

Technical Vocational Education and Training and Its Application in Addressing Insecurity Challenges in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

TVET is the education that helps prepare learners for future endeavour. It serves as pathway for lifting individuals out of poverty, thereby diminishing social vices among the youth and addressing insecurity challenges in Nigeria. In light of the objectives of TVET within the Nigerian context, this paper aims to identify and analyse various strategies for utilizing TVET to mitigate insecurity. The discussion highlights the importance of TVET and factors such as adequate funding, youth entrepreneurship engagement, challenges related to financial instability and educational dropouts, support for the physically disabled, marginalized populations, and aged or retired individuals, all of whom must be equipped with the essential skills for self-reliance. The paper asserts that the inclusion and consistent implementation of TVET initiatives could substantially reduce poverty, inequality, and insecurity in Nigeria. Among its recommendations, the paper advocates for diverse TVET delivery methods to be made accessible to all Nigerians, thereby providing them with the vital skills necessary for self-sustenance.

Keywords: Education, TVET, Insecurity, Challenges.

Introduction

Insecurity constitutes a paramount challenge in Nigeria, manifesting through various phenomena including banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, and intercommunal conflicts (Onime, 2018). These security issues significantly disrupt societal stability and impede the country's socio-economic progress. A notable contributing factor to this pervasive insecurity is the elevated youth unemployment rate coupled with the deficiency of employable skills within the young demographic, which frequently compels many to engage in criminal behaviours as survival strategies (Achumba & Ighomereho, 2018). Within the framework of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), there exists a viable intervention that endows youth with practical

skills, enhances self-sufficiency, and encourages entrepreneurial initiatives (Uwameiye, 2017; NBTE, 2018). Internationally recognized for its capacity to generate employment and alleviate poverty, TVET holds considerable promise for mitigating insecurity by offering marginalized groups constructive alternatives to criminal activity and social disorder (UNESCO, 2016; Dube & Mlotshwa, 2018). Nonetheless, there is a paucity of empirical research assessing the efficacy of TVET programs in Nigeria as instruments for addressing security challenges. This study seeks to critically assess the function of TVET in confronting insecurity within Nigeria, emphasizing its strategic utilization for youth empowerment, crime diminution,

and the advancement of sustainable development.

Review of Literature

Empirical studies have demonstrated how TVET interventions can lead to a measurable decline in crime and insecurity in Nigerian communities. According to Okoli and Chukwuma (2022), high youth unemployment in Nigeria is a major driver of insecurity as idle youths are easily recruited into criminal and insurgent activities. TVET programs provide practical skills tailored to market needs that enhance employability and foster entrepreneurship among youths. The authors contend that the successful execution of TVET programs can offer alternative employment opportunities to at-risk groups, thereby diminishing their motivation to participate in activities associated with insecurity. However, challenges such as inadequate facilities, poor funding, and outdated curricula limit TVET's full potential in Nigeria (Okoli & Chukwuma, 2022). Eze and Amadi (2023) carried out a study in Northern Nigeria, where insecurity due to banditry and insurgency is prevalent, and found that communities with access to well-structured TVET centres experienced lower rates of youth involvement in criminal activities. Their research emphasized that TVET programs provide learners with not only market-relevant competencies but also cultivate discipline and constructive social norms, thereby promoting social cohesion. The authors note that scaling up access to quality vocational training is essential to addressing the socio-economic underpinnings of insecurity (Eze & Amadi, 2023).

Despite the Nigerian government's recognition of TVET's potential in combating insecurity, policy inconsistencies and poor coordination among agencies hinder its success (Nwankwo and Olaleye (2021). The authors address the deficiencies in incorporating TVET into the overarching national security frameworks and highlight the necessity for policy reforms that prioritize holistic skills development aligned

with regional economic requirements. They recommend partnerships with private sector stakeholders to improve curriculum relevance and increase employment outcomes, thereby maximizing TVET's contribution to national security (Nwankwo & Olaleye, 2021).

Role of Technical Vocational Education and Training in National Development

The focus of TVET is centred on the provision of requisite skills to all interested persons without discrimination. Empirical facts have shown that provision of skills through TVET brings additional benefit to people and thus enhance their employability status. Thus, Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) conducted a research and found that TVET can equip people with skills for job creation and sustainable development of the economy. According to Oladejo (2019), TVET has great prospects for tackling poverty, enhancing employability through skill acquisition and boosting sustainable development. The role of inclusive TVET in equipping individuals with requisite skills that could enable them to effectively participate in social, economic and technology innovation processes cannot be neglected and this can go a long way reducing insecurity in Nigeria. TVET has been observed as one of the ways to achieve participation and inclusion of most Nigerians in legal and meaningful profit oriented activities to earn their living, eradicate poverty, combat insecurity and reduce social vices. Igniting avenues for creating jobs, generating and sustaining wealth in the nation through inclusive TVET could lead many people out of poverty and thereby reduce social vices and insecurity in Nigeria. It therefore becomes imperative to discuss feasible options of implementing inclusive TVET with a view to reduce or eliminate insecurity in Nigeria.

Importance of Technical Vocational Education and Training

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is essential for imparting

practical competencies that enhance individuals' employability and contribute to the economic advancement of a nation. It enhances workforce productivity, fosters entrepreneurship, and addresses the skills mismatch in labour markets (ILO, 2022). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) in her national policy on education advocated for the incorporation of TVET within the broader educational framework to foster self-sufficiency and continuous learning. By harmonizing TVET initiatives with the country's development objectives, the FRN guaranteed that the educational system actively supports poverty alleviation and industrial growth. Consequently, TVET functions as a pivotal instrument for achieving sustainable development and addressing security challenges, as underscored in contemporary global frameworks and domestic educational strategies. The FRN (2013) spelt out the aims of technical and vocational education in Nigeria as follows:

1. Provide trained manpower in the Applied Sciences, Technology and Business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels.
2. Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and
3. Give training and impart the necessary skills to individual for self-reliance economically.

The aforementioned three overarching frameworks illustrate the significance of TVET in several key domains, including:

- Economic empowerment and alleviation of poverty
- Fostering social inclusivity and advancing gender equality
- Encouragement of green skills and the creation of green employment opportunities
- Infrastructure development
- Enhancement of productivity
- Enhancement of regional connectivity and trade
- Sustainable urban development and transportation.

How to Use Technical, Vocational Education and Training to Fight Insecurity

To reduce the prevailing insecurity in the country TVET can be provided through the following recommended approaches:

1. Provision of Adequate Funding:

Adequate funding must be secured to ensure continual review, upgrading, and monitoring of the TVET curricula, materials, and equipment, so they remain current with technological advancements and learning methodologies. This financial support could originate from various sources, including government funding, international donors, NGOs, churches, parents, and alumni, to promote the establishment and sustainability of TVET programs aimed at reducing poverty and insecurity within the nation.

2. Aged and Retired:

The attention of TVET should also be moved towards retirees to bolster their skill sets, thereby contributing to economic expansion and development as some of these retirees may have been retired but not tired. It is essential to provide a variety of TVET options that facilitate their entry into or advancement within their selected skill-related professions. For retirees, the integration of work experience with skill training, or the acquisition of general occupational competencies through TVET, can serve as a motivational endeavour that engages them actively and enhances national economic activities. Accessibility to TVET programs should be offered at minimal costs for retirees. Furthermore, as policy frameworks significantly impact the transition from TVET programs to remunerative employment or established enterprises, the effective execution of thoughtfully constructed TVET policies could lead to seamless

transitions into meaningful and lucrative endeavours, potentially mitigating issues of unemployment, poverty, and insecurity. In Nigeria, policymakers ought to reassess TVET initiatives in light of specific conditions that might enhance participation in such programs, including the establishment of incentives for participants and employers, the implementation of employment insertion programs (Adebayo, 2013), simplifying entry requirements, ensuring ease of access, minimizing or eliminating cost barriers, providing initial capital and resources, effective training for instructors, continuous evaluation and regular updates to the TVET programs, revitalization of legacy industries, sufficient remuneration for instructors, and facilitating smooth transitions to work placements.

3. **Youth Entrepreneurship**

Engagement: To alleviate the prevailing insecurity in the nation, it is essential to provide inclusive TVET to the specified groups through the recommended methods. TVET is anticipated to empower the youth to take on entrepreneurial roles. Given the current economic downturn and the prevailing insecurity in the country, TVET can serve as a catalyst for youth integration into the labour market, thereby reducing poverty, insecurity, making their mind to be busy and not idle. Enhancing the productive capacities of these young individuals through TVET is crucial, as practical, hands-on training remains unparalleled in its effectiveness. Ozoigbo (2019) argued that a significant portion of violent incidents threatening national security in Nigeria can be attributed to youth unemployment. The authors assert that some unemployed youths have resorted to becoming suicide

bombers, vandals, terrorists, kidnappers, assassins, militants, and armed robbers, thus causing substantial revenue losses, impeding national development, and perpetuating insecurity. The government are therefore enjoined to assist parents in enrolling the youths and the less privileged into the various TVET centres across the country and these centres should ensure accessibility to TVET programs for all interested youth and make participation compulsory for all unemployed youth in their respective states

4. **The Physically Disabled:**

Individuals with physical disabilities ought to be afforded opportunities to engage in TVET programs, as asserted by Hirvonen (2010), who identified skill development as crucial for enabling individuals with disabilities to participate in the labour market. When provided with pathways to acquire essential skills, individuals with physical challenges can significantly contribute to the nation's economic growth. The physically challenged deserve the right to good living. Provision of materials and infrastructures that support the teaching and learning of these physically challenged in class. Allowing them to gain access to, make use of TVET facilities and equipment in the various centres. This will enable full participation of physically challenged individuals in TVET programs, thereby enhancing their contributions to the nation's economic advancement.

5. **The Marginalized Population/Push-Over:**

All individuals, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, or geographical location, should be afforded equal access to TVET opportunities. TVET's primary objective is to equip individuals with

the necessary skills for gaining employment, either through starting their own businesses or securing jobs that effectively utilize the competencies developed through this training. It is crucial to ensure that marginalized communities, including those hindered by geographical barriers or poor working conditions, have access to TVET programs, facilitating their participation in income-generating activities. Moreover, it is vital to provide equitable opportunities to both men and women in the context of TVET. In Nigeria, certain trades are traditionally associated with specific genders, such as carpentry and auto mechanics being labelled as masculine, while catering is often considered feminine. Therefore, it is essential to motivate, support, and encourage marginalized individuals in their selected TVET pathways, irrespective of gender, by ensuring that the necessary resources and facilities are available for skill acquisition and the establishment of their respective trades.

6. **Locate Real Locals:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) initiatives ought to be more accessible to rural populations to mitigate excessive urban migration driven by employment prospects. According to Tiarniyu and Babalola (2013), a significant barrier to socio-economic progress in Nigeria is the pervasive issue of rural poverty. By implementing TVET programs within rural areas, it is possible to provide essential skills aligned with the labour market's demands, thereby facilitating a successful transition to employment opportunities for rural residents. The design of these TVET programs should strategically support the informal economic activities prevalent among rural communities, ultimately enhancing their income-

generating prospects. This approach should be tailored to reflect the specific trades or skills that characterize each distinct region.

7. **Financial Bankruptcy/Educational Drop-outs:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs should serve as an essential catalyst for re-engaging those that lack financial support or school dropouts. These programs ought to be implemented to strengthen the individual capabilities of those who have left the educational system. Addressing issues such as youth delinquency and crime in Nigeria can be effectively achieved by providing school dropouts with pertinent TVET opportunities that foster their productivity. If these options are seamlessly integrated into the fundamental education curricula and executed efficiently, they can empower dropouts towards self-sufficiency. Moreover, TVET initiatives should be made compulsory and free of charge for those who have exited formal schooling. It is crucial to take into account the unique characteristics of each individual and their preferred vocational paths to avoid producing low-quality outcomes.

Conclusion

This paper asserts that addressing insecurity in Nigeria necessitates the reinforcement and efficient execution of TVET programs and policies through the proposed strategies. It posits that enhancing the productive capabilities of the populace could significantly mitigate insecurity. Consequently, the paper advocates for the promotion of inclusive TVET initiatives throughout the nation, as well as ensuring the availability of diverse delivery methods for TVET to all Nigerians. This approach aims to furnish individuals with essential skills that foster self-sufficiency, which in turn is intended to bolster wealth generation and

alleviate poverty, inequality, and insecurity in Nigeria.

Suggestions

Certainly, from the disciplinary perspective of educational development and security studies, the following five suggestions pertain to the utilization of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a strategic intervention to mitigate insecurity challenges in Nigeria:

1. **Strengthening Skill Acquisition Programs:** There is a need to expand and enhance TVET initiatives aimed at providing youths with practical and market-relevant competencies. This approach is intended to improve employment prospects and concurrently diminish their susceptibility to recruitment by illicit or armed groups.
2. **Encouraging Multi-Sectoral Collaboration:** It is imperative to promote synergistic partnerships involving government bodies, private sector stakeholders, and development organizations. Such collaborations should focus on the financing and support of TVET institutions to ensure that the training curricula are aligned with labour market demands and contribute to economic empowerment.
3. **Implementing Community-Centric TVET Models:** Localized TVET

programs should be established in regions characterized by heightened insecurity. Engaging youths within their native communities through these initiatives can foster social cohesion and act as a deterrent against participation in violent conduct.

4. **Integrating Socio-Civic Competencies into TVET Curricula:** The incorporation of modules related to conflict resolution, peacebuilding education, and leadership development within TVET frameworks is crucial. This integration aims to nurture responsible citizenship and reinforce constructive social values among trainees.
5. **Establishing Policy Frameworks and Monitoring Mechanisms:** Formulating and enforcing policies that allocate adequate resources to TVET programs in insecurity-prone areas is essential. Additionally, instituting continuous monitoring and evaluation processes will facilitate the assessment of TVET's effectiveness in alleviating insecurity within the Nigerian context. Translated into English, the above recommendations serve as a coherent and academically rigorous blueprint for leveraging TVET to address security challenges in Nigeria.

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