



## THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINING LIVING IN A PERIOD OF SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA

**Ikemike Dolfina Olaitari**

BSc, M.ed, Ph.D, Federal Medical Centre,  
PMB 502 Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

### **Abstract:**

This paper addresses the role of vocational and technical education in sustaining living in a period of security challenges. Hence, a detailed analysis of the concept of vocational and technical education was examined, including types of vocational and technical education, societal need for training programmes, security challenges in Nigeria, and causes of security challenges. It was concluded with few suggestions made as follows: that there shall be a restructuring of the while academic curricular in our institutions to give room to skill acquisition in different fields to our students, likewise the NYSC should be reconstructed in such a way that the Corps members should be exposed to different vocations in the orientation camps, in addition to their paramilitary training.

**Keywords:** vocational, technical, education, security, challenges

### **Introduction**

The development and security of any nation hinge on the social and economic contributions of her citizens. Vocational and technical education plays a major role in promoting community and national development, including security sustenance (Oguntuyi, 2013). Vocational and technical education can be described as any form of education whose purpose is to prepare person(s) for employment in an occupation or group of occupations. Throughout the country, there is a growing awareness about the need for vocational and technical education. The improvement in societal perception and interest has culminated in demands for changes in content, organization and delivery of vocational and technical curricular to reflect a new emphasis on technology.

As a matter of fact, vocational and technical education is aimed at developing not only practical skills but also attitudes and habits that make the recipient a creative, innovative and resourceful person (Uwaifo, 2001).

Vocational and technical education facilitates the acquisition of applied skills and basic scientific knowledge. It is a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begin with the exploration of career options, supports basic, academic and life skills, and enables the achievement of high academic standards, leadership, preparation for career and continuing education (Career and Technical Education, 2009). Unfortunately, Nigeria does not seem to give vocational and technical education the attention it deserves. This appears to be the reason for rising rate of unemployment and poverty in the society which had contributed largely to the insecurity problems in the country. According to Olaitan, (1996), this is because the youths and graduates from tertiary institutions are not equipped with adequate skills that will enable them exploit the natural resources that abound in Nigeria. He further posits that unemployment leads to frustration and disillusionment which may result in crime or drug abuse in a futile attempt to escape from, and forget the pains and humiliation associated with poverty which has worsened, as millions of school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions are not gainfully employed. The reason is that they lack the necessary occupational skills that would enable them to be self-employed and effectively function in today's world of work.

Ayodele, (2006) identified the problem of irrelevant education that is bookish, theoretical and "white collar job" oriented. In addition, government programmes are not designed to promote vocational and technical education. The level of infrastructural development and facilities provided by the government are affecting to a large extent, the level of skills acquisition in the country. The high rate of insecurity as exemplified in kidnapping, prostitution, and armed robbery has a relationship with unemployment and poverty. In the past, education in Nigeria was based on the need of the missionaries for teachers and preachers, as well as the need of the government for clerical workers in government offices; which is the main reason for the early establishment of both primary and secondary schools by the missionaries themselves (Fafunwa, 1974). No technical or vocational schools were originally established. As a result of this, education gradually became a means of avoiding manual work, hence the educational system was greatly criticized, not only for neglect of vocational technical education that could have made people to be self-reliant for national development, but being relevant to peculiar needs of Nigerian pupils.

Over the last few years, the interest for vocational and technical education has been acquiring a new spirit. Even though economists have focused their attention on

education as an investment in human capital (Becker, 1983; Hashianoto, 1981), Despite its benefits are evidenced long time, considerable importance on the investment of vocational education training performance, by entrepreneurs and labour, are mainly in certain sectors in which there is an ever growing need to train the workforce in each area of specialties to be effective and systematic. Vocational education is therefore acquiring a crucial role towards the maintenance of adequate competitive levels, appropriate for sustaining living in a period of security challenges in Nigeria. Globally, the incidence of vocational education tends to be stronger among the youth than among adults, and the groups more likely to receive training are the most restive ones.

### **Concept of Vocational and Technical Education**

Vocational and technical education is the acquisition of skills and techniques in a chosen occupation or profession to enable an individual earn a living. The Federal Republic of Nigeria, press release, (2004)., on the National Policy on Education (NPE), viewed vocational education as training or retraining programme, which is given in schools or classes under public supervision and control. Vocational education is a system of education, which is predicted upon the teaching of skills and also demanding the professional or expert use of hands. The teaching of skills of formal sector existed in two types of institutions initially established in Nigeria. These are technical colleges and trade centres. Vocational and technical education is a continuous process of adaptation of the worker's training towards acquiring the minimum knowledge required. Roland (1995) states that vocational and technical education is result oriented. It brings about technological advancement and aims to fit new manpower for employment and provide continuous training for those already qualified, so that they can keep up with modern working methods.

According to Ugwuja, (2010) vocational and technical education has been described as an aspect of education designed to prepare students for industry, agriculture, commerce, home economics, while National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) defined it as that aspect of education that leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is an education designed to prepare individuals for gainful employment as skilled or semi-skilled workers in a recognized occupation such that, such individuals could be self-reliant. It is an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact on productivity and economic development (Dike, 2009). Vocational and Technical Education therefore gives individuals the skill to live, learn and work as productive citizens in a global society (Nwogu and Nwanoruo, 2011).

## **History of Vocational and Technical Education**

The provision of vocational and technical schools has a long history. Before the Industrial Revolution (between 1750 and 1930), the home and the “apprenticeship system” were the principal sources of vocational education. But societies were later forced by the decline of handwork and specialization of occupational functions to develop institutions of vocational education (Duffy, 1967). Manual training that involves general instruction in the use of hand tools was said to have developed initially in Scandinavia (1886). However, vocational education became popular in the elementary schools in the United States after 1880 and developed into courses in industrial training, bookkeeping, stenography, and allied commercial work in both public and private institutions. According to Sandra, (2010); the Columbia Encyclopaedia noted, some of the early private trade schools in the United States which include Cooper Union (1859) and Pratt Institute (1887), the Hampton Institute (1868), and Tuskegee Institute (1881). The agricultural high school (1888) of the University of Minnesota was the first regularly established public vocational secondary school that introduced extensive public instruction in agriculture. The number of public and private vocational schools has greatly increased in the United States since 1900. There was an impetus on vocational education during World War II (1939 – 1945) when the armed services had great need for technicians that the civilian world could not supply.

There was a further upsurge on vocational training from the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (the G. I. Bill of Rights), which allowed World War II veterans to receive tuition and substance during extended vocational training, Education Act (1963), the Vocational Education Amendments Act (1968), and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (1984). These programs help to improve the nation’s workforce and ensure that vocational training is available for economically (and physically) challenged youths. The United States is not the only society that appreciates skills acquired through vocational and technical education. Secondary (high) schools in many other development-conscious nations have vocational centres that offer vocational training for life long trade together with general academic studies. For instance India and the “Asian Tigers” could not have become what they are without massive investment in technical education.

## **Status of Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria**

While technical and vocational education has continued to thrive in many societies, Nigeria has neglected this aspect of education. Consequently, the society lacks skilled

technicians: bricklayers, carpenters, painters and auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, electrical/electronic technicians, and skilled vocational nurses etc. Vocational and technical education in Nigeria has gone through a series of problems. From the humble beginning, it was perceived wrongly as the education for the dropouts or those who could not cope with academic rigor in the formal schools setting, but had to be sent to trade centres. This has led to the slow progress from the earliest times when the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) gave some clarification on its objectives with respect to entire education system. The specified goals of vocational and technical education are stated as:

- To provide trained manpower in the applied sciences technology and business, and particularly in the arts and craft.
- To provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development, and
- To give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically (FRN, 2004).

As laudable as these policies seem, they are yet to adequately fulfil the original goals of vocational and technical education in Nigeria. The consequences are steering, as the nation takes more than ever before, particularly with regards to youth employment and its implications on our national security. A lot of problems are facing vocational and technical education such as continuing misconception of the vocational and technical education programme especially by the policy makers and the generality of Nigerians, improperly planned government policies on vocational and technical education as well as lack of follow-up of implemented policies, inadequate funding, poor incentives for vocational and technical education teachers at all levels, inadequate and obsolete training facilities, inadequate skill power, irrelevant or inappropriate curricular of the vocational and technical education, and inadequate training institution as well as non-vocation approach of available institutions offering vocational courses. In view of these identified problems, there is an urgent need to reform vocational and technical education in Nigeria in the face of security challenges.

### **The Importance of Vocational and Technical Education**

Many developed economies of the world have recognised the great importance attached to vocational and technical education and have therefore accorded it the attention it deserves. They have regarded vocational and technical education as the basis of industrial and technological advancement. They saw vocational and technical education as a means to job creation and as an aspect of the education process involving

addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and acquisition of relevant practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupations in the various sectors to economic and social life (Apugu & Andural, 2007). Several countries that have breakthrough in the technological world today are those that have placed more emphasis and invested systematically on vocational and technological education and have proper planning and reasonable policy (Adepoju & Famade, 2010). Hence the importance of vocational and technical education is listed below:

- a) It helps individuals to be independent, autonomous; ambitious that takes responsibility for their own future.
- b) They are valued by employers, because the impact they give is valuable and productive.
- c) It helps people learn skills to gain jobs.
- d) It allows you a hand on approach to learning.
- e) Helps individuals to get out of high school and be ready to start a career.
- f) It provides information to individuals that will allow them to be successful in a job. It can involve training on how to get the job.
- g) Because not all people are college bound, many individuals find vocational education training to be a necessary part of high school education, whether it is a person with disability.
- h) According to Anusha (2012), vocational education training is primarily non-academic in nature, and offers practical training and skills needed to pursue an occupation straightway.
- i) It provides students with courses directly aligned to land a job in a chosen profession or a skilled trade; to enable the individual to attain self-employment.
- j) (Candidates with vocational training can find work in several states and central government organisations, non-profit groups, academic institutions and sometimes even in private companies. Those with strong vocational education background also opt for lecturing and teaching roles in the polytechnic colleges and vocational training institutes which match the government job scales (Anusha, 2012).
- k) Vocational/technical education and training prepares learners for career that are based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. In other words it is education designed to develop occupational skills. Hence vocational and technical education gives individuals the skills to live, learn and work as a productive citizen in a global society

## **Vocational Education as an Alternative to University Education**

Many people look to vocational schools as a form of higher education. Often in place of college or university course work, vocational schools are almost always less expensive than degree programmes; and job prospects are often much more certain. Though much depends on individual students and market dynamics, most people can find stable work within a few months of programme completion. Many of these jobs pay well, and most offer growth potential far into the future. The on-the-job learning common to vocational programmes is very attractive to most employers. Someone with a vocational certificate or diploma can usually start work immediately with little or no training required. (Victor, 2005).

Vocational Education can also be seen as path to a second career. Not everyone who attends a vocational programme is a new high school graduate looking for a way to break into the workforce. Many people see this sort of training as a way to start a new career. Those who have worked for a long time in a job they dislike may see vocational school as a way to retrain for something more exciting, to be accorded the opportunity to undergo the formal education. By this formal education, ignorance and all forms of excessive and barbaric behaviour will be wiped out from the society. If a citizen will be given the privilege (i.e. sponsorship of attaining school) then his or her actions and response to civic duties would change for the better. (Amparo., 1995).

## **Societal Need for Training Programmes**

According to Mitchell, (2014), most communities need balance of workers with different skills in order to be productive. Mechanics, repairmen and plumbers are often seen as essential to social order, while dental hygienist, beauticians and medical aides are important to quality of life. In order to encourage qualified people to enter those trades, many governments help subsidise vocational and technical education programmes. A good example is the Nigerian Amnesty Programme, where restive youths of the Niger Delta region are encouraged and sponsored by the government to go for vocational training of their interest overseas by way of making them become self-employed and to deviate from their restiveness due to unemployment problems in the country.

## **Types of Vocational/Technical Education Training**

Vocational/technical education offers a wide variety of options in administrative, business, computer, plumbing, hairstyling, technology, printing, agriculture,

automobile, craftsmanship, laboratory, librarian, and cosmetic fields. Specifically, these courses include: typewriting, secretarial practice, computer operation, desktop publishing, laboratory technician, librarian, mechanic, electrical technician, plumbing, refrigeration and air conditioning, tailoring, beautician, etc (Anusha, 2012). Hence vocational education is any sort of formal training programme that trains students for work in a particular trade. In most cases, training is somewhat short, usually only one to two years. Unlike most college programmes, which focus on providing a broad and varied education. Vocational schools, sometimes also called technical schools, are usually geared towards a specific job.

### **Concept of Insecurity**

The concept of insecurity would be best understood by first presenting the concept of security. In the view of Akin (2008, security refers to the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions. It is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threats to their lives or properties. It embraces all measures designed to protect and safeguard the citizenry and the resources of individuals, groups, business and the nation against sabotage or violent occurrence (Ogunleye, Adewole, Alese, & Ogundele, 2011). According to Igbuzor, (2011), it demands safety from chronic threats and protection from harmful disruption.

Security however, can be described as stability and continuity of livelihood (stable and steady income), predictability of daily life (knowing what to expect), protection from crime (feeling safe), and freedom from psychological harm (safety or protection from emotional stress) which results from the assurance of knowing that one is wanted, accepted, loved and protected in one's community or neighbourhood and by people around. It focuses on emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group, which can offer one protection.



**Table 1:** Level of crime rate from 2000 – 2008

Year	Theft	Armed robbery	Kidnapping	Assassination	Fraud
2000	29127	1877	243	1255	7927
2001	40796	2809	349	2120	10234
2002	35231	3889	337	2117	9134
2003	33124	3497	410	2136	9508
2004	37289	3142	349	2550	9532
2005	46111	2074	798	2074	9580
2006	41901	2863	377	2000	6395
2007	21082	2327	277	2007	5860
2008	23927	2340	309	1956	5058

**Source:** Summary of available crime statistics in Nigeria (2000 – 2008)

Table 1 shows that from 2008, the rate of theft, armed robbery and kidnapping which reduce in 2007, were on the rise again and Ani.,(2009); noted that the rate of theft, armed robbery, especially in the banks, kidnapping and assassination has continued to rise especially in the Southern part of the country. Also, Cleen (2012) in a survey of crime rate in Nigeria found that robbery rate has increased significantly in the past one year. Research has indicated that these vices are not equally distributed in the country (Cleen, 2012). For instance, the South-East states of the country have the highest incidence of kidnapping, armed robbery and fraud, while the northern states are characterised by bombings by the Islamic sect, Boko Haram.

### **Causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria**

It is on record that Nigeria had witnessed a drastic and frantic security challenges in the last few years. These crises are in various forms: communal, religious, political, and socio-economic, with varying degrees of casualty, mostly innocent citizens of this country – Nigeria. Some see this phenomenon as a calculated attempt by the international community to divide the country while others believe it is the phantom sectarian violence that is responsible (Dembo & Mustapha, 2013) The most worrisome fact is that this incessant violence apart from killing and maiming innocent souls has imprinted agony, tension and aggression in the minds of Nigerians. Today, we live in absolute suspicion and constant presentiment of an impending disaster. Most economic activities have come to a halt and private businesses are crippling with the result of the inability of employers to pay their employees. There is rarely government function taking place publicly compared to the previous years. All these are the direct aftermath

of insecurity in the country. Dembo and Mustapha, (2012) opined that the insecurity is caused by three (among others) major factors with their respective solution to::

- a) illiteracy;
- b) unemployment and
- c) disregard of traditional security measures.

Illiteracy is a major factor militating against the peaceful co-existence of this country. Nigeria is a country with over 150million people and a huge number of the population are youths, most of whom are partially or uneducated at all. The illiteracy rate is one of the major distinctions between the developed and the developing countries like Nigeria. Thus every citizen must be accorded the opportunity to undergo the formal education. By this formal education, ignorance and all forms of excessive and barbaric behaviour will be wiped out from the society. If a citizen will be given the privilege (i.e. sponsorship of attaining school) then his or her actions and response to civic duties would change for the better.

The immediate factors that cause Nigeria's insecurity are inexhaustible. However, it would do just to mention a few of them in this paper. According to Emmanuel (2011); for some time now, the problem of insecurity which used to be of the lowest in the hierarchy of social problems facing the country seems to have assumed alarming proportions since the end of the Nigerian Civil War which ended in 1970. During the pre-colonial and colonial era, insecurity was merely handled by the Federal Government utilizing the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), the Nigeria Prisons, Immigration Services and the Customs, all of which annual budget was among the least in the exclusive list. There are also local security men recruited by the native authorities, some of whom were attached to the Customary Courts that were called different names like "Danduka" or "Courta".

Since the past decay, government expenditure and security has walloped a life chunk of the federal, state and local budgets in the name of security votes and other related sub-heads. It would appear to everyone that unemployment is one of the strongest push factors. A situation where an alarming rate of about 40 percent of Nigerians, most of whom are in the youth bracket are not gainfully employed, smacks of a missing link in the government and an absence of a desirable social contract. The emergence of youth military in the Niger Delta could be traced to this factor. This is why the Federal Government has been commended by the international community for the on-going rehabilitation of the youths. Perhaps the huge expenditure which the federal and state governments have met in this process could have been avoided if the actual problem of the Niger Delta had been nipped in the bud. (Emmanuel, 2011). He also states that, the Niger Delta is not an island, and even if more than adequate

attention was paid to them, the other geo-political zones could become jealous, resulting to another claim of relative deprivation, because after all they are all in the country. The deliberate concentration of Nigeria's capital resources to the development of a few cities in the name of federal and state capitals culminating in the prevalence of a large population of rural and underdeveloped communities who later came to see the developing cities of Lagos, Port-Harcourt, Kano, Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna, and Calabar, to mention but a few, as a different country has equally compounded the security of this country.

Allen, and McConnick ,and Obrien, (1991) also states that; although, the welfare of the urban poor, like the Ajegunle and Maroko of Lagos and similar slum dwellers in Port-Harcourt, Kano, Ibadan, Bayelsa among others, is being addressed by successive administrators in these areas; these (second class citizens), see the dwellers of the cities as their enemies. In the same vain, the masses in the rural area appear to have waged a cold war against the urban dwellers. The trend seems to be organised criminal expeditions to the cities lasting for a few days and a retreat to escape law enforcement agencies, and this has continued till date. The rural dwellers are jealous of the bright light in the cities, the pipe borne water which flows at intervals, the health facilities, the fairly good roads and drainage systems including the educational institutions and the white collar jobs. What do we expect in this kind of confusion? It has even become difficult for the aggrieved youths to be traced because there is no road to the rural areas. It goes without saying that one way of reducing insecurity is to spread development to all the nooks and crannies of the country, no matter their contribution to the economy.

Thus it would be unreasonable for anyone to condemn the establishment of educational institutions and subsequent ways and educational policies of the federal and state governments which have produced millions of university graduates and other school leavers, since education is the bedrock of development of any country. But having achieved this, what efforts are we making to replace the departed and retired farmers who have been feeding this nation for decades? The unemployed school leavers are neither here nor there and this appears to worsen the food insecurity of this country, forcing the federal government to import food that we can produce, (Amparo, 1995).

### **Security challenges are attributed to the following**

- 1. Unemployment:** According to Akwara, Enwchala, Adenkule, and Udaw, (2013), unemployment causes poverty and that poverty causes insecurity. In a nation where a large number of the people are unemployed, they would be poor and poverty would lead to the insecurity of lives and property as the people's capacity to engage

themselves meaningfully in the nation's socio-economic processes would be highly reduced. They would channel their energies to unorthodox methods as crimes to eke out a living for themselves and as they do this, they endanger lives and properties in the society and raise the cost of governance.

Okafor, (2011), also state that unemployment in Nigeria is with attendant social, economic, political and psychological consequences. One of its social consequences on the Nigerian youths is the high level of youth unemployment. A phenomenon which encourages the development of street youths and urban urchins (area boys) that grows up in a culture that encourages criminal behaviours. Unemployment has also contributed to increasing feminization of poverty among young women, which has encouraged prostitution as a means of survival and leads to trafficking of young women across international borders with transnational security.

According to Lamido (2013), unemployment is generally caused by improper orientation of the youths, absence of policy on social welfare, societal attitude towards vocational and technical education, and inadequate teaching facilities. These have manifested in the alarming rate of armed robberies, in the south-west region, militancy and arson in the south-south region, terrorism in the north-west, north-central and north-east regions, and the kidnapping in the south- west region. All these have impacts on the security situation of the country. As a result of the high level of unemployment among Nigerians, especially the youths, they are adversely attracted to violence, crime (Adagba, Ugwu, & Eme., 2012). Nwagbosa, (2012) argued that the failure to address challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality distribution of wealth may result to real threat to the corporate existence of the country.

**2. Poverty:** It is no longer news that there is a growing recognition amongst development experts that poverty and its alleviation is best actualised through participation and empowerment of the vulnerable groups by giving them the right and the opportunity for economic choices and self-actualisation. Development outcome to a great extent depends on effective political relations as well as an active and efficient citizenry which can facilitate robust and collective action. This in no doubt can result into effective and better targeted public services, social justice, equity, accountability, transparency and good governance. However, the current scenario in Nigeria is such that the magnitude of youth unemployment and lack of participation in the labour market has created related socioeconomic crises, hence national insecurity, a disturbing feature no rational government can turn a blind (Abdullahi, Hussainatu & Yelwa, 2013).

### 3. **Lack of Corporate Responsibility by Companies**

Corporate and social irresponsibility is a set of actions that increase externalised costs and/or promotes distributional conflicts (Kotchen & Moon, 2011). Companies engage in corporate social responsibility in order to offset corporate social irresponsibility. The rise of terror groups in some parts of the country is directly related to the neglect of social responsibility by companies to the community where they are operating. This is the case of the Niger Delta Crisis.

4. **Rural/urban drift:** The migration of jobless youths from rural areas to urban centres is also one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria (Onuoha, 2011). Nigeria is one of the countries in the world with very high rural/urban drift. Most urban areas in Nigeria have grown beyond their environmental carrying capacities and existing infrastructure, and this has resulted to increased poor quality of the living conditions in urban areas in Nigeria (Adedeji & Eziyi, (2010). Out of frustration the youths are drawn into crime.

5. **Porous Borders:** One major immediate factor which has enhanced insecurity in Nigeria is the porous frontiers of the country, where individual movements are largely untracked. The porosity of Nigeria's borders has serious security implications for the country. Given the porous borders as well as the weak security system, weapons come easily into Nigeria from other countries. Small arms and light weapons proliferation and the availability of these weapons have enabled militant groups and criminal groups to have easy access to arms (Hazen & Homer, 2007). Nigeria is estimated to host over 70percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa (Edeko, 2011). Also, the porosity of the Nigerian borders has made it possible for unwarranted influx of immigrants from neighbouring countries such as Republic of Niger, Chad and Republic of Benin (Adeola and Oluyemi, 2012). These migrants who are mostly young men are some of the perpetrators of crime in the country.

### **The Problems and Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria**

According to Akintokumbo, (2011), more lives are lost in our country through road crash (transport insecurity), diseases which could have been prevented if not for lack of commitment and care by our violence (health insecurity); e.g. infant mortality due to ignorance, illiteracy and poverty that had caused so many deaths of Nigerians, directly and indirectly, mostly as a result of massive and unchecked corruption, greed selfishness, lack of political will and conscience, and of course, lack of vision. Insecurity, especially internal insecurity is not a problem that is unique in Nigeria. The US, the UK and many other countries face the challenges of insecurity within their borders on a

daily basis. The difference between them and our country Nigeria, is how they manage the threats; how knowledgeable and prepared they are; how they deploy resources against the threats; how effective they are; how patriotic and united these people are against threats of insecurity. Threats to the general peace may range from low-level civil disorder, large scale violence disorder, large scale violence, or even an armed insurgency. Threat to the internal security may be direct at either the states citizen, or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself, and may range from petty crime, serious organised crime, political or industrial unrest, or even domestic terrorism. Foreign powers may also act as threat to internal security, either committing or sponsoring terrorism or rebellion, without actually declaring war.

The current general state of insecurity has now lent weight to the report. It must be recalled that while the report was released at the advent of the so called Niger Delta crisis since the several acts of bombings, killings by extremist Islamic sect, Boko Haram, the carriage between ethnic Birom and Hausa/Fulani in Jos, and the political violence that followed immediately after the 2011 elections result, mostly in the northern part of the country, have further cemented the insecure state of the country. Starting with the usual religious/ethnic oriented conflicts to the Jos ethnic/religious/political conflicts of 2008, regrettably, the northern states have shown that security of persons and properties is still far from being realised. However, the current crisis which started in Bauchi and has engulfed other states in the north has elements of theoretic opinionated ambitions in it. While the fundamental group – Boko Haram’s demand for the jettisoning of a western behaviour pattern and the imposition of strict Sharia law can be described as absurd. To say the least, we should equally view it with the seriousness it deserves (Akintokumbo, 2011).

What the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians is that the government security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the safety and security of its people. A good example is the recent abduction of 280 students of Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State by the members of the Islamic sect Boko Haram, and also threatening to kill abducted school girls if search is not stopped (Jimitota, Johnbosco & Ndahi, 2014, 24 April). This could therefore have impact on the general security of the people as the situation promotes fear, while at the same time limiting the people’s ability to develop economically. At the same time, the state’s capacity to attract investors becomes limited as a result of the insecurity. For instance, states like Enugu and Bauchi that have huge tourism potential would be losing out on this front.

## **Terrorism**

At the most proximate and least disputable level, terrorism is the most fundamental challenge of insecurity in Nigeria today; and its primary bases and sources of support have generally been located in the religious fanaticism and intolerance, particularly in Islam dominated states of Nigeria. Terrorism which is a global phenomenon where no one is safe was defined by Sampson and Onuoha., (2011) as the premeditated use or threat of use of violence by an individual or group can cause fear, destruction or death, especially against unarmed targets, property, or infrastructure in a state, intended to compel those in authority to respond to the demands and expectations of the individual or group behind such violent acts. Terrorism is an Islamic insurgence with a political undertone by a faceless group based in the Northern region of the country, which called itself "Boko Haram", which takes into account the legitimate political, social and economic grievances of the Northern population. Nigeria has lost up to 1000 lives in the North since 2009 to the insurgency of this infamous Islamic sect Boko Haram.

### **Here is a list of Abuja terrorist attack under this administration since October, 2010.**

- There was bombing on Independence Day in Abuja. October 1, 2010.
- There was bombing at Army Barrack in Abuja. December 2010.
- There was bombing at Police Headquarters, Abuja. June, 2011.
- There was bombing at UN Headquarters, Abuja. August, 2011.
- The escalation of attacks in Kano, Borno, Bauchi and Kaduna, particularly the recent attacks at the Baga and Bama in Borno State and the crude oil threats to the corporate existence of the country.

These events portend frightening danger to the nation's economy. It is unthinkable the extent these deadly people have gone. No one seems to be safe from their radar as they kill at will. The murder of the Kwara State Commissioner of Police is an example of the state of insecurity in the country. The Emir of Kano who was attacked is an indication that truly, no one is safe in the country, and that the government has to act very fast to salvage the menace. The future of this country is at stake. If nothing is done to bring the life threatening situation in the country under control, it will give room for anarchy (The Tide News – online, July 22, 2013).

### **The role of vocational/technical education in curbing security challenges in Nigeria**

The discovery of a problem they say is halfway to its solution. Finding the way forward for vocational education in Nigeria entails the correction of anomalies with the quality

of Nigerian education system. Technical/Vocational Education (TVE) has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact on the security challenges of any country. Large percentage of Nigerian youths are unemployed and have often been the ready tool in the hand of unscrupulous individuals or group to perpetuate a state of insecurity in the nation, and that vocational and technical education is a more effective tool in the hand of any government or nation to curb the problems of unemployment and insecurity. Hence, it is important to consider how we can reform vocational and technical education in Nigeria and use it effectively. (Uwaifo, 2001).

According to Ayodele, (2006), the high rate of insecurity as exemplified in kidnapping, prostitution, and armed robbery has relationship with unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, and more especially lack of occupational skills that can be derived from vocational and technical education, which can be described as any form of education whose purpose is to prepare person(s) for employment in an occupation or group of occupations

This implies that vocational and technical education has a major role to play for the sustenance of living in his period of security challenges in Nigeria. This is true in the sense that vocational and technical education can help one to be independent, autonomous, ambitious, and can take responsibility for their own future. It can help people learn skills to gain jobs and become self-reliant and most importantly, candidates with vocational training can find work in several states and central government organisations, non-profit groups, academic institutions and sometimes even in private companies. Hence vocational and technical education gives individuals the skills to live, learn and work as a productive citizens in a global society.

According to Uwaifo and Victor (2009), Vocational and Technical Education has some implications for sustenance of living such as:

**Psychological Implication:** Vocational and technical education can bridge the gap between people without job and without hope. If one is able to acquire training in vocational education, employment is guaranteed. On the other hand, a country without enough man power will suffer the problem of unemployment, which leads to poverty and in turn leads to insecurity.

**Sociological Implication:** Vocational education is a social safety measure to many social problems. Unemployment is a serious social ill, without its numerous remote consequences like hooliganism, unstable homes, and other anti-social vices. Vocational and technical education helps to eliminate all these through the production of students that are easily employed.



**Economic Implication:** Vocational education is designed to meet the employment needs of particular areas of the economy. The training provided is closely matched with specific job requirement so as to foster immediate production performance by the trainee. Trainees can become wage earners, thereby becoming more useful and productive citizens who will be assets to the society and not liabilities.

**Technological Implication:** In the future, it is hoped that vocational and technical education will adequately equip students to be more effective in this age of science and technology and to raise a generation of people who can think for themselves and respect the dignity of labour and propel its citizenry into blossom economic stability. What is needed today and tomorrow is more workers with good technical skill background, rugged enough to transform Nigeria into a positive technological breakthrough with the ability to meet its immediate demand. A brighter future is possible if we are willing and able to re-examine the vocational programmes and its value in our educational system.

**Self-Employment:** Today in Nigeria, the high incidence of school dropout among secondary school students clearly highlights the importance of career development, which is achievable through vocational and technical education. These students who could not fit into the academic oriented curriculum would need practical skill to enable them function properly in the society. Secondly, the graduates from these existing school systems invariably enter the job market seeking employment that does hardly exist in this country today. To draw the majority of these job seekers out of the unemployment market, vocational and technical training in secondary schools becomes the most potent elixir. This again requires the training of the teachers that will impact these skills to students in the primary, post primary and tertiary levels (Uddin and Uwaifo, 2005).

## **Conclusion**

Nigeria's security is highly dependent on the positive utilisation of the vigour inbuilt in our youths. It is a common saying that an idle hand is a devil's workshop. If everyone is gainfully employed and is self-reliant, there will be no problem about poverty or unemployment, which are the key factors that ginger youths or young school leavers to go into scrupulous act or causing havoc to individuals, states etc., all for the sole purpose of meeting up survival skills hence vocational and technical education is a means of achieving that. It equips students with the right technical knowledge, skills and trained proficiency. Youths will no longer value the alluring offering of terrorist of youth leaders. Conditions which will necessarily and significantly dampen, if not

eliminate youth powered deliberate threat to national security in Nigeria. It is the panacea for socioeconomic security problems of Nigeria. Thus vocational and technical education is the gateway to the nation's industrialisation and security stability. It is high time a bigger premium is put on vocational and technical education, because it is the key to national stability, security, political and economic growth and development.

From all indications, poverty and unemployment are social menace in Nigeria and constitutes a threat to national security. Evidently unemployment creates poverty, and poverty leads to insecurity. It therefore follows that both poverty and unemployment have implications for national security. Based on the foregoing, it is observed that vocational and technical education occupies an important position in the sustenance of living in this period of security challenges in Nigeria.

### **Suggestions**

1. There should be a restructuring of the whole academic curricular in our institutions to give room for skill acquisition in different fields to our students.
2. Students should be encouraged to acquire skills in their areas of interests rather than forcing a particular area on them.
3. Vocational and technical education requires adequate funding. This should be left alone to the government. All well-meaning Nigerians, non-governmental organisations, religious institutions should contribute their quota by finding or establishing a vocational centre or supplying required equipment.
4. The federal and state government should set aside special fund apart from the ETF, ITF, and You WIN fund; for youth entrepreneurship at small or medium scale for the graduates of our higher institutions.
5. The NYSC should be reconstructed in such a way that the corps members would be exposed to different vocations in the orientation camp, in addition to their paramilitary training. They could be encouraged to form Coppers Cooperative and practice a practical vocation during their service year in addition to their primary assignments.
6. There should be a de-emphasis of Nigerian on-paper qualifications, which so far have not yielded many results.
7. While appreciating the efforts of the government in the area of security, all hands must be on deck to solve the immense security challenges so that we will all have a better country to live; a country where peace and tranquillity will reign and where the posterity will call a fatherland.

## References

1. Abdullahi, Y. Z., Hussainatu, A., & Yelwa, M.(2013). Youth Participation, Unempowerment & Poverty in a Democratic Nigeria. Towards a Policy Response for Sustainable National Security and Economy. *Journal of Economic and Sustainable Development* 4(10).
2. Adagba, O., Ugwu, S. C., & Eme, O. I. (2012). Activities of Boko Haram and Insecurity Question in Nigeria. *Arabian Journal of Business and management Review*, 1(9): 77 – 99.
3. Adediji, D. & Eziyi, O. I. (2010). Urban Environmental Problems in Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development in Africa. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 12 (1) 124-145
4. Adeola, G. L., & Oluyemi, F. (2012). The political and security implication of cross border migration between Nigeria and her francophone neighbours. *International journal of social sciences*, 1 (3): 1-9
5. Adepoju, T. L., & Fainade, O. A. (2010). The Application of Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SINOT), Analysis for Managing Vocational and Technical Education Programmes or Improved Efficiency. *Education Research and Review*, 5(7): 304 – 321
6. Akin, I. (2008). *The Utility of Close-Circuit Television (CCTV) in Intelligence gathering by security operatives in Nigeria*. Proceedings of conference on intelligence security, Lagos.
7. Akintokumbo, A. C. (2011). The problems and challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria, Accessed at <http://chatafrik.com/articles/nigerian-affairs/the-problem-and-challenges-of-insecurity-in-Nigeria>
8. Akwara, A. F., Akwara, N. F., Enwochola, J., Adekunle, M., & Udaw, J. E.(2013). Unemployment and Poverty: Implication for National Security and Good Governance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research (IJPAMR)*, 2(1) 2346 – 7215.
9. Allen, H. L., McConnick, B., & O'Brien, R. J.(1991). Unemployment and the Demand for Retraining: Economic Analysis: Economic Analysis. *The Economic Journal*, 101:190-201
10. Amparo, S. (1995). *Is Vocational Training Important to Achieve Sustainable Development in the Tourism Sector?* Department of Analysis of Economics, Valencia.
11. Ani, C. C. (2009). *Armed Robbery and National Security*. Retrieved from [nails-nigeria.org/pub/AniComfortChinyere.pdf](http://nails-nigeria.org/pub/AniComfortChinyere.pdf)

12. Anusha, B., (2012). Significance of Vocational Education Training. Today's paper, feature – empower. Accessed at [fags@UKonline.co](mailto:fags@UKonline.co) or from [www,Hindu.com](http://www.Hindu.com)
13. Apugu, V. V., & Andural, S. I. (2007). Refocusing Nigerian Vocational Education for Relevance and Sustainable Development. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development*, 1(1).
14. Ayodele, J. B.(2006). *Obstacle to Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria*. In Omotosho,F., Aluko, T.K.O., Wale-Awe, O. I., & Adaramola, G., (eds). Introduction to Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria. Ado Ekiti: UNAD Press.
15. Becker, G. S. (1983) & Hashianoto, M., (1981). Firm Specific Human Capital as a Shared Investment. *American Economic Journal*, 71 :475 – 482
16. Career and Technological Education (CTE), (2009). Washington Office of Superintendent of Police Instruction. Accessed from <http://www.kiz.wa.us/careerTedEd>
17. CLEEN Foundation. (2012). Summary of Findings of 2012 National Crime and Safety Survey. Retrieved from <E:/summary-of-findings-of-2012-national.html>
18. Dembo, N. B. & Mustapha, A. (2012). Nigeria: Security Challenges Facing Nigeria – a solution. Daily Trust. Accessed at <http://allafrica.com/stories/2012.html>
19. Dike, V. (2009). *Technical and Vocational Education: Key to Nigeria's Development*. Nigeria Villagesquare.
20. Duffy,N.F.(1967). Essays on Apprenticeship. Accessed from <http://www.nigeriaillagesquare.com/articles/technical-and-vocational-education-key-to-nigeria-development.html>
21. Emmanuel, N. (2011, Dec 30<sup>th</sup>) Security Challenges. Vanguard Breaking News. Accessed from Vanguard Newsstand APP (IOS, ANDROID, BB10).
22. Encyclopaedia Definition of Vocational Education (2008). Accessed at *Encyclopaedia Britannia, online*.
23. Edeko, S. E. (2011). The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa. A case study of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. *Sacha journal of Environmental Studies* 1 (2): 55-80
24. Fafunwa, B. A. (1974). *History of Education in Nigeria*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
25. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). *National Policy on Education*: NERD Press, Yaba Lagos.
26. Hazen, J. M. & Homer, J. (2007). *Small Arms, Armed Violence, and Insecurity in Nigeria: the Niger Delta in Perspective*. Switzerland: Small Arms Survey

27. Igbuzor, O. (2011). Peace and Security Education. A Critical Factor for Sustainable Peace and National Development. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*. 2(1):1-7
28. Jimitota, O., Johnbosco, A., & Ndahi, M. (2012). Nigeria: Boko Haram Threatens to Kill Abducted Schoolgirls if Search is not Stopped. Retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/stories/2014.html>
29. Kotchen, M. J. & Moon, J. J.(2011). Corporate Social Responsibility for Irresponsibility. Nber Working Paper Series. Retrieved from <http://environment.yale.edu/kotchen/wpapers/csrcsi.pdf>
30. Lamido, S. (2013, July 23). *Unemployment fuelling insecurity in Nigeria*. Punch Newspaper.
31. Mitchell, C. (2014). Societal Needs for Training Programmes Accessed at [www.Wisegeek.com/what\\_is\\_vocational\\_education](http://www.Wisegeek.com/what_is_vocational_education)
32. Nwagbosa, C. I. (2012). Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian State (2007 – 2011). *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*. 2(6): 244 – 258
33. Nwogu, P. & Nwannoruo, C. C. (2011). Vocational and Technical Education and Training for Self-Reliance Towards National Development. *Mech Terranean Journal of social sciences*, 2(5) 55 – 58.
34. Ogunleye, G. O., Adewole, O. S., Alese, B. K., & Ogundele, A. O.(2011). *A Computer-Based Security Framework for Crime Prevention in Nigeria*. A paper presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Nigeria Computer Society held from July 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>.
35. Oguntuyi, A. N. (2013). A Viable Vocational and Technical Education Curriculum: A Tool for Economic and Technology Development in Nigeria. *Scholarly Journal of Education*, 2(2): 22 – 26.
36. Okafor, E. E. (2011). "Youth unemployment and implications for stability of democracy in Nigeria", *Journal of sustainable democracy in Africa*. 13 (1).
37. Olaitan, S. O. (1996). *Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria (issues and Analysis)*. Onitsha: Noble Graphic Press.
38. Onuoha, F. C. (2011 Feb, 2<sup>nd</sup>). Nigerian Vulnerability to Terrorism: The Imperative of Counter Religious Extremism and Terrorism (CONREST) Strategy. Peace and Conflict Monitorr. Retrieved from <http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id>
39. Roland, L., (1995). *Internationalising vocational education and training in Europe, Prelude to an overdue debate*. A discussion paper. European center for the development of vocational training. Europe, Thaosalonila.

40. Sampson, I. T., Onuoha, F. C. (2011). Forcing the Horse to Drink or Making it Realize its Thirst? Understanding the Enactment of Anti-Terrorism Legislation (ATL) in Nigeria, *Perspective on Terrorism*, 5, (1): 3 – 4.
41. Sandra, L. (2010 June, 28th). *The Columbia Encyclopedia*: Columbia. Columbia University Press
42. The Tide News-online. (2013, July 22<sup>nd</sup>). Problem of Insecurity in Nigeria. A Commitment to Truth. Accessed from [www.thetidenewsonline.com](http://www.thetidenewsonline.com)
43. Uddin, P. S. O., & Uwaifo, V. O. (2005). *Principles and practice of vocational and technical education in Nigeria*. Ever-blessed publishers, Benin City.
44. Ugwuja, S.I., (2010). *Vocational Technical Education and Development*. Filed in news by Furtune, on Febuary 26, 2010.
45. Uwaifo, V. C. (2001). Vocational Education and General Education Conflicts or Convergence. *Nigerian Journal of Education Research*, 4(1)
46. Uwaifo, V. C., & Victor O. (2009). Industrializing the Nigerian society through creative skill acquisition vocational and technical education programme. *International NGO journal* 4 (4): 142-145.
47. Victor, E. D. (2005). Vocational Education: missing Link in Nigeria's Development Policy. Online: <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/article/victor-dike/vocational-education-missing-link-in-nigerias-development-2.html>

Views and opinions expressed in this research article are the views and opinions of the author(s), Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Physical Education and Sport Science shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use and provenience of the content. The author(s) retain(s) the copyrights of the published research article and consent(s) on being fully responsible for any conflict of interests regarding copyright violations, provenience and improper or inaccurate use of third part content. This research article is meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).