

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 1, MAY 2018

ISSN 0794-2192

African Journal of Historical Sciences in *Education*

A Journal of Historians of Education Development Society of Nigeria
An Affiliate of the International Standing Conference
for the History of Education (ISCHE)

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Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

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TRENDS IN TECHNICAL AND
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA
AND KENYA

JEKAYINFA OYEYEMI JUMOKE, SAIDU ABUBAKAR BUKOLA, Ph.D,
RAJI MONSURAT OMOBOLANLE,
AND
OGUNGBEMI, AKINLEYE AFOLABI

Abstract

Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is considered in most African countries to be a major instrument for the political, cultural, social and economic development. Thus, most nations, developed and developing are increasing the emphasis they place on improving TVE systems in recognition of the vital role it plays in equipping individuals with relevant skills and knowledge needed for self-reliance. The aim of this paper was to find out the major similarities and differences in the TVE systems in Nigeria and Kenya in the following areas: historical trends in TVE, philosophy and objectives of TVE, structure of TVE, curriculum content of TVE, administration and funding of TVE that account for the similarities and differences in the two countries. The paper reveals that in spite of the efforts of the successive Nigerian and Kenyan's governments TVE did not appear to meet the economic needs of most African countries in terms of technical manpower requirement. It was recommended that the Nigerian and Kenyan governments should extensively follow-up their TVE policies and practices and link it with international best practices. However, rigorous professional training in skills acquisition subjects is essential for both Nigerian and Kenyan teachers in order to pursue an education in a more practical way. The paper, therefore, recommended that government should endeavour to fund TVE because it is central to achieving national objectives.

Introduction

In all countries of the world, education is considered a master key to a rapid social, cultural, political and economic development. This sector is considered quite critical to a nation since its performance can influence the quality and magnitude of national development. Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) helps to develop the much required human resources by cultivating appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes that could enable nations to harness resources industrialise and take part fully in the global knowledge-driven economy. Even after the first and second war, there was a dire need for skilled scientific and technological manpower and TVE became the port of call (Okoroafor & Okoroafor, 2012). Nigeria and Kenya are currently experiencing a number of challenges, ranging from the demand for quality TVE graduates who would help

solve the problem of unemployment and social insecurity in the nation, quest for meeting up with global changes in the area in the area of technological advancement, knowledge-based economy and demand for manpower among others (Osam, 2013; Onsomu, Wambugu & Wamalwa, 2009). Although, both countries are developing countries and share the similar aspiration to join the league of developed nations. There is also the issue of knowledge explosion where knowledge and skills become an additional factor in national development.

Comparing the diversity in the provision of TVE between countries will help in understanding the similarities and differences in historical, political, economic and cultural development (UNESCO, 2009). UNESCO- UNEVOC (2012) remarked that TVE is an important type of education which leads to the realisation, development and drawing out of the natural endowment (potentials) of the individual in the society. In line with this, UNESCO and International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2002) affirmed that TVE in developed and developing countries of the world refers to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the planned study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. In this study, TVE implies preparation of an individual for an occupation or career. Furthermore, the dissatisfaction with general or literary education, particularly with its failure to provide the much-needed skill for employment and self- reliance implies that developing nations should improve the formal TVE to satisfy the technological and manpower requirements of societies (UNESCO, 2009).

TVE is a viable tool for economic and national development of any nation. Therefore, in recognition of the fundamental role of TVE, most nations have adopted TVE as a veritable instrument for technological and economic transformation. International studies have highlighted the role TVE plays in the development of the social fabric and cultures of many countries (Zengeya, 2009; Umunadi, 2014; Wygant, 1969 & Etim, 1976). During the last several decades, technical and vocational educators around the world have begun to seek one another out and compare the various systems of TVE (Nascimento, 1988). It appears that with the sound exchange of information and experience, education all over the world could become more democratic, offering better opportunities and career openings for all citizens. African countries are being obligated to promote economic development and address the problem of how to prepare young people to adapt to technological changes in order to advance their career. As a result of this, many developing countries are realising the role of technical and vocational education in their economic and social growth.

Many developing countries are reforming their education systems and embarking on ways to improve TVE at all levels (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). Nigeria and Kenya have been plagued by the unemployment of a large number of school graduates, many of whom have followed an exclusively academic education curriculum through their formal school years. The unemployment rate in Nigeria and Kenya is estimated at 60% and 70 % respectively (Olayonu & Carim-Sanni, 2015; & Onsomu, Wambugu and Wamalwa, 2009). Improving the standards of TVE programmes in the two nations could be one way to remedy the unemployment problem and the countries shaky economies. Several previous studies have also analysed the status and importance of TVE in African nations (Zengeya, 2009; Omekwe, 2009 & Osam, 2013). For instance, Osam 2013 concluded that the development of the economy and the craves for self-reliance and self-sustainability is the driving forces for embarking on TVE programme in any nation. Zengeya (2009) assessed technical and vocational education policy, growth and development in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Africa and suggested the need for more commitment of policymakers towards TVE development.

Hence, TVE in developing societies is a serious business with functions to perform in nation-building. TVE, therefore, has the quite revolutionary role of being an agent of social change in any society. In developed countries such as United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia, TVE, is rapidly growing, being liberally funded and eagerly being sought after (Zengeya, 2009). Zengeya (2009) compared African countries with developed nations and concluded that African nations lagged behind in technical and vocational manpower requirement in terms of implementing TVE programmes in institutions of learning in African countries. It is not surprising that African nations have lagged behind given the limited provision of resources for TVE development in most nations and the relative poverty of most African countries (Onsomu *et al*, 2009). This situation underscores the importance of a comparative and historical examination of technical and vocational education in Nigeria and Kenya in order to ensure that future reforms of TVE are done in such a manner that they may contribute more meaningfully to national developmental needs and expectations by taking into consideration what efforts other nations must have made and what results they may have achieved.

In order to evaluate the system of TVE in both countries, there is a need to check if the philosophy and objectives are followed, if the curriculum is well implemented if there is proper control in terms of administration and if it is well funded. Based on this, this paper will also address the historical trends in TVE of two African Commonwealth nations: Nigeria and Kenya. Both countries gained independence from Britain 1960 and 1963 respectively and largely inherited British educational system. It would be interesting, therefore, to examine and compare the historical trends of TVE in both countries several decades after

colonial rule and given the numerous transformations that have taken place in each country. This paper will present the trends in TVE in Nigeria and Kenya since independence and the philosophies and objectives, the content of curricula, administration and funding of TVE in the two countries. Also, the study will address the historical, political, cultural and economic sources of similarities and differences in the education systems in both countries.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to find out specific similarities and differences in the Nigerian and Kenyan technical and vocational education systems. Specifically, the study would examine the;

- (a) Similarities and differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya
- (b) Similarities and differences in the curriculum content of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya
- (c) Similarities and differences in the administration and funding of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya
- (d) Historical, economic, political and cultural sources of the similarities and differences in TVE in Nigeria and Kenya.

Research Questions

The following questions would be answered in this study:

- (a) What are the similarities and differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya?
- (b) What are the similarities and differences in the curriculum content of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya?
- (c) What are the similarities and differences in the administration and funding of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya?
- (d) What are the historical, economic, political and cultural sources of the similarities and differences in TVE in Nigeria and Kenya?

Historical Development of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya

TVE began in Nigeria before the arrival of the Europeans. The Nigerian indigenous education catered adequately for vocational skills before the advent of western education in Nigeria. There has been a shift in the development and expansion of Technical and Vocational education in Nigeria from the early 19th century with the advent of western education. During the colonial era, the colonial schools made little effort to meet the developmental needs of the Nigerian people. Farm schools and industrial day schools existed alongside elitist English schools. Later, the establishment of Hope Waddell Institute in Calabar and the Nasarawa School at Kano changed the mentality of Nigerian people towards TVE. But it was not until the Phelps -Stokes Report was published in 1925 that any real progress towards a strong educational system

was made. The Nigerian Government has made progress in the development of technical and vocational education since independence in 1960.

In keeping with its educational commitments, the Federal government's policy on education after independence has been geared towards increasing the country's manpower resources. It has provided resources for learning the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial and commercial development (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) 2013 revised). The government has supported TVE financially in institutions of learning in order to meet the nation's technological demands in the 21st century.

TVE began in Kenya before the arrival of the Europeans. Kenyans knew how to build their own houses, make agricultural implements such as hoes, Cutlass etc. Traditionally, these skills were passed on from parents to offspring within the family or clan through an apprenticeship system (Okaka, 2001). The early 1950s saw industrial depots being upgraded to vocational schools and by early 1960s they were further converted into secondary schools. A major breakthrough for TVE in Kenya was the setting up of a Commission for Higher Education in 1954 whose main recommendation was the establishment of the Royal Technical College in Nairobi. This institution later became the Nairobi University College and subsequently, University of Nairobi. The Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education was already in existence having been established in 1948 to provide technical and vocational education to Muslims in East Africa. It was converted into the Mombasa Technical Institute and later became Mombasa Polytechnic in 1966(UNESCO, 2009). The Polytechnic was established to provide basic craft courses, which were phased out after 1972 following the introduction of similar courses in technical and vocational schools. Since independence, there has been a tremendous growth and development of TVE as a result of direct government intervention and involvement, as well as through community participation.

From the historical point of view, one needs to ask what kind of education the colonial masters bequeathed to African countries like Nigeria and Kenya? This is important because formal education began in the countries when missionaries came to propagate Christianity and introduced western education in the two countries. Eventually, the colonial masters took control of education (Fafunwa & Aisiku, 1982). On the economic point, the type of education bequeathed to many of the African countries did not appear to meet the economic needs of the country in terms of manpower requirement. However, the two governments introduced several reforms to correct this anomaly. From the political point of view, one needs to ask what do the successive governments in the two countries pay adequate attention to the management and funding of TVE at the school level? And lastly, from the cultural point of view, the question can be asked thus: how have the two Commonwealth nations embraced TVE and what impact has it brought to the development of the two countries. Traditionally, TVE was well

catered for in the indigenous African societies but with the advent of western education the two societies underplayed TVE and placed more emphasis on literary education. Until recently when the two nations presently have many social and economic problems to handle in the 21st century, it appears the two governments are increasingly laying more emphasis on TVE at all levels of education.

Philosophies and Objectives of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria and Kenya

In Kenya, the foundation of TVE is premised on the philosophy of making an individual self-employed and self-reliant on the society. According to UNESCO (2009), TVE in Kenya has incorporated in the 8-4-4 system of education. Its specific objectives can be summarized as follows;

- a) To lay the foundation for the vocational skills required for socio-economic development
- b) To expose students to scientific and technological trends, skills and ideas;
- c) To develop vocational and entrepreneurial skills as a basis for further training and employment
- d) To develop appropriate vocational attitudes, initiatives and creative thinking oriented to work
- e) To develop an appreciation for the dignity of labour.

Kerre (2001) suggested that there is an urgent need for Kenya to become scientifically and technologically literate if it is to become part of the emerging global economy. This implies that the teaching of TVE has to be strengthened in order to prepare young Kenyans for the twenty-first century. UNESCO (2009) reported that in recent past students heartily loathed TVE, hence agricultural and technical educations were neglected in Kenya. However, the report noted that recent developments have indicated that TVE is now viewed in a more favourable light, although pupils may still have personal misgivings (Kerre, 2001).

In Nigeria on the other hand, the foundation of TVE is based on the philosophy of making the individual self-employed and self-reliant on the society. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in her National Policy on Education stipulated that the philosophy of TVE is based on helping learners realise and develop their self-potentials (inbuilt or hidden talents) and make it possible for individuals to acquire practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge which will make them productively self-employed and self-reliant for the development of the society. The main objectives of TVE as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) are:

- a) To provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and business particularly at the craft, advanced craft and technical levels;

- b) To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and
- c) To give training and impart necessary skills to an individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

The philosophical basis for TVE in the Nigerian senior secondary school emphasises that TVE is a means to serve the needs of individual, society and the nation; a means to provide equality of opportunity to all individuals according to their individual talents and capacity; a means to cope with social problems related to unemployment and promote self-reliance as well as economic development and as a means to cope with scientific and technological advancement (FRN, 2013). FRN (2013) stipulated that the trainees completing technical college programmes shall have three options: (a) secure employment after completing modules of employability skills, (b) set up their own businesses and become self-employed and be able to employ others and (c) pursue further education in advanced craft/ technical programmes and in post-secondary technical institutions. However, Dike (2011) noted that the philosophy and objectives of TVE in Nigeria are laudable; but their implementation is hampered by inadequate funds, poor management and administration, lack of required staff, inadequate equipment and facilities. Hence, it must be realised that unless adequate manpower is provided with required equipment and facilities, the identification and development of the student's potentials which TVE intends to achieve will remain a dream.

Curriculum Content of TVE in Nigeria and Kenya

It will be worthwhile to consider the curricula content of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) stipulated that senior secondary education will be for those able and willing to have a complete six-year secondary education. It will be comprehensive and have a core curriculum designed to broaden pupils' knowledge and outlook. The core curriculum is the group of subjects, which every student must take in addition to his or specialities. For instance, the core subjects are : Auto Body Repair, and Spray, auto electrical work, auto parts merchandising, air conditioning, refrigeration, welding, and fabrication, engineering craft, practice, electrical installation, and maintenance work, radio, TV, and electronics, serving, block laying, concrete work, planting, and decoration, plumbing and pipefitting, machine, woodworking, carpentry, and joinery, furniture making, upholstery, catering craft practice, garment making, clothing and textile, dyeing and bleaching, printing craft, practice, cosmetology, photography, data processing, leather works, manufacturing and repair, , stenography, animal storekeeping, bookkeeping, GSM, maintenance, and repairs, husbandry, fishery, marketing, and salesmanship (FRN, 2013).

According to Abimbade (2002), the criteria and selection of the content of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) should be guided by the following:

- (a) Development of students' skills in all typical and basic processes inherent in the occupation involved;
- (b) Need for students' experiences in the interpretation and use of fundamental factual information basic to the occupation;
- (c) Provision of learning experiences about the hazards, benefits, joys and pains connected with the chosen occupation;
- (d) Provision of experiences in related Sciences, Mathematics, Technical Drawing and other tool subjects related to the occupation;
- (e) The need for pupils to see his or her prospective occupation in relation to management, labour and the professions; and
- (f) Provision of learning experiences in general education which will enable the student to take his place in life and fulfil the life's needs as an enlightened citizen and worker.

UNESCO (2009) expressed concern that the existing TVE curriculum lacks a clearly articulated philosophy and balance, where educational training aspects are visible and can be understood by learners, teachers and parents. Among the objectives of the 8-4-4 system of education was that more emphasis was to be laid on TVE. It was supposed to ensure that students graduating at any level had some scientific and practical knowledge that could be utilised for their subsequent self-employment or in further training (the Republic of Kenya, 1984). Education Policy in Kenya is concerned with using schools to develop manpower for economic development. Curriculum revision formed an important element of this educational reconstruction. In 1985, both primary and secondary school curriculum was substantially revised with the adoption of the 8-4-4 system of education. A key element of this revision was the vocationalisation of the curriculum to improve the correlation of schooling with the world of work and make learners self-reliant and self-employed. There was an emphasis on practical subjects such as metal/woodwork, carpentry, home science, art and music, among others.

However, the process of curriculum reconstruction faced a number of challenges, including implementation without proper testing, inadequate teachers, workshops and equipment to implement practical education (Kamau & Mclean, 2001). Onsomu *et al*, (2009) stressed that the contents of TVE were hastily disseminated from a very high level and the transition particularly towards vocational and technical education subjects was carried out without adequate consultation.

Administration and Funding of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria and Kenya

The administration and control of education in Nigeria is a shared responsibility between the Federal and State governments in accordance with the constitutional provisions (FRN, 2013, p. 4). Nigeria consists of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory in Abuja. Each state has its own Ministry of education in addition to the Federal Ministry of Education. Consequently, both the Federal and state governments perform oversight functions on education for schools through the Ministries of Education. Offiong, Akpan and Usoro (2013) noted that the Federal Ministry of Education is responsible for the control of TVE at the national level. Its functions include a) formulating a national policy on education; collecting and collating data for purposes of educational planning and financing; maintaining a uniform standard of education throughout the country. NBTC and NABTEB are also controlling the quality of education in the country through the supervisory role of the Inspectorate services Department of the ministry, conducting examinations to ensure quality assurance, harmonising educational policies of all the states of the federation through the instrumentality of the National Council on Education (NCE) which is the highest policy-making body as regards education matters in the country; effecting cooperation in educational matters on an international scale and developing curricula and syllabuses at the national level in conjunction with the National Educational Research and Development Council.

In general, investment and resources needed to sustain TVE tend to be more expensive than general education due to the high cost of materials, equipment, facilities, and maintenance (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). This is compounded by the fact that TVE institutions in Nigeria are grossly underfunded. Even though the government is a major source of funding for TVE, reports indicated that the government allocation to TVE is low, ranging from one to 12 per cent of the total education budget of a country UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). Despite this challenge, the Wu (2003) acknowledged the complexities involved in financing TVE. It is difficult to deny government role in the funding of TVE in Nigeria, especially after independence. The Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2013) recognised that technical and vocational education form the bedrock of Nigeria's technological advancement; as all tiers of government in Nigeria are involved in the funding of education. Constitutionally, local government authorities are responsible for funding primary education, while states fund secondary education with the exception of the Federal Unity Colleges, which are owned by the Federal Government.

The importance of quality funding for the effective development of education in general and technical and vocational education, in particular, cannot be over-emphasised. Nzorkurum & Obi (2015) argued that use of internally generated revenue projects, parent teachers association, contributions from alumni

associations, donations from non-governmental organisations, state government and Federal government are the various ways principals and teachers perceive funds are provided for the implementation of technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

In Kenya on the other hand, the management of TVE is under different ministries. This makes coordination and maintenance of training standards difficult. According to Onsomu *et al* (2009), Kenya spends about 4% of the education and training budget and 0.002 per cent of the GDP on TVE programmes. The of TVE programmes in Kenya is generally low, with emphasis on theory and certification rather than on skills acquisition. This can be attributed to inadequate funding. Financing of education in Kenya is jointly undertaken by the central and local governments. TVE is financed from the public purse. Involvement of the private sector in TVE started in the 1960s as a result of the local community response to the demand for post-primary and secondary education and training opportunities. Sessional Paper No.6 of 1988 on Technical and Vocational Education for the next Decade and Beyond underscored the need for private sector involvement in education.

Conclusion

This paper examines the trend in Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria and Kenya. In all countries of the world, TVE is considered a master key to a rapid social, political, economic and cultural development. Technical and vocational education in Nigeria and Kenya are focused on making the individual self-employed and self-reliant. TVE in both countries needs to be properly implemented by the relevant stakeholders in order to ensure adequate delivery of TVE programmes. The need to improve the functionality of the TVE systems in Nigeria and Kenya is highly imperative and expedient at this period when the output of the system is being criticised and questioned by the public. If TVE is to achieve its expected role in both countries it must be designed to be qualitative and functional in its orientation. The National Policy on Education in Nigeria contains laudable goals, which could assist in the socio-economic and technological transformation of Nigeria. However, the inadequacy of funds allocated to the education sector is still one of the serious problems affecting it. It is clear that these two former British colonies shared a common view of the role of TVE within a developing nation hence, their common challenge of relating TVE to manpower needs and self-reliance.

In Kenya, for instance, the percentage of government expenditure allocated to education is also very low which reflect the lack of political of African leaders towards TVET. This paper has shown that apart from the problem of funding, the greatest challenge that faces TVE in Nigeria and Kenya is that of poor administrators' misconception of TVE as a pathway for less academically inclined in the society. Financing and delivery of TVE in both countries have

been a source of concern. Despite past investment in the TVE sector, many school graduates acquire low-quality training and the skills acquired fail to facilitate them from becoming self-reliant and productive in the absence of age employment (Onsomu et al, 2009).

Recommendations

- a) Governments should endeavour to fund Technical and Vocational Education at the school level in both countries based on UNESCO's 26% recommendations.
- b) The curriculum content of TVE in both countries should be well implemented in order to expose students to proper entrepreneurial skills so that the innovative instincts of students can be reawakened;
- c) The administration of TVE in both countries should go beyond partisan politics so that the vision of the two countries can be realised;
- d) Also, regular inspection of schools should be carried out to ensure that minimum standards are maintained and the manpower needs of the country should influence the quality of education delivery in order to reduce the problem of unemployment and make TVE more relevant and functional in the two countries.

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