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**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS ACQUISITION FOR
JOB CREATION AMONG STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF
EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study investigated vocational Education and job creation among students of colleges of education in Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions. The study was a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of vocational education students of Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, numbering 200. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study to select 150 students. The instrument for the study was structured questionnaire. It was validated by expert. It was tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and the value of 0.75 was obtained which was considered adequate for the study. The results showed that classroom activities tailored towards value creation and vocational education needed in the sectors related to students' field of study. Vocational education enhances Economic growth of country's economy and ideas to develop potentials of student. Again, the study found poor capital and insufficient funding of vocational education are militating against effective inculcation of vocational skills. The study recommended among others that, colleges of education in Nigeria should be made to be aware that students will acquire skills, only when they are exposed to regular workshop practice, with adequate equipment and instructional materials.

Key words: *Vocational Education, skills acquisition, job creation*

Introduction

Vocational education is one of the occupational areas that are richly provided by vocational skills education in Nigeria. Vocational education refers to a programme of instruction that offers various skills. The goals involve education for vocational education which is targeted at equipping students with the requisite attributes (knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes) to become gainfully employed in the world of work, later addresses vocational education about business and economics growth and development which is aimed at providing a sound basis for further studies at the graduate levels.

Vocational education is a type of education that helps students to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities and solving problems, and be able to have business-like attitudes useful for success in business situations for economic growth and development (Ugwuogo, 2019). Investment opportunities are made clear when one is armed with knowledge of vocational education. Okwuanaso and Nwazor (2013) defined vocational education as a process of instructing a person on what happens during business transactions in offices, banks, markets, and anywhere money changes hands.

It is also a type of education that helps someone to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities, solve problems and be able to have business like attitude useful for success in business situations. From the above, vocational education prepares one on education for economic growth and development. According to American international encyclopedia, vocational education or commercial education is the type of education, which prepares individuals for occupation in the business world for economic growth and development. Tonna and Nassy in Akpaka (2016) viewed vocational education as the aspect of the total

educational programme that provided the knowledge, skills, understanding needed to perform in the world of business as a producer and consumer of goods and services, vocational education offers.

Vocational Education is the term, in which the learner training for a specific occupation for business, trade, or industry economic growth through a combination of theoretical teaching and practical experience provided by many high schools of vocational studies and training by special institutions of collegiate standing as a college of vocational skills or a school of vocational studies. Vocational education is the process of training, allowing students to gain practical experience in their chosen career path before they even graduate and after graduating, it helps students who finish those rigorous programs to have the credentials and training they need to get started immediately in their chosen career path or to secured job for a living.

Vocational careers are fields of work in which employees apply hands on trade school experience in a professional setting. Vocational business training is a viable option to four year programme, which can be costly and prohibitive to entering the workforce quickly with employable skills. Providing employment opportunities for all is the single most effective means of tackling poverty and social exclusion. Employment enables individuals to improve their living standards; it also makes constructive use of human resources. In a modern economy, countries that succeed will be those that get the best out of all their people. This could be possible through embarking on vocational skill activities by the citizens of the society. This is because; the public sector cannot single-handedly drive in, the desired level of economic growth and development.

Furthermore, the success of a society in vocational depends on skills (education) acquired by the graduates. This owes to the fact that vocational education leads to creativity. In line with these, vocational education which is described as an education for business and about business developmental growth which could make a person to perform well when a job is secured. This is due to the fact that it equips the recipients with skills needed for business success and economic growth (Galadima, 2015).

Human Capital Theory

This theory endorses education, training and skills acquisition as configurations for accomplishing organizational productivity, employee efficiency and overall socio-economic growth. Brown (2000) acknowledges that spending on human capital and productive investment is synonymous to a country's investment for economic growth and development in physical assets. Boohene (2012) on their part consider education as a tool for improving human capital, stimulating labour productivity and boosting the levels of technology worldwide. Enhancing human capital through quality education serves as a critical element that is responsible for the massive provision of job opportunities in East

Africa and some Asian countries. For Collins et al. (2014), entrepreneurship training is responsible for the situation they consider as creative destruction, meaning an instance where education acts as an impetus for creating new ideas, improved techniques, new technologies and new products. Vocational business education is a programme in education that prepares students for entry into an advancement of jobs within the society. Aliyu (2016), it as a programme one needs to be proud of if properly designed, adequately prepared and religiously harmonized. He further affirmed that business education is an educational programme which involves acquisition of skills, knowledge and competences which makes the recipient/beneficiary proficient. It is an umbrella under which all business programmes take a shield, such as marketing, business administration, secretarial studies, vocational studies and accounting. Business education must have impacted accounting skills and creative knowledge required for employment generation opportunities, such vocational skills and accounting competences that make the business graduates to adopt some strategic survival instincts.

Concept of Provision of Job Opportunities

The concept of development has been viewed from different angles; social economic, political and cultural. From whatever angle, it is however viewed; it focuses on improving fiscal, economic, and social conditions in developing countries. According to Akintayo and Oghenekoliwo (2014) the main goal of provision of job opportunities is improving the economic wellbeing of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life. Osokoya (2018) considers factors such as health, education, working conditions, domestic and international policies, and market condition with a focus on improving conditions in the world's poorest countries. Provision of job opportunities is a broader concept than economic growth. Development reflects social and economic progress and requires economic growth. Growth is a vital and necessary condition for development, but it is not a sufficient condition as it cannot guarantee development.

Business education is one of the major components of vocational education. According to Abdullahi (2012), Vocational business education is an aspect of total educational programme which provides the graduates with knowledge, skills, understanding the attitude needed to perform well in the business world as a producer or consumer of goods and services. Furthermore, (Osuala, 2014) is of the opinion that Vocational business education is a broad area of knowledge that deals with a nation's economic system and also identifies and explains the rate of business contentment and experience that prepare individuals for effective participation as citizens, workers and consumers. Vocational business education is schools of both academic and vocational in nature. Vocational skill development in business education is a well-known fact that theoretical concepts must blend with practical concepts for the training to be meaningful and complete.

The Philosophical Concept of vocational Education

The philosophy of vocational education as stated by Okoro (2015) emphasized skill acquisition and basic scientific knowledge required by individual for employment in industry or self-employment. Because the revised policy did not emphatically mention vocational education but described it under technical education, the relevant sections of the objective emphasized skills necessary for industry and economic emancipation of individuals for economic growth and development. The pre-vocational education is subsumed into the 9-3-4 system which is broad based, and tends to provide basic exploration occupational orientation at junior secondary school level. Vocational education could lead to the development of graduates' skills in Nigeria and indeed all the countries of the world. This owes to the fact that based on the content of vocational education. Vocational education means different things at different levels of education. At the primary and secondary school level the aim is mainly to create awareness for a job opportunities option and thus it serves as a vehicle for economic growth and development of academic skills and emphasis on the importance of school subjects. This leads to mastery of school subjects especially English and Mathematics by the schoolchildren. At the colleges level of education vocational education is perceived not only as a job opportunity but as a way of upgrading a young person's abilities to succeed as an employee. The implication therefore is that the overall purpose of Vocational education is the development of expertise as a graduate. It is the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize job opportunities, the insight, the zeal, the knowledge, the courage and skills to act on them. This process is usually implemented through a structured vocational education programmes. At present, the role of vocational education in promoting the rapid development of economy through vocational education is increasingly obvious.

Provision of job opportunities is the process by which the economic growth and developmental well-being and quality of life of a nation, region, or local community are improved according to targeted goals and objectives. Provision of job opportunities therefore is the process whereby simple, low-income national economies are transformed into modern industrial economy. Development in the general sense is many sided processes. The achievement of any of those aspects of personal development is very much tied with the state of the society as a whole. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the new mode of vocational education around all aspects of talent training in vocational education. Provision of job opportunities is not only the aim and means of vocational education, but also the development trend in colleges of education and the inevitable requirement of educational reform (Xu, 2018).

Steady growth of vocational education in Nigeria is very essential for provision of job opportunities; growth is the art of increment in size and population. Growth is described as the increase in size of a living being or any of its parts occurring in the process of development. The success and growth of technological vocational is a factor of human capital, social capital and psychological capital. Obviously, many colleges of education are actively pursuing a variety of innovative educational developments as part of their broader strategy to improve the quality of vocational courses and programs (Graevenitz, Harhoff

and Weber, 2013). However, opinions about the impact of vocational education through creation of jobs are still controversial (Coleman and Robb, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

There are many challenges in Vocational education and job creation among graduates of Nigeria colleges of education. The first and possibly one of the greatest challenges facing education in Nigeria is inadequate funding by the federal, state and local governments. Poor governance and mismanagement have crippled most sectors in the country not leaving behind the education sector. Government's attitude towards crucial problems of education, especially its quality, is lackadaisical. Lack of Infrastructure In past years, some colleges of education and other vocational business education have collapsed due to abject neglect by governments. Some colleges of education in Nigeria today have fall into dilapidation and products of such schools are not given adequate training to compete with other products of another country. Many colleges of education lack basic materials for learning, especially for vocational practical classes, and those that claim to have are managing the old ones. Hence, the students only learn the theoretical steps rather than carrying out the practical aspect. Again, the libraries in colleges are lacking the needed books, journals and magazines; and materials for learning vocational skill e.g computers and projectors. Indiscipline in this regard is manifested in examination malpractices, secret cult menace, corruption etc. There is inadequacy of skilled and experienced manpower, which retard teaching and learning in many colleges of education in Nigeria. Poor Curriculum Content is another problem. The vocational business education in Nigeria seem not to have been adequately responsive to the changes in the labour market, entrepreneurial skills and job creation hence, the present study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the impact of vocational business education: a provision for job opportunities among colleges of education in Nigeria. Specifically the study is to:

1. To identify the innovative contents of vocational business education necessary for provision of job opportunities.
2. To identify the various problems hindering growth of vocational business education among student in colleges of education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were outlined to guide the study:

1. What are the innovative contents of vocational business education necessary for provision of job opportunities?
2. What are the various problems hindering growth of vocational business education among students in colleges education in Nigeria

Method

The study was carried out in Nwafor Orizu College of Nsugbe. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was guided by two research questions.

The total population for the study was 200 respondents. The sample size for the study was 150 respondents. Simple random sampling technique was adopted by the researcher in selecting the sample size. Data were collected using researcher's developed instrument titled "Impact of Vocational Business Education Skills for Job Opportunities among

Students of Colleges of Education in Nigeria."

The instrument was validated by two experts, one from the Department of business Education in Nwafor Orizu College of education, Nsugbe, while the second was from the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained using test re-test method. The data collated for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Any item which scored 2.50 and above was taken as Agree (A) while any item which scored below 2.50 was taken as Disagree (D).

Results:

Research Question 1: What are the innovative contents of vocational business education necessary for provision of job opportunities?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the innovative contents of vocational business education necessary for provision of job opportunities

No	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Vocational business education goal intention through practical collaboration that engage students in critical thinking sessions especially during class lectures	2.90	0.83	Agree
2	Risk-taking propensity that shapes an individual's decision to engage in an vocational career rather than pursue corporate employment	2.60	0.92	Agree
3	Classroom activities tailored towards value creation and vocational business education is in need of the sectors related activities to students' field of study	3.40	1.02	Agree
4	Vocational educational enhance Economic growth of country's economy and ideas to develop potentials of student	3.10	1.09	Agree
5	Industrial training content and implementation exposing students to activities based on the information and knowledge acquired from vocational courses	2.95	1.02	Agree

Table 1 above showed that classroom activities tailored towards value creation and vocational business education is in need of the sector related activities to students' field of study (3.40). The respondents agreed that topics such as business plan writing to enhance the vocational business ideas to develop potentials of student (3.10). Meanwhile, industrial

training content and implementation exposing students to activities based on the information and knowledge acquired from vocational courses (2.95). In general, items number 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 yields mean scores of 2.90, 2.60, 3.40, 3.10 and 2.95 with standard deviation of 0.83, 0.92, 1.02, 1.09 and 1.02 respectively and thus was accepted.

Research Question 2: What are the various problems hindering growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on problems hindering growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities

No	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
6	Insufficient funding of vocation business education hinders growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities	3.18	1.12	Agree
7	Inadequate staff training and retention hinders growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities	3.40	1.02	Agree
8	Economic pressure from parents hinders growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities	2.12	0.60	Agree
9	Inadequate equipment and technology hinders growth of vocational business education for alternative of job creation and development of graduates ideas	3.10	1.04	Agree
10	Inadequate infrastructural facilities hinders growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities	3.55	0.80	Agree

From table 2 above indicated the problems hindering growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities. The respondents agreed that inadequate infrastructural facilities hinder growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities (3.55). It is obvious that insufficient funding of vocational business education hinders growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities (3.18). Meanwhile, the respondents rejected that economic pressure from parents hinders growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities (2.12). On the whole, items 6, 7, 9, and 10 with a mean scores 3.18, 3.40, 3.10 and 3.55 corresponding to standard deviation of 1.12, 1.02, 1.04 and 0.80 were accepted while item 8 was rejected with a means scores of 2.12 and standard deviation of 0.60 respectively.

Corresponding to standard deviation of 1.17, 1.04, 1.01, 0.79 and 1.02 were accepted respectively.

Discussion

The finding of the study in table 1 revealed that the innovative contents of vocational business education is necessary for provision of job opportunities. The findings showed that classroom activities tailored towards value creation and vocational business education

is in need of the sectors related activities to students' field of study; topics such as business plan writing to enhance the vocational business ideas to develop potentials of student. This finding is in corroboration with the findings of Hong, (2014) who stated that in learning vocational business education that one of the critical skills in the vocational business subjects, is to understand and design effective business plans. Vocational business education is about teaching vocational skills and developing new innovative plans. The development of vocational skills in its economic plans with the goal of contributing to the eradication of poverty in the country and vocational business education continues to be on the national agenda. It is also in line with the view of Atkinson, (2015), that vocational business education provides disadvantaged students with a sense of hope and economic security and a chance to transform into a "generation of successful businesspeople and contributors to revitalized communities.

Finding of the study in table 2 also revealed the problems hindering growth of vocational education for provision of job opportunities as; inadequate infrastructural facilities hinders growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities. This is in agreement with the findings of Libecap (2013) who insists that due to inadequacy of facilities like good roads, electricity and access to information; water supply etc. there is increased problem confronting the development of vocational education. Infrastructure in schools today reveals that some schools do not even have a defined workshop or laboratories where students can practice what they learned.

Conclusion

The study has been able to investigate vocational business education: in the light of provision for job opportunities among students of colleges of education in Nigeria.

Vocational business education through the provision of job opportunities, the finding has revealed that classroom activities tailored towards value creation and vocational business education is in need of the sectors related activities to students' field of study. There are still some challenges such as inadequate infrastructural facilities hinder growth of vocational business education for provision of job opportunities. Based on the above points, it can easily be concluded that government support to vocational skills education through different favorable policies that will promote the vocational education among the colleges of education in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the finding of the study.

1. There should be broader vocational course offerings to ensure that a larger number of students have the opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills.
2. Follow-up training e.g workshops should be provided for the students to ensure that they are able to achieve their goals.
3. Government should ensure that good policies are put in place in order to encourage and accommodate youths' involvement in development of vocational skills.

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