

Revaluing Vocational and Technical Education in the National Policy on Education in Nigeria: Strategies and Prospects

by

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Introduction

I welcome all the home comers. It is a great happiness from the bottom of my heart to welcome all the past graduates of Vocational and Technical Education of this University, University of Nigeria their academic home. I also thank you on behalf of the Dean of the Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, staff and students, and upper most the Vice Chancellor of this University and his principal officers for responding to our WAZOBIA. I therefore, say Ekaboo, Sannu da zuwa, Nnoo.

2. What is Vocational and Technical Education (VTE)?

Vocational and technical education is not strange to you in meaning and context but it is still very strange to many in our country as you will observe later in this paper. My effort here is to speak about vocational and technical education or give the simplest meaning to the understanding of non-professionals. Therefore, vocational and technical education in the simplest form means various skill jobs which individuals could embark upon based on ability, interest and exposure to a complimentary or relevant pedagogy for possible inquiry and development in future due to innovations. Simply put, the term, vocational and technical education could be illustrated as follows: Vocation means relevant jobs or occupations like agriculture, home economic, technology and business occupations in addition to relevant pedagogy such as educational psychology, methodology of instruction, measurement and evaluation, guidance and counseling, work experience in the industry or schools among others. A combination of any occupation in vocation and pedagogy leads to a well trained individual in vocational or

technical education. Any deviation from this explanation will lead to a misunderstanding of the meaning of vocational and technical education which in the language of vocational and technical education can be called misconception of technical and vocational education. Vocational technical education can be at different levels like:

- a. Rudimentary/exploratory
- b. low tech
- c. high tech
- d. super/mega tech

a. Rudimentary/Exploratory

This is the lowest form of vocational education which in concept is exploratory; that is, learners obtain their experiences within their community or environment. For example children from farming families observe their parents in their farming activities, those from families in wood observe their parents making furniture, those from business observe their parents carry out business activities. These experiences are quite limited but informative. In most cases, the learners may not like their parents' occupation but have no alternative until they get to the school and are exposed to other vocations through exploration especially at the basic education level (Primary I - JSS III in Secondary School). Learners in the schools, therefore are exposed to general vocational program on exploratory bases to enable them develop interest in any or a group of vocations from which they can make a choice for future career. Hence the existence of rudimentary vocational program in primary and junior secondary school levels of the National Policy on Education.

b. Low Level Tech

This is a level where learners are now above exploration. It is believed that they have developed some interest in certain vocations like agriculture, delivered by competent teachers. Teacher in this context is an individual trained in relevant vocation and accompanying pedagogy. This low tech is typical of vocational and technical program in SSS I - III of the national policy on education. It is the foundation for providing basic employment for secondary school leavers if they are well taught in vocational and technical programs of the learners' choice by competent teachers of vocational and technical education.

In our National Policy on Education, this level is still experiencing severe problem of competent teachers or obtaining competent teachers to help learners make good choices of vocational occupation and developing relevant skills and attitude in them for basic employment after leaving secondary school, especially for these who could not move into tertiary institutions immediately. This observation in our secondary schools was supported by the Federal Ministry of education document on strategic planning (2011-2015, pg.54) where it was stated that the greatest challenge to successful vocational and technical education in Nigeria is dearth of qualified and competent teachers of vocational and technical education. This statement can be interpreted to mean acute shortage of teachers of vocational and technical education in the secondary schools. This appears to be a challenge for improvement in the National Policy on Education. This aspect is re-visited in this paper later under challenges

c. High Tech

The third level of vocational technical education is what is called high level tech education where individual learners that have succeeded in passing through the two levels discussed above can boast of being a professional in his occupation in vocational and technical education for self or paid employment. The individual has developed relevant skills and can become, in the

language of business, an entrepreneur or an owner of business either in production or in distribution and can be an employer of labor to enhance the development of his industry, business or company. Since the low technical level of vocational and technical education in our country is still growing in severe or acute shortage of competent teachers, one can imagine, how low the high technical level is in terms of educators. This will be re-visited later in this paper.

d. Super/Mega Tech

This level involves those individuals that have long term professional experience in their areas of occupation, and highly competent in developing innovations through research these individuals are professionals for international competitive development in their areas, for the purpose of controlling dumping goods into a nation. In order to reduce the economy of such a nation through non-combatant conflicts, vocational and technical education is the supremacy, technically called trade war. Our national development presently is still far from appreciating the importance of this level until we pass through the third level. This level of vocational and technical education is physically present in developed countries like United States of America, China, Russia, Japan, Germany and Britain among others. These countries depend less on other countries for the supply of man power except raw materials for work while their innovative dexterity in technology are cherished and imported by other developing countries, an example is computer hard and software, motor vehicle.

3. Misconceptions about Vocational and Technical Education

In this paper misconception is explained to mean a set of ideas or knowledge which is not true but people believe that it is true because of some observed similarities in a claim that is true; that is, the beliefs of people that certain activities that can produce result to satisfy an emergency in production is vocational education which may not be true. For example, in a beauty Salon, a wig cannot

mean the hair on the head of a female, although the wig may cover the head as performing the function of the hair on the head for some time while the hair can remain on the head as long as the owner wants, even without control. Therefore, one may tend to misconceive the wig to mean the hair on the head. Similarly, this situation exists in our education system where certain skill programs are viewed as vocational and technical education simply because of the misunderstanding of the meaning and functionality of vocational and technical education as understood and operated by professionals or experts in vocational and technical education. Some of the programs so misconceived by the general public as VTE are as follows:

i. Special education: This is a type of education given to those individuals whose needs for education are not normal or usual. These groups like others are at their own pace not mixing with normal people that can fit into general and popular education in the school system. There are two types of individuals in this group. They are the gifted and the handicapped children. The gifted child is a child whose intelligent quotient (I.Q) is far above that of every other person in the class and is never satisfied with the learning activities in such a class. Therefore, special attention or education is required. Such a child is sent to a school for the gifted for special education. The second group is made up of those individuals with disabilities such as visual impairment, deaf, dumb, cripple among others who require special learning facilities and teachers to enable them learn like other normal children in the school. The type of education therefore, made available to children in this group is called special education. The misconception in our education can be observed in the naming and operation of certain programs, such as vocational rehabilitation center. Enugu for these groups of individuals as vocational education hence, many parents and school youths reject association with vocational education as a viable option. Thus, the misconception accorded to vocational education is the nickname education for the handicapped”..

ii. Education for the dropout: Many individuals, be it educators, educated, influential, civilized and wealthy in the society believe that individuals that are not gifted with high level of academic reasoning or knowledge can be regarded as a never-do-well in the school and therefore, should drop out for vocational education. This misconception accorded vocational and technical education a very low status in the education system to the extent that all individual youths who enrolled in VTE are regarded as those who are very low in intelligence and cannot perform in the society. No parent or youth will like to identify with a program with such a derogatory affiliation.

iii. Vocational Training (on the job training): This is a type of work training experience given to individuals who probably is out of school or not privileged to go to school, but interested in acquiring some job skills for work in any area of vocational education like tailoring, photography, auto-mechanic, auto-electrical, block laying and concreting, carpentry and wood work, poultry keeping, marketing among others. Some of these individual learners work under apprenticeship for certain number of years and graduate to be on their own as masters. These individuals usually obtain enough training in skill but void of education in the trade hence, when an innovation into their trade occurs they are generally displaced. Also, they do not learn how to initiate hence, they can not know more than their masters on the job. The training is not planned or organized therefore, it is not systematic; it is based on the type of job customers bring to their masters; learning is primarily on observation of the performance of the masters on the customers job. When there are no jobs from customers. both the masters and learners are idle because there is no planned or organized program for training except customers patronage. This is not vocational and technical education in all its ramification.

4. Work-Value Challenges in the Education System and VTE for Rescue

The National education system consists of the following stages:

- i. One year of kindergarten
- ii. Six years of primary school
- iii. Three years of junior secondary school
Three years of senior secondary school and
- iv. Four years of tertiary education

The nation's education system is in form of a ladder with kindergarten at the base and tertiary at the topmost level. Learners are to study progressively from kindergarten upwards to tertiary level. In theory, this arrangement looks very easy, friendly and heartwarming. But in practice, it is interrupted by many challenges to the extent that the achievements from the *S.O. Olaitan Ph.D* at variance with the structure as discussed below.

i. The Kindergarten: This level admit children that are less than six years old and therefore does not pose much problem to the handlers and government in its implementation because many children may not be exposed to education at this level especially in rural community and this does not prevent them from enrolling in the normal primary schools. Nevertheless, exposure at this level still recognizes identification of some products of vocational education like food, clothes, shoes, car, house among others which many kindergarten children can identify with their parent and the school. Therefore, there is no serious challenge at this level requiring the rescue of VTE.

ii. Primary School Level: This is of six years duration and children are exposed to some ideas about elements of vocational education especially at the last three years. these include simple recognition, knowledge and practices in some aspects of vocational and technical education program like handiwork, gardening (agriculture) school farm, niddle work, cleaning the home/school such as sweeping, cleaning the body including dressing among others; although, many critics may feel these activities are normal and they do not belong to vocational and technical education. Experts or professionals in VTE are convinced that these are rudiments of agriculture and home economics areas of concern. These areas do not pose any work value challenges to VTE as most of the children are admissible to junior

secondary school for continuation of their schooling or learning.

iii. Junior Secondary School: This is a three year post-primary schooling where learners are exposed to basic element of some programs in VTE called pre-vocational subjects like basic technology, business studies, computer science, agriculture, home economics among others. Learners are exposed to basic elements of these programs (subjects) by trained or competent teachers in each program. The work value of this learning in respect of VTE is exploratory. This level does not pose any serious challenges requiring special attention of VTE beyond the assurance of provision of adequate, functional facilities and employment of competent teachers with right attitudes to work. Most of the learners at this level are either guided or counseled to any of the two branches of the post junior secondary school level of education which are: senior secondary school or science and technology school.

iv. Senior Secondary School: This is a three year post junior secondary school education where each learner is expected to end up with a maximum of a subject out of which one must belong to VTE. The mode of assessing the achievement/performance of the students at this level for certification is controlled by West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). The mode of assessment at this level is based on two parameters as follows:

Achievement test is based on cognitive domain of knowledge, comprehension and appreciation for multiple choice test and essay test. The major focus of selection of these items is from the content of the curriculum thereby neglecting the input and process of teaching and comparison of the product or the result with the objective of each program to determine whether they are achieved. The grading format used to determined the achievement of the students is based on norm reference testing which is hundred percent (100%) and therefore students are credited as having any of the following: A, B, C, D, and F with a norm of 1-10 where 7, 8, 9, and 10 represent failure

and 7 and 8 pass. Any students who could not place himself between A, B and C or 1-6 in the norm reference grade continuum is regarded as a failure. Due considerations not given to performance assessment assignment based on psychomotor domain of the included VTE subject hence, teachers, expose students to knowledge of the VTE subjects to enable them succeed in the norm reference examination rather than criterion reference examination, therefore, only negligible students are skilled up to acceptable low tech level in VTE subjects. It is also conceived by the education system that this group of students are not in all respects meant to study VTE courses beyond rudimentary level since they have been consoled at the JSS III to move to SSS III for non-vocational courses such as: Arts and Science subjects while those that are interested in VTE courses are expected to move into science and technology course. About 80% of the students from JSS III are counseled to continue their schooling in senior secondary schools.

1. Challenges in Senior Secondary School for VTE to Rescue

About 60% of those in senior secondary schools obtain 4 to 5 credits for admission into tertiary institution, while the remaining 40% or above are left to drain out of school or a few may wish to repeat SS III. There are two levels of dropouts:

a) A large percentage of students who could not obtain credit (C or distinction in 5 subjects demanded for entry into many tertiary institutions. The challenge here is, what happens to this large percentage dropouts from this requirement? Many of these dropouts also are probably not ready to repeat schooling in their original school. Definitely, they drop out to the society to find survival without any skills in any VTE program.

b) A large percentage of those students who succeeded in obtaining the five credits and sat for examinations for admission into tertiary institutions but could not gain admission because of its competitiveness; those who are not admitted therefore dropout into the society

to seek for survival without sustainable skill in any VIE program or occupation.

This group therefore, has increased the number of dropouts from the senior secondary school level and none has skills in any of VTE programs

ii. **Science and Technology:** students that are counseled at the junior secondary school level for high interest in VTE subjects are directed to enroll in technical schools now known as science and technology. This re-naming Was informed by acute shortage of students interested in pursuing technical subjects in these schools based on the misconception of parents about VTE subjects in preference to subjects in senior secondary schools. The technical colleges were no longer cost effective and therefore government who is interested in encouraging the growth and development of technical education directed that science courses like Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics among others be offered in these colleges hence, the name was changed to science and technology schools. Many students, therefore, enrolled in these schools for learning.

The work-value challenges in these schools are as follows:

The modes of assessment of students in these schools are the same as those in regular senior secondary schools; that is, by WAEC and NECO for science students. En addition, those in technology subject areas are directed to take their own examinations through National Board for Business and Technical Education (NABTEB) who usually subject the students to assessment of acquired skills through the use of rating scale. It was observed that the rating scale used for assessment failed to measure process of skill development but focused on the assessment of product only. The challenge here, therefore is that students that were assessed as qualified within the school through goal evaluation were rejected in the field for incompetence at work which is goal free evaluation. Therefore, technology education at secondary school level still remains ineffective in equipping learners with work value skills.

Another observed challenge is that some students offering technical subjects change to science courses to avoid derogatory/negative comments from other students on the low academic image of students enrolled in driven skill programs like tailoring, block molding, welding, carpentry among others as viewed, as programmed for non-intelligent students or academic dropout in favor of exalted subjects like physics, chemistry, mathematics, Biology among others. Most of these students who changed to science run into difficulties in obtaining work after graduation from school or failed to gain admission into tertiary institutions because of their low achievement score.

iii. Tertiary level: this level admits post secondary school leavers for training in various professions for a period of 3-4 years in the first instance. *S.O. Olaitan Ph.D* After which they move into the labor market for work. Most of those whose studies are professional in nature usually get employed in the field if they are competent. Some are exposed into further education training for improved competence. These professions include Medicine, Pharmacy, Law, teaching and probably some aspect of engineering. A few also are able to get employed in the entertainment occupations. *S.O. Olaitan Ph.D* Arts, music, mass communication, fine and Applied Arts.

Majority of others who are non-professional or ill-equipped usually turn to government or other stakeholders for employment; some of these jobs are not available to non professionals, hence most of these graduates returned to their communities for whatever they can do for economic survival. The consequence of this situation is that the system has produced many academic graduates into the market but with negligible work skill and these graduates must live on the economy of the nation where their academic qualification could not make enough contribution.. Another value challenge is the vulnerability of graduates who participated in NYSC and turned into the market for job after the service. These graduates were earning some allowance during the service but after the service the

allowance ended and noting for them to hang on for living; they therefore, become vulnerable to many negative practices that are not related to their study area to keep exiting as a past earner of some allowances. In order to a float, they provide negative services for politicians during election, threat on wealthy people in the community in order to obtain money from them for existence, cultism that can bring insecurity to livelihood in their communities and environments. This vulnerable group continues to increase yearly to the extent that it has become worrisome to community leaders and government. Parents of these graduates are handicapped and looking to government for assistance in solving the nagging problem of unemployment of these youths to enable them continue to earn salary after NYSC.

The work value challenges of school leavers in the country enumerated in i-v above require urgent intervention for solution, hence; VTE is being requested by stakeholders to intervene for rescue. Suggestions that could be adopted by VTE for rescue through committed policies are presented later in this paper under strategies.

5. Limitations of Effective VTE in Nigeria

i. Policy Limitation

Vocational technical education in Nigeria has been existing in the Nations Higher Education since 1960 when it was introduced as a program of learning into the faculty of education, university of Nigeria, Nsukka by the Eastern Nigeria government lead by Dr. Nnamidi Azikiwe as regional prime minister. The vision of the founders was to bail out youths from unemployment in future through aggressive training of competent teachers in vocational and industrial arts (technical) subjects that will move into schools and colleges in the nation to train youths in the schools for world of work. This vision was to compete with a similar vision of producing highly intelligent or academic modern man that can rule an environment. This second vision was preferred to the first by the policy makers and the graduates because of its importance in an

illiterate society in those days where those that could not respond to this vision (2nd) are regarded as school dropouts. The second vision still regards the first vision stated above as a vision for the school drop out which is a misconception.

The policy makers in education, interalia, were made of seasoned academic individuals from relevant universities in the nation who tend to believe that majority of those who should come out from the education system should be graduates in academics with high knowledge in all areas of endeavor. This view and action were only suitable in a country with small population and free “scarce resources”. Evidence on ground reveal that there is need to embrace a change from this vision to accommodate the larger number of people who need to work and live hence the policy limitation of effective vocational education require quick intervention for the sake of reducing to the minimum the high level of employment of growths in this country which is accompanied by high level of ill health, poverty, insecurity and technically unnecessary political challenges that are not heart warming for robust and true democratic governance.

ii. Limitations of existing Vocational and Technical Education Institutions

The existing vocational and technical education programs in school and tertiary institutions in the nation experience the following limitations

- a. Acute shortage of relevant facilities for training individuals in identified occupations that could benefits or meet the needs of the society. Some existing facilities are not functional based on certain challenges like spare parts for maintenance and power for operation
- b. Absence of comprehensive research to identify trades or occupations on which learners could be trained for functioning and integration into their various communities. What is existing in some institutions is the running of a program with a cluster of trade for a

very long term without inclusion of new trades or elimination of obsolete ones that have been taken over by innovations in technology.

- c. Acute shortage of competent teachers in each trade to equip learners with current skills for effective functioning in the field after graduation. This aspect has been stated clearly by the government as a serious concern in the development of VTE in the country as mentioned at the beginning of this paper.
- d. Lack of available resources for capacity building of existing teachers! lecturers in their trade in order to be relevant to modern requirements and needs of learners in their trade for survival in the field.
- e. Scarcity of research into suitability or otherwise on supporting enabling skill program, like Industry Training (IT), Students Work Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and others as to their effectiveness in complementing the work of the lecturers in equipping learners with skills for work after graduation. This research is necessary based on the unemployment rate of some of the out of school youth who claimed success in IT or SIWES program in their certificates after graduation.
- f. Absence of sensitization of the masses or parents in various communities for the preference of vocational technical education programmes for their children with reference to certain programme like medicine, engineering, law, international relation, and political science among others instead of program like building technology, block molding, electronic repairs, maintenance of electrical appliance, hotel, crop processing, fishery among others. The sensitization in this aspect is very low in communities until where some parents and youths are forced to learn

through experience of unemployment after graduation with certificates.

g. Low maintenance culture: this is a major worry in many vocational education program where many facilities including machines and equipment are rendered non-functional resulting to wastage. The low maintenance culture may be due to some of the following: lack of qualified technical/staff/technologists; low wages for employed technical staff, lack of spare parts and very low maintenance budgets by the stakeholders very low budget for maintenance of facilities.

6. Strategies for Re-valuing VTE in the Nigerian education system

Vocational technical education in Nigeria could be value driven if the following suggestions that could be integrated into National Policy on Education (NPE) 2014 (S.O. Olaitan Ph.D) considered for implementation. The challenges confronting VTE had been enumerated in this paper. It is therefore, presented in the paper that the National Policy on Education should contain the following for implementation by the appropriate authority.

It's suggested that each senatorial district or local government where possible should establish a V T E college within the state where all school leavers from JSS III to SS III, that is, those who could not succeed in WAEC or NECO or obtain admission into tertiary institution could enroll for training on one trade within a period of 3 years (S.O. Olaitan Ph.D). This should be made mandatory for each school leaver in these two categories that could not proceed to the next level immediately. The following conditions must be fulfilled by the established colleges;

A. Conditions for establishment:

- i. Only trades that are very importance to those communities within the senatorial districts or local governments should be established in those colleges. This could involved research efforts in identification of such important trade, their skill elements and facilities required for training.
- ii. The college must be well equipped with relevant facilities for each trade. This must meet the theory of vocational education which says, "the facilities on which the learner is trained must be a replica of facilities available in the area or industry where the learner will work."
- iii. There must be in the college competent teachers or trainers in each trade to help students acquire relevant skills in their chosen trades.
- iv. The school or college must be of short distance to the home of the learners to reduce training cost or burden on the parents especially in the area of accommodation, feeding and health care.
- v. Learners must be allowed to choose a trade of interest rather than being forced or encouraged to select available trade in the absence of the trade of interest, that is, the college should respect the theory of vocational education that says "vocational education is meant for those who need it, want it and can profit by it". Therefore each learner should be allowed to make a choice of a trade of his/her interest and be encouraged to succeed on it through training for work
- vi. Research has informed educators that learners can change in their attitudes to learning when they are in the early adolescent which probably is about 18 years of age. Therefore, each college should have extra-moral study department for those students who are interested in pursuing academic studies in addition to their training in the trade of their choice for work. If they wish to check out from training in the trade for academic pursuit in any tertiary institution they should have the freedom to do so. The cost of the extra moral studies should be

strictly at expense of each learner outside the cost of the skill training.

- vii. Graduates from the college should be followed up to their various communities to ensure that they are employed either by self or by entrepreneurs. This can also be through online follow up to reduce cost.
- viii. Each graduate in the field should have opportunity for further study in relevant trade and in a relevant tertiary institution on work study bases for the purpose of continuity in further skill development in the trade. The vocational! technical education courses offered in the tertiary institution should be spread out to accommodate work study for students on longtime bases.

B. Curriculum of the work value trade in the college should make use of modular approach in its development, while the performance assessment of learners in each trade should make use of evidence-based or psycho-productive test items. If rating scale is preferred, it must be used to assess process of skill development, rather than product.

C. Administration of the College: It is suggested that the college should be managed by the following stakeholders:

(i) A rector who must be a competent educator in a particular trade, and must be committed to the training of each youth in a trade of interest for work. He must be interested in maintenance culture of college facilities and personnel

(ii) A board of cooperative education consisting of members of the community where the college is situated, government officials, employers of labor, philanthropists and selected community leaders.

D. Competent Teachers for in Relevant Trades: Presently, VTE in the nation is faced with acute shortage of qualified teachers in the area, therefore:

i. the government both federal and state must embark on aggressive training of vocational and technical teachers for these colleges to enable the country achieve the objective of providing employment for youth.

ii. the Technical Teacher Training Program (TTTP) could be revived and mandated to vigorously pursue the training of technical teachers through available resources in the nation to meet the need of suggested colleges;

iii. Faculties of vocational and technical/departments of vocational and technical education in universities should be encouraged to expand their trade programs and facilities to help produce competent teachers to meet the needs of these suggested colleges in their area of locations. Other universities could also be encouraged to establish well equipped faculties or department of VTE. Older universities with faculties of vocational and technical education such as University of Nigeria Nsukka (TJNN), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) should be encouraged to expand their postgraduate programs in their trades in order to produce super tech/mega professionals that could help manage established VTE programs in new universities.

E. Lecturers (Super/Tech/Professional) in universities should be encouraged through sponsorship by the government to pursue retraining programs in their trades to imbibe innovations that could help them improve their training of students and research competency of their postgraduate students for employment in similar tertiary institutions in the country.

F. The Government should encourage the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in collaboration with researchers in VTE from tertiary institutions to embark on studies on the impact of some established programs like Industrial Training (IT), SIWES, NDE, one year practice for students of agriculture in universities among others on the employment opportunities for their beneficiaries after graduation from institution or NYSC program. The research should also suggest what to do to

enhance their effectiveness on youth employment.

G. The Government as a matter of policy should establish a vocational education commission (NVEC) parallel to the established senior secondary school commission for the following functions:

i. Accreditation of VTE programs or trades in each college in the senatorial district in terms of suitable facilities, modular curriculum, competent teachers among others;

ii. Assessment of college administrative board in terms of competent individuals;

iii, Approval of each trade to be communicated to the college and state government in collaboration with the work of the state established board of vocational education (SBVE). This is necessary at the state level in order to reduce the burden and the misjudgment of NBVE because of the amorphous and peculiar nature of occupational or work needs of each senatorial zone of the country. Therefore, the role of each state is very crucial in the work skills needs of youths for employment in the each zone. It is re *S.O. Olaitan Ph.D* the approval should be step wise such as trade verification followed by interim approval which may stay for about three to five years in order to obtain sufficient information on graduate placement especially within the zone through self or paid employment. This information can be obtained from the local government headquarters by the SVEB/by the college through on line and submitted to the NBVE through the SBVE for visitation towards final accreditation. It is suggested that the membership of this board should include representatives from allied ministries like labor, agriculture, finance, national planning and works.

H. Graduates that have completed their NYSC program but find it difficult to obtain employment nationally or locally may enroll in any of the trades that can provide them job in the state that provide them employment in their zone in preparation for his (super tech training in future). This may help to reduce the frustration of some of these graduates in

maintaining their existence through positive and affordable resources.

The suggested policy changes in the education system will have some implication to the existence of polytechnic education in future, because some of the learners that will enroll in the suggested colleges of education are suppose be those enrolling in polytechnics of today. That is, those individuals with lower cut off score for JAMB not enough for entry into universities usually enroll in polytechnics at OND which is now accommodated by the college; hence, there is need for the policy restructuring of polytechnic education as follow:

i. The National Diploma (ND) program of the polytechnic should be allowed to give way or drain into the college of vocational education at the zonal level for training of learners for employment either at low or middle level technology in each trade

ii. The Higher National Diploma (HND) should be restructured in form of trades similar to those existing at colleges of vocational education in each senatorial district/local government to enable graduates from the college to develop further in their trade up to high tech, super or mega professional to have the opportunities of doing so.

iii. At super or mega professionalization, the individuals are likely to become creators or inventors of useful technology as observed in developed countries like USA, Russia, China Pakistan and India comparatively.

iv. The program or curriculum of the high, tech, super and mega professionals in the restructured polytechnics should be challenging and in form of either modular, task analysis or problem solving based on sophisticated research. Some of the findings at this level must be classified, protected and researchers and their families granted securities..

v. Teachers/lecturers, presently, serving in polytechnics should be retrained competently in their trade and sophisticated research to enable them cope with teaching and research

for creation and invention as innovations into their trade.

7. Prospects for Re-valuing Vocational and Technical Education in the National Policy of Education

The paper has addressed problems of ineffectiveness of vocational and technical education program in the nation; also, strategies for overcoming the obvious need for effectiveness have been extensively suggested to the government and stakeholders. If these strategies are considered worthwhile and implemented. The following benefits will accrue from the implementation

- i. Youth employment in relevant trades beneficial to the country will be enhanced.
- ii. Production in terms of food, other materials for shelter, road, power among others will be sufficient for the citizens of the country.
- iii. Raw materials for the industries will be available and at affordable cost.
- iv. The economy of the nation will highly improve to the extent that the nation will become a lender to other Africa countries rather than a borrower of finance to pay salaries.
- v. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) will be enhanced tremendously.
- vi. The political power of the nation among committee of nations will be improved very highly.
- vii. Youths restiveness such as kidnapping, armed robbery, internet fraud, insecurity and other vices being favored by the youth without sympathy will drastically reduce.
- viii. Other nations of the world will be highly interested in investing in the economy of Nigeria for the benefit of both countries.
- ix. Poverty will be highly reduced among the people of the nation.

Prayer: I welcome the home comers and other high ranking visitors among us who spent time to listen or read this time

consuming and extensive presentation. This is based on the broadness of the problems confronting effectiveness of vocational and technical education in the country which department of vocational and technical education now faculty of vocational and technical education has been battling with since the establishment of this university. The faculty of the VTE is the first established department and faculty in the nation with other universities with academic programs without VTE, hence her impact has been very low on skill education development of youths for the nation.

I now call upon our home corners to help us out of this low impact through your status, influence, image and wealth to improve the impact of VTE on the nations' economy in the following direction.

1. Home-base (at UNN)

- a. Expand some of the facilities available in the faculty to enable students' and lecturers' interests improve on the use of facilities for producing competent teachers and entrepreneurs for the field.
- b. Help create opportunities for further training of our lecturers and technical staff on capacity building bases in their trades outside the country or within in exalted industry through sponsorship. This will help to motivate our staff.
- c. Help in providing accommodation facilities in terms of buildings for lecturers, staff offices and standard laboratories for practice by students and technical staff.
- d. Supply of technology facilities for equipping our laboratories for work. This may include modern equipment for work like computers, publishing facilities and printing equipment, conversion technologies, process technologies, radio, cell phone, television facilities, mechatronic equipment among others.
- e. Employment of some of our competent graduates in your companies or establishment for our benefit.

2. Government Policy on Education

i. Help through your good offices, image and contacts bring to the notice of government officials either at state or federal level to convince them to consider our strategies in this paper for consideration or implementation.

ii. Also, help make use of the same qualification to explain our strategies to your high profile politicians either at state or national assembly to help study this strategies and benefit for the purpose of convincing the executive arm of government for the possibility of imp this strategies for the expected prospect that are beneficial to the nation, economically, socially, politically among others

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