

# Vocational Skills and its Importance to Persons with Special Needs in Nigeria

Nanjwan, Josephine. Dasel,  
Eke, Vitalis. Ugochukwu

And

Plang, Edna Marcus  
Department of Special Education  
Faculty of Education  
University of Calabar  
Calabar

**Abstract:-** The paper discussed that vocational education is an education that prepares people for specific trades, crafts and careers at various levels. It also explained that vocational skills are usually based on manual or practical activities. Four types of vocational skills were discussed. It was also discussed that vocational education is a special educational programme it can be adapted to suit persons with special needs. Importance of vocational skills were also discussed alongside with some challenges and the way forward. It was concluded that vocational skill development and training is concerned about the individual with special needs. The personnel are seen as human resource to liberate the mind of trainee on vocational skills.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**Vocational education** is education that prepares people to work as a technician or in various jobs such as a trade or a craft. Vocational education is sometimes referred to as *career and technical education*. A vocational school is a type of educational institution specifically designed to provide vocational education. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational\\_education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational_education).

Vocational skills are usually based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. It is sometimes referred to as technical education as the trainee directly" develops expertise in a particular group of techniques.

**Vocational education**, instruction intended to equip persons for industrial or commercial occupations. It may be obtained either formally in trade schools, technical secondary schools, or in on-the-job training programs or, more informally, by picking up the necessary skills on the job. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/vocational-education>.

At the post-secondary level vocational education is typically provided by an institute of technology, university, or by a local community college to benefit everyone include exceptional persons for sustainable development Elemukan and Ugo, 2017.

Vocational and Entrepreneurial education is becoming a global phenomenon due to world growing employment and poverty. It is conceptualize as a process of impacting in exceptional person's attitudes, skills and knowledge of managing risk involved in reasonable venture that can enhance their capacity and self-dependence in the society in which they belong. (Iroegdu, and Unegbu, 2017).

The goals of educating persons with visual impairment include effective communication, social competence, employability and personal independence (FRN 2019) Method of educating Persons with visual impairment depends on information gathered through sensory media other than vision. Basically, 3 ways through which persons with visual impairment can get information from the environment include verbal description, use of tactile stimuli and self-exploration about the world however this modalities cannot effective compensate visual stimuli but just to reduce the impact to learning caused by lack of vision. Therefore when teaching persons with visual impairment it must be emphasized that touch and hearing are very important senses. Iroegdu, and Dala, (2017)

Vocational Education is the birth rock of national development plans of numerous civilizations. This is because it helps to develop human resources, make them more productive and useful to the society and leads to massive economic expansion and advancement. Irrespective of this conspicuous contribution of vocational training to the development of any nation Nigeria unfortunately have not been able to tap from this aspect of human resources development. The neglect of vocational and marginal attention given to the sector by our government is undoubtedly one of the top reasons why there is massive unemployment in Nigeria (Inibehe, and Otobong, 2016).

## II. DEFINITION

Vocational skills are those skills which allow a person to master a particular subject or procedure that is applicable to a career. According to Oni (2007) defines vocational skills that are attained in a hands-on-environment that is typically not in a classroom, Ben (2010) postulated that training of these skills could be in one or more of these areas: tailoring, carpentry, weaving (cloths, basket, mats), designing and making of bags, cane chairs, poultry keeping, agriculture, gardening, masonry, cookery and sewing.

## III. TYPES OF VOCATIONAL SKILLS

There are four types of vocational skills which are:

- Hard skills: these are applied abilities, hard skills are abilities that complement other jobs. Hard skills can be acquired through learning in a classroom, through study on the internet, through books and other materials. Examples of hard skills for a secretary is computer skill.
- Soft skills are abilities of an individual not precisely related to specific jobs but apply to all jobs. These skills are communication skill, management skills, etc.
- Technical skills are the abilities and knowledge needed to perform specific tasks. They are practical, and often relate to mechanical, information technology, mathematical, or scientific tasks. Some examples include knowledge of programming languages, mechanical equipment which includes: carpentry, joinery, building, plumbing, electrical/electronic, etc. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/technical-skills-list-2063775#what-are-technical-skills>. Retrieved 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- Living skills: Vocational living skills or life skills help persons with disabilities make the transition to independent living. Living skills programs help individuals develop the skills needed to gain employment and earn a paycheck. Individuals also learn the soft skills necessary to interact and learn the soft skills necessary to interact and communicate with co-workers and customers. Living skills includes: tailoring, cake baking, jewelry making, leather work.

## IV. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ADAPTATION

Vocational Education is however a special educational programme that can be adapted to suit persons with special needs Nanjwan, and Owojaiye, (2019). It is designed to help learners with special needs for effective entrepreneurship which will lead to progress in specific occupation for employment and national development. Entrepreneurship is associated with several activities concern with the establishment and operation of a business Enterprise. Okeke, and Obidiegwu, (2005).

Entrepreneurial skills provide benefits to the society even beyond their application to business activities can be useful to persons with disabilities in their daily responsibilities and business skills need to be provided to those persons with special needs who choose to be self-employed or started their own ventures (Edu, 2016).

### ➤ Importance of Vocational Skills

Vocational skills development can make a decisive contribution to and have a widespread impact on poverty reduction. The aim is to provide people with the skills they need to take part in economic life and open up new opportunities for productive employment and access to appropriately paid work. There are several benefits for individuals, employers and Economy and society Loo, (2018) listed the following:

- Individuals with higher levels of skills attainment are significantly more over the course of their life-time than those without skills. Also.
- Skills have a positive effect on mental abilities.
- Increases employment opportunities.
- Improves standard of living and create equality in the society.
- Increases skill development

### ➤ Challenges of Vocational Skills in Nigeria

Some of the challenges of technical education development in Nigeria are explained below:

- The idea of the society
- Lack of trained personnel
- Inadequate resources
- Less investors
- Less concern of lawmakers and the executive
- Slow technological evolution
- Less funding
- Lack of education and learning facilities and materials.

### ➤ The Way Forward in Vocational Skills Acquisition in Nigeria

- Awareness programmes should be held to educate the general public about vocational skills and the usefulness to parents their children and the society at large.
- It should be made mandatory by policy makers that competent and quality teachers should be employed in the vocational training institutions.
- There should be increased rate in the availability of centres where vocational skills are being rendered.
- Adequate funding, effective equipments and teaching materials should be made available for the vocational skills centres.

## V. CONCLUSION

Vocational skill development and training is concerned about the individual especially those with special needs. The personnel are seen as human resource and it is therefore see to liberate the mind of trainee on vocational skills. The problem of our Nigerian children and adults is not only that of illiteracy but rather of ignorance and of not being informed about different types of vocational skills that will suit them. Much more can be achieved through training persons with special needs to develop interest and to know vocational skills. Vocational training provides the key for a development of any nation's economy.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Ben C. B. (2010). Vocational technical education in Nigeria Ibadan: El-summer educational books nig. LTD
- [2]. Dike, V. (2003). *The Relevance of Vocational and Technical Education*. [www.gamji.com/articie8000/NEWS8534.htm](http://www.gamji.com/articie8000/NEWS8534.htm).
- [3]. Edu, D. O. (2016). Relevance of integrating Entrepreneurship into technical vocational education and training programme for quality work force and development in Nigeria. In education today University of Calabar Press. 12(1) 25-33.
- [4]. Jegede and Owolabi (2005). *Availability, Teachers' Awareness and Attitudes towards the use of computers*. Education & Information Technology Digital Library.
- [5]. Igba , I. U. & Nanjwan, J. D. (2019). Emergent of braille literacy and communication skills for children with congenital visual impairment. Special needs education *Journal of the department of special education University of Calabar* 4, 101-107.
- [6]. Iroegdu, V. U. and Dala, B. G. (2017). Vocational Education for persons with visual impairment in Nigeria. *Issues in special needs education A festschrift of prof.(sr.) Theresa Anbang National Association for exceptional children* 342-350
- [7]. Inibehe, A. J. and Otobong, U. E. (2016) Vocational Education and training for sustainable youth empowerment in Nigeria. *African Journal of Vocational Education (AJOVED)* 6(1) 68-75.
- [8]. Loo, S. (2018) *Teachers and Teaching in Vocational and Professional Education*. Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge Ltd.
- [9]. Nanjwan, J. D. & Igba, I. U. (2019). *Handbook for educating persons with visual impairment*. Calabar: Sunny-Tech Link & Logistics Concept.
- [10]. Nanjwan, J. D. & Owojaiye, S.O. (2019). Adaptation leisure/recreational for persons with disabilities (visual impairment) *Journal of environmental and tourism education (JETE)* 1(2) & 2 (1) 66-71.
- [11]. Nanjwan, J. D. & Ashi, M. M. (2019). The national policy on education with focus on special education. *Journal of environmental and tourism education (JETE)* 1,(2) & 2, (1) 66-71.
- [12]. Oharisi, J. (2007). *Fundamentals of Technical and Vocational Skills*. Anpath Nig. Ent., Warri, Nigeria.
- [13]. Oni, C. (2007). *Development Vocational skills through Computer Literacy in Nigeria*. Education & Information Technology Digital Library.
- [14]. Okeke , B. C. & Obidiegwu, U. J. (2005). Vocational counselling and the status of Nigerian women: contemporary experience. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development (MULJORED)*, 6 (3), 145-152
- [15]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational\\_education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational_education). Retrieved 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- [16]. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/vocational-education> Retrieved 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- [17]. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-are-hard-skills-2060829#hard-skills-defined>.
- [18]. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/technical-skills-list-2063775#what-are-technical-skills>.