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Abstract

In every economy, development is initiated by the practical application of scientific knowledge and such is best achieved by the basic knowledge from vocational technical educational skills which advances the economy. This paper examine and emphasis the importance of vocational technical education in Nigeria, its past, present and future. The reason for the missing of the technological development track that lead to the nation being a consumer nation rather than a productive nation that resulted to the nation importing most of the simple goods they consume ranging from tooth picks to machines, failure to develop vocational technical education has brought about bad economy, poverty, unemployment, and mass exodus of the youths to foreign lands for greener pasture, whereas other nations followed their technological development tracks that resulted to their greatness. Vocational technical education (VTE) is the type of education that prepares people to work in various jobs, such as trade, craft or technician. Vocational technical education is sometimes referred to as career education or technical education . A vocational school is an educational institution specially designed to provide vocational education. Vocational education can take place at the post-secondary, higher education level and can be through interaction with the apprenticeship system. At the post secondary level, vocational education is often provided by highly specialized trade, technical schools, community colleges, colleges of further education such as universities, Institutes of Technology/ Polytechnic Institutes until recently, almost all vocational education took place in the classroom, or on the job site, with students learning trade skills and trade theory from accredited professors or established professionals in the industry



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TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Our country is facing an acute problem of unemployment- People are willing to work but they cannot find jobs. A result majority of them go astray. If we discuss the reason for this situation, we will find that it is our defective education system which lays too much stress on literary training and ignore technical and vocational education.

The growth in education has resulted in large number of people looking for white-colour jobs, which are not available. There is no dearth of natural resources in our country. It is our misfortune that we are still poor.

It is because we do not know how to make the best use of our natural stock. Only technical and vocational education can save us from hopelessness and depression, which is seen at

all, levels. Technical and vocational education can give us expert engineers, technicians and mechanics. They are needed in large number in our country.

It has been seen that young men and women after finishing their education, find it very difficult to find a suitable employment for them. It is because all of them run after office work. They never think to do other work.

They find it more prestigious in engaging themselves in petty jobs than to start their own business. It is the fault of our education system. Hence it is essential to provide young men and women with educational as well as vocational guidance. This will help them choose a profession in accordance with their capability and attitude. This will also help in uprooting the problem of unemployment.

If, during education period, our young men and women are taught to do so many things with their own hands, many of them will not run after petty jobs. They will start their own business and what is more, they will give employment to many others.

There is need of efficient and skilled workers in all vocations. Hence vocational and technical training is very important. It is the age of large scale industries. It is very difficult to achieve progress in the industrial field without a sufficient number of technically trained hands. Hence, young men must be given technical education, so that they may contribute their best in the desired development of our country.

Our government has done a great deal in establishing technical and vocational institutions throughout the country. . "Ere is a network of Medical colleges. Industrial Training institutes are also there. The government also encourages Small scale industries. They can* be set up faster than large industries and help to provide employment for a large number of people.

We must take lessons from other countries which are powerful even though they are not rich in natural resources. Only technical education has made them distinguished in the world. Our county is fortunate to have rich resources. The only need is to give technical and vocational guidance to our young men and women. This alone can solve many problems at the same time.

The Technical / Vocational Education and Training is multi-sectoral in nature. Each ministry/department in Central as well as State Governments is responsible for manpower development in that sector. While some offer regular formal or non-formal courses, others

draw from the general pool of educated and trained manpower. The higher secondary vocationalisation programme aims to develop skilled manpower through diversified courses to meet the requirements of mainly the unorganised sector and to prepare people for the world of work in general through a large number of self employment oriented courses, not precluding wage employment orientation of many courses. Through diversification into production and service oriented courses, it is desired to reduce the aimless pursuit of higher education and thereby reduce pressure from the tertiary education. In 1989-90 there were more than 150 courses in different states which are grouped under the major areas of agriculture, business and commerce, engineering and technology health and paramedical, home science and humanitiies. The design consists of theory and practice relating to the vocational field, related subjects, language and general foundation studies which includes entrepreneurship. during that time a total of 168.680 students were enrolled in the first year of the two year programme. There are more than 5000 full time teachers teaching these courses. Vocational education is the skill based education in a specific field which enables students to acquire training and practical skills in a specific trade, vocation or occupation. It is also known as career and technical education as students develop skills and expertise in a specific discipline through manual practice. Vocational courses focus more on application based study. Diverse job functions from various sectors such as banking and finance, food and beverage, tourism, computer network, designing, healthcare, cosmetology, skilled trades etc, are included in vocational education.

BENEFITS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- **Job Ready:** Vocational education makes a student employment ready. It provides students required skills and training for a particular job such as Interior Designing, Fashion Designing, Computer Networking, etc. Along with the classroom instructions students also get practical knowledge. This makes the students job-ready and experts in their field.
- **Low Education Cost:** Private and Government institutes provide vocational education and the fees for such courses are quite economic. Vocational courses are easy and cheaper alternative for students who do not want to take a three year degree course and

cannot afford the hostel fees, commuting and added costs. Many vocational courses are as good as degree courses and provide employment to the students. Vocational course is the best option for those who cannot manage the expenses for college degree.

- **Easy Employment:** Vocational training makes it easy for the students to find employment opportunities. There is a growing need of skilled and efficient manpower for jobs in various sectors. The students with vocational training have advantage over the college pass outs. The students with vocational training are preferred as they possess right skills, education and knowledge for the job. Thus, easy and fast employment is a major advantage that students with vocational training have. Vocational education and skills can also provide students employment opportunities in foreign countries.

- **Career Advancement:** For people who already have a job and want to acquire further skills to enhance their career, vocational education is the best alternative. The duration of the course is quite less compared to the degree courses but the skills imparted are quite important and useful. Professionals can improve their career prospects and be successful. Students who are less interested in academic studies or the drop outs can choose from the diverse courses available and enhance their skills in the field of their interest. Vocational education can help students make a successful career.

- **Meet Market Demand:** Employers in various industries rely on training organizations to impart knowledge and skills to the workers. These training organizations need to train the workers and ensure that their services meet the needs of employers and the students are job ready. Students who pursue vocational courses at college level do not require undergoing such training programs. This saves the company cost spent in training.

- **Economic Development:** There is a growing need of skilled professionals in various sectors across the world. The existence of skilled manpower is beneficial to the society and also for the economic development of the nation. There would be lesser need to import manpower from foreign countries at higher wages.

- **Job Satisfaction:** There are also various indirect benefits. For instance, vocational education boosts confidence of the students and they are well groomed and trained that makes them eligible for specific jobs. It also increases the job satisfaction and results in high productivity.

Conclusion

Students who successfully complete VET programs perform better in jobs compared to the students with mere academic education. Vocational education is an asset to our economy. There is high demand of skilled labour both in business and government sectors. Vocational education benefits students, employers, society and nation.

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