



# ROLE OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN CURBING SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA

## ABSTRACT

*This paper brings to the fore the role of Vocational and Technical Education(VTE) in curbing Security Challenges in Nigeria. It is a field of study that is aimed at equipping the individuals, especially youth, with the relevant skills and knowledge that will enhance their functionality in the society where they live. Vocational and technical education equips*

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## Introduction

The concept of insecurity connotes different meanings such as: absence of safety; danger; hazard; uncertainty and lack of protection. Achumba et al (2018) defines insecurity from two perspectives. Firstly, insecurity is the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune.

Education is a human right, a public good and a public responsibility. Without inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



learners with both key competences and specific vocational skills. Types of insecurity in Nigeria include: kidnapping and abduction, armed robberies, suicide bombing, militancy, banditry among others. It was revealed that lack of quality education or training, lack or inadequate basic infrastructures, corruption and corrupt practices of government officials, unemployment and poverty are some of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. Types of Vocational and Technical Education that will boost youth self-reliant and curb security challenges are: catering craft practice, electrical installation, mechanical engr. craft practice, motor Vehicle Mechanics, painting and decorating, business studies, radio and television electronics, graphics arts. Vocational and technical education has played a major role in helping students to develop practical skills, it enhances the development of the economy, functional vocational and technical education helps solve insecurity issues, security challenges may be reduced through investment in vocational and technical education. The curriculum of VTE enhances creativity and innovation, insecurity problems will linger or continue if the government doesn't make vocational and technical education functional, most of the youth that involves in cultism, banditry, thuggery, kidnapping, militancy and insurgency are unemployed. Based on the foregoing, the following suggestions were made: Government should make vocational and technical schools functional by providing them with adequate human, financial and material resources that will aid teaching and learning in the technical schools in the country. There should be societal re-orientation on the relevance of the VTE by the state government and the curriculum of vocational and technical education should be improved in line with the current and global best practices among others.

**Keywords:** Education, Vocational and Technical Education (VTE), insecurity,

UNES CO, 2021). Education is today a key factor in the development of human and material resources in every nation. It is a process for transmission, preservation and improvement of the culture of a people.



According to Offorma (2016), education is a process through which human beings become morally good members of their society. Education is relied upon as the bedrock and tool for nation building. This implies that no meaningful development or peace can take place in a country that lacks adequately trained manpower no matter how well-endowed such a nation might be. This was rightly affirmed by Garba et al (2017) that people and nations are what they are because of the nature and types of education they have been exposed to. It is in recognition of developing society that governments of many nations commit immense resources to the educational sector to ensure citizens are trained to acquire the desired skills; also policies are tailored towards ensuring accessibility to the general public.

The word vocation refers to a strong feeling of suitability for a particular career or occupation. Okoye (2019) defines vocational education as a skill-based programme designed for skill acquisition at a lower level of education. It is planned to offer people the opportunity of refining themselves in their proficiency, especially about their current or future occupation. When people hear vocation education, they believe it is for those who cannot afford a quality education. However, this is a very wrong assumption. The truth is, there are three domains of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives of 1956. The three categories are cognitive domain (knowledge), affective domain (attitude) and psychomotor domain (skills). So, placing more emphasis on one domain to the detriment to others is not healthy as is the case with Nigeria.

Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) is a field of study that is aimed at equipping individuals especially youth with the relevant skills and knowledge that will enhance their functionality in the society where they live. It inculcates in the learners the necessary knowledge and skills needed in the present day of science and technology. Nwalado and Nwalado (2019) defines VTE as a programme designed to train and equip learners with occupational skills, knowledge and competencies required for them to be self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to the economic development of the nation through agricultural industries, commerce, traditional crafts and cottage industries which bring about peaceful coexistence of people within the society. Also, Ekong (2019) opines that



VTE is a specialized training organized either in a formal or informal setting for the purpose of imparting occupational skills to individuals or groups of individuals. This is aimed at enabling them to acquire skills that would make them render specialized services or become creative which at the end, would make them to be self-employed and consequently, employers of labour.

VTE is a means to an end, transmission of knowledge and acquisition of skills that are relevant to various occupation/field. VTE is an education that prepares an individual for gainful employment. Vocational and technical education equips learners with both key competences and specific vocational skills. Work-based learning need to be included in all initial vocational training courses, ensuring that young people have the knowledge, skills and competences needed for a successful first step into the labor market. Provision of attractive and inclusive vocational training with highly qualified teachers and trainers, innovative learning methods, high quality infrastructure and facilities, a high labour market relevance and pathways to further education and training, improvement of permeability between the different education and training. Subsystems (school, education, vocational training, higher education, adult education) and cater for the validation of non-formal and informal learning including competences acquired in the work place. Provision of easily accessible and high quality lifelong information, guidance and counseling services which form coherent network and which enable citizens to take sound decisions and to manage their learning and professional careers beyond traditional gender profiles.

To make vocational and technical education functional, students must be taught under a conducive and well-equipped environment that is a replica of where they are expected to perform after graduation. Supporting this view, Ibidapo et al (2018) remarked that principles of vocational education include the following: vocational education will be efficient in proportion as the environment in which the learner is trained as a replica of the environment in which he must subsequently work. Effective vocational training can only be given where the training jobs are carried out in the same way with the same operation, the same tools and the same machines as in the occupation itself. Vocational education



must recognize conditions as they are and must train individuals to meet the demands of the market. Effective vocational education can only be given to the selected group of individuals who need it, want, and are able to profit by it. These principles underscore the need to provide necessary equipment, exact teaching environment, considerations of employment or self-employment opportunities.

Unemployed persons, according to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001) are persons above a specified age (usually 15) not being in paid employment or self-employment but currently available for work during the reference period. The unemployment rate in Nigeria is estimated to reach 32.5 percent. The figure is projected to increase further in 2022. Chronological data show that the unemployment rate in Nigeria rose constantly in the past years. What is driving unemployment in Nigeria? One factor that is driving unemployment in Nigeria is the state of the economy. The economy has not been in good shape for the past five years and first went into a recession in 2016. In 2020 in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic it plunged into another recession – its worst in four decades (National Bureau of Statistics NBS, 2021).

Unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially the youth is a major cause of insecurity and violent crimes in Nigeria. Youth unemployment in particular has contributed to the rising cases of violence and conflict in Nigeria. To confirm this, the result from world poverty clock in June 2018, showed that Nigeria has the highest number of extremely poor individuals in the whole world above India. It is said that idle hands are the devil's workshop. Energetic youths who have nothing worthwhile to do will likely think of something bad or evil to do and this is the situation of millions of Nigerian youths today.

However, this problem might be solved or reduced if the vibrant youth that constitute more than 60% of the population are equipped with skills to be self-employed which could be achieved through vocational and technical education. This problem may persist if the government doesn't look away from the traditional way of curbing insecurity to a more technical approach. A technical approach is to be adopted seeing that



the traditional approach currently been adopted to curb insecurity is not achieving the desired result.

This study will be tackled under the following six (6) angles as follows:

**1. Security Challenges in Nigeria**

The following, according to Oludare et al (2015), are some of the security challenges in Nigeria:

- i. Kidnapping and abduction,
- ii. Armed robberies,
- iii. Suicide bombing,
- iv. Militancy,
- v. Banditry,
- vi. Insurgency
- vii. Cattle-Rustling, and
- viii. Carnages of all forms

**2. Causes of insecurity in Nigeria**

The state of insecurity of lives and property in Nigeria is an issue that has generated the attention of researchers. Insecurity is a threat to national growth and development and Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity. For some years now, the government has allocated huge amount of money from the national budget to security. Despite all the efforts of the government, many lives and property are destroyed and almost everyone feel unsafe in their bedroom. Otto and Ukpere (2017) observed that the Nigerian society is getting more and more insecure, more people are involved in crimes and they are becoming more ruthless, and desperate.

Causes of insecurity in Nigeria are but not limited to the following: lack of quality education or training, lack or inadequate basic infrastructures, corruption and corrupt practices of government officials, unemployment and poverty, materialism and the display of wealth with impunity, ethnic superiority, perceived victimization, porous borders, weak security system, domination and exploitation, religious superiority, hate speech, social media among others.

**3. The Effects of Insecurity In Nigeria**



Origa (2019) enumerated the effects of insecurity in Nigeria as follows:

- i. Social dislocation and displacement of people,
- ii. Social tensions and new pattern of settlements which encourages Muslims/Christians divisions,
- iii. Heightens hostility between indigenes and settlers,
- iv. General atmosphere of mistrust,
- v. Fear,
- vi. Anxiety,
- vii. Inhumane treatment of people especially in areas where rape, child abuse and neglect are used as instruments of war and
- viii. Deepening of hunger and poverty.

#### **4. Types of Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria**

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) TVE is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of 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 social and economic life. The goal of TVE is to provide trained manpower in applied sciences, technology business particularly at craft, advance craft and technical levels, provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development and give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals for self-reliant economically.

The following are VTE courses as a curriculum response to make VTE count in Nigerian education system.

- i. Bricklaying, block-laying and concreting (BBC).
- ii. Carpentry and joinery
- iii. Catering Craft Practice (CCP)
- iv. Electrical Installation
- v. Mechanical Engineering Craft practice (MECP)
- vi. Motor Vehicle Mechanics



vii.	Painting and Decorating (PD) Business studies	viii.
ix.	Radio and Television Electronics (RTE) Graphics Art	x.
xi.	Bricklaying, block-laying and concrete Carpentry and joinery,	xii.
xiii.	Catering craft practice, Electrical installation,	xiv.
xv.	Mechanical Engineering, Motor vehicle mechanics,	xvi.
xvii.	Painting and decorating, Radio TV & elect. servicing	xviii.
xix.	Graphics art Clothing and textile	xx.
xxi.	Dyeing and bleaching Photography	xxiii.
xxiv.	Data Processing Store keeping	xxv.
xxvi.	Fishery Animal Husbandary	xxvii.

**5. Role of Technical and Vocational Education in curbing security challenges in Nigeria**

Functional VTE is a training or education that is useful, practical and able to impact learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to be self-reliant as well as preparing them for useful living within the society. Nwalado and Nwalado, (2019) averred that functional VTE will help recipients to unleash the latent potentials in them and make them job providers rather than job seekers. For vocational and technical education to be functional it must be sufficiently funded, adequately equipped with qualified personnel and good infrastructural facilities. Functional vocational and technical education is expected to promote the wellbeing of economic growth, promote peace and security and enhance overall development of any nation. In line with this, Joseph (2019), argues that with functional vocational and



technical education, there would be a remarkable reduction in the rate of such crimes as robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, assassination, insecurity, war, internet fraud, prostitution, militancy as well as reduction in the rate of poverty in the nation. Recipients of vocational and technical education programme need to be trained on how to raise capital for funding commercial farming, business centers, catering services, tailoring, electronic mega shops, furniture workshops etc. All these corroborates with the views of the researchers that functional vocational and technical education is geared towards the production of the educated man who can effectively work with his head, heart and hands according to Blooms taxonomy of educational objectives. Functional vocational and technical education can equip youths with the necessary skills to be self-reliant. This is in line with Usman and Negedu (2016) whose findings revealed that there is a need for paradigm shift to vocational and technical education by government at all levels. A strong industrial sector partnership need to be forged with vocational and technical training institutions with a view to producing the required skilled youth that will be key players in the nations quest for technological relevance. Functional vocational and technical education will help youth to be self-reliant. Functional vocational and technical education will solve the problem of unemployment, vocational and technical education has gone a long way in reducing poverty among the unemployed youth in the society, vocational and technical education has helped students to develop practical skills, vocational and technical education enhances the development of the economy, functional vocational and technical education helps solve insecurity issues, security challenges may be reduced through investment in Vocational and technical education. All these are also incongruence with the views of the researchers that the curriculum of VTE enhances creativity and innovation, insecurity problems will linger or continue if the Government doesn't make vocational and technical education functional. This is because most of the youths that involves in



cultism, banditry, thuggery, kidnapping, militancy and insurgency are unemployed.

Study conducted by Gidado (2014) revealed that Vocational and technical education is a weapon for sustainable development in Nigeria in the sense that it has the prospect of leading to socio-economic development, entrepreneurship development, production of competent manpower, rural transformation, provision of relative security, etc. The paper also identified public perception on Vocational and technical education, poor funding, obsolete curriculum, acute shortage of vocational and technical education teachers, among others as the constraints facing the programme in Nigeria. Finally, as a way forward, the paper recommended that vocational and technical education should be well funded; there should be societal re-orientation on the relevance of the programme, the curriculum of vocational and technical education should be improved in line with the current and global best practices, the available teachers should be well motivated and there should be improvement in the provision of electricity and telecommunication services.

In another study that was conducted by Nwalado and Nwalado (2019) on Functional vocational and technical Education for sustainable peace and security In Nigeria. The paper examines concept of Vocational and Technical Education, functional vocational and technical education, objectives of vocational and technical education, peace and security, VTE for sustainable peace and security, barriers to effective implementation of Vocational Technical Education. The paper opined that for sustainable peace and security to be achieved, the citizens should be productively engaged in any of the vocational areas and government should establish more vocational centres to give opportunities to those who did not pass through formal education and also strengthen the existing ones. This is also in tandem with the opinions of the researchers that government should step up skill acquisition programmes already in existence to boost VTE.



Also in a study that was carried out by Usman and Negedu (2016) on technical and vocational education as a means of empowering Nigerians to combat poverty, unemployment and insecurity. This paper examines, though not in details, the inefficiencies of various governments' empowerment programmes aimed at empowering the citizens to combat hunger, poverty and unemployment. The paper also highlights steps that should be taken to diffuse technological and vocational skills among the youths, private sector and those in the formal sector. It was recommended that a major paradigm shift to technical and vocational education be embarked upon by government at all levels and that a strong industrial sector partnership be forged with vocational and technical training institutions with a view to producing the required skilled labour that will be key players in the nations quest for technological relevance. This also corroborates with the views of the researchers that Non- governmental organizations, private enterprise should support VTE by providing laboratories, equipment, workshops, facilities and machines for technical schools.

6. **Challenges of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, there is too much emphasis on university education which has reduced the economic opportunities for those who are more work-oriented. Not everybody can afford a university degree, and not everyone is academically inclined. People need to be allowed to learn valuable hand-on skills. In the long run, these skills can act as a means in which income is generated. We have had a lot of successful entrepreneurs who are changing and shaping the business world – for example, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs among others. These people learnt Technical and vocational skills which impacted and led them into designing technologies that provide solutions to the world.

TVE can be thoroughly dealt with, only if the issue affecting its implementation to the educational sector are sorted. Technical and vocational training can contribute to the reduction of poverty, insecurity, hunger and unemployment if the challenges are



addressed. The following are some of the challenges of technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

1. Inadequate qualified trained teachers – Most educational institutions lack qualified teachers that can handle vocational subjects. Qualified TVE educators play a significant role in ensuring that their students enjoy practical learning. Many educational institutions do not see the need to explain vocational/technical education to students in the first place. Hence the reason they exclude it from their curriculum and therefore do not require qualified teachers for their students.
2. Insufficient facilities – TVE departments in schools in Nigeria do not have the facilities or workspace to train and educate students. According to Origa (2015) only 40% of institutions of Higher learning in Nigeria have laboratory or workshop space for technical education programme. The lack of sufficient facilities makes it difficult to provide high-quality vocational education.
3. Lack of training and incentives to staff – Most educational institutions do not educate and train their teams on vocational education. Without appropriate training, employees can become demotivated and this may impact negatively on the learning process.
4. Lack of political will – Political office holders in Nigeria show lack of concern in introducing VTE into school's curriculum. Lawmaker's attention to VTE is negligible, their devotion to the success of the economy is focused on other sectors.
5. Nigeria's value system – Nigerians have this mentality that a university degree is more important than technical or social training. There is too much emphasis on getting a university qualification, not bearing in mind whether the holder possesses the required knowledge and skills. But VTE need to be taught to students for necessary career skills that are necessary in the business world.

### **Conclusion**

Vocational and technical education is the type of education that is aimed at equipping the individuals especially youths with the relevant skills and knowledge that will enhance their functionality in the society where they live. It inculcates in the learner the necessary knowledge and skills



needed in the present day of science and technology could be a veritable instrument to combat the security challenges in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it is clear that there is high rate of insecurity. There is also the issue poverty and unemployment which are the major factors responsible for insecurity in Nigeria. In order to eradicate or reduce the level of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria therefore, greater emphasis must be placed on VTE. VTE provides students with life skills to become productive entrepreneurs, as it breeds creative and innovative ideas. Functional vocational and technical education will equip the youths with skills and competences that will make them to be self-reliant and job providers rather than a job seekers and as such they may not have time to engage in social vices.

### **Suggestions**

The following suggestions were made to help curb insecurity challenges in Nigeria:

1. Government should make vocational and technical schools functional by providing them with adequate human, financial and material resources that will aid teaching and learning in the technical schools in the country.
2. Non- governmental organizations, private enterprise should support VTE by providing laboratories, equipment, workshops, facilities and machines for technical schools.
3. Scholarships/loans should be given to individuals in the field of VTE in order to grow academically and be self-reliant individual.
4. There should be societal re-orientation on the relevance of the VTE by the state government.
5. The curriculum of vocational and technical education should be improved in line with the current global best practices.
6. Parents/caregivers should not discourage their children or wards from attending vocational and technical schools but rather they should encourage them and give them necessary support.
7. The Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria should go on with the current campaign of professionalizing teaching profession through conducting examinations and registering qualified teachers.

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