

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: THE NIGERIA PERSPECTIVES

By

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Abstract

This paper examined vocational education programme as that which prepares and designed to offer training to improve individuals general proficiency; while vocational education has continued to develop other countries, Nigerians still have no or low understanding of the importance of the programme which has so increased the problems of vocational education. The study observed that one of the most proficient ways to improve the programme relies on the success of proper administration and supervision of vocational education. The paper also discusses the problems of vocational education among others as lack of funding, lack of researchers and specialists, lack of manpower. Inadequate classrooms/ laboratories, the paper recommended that the curriculum at all levels of education should be vocational education based and all stakeholders, government, including non-governmental

organizations should help to fund and provide enabling environment for the development of vocational education needed for economic job creation and national development in Nigeria, vocational education will reach its peak.

Keywords: Administration and supervision, vocational education.

Introduction

The rapid growth and increase of work force, industrialization and national development was as a result of the emergence of vocational education in Nigeria. Therefore vocational education is viewed as that aspect of education that aims at development of human abilities in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding so that the individual may serve happily and efficiently in carrying on their activities in the vocational pursuit of his choice. Since the most important objectives of vocational education is its orientation towards the world of work and emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills that are needed for accelerated national development.

Therefore, human society and organizations have ways of allocation individuals to different positions, and

modern organisation do this through education and training of staff. National Policy on Education (2004) called on schools to develop individuals with greater variety of specialised skill. The emergence of the vocational education colleges and professional colleges is the outcome of this policy.

This specialised skills and potentials according to Onyeukwu and Usoro (2014) can only manifest through proper and judicious administration and supervision of vocational education. There has been a conceptual misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the term vocational education in Nigeria.

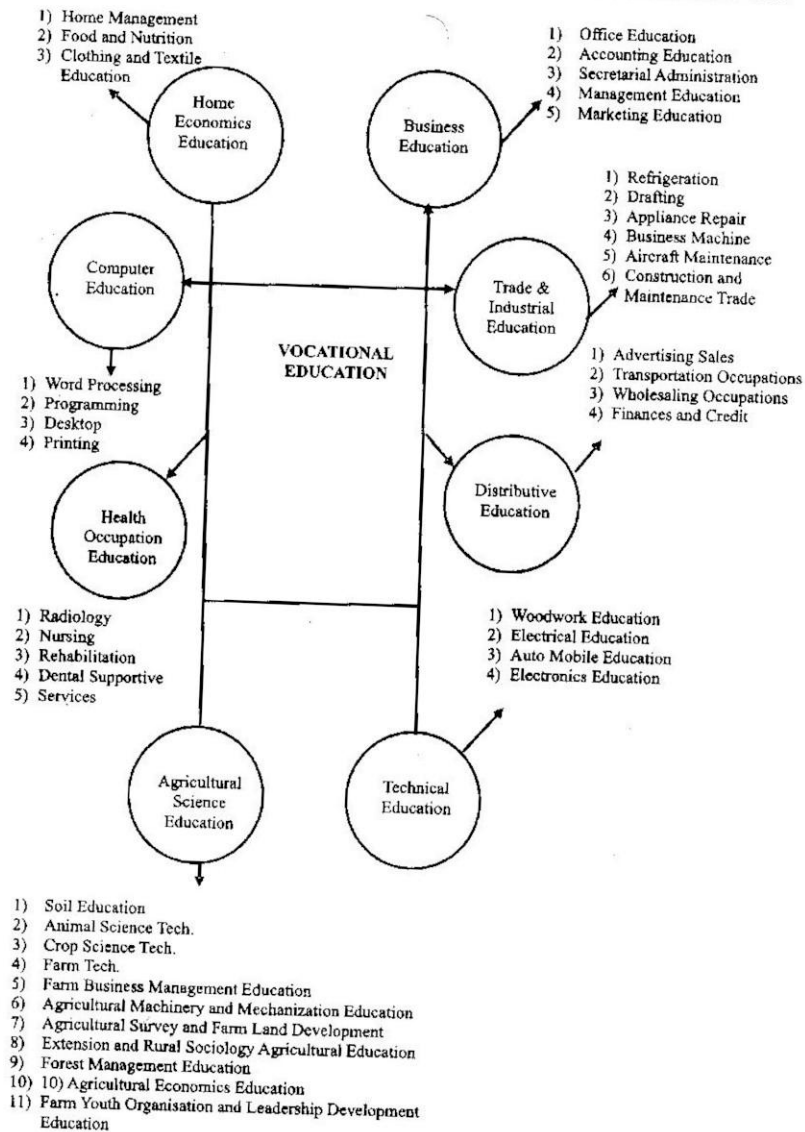
Concept of Vocational Educational

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) defined vocational education as that aspect of education which is designed to meet the complex technology needs of modern industries. It is an education that develops craftsmanship's practical experience and practical problem-solving. Osuala (2004) sees it as that area, which emphasizes job competency, career preparation and work adjustment, vocational education is any form of

education designed to prepare persons for employment in recognized occupations to provide skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment in specific occupations (Ukoha and Usoro 2014) furthermore, Matthew (2015) points out that any education acquired through vocational education means (a sub-field of general education) enhances productivity by participant is motivated for a desire for self-development rather than depending on white collar jobs.

Vocational education is very wide and versatile and it covers wide areas of human endeavour and it is grouped into different faculties or units or areas of specialization such as business education, distributive education, agricultural education trade and industrial education, health education, home economics educations, technical education and computer education. All these vocational areas contribute enormously different skills and opportunities that add to the diversification of productive base of the development of Nigeria economy.

Diagrammatical View of Vocational Education



Source: Akpan, V.C. J. (2001)

The above diagram explains that vocational education programme is prepared and designed to offer training to improving individuals' general proficiency, especially in relation to their present or future occupations, and it should be an integral part of everyone's basic education. Upon these definitions and wide areas covered by vocational education there were still lots of misconceptions that led to the problems and slow growth of vocational educational in Nigeria.

Objectives of Vocational Education

The objectives of vocational education as stated in the National Policy on Education (2004) and in consonance with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) general conference (2001) recommended and formulated the following objectives:

1. To provide trained manpower in applied sciences, technology and commerce particularly at sub-professional levels.
2. To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for the agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development.
3. To provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.

4. To give training and imparting the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and economically self-reliant.
5. To give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and other technologies.
6. To enable young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

In addition to these objectives, vocational educators have formulated the specific objectives in support of vocational education mission, all geared towards developing manpower for the society:

1. To develop specific skills and related knowledge associated with the occupation involved.
2. To develop an understanding of labour and management
3. To develop occupational safety habits and understating
4. To develop ability to cooperate with fellow workers in the occupation involved.
5. To develop ability to solve problems
6. To stimulate the development of leadership qualities
7. To foster the development of self-reliance.

8. To develop pride in work and an appreciation for craftsmanship (Eyo and Usoro, 2006).

The above objectives touch on the four aspects of the development of man's work behaviour namely, the cognitive, affective, psychomotor and perceptual aspects. With a proper administration and supervision of vocational education in Nigerian primary, post-primary and higher institutions, say education system and individual who has passed through the four walls of the system would have been self-reliant and prepared for entry into employment and advance in his or her chosen career thereby meeting the manpower needs of society.

Concepts of Administration and Supervision

Administration is a universal concept, which applies to both private and public sectors of human society; and cannot be defined in a mono or single sentence such a definition if attempted, is inadequate because of the complexity of the concept.

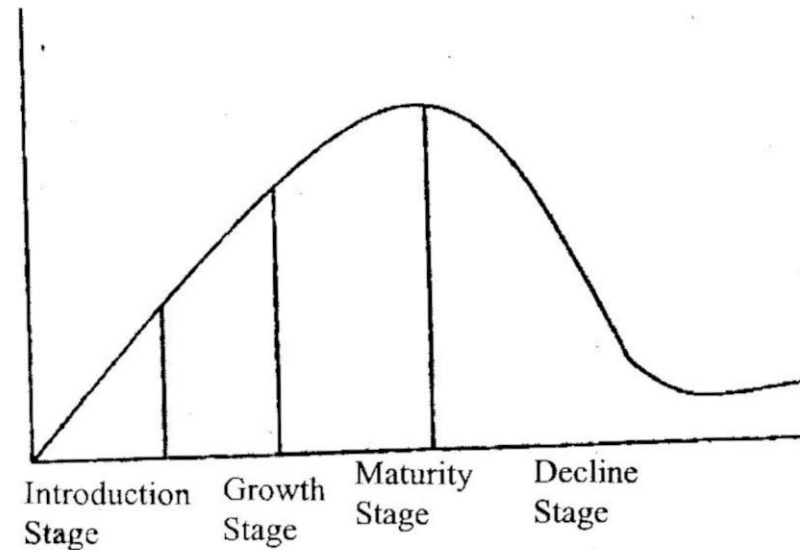
According to Duruamaku-Dim (2002) Administration is the complex process of designing and sustaining appropriate environment for organised efforts to accomplish the organizational goals. Administration

involves the coordination of all organised activities with purpose of implementing policies. There are two parts to this definition.

The first part is the coordination of organised activities. Coordination of activities is common and central to all administrative efforts be they in private or public organizations. The second part, which is implementation of policies, involves the participation of various actors or administrators in the unique sociopolitical and economic environments.

According to Akpan (2001) it is the coordinating of human and materials resources towards the attainment of predetermined objectives. It is the art of organizing and managing men and materials to attain the goal of an organisation. Organisations are established, created or born. They, like human beings, normally go through a period of growth from infancy, to adulthood. They may attain a position or an age of maturity and finally, may die. They may be created to achieve a goal or they may remain permanent with no end in sight. No matter the circumstance surrounding an organisation, its activities has to be well coordinated for its survival.

Organisation Lifecycle



Therefore, for every administrator/supervisor of vocational education to survive he/she should keenly monitor every stages of the lifecycle of an organisation as shown above and employ a good administrative and supervisory strategy to fit in and go in the trend with the technological changes for its survival than the competitors knocking you out of existence.

Akpan and Akpan (2014) viewed administration as the systematic arrangements of human and material resources and programmes that are available for education and carefully using them systematically within defined guideline or policies to achieve educational goals.

Supervision is that aspect of management process carried out by first line managers (supervisors, foremen, heads of departments, vice principals, platoon commanders, coaches etc.) with the intent of inspiring actions in subordinating and guiding those actions towards the accomplishment of desirable and predetermined goals. This means that in supervision regular reports are required from the key actors for control and upgrading.

This concept conveys the various meanings of being in charge and in control. It imposes inspection, overseeing and superintendency, these three terms of supervision have a generic meaning of assessment for improvement of the prevailing work condition.

Duramaku-Dim (2019), affirmed that superiors are in close contact with nearly all the members of an organisation, they are responsible more than other administrators for the resolution of various demands which the personnel are supposed to comply with. By his trading and general disposition, the supervisor chooses between certain official standards and cultural values when there are incompatible demands.

Supervision is the constant and continuous process of guidance by a team of inspectors or supervisors based on frequent visits which focus attention on one or more aspects of school and its

organisation. This shows that supervision is a series of activities, from an external source performed in the school or as applied to technological institution. Usoro and Usoro (2010) supported the above assertion as they viewed supervision as that aspect of management that is important to organizational practices in the daily operations of industrial organizations through routine direction and control of employees' activities.

Administration and supervision of vocational education is the process of harnessing and constantly guiding, inspecting available resources (people, material, equipment, infrastructure and programmes) for the purpose of achieving the objectives of vocational education. It is the application of administrative and supervisory science in the pursuit of vocational education goals. Administration of vocational education involves bringing men and materials together for effective and functional teaching and learning, it is also a service activity or tool through which the fundamental objectives of the vocational educational system can be more fully and efficiently realised subsequently. Supervision is one of the basic requirements in administration that concerns the tactics of efficient and proper management. Thus, it can be said that supervision is the "nervous system" of an organisation.

In summary, the administration and supervision of vocational education can be classified as being positively oriented, democratic and objective in nature, creative and systematic in approach of coordinating the continuous evaluation and control of vocational education programme. Mbuk and Akpan (2012) stressed that the purpose of the vocational education administration and supervision is to enable vocational institutions to execute their functions with maximum efficiency. It also enables the right learners/students receive the right education from the right teachers at a cost which is to bring workers together such conditions and subsequently promote the goals of vocational education.

Problems of Administration and Supervision of Vocational Education in Nigeria

Administrators, managers and supervisors of vocational education face a constant problem arising from the inconsistencies which subordination poses in a democratic society and education system as Nigeria. The problems are as follows:

1. Poor public opinion of vocational education. Akpan (2001) stated that the perceived importance of this type of education by most Nigerians is still distorted. Even though the government's appreciation of the worth of vocational education

programme with the overall educational system is beginning to rise in the recent times. Yet majority of Nigerians, especially the elites whose educational orientations were liberal in content are still vexed with the whole idea of this type of education.

Many people enormously conclude that vocational education is education for the drop-out and never-do-well students.

Akpan (2001) passionately stated that it is shocking too to observe that even front-line advocates for vocational education programmes, including vocational educators finds it extremely difficult to allow their own children opt for vocational courses. At the point it becomes necessary to draw out attention to the fact that the poor image which vocational education wears has serious effects on the financing and administrative patterns of the programme.

Lack of researchers and specialists: There is currently shortage of research reports and on-going research projects relevant to vocational education in the country.

Poor management strategies and policy framework: There is no proper planning and implementation of policies on this area of education.(Ansah and Kissing,2013).

4. Lack of effective leadership of vocational education: The reason vocational education has been unable to achieve some of its desired goals is traceable to lack of effective leadership
5. Lack of liaising between the school and the community: It is the responsibility of vocational educators or teachers to interpret the importance of the programme to the public/community; but it is said in conferences than done in the community where the awareness is needed most.
6. Imbalance between theory and practice: When a programme contains more of theoretical component than practical work the teachers are incompetent. Verse-versa
7. Lack of Manpower: The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) acknowledges that the calibers of teachers (manpower) of educators needed to train vocational educators are in short supply. No educational system can be better than their teachers who run and operate it. This is true of vocational education. Therefore, adequate supply of staff should be made available as there should be linkage between training institutions and industries for practical experiences.
8. Evaluation and supervision problem: A good programme is one that is constantly

evaluated, supervised and improved upon as the need arises, poor evaluation and supervision hinders performance of any programme. constant evaluation is necessary for at least three reasons:

- a) To ensure that instructional facilities are adequate
- b) To ensure that societal needs are being met and
- c) To ensure that the programme is tailored to the needs of the labour market.

This act as a check for standard and progress to follow both in process and administration. Therefore, evaluation and supervision is an instrument that fosters productivity which is the end product of vocational education.

9. Lack of Supervisors, Inspectors and Vocational Administrators: Despite the establishment of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), there is still a lot of set back and unseriousness in inspection and accreditation of vocational education departments to a standard to commensurate practical skills. Proper inspections of vocational education programme by appropriate bodies are stoutly required.
10. Inadequate Funding: Poor funding limits the amount of technical and industrial exposure that trainees would have acquired on the course of

learning and has caused infrastructural decay in vocational education institutions and has hindered quality education service delivery. For this reasons students have to contribute either willingly or by democratic coercion to buy equipment if they want to learn. This problem has affected the provision of vocational education as well.

11. Inadequate classroom/well equipped laboratory and Instructional Materials: Vocational subjects are being taught theoretically while the practical aspects are ignored due to absence of teaching/learning facilities. Laboratories where the skills are supposed to be learned are ill-equipped most of the times, making the learners to learn only the theories to qualify certification and for white collar jobs(Nsa,Udom,Ikot,andAnangbor, 2016).

Educational Implication

- 1) When the society understand the concept and importance of vocational education through all possible means from primary to secondary school, this will help to clear the misconception of vocational education as education of the never do well students and the students without any form of persuasion will even choose vocational education and fill it as a course of study in Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination.

- 2) The funding and well equipping of vocational education programme and its laboratories, workshops and classroom will make the programme more interesting; thereby encouraging parents and students to opt for it.
- 3) Through the implementation of vocational education, joblessness and criminality through the cultivation and acquisition of vocational skills, these will instigate them into greatness and economic independence.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing discourse, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Upon the government, vocational education movements, front-line associations Association of Vocational And Technical Educators of Nigeria(AVTEN), National Association of Business Educators (NABE), Nigeria Technical and Vocational Institution Development (NTVID) and other associations through legitimate activities could bring the image of vocational education to the limelight using the mass media, seminars and conference forum.
2. Nigerian government should provide enough

funding for training of skilled man power and modify facilities to accommodate new technologies at the right time because a programme that is starved of funds kills the genuity and motivation of teachers-trainers and leads to the production of half-baked teachers.

3. Vocational Technical institutions should be improved in their internship training as well as empowering the students after their industrial training through already existing International Monetary Fund (IMF) provisions.
4. Administrators and supervisors of vocational education in Nigeria should embark on comparative studies of vocational education programme of other countries; this will improve the standard of vocational education in Nigeria.
5. There should be constant measurement, evaluation and appraisal exercise regularly by the vocational educational curriculum developers and leaders of vocational education association for improvement of vocational education programme.
6. The federal government through the state ministries of education in collaboration with the

board in-charge of vocational education should regularly supervise, inspect and evaluate programme curriculum as well as making its policies effective.

7. It is also recommended that functional laboratories with adequate equipment and professional handlers should be employed in different institutions of vocational and technical education ranging from primary, post-primary to the higher institution.

Conclusion

For the misconception of vocational education to gradually come to an end, government and all the stakeholders of vocational education must put hands on deck to clear this menace done to the programme. Hence, it will extend to the general education.

The only way forward for vocational education administration and supervision is the effective and efficient implementation of the recommendations to curb the web in the cogwheel of progress of the programme. Therefore the well conception and understanding of the philosophy, theory and concept of vocational education is vital success to the Nigeria economy.

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