

Development of Global Partnership in Technical Education Through Stakeholders' Intervention for Sustainable Development in Bayelsa State

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Abstract

Technical education is the most critical felt needs for human skills development because it is the gateway to sustainable socio-economic empowerment and self-reliance development of a state. Though technical education constitutes the main basis of skill advancement among youth, so many youths do not have access to quality technical education in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The development of global partnership in technical education through the collaboration of stakeholders is to ensure that youth have access to technical education through funding, training, infrastructural development, provision of instructional materials and equipment, supervision and reporting system. This paper therefore, examines the development of global partnership in technical education through the intervention of stakeholders and recommends among others that such partnership will engender accelerated skill development, youth empowerment, job creation, creative and innovative entrepreneurial interest among beneficiaries for sustainable development in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Keywords: *Global partnerships, Sustainable development, Technical education, Skill development.*

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Background to the Study

Education is the key component which stimulates economic, social and political development of every nation. Education provides foundation for economic prosperity for individuals and for nations of the world. Amadi (2011) defined education as the act of systematic development and training of the mind, capabilities or characters through instruction and studies. Education facilitates the acquisition and transmission of knowledge, skills and values. Education is a citizen's most prized possession because it is the ladder for economic and social upliftment. Education enables one to develop skills which help one to generate wealth for personal and general purpose. Technical education is the education that involves training processes that lead to the impartation of necessary skills required for work. Technical education promotes the acquisition of knowledge, practical skills and values needed to improve the quality of life of people in the society in self-reliance perspective.

Technical education is expensive and there is a steady increase in the cost of its provision globally. Many young people who could have acquired useful skills for the technological advancement of their country are not able to achieve their dreams as a result of the inability of their parents or sponsors to pay their fees. Youths of today are becoming nuisance to the society at large because of the rising cost of technical education in general (Adebowali, 2014). Considering the rising cost of technical education and the consequence of many youths not being able to afford technical education, it is necessary for stakeholders in education to encourage global partnership in technical education and collaborate in order to intervene to make technical education accessible to all youth particularly in Bayelsa State. This paper therefore examines the development of global partnership in technical education through stakeholders' intervention for sustainable development in Bayelsa state.

Literature Review

To address the issue of development of global partnership in technical education through stake-holders' intervention for sustainable development, it is pertinent to provide literature on the following:

Technical education

According to the Federal Government of Nigerian (FGN)(2013) National Policy on Education (NPE), technical education is used as a comprehensive term which covers education, the study of technologies and its related sciences which relate to the acquisition of practical skills and attitudes relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. This implies that technical education is part of education which is required for the acquisition of skills for individual to enable them to work in order to survive in the society. This definition indicates the comprehensive nature of technical education. Technical education is provided in educational institutions or through co-operative programmes jointly by educational institutions and industrial, agricultural or commercial institutions which are all related to work. It therefore accommodates multi-sector participation in its implementation.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) National Policy on Education (NPE) listed the goals of technical education as follows;

1. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences technology –advance craft;
2. Provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development and
3. To give training and impart the necessary skills to individual for self reliance economically (pp 24).

In the same vein, the objectives of technical education are to empower youth in order to make them to be self-reliant, develop skilled craftsmanship, innovative skills, creativity and problem solving abilities among others. Technical education has very broad and impressive contents (areas) of training manpower for national development (Usoro, Williams and Otu, 2012). Skills are indispensable for personal, institutional or organizational development. Skills according to oxford dictionary (2019) is the ability to do something well: expertise. Skills acquired through training enable people to be innovative, creative and self-reliant. Ayamele, Nwabueze and Ememe (2009) stated that work related skills provide a fore taste for work-place culture, which help workers to be more effective. This implies that skills development by the youth through technical education is crucial to the social and economic development of the society.

Education for Sustainable Development

United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO,1989)stated that education for sustainable development empowers the learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society for present and future generation while respecting cultural diversity. This implies that technical education for sustainable development is aimed at making students develop thinking ability that will make them to be proactive, innovative and self reliant economically. UNESCO (1989) also recognised that technical education meets the global aim of developing both individuals and societies. For instance Goal 9 of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) focuses on industry, innovation and infrastructure. The essence of this expectation is to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. This goal is very instructive in terms of collaboration or partnership for the creation, development and sustenance of technical education among youth in Bayelsa State. To bridge the unemployment gap that pervades the formal sector, investment in technical education demands global partnership in capacity building, training, funding, provision of equipment, monitoring and evaluation that would mitigate the deficits associated with innovation, creativity, adequate infrastructure and sustainable industrialization in the state.

Development of Global Partnership for Technical Education and Stakeholders' Intervention in Bayelsa state

Development according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2018) is the process that brings about change, socially and economically that allows people to achieve their human potential. This implies that development is the process that creates progress or positive

change. Hence, development of global partnership in technical education is the process of bringing stakeholders in technical education globally together for the purpose of promoting change and enabling all youth to have access to skill acquisition and technical-know-how of creativity, innovation and industrialization in their various settings. It is essential for stakeholders in technical education globally to collaborate and work together to achieve common goals. Stakeholders in technical education are persons who have vested interest in the achievement of the mandate of technical education. They are decision makers, policy makers, advisors, administrators, government (ministries of education) school management boards, parents, family members, students, teachers and private agencies, philanthropies etc.

Intervention Processes in Technical Education

Currently technical education in Bayelsa state is funded through the following:

1. Budget appropriation: the government at both the federal and state levels appropriate special intervention fund for the development of technical education by making provision for the funding of technical education in the budgetary allocation both at the national and state levels. Appraisal of public funding for technical education is critical to sustainable development of skill capacity of youth in the state.
2. Endowment Fund: it is evident that government alone cannot adequately fund education in general. Taiwo (1983) stated that there is shortage of needed funds for technical education in Nigeria due to the high demand for education and the growing manpower requirements of the economy. Endowment funds are donations made by wealthy individuals, philanthropists, non-governmental organizations and agencies to fund the execution of specific projects that will assist technical education to achieve its mandate. When such funds are made available it will sustain investment in technical education.
3. Establishment of Internally Generated revenue Projects: institutions facilitate funding of technical education through the establishments of entrepreneurial centres for the production of such products as water, detergents, furniture making and agricultural products which could be sold to generate income.
4. Parents- Teachers Associations raise funds internally among themselves to provide equipment, facilities and structures for institutions to promote technical education.
5. Alumni Association is a body of old students of the institutions most of whom are well placed in the society, politics and some are captains of industries. They donate cash or kind to the alma mater in order to promote technical education.
6. Collaboration with Multi-National Companies: Ogumka (2002) remarked that multinational companies are not social welfare organizations but are hard-line profit motivated companies. For the adequate funding of technical education in Bayelsa State it is pertinent to consult and collaborate with these companies to make them take on this aspect of education as their corporate social responsibilities in the provision of structures, equipment and laboratories in institutions.

7. Dedicated Taxes and Levies: education levy-grant/ rebate systems are developed to compliment public funding of technical education. This system can be put in place by the imposition of levy on all employers based on the wage bill.
8. International Donor assistance: donor support by international organizations play a very important role in developing technical education in most developing countries.

For the adequate funding of technical education for sustainable development in Bayelsa State there is need for development of global partnership through stake-holders' intervention in the following areas:

Provision of Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructure is a key factor in the development of technical education for sustainable development. The term infrastructure according to Oyedele (2012) refers to the technical structures that support a system, such as roads, water supply, sewers, energy, telecommunications etc. Fulmer (2009) also defined infrastructure as “the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain or enhance societal living conditions” (Pg 30-32). The infrastructural deficit in the technical colleges in Bayelsa State is a challenge to the development of technical education. Most infrastructures are now decayed and need repair, rehabilitation, or replacement. Partnership or collaboration is the act of working together of different people to achieve common objectives, American Heritage Dictionary (2018). Developing global partnership with the World Bank, European Union and International Foundations in the society to provide infrastructural facilities for technical education is critical to the development of technical education for sustainable development in Bayelsa State. Infrastructural facilities such as buildings, offices, laboratories, lecture theatres, classrooms, road network, water, energy etc are crucial elements of learning which enhance the development of technical education for sustainable development. In order to ensure the provision of these infrastructures for technical education international financial organisations such as the World Bank can give value proposal that would combine mobilization of public and private capital to develop technical education.

Global infrastructural facility provided by the World Bank is an open platform that enables the mobilization of resources for private and institutional investment that are beyond the resources of any individual partner. (World Bank Public Private Partnership, 2015). The global infrastructure facilities provided by the World Bank enable investment in core infrastructure through expansion of investment, improvement of infrastructural facilities and by supplementing existing resources etc.

Global partnership with the World Bank is required in the provision of equipment, instructional materials like books and journals and other materials which are crucial in the teaching and learning processes in technical education

Training and Development of Professional Instructors (Teachers) in Technical Education in Bayelsa State

Training is one of the most potent tools required for the development of human resources for sustainable development. This is because, through training, knowledge, skills and values required to improve people's quality of life are acquired. The teaching profession in the technical education frame-work is different because the teachers (instructors) and professionals impart skills required for the transformation of the economic and social sector of the country. It is therefore necessary for the training of instructors to align with the training required for work within the community or competencies associated with the quality of working life, Billett (2009). Kingombe (2017) stated that the roles technical education professionals undertake are likely to be varied because the educational institutions in which they practice shape the way in which their roles and activities are performed. Therefore, professional preparation for the training and development of teachers in technical education is required. Billett, (2009) divided the preparation and development of practicing teachers in technical education into: those who deal with the profession and those who focus on professional development with regards to current and emerging societal needs.

For effective training and development of instructors in technical education, it is necessary to develop global partnership with the World Bank or UNESCO, and other stakeholders to obtain quality training required for professionals in technical education. This is because professionals in technical education need to go beyond just being teachers, to include a broader role of engaging in social and economic development (Leite, Mello and Chieco 2009). Grollman (2009) proposed that the key to enhancing the status of technical education profession is through the process of professionalization which could be done through partnership by individuals and technical education institutions. Development of global partnership with World Bank or UNESCO in the area of training and development of teachers and professionals in technical education will facilitate human resources development for sustainable development in Bayelsa State.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Technical Educational Programmes

Monitoring and evaluation are processes that help to improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. It is used to assess the performance of projects, institutions and programmes set up by government's international organizations. Many international organizations such as the United Nations, USAID, the World Bank group monitor and assess their projects to ensure that the execution of the projects are in line with the required standard. The development of global partnership in technical education with World Bank or other private organizations to monitor and evaluate the implementation process of the programmes / curriculum in technical education is basic to effectiveness and direction of all the processes involved in technical education.

The Federal Government of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2013) recognised the role played by technical education in the development of manpower in Nigeria, hence the Federal Government of Nigeria through its National Universities

Commission (NUC) directed that entrepreneurial centres should be established in all tertiary institutions to enable students to acquire at least a skill on graduation. Agencies such as Petroleum Trust fund (PTF), Needs Assessment Fund (NAT) and other intervention funds have been empowered to assist in the development of programmes and acquisition of facilities to enhance education generally. In spite of these efforts, underfunding of technical education is still a challenge in Nigeria. Technical education is the key to the development of Nigeria, yet it is the worst applied instrument for national development (Dike, 2009).

Offiong, Akpan and Usoro (2012) noted that proper funding of technical education need not be over emphasized if Nigeria is to provide for adequate training of persons who should be able to proffer solution to the nation's industrial and technological backwardness. In the same vein, Akpan (2010) also agreed that the proper implementation and the attainment of the goals and objectives of technical education can only be actualized with adequate funding. It is glaring that technical education is not adequately funded this is evidenced by the dilapidated infrastructures and equipment in most technical colleges in the country and in Bayelsa State in particular. Technical education colleges are no longer being inspected and supervised as it were hitherto, so proper control, monitor and evaluation are needed. Reports of inspectors are not rigidly implemented as before (Babalola, 2016). There is therefore the need for monitoring of the implementation of programmes and effective funding by partners and stakeholders to facilitate maintain and put the equipment in good working conditions through routine checks, servicing and repairs (Offiong, Akpan and Usoro 2013).

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper examined the need for the development of global partnership through stakeholders' intervention for sustainable development in Bayelsa State through collaboration with multi-national organizations, donor agencies and dedicated taxes and levies. Technical education as a skill development programme is capital intensive as it requires equipments, tools, personnel and special workshops to acquire emerging technologies. It is established that the development of global partnership in technical education through stakeholders' intervention in Bayelsa State in the provision of infrastructural facilities, training and development of professionals in technical education, monitoring and evaluation of technical education programmes will enhance the development of technical education for sustainable development in the state.

Based on the above presentation this paper recommends the following:

- (i) Global partnership in technical education through stake-holders' intervention should be encouraged because the government alone cannot fund education generally. Global partnership will engender skill development, youth empowerment, job creation and poverty reduction and hence promote sustainable development.
- (ii) Monitoring and evaluation processes, should be established to ensure effective utilization of funds and the implementation of the curriculum for the actualization of the goals of technical education.

- (iii) Training Programmes should be put in place for teachers/ lecturers of technical education to update their knowledge to meet up with the emerging technologies.

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