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*Keywords:* *technical and education and training, skills acquisition and opportunities.*

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# TVET for Job Creation: Needs, Problems and Opportunities Provided by National Directorate of Employment Skills Acquisition Programmes in Adamawa State of Nigeria

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## I. Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is the comprehensive term used to describe the integration of the formal and non-formal sectors of vocational education. The non-formal, as well as the formal sectors has specific skills, attitudes and knowledge that the learners should acquire in order to survive the occupational trend in the society. According to Ogwo and Oranu (2006), the general skill training given in the study of vocational subjects enhances occupational mobility. Thus, training obtained from TVET qualifies one to change from one occupation to another in order to face and withstand the existing unemployment situation in the Nigerian society.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), (2011) defined technical and vocational education (TVE) as the education and training geared towards the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for employment in particular occupation. It occurs in a variety of learning contexts- formal, informal and it takes place in educational institution or at work place.

Technical and Vocational educational training is designed for the acquisition of occupational skills. It gives individuals the skills to live, learn and work as a productive citizen in a global society (Dike, 2009). Afeti (2009) enumerated three major objectives of technical and vocational educational training as:

1. The acquisition of relevant knowledge, practical skills and attitudes for gainful employment in a particular trade or occupational area.
2. Flexibility, adaptability and life-long learning, and
3. Developing technical and vocational education as a vehicle for rapid industrialization, as well as economic empowerment and social mobility of the individual.

Unemployment and poverty, especially among school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions, has remained one of the fundamental challenges threatening the economic development of Nigeria. These problems started assuming an alarming rate during the economic recession of the 1980s and had continued to worsen with the implementation of some economic reform policies of currency devaluation, deregulation, trade liberalization and the enthronement of market forces. All which resulted in the lowering of capacity utilization in industries, the collapse of various businesses, and massive staff rationalization in both government and private agencies (National Directorate of Employment, (NDE), 2016). The situation of unemployment in Nigeria is on the increase such that many youths remained unemployed after graduation (Industrial Training Fund [ITF], 2007).

In order to curb the problem of unemployment in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria made several attempts, with the introduction of some intervention programmes to help youths both graduates and non-graduates to acquire necessary skills for survival. One of such programmes established by the government is the NDE. The NDE is a federal government agency established to curb or reduce the problem of unemployment. According to the NDE (2016) Annual report, NDE was established through a Committee, which was under the auspices of the

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Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity, on 26th March, 1986. The recommendations of the committee led to the establishment of NDE on 22nd November, 1986. The scheme was officially launched on 30th January, 1987.

The objectives of the NDE include the following: -

1. To design and implement programmes to combat mass unemployment.
2. To articulate policies aimed at developing work programmes with labour intensive potentials.
3. To obtain and maintain a data bank on vacancies and employment agencies; and
4. To implement any other policies as may be laid down from time to time, by the Directorate.

Unemployment is on increase upon all the effort made by Government to curb this menace. This is worrisome, coupled with the fact that NDE skill acquisition programmes in some part of the country is fast declining, especially in the area of training facilities required for Skills Acquisition training. According to Omofonmwan & Chukuedu (2013) one of the major problems facing NDE skill acquisition programme in Edo state is that most of their training facilities are inadequate, obsolete and some are not even provided by Government.

## II. National Directorate of Employment

Acquisition of special and relevant skills and creation of jobs have remained a focal point in the Nigerian Government policy overtime, at least on paper, hence between 1986 and now, various programmes such NDE, Operation feed the nation, Poverty Eradication Programmes, N-Power build etc has been established by Government to promote self-dependence and self-reliance in the generation of gainful self-employment. It is believed that the education system operated since the post-independence placed emphasis on academic excellence rather than skill acquisition which can prepare the individual for a more useful and fulfilling life within the society (Adebisi & Oni, 2012). Vocational skills acquisition programmes is believed would be more relevant to the development of any nation. Hence, a new national policy on education was developed in 1977, introducing vocational courses in the educational curriculum, (Chinedum, 2006).

The ineffectiveness of the vocational courses in the school curriculum to address youth unemployment which assumed alarming proportion, prompted the Federal Government to set up the Chukwuma Committee on 26 March, 1986 (NDE, 2014) Annual Report. The report of the Committee led to the creation of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in November 1986 and charged with the responsibility of promoting skills acquisition, which facilitate the spirit of creativity, self-reliance and independence. To this day, vocational skills' training is receiving good attention as many centres have been established by NDE across the nation.

According to Chinedum, (2006), one of the fundamental steps taken by the Nigerian government to reduce the problem of unemployment in Nigeria was the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), which was established on November 22, 1986 with the general objective of promptly and effectively fighting unemployment by designing and implementing innovative programmes, which are directed towards the provision of training opportunities through the guidance and management support services to graduate farmers and small scale entrepreneurs. The programmes of NDE spanned across the following: - Agricultural development programme, Youth employment and vocational skills development programme, Special public works, and Small scale industries and graduate employment programmes, (Hassan, 2015).

## III. Vocational Skills Acquisition Training Programmes of National Directorate of Employment

Training is very germane to the acquisition of technical/vocational skills. Dike, (2009) observed that vocational education and job training programmes has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies, because of its impact on human resource development, productivity and economic growth. Vocational education is designed to offer training to improve individual general proficiency, especially in relation to their present or future occupations (Dike, 2009). Training is to educate, teach, change the behaviour and make people acquire new knowledge and new skills (NDE, 2016).

Training also teach people to change their attitudes, training in the deepest sense is to teach thinking, creating and learning to learner. Training is generally through practical exposure, either in-formally by practical exposure to job, or in formal institutions established for the purpose of providing exposure to required skills (Ogbimi, 2006). Training imparts an individual with skills required to function profitably in a particular job. A skill could be said to be an action required in order to perform a task that involves coordination of body movements.

Training according to Neitzel (2007), training has to do with the application of knowledge, and knowledge is an understanding of facts, principles, or concepts, including the cognitive process necessary to process information. The emphasis in training is on practical work and demonstration. That is, what the individuals can do with their hands applying vocational or technical skills. While education prepares the individual for eventual skills acquisition, the attainment of skill or expertise is provided by training.



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According to Lawan (2011), training prepares people for work and life. Skills are largely developed in a working situation; competence develops through the improvement of awareness, knowledge and skills. Any gap between a person's education and the skills needed for a job is bridged by training (Ogbimi, 2006). A training objective is the specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes that the trainees are to gain as a result of the training activity.

The following are some of vocational skills acquisition programmes operated by NDE in Nigeria for training unemployed youth: Electrical installation, Computer operation, Auto-Electrical, Catering, Plumbing, GSM repairs, Welding, Interior Decoration, Hair-Dressing, Motor-cycle Repairs, Knitting, Shoe making and Dish installation (Hassan, 2016).

## IV. Objectives of Vocational Skills Acquisition Programmes of NDE

The skill acquisition-training concept introduced by the NDE to combat mass unemployment has remained a veritable tool which the directorate has adopted since its inception (Ogunlela, 2012). This development made it possible for the directorate to design and implement vocational and technical skills acquisition schemes. This has no doubt, assisted in addressing the problem of unemployment, resulting from the lack of productive and marketable skills, among the unemployed youths (Adebisi and Oni, 2012). It is on this premise, that the vocational skills development (VSD) programme was designed to achieve the following according to NDE (2013):

1. To provide technical and vocational training for school leavers, school dropouts and unemployed graduate.
2. To equip the youths with skills that will enable them become self-employed or gain wage-employment.
3. To provide alternative employment opportunities for youths and to enable them form cooperatives and start their own business.

In ensuring that the above stated objectives were achieved, the following schemes were design, adapted and implemented by the VSD department: -

1. National open apprenticeship schemes (NOAS) which operates two sub schemes namely:
   a) Basic-National open apprenticeship scheme (B-NOAS)
   b) Advance-National open apprenticeship scheme (A-NOAS)
2. School-on-wheels schemes (SOW)
3. Resettlement loan schemes (RLS).

## V. Needs of Skills Acquisition Programmes of National Directorate of Employment

Technical colleges and vocational institution in Nigeria have been training people to become artisan, craftsmen and technicians. Training qualifies them for jobs in both public and private sectors of the economy. Both sectors, according to Ndomi (2005), require well-trained and competent technicians or technologist who can operates and maintain the available technical equipment. Therefore, there is needs of standard skills acquisition centres and adequate training facilities to produce graduates that can perform competently in their chosen vocation without a need for pre-employment training. The major goal of NDE Vocational skills acquisition programmes is to prepare trainees for successful employment in the labour market (Medugu and Hassan, 2016).

Many people lack skills, or have skills that are outdated or of little relevance to present conditions (Lawan, 2011). Furthermore, they have little to depend on other than their own physical strength. Thus, Ogbimi (2006) believed that training and capacity building for both men and women is key priority for poverty reduction, in order to address lack of appropriate skills and capacity both within the private and public sectors. The bane of unemployment has been due to lack of technical/vocational skills that are relevant to the modern and technological advanced world by most Nigerian graduates and school leavers. Dike, (2009) lamented that Nigeria is lagging behind in preparing her workforce for the challenges of the rapidly changing global economy. To curb this menace, vocational/ technical education must be reprioritized in the country's educational system (Umar and Ma`aji 2010). Base on the above issues we can see that before NDE can achieve its objectives, there is need of standard training centres, adequate facilities and proper training in all aspect of its vocational training programmes, (Omofonmwan and Chukuedo, 2013).

Regrettably, training systems in developing countries generally and in Nigeria in particular, are inadequate for supporting those seeking work or self-employment, and need to improve their relevance in the emerging competitive world (Hassan, 2016). People are unemployed either as a result of lack of employment or lack of employable skills. The latter is the need that must be met, if individuals must be employed. Provision of relevant job skill training is very essential to meet employable skills that might be lacking in the unemployed. There will always be job opportunities but people remain unemployed as long as they lack employable skills. According to Marjor-Ritta (2009), the core issue in providing relevant training is to identify what the real training needs are. Marjor-Ritta believes



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that a related issue is the gap between perceived and real needs. To make training count, it must be matched directly to the needs of the people (Rosner, 2009).

## VI. Problems of Vocational Skills Acquisition Programmes of NDE

NDE vocational skills acquisition programmes aims at equipping individuals with knowledge and skills that will make them self-reliant or functional member of society. However, Shittu (2014) argue that in Technical school skill are not acquire in a vacuum or without training facilities. Bello and Shuaibu (2013) stressed that tools and equipment and other facilities make up the learning environment conducive for skill acquisition. Effective use of those facilities according to them is of paramount importance, consequently available training facilities must be functional and adequate to be effectively put to use. The inadequacy of tools and equipment in training centres, workshops and laboratories of schools in Nigeria are the reasons why TVET programme suffers.

Omofonmwan and Chukwuedo, (2013), find out that tools and equipment for NDE vocational skills acqusition programmes are not sufficient as required, and some are not provided at all by government in Edo state, also Hassan, (2016) found that the required training facilities are not available at NDE skills acquisition centres in Adamawa state. Hassan also found that, the available training facilities at NDE skills acquisition centres in Adamawa state are not adequate as required by the directorate. Therefore, these are some of problems faced by NDE vocational skills acquisition programmes.

## VII. Employment Opportunities Provided by NDE Vocational Skills Acquisition Programmes

Knowing the employment opportunities that are available on any technical and vocational trade especially NDE skills acquisition programmes, such can stimulate the interest of unemployed youth either graduate or non-graduate to enrol in to skills acquisition programmes to acquire the required skills for wage or self-employment and National Development.

Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET) is one of the manpower development programmes of study that is attracting the attention of various countries around the world. This quality equally qualifies it to be seen as the only programme that tackles the menace of unemployment and create employment opportunities in society,

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) emphasizes on self-employment in preference to wage employment. The activities of NDE were structured into four main programme areas which entail job creation as well as productivity and income generating enhancement for the youths and other beneficiaries. The four-programme areas are: the Vocational Skill Development (VSD), the Small Scale Enterprise Programme(SSE), the Special Public Works (SPW) and the Rural Empowerment Programme (REP). The VSD programme is a skills acquisition programme which Since its establishment, many youths either graduates or non-graduates are trained in various technical and vocational trades (Amire and Justice 2015). According to Amire and Justice (2015) NDE and its programmes are not popular to the public, most unemployed youths and school levers are not aware of NDE programmes, there is disconnection between NDE and mass unemployed youth. They suggested that NDE need to advertise its programmes especially in higher institution through the use of mass media.

Vocational skills acquisition programmes of NDE consist of various vocational trades where one can earn a living after completion of the training. Ogbuanya, Abdullahi and Ado (2013) observed that skilled job opportunities are not filled up, skill acquisition graduates are not competent enough to take up the available job opportunities. They further stated that, Electrical installation graduates are weak in practice of their trade. Furthermore, the standard of performance of Nigerian technicians in general is at the moment very low there by retarding the overall productivity of the Nigeria economy.

Adebisi and Oni (2012) found that there are many employment opportunities for the graduates of NDE programmes in south west Nigeria for self-employment, the employment opportunities are available in Electrical installation, catering, plumbing, Garri processing, tailoring etc. Also, Igwe and Oragwu (2014) found out the employment opportunities for graduates of skills acquisition centers in Rivers state are to secure employment in Agriculture establishment, Electrical installation etc as well as set up their own bossiness. Similarly, Hassan, (2016) confirmed that there is employment opportunities for graduates of electrical installation trade of NDE skills acquisition centres in Adamawa State.

Inadequate awareness of the employment opportunities available through NDE programmes particularly creation of wealth and self- reliant could lead to poor enrolment in to the NDE skills acquisition programme, since unemployed youth can only benefitted from NDE programme when they enroll into the programmes.

## VIII. Conclusion

The desire to create employment opportunities for National development through NDE vocational skills acquisition programmes can be achieved when the skills acquisition centres and training facilities are



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provided and are well utilized, for the programme to succeed as demanded by the Directorate. Some of the needs and the problems of NDE skills acquisition programmes that were identified needs to be addressed. It is certain that, for NDE to achieve its goals of creating Jobs and reducing unemployment through its vocational training programmes, training facilities should be available, adequate, used and public should be made to be aware of the available employment opportunities for the graduates of NDE skills acquisition programmes. The non-implementation of the recommendations made will have far reaching implications especially on achieving the objectives of NDE, which include job creation and reducing the rate of unemployment through its vocational skills acquisition programmes.

## IX. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. Federal, state and local government should ensure prompt provision of adequate training facilities to match the needs of trainees at NDE skills acquisition centres.
2. All the NDE skills acquisition centres in the country should be adequately equipped with the needed training facilities. These facilities should be up-to-date in both quantity and quality for effective training to take place.
3. Awareness should made to public on the activities of NDE, the job opportunities that are available for vocational skills acquisition graduates of NDE and the recruitment exercise should be publicized so that, interested candidates can be enrolled in to the training programmes.

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