohammed, 2015).

Skills for Employment

In order to get employment and to stay on job, there are worthwhile skills that are needed for achieving that. Olaitan and Ike (2015) described employability skills when quoting Robinson (2000) as the basic skills or general work skills of importance for being employed, keeping and staying well on the job. The skills include computer literacy, individual competence, communication skills among others. Oresanya et al (2014) enumerated the following employability skills in their work: communication skills, analytical/reasoning skills, computer/technical literacy, interpersonal among others.

Whereas technical skills are job specific related skills needed to do a specified job expressed by Robinson (2000). Technical skills involve specialized knowledge, analyzing ability within a specialty and faculty in the use of tools and techniques of the specified discipline. Technical skills are important for reasons such as efficiency, boost confidence, competence to perform their daily assignment to the best of their abilities. The importance of technical

skill was mellowed down by (Inti et al, 2016) that the needed skill in work force is generic skills for competence in Nigeria.

Relevance of Technical and Vocational Education Skills

TVET is viewed by UNESCO as learning geared towards developing skills in the practice of a certain vocation, equally as learning to prepare students for job entrance in labour market (Ogbunaya and Udoudo, 2015; Okolocha, 2012). TVET programme provides participants with skills, knowledge and aptitude that enable them to involve in creative work, with good adaptation to ever changing labour markets and economies.

In a report, The Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) describes TVET as a system of general education involving the acquisition of practical skills, mindset, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations various sectors of economy. The objective of TVET is to develop human capital with sound technical knowledge and skills to fill the gap in labour market both now and in the future (Inti et al, 2016). One of the reasons for high rate of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria is because TVET is not given the needed attention it deserves (Okafor, 2011). There is a gap between Dutch experience and Nigeria experience regarding the systems of education in the two nations; the Dutch school system pays attention to high standard in Mathematics and provision of technical education at age 14-16 years, elaborate vocational education at age 16 and above however, this is not obtainable in Nigeria. The objective of the study is to determine the relevance of Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) as a factor in the employability in Nigeria and how this affects the rate of unemployment.

TVET was classified into three broad categories which are formal, non-formal and informal TVET. Formal TVET is obtained in an organized vocational education programmes, obtained at an approved public or private educational or training institution and it is structured in a curriculum framework with defined learning objectives within a specified learning time such that it constitutes a continuous step where one level leads to the next and finally leads to certification. Non-formal TVET is the type of vocational education and training which takes place outside the formal school system either on a regular or intermittent basis. It can be on a short term which makes it advantageous in its own right. Informal TVET is one that is provided by craftsmen of different trades in the informal sector of the economy. It is often referred to as vocational training or experience based learning and is usually carried out in form of apprenticeship system. Informal TVET is characterized by lack of curriculum or structure as there is no well-designed scheme and the method of training is not always sequential (Ogbunaya and Udoudo, 2015).

Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey research to know the level of relevance of technical skills in employability in Nigeria. The study was carried out on some former students of TVET programmes. A structured questionnaire sectioned into five comprising profile information, educational information, employment history, interactions with others and experience on the job. There are twenty nine (29) questions in all. The questionnaire was developed on goggle form which was sent to former students social groups and their responses were harvested from the responses of the developed goggle form. The method of data analysis was based on simple proportions, ratios and percentages.

Results and Discussion

The estimated number of respondent were about 180 but only 144 respondents were able to sent the responses which constitute about 80% of the expected total. Table 1 contains respondents' profiles. Table 2 provides the educational information of the respondents. Table 3 depicts the employment history of the respondents while Table 4 gives brief on the interaction with colleagues and Table 5 provides insight into the experience on the job of the respondents.

Table 1 - Profile information

S/No.	Description	No	%
1.	Age bracket		
	(i) 20-25	64	44.4
	(ii) 26-30	34	23.6
	(iii) Above 30	46	31.9
2.	Gender		
	(i) Male	101	70.1
	(ii) Female	43	29.9

The results obtained in Table 1 shows that respondents are in the youth age bracket which falls within about 25% of Nigeria population (NBS, 2017). There is a great need for these youths to be functionally engaged in a productive way for national economic development. The gender of the respondents which is female is about 30% of the total respondents which indicate good improvement in female participation in science and technology.

According to the report of National Bureau of Statistics (2017) new job opportunities would be needed to meet up with high number of youths. The youthful age of below 30 years termed ‘youth budge’ should be met with right policies, for example creating more jobs should be taken with utmost interest. Therefore with this result it will not be out of place if there is adequate and functional TVET programme for youths.

Table 2 - Educational information

S/No.	Description	No	%
3.	Your level of education		
	(i) ND	26	13.9
	(ii) HND	94	65.3
	(iii) BSc	21	14.6
	(iv) non formal education	9	6.3
4.	Educational training		
	(i) Technical Training school	4	2.8
	(ii) Monotechnic/polytechnic	91	63.2
	(iii) University	48	33.3
	(iv) other Technical Training educational institution	1	0.7
5.	What is your field of study?		
	(i) Science	23	16.0
	(ii) Commercial	20	13.9
	(iii) engineering/technical	101	70.1
	(iv) Art	-	
6.	Is the curriculum of your educational training sufficient?		
	(i) Yes	75	52.1
	(ii) No	69	47.9
7.	In which area can the curriculum delivery in Technical & Vocational Education be improved?		
	(i) Skills impartation	96	66.7
	(ii) Equipment acquisition	48	33.3
8.	If you have an opportunity to influence education what would you do differently?		
	(i) More investment on equipment for training	42	29.2

	(ii) Encourage more technical education	25	17.4
	(iii) Encourage younger generation to go for more technical and vocation training	76	52.8
	(iv) Encourage younger generation to go for less technical and vocation training	1	0.7

The educational status of the respondents is given in the above table which starts with educational attainment to influence of educational policy related to TVET. The highest number of the respondents have higher National Diploma (HND) and the lowest having non-formal education and about 15% of the respondents have university education of which they would have their background in TVET. The training ground of more than 65% respondents is either technical training school or monotech/polytechnic. More than 75% have science/engineering/technical training which are desired in the 21st century global development. About 50% respondents believed that TVET curriculum is sufficient in itself while other 50 differs. There is a need for proper review of the curriculum to meet the yearning of the global demand. Equally more than 50% of respondents advocated for youth to do more of TVET related training, all these submission pointed to the fact imperatives of TVET on employability.

Table 3 - Employment history

S/No.	Description	No	%
9.	Employment search		
	(i) under a year	72	50.0
	(ii) more than a year	40	27.8
	(iii) above 2 years	32	22.2
10.	On job training		
	(i) Technical training	70	48.6
	(i) Skill training	45	31.3
	(ii) managerial training	17	11.8
	(iii) other type	12	8.3

The above table shows the employment history of the respondents, 50% got a job within a year of the completion of their TVET programme and equally before the expiration of three years all were engaged in one employment or the other. There was additional training on the job which is important to improve competence, more than 45% got on the job training which may be soft skill that would improve their expertise of competitiveness for leadership capability.

Table 4 - Interactions With others

S/No.	Description	No	%
11.	Do you think skill acquisition improve their employability?		
	(i) Yes	138	95.8
	(ii) No	6	4.2
12.	Do you think skill acquisition help their performance?		
	(i) Yes	143	99.3
	(ii) No	1	0.7

Table 4 gives the results from respondents' interaction with others such as colleagues which shows that the skills acquired by them improved their employability and equally enhances their performance on the job.

Table 5 - Experience on the Job

S/No.	Description	No	%
13.	Your work experience		



	(i) below 2 years	51	35.4
	(ii) above 2 years	30	20.8
	(iii) below 10 years	30	20.8
	(iv) above 10 years	33	22.9
14.	Which area do you find challenging?		
	(i) Communication/reporting	50	34.7
	(ii) Technical	35	24.3
	(iii) Managerial	59	41.0
15.	Your area of competence		
	(i) Communication/reporting	34	23.6
	(ii) Technical	82	56.9
	(iii) Managerial	28	19.4
16.	In which area do you have an edge?		
	(i) Communication/reporting	43	29.9
	(ii) Technical	72	50.0
	(iii) Managerial	29	20.1
17.	Did you obtain additional skills training after school?		
	(i) Yes	106	73.6
	(ii) No	38	26.4
18.	If yes, is it so necessary?		
	(i) Yes	96	90.6
	(ii) No	10	9.4
19.	Are you employed in the same field of your study?		
	(i) Yes	79	54.9
	(ii) No	65	45.1
20.	If 'No' why?		
	(i) Based on Interest	15	23.1
	(ii) Based on circumstances	50	76.9
21.	In which area would you have encouraged the younger generation to have skill training/development		
	(i) Fabrication	11	7.6
	(ii) Programming	48	33.3
	(iii) Automation	59	41.0
	(iv) Others	26	18.1
22.	What kind of outfit would you have encouraged skill training		
	(i) Formal outfit	93	64.6
	(ii) Non formal outfit	34	23.6
	(iii) Informal outfit	17	11.8
23.	Has your TVET education improve your chance of being employed?		
	(i) Yes	110	76.4
	(ii) No	34	23.4
24.	What is the effect of your educational training on your job performance?		
	(i) Low	40	27.8
	(ii) High	104	72.2
25.	In your opinion, what do you think is the rate of unemployment in Nigeria?		
	(i) Low	15	10.4
	(ii) High	129	89.6
26.	In your opinion what could reduce the rate of unemployment in Nigeria		

	(i) <i>Technical Skills</i>	91	63.2
	(ii) <i>Political will on the part of the Government</i>	53	36.8
27.	Which sector of economy exploit/capitalize on TVET for employment		
	(i) <i>Public</i>	38	29.5
	(ii) <i>Private</i>	91	70.5
28.	What is your current employment status?		
	(i) <i>Employed</i>	82	56.9
	(ii) <i>Self employed</i>	31	21.5
	(iii) <i>Entrepreneur</i>	31	21.5
29.	What is the major factor for your status (above)?		
	(i) <i>Skills</i>	104	72.2
	(ii) <i>Circumstances</i>	40	27.8

The interpretation from Table 5 on the job experience of the respondents indicates 50% respondents having more than 3 years experience while below 50% have between 5-15 years experience. The most challenging task is in the area of communication/report writing and managerial assignments which may be in low supply in TVET education and this was discussed by Oresanya et al (2000) while above 50% are comfortable in technical assignment where they excel. High percentage of the respondents obtained additional skill after school which may not be limited to only technical in nature which they asserted that it is of imperative to get that done.

There are about 50 respondents that are not employed in the fields of their training but do what they do based on the circumstances they find themselves this is about 34% of the total respondents.

On the need to enhance the technical skills of youths, 41% of the respondents supported skill in automation which shows that the curriculum of TVET needs to be upgraded to include programming and automation. In this study only 8% supported fabrications which is an old way of doing things technically. The best training outfit advised by respondents is a formal type, for example monotechnic/polytechnics which further supported curriculum upgrade.

High percentage of the respondents indicated that their TVET education gave them better chance of getting employed which equally enhanced their performance on the job. From the table, it shows that the sector that exploits more on TVET for employment is private sectors, therefore there is need to have a good collaboration between the private sectors and TVET educational institutions. It is equally asserted from the study that about 57% of respondents are employed, 44% self employed and entrepreneurs.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The data obtained from the administered questionnaires were analyzed and can then be concluded that:

- (i) Technical and vocational education training programme is highly relevant in employment in Nigeria.
- (ii) TVET can afford the participants the opportunity of being self-employed. With the rate of unemployment, TVET programmes should be developed to achieve this category so as to attain self reliance in the country. The following Recommendations ensue:
 - (i) TVET programmes should be made functional by providing the needed funds and competent and qualified instructors should be saddled with training responsibilities.
 - (ii) Private sectors should be encouraged to support the implementation of TVET policy by setting aside funds for this purpose.

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