

Capacity Building of Youth Through Technical Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria

Samuel Osamede Ogbebor^{id} and Jane Oviawe^{id}

Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigated the capacity building of youth through technical vocational education and training for sustainable development in the three Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design using a convenient random sampling technique. The study population was 120 TVET educators, comprising 85 lecturers and 35 instructors. A structured questionnaire titled Capacity Building of Youth through Technical Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (CBYTVETSD) was used for data collection by the researchers with the support of two research assistants. The instrument was validated by three research experts, two from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ambrose Alli University, and one from Measurement and Evaluation, University of Benin, both in Edo State, Nigeria. Cronbach Alpha reliability was used and an overall reliability coefficient of .81 was achieved. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test to test the hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. Generally, the study found that the role and impact of TVET programs are essential for sustainable development. The study therefore, concluded that capacity building of youths through TVET for sustainable development is essential for the effective reduction of hunger, poverty, unemployment, and dependency among youth and that it aids in the promotion of competent manpower development, creative skills, job creation, self-employment, self-reliance, gainful employment, fast track technology process, life-long learning among others. The study recommended the need for conducting public education campaigns and activities to educate and inform communities about the significance of TVET programs and that effective co-ordination and co-operation of TVET programs should be encouraged between the responsible bodies for sustainable development, among others.

Keywords: TVET, capacity building, sustainable development, youth empowerment, labor market readiness

Introduction

The phrase "Technical, Vocational Education and Training" (TVET) has several modern definitions that are changing to reflect the basic shifts in the scope of programs around the globe. TVET, as defined most recently by (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013), is a broad term that encompasses not only general education but also the study of technologies and related sciences as well as the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, and knowledge related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

According to FRN (2013), among the objectives of TVET are the following: the supply of skilled labour in the fields of applied sciences, technology, business, and advanced crafts and the provision of training and associated skills for employment and self-reliance. TVET is in fact, a powerful tool for accelerating technical advancement, enhancing the skills of citizens, fostering economic growth, and attaining sustainable development (Akhueonkhan & Raimi, 2013). It is intended to teach the entrepreneurial and skilled labor force required to generate wealth and lessen the threat of unemployment and poverty (Maigida & Raymond, 2014).

A report by (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2009) defined TVET as learning that strives to prepare students for entry into the labour market generally and to develop skills in the practice of specific crafts. The group said that in both situations, education can be designed to directly prepare students for the workforce or to set the groundwork for future training and higher education with a focus on joining particular trades. TVET includes programs that give participants the abilities, knowledge, and skills necessary to work productively, adjust to quickly shifting labour markets and economies, and take part in their communities as responsible members of society, the organization added. To Okorie (2001), TVET has a good chance of alleviating poverty and providing jobs for unemployed graduates because individuals who have received this type of training can start their businesses and earn enough money to support their families, enabling them to become self-sufficient and stand on their own two feet.

Formal TVET refers to organized vocational education programs offered within an approved public or private educational or training institution, and it is structured (in terms of curriculum, learning objectives, and learning time) in such a way that it constitutes a continuous "ladder" where one level

leads to the next and finally leads to certification. In short, formal TVET covers vocational education programs offered within an approved public institution, and it is intentional from the learner's perspective, school-based, has a rigid curriculum, and the entry qualifications of trainees are fixed. These three categories were established by (UNESCO, 2006).

The formal TVET delivery system also requires teachers to be technical teachers with relevant vocational teacher qualifications. Non-formal TVET is the type of vocational education and training that occurs outside of the formal school system, either regularly or occasionally. It has the advantage of being occupation-specific, having a short training period, and emphasizing the acquisition of practical skills for self-reliance or direct employment in a related field. As a result, skilled craftsmen with some pedagogical training may be hired as instructors. Informal TVET is the type of vocational education that is offered by craftsmen of various trades in the economy's informal sector. It is typically conducted through an apprenticeship system and is more accurately known as experience-based learning or vocational training. Due to the lack of a well-designed plan and the non-sequential teaching technique, informal TVET is characterized by the absence of any curriculum or framework. The master artisan determines what the apprentice should learn based on his expertise. To Hollander and Mar (2009), TVET is therefore viewed as a tool for lowering severe poverty. TVET is an excellent instrument that can help achieve an internationally recognized workforce and sustainable development because of these unique traits. Since individuals who have received this kind of training may start their enterprises and earn enough money to support their families, they can become self-reliant and stand on their own two feet. When combined, these all contribute to the development of youth capability.

Youths are adolescents between the ages of 13 and 30. These young people include graduates without jobs, undergraduates, and secondary school dropouts. Young people with creative ideas and related capacity building are a country's main engine for sustainable growth. Although they are the most underappreciated segment of the Nigerian population, youngsters are the driving force behind movement and change to improve sustainable development. The globe is currently dealing with a high rate of unemployment, instability, hunger, and poverty, among other issues. The world is changing quickly, and traditional approaches to addressing such complex issues are severely constrained. As change agents for sustainable development, youth are also important and productive stakeholders with creative ideas for planning, policy making, and decision-making. Young people are a country's most valuable resource as they are seen as future leaders and should be invested in for its growth (Cargo et al., 2013). Additionally, they are an effective way for a nation to both reproduce and attain sustainable growth. This generation has contributed to the development of youth ability, according to Obadan (2012), by giving them access to schools devoid of instruction, issues devoid of answers, hatred devoid of love, and politics devoid of sustainable development.

Nwosu and Micah (2017) argued that sustainable development is a progressive and dynamic approach to addressing the needs and opportunities of the present without impairing or jeopardizing the integrity of the environmental factors that contributed to the enabling environment, thereby enabling the ability to address the needs, opportunities, and challenges of the future. Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017) defined sustainable development as a continuous process with goals in mind that is comprehensive, long-term, and synergistic with effects on many facets of life. Sustainable development of the Nigerian economy can be defined as a pattern of development that enables future generations to have access to the necessities of life, such as food, protection, healthcare, clothing, and shelter, as well as the current generation to have access to at least a high standard of living, self-esteem, and freedom (Edokpolor & Owenvbiugie, 2017). Education for Sustainable Development, according to Henriques and Brilha (2017), aids people in acquiring the information, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for sustainability. Promoting Education for Sustainable Development in education is thought to be essential for creating a sustainable future and for

putting children and youth at the center of sustainable development.

The Millennium Development Goals were intended to be fully implemented by the Sustainable Development Goals, also known as global goals. Two of the Sustainable Development Goals stated by the United Nations Development Program are to ensure that everyone has equitable and comprehensive access to high-quality education and to promote opportunities for lifelong learning. The precise aims for this purpose (4.4 & 4.7), which serve as the foundation for this article, are, among other things:

1. By 2030, increase the number of adults and youth who possess the technical and vocational skills needed to secure employment, start their own businesses, and work for themselves.
2. Ensure that by 2030, every student possesses the skills and knowledge required to promote sustainable development, including but not limited to human rights, gender equality, education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, fostering a culture of peace and nonviolence, encouraging global citizenship, and appreciating cultural diversity and its role in sustainable development.

Since the function of education has been acknowledged as crucial to its achievement, skills gained through education will play a prominent role in the fourth Sustainable Development Goals as a vital idea that might drive all other attainments indicated in the two targets (Matthew & Emmanuel, 2019). In other words, gainful employment, respectable positions, entrepreneurship, the promotion of sustainable development, the attainment of sustainable lifestyles, etc., are all made possible by the acquisition of pertinent skills. When the FRN recognized the need for a sustainable industrial and technology workforce through capacity building, it established technical colleges to generate graduates who will be skills-focused, create jobs, and be employable in the workforce.

Sule et al. (2022) asserted that there have been a series of efforts by the government and stakeholders to support entrepreneurial skill development. Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as having a significant impact on economic development, job creation, and improvements in well-being. The government and other stakeholders are paying increasing attention sequel to this understanding. Entrepreneurship development is expected to bring about improved entrepreneurial skills, job creation, and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities, improved standard of living and innovativeness, and prevent industrial slums and social tension. It appears that individuals do not get adequate support to acquire and practice entrepreneurial skills. Also, entrepreneurship skills development is not adequately funded. There is a low tendency for entrepreneurship development to translate into the desired economic progress. To this end, Oviawe (2010) examined the role of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria and identified some variables as possible obstacles to entrepreneurship education, they include among others: poor knowledge-based economy and poor enterprising culture. Also discussed were ways of avoiding the obstacles and how the teaching of creativity and problem-solving skills can reposition Nigerian youths in Nigeria. Sule et al. (2022) conducted a study aimed to unveil the challenges confronting entrepreneurship development and the impact of government support in Kogi State and examined the influence of government policies on entrepreneurship skills development in Kogi State. The study determined the effect of government support on entrepreneurship skills development in Kogi State and examined the influence of government policies on entrepreneurship skills development in Kogi State. The study found that government support substantially affected entrepreneurship skills development in Kogi State. Findings also demonstrated that government policies in Kogi State have a limited effect on developing entrepreneurship skills.

Developing and improving the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources communities and organizations need to strive, adapt, and thrive in a constantly changing environment is known as capacity-building (Millar & Doherty, 2018). A clear policy framework, citizen democratic engagement and

monitoring, human resources improvements, including education and training, and sustainability are the five elements that the European Commission, World Bank, and United Nations say make capacity building (Hambrick et al., 2019). A framework for interrelated capacity development—individual, institutional, and enabling policy—is provided by the UN Development Group Capacity Development Guidelines (Millar & Doherty, 2018).

The development of a person's, an organization's, or a system's capacity to carry out suitable tasks in an effective, efficient, and sustainable manner is referred to as capacity. Asogwa and Ohagwa (2010) described capacity development as an endeavor to raise an individual's degree of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes so they can do a task or job more effectively. The process of maximizing young people's skills and abilities to help them perform essential tasks, develop new skills, create jobs, solve problems, define and accomplish goals effectively and efficiently, find gainful employment, and become employers of labor is known as capacity building in the context of this study. The process of creating a collection of skills, potentials, and abilities for sustainable growth, including all types of training and education, is referred to as capacity building.

To Ezenwosu et al. (2022), Capacity Building implies a continuous process of teacher improvement, investing in human resources for positive empowerment for sustained and effective productivity. Jaquith et al. (2010) explained that capacity building has to do with allocating investment in resources – physical, intellectual, or human especially when other intervening variables have failed within a given institutional or social context. Olabiyi (2013) defined youth capacity building as motivating young people to participate actively in their communities. Youth mentoring is regarded as one of the best strategies for assisting young people in realizing their full potential as contributing members of society since it can offer them support, encouragement, and positive role models. TVET seeks to foster the social integration of young people with occupational skills from a variety of educational, socioeconomic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Youth hunger, poverty, and unemployment would be lessened as a result, and their time, energy, and effort would be directed toward more fruitful endeavors. Young people will be more prepared for the workforce and less vulnerable to socially demeaning behaviours that could jeopardize the country's peace and security. Auto repairs, block construction, metalworking, woodworking, plumbing and fitting, electrical work, business, home economics, and agriculture are just a few fields in which TVET programs provide training. Nonetheless, given the nation's present demands, it is more practical for these young people to receive training in particular fields that have been determined to be necessary skill sets by labour employers, market research, and needs analyses. This is required to prevent the duplication of skilled workers in already occupied skill areas and to preserve a balance in the distribution of workers across all economic sectors.

According to Statistics Botswana (2013), the goals of youth capacity building are to (1) help them develop good work ethics, (2) help them gain experience in entrepreneurship, (3) help them become employment-ready, (4) help them develop skills and competencies that will allow them to positively contribute to the development of their communities, (5) encourage the development of behavioral change, and (6) instill a certain amount of responsibility and accountability in them. They also hope to use their creativity and energy to improve the delivery of public services, thus reducing youth unemployment and ending youth poverty. Ezenwosu et al. (2022), carried out a study to investigate the capacity building of secondary school teachers of the English language in the Onitsha metropolis of Anambra State, Nigeria, and found that teachers of the English language need capacity building in teaching some aspects of the language as well as in innovative methods of teaching the subject and in the use of some instructional materials, especially ICT gadgets. Oviawe et al. (2017) conducted a study to determine the best practices in technical education programme for students' capacity building and sustainable development in the 21st century using survey research design. The entire population of 50 technical teacher educators in the Departments of Vocational and Technical

Education in the three public universities in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria was used for this study. The findings revealed that there were almost no joint programme in technical education between school and industries except for the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). There is also no involvement of industries in the running of technical education programme in Nigeria. Some challenges to effective school-industry collaboration and some ways that schools and industries could jointly engage to enhance students' capacity building in technical education were identified. It was recommended among others that educational institutions offering technical education programmes should tap the dynamisms and synergies of the 21st century workplace to the full to produce technical education graduates who can fit in and succeed in the 21st century world of work. Since the Millennium Development Goals were conceptualized and the focus on poverty reduction—which includes a multifaceted understanding of poverty—TVET has gained more recognition as a tool for social inclusion and for integrating people into the workforce. TVET has also gained more credibility in the education spectrum because it tackles several social and economic issues that the sustainable development goals have brought to light.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the government's efforts to reduce poverty and empower young people since independence, the country continues to face high rates of unemployment, poverty, hunger, and instability. The programs' inappropriateness might explain this: excessive emphasis on pre-existing skill sets, irregular program operations, inadequate management, and inadequate and inappropriate program material that does not align with employer demands. These could be the cause of the country's impending poverty, hunger, insecurity, and unemployment, which lead to young people committing various social vices that impede sustainable development. Therefore, it is necessary and required that youth capacity be built through TVET programs that would give them the necessary skills to be empowered. Therefore, the study aims to look into how Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria can increase youth capacity through technical vocational education and training for sustainable development.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to develop the capacity of the youths through TVET for sustainable development. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate the role of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development.
2. Analyze the impact of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the role of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development?
2. What is the impact of TVET on youth capacity building for sustainable development?

Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis was formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

1. There was no significant difference between TVET lecturers and instructors on the role of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development.

Methodology

The research employed a cross-sectional survey research design. A sample of 120 respondents (85 lecturers and 35 instructors) of TVET programs was selected via convenience random sampling across three Federal Universities in South-

South, Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Capacity Building of Youth through Technical Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development (CBYTVETSD) developed for the study. The instrument has two sections: 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' sought information on the personal data of the respondents, such as institutions, positions, and ten items about the role of TVET on youth capacity building for sustainable development. Section 'B' contained 10 items on the impact of TVET on youth capacity building for sustainable development. Likert scale was developed, having *strongly agreed* to *strongly disagreed*. The response categories were assigned numerical codes of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by three research experts, two from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ambrose Alli University, and one from Measurement and Evaluation, University of Benin, both in Edo State, Nigeria. A reliability test was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, and the result showed a coefficient of 0.81 via Cronbach's alpha. The questionnaires were administered and completely retrieved from the respondents by the authors and two assistants. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while *t*-test analysis was adopted in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of

significance. Decision-making was based on a criterion mean value of 3.00. Mean values of 3.00 and above were regarded as Agreed, while mean values below 3.00 were disagreed. A probability *p*-value less than or equal to .05 implies significance (reject H_0), while a probability *p*-value greater than 0.05 implies no significance (accept H_0).

Results

Ten items pertaining to the function of TVET are listed in Table 1 (e.g., fostering self-reliance, developing creative skills, providing trained manpower, promoting lifelong learning). Every item has a significance (SIG), *p*-value, mean (*M*), standard deviation (*SD*), and remarks. All of the comments are "Agree," and the SIG is "NS" (not significant). Strong agreement among respondents was indicated by all item means, which ranged from 3.59 to 3.92 (above the 3.00 cutoff). Participants' moderate agreement was indicated by standard deviations (*SD*), which ranged from 0.57 to 0.74. The null hypothesis is accepted since all *p*-values (range: 0.11–0.19) are greater than 0.05. There was no discernible difference in how instructors and TVET lecturers viewed the role of TVET. Every item was accepted, emphasizing the vital role that TVET plays in employability, skill development, and long-term growth.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on Respondents on the Role of TVET in Capacity Building of the Youth for Sustainable Development

Item statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i> -values	Remarks	SIG
Capacity building of the youth towards self-reliance	3.76	0.62	0.13	Agree	NS
Develop youth creative skills	3.78	0.64	0.15	Agree	NS
Provision of trained manpower among youth in technology	3.92	0.57	0.11	Agree	NS
Capacity building of the youth to achieve sustainable development	3.67	0.71	0.16	Agree	NS
Development of youth employable skills	3.59	0.67	0.18	Agree	NS
Provision of trained manpower in applied science	3.74	0.63	0.19	Agree	NS
Capacity building of the youth through advanced craft	3.87	0.73	0.15	Agree	NS
Capacity building of the youth through training in relevant skills	3.62	0.74	0.19	Agree	NS
Prepare the youth for gainful employment	3.92	0.69	0.17	Agree	NS
Capacity building towards life-long learning	3.68	0.68	0.19	Agree	NS

Note. *N* = 120. NS = not significant.

Research question two: What is the impact of TVET on youth capacity building for sustainable development? The outcomes of the information presented in Table 2 demonstrated that ten items, with sequential numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 had mean values that ran from 3.12 to 3.89. The mean values infer

that the item statement agreed with the impact of TVET in capacity building of the youth for sustainable development. On the other hand, the standard deviations of all 10 items in Table 2 range from 0.21–0.71, showing that the respondents were not far from each other in their responses.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses from Respondents Regarding the Impact of TVET in Capacity Building of the Youth for Sustainable Development

Item statement	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Remark
TVET aids in wealth creation	3.89	0.62	Agree
TVET aids in poverty reduction	3.13	0.71	Agree
TVET reduces unemployment	3.12	0.21	Agree
TVET aids the development of employable skills	3.27	0.42	Agree
TVET promote self-reliant	3.56	0.23	Agree
TVET promotes lifelong learning	3.71	0.29	Agree
TVET aids in job creation	3.52	0.63	Agree
TVET developed good work ethics	3.74	0.36	Agree
TVET promotes the development of behavioral changes	3.62	0.49	Agree
TVET developed youth capacity for employment readiness	3.45	0.57	Agree

Note. *N* = 120.

TVET educators strongly agree, as shown in both tables, that TVET programs play a major role in enhancing youth capacity. While Table 2 highlights TVET's socioeconomic effects, including job creation and poverty reduction, Table 1 highlights the

program's contribution to skill development and self-reliance. The study's conclusion that TVET is an essential tool for sustainable development is supported by the responses' consistency (low *SD*s) and acceptance of the null hypothesis (Table 1). However,

Table 2's comparatively lower mean for unemployment reduction points to possible difficulties in converting TVET training into quantifiable employment outcomes, which calls for more research.

Discussion

The finding of the study in Table 1 revealed that the 10 items that were pointed out as the role of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development were accepted by the respondents and that there is no significant difference in the responses of the TVET lecturers and instructors on the role of TVET in youth capacity building for sustainable development in federal universities in south-south Nigeria. This is in line with the Federal Republic of Nigeria's (FRN, 2013) conclusions regarding the function of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which include training and related skills for self-reliance and employment and the provision of skilled labor in the fields of applied sciences, technology, and advanced crafts. Furthermore, the results corroborate those of Akhuemonkhan and Raimi (2013), who found that TVET is an effective instrument for boosting individuals' abilities, accelerating technical improvement, promoting economic growth, and achieving sustainable development. Lastly, the results corroborate those of Maigida and Raymond (2014), who found that TVET aims to create the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce required to create wealth and reduce the risk of unemployment and poverty.

According to the study's findings in Table 2, the respondents agreed with the ten points that were highlighted as the influence of TVET on enhancing youth capacity for sustainable development. Okorie (2001), who discovered that TVET helps reduce poverty levels and produce jobs for unemployed graduates, supports this conclusion. Furthermore, TVET helps them (1) develop a strong work ethic; (2) gain experience in entrepreneurship, (3) become employable, (4) acquire skills and competencies that will enable them to positively contribute to the development of their communities, (5) encourage the development of behavioral change, and (6) instill a certain amount of responsibility and accountability (Statistics Botswana, 2013). After that, they can apply their imagination and vigor to enhance the provision of public services, lower youth unemployment, and eradicate youth poverty. Additionally, the findings corroborate the claim made by (UNESCO, 2009) that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs give students the abilities, skills, and knowledge needed to function effectively in the workplace, adapt to quickly changing economies and labor markets, and act responsibly in their communities.

Conclusion

The study aimed to determine how technical vocational education and training (TVET) could help young people increase their potential for sustainable development, but the findings indicate that TVET programs are important for sustainable development and that their impact on young people's capacity building is good for sustainable development. The study concluded that TVET for sustainable development is important for building youth capacity to effectively reduce hunger, poverty, unemployment, and dependency among young people. Among other things, it supports the development of skilled labor, innovative skills, job creation, self-employment, self-reliance, gainful employment, fast track technology process, and lifelong learning. Modern TVET programs will assist young people in meeting their present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Conducting public education campaigns and activities to educate and inform communities about the significance of TVET programs and effective co-ordination and co-

operation of TVET programs should be encouraged between the responsible bodies for sustainable development.

2. The government, through the youth capacity-building programs, should foster behavior change among youth and instill some level of responsibility and accountability in them.
3. TVET administrators should aid the development of vocational skills that will develop in youth character building and the general discipline of a work environment towards sustainable development.
4. Efforts should be made to strengthen the collaboration between industries, vocational institutions, and TVET providers so as to enable relevant content that meets labor needs to be taught to participants of various vocational training programs.
5. The Ministry of Education, through National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and its respective agencies charged with the responsibility of capacity building of the youth through vocational training, should conduct public education campaigns and activities to sensitize, educate, and inform youths in various communities about the significance of TVET programs.

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