TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: A MEDIUM FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 9 AND 10 IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in achieving Sustainable Development Goals 9 and 10 in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030. These goals are industry, infrastructure and innovation, and reduction of inequality. Descriptive design was used, with two each of research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. A total of 24,610,805 population of male and female youths covering the six states of south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria was used for the study. The sample size for this study was 800 youths, male and female from the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. A self-developed instrument titled "Imperatives of Technical and Vocational Education and Training as a Medium for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals Questionnaire (TVETAMSDGQ)" was used. The reliability of the TVETAMSDGQ was determined, using Cronbach Alpha with reliability coefficient of 0.72 obtained. To answer the research questions, mean and standard deviation were used while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 Alpha level of significance. The study revealed that technical-vocational education and training have a strong influence on sustainable development goal 9 and 10 in south–south, Nigeria. The study recommended among others, that government should establish one sophisticated Technical and Vocational Education and Training school in every community or at clan levels in South-south ,Nigeria, Technical and Vocational Education and Training be made a compulsory in South-South, Nigeria, provision of infrastructure for technical-vocational schools, adequate funding and proper implementation of policies for technical-vocational schools/institutes as well as working on the challenges hindering full realization of technical-vocational education and training, and sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

Keywords: Technical-vocational, education, training, Sustainable development, goals, poverty.

Introduction

The United Nations endorsed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, in 2015 as a global action to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that by the year 2030 all people live in peace and prosperity. The Sustainable Development Goals aimed to address 17 action goals, including the eradication of poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduce inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below the waterline, life on land, and peace.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interconnected goals, each of which has a target and at least one or two indicators. It's goals to promote economic growth, social inclusion, and to safeguard the environment. The UN offers support to governments, the commercial sector, academic research and Civil Society Groups (CSOs). The SDGs promote collaboration, ensuring that the appropriate decisions are made to sustainably improve lives for future generations. Through the SDGs, United Nations mapped out plans for the world to fully experience peace and prosperity.

In 2020, Nigeria was *ranked 160* on the *2020 world's SDG Index*. As such, the Federal government indicated interest to achieve the SDGs in accordance with a deal reached between the Nigerian government and the UN, and seeks to coordinate its development priorities with CSOs and the business sectors in order to jointly accomplish the SDGs. With the help of the 17 SDGs and the five P's which stands as People's Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships agenda; aiming to create a sustainable world. At the High Level of Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2017, Nigeria was one of the 44 UN members to deliver its Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on SDGs. These objectives are being pursued in Nigeria by the government, non-governmental groups, and academic institutions (FRN, 2020).

The October 2022 Cadre brought to knowledge the Government Aid to UN research on food and nutrition conducted twice a year indicated about 25 million Nigerians would face danger of becoming hungry between June and August 2023 if immediate action is not taken. The most vulnerable group to food insecurity will be children as six out of the 17 million Nigerians under the age of five faces food insecure challenges such as acute malnutrition with a significant risk of mortality in children. It was anticipated that there would be 2 million children with acute malnutrition by 2023.However. Nigeria scored 42.0 out of the possible 113 points in the 11th edition of the Global Food Security Index (GFSI), which was published last year. This placed Nigeria 107, the overall out of 113 countries globally in 2022, indicating that Nigeria is a home to 12.9% of people living in extreme poverty (World Poverty Clock, 2023). Nigeria was assessed in 2017 as a friendly nation for 2030 SDGS progress determined by the annual reviews presented to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2020.

With all efforts Nigeria have made to achieve sustainable development goals, particularly in the area of industry, infrastructure and innovation, and equitable opportunities to all citizens, but there is still chronic lack of medium and small-scale industries for youths' employment and empowerment. The inhuman approach to living like cultism, merciless killings, political thuggery, vandalization of oil installations, oil theft, kidnapping and terrorism as well as ritual practices are consequences from the neglect of technical-vocational education and training. TVET, can be used to trigger rapid skill development. The government has to act swiftly otherwise crime in South-South and Nigeria entirely will be difficult to curtail in the nearest future because it is no longer analogue, but digital as recent time has witnessed in the bedrock of oil and gas in Nigeria. Most often, the youths engaged in criminal activities as a secondary way of surviving financially as there is no economic opportunities. These acts have under mind the peace and sanity of other citizens. The ugly trend has positioned and branded the South-South, Nigeria and Nigeria at large as hostile and unconducive environment for businesses and development. As a result, many citizens no longer have confidence in the governments of the region and of the national level with the belief that it is impossible to get South-South geo-political zones developed because of the prevailing circumstances. As a result, any sudden altercation on the streets or roadways causes the locals to flee and seek safety. This scenario cannot happen in an organized society, as such, the South-South region of Nigeria has government and leadership overseen the day-to-day business and administration of the region, therefore, the government should change its policies and strategies to develop the youths so as to redirect, channel the energy and strength to meaningful functions in society.

The youth population is rising, and white-collar job employment opportunities are few. Consequently, available infrastructures no longer match the increasing population. To provide the rapidly growing adolescents and adult's population with a sense of economic direction, something must be done

practically through technical vocational education and training employment and empowerment, and creates safe environment for businesses

Beke (2010) asserts that kidnapping and armed robbery committed by young people are traceable to the ongoing exodus of businesses from Nigeria in general and the South-South in particular. If these unethical activities in Nigeria are not correctly handled, the country's economic situation would deteriorate.

Indeed, there are poor and hungry people in every family in south-south of Nigeria, and because of being unemployed, some of them participate in actions that undermine the economy and disturb the regular flow of economic activities ((Anyaegbu, 2017).

The above are source of worry and what informed this study on "Technical Vocational Education and Training in Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 9 and 10 in South-South, Nigeria". However, the goal 9 and 10 include industry, infrastructure and innovation, and reduction of inequality.

Since, technical and vocational education and training equips people with the skills necessary for work and self-development as well as independent, its role cannot be underestimated Obidile, Obi & Ikpat (2020) posits that technical and vocational and education and training is one of the educational systems used to achieve participation and inclusion of many citizens in lawful and sensible centered advantage activities towards good living by eliminating poverty, social un rest that hinders social development in society. Similarly, Cong & Wang (2012) assert that technical and vocational education and training equips individuals with competences as regard to skills and knowledge necessary for work engagement and entrepreneurship spirit, and maintenance of skilled workforce which is the driving force to prosperity. Consequently, Igbuzor(2006) sees technical education as a human right which every human being should attend for self-development and work activities. In the same line of idea, Nwokolo-Ojo, Agada & Shitmi (2018), states that the world is confronted with challenges of youth employment which solution is technical and vocational education and training, believed to bring individuals and societies back to developmental plans after many decades of neglect. According to Nwokolo (2012), the elementary function of technical and vocational education and training is the development of adequate individuals in society with right work driving skills for market demands. However, it is a panacea for youth employment and sustainability of labour market (Nwokolo-Ojo, Agada & Shitmi, 2018).

This study seeks to examine the influence of technical vocational education and training on sustainable development goal 9 and 10 in South-South region of Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

To examine the potential influence of technical vocational education and training on the development of small-scale industries, infrastructure and innovation among the male and female youths in South-South region of Nigeria by the year 2030.

To examine the impact of technical vocational education and training in reducing inequalities among male and female youths in South-South region of Nigeria by the year 2030.

Research Questions

To what extent can technical vocational education and training of male and female youths in South-South region of Nigeria contribute to the development of small-scale industries, infrastructure and innovation by the year 2030?

To what extent can the technical vocational education and training of male and female youths in South-South region of Nigeria contribute to the reduction of inequalities by the year 2030?

Hypotheses

Ho1. The technical vocational education and training of male and female youths do not have a notable effect on the formation of small-scale industries, infrastructure and innovation in South-South region of Nigeria by the year 2030.

Ho2. The technical vocational education and training of both male and female youths in South-South region of Nigeria is not expected to have a substantial effect on reduction of inequalities among male and female by the year 2030.

Methodology

The study was conducted in six States that forms the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It comprises AkwaIbom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers. A total of 24,610,805 population of male and female youths covering the six states of south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria was used for the study. Categorically, the male youth's population was 12,414,784; while the female youths was 12,070,027 population giving the above mentioned population for the study. The sample size for this study was 800 youths. Purposively, the male youth population of 12,414,784 was subjected to Taro Yamene's sample size selection formula which gave approximately 400. The same was applied on the female youth population of 12,070,021 which also gave 400. The summation of both male and female youths gave the aforementioned size of 800 youths.

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A Self-developed questionnaire titled "Technical Vocational Education and Training: A Medium To Achieve Selected Sustainable Development Goals Questionnaire (TVETAMSDGQ)". The TVETAMSDGQ was used for data collection. This questionnaire consists of section A and B. Section A consists of personal data. Section B comprises items 1-5 determining hunger eradication; determining poverty reduction, determining access to quality education, small scale industries, infrastructural development and innovation and reduction of economic inequality. All the items were structured based on the four-point modified Likert rating scale of Very High Extent =(VHE), High Extent = (HE), Low Extent = (LE) and Very Low Extent= (VLE), were assigned numerical value of 4,3,2 and 1 for positive keyed items while 1,2,3, and 4 were assigned for negatively keyed items to measure the IVTEAMSDGQ.

The validity of the instrument (TVETAMSDGQ) was subjected to face and content validation by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation. They vetted the items in terms of its relevance, appropriateness and language level. Their corrections and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. The pilot testing with 20 respondents outside the target population was carried out to determine the reliability of the instrument using the Cronbach Alpha. The Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.72 was obtained and considered.

In the administration of the instrument, the researchers established good relationship with the respondents and explain clearly to them to respond to the items correctly and they were properly guided about the instrument. However, the researcher carried this out with two research assistants in each state of the south-south, Nigeria. To achieve success, 400 copies of the questionnaire containing 25 items were administered to the respondents and its collection was done thereafter. The data retrieved from the respondents for this study through the questionnaire were analyzed with Mean and Standard Deviation while the null hypotheses were tested with independent t test at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The weighted response was used to calculate the criterion mean as shown below:

Criterion mean (X) of response = 4+3+2+1÷ 4 = 10/4 = 2.5. Where;

Very High Extent	(VHE)	=	4 Points
High Extent	(HE)	=	3 Points
Very Low Extent	(VLE)	=	2 Points
Low Extent	(LE)	=	1 Point

The responses that received a mean equal or greater than the criterion mean are considered positive, while those below the criterion mean are considered negative.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent can technical-vocational education and training enhance the establishment of small-scale industries (infrastructural and innovation) among the male and female youths in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses of the extent to which technical-vocational education and training can enhance the establishment of small-scale industries among the male and female youths in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030.

S/N	Items	Male			Female		
		$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision	$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Skills acquired from technical-vocational education and training can lead to infrastructural development in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030	3.09	.54	HE	3.02	.75	HE
2	With the skills acquired from technical-vocational education and training the youths can be creative.	3.09	.45	HE	2.98	.75	HE
3	Technical-vocational education and training can lead to small scale fashion/design business among the youths in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030.	3.05	.46	HE	3.04	.77	HE
4	Foreign exchange can be generated through industrial establishment in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030.	3.03	.56	HE	2.96	.66	HE
5	TVET Skills will help the youths to become producers of goods and services rather than consumers alone.	3.22	.49	HE	2.91	.76	HE
	Grand Total Mean/Standard Deviation	**3.09**	**0.5**	**HE**	**2.98**	**0.74**	**HE**

Legend: 0.00-1.89 (Very Low Extent), 1.90-2.79 (Low Extent), 2.80-3.69 (High Extent) and 3.70-400 (Very High Extent)

Data on Table 1 revealed that grand mean for male is given as 3.09 while that of female is 2.98 respectively. Both male and female mean values are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, technical-vocational education and training to a high extent can enhance the establishment of small-scale industries (infrastructural and innovation) among the male and female youths in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

Research Question Two: To what extent can technical-vocational education and training reduce inequalities among the youths in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses of the extent to which technical-vocational education and training can reduce inequalities among the male and female youths in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030.

S/N	ITEMS	Male			Female		
		$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision	$\overline{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Skills available in Technical-vocational education and training like paint making and plumbing open to all the youths irrespective of gender, tribe and faith denomination the youths will develop good economic knowledge and drive and will do away with crimes.	3.12	.55	HE	3.02	.72	HE
2	Technical-vocational education skill programme like Graphic design, interior decoration and shoe making made available to all the youths in south-south, Nigeria irrespective of socio-economic background of the youth involved, the region will experience economic growth.	3.14	.64	HE	2.93	.82	HE
3	It will enhance a high economic creativity of the youths in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030.	3.18	.61	HE	3.00	.83	HE
4	Social and economic mobility of the youths in south-south, Nigeria can be sustained by Technical-vocational education and training in 2030.	3.08	.58	HE	2.92	.74	HE
5	Skills will enhance gender equality in distribution of resources among the youths in south-south, Nigeria and lead to economic expansion.	2.86	.70	HE	2.77	.78	LE
	Grand Total Mean/Standard Deviation	**3.08**	**0.62**	**HE**	**2.93**	**0.78**	**LE**

Legend: 0.00-1.89 (Very Low Extent), 1.90-2.79 (Low Extent), 2.80-3.69 (High Extent) and 3.70-400 (Very High Extent)

Data on Table 2 revealed that grand mean for male is given as 3.08 while that of female is 2.93 respectively. Both male and female mean values are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50.Therefore, technical-vocational educational and training reduces inequalities among the youths in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

Ho1There is no significant difference between the male and female youths mean rating of –technical-vocational education and training on the enhancement of small scale industries (infrastructural and innovation) in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

Table 3: t-test analysis on the difference between the male and female mean rating of technical-vocational education and training on the enhancement of small-scale industries (infrastructural and innovation) in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030

Gender	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Df*	*t-cal*	*Sig.*	*Alpha*	*Decision*
Males	400	15.49	1.48	798	4.03	.00	.05	Significant
Females	400	14.89	2.54					

Data on table 3 shows that male youths have mean and standard deviation scores of 15.49 and 1.48 while female youths have mean and standard deviation scores of 14.89 and 2.54 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 798, the t-calculated value of 4.03 is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05.

Therefore, there is a significant difference between the male and female youths mean rating of technical-vocational education and training on the enhancement of small-scale industries (infrastructural and innovation) in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

H_{O2} There is no significant difference between the male and female mean rating of technical-vocational education and training on reduction of inequalities in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

Table 4: t-test analysis on the difference between the male and female mean rating of technical-vocational education and training on reduction of inequalities in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030

Gender	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*	*Df*	*t-cal*	*Sig.*	*Alpha*	*Decision*
Males	400	15.37	2.04	798	4.11	.00	.05	Significant
Females	400	14.64	2.54					

Data on table 4 shows that male youths have mean and standard deviation scores of 15.37 and 2.04 while female youths have mean and standard deviation scores of 14.64 and 2.54 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 798, the t-calculated value of 4.11 is rejected because the significant value of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the male and female youths mean rating of –technical-vocational education and training on reduction of inequalities in South-South, Nigeria by the year 2030.

Summary of Findings

Influence of Technical-Vocational Education and Training on the Development of Industry, infrastructure and innovation (Sustainable Development Goal 9)

Study shows, that both the male and female youths have positive perception of technical-vocational education and training on the establishment of small-scale industries which both short and long term effects will lead to serious infrastructural development and innovative mindset development in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030. Thus, technical-vocational education and training can enhance establishment of small-scale industries. This is in line with, Basheer, Mohammed, Mohammed and Musa (2020), assertion that vocational and technical education play a vital role in training skilled personnel to manage micro and macro enterprises as well as becoming entrepreneurs having developed the mindset of setting and managing businesses.

Impact of Technical-Vocational Education and Training on the Reduction of Inequality (Sustainable Development Goal 10).

The finding of the study also revealed that both the male and female youths have a very understanding and knowledge that technical-vocational education and training reduces inequality in society. However, technical-vocational education and training can reduce inequalities. Consequently, Saltmarsh (2012) assert that technical and vocational education and training creates and ensure equitable freedom of skill education for male and female with a view of motivating gender inclusivity in lifelong training programmes, also a skill preparatory system attracting employment opportunities for all gender and a correspondence to different values of society with the evolving economy. Similarly, Anele, Isiorhovoja, Dele and Asoluka in Ngugi and Mutima (2017) describe vocational-technical education and training as a tool that mould quality people for economic creativity which help them to live a life free of poverty and social exclusion, this comes through when people are trained with skills turning them into entrepreneurs, employment opportunity creators and well enlightened individuals who will also play vital roles in economic development of the societies they live. Since men and women contributes to economic and social development of their societies, vocational-technical education skills happen to be gender inclusive programme for equal training for equal income earning it influences reduction of inequalities.

Consequently, technical-vocational education and training provides skills that properly equip people with lifelong carrier, perpetual skills for self-independent, self-reliant and access to job opportunities in private or public enterprises. It reduces unemployment and poverty. Accordingly, Mbongeni, Siyabonga and Kaseeram (2023) acknowledges that unemployment causes poverty as one percent addition to unemployment results to 0.4 to 0. 97 percent growth in poverty rates. As such, technical-vocational education and training is skill-oriented programme and it is a panacea to poverty and unemployment in society. Hence, technical-vocational education and training produces skilled men and women with the capacity to work assiduously to reduce poverty and eradicate hunger in south-south, Nigeria by the year 2030 if the youths are encouraged to embrace the scheme more than theoretical certificate based education.

Conclusion

This study investigated technical and vocational education and training as a medium for achieving sustainable development goal 9 and 10, in South-South, region of Nigeria. Findings of study indicated that technical-vocational education and training produces skills that have strong influence on the development of industry, infrastructure, innovation, and reduction of inequality. The outcome of technical-vocational education and training the production skills required for job creation, empowerment, innovation, economic growth and expansion as well as nation building. Consequently, sustainable development goals of United Nations would be achievable in south-south region of Nigeria if technical-vocation education and training towards skill development is prioritized as bed rock to nation's economic viability. Its impacts and values on societies are numerous and immense. It offers people the opportunity to improve themselves for economic roles. From all indication, technical-vocational education and training perpetuates skills that trigger economic empowerment and employment opportunities which generally reduced poverty, eliminates hunger and pave way to quality education. Thus, it empowers families, individuals and fosters the habit of creativity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following were recommended.

i. United Nations' arm in charge of sustainable development goals in Nigeria should consider technical-vocational education and training and accord it first class attention as it is the bed rock of economic development, job creation, growth and expansion.
ii. To reduce poverty and eliminate hunger in developing nations, United Nations should involve micro and macro enterprises that have the capacity to train individuals in various societies because government TVET training centers are limited and out modern demands.
iii. Various government in south-south region of Nigeria should revive technical-vocational education centers with modern technologies to meet international standard so as to close the gap between available job opportunities in oil and gas and lack of skills for employment.
iv. Government should ensure that vocational-technical education compulsory system for the youths at all levels.
v. Government should review the National Policy on technical-vocational education and training in order to examine whether the stated objectives have been achieved or not.
vi. Since technical-vocational education and training equip people with industrial technical know-how for works, government and none governmental bodies should ensure that the provision of infrastructural facilities that will aid the teaching and learning of technical-vocational studies are adequate and effective to meet the needs of the time we are.
vii. Government should ensure adequate funding of technical-vocational education system since it is the bedrock for development of the youths and the nation building at large.
viii. Government should shift certificate-based education to practically-oriented education so as to make the youths economically viable after tertiary education.
ix. Government should make technical-vocational education mandatory advanced education with award of High National Certificate after secondary for the youths in this modern time
x. Government should partner with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other concerned bodies to harness the potentials of the youths through technical-vocational education and training.
xi. The government should borrow a leaf from United States of America, Canada, China and other countries that used technical-vocational education and training to develop and improve their economies by making technical-vocational education and training a fundamental educational system rather than the certificate-based education that has limited job opportunities for the youths.
xii. To reduce unemployment rate and social vices which the youths are always in the forefront in south-south, Nigeria, the energy, strength and thinking to do evil would be channeled to reasonable efforts if TVET is given a holistic approach.

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