

Shortage Of Teaching Personnel For Technical And Vocational Education (Tve) In Oyo State: Issues, Challenges And The Way Forward.

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ABSTRACT: *The study critically assessed the ability and capacity of the FIVE technical colleges in Oyo State to fully comply with the National Policy on Education (NPE) that stipulates that for effective participation of students in practical work, the teacher-students ratio shall be kept at 1: 20. The breakdown of the teacher to students of one of the technical colleges indicated an average of 1 teacher to 83 students which was observed as a serious departure from the best practices and total negation of the dictate of the national policy on education. The findings revealed not only a dearth of professional and qualified teachers, but also showed that many instructors have left teaching line for greener pasture in other ministries, institutions, agencies, parastatals and high paying industries. It was established also that the ratio of teacher to student in these colleges is far higher than what the policy stipulates. Two key recommendations are that since students' enrolment is increasing in Oyo State and the students' population is ever increasing, it is expedient to employ more instructors in line with the growing students' population. The teachers equally need to be well remunerated, such that they earn as their counterparts with the same qualification in other ministries and industries. Hopefully, this will afford the system to retain best hands for the effective impartation of skills on the TVE beneficiaries such that their performances at places of work will be significantly enhanced.*

Keywords: *Educational Policy Implementation; Teaching Personnel; Technical and Vocational Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education is one of the major means of providing jobs for the ever increasing youth population, creating jobs for others, alleviating poverty and promoting the economy of both developing and developed nations. Uninterestingly, however, myriads of challenges have over the years been militating against the development of this level of education. Apparently, issues ranging from shortage of funds, equipment, tools, standard workshops, well equipped laboratories and libraries, unhealthy political will, inappropriate monitoring and evaluation procedures, problem of policy formulation and implementation, inadequacies in the curriculum implementation, poor societal perception, shortage of teaching personnel that militate against the development of TVE in the last few years constitute major concern for all stakeholders and at the same time, hinder students' participation in practical work as well as level of competency after graduation. As Ekpenyong (1999) put it, TVE, particularly vocational education seemed to have suffered some setback after the medieval renaissance because of the emergency of the concept of humanism in education between the 15th and 16th century, when emphasis was placed on the study of human nature and cultural heritage. Of all the resources necessary for effective students' participation in practical work, the human resource plays a prominent role, as it coordinates the other resources. Unfortunately, there is an acute shortage of technical instructors in Oyo State Technical Colleges. This development impacts negatively on the practical work.

Apparently, TVE teachers are grossly in short supply in Nigeria, both in quantity and quality. Thus, shortage of teachers is arguably responsible for low level of skill acquisition and lack of competency of the beneficiaries that has exposed them to series of challenges at their various places of work, created bottleneck for the implementation of policy on TVE and led to low promotion of TVE generally. Dearth of TVE teachers is so serious that some colleges with over two thousand students' population, have either only one teacher for each of the basic subjects or none at all. For the trade subjects, cases of one or at most three teachers in a department with about 370 students is rampant, thus creating a situation where a teacher handles students ranging from 53, 65, 88, 99 to 101, depending on students for practical classes.

Table 1.1: Student and Teacher Population of Government Technical College, Ibadan as at January 2016.

S/N	Dept	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	No Of Instructor For The Available Trades.	Ratio Per Department
1.	Electrical Installation & Maintenance Works.	215	203	189	607	06	1:101
2.	Block Laying, Bricklaying & Concreting	120	146	128	394	04	1:99

3.	Motor Vehicle Mechanics	95	100	103	298	03	1:99
4.	Mechanical Engineering Craft Practice	60	65	70	195	03	1:65
5.	Catering Craft Practice	42	56	62	160	03	1:53
6.	Carpentry And Joinery	61	67	79	207	02	1:104
7.	Business Studies	55	50	54	159	03	1:53
8.	Painting And Decorating	70	66	39	175	02	1:88

This development, as clearly indicated in table 1.1 above is quite unfortunate, unacceptable and against the policy on TVE that stipulates a maximum of 20 students per teacher for the practical work. Section 7; subsection 43 of the national policy on education states that “for effective participation of students in practical work, the teacher-students ratio shall be kept at 1: 20 (FGN, 2004). Debatably, the NPE dictates on TVE is a mere extension and elaborate of what happened at the beginning of creation in the Garden of Eden (the workshop and workplace), where there was a teacher (God) to only two students (Adam and Eve). God was the only technical instructor, teaching and imparting skills on just two students (Adam and Eve) on how to till the land, fish in the streams and rivers, harvest, store and tend the flock. He infact made them multi-skilled having created them multi-talented. However, inspite of this better than both best practices in the world and as even stipulated in the NPE as regards teacher-students ratio of 1:20, Adam and Eve slipped and disappointed their creator who doubled as their instructor. From the flow of the logic and in view of the argument above, one can safely predict the outcome of having teacher / student ration ranging from 1:65, 80 and 101 when we had issues with ratio 1:2 as evidence in the Garden of Eden.

Tafida, Clement and Raihan (2015), aptly noted that teachers preference for other sectors of the economy where better salaries are paid is one of the major factors responsible for shortage of teachers in the various institutions of learning including technical colleges. Also, graduates of TVE are equally needed in industries because of their qualifications. Unfortunately for TVE institutions, industries are more than ready to pay them higher wages that serves as a greater attraction to them than the poorly paid job as an instructor or a teacher. The good ones are absorbed by the industries while schools are left with possibly, the frustrated few and ill motivated. Other reasons identified for the shortage of TVE teachers include late introduction of TVE in Nigeria, lack of motivation for teachers of TVE, late payment of salary, unnecessary delay in the promotion of teachers, lack of periodic re-training for the instructors, underfunding of TVE, that result in some states, having teacher-students ratio, ranging from 1: 53 to 1: 101 instead of 1: 20 recommended by the national policy on education.

The place or role of teachers in the effective functioning of any level of education has long been strongly recognized by all and sundry. Also, the old saying that no education can rise above the quality of its teachers is relevant in this situation. In the opinion of Puyate (2008), teacher is the centre of the implementation of any educational programme. Any divergency from the policy statement at any level of education may be likened to building on a weak foundation. As Puyate (2008) noted, the bedrock of any technological advancement in any country lies in the effective implementation of educational policies. It is imperative, therefore, that government, be it at federal or state level should emphasize technology-transfer through its educational policies.

The focus of this study is to critically look at the present ratio of teacher to students in the FIVE technical colleges in Oyo State and analyze the extent to which this is in line with the NPE dictates as well as the level of contribution to the success or failure of skill impartation in the workshop by teachers and students’ participation in the practicals and acquisition of the necessary skills, with a view to recommending some possible measures that can help to ameliorate the situation.

Issue Of Shortage Of Tve Teachers.

As Tafida, Clement and Raihan (2015) observed developing countries in general suffer from the shortage of qualified teachers. The problem of retaining teachers particularly TVE teachers in educational institutions dated back to 1960s. The constant movement of teachers from teaching to better paying jobs in other sectors of the economy is apparently responsible for the shortfall of teachers of TVE. Unfortunately, shortage of TVE teachers seems to be a global issue. For instance, Wilkin and Nwoke (2011) reported a significant shortage of TVE teachers in the United States (U.S) especially in states like Michigan, Virginia, South Dakota, Iowa and New York. According to International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2010), report from some high-income countries indicates actual or potential shortages of TVET teachers and trainers, notably due to the aging of this workforce. For example, a 2007 report from Sweden indicated that more than half of such teachers were over 50years of age. Observably, the problem has been compounded until very recently by difficulties of competing with often more lucrative private enterprises and in rapidly expanding professions. In spite of the recent economic recession that affected the economy of many nations negatively, which could have paved way for teaching of TVET to be more lucrative, shortage of teachers exists in low-income countries especially to meet the Education for all (EFA) goals by 2015 (UNESCO, 2010). Reasons such as low financial incentives and

general conditions of service in the education sector in comparison with the industrial, commercial and service enterprises have been identified as some of the underlying factors for teachers' preference for working in industries. As Simons, Harris, Pudney and Clayton (2009) put it, one of the challenges facing the recruitment of TVET professionals (particularly for public providers) is the salary gap between what can be earned as workers in industries and the income of the teachers in TVET sector. According to Wilkin and Nwoke (2011), shortage of skilled vocational workers is so serious to the extent that career and technical education as well as economic growth have been affected negatively.

Undoubtedly, issues on TVE have negative implications for youth employment, job creation, industrial development and the development of a nation's economy. It might not be possible to think of the advancement of the technology of a nation, let alone its economic development without the provision of the necessary resources for TVE institutions. This assertion has been established by previous studies. For instance, Puyate (2008) investigated constraints to effective implementation of vocational education programme in private secondary school in Port-Harcourt local government area and reported that dearth of professional and qualified teachers for the teaching of vocational and technical subjects, inadequacy of infrastructure and equipment in schools, insufficient instructional materials and books in schools and poorly funding of schools constitute hindrances for the promotion of TVE.

Implication Of Non-Compliance With The Policy Dictates.

Non-compliance with the policy dictate and expectation of ration 1: 20 of teacher to students in having an effective workshop interaction and participation has grievous and negative implication on the person of technical instructors, students' competence, student effectiveness in an on-job situations and fulfillment in life. Having more than the required students to cope with increases pressure on the teacher in term of time that will be spent on work and it will psychologically create an imbalance as this serves as a serious discouragement for instructors to give their best. Not many can work and cope with pressure. Arguably, the level of involvement in terms of proper evaluation, close supervision, adequate monitoring as expected under the strict instructor's guidance in a workshop to evaluate individual student's progress cannot be guaranteed with high population of students in workshop as evident in nearly all the departments in technical colleges in Oyo State. Also, the following are possible:

- The pressure of work due to the above situation sometimes contributes to unsuccessful efforts at retaining best hands in teaching and in recruitment to meet the high rise in students' population.
- Higher ratio of students that is far above the ratio recommended by the policy can lead to ineffective control of workshop activities and might create preventable accidents.
- Retardation of the progressive transfer of students from studentship to well skilled technicians and less effective craftsmen's, since only effective participation and frequent practice enhances skill impartation.
- The concept of self-reliance, self-employment and high marketability of technical students are negatively affected if training is in anyway truncated due to overpopulation of students and this can be counter-productive to the aims and objectives of technical education.
- The overpopulation of students and depletion of technical instructors in workshop has capacity to make the students half-skilled, which might make them not only unemployable but also turn them to a highly vulnerable group ready for recruitment into societal vices like drug vendors, religious extremist volunteers, criminal gangs, among others.
- Workshop interaction and participation also provides a robust platform and linkage among schools, training centres, job market and industries. It must be noted that increase in teacher/students ratio has capacity to create a gap, with what supposed to work as a system, since the base foundation will be altered by lack of adequate students involvement and participation in the workshop activities.
- If and whenever the students eventually graduate and become gainfully employed, their employer are not likely to maximally get values for money in terms of their effectiveness and efficiency at work.
- Shortage of TVE teachers in Oyo State has been noted to be one of the factors responsible for non-accreditation of many trade subjects for more than a decade ago by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). Non accreditation of trade subjects has serious implication on the quality of the certificates held by TVE graduates, promotion and the future of TVE.
- Ultimately and in the final analysis, the society suffers. The labour market is currently under pressure of an acute demand of skilled craftsmen and technicians in order to cope with the technological advancement, increasing the productivity of the nation and the per capital income of the citizens.

Possible Measures For Reducing The Issue Of Shortage Of Tve Teachers.

In view of the above, there is the need to creatively resolve the problem of non-compliance with the best practices and the stipulated ratio of 1 teacher to 20 students in workshop activities. The under listed measures are the possible measures for addressing the issue of shortage of TVE teachers.

- Professionals serving as technical instructors should be made to find the teaching profession as attractive if not more attractive and rewarding than their counterparts in other ministries, institutions, agencies and industries. This, one hope will arrest the brain drain and increase the possibility of the schools retaining their staff.
- Recruitment exercise should be in time and in consonance with the increase in students' population.
- Salary should not only be made attractive but must be paid on time.
- Stagnation of instructors over a long period of time encourages exodus of staff and must be discouraged.
- Since we sometimes have reasons to hire foreign national coaches for our national team for crucial competition, we can on a serious note, critically and seriously consider bringing expatriate from technologically advanced nations to rectify the imbalance in the supply of the technical instructors in our technical colleges.

II. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

Dearth of TVE teachers seems to exist generally world over. In Oyo State, acute shortage of TVE teachers has been identified as one of the major factors that hinder students' effective participation in practical work, genuine skill acquisition, sound competency and rapid promotion of TVE. Irregular TVE teachers' recruitment, re-training, regular departure to industries and other places where salary and other conditions of service are fantastic are some of the underlying factors for this unfortunate development. A situation where there is a teacher to about 83 to 101 students for the practical class instead of teacher-students ratio of 1:20 stipulated by the NPE is not only unfortunate but inimical to the development of TVE in Oyo State. This unhealthy situation is no doubt a departure from the NPE dictate on TVE practicals to the extent that implementation of the policy on TVE practicals has become an issue. To this extent, urgent steps are required to make the implementation of policy on TVE practicals feasible in a way that the teaming students' population of TVE in the state will genuinely acquire useful knowledge capable of making them self-reliant, job creators, promoters of the state economy particularly and the nation in general.

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