

# Sustainable Financing of TVET Programmes for Employability of Graduates in Nigeria

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## Abstract

*Sustainable financing of TVET programmes for employability of graduates is an issue that should not be overlooked and then this paper 'Sustainable financing of TVET programmes for employability of graduates in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. The study used descriptive survey design. The instrument for the study was structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher with the help of one research assistant. A total of 120 copies of the questionnaire administered were returned and analyzed for the study. The study found that non sponsorship of staff for workshops and inadequate facilities for training of students were challenges to TVET programmes financing. It was also found that enterprise levy grants, scholarship and marketing of Technical and Vocational Education manpower through consultancy services as well as operating hiring and rental services of school facilities were acceptable for sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable Financing; TVET Programmes; Employability of Graduates.

## Introduction

The objective of education is to equip learners with knowledge, attitudes and practical skills that will make them good citizens and employable. One of the features of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is its orientation towards the world of work and the emphasis of its curriculum is on the acquisition of employable skills. With this feature, TVET programmes if properly implemented would hopefully fulfill this objective of education aforementioned.

TVET include those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life (UNESCO, 2005). Dike (2005) held that vocational and

technical education is the educational process that focuses on individuals' preparation for entrance and progress in occupations. The major functions of TVET are to provide knowledge, develop skills and attitude that are necessary for entry into occupation. According to Dike, technical and vocational education includes such job skills like; carpentry, building, welding, sewing, knitting, weaving, office education, farming among others. TVET offered a range of learning experiences which are relevant to the world of work. The learning experiences may occur in a variety of learning contexts, including educational institutions and work places. TVET is a learning pathway which aims at equipping people with knowledge, know-how, skills and competences required in particular occupations or more broadly in the labour market for the jobs of today and tomorrow. It is a training activity which

people take part that will help them to obtain knowledge and learn new skills for current or future jobs to increase earnings, and to improve other career opportunities in current or another field (NICHE, 2010). TVET is understood to be an integral part of general education; a means of preparing for occupations and effective participation in the world of work. It is an aspect of lifelong learning and preparation for responsible citizenship. It covers a large number of careers and industries like: commerce, office work, craft, technician, hospitality, accountancy, technology among others. It is any financed formal, non-formal or informal training and learning activity provided by institutions or learning locations leading to the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills which can be relevant for paid employment or self-employment. TVET training which the youth, the poor and the vulnerable of society can therefore benefit from require a lot of money or finance to run the programme (Norton, 2016).

Financing is the act of providing funds for business activities such as making purchases and or investments. Financial institutions like banks are in the business of financing as they provide capital to businesses, consumers and investors to help them achieve their goals. Financing is the act, process of raising or providing money for a project (Investopedia, 2016). Finance is vital in any economic system including institutional programmes, as it leads to efficient achievement of organizational goals. Finance as a field of study, deals with the study of investment. It includes the dynamics of assets and liabilities over time under conditions of different degrees of uncertainty and risk. Finance is also science of money management (Merriam 2016). Finance according to Pandey (2005) in Matthew (2016) is a body of facts, principles and theories which deal with raising and use of money by individuals, business,

institutions and government. The author asserted that the acquisition of fixed assets such as land, building vehicles and payment to people for other operational activities all need finance. The author identified two types of finance functions as managerial finance functions and routine functions. Managerial finance requires skillful planning, controlling and executing of financial activities. Routine finance functions involve supervision of cash receipts and disbursements and safeguarding of cash balances; custody and safeguarding of securities and other valuable paper documents and record keeping and reporting.

It is the release of money for the purchase of needed materials and providing enough money to attend to the needs of organizations for effective programme delivery. Financing TVET programmes means providing enough money either by government or individuals to purchase needed materials and to provide for other needs of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programmes. The financing of TVET programmes in Nigeria according to Olaitan (1992) is majorly done by the government. The Federal Government from its annual budget allocates certain percentage of its budget for the financing of TVET programmes through Ministry of Education. The amount allocated is always inadequate (Olaitan, 1992). It is based on this that Usman and Abiodun (2009) stated that the financing of Technical and Vocational Education should not be over relied on government. Olaitan (1992) further stated that for Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes to produce quality graduates, it must be adequately and sustainably financed. Olaitan (1996) explained that inadequate financing pose a lot of constraints to the objectives of Vocational and Technical Education. The authors are of the opinion that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is expensive and hence the government alone should not

be the major source of financing TVET programmes if sustainability and employability of TVET graduates will be realistic. In this context, it is essential to seek sustainable financing for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria.

Sustainability is giving people what they want without compromising quality of life, especially in the developing world and reducing the financial burden (red tape) of doing the right thing. It is ensuring that a system remains diverse and produce everything it needs for the situation to remain balance or progressive. Sustainability is about examining the longer term effects of the actions humanity takes and asking questions about how it may be improved. Sustainability and sustainable development focuses on balancing that line between competing needs – the need to uninterruptedly move forward technologically and the needs to provide food on table for oneself and others in the country (Mason, 2017).

Adequate and sustainable financing of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programmes ideally would breed graduates who should provide jobs for themselves and others. This is usually accomplished when unemployed persons become entrepreneurs; start up their own businesses for self-reliance and economic empowerment. Transforming the economy and society in line with the concept of sustainable development is only possible through adequate financing of TVET. One of the most important features of TVET is its orientation towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. TVET delivery programmes are therefore well placed to train the entrepreneurial workforce that Nigeria needs to create wealth and overcome poverty. Entrepreneurship is linked to employability and it involves ability or capacity to start and

run a business because of the skill acquired and also make money from the business. Employability is not the same as gaining a graduate job, rather having the capacity to function successfully in a given role and be able to move between occupations thus remaining employable throughout. Employable graduate is one who had acquired skills, understanding and personal attributes that make him or her more likely to gain employment and be successful in the chosen occupations which benefits him or her, the workforce, the community, the economy or the country (Yorke, 2004). Adequate training of TVET students will make the graduates upon graduation employable in industries, civil service and or also self-employed.

An employable graduate is one who has the skill that would help him or her get and keep satisfactory work. Employability skill is a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace to the benefit of themselves, their employer and wider society. Employability presupposes the acquisition of employable skills that are related to the demands of the labour market. The employability skills also include: personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations (Peter and Yorke, 2016). The skills are the attributes of employees, other than technical competence that employers see as valuable in the actual work place. These skills include problem solving, decision making, dependability, positive attitude, cooperativeness, time management and readiness to improve own performance based on feedback. On commercial and customer awareness, the skill involves the understanding of the key drivers for business success which include the importance of innovation and taking calculated risks; and

the need to provide customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty. Employability skills are not specific but are skills which cut across all employment sectors and virtually across all jobs from entry level to highest level. At these levels the skills involve using initiative, strategy and innovative (Peter & Yorke, 2016). The core skills with which graduates leave college or university are highly sought after, especially in a modern world where both government and individual are looking for how unemployment would be reduced. The employability skills are the generic attributes required by employers from employees for sustainability of their organizations. Such employable skills offered by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) consume time and money in the process of learning or acquiring them. For instance, there should be provision of personnel emolument for teachers and lecturers of Technical and Vocational Education. The lecturers or teachers are to be well paid to enable them deliver. The library should be well equipped because books in technical area are not found easily elsewhere. Building of workshops and classrooms should be provided according to specifications to enable students acquire the needed skills. Facilities and equipment should be relevant and modern. In addition, there should be provision of teaching aids since Technical and Vocational Education could not be effectively taught without teaching aids. There should also be provision of money for repair and maintenance cost. Provision of finance for repair and maintenance of physical facilities should ensure healthy state of machines and equipment hence TVET programmes requires sustainable financing.

The sustainable financing of TVET programmes requires well planned budget and money. Adequate financing of TVET will lead to youth development, youth empowerment, youth employment and self-

reliance as well as economic development. The financing strategies currently used for TVET programmes in Nigeria (Federal and State) are government grants/subvention, donations, school fees among others. These level of strategies are however not adequate considering the financial intensive nature of TVET programmes. This, therefore, requires innovative financing strategies.

The innovative financing strategies that will bring sustainability in TVET programmes can include direct public payments to TVET institutions; financing mechanisms related to individual – students loan scheme; financing mechanisms related to industry-employers pay levy that is pooled for approved training applicant; multiple financing mechanism-input-oriented financing from government; grants from donors. Donor Agency makes property or money available to institution. Such property or money is used to tackle institution's development challenges or it is used as assistance to a developing country or respond to an institution's crisis; scholarships – this idea introduces scholarship skills to students in their first year at university which provide a number of recommendations that would be of use to policy makers, practitioners and students; enterprise levy grants – it is used to up skill workforce and improve the nation's productivity. Employers in all sectors pay the levy which should be charged at between 0.5% and 10% of an employer's annual pay bill; single budgeting by government – it holds that TVET financing should be planned on time and planned budget should be adequately financed (UNESCO, 2005); endowment funds – during prize giving/convocation, appeals could be made to government agencies, NGOS and wealthy individuals; collaboration with companies – school authorities could initiate such collaboration where multi-national companies could be appealed to help to provide structures, equipment and facilities;

establishment of internally generated revenue projects – school life stock and crop farms should be restored, workshops use to repairs, maintenance and service of machines and equipment, canteen, eating unit; Alumni Association/Home coming – an avenue where alumnus or old boys/girls could be appealed to get them donate; consultancy services – using the experts of staff to raise money; agricultural projects – commercial farm which would produce different products and generate funds; internet café/production centre – provide internet surfing service to customers; rent for use of school facilities – school could rent their halls, workshops and institution/government could partner with development partners like DFID, USAID, World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO in area of resource mobilization.

### **Problem of the Study**

Prior to colonial era, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) were included in the Africa Traditional Education (A.T.E) and parents sponsored their children. During the colonial government, education was funded by Colonial Government, Missionaries, Voluntary Agencies and Individuals (Matthew, 2016). However, Colonial Government ignored Technical and Vocational Education and Training Schools but rather was investing on general education which was popularly known as grammar schools.

In 1945, the Commission for Higher Education in West Africa recommended Vocational and Technical Education for Nigeria and further proposed establishment of handicraft centres, trade centres and technical schools (Osuala, 2004). From colonial government era till date Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been seriously neglected and poorly financed by the government. The sum of four hundred thousand pounds according to Fafunwa (1991) in Akpan (2010) was

granted through the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme (CDWS) to the Voluntary Agencies which established Vocational Institutions and were directly responsible for the funding of Vocational and Technical Education. Ibukon (2016) tearfully expressed that Nigeria's best university is backward in Africa's ranking and worse off in world ranking. The author faulted this on the nation's poor financing of education, the chief source of which comes from government budgetary allocation. The little allocation to TVET from Federal, State and Local Governments are often diverted by politicians and some top civil servants (Okoli, Wejinya, Agam & Asufi, 2016). The poor financing is shown in ill-equipped workshops, laboratories, farms, typing pools/computer laboratories in the institutions. It is clear from evidence shown by these authors that Federal, State and Local Governments would not finance the TVET programmes adequately alone.

Atah, Ele, and Bessong in Offiong, Akpan & Usoro (2013) stated that proper financing of TVET programmes need not be over emphasized if Nigeria is to provide adequate training for persons who should proffer solution to unemployment of teaming graduates in the country. The importance of proper financing of TVET programmes has been noted by Adesina (1977), Ukeje (1977) in Akpan (2010). The authors agreed that since TVET programmes are capital intensive, proper implementation and actualization of its set goals should not be achieved without adequate financing.

The major goal of TVET programmes is to graduate students with employable skills. Presently, most TVET graduates according to Inyiagu (2014) do not possess the employable skills and attributes which the society wishes them to have. The problem is inadequate financing hence there is need for sustainable financing strategies. The broad purpose is sustainable financing of TVET programmes for employability

of graduates in Nigeria. Specifically the paper sought to:

1. Identify the current challenges to TVET programmes financing.
2. Ascertain the sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates.

### **Research Questions**

This paper attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the current challenges to TVET programmes financing?
2. What are the sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates?

### **Method**

The study adopted descriptive survey design to identify the current challenges to TVET programmes financing, and to ascertain the sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates. The population for the study comprised 70 accounting lecturers and 50 students (accounting options) of University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. Business Education Lecturers and Students of Business Education who are knowledgeable in accounting were used since the topic is on finance. The entire population was used because it was manageable.

The instrument used for data collection for the study was structured questionnaire. A structured questionnaire titled 'Sustainable Financing of TVET programmes for employability of Graduates' (SFTVETPEG) was developed by the researcher based on literature reviewed. The instrument was sub-divided into two parts I and II. Part I is on the general information

about the respondents. Part II was further divided into two sections A and B. Section A is a 5-item statement that sought information on the 'current challenges to TVET programmes financing while Section B is 5-item statement and sought information on the 'sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates'. The response categories for the two sections was a 4-point rating scale which ranges from 4 – 1 (strongly agree = 4; Agree = 3; Disagree = 2; strongly disagree = 1).

The questionnaire was validated by two Business Education lecturers from University of Nigeria, Nsukka and one Business Education lecturer from Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The validates vetted the instrument for correcting the content which their observations were used to modify the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher with one researcher assistant. The research assistant distributed the questionnaire to Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu while the researcher distributed the questionnaire to University of Nigeria, Nsukka. One hundred and twenty copies were administered and one hundred and twenty copies were retrieved. The two research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as accepted or agreed while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as not accepted or disagreed.

### **Research Question 1**

What are the current challenges to TVET programmes financing.

**Table 1**

**Mean responses of respondents on current challenges to TVET programmes financing**

S/ N	Columns	Lecturers			Students			Overall		
		N0	$\bar{X}$	SD	N0	$\bar{X}$	SD	No	$\bar{X}$	SD
1	Lack of basic instructional technological facilities e.g. computer	70	3.2	.62	50	3.3	.56	120	3.3	.60
2	Over dependent on government in financing TVET programmes	70	3.2	.62	50	3.3	.56	120	3.3	.60
3	Inadequate staffing			.76	50	3.2	.68	120	3.1	.73
4	Non sponsorship of staff for workshops, conferences/seminar for professional development	70	3.4	.85	50	3.4	.75	120	3.4	.81
5	Inadequate facilities for training of students e.g. laboratories/materials	70	2.8	.99	50	2.9	.97	120	2.9	.98
6	Inadequate classrooms and workshops	70	3.3	.60	50	3.2	.58	120	3.3	.60
7	Lack of standard and relevant books in the library	70	3.1	.57	50	3.4	.61	120	3.3	.60
8	Inadequate building for staff offices	70	3.0	.75	50	3.2	.69	120	3.1	.73
9.	Lack of indispensable tools and devices in farms, workshops, laboratories	70	3.2	.84	50	3.6	.76	120	3.4	.81
10	Lack of repairs and maintenance of machines and equipment	70	3.2	.59	50	3.3	.59	120	3.3	.60
11	Lack of school – industry linkage	70	3.3	.74	50	3.2	.70	120	3.3	.73
12	Non developing and fully incorporating indigenous curriculum into TVET curriculum	70	2.8	.94	50	3.0	.95	120	3.0	.95

The mean scores of the items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 on the table 1 ranged from 2.9 – 3.4. This implied that the respondents accepted that all the statements in the twelve items were current challenges to TVET programmes financing. The standard

deviation of the twelve items ranged from .60 to .98 and showed that the opinions of the respondents were not far from each other.

### **Research Question 2**

What are the sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates

**Table 2**

**Mean responses of respondents on sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates.**

S/ N	Columns	Lecturers			Students			Overall		
		N0	$\bar{X}$	SD	N0	$\bar{X}$	SD	N0	$\bar{X}$	SD
1	Single budgeting by government	70	2.6	.89	50	2.7	.83	120	2.7	.86
2	Enterprise levy grants	70	3.2	.66	50	3.2	.64	120	3.2	.65
3	Student Loan Schemes	70	2.9	.78	50	3.0	.75	120	3.0	.77
4	Direct Public Payments to TVET Institutions	70	3.4	.49	50	3.4	.48	120	3.4	.49
5	Scholarship	70	3.7	.48	50	3.7	.47	120	3.7	.44
6	Endowment fund	70	2.5	.59	50	2.8	.59	120	2.7	.60
7	Collaboration with companies	70	3.2	.55	50	3.3	.63	120	3.3	.60
8	Establishment of internally generated revenue projects	70	3.4	.74	50	3.3	.70	120	3.4	.73
9	Alumni Association/Home coming	70	3.1	.61	50	3.4	.57	120	3.3	.60
10	Consultancy Services	70	3.6	.86	50	3.8	.74	120	3.7	.80
11	Agricultural projects	70	3.0	.60	50	2.9	.62	120	3.0	.61
12	Internet Café/Production centre	70	3.2	.65	50	3.1	.65	120	3.1	.65
13	Rent for use of school facilities	70	3.0	.80	50	2.9	.83	120	3.0	.81
14	Institution/Government could partner with development partners	70	3.2	.63	50	3.2	.55	120	3.2	.60

Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 in table 2 had mean scores ranging from 2.7 – 3.7 which were within the boundary limit of 2.50 – 4.00. This implied that the respondents accepted that all statements in the items 1 – 14 were relevant for sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates. The standard deviation of items 1 - 14 in Table 2 ranged from .44 to .86. The range in the responses of respondents was not far from the mean. This implies that the opinions of respondents were close to each other and hence the statements were relevant for sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates.

#### **Discussion of Findings**

It was found that there was lack of basic instructional technological facilities. This finding is in line with the view of Moses and Kingsley (2013). The authors stated that

Technical and Vocational Education lack teaching aids or indispensable tools. The authors opined that Technical and Vocational Education cannot be taught effectively without the use of teaching aids or indispensable tools such as electrode, word processing materials, cooking spices/condiments, rods, cement and so on. These consumables are used in practical classes and are to be replaced often without which the equipment would be useless. It was also found that there was over dependent on government in financing TVET programmes. This finding was in agreement with the statement of Usman and Abiodun (2009). The authors stated that the TVET is capital intensive and government alone cannot adequately finance it. There was inadequate staffing and existing staff were not sponsored for workshops which help them to develop professionally. It was found that there were



inadequate facilities for training of students. This is in agreement with the view of Obioma (2010). The author stated that most technical colleges, mono—techniques, polytechnics and universities lack necessary training facilities to train people in Vocational and Technical Education. It was found that there was lack of school – industry linkage. This agreed with the statement of Ibeneme (2013). The author stated that in this time of globalization that vocational and technical education and training institutions should no longer function in isolation. It was found that there was lack of fully incorporated indigenous curriculum into TVET curriculum. This agreed with the idea of Ezem and Okorafor (2012). The authors stated that the main idea behind any functional vocational and technical education programme is to satisfy the needs of the immediate environment. For TVET to fulfil this objective, the authors opined that it is time to develop and incorporate in TVET the curriculum that is relevant to the economic and social needs of the society.

It was found that single budgeting by government (TVET programmes should be financed separately from specific fund by government and not to be combined by all other educational programmes in government institutions). This agreed with Matthew (2016) who opined that government budget should be increased for TVET programmes. As the key player in education, the author suggested that government at all levels should redirect funds they spent on passive and irrelevant issues like political party rallies to the funding of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in order to meet the 26% UNESCO recommend benchmark. It was also found that there should be endowment fund for TVET, collaboration with companies and establishment of internally generated revenue projects. The statement of Offiong, Akpan and Usoro (2013) agreed with the finding.

The authors agreed that the findings could be an avenue to facilitate funding of Vocational and Technical Education and Training. The paper found that consultancy services, agricultural projects and internet Café/Production Centre were accepted as sustainable financing strategies for TVET. The finding agreed with the view of Ayonmike, Okwelle and Okeke (2015) that Vocational and Technical Education could be involved in commercial businesses that would generate fund. It was found that institution/government could partner with development partners such as World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID and many others.

### **Conclusions**

The study set out to ascertain the ‘sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates’. In conclusion, the lecturers and students unanimously accepted that lack of basic instructional technological facilities; over dependent on government in financing TVET programmes; inadequate staffing; non sponsorship of staff for workshops which would help staff for professional development and inadequate facilities for training of students; lack of indispensable tools and devices in farms, workshops, laboratories; lack of school – industry linkage; non developing and fully incorporated indigenous curriculum into TVET Curriculum were current challenges to TVET programmes financing.

They accepted also that single budgeting by government (TVET programmes be separately financed from specific fund by government and not to be combined by all other educational programmes in government institutions); enterprise levy grants (taxes on company payrolls for TVET programmes which would be recovered through agreed term between government and management of the company); direct public payments to TVET

institutions; student loan scheme (to be sourced from Finance Institutions – certain percentage for TVET financing should be taxed from interests of the loan given to customers) and scholarship; endowment fund; collaboration with companies; establishment of internally generated revenue projects; consultancy services; internet café/production centre; institution/government partnering with development partners were relevant for sustainable financing strategies for TVET programmes for employability of graduates.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings, this paper recommends:

1. Institutions offering Technical and Vocational Education should mount a unit in the institutions which should be solely for internal revenue generation. The unit should be manned by an experienced and honest person who has business attributes

bearing in mind that the unit is entirely meant to raise an alternative financing sources for TVET sustainability.

2. Institutions running Technical and Vocational Education should during convocation, graduation and home coming launch endowment fund raising. The fund raised could be used to provide instructional materials, equipment and facilities for Technical and Vocational Education.
3. The institutions should approach agencies under NGOS such as USAID, UNICEF, UNESCO and many others.
4. Institutions offering Technical and Vocational Education should market their manpower through consultancy services as well as operating hiring and rental services of school facilities.

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