

INFLUENCE OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING ON
POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NIGERIA (A CASE STUDY OF OYO STATE
AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT SCHEME, 2021)

AKINSEYE, Risikat Abimbola, (B.A., M.Sc., FCPA., ASPA., SECoPA., Ph.D)

Department of Public Administration The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJASR.2024.5702>

IJASR 2024

VOLUME 7

ISSUE 1 JANUARY – FEBRUARY

ISSN: 2581-7876

Abstract: Technical and Vocational Education Training allows people to learn specific skills for different types of jobs, mainly for technical or trade-based crafts; which quickly enables them to be part of a competitive workforce by enhancing their skills so they can cope with the rapidly changing technological world. This study aimed at providing answers to the research questions formulated thus: (i) what impact can Technical and Vocational Education have on the youth to earn a living in Nigeria? (ii) is Technical and Vocational Education achieving the set objectives of poverty reduction among the youth in Nigeria? (iii) what ways can Technical and Vocational Education help in reducing poverty among the youth in Nigeria? Cross-sectional design was used to examine 5% of the beneficiaries of the 2021 Oyo State Agricultural Investment Scheme through the use of a closed-ended questionnaire. Findings in this study revealed that the scheme has started yielding qualitative impacts for the state's food security and nutritional status, which is already among the best in Nigeria. This has contributed greatly in generating competitive human capital for economic development. To this end, government and corporate bodies should play vital roles in reducing poverty by empowering youth with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through strategic investments in technical and vocational education training so that they can become creative and hence, contribute to the social and economic development of the nation.

Keywords: TVET, poverty alleviation, agricultural investment, scheme

INTRODUCTION

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization described Technical and Vocational Education Training, sometimes referred to as TVET, as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the 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 economic and social life (UNESCO, 2006). TVET is an international term that was born in 1999 through UNESCO Second International Congress held in Seoul on Technical and Vocational Education. However, the system has evolved under the British Colonial and later the British Commonwealth influence. Nigeria as a member of United Nations Organizations is a signatory to several education charters among which are Education For All (EFA) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) states (Aina & Nwachukwu, 2012). Hence, it is imperative to consider TVET with respect to Nigeria and other developing countries in order to have a comprehensive insight on the concept and significance of TVET.

In most developing countries, TVET refers to non-academic technical education and practical training that develop the skills and knowledge of apprentices working in different sectors of industry and students trained in different technical vocational institutes, centres and schools (Moustafa, 2023). TVET uses formal, non-formal and informal means to enhance its system of learning. Examples of areas where TVET is mostly undertaken are electrical works, plumbing, automobile, vulcanizing, computer engineering, phone repairs, cloth weaving, agriculture, entertainment, hospitality, information technology, primary industries, and tourism (Abdullahi, 2010).

Poverty can be defined as a condition of having insufficient resources or income (Corbett, 2012). Oriahi & Aitufe (2010) define poverty as a state of shortage or deficiency of meeting basic needs. Africa is blessed with diverse

natural resources, yet it remains the least developed continent of the world. Many African countries have been engulfed by series of internal crises over the past three decades. As a result of these crises, poverty has increased throughout the nations, and it has underpinned the education and national development of the affected countries (Nwachukwu, 2014). Poverty connotes deprivation of the means of subsistence; the manifestation of poverty such as inadequate distribution of resources, lack of access to basic social services like education and health, food scarcity, low life expectancy, and lack of participation in decision making process (Fennal & Brown, 2006; Gartlehner, Hansen, Nissman, Lohr, & Carey, 2006). Among the comity of nations, Nigeria has been described as poor. Even on the continent of Africa, using selected world development indicators, Nigeria is poorly ranked (Oshewolo, 2010).

However, education of every citizen is essential in reducing poverty and enhancing national development (Ogudo & Nwachukwu, 2013). As a matter of fact, it has been discovered through several studies that Technical and Vocational Education Training provides knowledge and skills for employment, and has been recognized to be a crucial vehicle for social equity, inclusion, sustainable development and national development of most countries of the world (Afolabi, 2011). This type of education has the economic role of providing qualified manpower by changing the individual and enabling him to use complex technology. African Union (AU, 2011) stressed that TVET delivery systems are well placed to train the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce that Africa needs to create wealth and emerge out of poverty. Therefore, Technical and Vocational Education Training is a bedrock upon which a country's socio-economic, technological and cultural advancement can be built.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Technical and Vocational Education has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact on human resource development, productivity and economic development. However, despite the contribution of TVET to societal and economic development, Nigerian leaders have not given this aspect of education the attention it desires. According to available statistics, 40 percent of Nigeria's total population, or almost 83 million people, live below the country's poverty line of 137,430 naira (\$381.75) per year thereby ranking among the poorest of developing countries in the world (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

In particular, Oyo state has a high rate of unemployed graduates as well as youth having little or no education without adequate skills for self-employment. This could be one of the reasons for the state's underdevelopment and the high poverty rate. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the influence of Technical and Vocational Education Training on poverty alleviation in Nigeria with specific emphasis on Oyo state through the 2021 Agricultural Investment Scheme.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The core objective of this research is to examine the influence of Technical and Vocational Education Training on poverty alleviation in Nigeria. Specifically, the following research questions were formulated:

- i. What impact can Technical and Vocational Education have on the youth to earn a living in Nigeria?
- ii. Is Technical and Vocational Education achieving the set objectives of poverty reduction among the youth in Nigeria?
- iii. What ways can Technical and Vocational Education help in reducing poverty among the youth in Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey design for the research methodology, which deals with the method, strategies, and techniques used during the course of data collection and analyses. The use of questionnaire constituted the source of the primary data while the review of various literature works served as the secondary data source.

Sampling Technique, Sample Size and Study Location

A sample size of 50 respondents using Simple Random Sampling Technique was used for this study. The respondents were the beneficiaries of the Oyo State Agricultural Investment Scheme of 2021 upon their completion of the training. The survey was done through the distribution of questionnaires to fifty of the beneficiaries of the scheme at five geographical zones of Oyo state viz: Iseyin, Saki, Oje, Moniya and Bere; where they were carrying out their businesses such as farming and selling of agricultural produce.

According to **BUSINESS DAY** in the article "Oyo engages 1,000 youths, flags off \$50m agricultural investment", which is available at <https://www.google.com/amp/s/businessday.ng/news/article/oyo-engages-1000-youths-flags-off-50m-agricultural-investment/%3famp=1>, Oyo State government created new investment in agriculture and agribusiness worth \$50 million, with over 1,000 youths engaged under the first phase of the Youth Entrepreneurship in Agribusiness Project (YEAP) in 2021. The programme was administered by the Oyo State Agribusiness Development Agency (OYSADA). The newly launched scheme is expected to empower 15,000 women and youth through agribusiness entrepreneurship by 2028 and generate 45,000 indirect jobs in the long run. Thirty percent of the beneficiaries in the phase of the scheme were females, who were expected to be incubated at the IITA-Oyo State Agribusiness Park in Awe, where they would receive both technical and entrepreneurial training and start-up grants to establish sustainable income-generating activities in agriculture and related enterprises.

Speaking at the launch and commissioning of Oyo State Agribusiness Development Agency (OYSADA) headquarters in Saki, Governor Seyi Makinde said that the YEAP initiative would enhance young people's access to employment opportunities and well-paying jobs in agriculture and related enterprises.

"The project complements ongoing work by OYSADA in the Oyo State Youth in Agribusiness Programme and seeks to promote social and occupational inclusion of youth in profitable ventures that will create income, decent, sustainable jobs in the tomato, vegetable, cereal, livestock, roots and tuber value chains and seed production. "Oyo State youths are to be the major contributors to the development of agribusiness in the state. The present government is working towards making Oyo state the agricultural hub of Nigeria". "The first phase of the YEAP will benefit 1,000 unemployed young people. Furthermore, through capacity-building, the project will have qualitative implications for the state's food security and nutritional status, which is already among the best in Nigeria."

Period of study

The study was carried out over a period of five months between November 2021 and March 2022 in order to generate adequate data used for the research.

Instrumentation and Empirical Investigation

The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of two sections A and B. Section A was designed to elicit information on the background of the respondents using such variables as: age, sex, level of education, marital status, religion and family size. Section B comprised 15 questionnaire items. Each item in the research questions had a four-point rating scale of **Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2)** and **Strongly Disagree (1)**. The questions were basically on the perceptions of the respondents on the Agricultural Investment Scheme viz. their gains, challenges, and advice for the government and their fellow youth.

The instrument was validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan in terms of appropriateness of the research objectives. The questions submitted for expert debriefing were evaluated by the experts as suitable, partially suitable or unsuitable with respect to the aim of the study. The questions deemed suitable by the experts were used as they were, whereas the questions the experts deemed partially suitable were amended according to their suggestions. None of the questions was deemed unsuitable by the experts; therefore, there was no question that was excluded from the form.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by using Cronbach's alpha, which gave a score of 0.77. This high value of internal consistency obtained was considered appropriate for the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The participants' responses from the questionnaires were collated and the information gathered was combined, organized and interpreted within the framework of the study. The questions were drafted based on the objectives of TVET in Oyo state which include promotion of social and occupational inclusion of youth in profitable ventures that will create income, decent, sustainable jobs in food production. The scheme, which was zoned across all the 33 local government areas of Oyo state, was handled by seasoned personnel in the agriculture sector. The training was basically on tomato, vegetable, cereal, livestock, roots and tuber value chains and seed production. The training lasted for three months and the beneficiaries were assisted thereafter with grants from the state government to establish what they had learnt in the course of the programme.

The beneficiaries of the scheme were very happy as majority of them are now self-dependent in their areas of specialization. For instance, Idris Akinteye, one of YEAP beneficiaries from Kajola local government area, Oke-Ogun, remarked: "This is my first time of being in this kind of gathering, and I really commend Governor Makinde for this laudable programme. With this, I can say that youths in the state have a bright future."

From the information collated, reviewed and analyzed, 48 out of the 50 participants in the research survey (that is, 96%) strongly agreed that the Agricultural Investment Scheme was of great benefit to them. This was attributed to the free training and logistics costs which were borne by the Oyo state government as well as the start-up capital which was also provided by the state government. This finding is in line with the work of Oviawe (2020), who opined that poverty can only be eliminated if the students who have been urged to go to school actually receive some tangible benefits for their years spent in school.

Likewise, 37 out of the 50 respondents (that is, 74%) strongly agreed that Technical and Vocational Education Training should be encouraged and supported by the government in order to prepare people for self-employment. As a matter of fact, 36 out of the 50 respondents (which is 72%) opined that young people should consider having Technical and Vocational Education Training in lieu of the conventional university education as a result of cost-efficiency and less time for skill acquisition.

Above all, 41 out of the 50 respondents, representing 82% of the survey participants strongly agreed that Technical and Vocational Education Training is a tool for poverty alleviation not only in Oyo state, but in Nigeria as a whole. This corroborates the finding of Fluitman (2002) that "there is a link between poverty reduction and skills training and increased growth, productivity and innovation, in particular for the informal sector. This finding is also in line with Popoola (2012) who postulated that TVET programme is the most adequate tool for self-reliance, economic survival and advancement of knowledge accumulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the success of technical and vocational education as a viable tool for poverty alleviation, the following recommendations should be put into consideration:

- (i) Poverty alleviation programmes in form of TVET should be periodically organized for the youth by the government (both state and federal) in order to enhance skills for self-reliance among the youth.
- (ii) Such programmes mentioned above should be accompanied by grants from the government for easy take-off of the vocation learnt.
- (iii) Since vocational education and training remains an indispensable tool for poverty reduction in Nigeria, policy makers and curriculum planners should work towards making vocational subjects in schools and colleges compulsory.

CONCLUSION

The Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) provides knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant for employment or self-employment as earlier discussed in this study. This implies that it helps to solve the problems of unemployment thereby reducing the number of people who depend on government for jobs. It is generally believed that one of the major parameters for measuring a country's economic growth, development and self-reliance is the extent of the country's development in technical and vocational education.

Despite the abundance of human and natural resources, poverty still remains prevalent in Nigeria. However, TVET is a viable and reliable instrument for economy transformation, and it can be utilized to reduce the level of poverty in Nigeria. TVET has many challenges that hinder its effective output in Nigeria which include poor funding, unfavourable government policies, lack of standard teaching facilities and training laboratories, poor remuneration for the teachers, and poor management of the scheme. It is noteworthy that the findings of this study provided corresponding answers to the research questions earlier raised, which affirm the importance of TVET in the economic development of any nation. Therefore, if the Nigerian government could give more attention to the management of Technical and Vocational Education Training, there would be great economic development and drastic reduction in the poverty level of the country.

REFERENCES

1. Abdullahi, K. (2010). Skills and Education: A Policy History. *Journal of Vocational Research*, 3, 16 - 34.
2. Afolabi, M.M. (2011). Poverty Alleviation and National Development in Nigeria Through Women Empowerment. Retrieved from <https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/>
3. African Union (AU). (2011). Strategy to Revitalize Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Africa. Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF II+), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
4. Aina, O. and Nwachukwu, O. (2012). Emerging Challenges in Business Studies Teachers in the New Senior Secondary School Curriculum. *Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN)*, 2(1), 24 - 26.
5. Corbett, T.J. (2012). Poverty. In: *Encarta Encyclopaedia*. Microsoft® Student 2008 (DVD). Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA.
6. Fennal, M., and Brown, C. (2006). The relationship between obesity and poverty in children. *JOCEPT: The journal of Chi Eta phi Soroty*, 52(1), 10-15.
7. Fluitman, F. (2002). Vocational Education And Training: An Important Tool For Poverty Reduction In Nigeria. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356732614_VOCATIONAL_EDUCATION_AND_TRAINING_AN_IMPORTANT_TOOL_FOR_POVERTY_REDUCTION_IN_NIGERIA
8. AND_TRAINING_AN_IMPORTANT_TOOL_FOR_POVERTY_REDUCTION_IN_NIGERIA
9. Gartlehner, G., Hansen, R., Nissman, D., Lohr, K., and Carey, T. S. (2006). Criteria for Distinguishing Effectiveness From Efficacy Trials in Systematic Reviews. *Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*, (12), 1 – 28.
10. Moustafa, M. (2023). Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Challenges and Priorities in Developing Countries. Retrieved from: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://nevoc.unesco.org/forum/TVET_Challenges_and_Priorities_in_Developing_Countries.pdf&ved=2ahUKEiG_K7LjCAxVrVEEAHcotCygQFnoECBMQAQ&usq=AOvVaw0SLB6K4F5yWcSwG1w7nBte
11. National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). “2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria” Report. World Bank Group.
12. Nwachukwu, P.O. (2014). Poverty Reduction through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies*, 4(14), 34 - 38.
13. Ogudo. P. and Nwachukwu, O (2013). Improving Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) in Nigeria through the Public - Private Partnership Approach.
14. *International Journal of Research and Advancement in Education Methods*, 10, 47 - 54.
15. Oriahi, C.I. and Aitufe, A.O. (2010). Education for the Eradication of Poverty. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(6), 306 - 310.
16. Oshewolo, S. (2010). Galloping Poverty in Nigeria: An Appraisal of the Government's Interventionist Policies. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 12(6), 264 - 274.

17. Oviawe, J. I. (2020). Strategies for Funding Technical Vocational Education and Training for Achieving Sustainable National Development in Nigeria in a Post-Oil Boom Economy. *Vietnam Journal of Education*, 4(2), 1 - 10.
18. Popoola, O.B. (2012). Technical Vocational Education as a Poverty Alleviation Tool. *International Journal of Vocational Studies*, 6(5), 3 - 8.
19. UNESCO (2006). *Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit*. Paris: Section for Education for Sustainable Development (ED/UNP/ESD).