

# Repositioning Technical and Vocational Education for Sustainable Development of Graduates in Post Covid-19 Era in Rivers State

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**Abstract:** *The study examined repositioning technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era in Rivers State. The study adopted a survey research design method. The population of the study covered one hundred and twelve (112) TVET lecturers in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 70 respondents (45 male and 25 female lecturers) from the entire population. The instrument used for data collection was a 22-items structured questionnaire tagged 'Re-positioning Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development of Graduates in Rivers State (RTVETSDGRS)' designed in the pattern of a 5-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SDA) having numerical values of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. Three experts drawn from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt validated the instrument while a reliability coefficient of 0.73 was established using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation and an inferential statistic of t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of consistency. It was decided that mean scores less than 3.00 is regarded as disagree or not necessary while mean scores equal or greater than 3.00 is regarded as agree or necessary respectively. The study recommended that the strategies identified in this study such as improvement in organization of TVET, adequate mobilization of TVET, tackling of negative stereotyping should be enforce.*

**Keywords:** Repositioning, TVET, Sustainable Development and Graduates

## Introduction

As technological developments magnet the world more closely together, vocational and technical education preparedness becomes increasingly significant. It is generally believed that one of the major parameters for measuring a country's economic growth, development and self-reliance is the extent of the country's development in vocational and technical education. Technical and Vocational and Training Education (TVET) is fundamental to the development and industrialization of nations. Thus the skills, abilities and competencies that are needed by the nation are embedded in vocational and technical education, which are central to a nation's social and economic emancipation. Consequently, any nation that believes in education as an instrument par excellence for national development has to recognize the significance of vocational and technical education and accord it the desired attention and support that it deserves. Technical and vocational education is the training of technically inclined individuals in respective fields who are to eventually become originators, implementers and coordinators of technological development in a nation (Tide News, 2017). In another dimension, Jean (2003) affirmed that there is ample evidence that better qualifications and skills protect individuals from unemployment while macro-economic perspectives show that higher skill level work force go hand in hand with better overall performances and also have positive impact on social capital.

However, Okonkwo (2008) deposited that TVET is that aspect of education and training that bothers on the acquisition of practical skills as well as basic scientific knowledge which are vital to the improvement of man's material wellbeing. In the same view Sallah (2008) stated that Technical and Vocational Education is an educational aspect that prepares individuals for saleable skills and takes one fit into the society to make effective contributions for its development. This implies -that practical skills acquisition in various areas or vocation leads to economic stimulation in a dynamic society where individuals who are vocationally knowledgeable embark on production saleable items. It is an integral part of the total education programme and contributes towards the development of good citizens by developing their physical, social civic, cultural and economic competencies. Vocational and technical education can also be defined as an educational training which comprehends knowledge, skills, competencies, structural activities, abilities, capabilities and all other structural experiences acquired through formal, on-the-job or off-the job which is capable of enhancing recipients opportunity for securing jobs in various sector of the economy or even enabling the person to be self-dependent by being a job creator. Manfred and Jennifer (2004) advocated that vocational technical education comprises all more or less organized or structured activities that aim at providing people with the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to perform a job or a set of jobs whether or not they lead to a formal qualification. Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2013) preached that vocational technical education is an aspect of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related

sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relative to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

TVET programme is designed in such a way that beneficiaries have a specified duration to understudy a training course, after which he/she graduates from the programme. Thus, he/she is referred to as a graduate. Graduates are used in different context to refer to anyone who has successfully completed a training course in any given field either in education or another programme. In this study, graduates are used to describe the products of tertiary education that have successfully undergone four years training in technical and vocational education in tertiary institutions. Through TVET programme, beneficiaries gain relevant skills that lead to self-employment through acquisition of employable skills. Self-employment refers to a situation where an individual creates, begins and takes control of the business decision rather than working for an employer. It is on this premise that, Chukumerije (2011) stated that TVET remains the only imperative measure for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Thus, sustainable development is very critical to the existence of any nation. The researcher noted that sustainable development is a wide concept which emphasizes the livelihood of the citizens of any nation. While attempting to conceptualize the term 'sustainable development', the International Institute for Sustainable Development (2010) posited that 'the improvement of economic efficiency, the protection and restoration of the environment and the enhancement of the social well-being of people formed the basic tenets of sustainable development According to Gambari (2008) sustainable development is about the tangible and intangible threads that hold a political entity together and gives it a sense of purpose. It involves building institutions like the economy and educational sectors. According Abdulkarim (2012) the essence of this form of development is a stable relationship between human activities and the natural world, which does not diminish the prospects for future generations to enjoy a quality of life, at least as good as our own yet many observers believe that participatory democracy, undominated by vested interests, is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development.

With these conceptual understandings in place, sustainable development of Nigerian economy can be seen as a pattern of development that permits the future generations to have access to basic life-sustaining essentials, such as food, protection, healthcare, clothing and shelter as well as current generation having access to at least high level of living, self-esteem and freedom. Hardi as cited in Edokpolor and Owenbiugie (2017) pointed out that sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony; rather, it is an on-going process of evolution in which people take actions leading to the development that meets their current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is generally believed that a nation's economic growth can be measured or analyzed by the extent to which vocational training is embraced. The training of individuals on technologically related fields helps them to become self-reliant, self-sufficient and independent.

### **Statement of the Problem**

TVET is a type of education designed for preparing the individual learner to earn a living or to be self-reliant (Akaninwor, 2004). Surprisingly, the present state of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria shows that the country is not taking TVET seriously. Regrettably, this neglect and highhandedness about TVET has doused various articulated skill acquisition programmes of the government. It is also remarkable that neglect of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is socially injurious as it robs the nation of contributions the graduates would make to national development. Therefore, it is imperative to re-engineer TVET to turn out graduates with requisite skills and competencies to fill the gap in manpower need in order to arrest youth unemployment and its attendant poverty. To this end, the study repositioning technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era in Rivers State was necessitated.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study was to determine how technical and vocational education and training (TVET) can be repositioned towards sustainable development of graduates in Rivers State in post covid-19 era in Rivers State. The study specifically sought to:

1. Examine the limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State
2. Determine the strategies for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State?
2. What strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State?

## Hypotheses

The following alternative hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of confidence.

1. There is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on the limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State
2. There is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on what strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State

## Methods

- **Research Design:** The study adopted a survey research design.
- **Population of the Study:** The population of the study covered one hundred and twelve (112) TVET lecturers of tertiary institutions offering TVET in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- **Sample and Sampling Techniques:** A purposive sampling technique was used to select seventy (70) respondents which consist of 45 male lecturers and 25 female TVET lecturers of tertiary institutions offering TVET programme in Rivers State.
- **Instrument:** The instrument used for data collection was a 22-items structured questionnaire tagged '*Repositioning Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Post Covid-19 Era in Rivers State (RTVETSDPCRS)*' designed in the pattern of a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SDA) and Highly Necessary (HN), Necessary (N), Not Necessary (NN), Highly Not Necessary (HNN) having numerical values of 4,3,2 and 1.
- **Validation of Instrument:** The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by three experts drawn from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt.
- **Reliability of the Instrument:** The reliability of the instrument was determined after two weeks of test re-test; thereafter which Pearson Product Moment Correction (PPMC) was used to establish a reliability coefficient of 0.73 on the instrument.
- **Data Analysis:** Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions whereas an inferential statistic of t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of consistency. It was decided that mean scores less than 3.00 is regarded as Disagree or Not Necessary, while mean scores equal or greater than 3.00 is regarded as Agree or Necessary respectively.

## Results

### Research Question 1

What are the limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State?

**Table 1**

**Mean and Standard Deviation of Male and Female TVET Lecturers on the limitations of TVET towards Sustainable Development of Graduates in Post Covid-19 Era Rivers State**

S/N	Items	TVET Male Lecturers N <sub>1</sub> =45			TVET Female Lecturers N <sub>2</sub> =25		
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Rmk.	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Rmk.
1.	Poor workshop training machine and equipment	3.27	0.76	A	3.01	0.79	A
2.	Quality of entrants	3.63	1.07	A	3.54	0.88	A
3.	Poor academic staff recruitment and development	3.35	0.82	A	3.23	0.74	A
4.	Poor infrastructure	3.64	0.92	A	3.26	0.53	A
5.	Poor industry-TVET relationship	3.90	0.98	A	3.33	1.10	A
6.	Poor funding of TVET institutions	3.40	0.49	A	3.58	0.74	A
7.	Poor management and organization of TVET	4.20	0.86	A	3.63	0.84	A
8.	Negative societal attitude towards TVET	3.53	0.82	A	3.54	0.10	A
9.	Poor power supply of TVET institutions	3.48	0.93	A	3.88	1.11	A
10.	Poor working condition for TVET lecturers in tertiary institutions	3.40	0.87	A	4.07	0.93	A
11.	Weak government policy and its' implementation	4.02	1.03	A	3.85	0.84	A
12.	Curriculum related problems of TVET program	4.23	1.05	A	4.03	0.88	A
	<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>A</b>

Source: Authors (2021)

Key: A= Agree

Table 1 above revealed the responses of male and female TVET lecturers on limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State with mean and standard deviation scores of (3.58-3.67) and (0.79-0.88) respectively. This means that the poor state of workshop training machine and equipment, poor power supply, poor state of infrastructures, societal attitude, placement of student for industrial attachment, weak government policy and poor implementation, poor funding and poor academic Staff recruitment and development among others are limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State.

**Research Question 2**

What strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State?

**Table 2**

**Mean and Standard Deviation of Male and Female TVET Lecturers on what Strategies are What Strategies are necessary for Repositioning TVET for Sustainable Development of Graduates in Post Covid-19 Era Rivers State.**

S/N	Question Items	TVET Male Lecturers N <sub>1</sub> =45			TVET Female Lecturers N <sub>2</sub> =25		
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	Rmk.	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	Rmk.
1.	Tackling negative stereotyping	3.63	0.84	N	3.52	0.92	N
2.	Improved infrastructure	4.20	0.75	N	3.90	0.87	N
3.	Sustainable financing of TVET	3.53	1.09	N	3.38	1.11	NN
4.	Sustainable synergy between TVET institutions and industries	3.01	0.79	N	3.05	0.89	N
5.	Provision of adequate training facilities and materials	4.00	1.40	N	3.38	0.96	N
6.	Adequate staff training and welfare programmes	3.70	0.93	N	3.13	0.93	N
7.	Increased access to TVET programme	4.20	0.75	N	3.90	0.87	N
8.	Adequate campaign and jingles	3.04	0.88	N	3.13	0.93	N
9.	Regular supervision and evaluation of the entire administrative process of TVET institutions	3.23	0.74	N	4.00	1.13	N
10.	Develop and maintains liaison with public and private groups	3.63	0.82	N	3.41	0.90	N
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>0.95</b>	<b>N</b>

Source: Author (2021)

Key: N = Necessary; NN = Not Necessary

Table 2 above showed the responses of TVET male and female lecturers on what strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State with mean and standard deviation scores of (3.48 - 3.62) and (0.90 - 0.95) respectively. This means that the respondents enormously agreed that improvement in organization of TVET in tertiary institutions, adequate mobilization of TVET programme, tackling of negative stereotyping, adequate staff training and welfare, sustainable financing, increased access to TVET, provision of adequate training facilities and materials among others are effective strategies for strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State.

**Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1**

There is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State.

**Table 3: t-test analysis of male and female TVET lecturers on limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State**

Category of Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	P	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
TVET Male Lecturers	45	3.67	0.88	114	0.05	0.57	1.96	<b>Rejected</b>
TVET Female Lecturers	25	3.58	0.79					

Source: Authors (2021)

Table 3 above revealed the calculated value (0.57) is less than the table value of (1.96). Therefore, since the t-cal is less than the t-table, the hypothesis which state there is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State was rejected. This indicates that the respondents agreed the items outlined above are limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State.

### Hypothesis 2

There is significant difference between the mean responses of male and female TVET lecturers on what strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State

**Table 4: t-test analysis of male and female tvet lecturers on what strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State**

Category	of N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	P	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
<b>Respondents</b>								
<b>TVET Male Lecturers</b>	45	3.62	0.90					
<b>TVET Female Lecturers</b>	25	3.48	0.95	114	0.05	0.78	1.96	<b>Rejected</b>

Source: Authors (2021)

From table 4, since the t-cal (0.78) is less than the t-table (1.96), the hypothesis of significant difference was rejected. This stipulates that respondent's opinions affirmed that the strategies identified above are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State.

### Result and Discussion

Table 1 above revealed the responses of male and female TVET lecturers on limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State with mean and standard deviation scores of (3.58-3.67) and (0.79-0.88) respectively. This means that the poor state of workshop training machine and equipment, poor power supply, poor state of infrastructures, societal attitude, placement of student for industrial attachment, weak government policy and poor implementation, poor funding and poor academic Staff recruitment and development among others are limitations of TVET towards for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State. From table 3, the responses of male and female lecturers on research question 1 showed their mean and standard deviation scores to be (3.58-3.67) and (0.79-0.88) respectively, and t-cal value of (0.57) which is less than the critical value of (1.96). This indicates that the alternative hypothesis stated above was rejected. This means that the respondents enormously agreed that poor state of workshop training machine and equipment, poor power supply, poor state of infrastructures, societal attitude, placement of student for industrial attachment, weak government policy and poor implementation, poor funding and poor academic staff recruitment and development among others are limitations of TVET towards sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State. This finding supports Atsumbe (2010) observe that the irrational practice of sending only drop-outs and mediocre students to technology base programmes still persist up till date.

Table 2 above showed the responses of TVET male and female lecturers on what strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State with mean and standard deviation scores of (3.48 - 3.62) and (0.90 - 0.95) respectively. This means that the respondents enormously agreed that improvement in organization of TVET in tertiary institutions, adequate mobilization of TVET programme, tackling of negative stereotyping, adequate staff training and welfare, sustainable financing, increased access to TVET, provision of adequate training facilities and materials among others are effective strategies for strategies are necessary for repositioning TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era Rivers State. From table 4, the responses of male and female lecturers on research question 2 showed their mean and standard deviation scores to be (3.48-3.62) and (0.90-0.95) respectively, and t-cal value of (0.78) is less than the critical value (1.96). This indicates that the alternative hypothesis stated above was rejected. This finding agreed with Saue and Igweagbara (2019) who noted that the goals of TVET programme could be achieved through administrators' effectiveness to make and take reasonable decisions as it concerns the activities stipulated in the curriculum. More so, Tiamiyu and Babalola (2013) who maintained that the quality of Nigerian education is poor due to poor leadership and corruption. Furthermore, Okolocha and Baba (2016) reiterated that in realizing the vital roles of TVET, the government needs to channel sufficient funds towards TVET.

### Conclusion

Indeed, Technical Vocational education and training (TVET) contributes to sustainable livelihood and nation building through the provision of skills, knowledge, attitude and values needed for the place of work. The persistent neglect of vocational and technical

education in Nigeria is socially injurious as it rubs the nation of the contribution the graduates would make on national development. This study therefore lends credence to the strategies identified by this study as effective for repositioning technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era in Rivers State.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended in respect to the strategies identified to reposition TVET for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era in Rivers State. Improvement in organization and administration of TVET in tertiary institutions, adequate mobilization of TVET programme, tackling negative stereotyping, adequate staff training and welfare, sustainable financing, increased access to TVET, provision of adequate training facilities and materials among others should be applied by government and technical and vocational education administrators and management in order to reposition technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development of graduates in post covid-19 era in Rivers State.

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