

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: A ROAD MAP TO SELF SUSTENABILITY

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### **Abstract**

Vocational and Technical Education is that aspect of education that leads to acquisition of skills for sustainability. It creates opportunities for graduates to be self employed and in turn, create employment for others. The various options or departments in Vocational and Technical Education were examined. They include: Business Education, Home Economics, Agricultural Science Education and Technical Education. The occupations under each of the options were analyzed. There is high concentration of graduates in Cassava farming, Fish farming, Poultry farming, fashion designing, cake and snacks making, business centres, communication services, electrical installation, bricklaying, mechanical engineering etc. this is as a result of the profitable nature of the occupation. Conclusions and recommendations were made.

### **Introduction**

The Nigeria policy of education (2004 revised), emphasize education that will leads to self reliance, education that will prepare an individual to be self employed and provide employment for others. From the above statement, the need for Vocational and Technical Education is very paramount. The Vocational Education philosophy was built on the production of graduates who will be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge that will

not only enable them fit into already existing job opportunities in the society but also empower them with skills that will enable them establish their own enterprise or business ventures and if possible, create job opportunities for others (Kpangba, 1998).

Ekpenyong (2005) added that students' participation in Industrial Training (I.T), seminars, workshop, excursion and National Youth Service is a

key tool in the realization of the Vocational Education philosophy.

Vocational and Technical Education is concerned with preparing people for work and with improving the work, potentials of the labour force. In this regard, Vocational Education is any kind of training that aims primarily at preparing individuals for a job.

### **Areas of Specialization Under Vocational Education**

Ekpenyong (2005) postulated the following areas of specialization in Vocational Education under the course options that make up Vocational and Technical Education.

#### **1. Technical Education**

Under Technical Education we have:

- a. Engineering Technology
- b. Electrical Electronics Technology/ Electrical Installation and Maintenance.
- c. Building Technology
- d. Automobile Engineering

#### **2. Business Education**

- a. Office management or secretarial studies
- b. Accounting Education
- c. Distributive studies
- d. General business studies

#### **3. Agricultural Education**

- a. Agronomy
- b. Soil Science or forestry

#### **4. Home Economics**

Under this course, concentration is usually made in home management,

food and nutrition, clothing and textiles, tile and dye.

UNESCO (1974) and Towe (1969) stated that Vocational Education are of three dimensions. They are:

- Vocational Education has a component of general education.
- It prepares the learner for occupation
- It creates room for self reliance individuals.

### **Agency Responsible for Vocational Training and Development**

In 1960, the government established National Directorate of Employment (N.D.E) with the sole aim of curbing the problem of unemployment in Nigeria. The body has the mandate of:

1. Providing of Vocational skills to school learners
2. Providing of entrepreneurial institutions
3. Training for rural employment
4. Training labour based work programmes and
5. Resettlement for training beneficiaries. (udoh, 1997)

### **Aims and Objectives of Vocational and Technical Education.**

The National policy on education (2004) stated clearly the aims of Vocational and Technical Education as follows:

1. To provide trained manpower in applied science technology and commerce particularly at sub professional grades.

2. To provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environment/problems for the use and convenience of man.
3. To provide technical knowledge and Vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.
4. To give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and technology
5. To give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self reliant and to make our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

Vocational and Technical Education has vast job opportunities for its graduates. Before the completion of the programme, many have engaged themselves in one for of occupation and the other.

#### **Available Occupations in Vocational and Technical Education**

The various occupations in the areas of specialization in Vocational and Technical Education is highly profitable and some requires little capital to start. Kahl et al (1996) added that if such Vocational occupation is well managed, it can develop to the big industry or venture. The occupations include:

Poultry farming: - poultry farming could be for meat or egg production. Ighodaro (2005) posited that, for meat production, broilers are very good. It takes two to three months to reach table size (maturity); that is when they are well managed. Unlike others, it takes longer duration. The longer the rearing period, the more the financial implication. It is worth mentioning that when layer are old and could not lay eggs, they are dispose in the market. In most cases, the capital realize from this sales is use for the purchase of new birds. It is advisable to buy day old birds for rearing whether for meat or egg production.

- Animal farming:- this could be piggery, rabbit, snail, grasscutter etc.
- Oil palm
- Cassava farming
- Cake and snacks making
- Party management/planning
- Interior decoration
- Fashion designing
- Catering services. This could be mobile or stationed
- Bead making
- Documentary services
- Office management/ planning consultant service
- Computer services
- Office equipment sales and repair
- Bricklaying and bricks production
- Electrical installation/maintenance
- Building design
- Automobile services
- Mechanical engineering
- Refrigerator engineering etc.

### Conclusion

Vocational and Technical Education is a field of study that create job of various kinds for individuals. In the various options under Vocational and Technical Education, occupations which are lucrative in nature are numerous. Many graduates are engaged in different form of occupation under Vocational and Technical Education. The government at all levels (federal, state and local government) and private individuals provide soft agricultural loan for interested individuals. Those who are not in school should enroll in any N.D.E training centres through out the country. It is imperative to note that unemployment level has gradually reduced.

### Recommendation

Vocational and Technical Education students should engage in thorough practicals (outside the school) relating to their area of study in other to have real knowledge and necessary skills. The future Vocational and Technical Education should be geared towards entrepreneurship development. This is a major means of enhancing job creation and empowering citizens by providing them with the entrepreneurship skills, attitudes and knowledge they need thereby conquering the challenges of prevailing unemployment of Vocational and Technical Education graduates. (Oviawe & Anavberokhai, 2008).

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