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**Enhancing the Financing of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in
Nigeria through Communal Efforts.**

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ABSTRACT

This paper tries to examine the major ways that the financing of technical vocational education can be enhanced. It looked into the present state of technical vocational education in Nigeria. It also looked into some of the alternatives that funds could be generated for the financing of technical vocational education and training such as: Endowment Fund, Education Tax, Production Unit, Extra/Sandwich programmes and Consultancy/business. It drew out recommendations to improve the funding of technical vocational education some of which are, improving and increasing the range of services the institutions offer to the immediate communities; there should be honesty in accountability when it comes to disbursement of funds.

Introduction: The economic downturn in Nigeria has made the educational sector to be experiencing serious under funding. This inadequate funding is biting hard in Technical Vocational Education and Training not withstanding that it is highly capital intensive. This neglect is very clear in the level of the available facilities, functional and up-to-date equipment, structure and personnel. With this poor state of this type of education, it is well nigh impossible for Nigeria to meet its desired manpower need. Okorie (2001) further confirmed that, the instructional facilities in consonance with industrial development in most technical institutions are grossly inadequate and out of date.

To improve this ugly state of affairs, there is need for the level of funding to be improved. This should not be the sole responsibility of the government as it is, but other sources need to be explored. One of the ways to ensure success is the active involvement of the communities in funding technical vocational education.

The state of Technical Vocational Education: The general misconception that technical and vocational education is meant for people who are backward academically and that it is mere arts and crafts or typing and office practice are contributory factors to its poor funding. In its actual

sense, vocational education is that education which is concerned with the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes required for success in any useful occupation.

Surman (2003) see technical and vocational education as a term intended to mean a functional form of education, training or retraining designed to prepare persons to enter or continue in paid employment in any recognized occupation and in new emerging occupation. Technical vocational education is that type of education which deal with practical skill acquisition and application of basic scientific knowledge (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). It is obvious therefore that technical vocational education cuts across a wide range of human endeavours. Its prospects are high in a society such as Nigeria which cherish technological advancement.

Despite the acclaimed prospect of technical and vocational education in Nigeria the country seem unprepared for it. The foregoing statement derive its reliance from observations when one pays a visit to any educational institution which offers technical vocational education. In some secondary schools and even technical colleges, workshop buildings hardly exist let alone the materials for the workshop practice. Adewumi (1999), said, the same thing when we visited some technical colleges and found that many of them were without workshops, where workshops were provided, the equipment were not installed. He discovered that most of the machine tools were left on the corridors of most of the technical colleges.

It is embarrassing to note that basic text books are not even available in some of these institutions. These problems are so acute that technical vocational education teachers only emphasize more of the development of cognitive and affective domains leaving the psychomotor domain which should be the main focus in such institutions.

Enhancing the Funding of Technical Vocational Education through Communal Efforts

The term community in this paper refers to all the people living in a given place, district or the entire country. This means that parents, students, guardians, religious and voluntary agencies, professional bodies, trade unions, the industrial sector, market Associations, village and town unions, etc. are considered to be communities. By implication then, the funding of technical vocational should be a joint venture involving all.

It is in the realization of the need for community involvement that government included it in its policy. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). Education is an expensive social service and

requires adequate financial provision. The government welcomes and encourages the participation of local communities, individuals and other organizations.

It is a common knowledge that the best institutions of learning in terms of availability of infrastructures and learning resources are often these where parents are involved. Thus the realization of meaningful vocational education for the child therefore demands concerted and conscientious efforts by the government, individuals and organizations. Good school community relationship in attainment of maximum teaching and learning is essential.

It is apparent that the revenue from conventional sources such as government subventions, boarding fee, games fees, medical and library fees, development levies, external aids and similar other sources cannot meet the ever-rising cost of technical vocational education. While trying to seek the consent of the community to be involved in the funding of technical vocational education, the school should be more sensitive to the needs of its immediate community. Some of such services rendered can be lucrative if adequately commercialized. The various sources of revenue that can be explored through the involvement of the community in technical vocational education include:

- (i) **Endowment Fund** - This is money donated to provide income for the execution of some projects. Under this arrangement, appeals are made by the institution to government, philanthropists, other individuals, and organization to donate funds for the execution of some specific projects. It is pertinent to point out here that the response received from the public will be a function of the level of mutual relationship between the institution and community. The school should be able to win the confidence of the community as regards its ability to judiciously use the fund for the purpose for which it is meant. This can be done by involving some reputable members of the society in the committee that is charged with the responsibility for disbursement of such funds. Another strategy is that some specific projects or building could be named after some wealthy and worthy individuals who have contributed immensely to the growth of technical vocational education in that community or society at large. This may make some of such people willing to finance some projects. Another strategy is the timing of such launching to coincide with political campaigns. Wealthy politicians seeking the people's mandate can be made chief launchers. Still yet another strategy is to approach some notable organizations such as the NNPC, UAC, PZ, Julius Berger, Impresit,

etc. to execute some projects that have direct relationship with their operations. This could also be a social service for them to the institution.

(ii) *Education Tax*: The government should make a legal declaration demanding a certain percentage of the profits from firms, industries and other profit making organizations for education purposes. A good percentage of the amount accruing from this source should be allocated to technical vocational education. The profits made by most of these multinational conglomerates are intensive to the plight of their host communities

(iii) *Production Unit*: Each technical vocational institution should establish a Production Unit to be headed by a senior academic staff. This unit ensures the production of goods and services that the community or any individual may need. The payments for the products or services constitute a revenue source for the institution. The services could be in areas of motor mechanic, electrical installation, plumbing, radio and television work, refrigerator, air condition work while goods could be from carpentry and joinery, welding and fabrication, fitter machinist, building, etc

(iv) *Fees from Extra-Sandwich Programmes*: Some people still regard these programmes as inferior to the usual regular programmes. There is need for an intensified enlightenment campaign on the existence and importance of such programmes as well as their corresponding prospects. Where this has been successfully done, the amount realized has been quite reasonable. Onunka (1992) asserts, most institutions which offer technical vocational teacher education and indulge in the above programmes have been realizing substantial sums. This has yielded funds enough to embark on the implementation of capital projects and purchase of some equipment

(v) *Consultancy and Business Unit*: Another viable option for funding technical vocation education is the establishment of consultancy business unit by technical education institutions.

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