

POVERTY ERADICATION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA: THE NEED FOR INTERVENTION THROUGH TVET

Williams Kennedy George;

Samuel Amos Ikpe
Department of Technical Education
Akwa Ibom State College of Education,
Afaha Nsit, Nigeria

AND

Mfon Okon Ekong, Ph.D
Department of Home Economics
Akwa Ibom State College of Education,
Afaha Nsit

ABSTRACT

One of the most difficult challenges facing developing countries such as Nigeria is how to tackle poverty. The main reasons for increasing levels of poverty in Nigeria are traced to a lack of skilled manpower. Despite government programmes to eradicate poverty, Nigeria is regarded as a home to the largest number of multidimensional poor in the world. It is therefore imperative to assess educational mechanisms for the eradication of poverty in Nigeria. Hence, this paper highlights poverty eradication programmes, challenges, and the roles of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) towards poverty eradication in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that TVET has great potential for tackling poverty through the enhancement of employability skills acquisition as well as boosting socio-economic development. Unfortunately, the study showed that TVET is facing challenges due to inadequate resources such as workshops, libraries, and classrooms; tertiary institutions and industry collaboration for skills training; inadequate in-service training; seminars and conferences; and TVET educators' involvement in all poverty eradication policy formulation to facilitate the effectiveness of policy implementation. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the federal, state, and NGO governments should provide adequate infrastructure and equipment, such as adequate workshops, libraries, and classrooms; regular recruitment of qualified and experienced TVET personnel; and the organization of in-service training, seminars, and conferences to sensitize and train the TVET educators on the potential of TVET for poverty eradication in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: TVET, Poverty Eradication, Challenges, Nigeria.

Introduction

Every human being needs a range of basic necessities for daily life, such as food, water, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. According to Buba and Ibrahim (2016), the economic condition of lacking these essential goods and services to meet the basic needs of life has become the primary reason nations embark on policies and programmes to reduce

scarcity of basic necessities and promote socioeconomic development. Addae (2014), Shah (2016), Barrientos and Hulme (2016), and the World Bank (2019) described the economic condition of lack of access to social protection and gender inequality, low levels of income, education, and health as poverty. While poverty is universal, it is acknowledged as a major global socio-economic development challenge. In African countries, according to Uma and Eboh (2013), poverty is massive, pervasive, and chronic, engulfing a large proportion of society. Duru (2008) stated that the Federal Government of Nigeria, in the Vision 2010 documents, described poverty as the inability of the society to have access to the basic needs of food, health, housing, education, and clothing.

In Nigeria, a country with a population of more than 200 million people and the most populous country in Africa and the sixth-largest in the world with a landmass of 923,768 km², about 86.9 million people live in severe poverty, which is about 50% of its entire population (World Bank, 2020; Okadi, Agu, and Onu, 2021). The World Data Lab's Poverty Clock (WDLPC, 2020) quoted the number of people living in extreme poverty as 105,097,856, representing 51% of the population. Similarly, OSSAP-SDGs (2020) described Nigeria as home to the largest number of multidimensional poor in the world, with ten states in the north of Nigeria accounting for 70% of the total who are multidimensionally poor.

According to Demuren, 2018; Iheonu, and Urama (2019), Nigeria is endowed with vast natural and material resources, yet the country has been described as the "poverty capital of the world." Tiarniyu and Babalola (2013) stressed that lack of basic necessities and endemic rural poverty are among the developmental challenges that pose a serious threat to socio-economic development in Nigeria. The nature of the determinants of poverty in Nigeria, can be traced to low or declining level of economic growth, income inequalities, unemployment due to lack of skills, corruption, bad governance, diversion of funds into non developmental project fund embezzlement, inappropriate macroeconomic policies, insecurity, unhealthy environment, inadequate endowment of human capital, debt or borrowing, hunger, homelessness, diseases, malnutrition, high child mortality rate, family disintegration, labour market deficiencies that were caused by limited growth in job creation, low productivity, low wages in the informal sector and poor development of human resources (Akpohwo and Ibe, 2013; Omoniyi, 2013; Abia, Udofia and Udofia, 2013).

According to Nwachukwu (2014) and Jiboku, Jiboku, and Babasanya (2021), for socio-economic development to be achieved in Nigeria, the nation should be comparatively free from the overwhelming consequences of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. In the view of Oviawe (2018), an educational system that leads to the acquisition of practical skills and the awareness and comprehension of occupations for job creation and poverty eradication is referred to as technical vocational education and training (TVET). UNESCO (2019) opined that TVET could be strategically used to tackle poverty alleviation, weak economic growth, low productivity, social inequality, instability, and insecurity. Salabson (2018) noted that TVET is a kind of education that, if fully implemented, will solve the problems of poverty and unemployment in any nation. Oladejo (2019) stressed that TVET has great potential for tackling poverty, enhancing employability through skills acquisition, and boosting socio-economic development. In the same vein, Ogudu (2013) and Nwachukwu (2014) noted that poverty could be reduced when TVET is well funded, which will invariably develop the nation. Hence, this paper seeks to examine the potentials of TVET for poverty eradication in Nigeria.

Poverty Eradication Programmes in Nigeria: An Overview

Nigeria is faced with the challenges of eradicating poverty to improve the socio-economic well-being of its rural and urban citizens. Ogwudire, Egesi and Okarouga, (2013) and Taiwo and Agwu (2016), stated that the programmes which the Nigerian military government have initiated over the years to address the poverty problem include: Farm Settlement Scheme in the 1960s, National Accelerated Food Production Project in 1972, Operation Feed the Nation in 1976, Free and Compulsory Primary Education, Green Revolution, Low Cost Housing, River Basin Development Authorities, National Agricultural Land Development Authority, Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) in 1973, Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme, Strategic Grains, Reserves Program, Rural Electrification Scheme, Rural Banking Programme in 1977, Green Revolution Programme in 1980, Family Economic Advancement Programme, Better Life for Rural Women in 1987, Family Support Programme, Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986, National Directorate of Employment, Directorate for Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI), Mass Transit Programme, Guinea Worm Eradicating Programme, Petroleum Trust Fund, National Economic Recovery Fund (NERFUND) in 1989.

Similarly, the efforts to eradicate poverty by democratic governments from 1999 to date are numerous; among them are the National Poverty Eradication Programme in 1999, Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 2000, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 2001, the Nigeria Agricultural Development Fund (NADF) in 2002, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2003, the Commodity Marketing and Development Companies (CMDC) in 2003, the People Bank, the Community Bank, and the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). Furthermore, the President Muhammadu Buhari-led administration on assumption of office, according to Premium Times (2020), established a number of policies and programmes to eradicate poverty, which include the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), Vision 20: 2020 National Industrial Revolution Plan, Nigeria Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan, Nigeria Agenda 2050, the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP), YOUWIN, N-POWER, and Graduate Trainee Schemes, among others. The various poverty eradication programmes adopted by both the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), aimed at combating and eradicating poverty in Nigeria, have been found to be unsuccessful, with over 87 million Nigerians still living in poverty (Demuren, 2018; Iheonu and Urama, 2019; and Olayinka, 2019).

According to Obikeze, Ananti and Onyekwelu (2015), factors such as failure to focus on the poor, policy inconsistency, corruption and bad governance posed a serious setback at eradicating poverty at the grassroots. In the same vein, Taiwo and Agwu (2016), Okadi, Agu, and Onu (2021) outlined the challenges facing poverty eradication programmes in Nigeria as follows:

1. Political and policy instability resulted in frequent policy changes and inconsistent implementation, which in turn prevented continuous progress.
2. Inadequate coordination of the various programmes which have resulted in each institution carrying out its activities with resultant duplication of effort and inefficient use of limited resources which ultimately led to institutional rivalry and conflicts.

3. Severe budgetary, management, and governance problems have afflicted most of the programmes, resulting in facilities not being completed.
4. lack of accountability and transparency, thereby making programmes serve as means for draining national resources.
5. Over-extended scope of activities of most institution, resulting in resources being spread too thinly on too many activities.
6. inappropriate programme design that reflects a lack of beneficiary involvement in the formulation and implementation of programs. Consequently, beneficiaries are not motivated to identify themselves with the successful implementation of the programmes.
7. absence of target setting for ministries, agencies, and programmes
8. lacked mechanisms for effective collaboration and complementarity among the tiers of government that could be used by all concerned in poverty eradication.

TVET and Poverty Eradication Programmes in Nigeria

Nigeria, like most nations of the world, has acknowledged the role of TVET in enhancing technological transformation and socio-economic development (Tripney and Hombrados, 2013; Ogbunaya and Udoudo, 2015; Ezenwafor, 2015; Akanbi, 2017; Okorafor and Nnajiifo, 2017). The Nigerian National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) defines TVET as an educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of the economy and society. In the view of Ayonmike, Okwelle, and Okeke (2015), Edokpolor, and Owenvbiugie (2017), TVET is a programme for the acquisition of skills needed in the world of work to raise prospects for productive work, personal empowerment, and socio-economic development, thereby ensuring a sustainable livelihood in the speedily changing work milieu.

In Nigeria's educational system, the quality assurance agencies regulatory bodies for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) include the National University Commission (NUC), and National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The NUC is responsible for the accreditation, monitoring, and evaluation of university programs, infrastructural facilities, teaching and non-teaching staff, and instructional materials (Ovbiagele, 2015; Oladele, 2015; Olaleye and Oyewole, 2016; Ijeoma and Adaora, 2021), while the NBTE is responsible for the accreditation, monitoring, and evaluation of polytechnics, technical colleges, and other certificate-awarding TVET institutions (NBTE, 2013; Ovbiagele, 2015; Oladele, 2015). Unfortunately, Nigeria is yet to reap the potentials of TVET with increasing records of illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty (World Bank, 2018; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2019; and AUCDIC, 2017).

Nigerian TVET is faced with many challenges in the fight to eradicate poverty in Nigeria. Ayonmike, Okwelle, and Okeke (2015) and Ezenwafor (2015) observed the acute shortage of competent TVET teachers and instructors; Nwogu and Nwanoruo (2011) noted the issue of poor remuneration of TVET teachers; and Yusuff and Soyemi (2012) decried the poor supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of TVET programs. In addition to these problems, Odukoya, Bowale, and Okunlola (2018) point to the career progression of TVET educators, discrimination against

TVET graduates, and low enrolment at all levels of TVET institutions. In the views of Bolarinwa (2015), Okadi, Agu, and Onu (2021), some of the major challenges include the following:

1. Inadequate infrastructure and equipment such as workshops, libraries, and classrooms.
2. inadequate collaboration between tertiary institutions and industries for skills training;
3. high incidence of cultism, examination malpractices, and other social and academic vices;
4. Lack of adequate in-service training, regular promotions, seminars, and conferences.
5. negative public perception, which is responsible for low patronage among Nigerian students.
6. Procrastination in the implementation of reforms needed to improve the quality of TVE.
7. Poor curriculum design and the unavailability of a TVE Quality Assurance Unit to ensure that standards are sustained at all times.
8. The methodology of TVET instruction does not promote competency-based approaches for assessment of skills acquired for poverty eradication.
9. Inadequate involvement of TVET educators in all poverty eradication policy formulation to facilitate policy implementation effectiveness .

Conclusion

The present programmes in Nigeria, aimed at eradicating poverty, have not been successful. To reduce poverty and improve the quality of life in Nigeria, we will need a mechanism for sustained economic growth. Therefore, considering the potentials of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as an embodiment of practical skills that encourage the cognitive and psychomotor domains of learning, entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and independence, and its value re-orientation capacity, it is easily adaptable to many government poverty eradication programmes and policies in Nigeria. Hence, it is in recognition of the potentials of TVET for poverty eradication that this paper concludes that adequate revitalization and implementation of TVET programmes are the best means to eradicate poverty in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following TVET measures to serve as a hub for poverty eradication in Nigeria:

1. The federal, state, and nongovernmental organisations should provide adequate workshops, machines, equipment, libraries, and classrooms in TVET institutions.
2. TVET institutions should form collaborations with industries for skill training.

3. Strict disciplinary measures should be applied in cases of cultism, examination malpractices, and other social or academic vices.
4. Regular recruitment of qualified and experienced TVET personnel to take care of the deficit due to a work force shortage.
5. Regular organization of in-service training, seminars and conferences to sensitize the TVET educators on the potentials TVET for poverty eradication.
6. Realigning TVET curricula to ensure that the educational content is relevant to the skills, knowledge, and attitude required in the workplace.
7. Involving the TVET educators in all poverty eradication policy formulation and programmes to facilitate effectiveness implementation.

REFERENCES

- Abia, O. E, Udofa, G. S. & Udofia, W. U. (2013). Regenerating Technological Education for poverty Eradication and self-reliance for National Development. *Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction*. 5(1) Pp 98-104.
- Addae, K. (2014). Causes of poverty in Africa: A review of literature. *American International Journal of Social Science* 3(7), Pp 147– 153.
- African Union Commission Directorate of Information and Communication, (AUCDIC, 2017). *The Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth*, 2017 Edition, Issue 01. Ababa: AUC Directorate of Information and Communication.
- Akanbi, G. O. (2017). Prospects for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) Nigeria: Bridging the gap between policy document and implementation. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 16(2) Pp 1-15.
- Akpotohwo, F. C. & Ibe, E. O. (2013). Repositioning women Education for Poverty Alleviation, self-reliance and National Development. *Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction*. 5(1) Pp 88-92.
- Ayonmike, C. S., Okwelle, P. C. & Okeke, B. C. (2015). Towards quality Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria: Challenges and Improvement Strategies. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 4(1). Pp 46-58.
- Barrientos, A. & Hulme, D. (2016). *Social protection for the poor and poorest: Concepts, policies and politics*. Springer.
- Bolarinwa, F. B. (2015). *Comparative Analysis of the New and Old Office Technology and Management Curriculum in Government Polytechnics in Ogun State*. Pp 2-11. Unpublished M.Ed Thesis, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State, Nigeria.
- Buba, A. & Ibrahim, I. (2016). *poverty alleviation in Nigeria: an assessment of government policies*. Proceedings of Academics World 46th International Conference, Dubai, UAE, 29th-30th September 2016. Pp 19-29.
- Demuren, H. O. (2018). *Public Governance and Sustainable Development*, Inaugural Faculty of Social Sciences Open Lecture. Venue: OGD Hall, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago - Iwoye.
- Duru, M. (2008). An Analysis of Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Poverty in Northern States. *Nigerian Journal of Contemporary Public Policy Issues*. 1(1), Pp 43-57.
- Edokpolor, J. E. & Owenvbiugie, R. O. (2017). Technical and Vocational Education and Training skills: An antidote for job creation and sustainable development of Nigerian economy. *Journal of Problems of Education in the 21st century*. 75(6), Pp 535-549.
- Ezenwafor, J. I. (2015). Rating of strategies for transforming technical vocational education and training for the 21st century by tertiary institution Lecturers in South East Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review*, 2(7) Pp 88-97.

- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National policy on education* (6th ed). Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council Publishers, Yaba, Lagos-Nigeria.
- Iheonu, C. & Urama, N. (2019). Addressing poverty challenges in Nigeria. *African Heritage Policy Brief*. Enugu: African Heritage Institution. Retrieved from: <http://www.afriheritage.org>.
- Ijeoma, F. M. & Adaora, J. U. (2021). NUC accreditation: A means of assessment and improvement of university libraries in Nigeria. *Journal of Library Services and Technologies*, 3(2), Pp 58–68.
- Jiboku, J. O., Jiboku, P. A. & Babasanya, A. O. (2021). Poverty and unemployment in Nigeria: the case for advancement of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). *International Journal of Economic Behavior*. 11(1) Pp 57-77.
- National Business and Technical Education {NBTE}, (2013). *NBTE Information Brochure*. UNESCO-UNEVOC Centre. Kaduna, Nigeria. Retrieved from: www.tvetcentre.org.ng.
- Nwachukwu, P. O. (2014). Poverty Reduction through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies Journal*. 4(14), Pp 10-13.
- Nwogu, P. & Nweanomo, C. (2011). Vocational technical education and training for self-reliance: towards national development. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 5(5) Pp 55-59.
- Obikeze, O. S., Ananti, M. O. & Onyekwelu, R. U. (2015). The challenges of ending rural poverty: an appraisal of national poverty eradication programme. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*. 9(3), Pp 189-199.
- Odukoya, J. A., Bowale, E. & Okunlola, S. (2018). Formulation and implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. *African Educational Research Journal*, 6(1).
- Ogbunnaya, T. & Udoudo, E. (2015). Repositioning Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for youth employment and national security in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(32) Pp 141-147.
- Ogudu, P. (2013). Improving Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria through the Public - Private Partnership approach. *International Journal of Research and Advancement in Education Methods*. 10(2) Pp 34-48.
- Ogwudire, A. Egessi, O. & Okorogua, I. (2013). Adult and non-formal education for poverty Eradication and National Development. *Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction*. 5(1) Pp 22-34.
- Okadi, A., Agu, R. & Onu, N. (2021). Skills acquisition as strategy for sustainable poverty eradication in Nigeria. *Integrity Journal of Education and Training*. 5(3), Pp 47-53
- Okorafor, A. & Nnajofo, F. (2017). TVET policies and practices in Nigeria: Why the gap? *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3(4) Pp 37-51.

- Oladejo, M. (2019). Challenges of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Nigerian history. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*, 11(1) Pp 67-81.
- Oladele, A. E. (2015). The role of the National Universities Commission (NUC) in the Development of University Education in Nigeria: Reflections and Projections. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. 2(3) Pp 116-130.
- Olaleye, F. & Oyewole, B. (2016). Quality assurance in Nigerian University education: the role of the National Universities Commission (NUC) as a regulatory body. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*. 5(4) Pp 23-29.
- Olayinka, S. (2019). *93 million Nigerians now living in Extreme Poverty*. Retrieved on July 13, 2022 from *The Nation*: www.thenationonline.ng/93-million-nigerians-now-living-in-extreme-poverty/
- Omoniyi, M. (2013). The Role of Education in Poverty Alleviation and Economic Development: a theoretical perspective and counselling implications. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 15(11), Pp 176-185.
- Ovbiagele, A.O (2015). Evaluation of Vocational Education in Nigeria: A Review of the Roles of the Regulatory Bodies. *Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*. 4(3) Pp 16-21.
- Oviawe, J. (2018). Revamping technical, vocational education and training through public-private partnerships for skill development. *Journal of Higher Education*. 10(1), Pp 73-91.
- Premium Times (2020). *How I will lift one hundred million Nigerians out of poverty* – Buhari. Premium Times Newspaper.
- Salabson, A. (2018), Repositioning Vocational and Technical Education for Economic Sustainable and National Development. *Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*. 2(2) Pp 6-17.
- Shah, M. (2016). *The myth of community: Gender issues in participatory development*. ITGD Publishing.
- Taiwo J. & Agwu M. (2016). Problems and prospects of poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Management Review*. 4(6) Pp 18-30.
- The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs) (2020). *Integration of the SDGs into NIGERIA National Development Planning: A Second Voluntary National Review*. The Presidency.
- Tiamiyu, R. & Babalola, Y. (2013). Vocational Education and Security Challenges in Nigeria: The way forward. *Developing Country studies*. 3(5), Pp 97-100.
- Tripney, J. & Hombrados, J. (2013). Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for young people in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Empirical Research in Vocational Education and Training*, 5(3) Pp 24-36.

Uma, K. & Eboh, F. (2013). Corruption, economic development and emerging markets: Evidence from Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences and Education*, 2(3), Pp 56-67.

UNESCO (2012). *ESD + TVET: Promoting Skills for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved from www.unesco.org/education

UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre. UNESCO-UNEVOC, (2019). *TVET Country Profile-Nigeria*. UNESCO.

World Bank (2018). *Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Lessons from China*. 8 September. Washington, D.C: The World Bank Group.

World Bank (2019). *Nigeria Economic Update Fall 2019, Jumpstarting Inclusive Growth: Unlocking the Productive Potential of Nigeria's People and Resource Endowments*. Retrieved from: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32795>.

World Bank (2020). *World development report*, World Bank, Washington, DC.

World Data Lab's Poverty Clock (2020). Retrieved from www.worlddata.io/portfolio/world-poverty-clock

Yusuff, M.A. and Soyemi, J. (2012). Achieving sustainable economic development in Nigeria through Technical and Vocational Education and Training: The missing link. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2(2) Pp 44-57.