

RE-FOCUSING TECHNOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS FOR LIFE – LONG LEARNING IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

The study adopted descriptive survey which involved 100 supervising principals as the population. Two (2) purposes and (2) research questions guided the study. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Enugu state University of Science and Technology (ESUT) Enugu. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a result of 0.69. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance, while mean (x) with standard deviation (SD) was used in data analysis. The findings show that the supervising principals were of the opinion that strategic reform in T.V.E. is important for life-long learning and system enhancement in Enugu state. The study recommends that the stakeholders in education should adopt the current UNESCO policy on T.V.E. in the state.

Introduction

The primary aim of technology and vocational education is to prepare individual for the world of works and possibly develop their other potentials for work. According to UNESCO (2008) integrating TVE into the secondary school education and total review of the internal coherence of the present configuration of the programmes will help to stimulate interest of would be students. The National Policy on Education (2004) highlighted the key objectives of government regarding vocational programmes in the secondary education. The UNESCO recommendation concerning Technology and Vocational Education (2001) emphasized skill and competency based learning for total development of the individual, Onyia (2010) opined that general education and vocational education should be integrated to form the new curriculum of secondary

education. The re-focusing that is pertinent posed a very big challenge to stakeholders in education. In a world that is increasingly driven by competency – based learning for life, the system should be re-focused to meet the needs of the society and individual respectively.

The recent global emphasis for Technology and Vocational Education (TVE) and competency development inherent in the programmes has created new opportunities for youth and adults for knowledge and skill development. This is clear in the recent priorities as well as in the changing needs of the stakeholders in the state and national education systems. The priority operatives centred on good quality skills and increasing demand by the labour market for highly competitive and productive product from TVE. Despite the depth of the recent economic crisis, skills are claimed to be at the centre of the new

challenges of sustaining, and accelerating economic growth across many parts of the developing world of which Nigeria and Enugu state are one (DFID 2008). The refocusing should value the intrinsic importance of TVE, given the vital roles of skill development in education. The stakeholders in education should be cautioned against the drivers of TVE that are politically motivated. High quality skills are necessary but not enough condition for the creation of decent work or secure livelihoods.

Therefore technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) are new innovation covering both TVE and skills development in school based programmes or industry-based training. The successful acquisition of the technical and vocational skills will be dependent on core skills, soft skills, and behavioral skills.

Statements of the Problem

Many nations of the world have educational policies on vocational and technical education that are directly related to their labour market needs. Developed world treat TVE as part of general education, as a preparation for life-long occupation and as part of lifelong learning for poverty reduction. However, our national policy document on education treats TVE as an education for the weak. Developed nations consider that TVE can even permit the harmonious development of personality and character, and foster spiritual and human values, the capacity for understanding, judgment, critical thinking and self-expression. The National policy on education (2004) which Enugu state adopted did not have broad vision of the capacity and quality associated with TVE whether in life, in work or in the society. TVE is certainly not seen as a dead end but conceived as learning culture that allows

individuals to expand their intellectual abilities. The redirection being advocated in the state is that TVE should be positioned as part of liberal or general education and that they are investments with significant returns, including the workers welfare, and enhanced productivity. Further TVE should not be regarded as a programme for individual with low intellectual abilities or associated with low academic performers.

Purpose of the study

The purpose centred on strategic conceptual approach to TVE reform in Enugu- State. The study specifically sought to:

1. determine the strategic refocusing of TVE programmes for
Life-long learning in Enugu state
2. determine a reform system that will enhance TVE in Enugu –state

Significance of the study

The findings of this study, will be of benefit to the stakeholders in Education, the Ministry of Education, the schools offering TVE courses and the industries that will employ the product of the program.

The students of TVE will also fill the impact, as their programmes will be expanded to incorporate areas that will sharpen their intellectual abilities. The entire society will also benefit in the sense that barriers in academic pursuit will be removed. Limitations shall be no more and total integration of general and vocational courses will be put in place.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided the study:

1. What are the refocusing programmer that will provide for life-long learning in TVE in Enugu State.?
2. Which strategies will be adopted in

Enugu state to refocus TVE?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the supervising principals opinions on the reform systems intended for life-long learning in TVE in Enugu state.

Methods

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The survey was used because it involves the assessment of a group of people which represents the entire population.

The study area was Enugu- state of Nigeria. 100 education supervising principals from the rank of grade level 15 – 16 formed the population for the study. There was no sampling since the population size is manageable. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used in collecting data for the study. Three experts from measurement and evaluation and TVE validated the instrument department Enugu-state University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The reliability test was done using cronbach alpha which yielded a result of 0.69. The test was carried-out in Ebonyi state because they share the same administrative pattern in education with Enugu state .20 supervising principals were used in the reliability test. The instrument was administered to the respondents by hand and 100% return rate was recorded.

Mean and standard deviation statistics was adopted in analyzing the

data collated. A four point rating scale was used in determining the agreement level. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using t- test statistic.

Strongly Agree	-	4
Agree	-	3
Disagree	-	2
Strongly Disagree	-	1
		10
$4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10$		
$4 = 2.5$		

Decisions rule

Any score of 2.5 and above is regarded as agree while scores below 2.5 is regarded as disagree. If the null hypothesis H_0 t-value is greater than the t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, then the null H_0 is rejected otherwise accept.

Results:

The results are presented in tables according to the research questions and hypothesis.

Research Question 1.

What strategic reform systems are intended for life – long learning in TVE in Enugu State.?

Table 1: Programmes for refocusing TVE for life-long learning in Enugu State.

	X	SD	Decision
1. TVE programme should be comprehensive in course content	2.86	1.26	Agree
2. The curriculum should integrate liberal art education	2.51	1.09	Agree
3. General education and TVE should be taught in sec. schools	2.62	1.15	Agree
4. Barriers in admission into high institution should be removed	2.50	1.16	Agree
5. Trade centres should be re-introduced	2.20	1.27	disagree
6. Vocational courses should not be exposed to liberal art Students	2.25	1.21	disagree
7. Science and art students should be separated	2.13	1.11	disagree
8. TVE programmes should end at secondary level	2.09	1.22	disagree
9. TVE and general education should be integrated in Secondary school Examinations	2.73	1.14	Agree
10. TVE courses should be made compulsory in secondary schools.	2.56	1.17	Agree
Grand mean	2.45	1.18	Disagree

Data presented in Table 1, shows that the supervising principals used for the study attested that out of the 10 question items posed, only three (3) had negative response while seven (7) had positive response. The responses indicates high acceptance of strategic Reform agenda for life- long learning in TVE in Enugu- State.

The findings shows that the stake-holders and supervising principals a of the view that strategic reform is necessary in TVE for life –long learning.

Table 1 above had a mean range of 2.09 – 2.86 with standard deviation

range of 1.09 – 1.27 respectively. The SD values reveals that the respondents were consistent in their opinion.

This indicates homogeneity in the responses of the supervising principals.

Research Question 2

Which strategic reform system will enhance TVE in Enugu – state. Mean and standard deviation analysis of the responses of the respondents is presented in table 2

Table 2: Strategies to be adopted for refocusing of TVE for life-long learning in Enugu State

	X	SD	Decision
1. Emphasize basic education	2.80	1.19	Agree
2. Place emphasis on skill acquisition	2.40	1.26	Disagree
3. Include history and politics in the subjects	2.68	1.16	Agree
4. Linkage programmes with industries	2.50	1.20	Agree
5. ICT training as part of the school programme	2.58	1.20	Agree
6. Promote TVE as a vehicle for poverty reduction	2.62	1.17	Agree
7. Improve coherence of general and technical Education	2.50	1.20	Agree
8. Mainstream TVE and liberal art education	2.65	1.22	Agree
9. Support children to choose TVE	2.68	1.14	Agree
10. Oppose the perception that TVE is for the less Academically endowed.	2.83	1.21	Agree
Grand mean	2.63	1.19	Agree

Data presented in Table 2, shows that the supervising principals used for the study agreed that out of the (10) ten question items posed, only one (1) had negative response while nine (9) had positive responses. The responses indicates total acceptance of the reform to enhance TVE in Enugu state.

The finding show that the supervising principals support the strategic reforms to enhance TVE in the state. Table 2 above had a mean range of 2.40 – 2.68 with standard deviation range of 1.14 – 1.26 respectively. The SD values reveals that the respondents were consistent in their opinion. This indicate Uniformity in the opinion of the respondents.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses that were formulated for the study was tested using the t –test Statistical analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the supervising Principals on the strategic reform system intended for life – long learning in TVE.

Table 3

t – test Analysis of strategic Reform system for life-long learning.

Sample size	X	SD	df		t - cal	t- table	Decision
100	2.445	1.175	98		2.50	1.96	Reject HO,

The data presented in table 3 shows a computed t-value of 2.50, which indicated that, the respondent-supervising principals) opinion is grater than the t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis Ho, of no significant difference was rejected. The decision shows that the supervising principals were Of different opinions regarding the reform system intended for life-long learning and enhancement in Enugu state.

Discussion

According to UNESCO (2009) the

challenges of the current claim that technical and vocational skills should not be supply –led rather it should be demand driven. In other words, schools should not produce graduates by virtue of the number of courses, but rather the supply should be conditioned by the labour market demand for specified areas.

The comparative analysis of skills and competencies showed that there was a big gap existing between the two. The gap was as a result of our level of industrial development. That highlighted the variations that exists between supply- led programmes and demand- led programmes. Very often

competency- based approaches were linked with the desire to acquire specific occupational standard set for the educational suppliers by the relevant industry or employer of labour. In other words, the competencies were frequently claimed to be demand driven, and their mastery was often secured in a series of modules linked to specific tasks and targets. Indeed, technical and vocational skills are often associated with a "feel", "flair", or a degree of creativity, which may be impossible to translate easily into a measurable learning outcome.

Through good educational planning, technical and vocational skills have been

Included as one of the priority areas in education that attracted government attention. It is noted that individuals need practical skills for life-long learning and for the world of work. The recognition that skills are full and legitimate component of educational programmer for all, (EFA), it is pertinent that every individual should have a life- long skill for survival. As part of UNESCO's framework for wider leadership in personal competencies, the technical and vocational skills have been included as preparation for the world of work and for continuation to further and higher education. The IL0 (2008) document on skills and competences emphasized a new collaboration around skills for life, skills for employability and work, and skills for growth which UNESCO upheld as the current focus for TVE in the developing world.

Conclusion

It would be a very high priority for Enugu- state to capture the new trend of T.V.E. skills and competency development activity within the

educational sector. The vital contribution of TVE to skills and competency development of individuals gives prudence to employability, and poverty reduction. Technical and vocational education are viewed as part of general education, as a preparation for an occupation, and as part of life-long learning. The education ministry should embrace the new wind of reform going on in the education sector. Refocusing TVE system for life -long learning and changing roles of government and other stake-holders in matters concerning technical and vocational education should be pursued.

The action plan should be centred on developing skills and competencies necessary for self-employment and capacity building. Training and re-training to adapt to current innovations in TVE reform system to be given priority.

Recommendations

1. The stake holders in education should adopt the current UNESCO policy on TVE in Enugu state education policy.
2. The National policy document on education should be enforced strictly in compliance with the implementation of TVE programmes .
3. Private sector involvement in promoting technical education should be encouraged.
4. The state ministry of Education and the Technical Education Board should recruit competent technical Teachers to handle core technical subjects in our schools.
5. Government should appoint competent technical and vocational Education graduates to advice on matters

concerning TVE.

Retraining of serving technical teachers should be the priority of the ministry of Education Enugu- state.

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