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SUSTAINING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH QUALITY TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
Technical Education, which is geared towards preparing people for technological development of a nation, is fast diminishing in terms of recognition and utilization. Consequently, there is serious reduction in production of skilled and competent personnel who drive the economy for sustainable development at craft level in Nigeria. This study therefore was carried out to examine sustaining National Development through Quality Technical Education in Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was used. The study was conducted in the five Technical Colleges in Ondo state and purposive sampling was used in selecting 55 technical teachers. Three research questions were formulated and answered. A modified structured questionnaire called Sustaining National Development Through Quality Technical Education In Nigeria Questionnaire (SNDTQTEINQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.82, was used to collect data for the study. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results revealed that teaching-learning facilities are grossly inadequate ($\bar{x} = 1.68, SD = 1.24; \bar{x} = 1.29, SD = 1.20$), *most available facilities are obsolete* ($\bar{x} = 1.18, SD = 1.23$), *infrastructural materials for teaching-learning are rarely utilized* ($\bar{x} = 1.21, SD = 1.25$), *and there are acute shortage of Technical instructors* ($\bar{x} = 2.24, SD = 1.35; \bar{x} = 2.30, SD = 1.37$), *for effective training and teaching. These culminated to weakening the quality of technical education. Based on these findings, it was recommended that timely intervention is required in the area of providing adequate learning facilities, refurbishing old equipments, provision and utilization of*

technical infrastructures, and employment of more technical experts to all technical colleges should be given preference if the desired national sustainable development through quality technical education is to be achieved.

Keywords: Technical Education, National Development, Quality Technical Education, Sustaining Development

Introduction

Technical Education, which is geared towards preparing people for technological development of a nation, is fast diminishing in terms of recognition and utilization. Consequently, there is a serious reduction in production of skilled and competent personnel who drive the economy for sustainable development at craft level in Nigeria. Technical and Vocational Education have always been used interchangeably even when two are different but similar ideas (Raji, 2019). According to Raji (2019), Vocational Education is an aspect of Technical Education that focuses primarily on skill transfer and acquisition of relevant useable education for self-growth and national development while Technical education involved transmission from the trainer to the trainee, practical knowledge and scientific skills necessary for the societal growth. For the purpose of this paper, Technical education encompasses both Vocational Education and Training.

Technical and Vocational Education is described as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the education 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 occupation in various sectors of economic and social life (NPE, 2012). It is equally described to mean the training of individuals for the implementation of technological development of a nation by providing the citizen with the appropriate skills necessary for employment (Idris and Mbudai, 2016). The immense contributions of technical education in any developing country of the world today cannot be overemphasized. Technical education plays a vital role in the national development.

Technical Education is an important aspect of educational system that serves as a catalyst for the rapid socio-economic, scientific and technological development. It has therefore become

incontrovertible fact that Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is the key for unlocking the treasure of the nation for technological and economic growth (Ibidapo, 2007). The acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical, as a pre-requisite for the individual to contribute meaningfully and effectively to the national development is sacrosanct to the realization of the objective of the National Policy on Education (NPE).

The National Policy on Education succinctly enumerated the objectives of TVET to ininclud; provision of trained manpower in the applied science and technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical level; provision of technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agriculture, commercial and economic ddevelopment; and Training and impacting the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

Technical education system has been arguably agreed to play a crucial role in the social and economic development of a nation. This process can only be sustained with concerted effort of the government through the provision of quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training to the citizens. This strategy requires meeting certain standard in terms of availability of functional instructional facilities (apparatus, tools, lathe machines, consumable materials, health facilities etc,), usable infrastructures (Roads, water supply, electricity, workshops etc), and adequate technical personnel (enough technical instructors).

Quality, according to Oxford dictionary, means amongst others, the degree of excellence of something. It also refers to the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Quality technical education therefore refers to the degree to which the developmental demands of people are met. It also means provision of adequate, modern, state-of-art instructional materials to all technical education sectors so that a desired product can be achieved.

Quality technical education framework is a holistic process of overhauling all what it takes to produce competent artisans, craftsmen and skilled-based individuals who can maximally contribute to the economic development of the nation. The framework is designed to equip individuals not only to be self-reliant but also for job creation, wealth creation, poverty alleviation, and economic recovery of the

nation. Quality technical education strategy focuses on individual potential development through practical training with real life situation exposure that makes the trainees competent and needed in the labour market of this modern age. The question then is can the available instructional facilities in our technical colleges meet the demand of 21st century teaching-learning methodology?

National Development is a comprehensive term used to describe all round growth plus change experienced at different aspects of the nation. The National Development facets broadly include political, economic, social, cultural, scientific and material (Bhawna, 2021).

The expected National Development is aimed at increase in productivity, economic growth, political stability and social well-being of the citizens through technological advancement. However, the low priority accorded to technical and vocational education in the Nigerian educational system is one of the defects of the system and it goes a long way in undermining the efficiency of the system in realizing the goals of national development (Sanni, 2015). This neglect has resulted into increase in unemployment, rise in poverty level, emancipation of insurgency in variant dimension and all forms of insecurity issues.

The challenges of unemployment, job creation, wealth creation would have been combated in Nigeria if the government maintains and really consider technical and vocational education as potent tools for economic and industrial development which are good indices of national development (Olaoye, 2018). The factors of unemployment, poverty, youth restiveness, and insurgency will inhibit economic growth and development of a nation if a purposive framework such as quality technical education is not well developed and articulated. To boost development through quality technical education therefore the training facilities, college infrastructures and adequate trainers i.e. the technical instructors must be considered paramount in the framework. Since the form of learning or training under technical education is skill-based, training materials must not only be made available, adequate and usable but of importance align with the real life situation and specification, if meaningful results would be achieved at the end of the training.

Magaji (2015) also opined that changes in a country's economy is required to prepare young people for the jobs of the future and

technical education has always been an integral part of National economic development. He further stressed that the neglect of vocational and technical education in the area of adequate personnel, financial support and facilities to encourage technical and vocational education are nothing but denying the nation of meaningful and effective contribution their graduates would make in the economy. Nyam and Imborivungu (2019) strongly maintained that the objectives of TVET in Nigeria are yet to be fully realized as a result of neglect and discrimination which has resulted in provision of outdated equipment and tools. Therefore, quality technical education that will engender national development requires availability of learning and teaching facilities, adequate and modernized infrastructure and competent instructors in all technical colleges or training centres.

Nwogu and Nwanoro (2011) had previously identified myriad of challenges facing vocational technical education and training for self-reliance which has invariably affected negatively our national life and national development to include but not limited to: lack of skilled mamanpower; acute shortage of training facilities; lack of adequate training facilities and equipment; inadequate vocational, technical education policies; and Poor emphasize on the practical aspect of vocational technical education.

Statement of the problem

In Nigeria, untold hardship has been a subject of concern not only to the government but also many highly-spirited citizens. Several programmes have been put in place to help alleviate the rate of unemployment, reduce poverty, create job, create wealth, achieve industrial and economic development but all seems to have failed. Nigeria Education Roadmap with TVET being given top priority of the agenda with the hope that by the year 2020 Nigeria would become one of the top 20 top economies of the world has also become a mirage. Unfortunately our economy is still dwindling and largely dependent on importation of not only goods but also labour from neighbouring states who have adequate skills to meet the demands of the labour market. The problem of unemployment remains unresolved, many people are still experiencing untold hardship, accelerated poverty alleviation programmes remain unmet, one of the reasons adduced to this ugly trend is the gross neglect of technical and vocational education which

focuses on skill development and training that is central to youth empowerment, poverty alleviation, creation of jobs, economic self-reliance, technological development and subsequently sustaining the national development. The negligence is majorly identified as inadequate facilities, dilapidated infrastructure and lack of competent and adequate technical personnel for training in the technical colleges. It was against this backdrop that this paper examined sustaining national development through quality technical education in Ondo state.

Research Questions

1. How adequate are the instructional facilities in technical colleges in Ondo state?
2. To what extent do the infrastructural materials are made available for use in technical colleges in Ondo state?
3. What is the adequacy level of the technical instructors in the technical colleges in Ondo state?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population used for the study comprised five technical colleges in Ondo state - These technical colleges are: GTC Owo, GTC Oka-Akoko, GTC Idanre, GTC Okeigbo and GTC Okitipupa. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 55 technical instructors from the 93 technical instructors in the five technical colleges. Data was collected using a modified structured questionnaire called Sustaining National Development Through Quality Technical Education In Nigeria Questionnaire (SNDTQTEINQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The data was analyzed using a descriptive statistics of mean. The cut off mark of 2.50 was used for the decision taking. Any item less than 2.50 was considered disagreement with while 2.50 and above is accepted and agreed with.

Results

Research Question 1: How adequate are the instructional facilities in technical colleges in Ondo state?

Table 1: Adequacy of the Infrastructural Facilities in the Technical Colleges in Ondo State

S/N	Item Statement	$\tilde{X}$	SD	Remark
1	There are enough workshops for each of	1.68	1.24	Disagree
2	the trades	1.60	1.31	Disagree
3	Consumable materials are provided for	2.32	1.16	Disagree
4	each trade	1.29	1.20	Disagree
5	The tools provided can go round each candidate	2.40	1.07	Disagree
6	There are adequate practical materials in the training workshops	2.19	1.31	Disagree
	Each of the workshop environment is spacious for practical training	1.18	1.23	Disagree
	Tools and equipment in each of the workshops are functioning	1.99	1.22	
	Equipment available in the workshops are appropriate for up to date.			
	Grand mean/SD			

The data presented in table 1 revealed that all the seven items have their mean values range from 1.18 to 2.40. This showed that the mean value of each item was below the cut-off point of 2.50. This showed that the general conditions for adequate instructional facilities are not met as the respondents disagreed to the provision of standard and adequate instructional facilities in technical colleges. The Standard Deviation (SD) of the items are within the range of 1.07 to 1.32, this showed that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their perspectives, the grand mean 1.99 and grand standard Deviation was 1.22. This showed close relationship in the response of the respondents.

Research question 2: To what extent do the infrastructural materials are made available for use in technical colleges in Ondo state?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the Frequent use of the Infrastructural Materials in the Technical Colleges in Ondo State

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	Modern equipment are provided in each workshop	1.86	1.26	Disagree
2	Equipment in the workshop are functioning	2.16	1.24	Disagree
3	Candidates are allowed to operate the equipment	2.86	1.32	Agree
4	Electricity is available to operate machines in each workshop	1.21	1.15	Disagree
5	Water supply is available in each of the training centres all the time	2.19	1.25	Disagree
	Grand Mean/SD	1.80	1.01	

The data presented in table 2 revealed that the five items have their mean values range from 1.21 to 2.19. This showed that the mean value of each item was below the cut-off point of 2.50. The implication is that the five conditional statements for the use of available instructional infrastructures are not met. The standard deviation (SD) of the items are within the range of 1.26 and 1.31. This shows that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in view. The grand mean 1.80 and grand standard deviation 1.01 showed close relationship between the opinions of the respondents to the fact that the instructional infrastructures were not frequently used.

Research question 3: What is the adequacy level of the technical instructors in the technical colleges in Ondo state?

Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation showing Adequacy Level of the Technical Instructors in the Technical Colleges in Ondo State

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD	Remark
1	There is provision of qualified master trainers With degree in relevant field for each trade	2.24	1.35	Disagree
2	There is provision of qualified master trainer with HND in relevant field for each of the trades	2.30	1.37	Disagree
3	Provision of trainers with NCE Tech for each of the trades	2.46	1.40	Disagree
4	Trainers with OND in relevant field for each of the trades are made available	2.38	1.35	Disagree
5	Master trainers with FTC, or ANTC or ANBC in Relevant field are made available	2.86	1.13	Agree
6	Craftmen with NTC or NBC or WAEC Intermediate Technical Certificate are provided for each of the Trades	2.56	1.24	Agree
7	Relevant training models are provided for each Trade	2.13	1.06	Disagree
8	The time allocated for practical works in each trade is adequate	2.16	1.24	Disagree
9	Instructors are punctual in the workshop	2.72	1.31	Agree
10	The training modules are covered by the instructors Before certification	2.37	1.13	Disagree
	Grand Mean/SD	2.42	1.26	

The data presented in table 3 revealed that seven out of ten items have their mean values range from 2.15 to 2.46. This showed that the mean value of each item was below the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating that three out of ten general conditions for competence and adequacies of technical instructors are met, that is, items 5, 6 and 9 have their mean values ranged from 2.66 – 2.86. This showed that the mean values of each item were above the cut-off mark of 2.50. The table also indicated that the standard deviation (SD) of the items are within the range of 1.06 to 1.40, this showed that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their views. The grand mean 2.42 and grand standard deviation was 1.26. This showed close relationship in the response of the respondents. This shows general disagreement to the provision of competent and adequate number of technical instructors.

Discussion of Findings

Data analyzed on sustaining National development through quality Technical Education shows a general deplorable condition of Technical Education in Ondo state. The major findings are discussed below:

The first finding of this research showed that teaching and learning facilitates in technical colleges in Ondo state were grossly inadequate with a cluster mean of 1.99 which was below the decision benchmark of 2.50. This is in line with Sanni (2015) who reported that the huge government investment is yielding poor return as some of the training centres have shortage basic infrastructure facilities and amenities such as good road to the training centres, electricity supply to power machines and machinery, portable water and training materials for practical training.

The second finding of this research equally revealed that most of the available instructional materials in the technical workshops are obsolete and were not made available to be used for practical purposes. This is also in line with the finding of Sanni (2015) that equipment available in the workshops are obsolete.

The third finding of this research revealed that there are acute shortage of technical instructors for effective training and teaching and All these have culminated to weakened Technical Education. This finding was also similar to the finding of Oviawe (2009) who opined that competent teaching staff should be employed for TVET and the

teachers should be given adequate training. This finding suggested that the teachers were inadequate and need re-training programme to increase their competence level.

Finally, this research found that maintaining quality Technical education is a strategic framework to sustaining national development through Technical Education in Ondo state and Nigeria at large.

Conclusion

Based on the findings made, the study concluded that National Development can be sustained but required a quality technical education system. It was also discovered that the present state of technical education lacked many parameters of quality education which include adequate teaching and learning instructional materials, competent and adequate technical instructors to produce competent individuals who can be self-sustained, contribute productively to the economic development of a nation as envisioned by the sustainable development goal in Nigeria.

Recommendations

From the findings made, it was recommended that if the desired sustainable national development through quality technical education are to be achieved in line with the inclusive education based on 2030 agenda, the following conditions are sacrosanct.

- Teaching and learning instructional facilities should be provided. This will facilitate both the teaching and learning of technical education subjects.
- All old equipment in technical workshops should be refurbished. This will enhance students access to quality learning of technical education.
- There should be provision and utilization of technical education infrastructures in all technical colleges. Technical education requires the use of both mental abilities and hand dexterity. Hence, students competence will be enhanced to contribute maximally to the economic development of the nation.
- Government should recruit more technical experts to handle all technical training trades/subjects in the technical colleges in the country. This will encourage effective teaching when the technical instructors are less overloaded.

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