

Strengthening Public Private Partnership in the Provision of Technical Vocational Education for the Realization of Vision 2020.



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Abstract

It is very obvious that funding of vocational technical education can no longer be the responsibility of government alone, hence the necessity to incorporate public private partnership. This paper described the concept of technical vocational education as a means for an individual to become self reliant. It also highlights the benefits and the needs for public private partnership in order to realize vision 2020. Finally recommendations are made as a way forward towards funding and making provision for technical vocational education.

Introduction

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is becoming obvious a clear phenomena to boost development and well being of any society and the conceptual aspect of such relationships combining the role of the key players in collaborating to make these partnerships successful or otherwise. In Nigeria and other developing countries, sustainable access to technological development and product can best be achieved through public-private partnership contributing towards provision of technical and vocational education so as to realize vision 2020.

In spite of the recurring debate on public partnership efforts in both national and international conferences, little or no impact has been perceived in the Nigeria Technology Education scene. If Technical vocational Education is to be meaningful and relevant for young people, then relationships are needed between public and private sectors. In an ideal situation as obtainable in developed societies of the world, the training and Education of any nation's citizenry is a collective effort of both Government, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), Private firms and private individual or philanthropist (Puyete,2005). According to Akainwor (1992), Industrial Training Education which covers the process of producing craftsman, etc is defined by the International Labour Organization as that which involves all activities, essentially aimed at providing the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for employment in a participating occupation, group of related occupation or a function in any field of economic tourism, public private/services etc. Thus for a nation like Nigeria blessed with all kinds of resources to develop, there is the great need to involve private public participation for the realization of vision 2020 without resting all function in the hands of the government.

The Benefits and the needs for Public Private Partnership (PPP)

It must be noted; however that greater output shall be realized if PPP agreements or contracts are structured in ways that do not place the poor majority in social, economic and or political disadvantage. Also, combining the partnership with credible and group-accepted innovative approaches to funding and mobilization has the

potentiality of increasing the overall access to essential services based on PPP structures already in place.

More so, in order for government to deliver the minimum standard of services, products and or care required for PPP to thrive, it must put in place, law, regulations and or enhance existing ones, as well as improve the enabling environment for Private Sector Participation (PSP) in the provision and development of Technical Vocational Education to occur. Stakeholders' commitment to the PPP would be accomplished by focusing on micro, small and medium-sized operations, involve community leaderships like community development associations, town unions, non-governmental organizations, local, state, and /or regional governmental authorities including private company operators. Included among these potential partners are municipalities, government agencies and ministries, public and private companies, and trade associations as potential partners. It is incumbent on all stakeholders to orient PPP activities around orientation, match-making, implementation and institutionalization for effective and sustainable outcomes.

Concept of Technical Education

Technical education is that aspect of education that deals with the preparation of student for acquisition of necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to earn employment as expert assistant to professional in any fields. Institutions involved in the training of this caliber of workers are the Colleges of education and the polytechnics. While the universities are meant for professional education. Basically these institutions specialized in training technicians for different occupational areas. Students are admitted from senior secondary schools, and technical colleges. The training is for duration of 2 - 3 years but the course contents are below the university standard. The training emphasis is more practically oriented than theoretical. He takes specific courses such as welding, machine shop practice, electricity and machine design etc in addition to general courses such as calculus, chemistry, physics analytical geometry. It can be seen from here that this student has a broader base of knowledge, skills and attitude than a skilled worker (machinist) from a trade centre. Technical education applies to many fields of study e.g. business, agriculture, home economics, fine art, industrial etc.

Concept of vocational education

Vocational education is not the same as general education. Vocational education is education for the specifics. The society is generally organized into specific vocations where-in exist many occupations and jobs. The development and sustenance of the society as a social and economic entity is dependent on vocational education. Vocational education is therefore regarded as education which provides the recipient with the basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the work force.

Vocational education nurture skills that are necessary for Agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development. In effect, vocational education is focused on building a self reliant society as well as a self reliant nation. In the United States, Smith- Hughes Act in 1917 established vocational education as an integral part of the individual's total education. The act created education programmes in agriculture,

home economics, and industrial occupations (Lazerson, 1979). Vocational education, as part of a general education programme, essentially constitutes any form of education with the primary purpose of preparing people for useful employment in a recognized occupation (Okoro, 1993; Oranu, 1992). Olaitan (1994) describes vocational education as that type of education which is concerned with the development of skills knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in any occupation. Vocational education includes technical education that provides both practical and theoretical instruction (Oni, 2000). Such instruction is usually given to those who need employment in commerce and industry or in any type of enterprise which involves the use of tools and other machinery.

Today, most of the vocational technical education programmes in Nigeria are computer oriented. Courses in content areas such as mathematics, electronics, agriculture, commerce, administration, and medicine include the use of computers. It is, therefore, important that computer education component be introduced into vocational subject in junior secondary schools. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) recently made the subject in Junior Secondary Schools Certificate compulsory for the entire citizenry. Implementing computer education into the required curriculum at this level can provide a unique opportunity to ensure that individuals are optimally prepared for advancement.

Vocational Technical Education

According to the National Policy on Education NPE, (Revised 1981), vocational technical education is defined as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic and scientific knowledge. Vocational education embraces technical education, in other words, technical education is component of vocational education. It requires the study of advanced mathematics and pure science to produce semi-professionals or technicians in all areas of vocational education. Technical education is available in all the areas of vocational education e.g. agricultural education. Home Economics Education, Business Education, and Industrial Education.

Benefits of Vocational Technical Education as a mean's for Self Reliance

Vocational technical education is a type of education that provide for people who could apply relevant technical skills to be able to make positive changes within the society. In other words man is able to improve his saleable inbuilt skills to advance the nation and to become useful within the society by being a producer of goods and services rather than a mere consumer. It affords a self-dependent life after formal education, by giving individuals the opportunities to put into use the acquired skills thereby enabling Nigeria youths to become job-creators rather than job-seekers. It is a medium of reducing social vices, having been trained vocationally Nigerian youth now become wage earners who are asset to themselves and the nation at large. This therefore explains why social reformers, professionals, sociologists, educators and writers had generally clamored for proper implementation of VTE as a key answer to certain social ills presently plaguing the nation. According to them, VTE if properly implemented will phase out

involuntarily idle and unproductive youths and give way to competent youth like their foreign counterparts.

Funding Vocational Technical Education Programmes by Government and Other Sectors

The term funding according to Babayi A.U (1998) is derived from the word fund which means the sources of accumulated money. Funding therefore stands for the source of money gathered, invested or collected for a particular purpose.

In Nigeria, funding vocational technical education programmes has ordinarily been the responsibility of the State and Federal government. The enormous responsibility has brought about a near total collapse of the whole system of education including vocational technical education programme. There is therefore an urgent need for generating funds for vocational technology educational programmes from different sources other than the government.

The Needs for Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria

1. Vocational and technical education is needed in the country to increase the productive power of the community and allow occupational upward mobility.
2. Vocational and technical education is needed to conserve, develop and preserve the country's natural resources e.g. agricultural resources, mineral resources and water resources.
3. Vocational and technical education is needed to provide an efficient substitute for the age-long traditional apprenticeship system of training manual workers.
4. Vocational and technical education is needed to meet increase demand for trained workers or manpower.
5. Vocational and technical education is needed to off-set increased cost of living.
6. Vocational and technical education is needed in the country because it is considered as a wise business investment capable of yielding appreciable economic and social returns on life time basis.

Problems of vocational technical education

Prior to the early years of Nigeria independence, one of the problems of vocational technical education was the limited number of vocational teachers and administrators to fill the teaching and administrative positions in the country's educational system. About this era is only the university of Nigeria, Nsuka and the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria offered vocational teacher education programme with limited training facilities and personnel. The products of these institutions were grossly inadequate to meet the man-power need of vocational technical education in the country.

Another problem with educational funding often resulted in poor management, and mismanagement of educational priorities. Sometimes decisions made for teachers and administrators are never as easy as they might appear to be. Management and finance are of significance in our decision making. Failure for the government to announce its budget in time often affects educational activities. Sometimes sources of funding such as revenues, school fees and subventions might fall short of expectations thereby rendering the education plans at disarray.

Conclusion and recommendation

In actuality, there is a positive correlation between power and skills. A nation that is powerful is known to have possessed skills in almost all occupations of human Endeavour. For instance, the United States of America is a super-power in the world of today because her citizens have acquired occupational skills in almost all spheres of life like food production, shelter, transportation communication, information etc. These developments influence the Americans' attitude towards other nations particularly the less developed ones. Today, the nation tends to dominate the world politics and economic of the less developed countries tend to be subjected to them. History tells us that these developed nations imbibed vocational and technical education as a pivot of their technological development. Philosophically, Nigeria is justified to embrace vocational and technical education for development. As the most populous black nation of world, there is the need to recognize and invest consciously in vocational and technical education so that she might play a leading role amongst the black race of the world.

Adequate funding is needed for our vocational and technical colleges to conduct project work and exhibit and undertake job contract to improve revenue and funding. While more funding is been sought from our sources (feeders) that is, the federal and the state government, Non – Governmental Organization (NGO), well meaning individual, banks as well as industries who are principal beneficiaries of the product of technical vocational education should join hands together in the provision of tools, equipment and materials for proper training of students so as to realize vision 2020.

Technical education as the pillar for all social and economic development and comfort deserves complete attention from both the private and public sectors. And that resource so earmarked should be directly utilized appropriately on activities that relate to the enhancement of teaching and learning of technical vocational education.

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