



ABSTRACT

This paper examined vocational and technical education as a means to solving insecurity in Nigeria. It identified the need to re-engineer vocational and technical education towards productive social enterprises by acquiring various vocational and technical skills, through education and socio – cultural

VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A PANACEA TO INSECURITY IN NIGERIA.

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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is not only the most populous nation in Africa, according to the National Youth Development Policy (FGN, 2001) which defines youths as people aged between 18-35 years, youths make up to about 40% of the Nigerian population. These youths are faced with myriad of problems realities which include poverty, conflicts disease, and particularly unemployment. Dabalán, et al., (2000) noted that the problem of unemployment in the country is traceable to the disequilibrium between the labour market and lack of required employable skills of the graduates, supporting this, Nwafor (2006) asserted that most youths that are not gainfully employed become agents of social destabilization and disunity, economic sabotage and thuggery. Youths are filled with energy and when this energy is positively channeled or guarded, they are highly productive, and hence they are likely to contribute to the overall development of the society. On the other hand, when the energy is negatively



value orientation. The paper also examined the causes of insecurity in Nigeria such as unemployment, corruption, security system weakness, poverty, poor health care delivery services, decayed and collapsed infrastructure, porous borders, injustices and socio-religious crises. The primary focus of this paper is that vocational and technical education can serve as an effective tool for solving insecurity thereby ensuring development of the country. It also critically examined the role insecurity played in under developing the Nigerian economy. It recommended among others that the government should improve the provision of infrastructure to institutions of vocational and technical education, employ more teachers on that field and relevant vocational and technical education skills should be taught to Nigerians especially youths that will not only make them to be self employed but equally employ citizens and thereby ensuring security, growth and development of Nigeria.

Keywords: Vocational, Technical, Education, Insecurity, and Nigeria.

channeled restiveness and its resultant effect are likely to be felt.

It is therefore not very surprising that in recent times the Nigeria society is facing many difficulties which include insecurity, religious crises, ethnic clashes and social disintegration agitations among others. The activities of these nefarious groups like Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Arewa youth consultative forum, e.t.c. There is no nation that is void of violence and criminalities but when a nation starts to experience organized crimes such that there exists a situation whereby people carry arms regardless of what they themselves will go through during the process, you begin to wonder at the level of discontentment in that society, and when the age bracket of these criminals is analyzed, it reveals the rate of the nations education, skills acquisition, technical-know how, human capital development and productive capacity



of such a nation that cannot accommodate her youths (Business day, 2012). These youths can be accommodated given the right education which equips them with needed skills and technical know-how on how to keep them positively engaged and equally participate in growing and developing themselves, others and the nation

Education

Generally, education is a viable tool for national development which requires deliberate plan to suit the development needs of a nation. More so, it is geared towards the system producing the right type of manpower in the right quality and quantity for nation building. It is an exercise that engages every one. It is a process that enables the individuals to live as useful and acceptable members of a society. An individual may go through liberal, general education or acquire knowledge and be useful to him and to the society at large. Education means more than just going to school (formal education).

Oluwatimilehin (2002), opined that education is that which promotes self realization and self survival. Ajibewa (2003), defined education as a process of helping the individual to lead the fullest life he/she is capable of living through the understanding of the past and present heritage and possibly able to participate and contribute to the future development of the society. Education is said to be the common property of everyone, it is the prime creator and in a facet, the most complex human behavior, Amimani and Ogunyinka (2011). In view of this situation, the Nigeria education policy makers have made frantic efforts to review and revise the policy on education in terms of its relevance to the needs of the individuals and those of the society in consonance with the realities of our environment and the modern world. Consequently the Federal Government adopted education as an instrument par excellence for effecting National development and the unambiguous declaration that “not only is education the greatest force that can be used to bring about redress, it is also the greatest investment that a nation can make for the quick development of its economic, political, sociological and human resources (FGN 2004:5-8). Education is a tool that



plays the role of changing the mind of an individual constructively since it provides the learners with the needed knowledge, skill, values, attitudes and competencies to contribute meaningfully in building a nation. Consequently, the National Policy on Education revised in 2004, section 8(d) states clearly that tertiary education shall help undergraduates “acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society”.

Vocational & Technical Education

Vocational and Technical education is a comprehensive term referring to the education process when it involves, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Osayomuanbor and Edokpayi (2008), define vocational and technical education as that type of education that train and help to prepare the individual for employment in a specific occupation or trade. Usman, (2012), opined that vocational and technical education is a systematic study of techniques for making and doing things.

Vocational and Technical education leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills, as well as basic scientific knowledge that enables the individual to be prepared for the world of work. Vocational and Technical Education is an integral part of general education, it is a means of preparing students for participation in world of work, an aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenships as well as an instrument for promoting environmentally healthy sustainable development.

Vocational and Technical Education trains or develops individual in the fields of vocation and technology so that the country can through the activities of such experts enjoy the good fruit of technology and at the same time contribute her own quota to the overall technological development of the world. Vocational and Technical Education is aimed at making individuals that will be well armed with skills and knowledge to enable them secure employment either by establishing a small-scale outfit, or by being gainfully employed thereby utilizing their skills, abilities and competencies that are



cultivated and inculcated by this type of education are of immeasurable importance in the socio-economic life of today's society.

The Objectives of Vocational and Technical Education

The National Policy on Education (2004), enumerated the objectives of vocational and technical education in Nigeria as follows:-

1. To provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particularly at sub-professional grades.
2. To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commerce and economic development.
3. To provide people who can apply specific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.
4. To give an introduction of professional studies in engineering and other technologies.
5. To give training and impart the skill leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant
6. To enable our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

It is very clear that if the teeming youths in Nigeria are availed with the right skills, technical –know how through vocational and technical education, they will have little or no time for participating in activities that challenge the security in Nigeria.

Insecurity

Insecurity apart from being the fear of every Nigerian has become the word on the lips of every Nigerian and a discussion topic where two or three Nigerians gather. Insecurity is a state of being subject to danger. It is the anxiety one experience when one feels vulnerable and insecure. . It is as a state of being not secure, lack of confidence. Achumba,Ighomeroho Akpor(2013),defined insecurity as 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. 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 misfortunes. Insecurity is a state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection.

From all the definitions of insecurity above, it reveals a major point that those affected by insecurity are uncertain, unaware of what would happen and they are also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur. Nigerians are engaged in business activity, either directly or indirectly, to satisfy unlimited human wants. Therefore, business has become part and parcel of not only Nigerians but the global world in general. It is crystal clear that insecurity is detrimental to general well being of the people with its resultant effects in the areas of illnesses, low life expectancy, low quality of life, suspicion, lack of unity, national dis-integration avoidable and untimely deaths of precious lives.

The country is presently bedeviled with different cases of insecurity that comes in different shades like Boko Haram uprising in Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, and Gombe states of Northern Nigeria which marked a tipping point in the conflict between the sect and the government authorities. From 2009 till date, the sect has engaged in arson, bombing, shooting and stabbing with disdain and impunity. Another one is ethnic militias like the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), Odua People's Congress (OPC). There's also the farmers/herdsmen clashes, kidnapping as well as banditry. All these have left fear, uncertainty, dislike and lack of trust among Nigerians such that the issue of oneness among Nigerians which can lead to peace and national development is being threatened.

Causes of Insecurity In Nigeria

Ali (2013) stated since the country returned to democratic rule in 1999, the fear of insecurity in Nigeria is on the increase and this has been compounded



by the rising waves of terrorism. Many scholars have identified several causes of insecurity in Nigeria that are inimical to socio-economic and national development (Ali, 2013; Okorie 2011; Ezeoba, 2011; Salawu, 2010). These causes include among others;

Security System Weakness: This is one major variable contributing to the high level of insecurity in Nigeria, which can be attributed to many factors which include inadequate funding of the security agencies in Nigeria, poor welfare of security personnel, and inadequate personnel as well as lack of modern equipment both in weaponry and training.

Unemployment/Poverty: Youth's unemployment have contributed to the rising cases of insecurity in the country, supporting Adagba et al (2012) stated that unemployment/poverty among Nigerians, especially the youths is a major cause of insecurity and crimes in Nigeria. Equally the failure of successive government administrations to solve the problem of unemployment in Nigeria has further compounded the insecurity problem of the country.

Porous Borders: There is an unchecked inflow of Small Arms and Light Weapons into the country which has aided militancy and criminality in Nigeria (Hazen and Horner, 2007), supporting this, Achumba et al. (2013) observe that the porous frontiers of the country, where individual movements are largely untracked have contributed to the level of insecurity in Nigeria.

Pervasive Material Inequalities and Unfairness: There is the growing awareness of inequalities and disparities in life chances presently in Nigeria this also contributes to cause insecurity in the nation.

Systemic and Political Corruption: This has increased government failure and breakdown of institutional infrastructures. No doubt this twin evil and hydra-headed monster has held Nigerians and the Nigerian state captive devoid of much needed growth and development and hence causing insecurity to the nation.

Vocational and Technical Education: A Panacea to Insecurity in Nigeria.

The present insecurity challenges in Nigeria are mostly attributed to youth restiveness, resulting from increasing unemployment and this has led to



terrorists recruiting the youth to carry out their destructive activities. Vocational and Technical Education is the solution to unemployment, youth restiveness and idleness. This type of education has many trades that come under it which is capable of empowering the youths with skills and at the end they will be empowered with varieties of skills and technical know-how to be self-employed and even become employers of labour. Vocational and Technical Education is mostly concerned with production of goods and services that are essential to life in fields of Agriculture Education, Business Education, Fine and Applied Arts, Home Economics and Technical Education which youths can be trained, thereby empowering them with skills to become self-employed, these areas include:

Fish Farming: It involves raising fish commercially in tanks or enclosures or in ponds for human food (Merriam-Webster Dictionary,2015). Fish farming is growing at about 6.5% per year globally. This type of farming can be started with small amount of capital and can be used as a hobby.

Photography: Photographers take photographs and make money by displaying, sale or use of those photographs. Private Corporation like newspaper companies employs photographers and at the same time one can own photo studios. At different occasions the services of photographers are needed,like weddings,naming ceremonies e.t.c.

Animal Husbandry: Animal husbandry is a profitable venture that one can go into as a business. It is the action of rearing domestic animals mainly for profitable purpose, it includes goats, sheep, poultry rabbits, pigs,snails e.t.c. Animals could be exported out life or slaughtered as meat to foreign countries thus, the business man and the country will earn foreign exchange. Balogun (2013), supported this by maintaining that micro livestock farming involves the production/farming of little known animals with promising economic future.

Cosmetology: By teaching our youths the art cosmetology(make-up), they can become skilled in make-up segment. This can take many dimensions, from the beauty make-up for women and brides, make-up for our actresses and actors in the entertainment industry to henna designing and make-up. All these are vocations that are equally job-opportunities for gainful income,



time engaging and eye-opening Thus, reducing youth restiveness, unemployment and dependency on government for job-opportunities.

Auto Body Repair and Spray Painting: This involves teaching our youth how to repair vehicles like mending scratches, scuffs and dents to vehicle damage as well as damage caused by collision and major accidents. It also involves spray painting to the body of the vehicle worked on, so that it will look nice and be prevented from corrosion. Motorcycle repairs and assembling is equally included here

Event decoration & Management: is another aspect of vocational and technical education that can serve to job-opportunities created and paved by vocational and technical education as it provides graduates the opportunity of managing different events from wedding, naming, to birthdays. Also, decoration of venues, offices as well as homes is lucrative and making youths to be employed rather than doing nothing for themselves. Many products of vocational and technical education are gainfully employed in this segment of the economy and are growing and progressing in their lives.

Garment Making: Successful clothing business means great work and dedication, needs high creativity and innovation especially in this 21st century. By teaching our youths the skill and technical knowhow of garment sewing and making into varieties of fabrics, our youths will be given the opportunity to earn a living, employ others and even compete with foreign designers at the international level and thus, reduce the insecurity challenges of the country.

Challenges of Vocational and Technical Education As Panacea To Insecurity In Nigeria

There are many challenges facing vocational and technical education as panacea insecurity in Nigeria, they include:

Erratic Power supply: Power supply in Nigeria has and is still a major problem that government after government have promised to make steady and constant but unfortunately till date no government has achieved. Many of the learning equipments and machines used in practical vocational and



technical education courses are electrical in nature, and thus there is every need for constant supply of electricity for operation effectiveness and efficiency, thus making vocational and technical education as a tool for solving insecurity in Nigeria challenging.

Shortage of Vocational & Technical Education Teachers: There is need for more teachers of vocational and technical education in Nigeria. This is due to the nature of vocational and technical education the courses, as a result of this, the teachers are over loaded with both course work and practical works. The truth is teachers cannot give in their best when they are overworked and overloaded with students thus, making vocational and technical education as a panacea to insecurity in Nigeria challenging.

Government Attitude Towards Education: It has become a normal thing for any Nigerian government to say it is committed to ensuring that the education sector is given the needed attention and fund but in practice it has hardly been so. The Nigerian government is yet to accord education(vocational & technical education inclusive) its importance in relation to other sectors of the economy and thus further compounding the challenges vocational; and technical education as a tool for solving insecurity in Nigeria.

Inadequate workshops/laboratories for training: Laboratories/workshops, which houses the tools, machines, and equipment for the training of students, are hardly available and the available ones are obsolete. This is why many vocational and technical education teachers resort to theoretical teaching. Where few functioning equipment or machines is available, students are divided into groups during practical lesson. This system is not effective; hence many teachers and students do not have access to such equipment for practice as much as they want, thereby this becomes a challenge at using vocational and technical education to solve insecurity in Nigeria.

Incessant Strike Actions By Higher Institutions Of Learning In Nigeria: The manner and rate at which normal academic activities are suddenly brought to a standstill in higher institutions in Nigeria leaves much to be achieved as time available for studies is limited and inadequate for coverage of the



curriculum, let alone adapting social media which is involves practical, this strike actions are really disrupting academic activities, thus another major challenge of solving Nigeria's insecurity problem through vocational and technical education.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria a country with a population of 211,716,935(worldometres,2021) as at August 2021, has every cause to be concerned about insecurity as the danger that insecurity poses cannot be over emphasized, this is because when a nation is saddled with the problem of insecurity every other plans are stalled. This menace of insecurity cannot be allowed to derail Nigerias political and economic development plans.

Recently, we have experienced increased in violent activities in Nigeria which has claimed several lives and properties mostly as a result of lack of proper equipping and utilization of our youths. There is therefore urgent need to educate our youths with relevant knowledge, skills and technical knowhow so that insecurity is eliminated and wiped out of Nigeria to usher in the much needed growth and development for the nation and its citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Federal Government in conjunction with the various State Governments should provide infrastructural facilities, equipment and tools in various vocational and technical educational institutions across the country to ensure the full implementation of curriculum in these schools.
- Vocational and Technical Education teacher programme in tertiary institutions should be expanded to give room for training of more teachers that would fit in to the system.
- Government should improve on the supply of electricity to Nigerians and specifically to institutions offering vocational and technical education as this will improve the teaching of practical aspects of



vocational and technical education and thus enhance it as a tool to solve insecurity in the Nigerian economy.

- Government should increase the budgetary allocation to vocational and technical education. As we know that government cannot do it alone, corporate organizations, parents and alumni associations should assist in providing some of the equipment needed in the training of vocational and technical students.
- The issue of strikes by lecturers in Nigeria should be looked into deeply so as to find a lasting solution to the strikes that disrupts normal teaching and learning processes in these institutions.

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