



COMBATING THE CHALLENGES OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA THROUGH VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN OSUN STATE

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the knowledge and effectiveness of vocational and technical education in combating insecurity in Osun State, South West, Nigeria. Actually, respondents of vocational and technical education as well as its usage in fighting insecurity through employment drive were determined. So also, the importance of vocational and technical education and relationship between skill acquisition and full employment were determined. One hundred and sixty fully engaged private vocational artisans were selected using multipurpose sampling technique. They were interviewed through the use of a pre-tested structured interview guide. Frequencies and percentages were used in analyzing the data. While regression analysis was used in determining the relationship between the selected characteristics of artisans and their knowledge of effective security of lives and properties. Majority of the artisans had the knowledge; however, less percentage of them believed in it. Majority of the respondent indicated the need to get government financial support their vocation in order to timely fight insecurity. The result of one analysis reviewed that education, environment and training received had positive and significant relationship with fighting of insecurity at 0.01 level of significance. Age, workshop size and equipment being used by respondents were however found to be relatively related to fighting insecurity in Osun state. The result showed the need to incorporate vocational and technical education into the school curriculum and should be made compulsory and that guidance and counselling offices be established; especially, at the tertiary level of education. It also indicated that passing of vocational and technical education practical course should be made one of the basic requirements for graduating.

Keywords: Vocational and Technical Education, Knowledge, Fighting Insecurity, guidance and counselling.

Introduction

The main challenge of most government all over the world today is insecurity culminating from high index rate of unemployment; Nigeria is not an exemption. Insecurity now has no bounds, ranging from simple threat to private properties, kidnapping, armed robbery and banditry to a full scale terrorism. All these are featured in Nigeria as at date and it is obvious on the landscape of the country, be it North, South, East or West (Fasona et al., 2022). This is a scourge which has catapulted into an immeasurable down turn to financial, industrial and social sectors of the country. It would be unfair that governments at all levels are having their fingers crossed on this issue. Rather, governments had been having sleepless nights trying to find solutions to the problem. While trillions of Naira had been expended on acquisition of military equipment aimed at combating the menace, it is observed that stakeholders had not noted the high rate of unemployment as major contributing factor to the problem of insecurity being witnessed in the country; or should one say that lip service is being paid to solving unemployment problem which if solved, would change the present story about insecurity. There is no gain saying the fact that white collar jobs are no longer available for the teeming graduate youths from various institution of learning (Attah et al., 2020; Egbri and Owenvbiugie, 2021), hence the need to fully embrace vocational and technical education, guidance and

counselling which readily guarantee high employment of labour (Guichard, 2022; Gyimah, 2020).

Fear of the unknown has gripped everyone across the length and breadth of Nigeria due to incessant terrorists' attacks on the people. Of course, institutional properties including government formation are not left out. In the very recent times, youth interest has taken over the south eastern states with police formation becoming their objects of attacks. South west undoubtedly is not left out of this gory situation. The formerly peaceful ancient town of Igangan in Ibarapa local government area of Oyo state, Nigeria recently got its own share of the menace as scores of residents got killed by bandits while properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed (Lamidi et al., 2024).

Today, insecurity has taken a new dimension. Assassination, banditry, ritualism and kidnapping for ransom is now the order of the day (Aleyomi & Olajubu, 2024). Ezenwa and Onabanjo (2009) reported that with the agitation from Niger Delta avengers, Boko Haram and activities of the cultists, armed robbers, herdsmen attacks on farmers etc., causes destruction to human life abounds. Today, agitators for self-determination are on the high side; the emancipation of Yoruba nation had recently joined the league. With the terrorists' attack on the World Trade Centre in the United States of America on September 11 2001, Adeyemo (2013) opined that the year 2011

would linger for long in the memories of Nigerian. The year was a year of terrorism.

Concept of Vocational and Technical Education

Shinga et al. (2021) defines vocational and technical education as a type of education that prepares learners for jobs rooted in manual or practical activities. This education is traditionally non-academic and closely related to a specific trade, occupation, or vocation. Common subjects within vocational and technical education include business (office administration, entrepreneurship), trade and industrial (automotive technology, computer numerical control technology, metalwork, woodwork), home economics (fashion design, food technology), fine and applied arts (painting and decoration, sculpture, graphics, ceramics, textile works), electrical and electronic technology, and building technology. The primary aim of vocational and technical education is to provide immediate employment opportunities for graduates and foster self-reliance.

Concept of Guidance and Counselling

Guidance is a school's organized effort to help each child reach their full potential. Through this process, students learn about themselves, their relationships with others, and behaviors that support personal growth. Guidance and counseling aim to help individuals understand themselves and their opportunities, make necessary adjustments and decisions based on this understanding, take responsibility for their choices, and act in harmony with their decisions (Akbar et al., 2023). While vocational and technical education offers

various fields and opportunities, guidance and counseling are essential for helping students make the right choices. By providing the right information and support, guidance and counseling help students choose, train for, and thrive in their chosen specializations.

Objectives of the Paper

The objective of the paper is to present the possibility of exploring the instruments of vocational and technical education as well as guidance and counselling in combatting the menace of insecurity in Nigeria. The following will guide the study:

- a. Investigating the relationship between vocational and technical education, guidance and counselling and security crises.
- b. Determining the government's awareness of the role of vocational and technical education, and guidance and counselling in creating employment opportunities to reduce or eliminate the problem of insecurity in Nigeria.; and
- c. Determining people's knowledge and practice of vocational and technical education with guidance and counselling as effective means of combating insecurity in Nigeria.

Research Questions

In conducting this study, 3 (three) questions were raised and looked into:

1. Is there any relationship between vocational and technical education and guidance and counselling?

2. To what extent is people's knowledge of vocational and technical education, and guidance and counselling in creating employment opportunities among our youths?
3. What relevance is vocational and technical education, and guidance and counselling in the fight against insecurity in Nigeria?

Population: Unemployed youths in Osun State were used.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used for the study. Twenty local governments were purposively used for the study because of their urban nature and was followed by the selection of communities from each of the local government areas. The selection of the communities was based on the areas where vocational and technical skills was concentrated based on the advice of guidance counsellors. List of practicing vocational technical practitioners was obtained through the support of trade unions. Simple random sampling technique was used to select eight (8) from each of the selected local government areas to make 160 who were later interviewed the whole 160 copies of the completed interview were used for data analysis.

1. Atakunmosa East 2. Atakunmosa West 3. Ilesa West 4. Ilesa East 5. Obokun 6. Oriade
7. Osogbo 8. Olorunda 9. Ayedaade 10. Ila 11. Ife Central 12. Ife South 13. Ife North 14. Ayedire 15. Boripe 16. Ede

- North 17. Ede South 18. Egbedore 19. Ejigbo 20. Olaoluwa

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for the study was structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to obtain primary data. Data on respondents' personal and socio-economic characteristics, source of information on vocational and technical job and occurrence of health hazards, preventive methods employed, effectiveness of vocational and technical education and guidance and counselling in curbing security problems were obtained. Knowledge is the extent to which vocational technician is aware of the safety measures of the equipment used. Knowledge of safety measures is the vocational and technical practitioners' awareness through the assistance of guidance counsellor, knowing that such choice would help in making one self-reliant and knowledge of the existence of job satisfaction. Participants were asked to respond to a checklist of ten (10) advantages of making the right choice of vocation. They were operationalized on a 2-point scale of "have knowledge of" which was scored 1 and "No knowledge of" which was scored 0. Possible maximum score for each participant was 10 while minimum score was zero.

The dependent variable for the study is relevance of vocational education and guidance and counselling in curbing insecurities in Nigeria. Respondents were asked to respond to a checklist of ten roles of vocational, technical, guidance and counselling education in the fight against insecurity. Responses were grouped into

“very relevant” – which was scored 2, “Relevant” which was scored 1 and “Not relevant” – which was scored 0. Possible maximum score for each respondent was 20 minimum score as zero.

Validity of the Instruments

The instrument was presented to three experts for content validity. Their suggestions were incorporated into the instruments to form the final copy. Test-retest method was used to determine the consistency of the research instrument. The initial instrument was subjected to pilot

Analysis of Data

testing using the test-retest method of an interval of three (3) weeks. A reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Regression analysis was employed to test the relationship between selected participants’ characteristics and practice of safety measures above the relationship between vocational generation and effects on curbing insecurity challenges was established using regression analysis.

Table 1: multiple regression analysis showing linear relationships between respondents’ security measures and personal/ socio-economic characteristics.

Selected characteristics CX-variables	Regression coefficient (b)	T – value for HO
Age	-0.334	-3.325**
Family size	-0.144	1.424
Practicing experience	0.442	4.227**
Business size	-0.189	-2.358*
Education	0.188	2.396*
Workshop/seminar/training attended	0.260	2.561*
Cooperative membership	0.069	0.886

R=0.438 R²=0.192 Adjusted R²=0.057

F value= 10678

** T is significant at P<0.01 level

* T is significant at P<0.05 level

The data in table 1 reveals a significant and positive relationship between respondents' knowledge of security risks and measures in Combating such, (T=60.954; b= 0.646) at 0.01 level of significance. This translates that the more the knowledge of security risks, the more the knowledge of combating such, the more the possibility of tackling security crisis through VTE and guidance and counselling. The

negative relationship between number of security in risks and measures in tackling such meaning that the occurrence of security risks experienced as a result of youth's engagement in vocational job through guidance and counselling, the more the effective of dissipation of energy on more veritable things that can encourage economic growth and social development.

Table 2: Regression analysis showing linear relationships between youth's engagements in vocational jobs and number of occurrence of security risk.

Variables	Regression coefficient (b)	T-value
Youths engagement in vocational jobs	0.646	10.954**
Number of occurrence of security risks	-0.143	-2.420*

R=0.689 R²=0.469 Adjusted R²=0.462

** T is significant at P<0.01 level

*T is significant at P<0.05 level

Results and Discussion

Majority of the respondents are between the age range of 21-50. The UNESCO has posited that age bracket 21-50 is the economically active age; (UNESCO, 2013). This contradicts the earlier position of FAO that believed age bracket 31-50 as the economically most active age, (Sasa et al., 2022). People in this age (21-50) are innovative and energetic, (Lawal, 2007).

Most (83.3%) of the respondents were male and 73.8% were married. About 87.5% of the respondents had formal education while 12.5% had no formal education. Majority of them belonged to cooperative groups while 41.3% were members of one or social clubs in their communities. About 49% had major equipment for their jobs. Sources of information/direction on their chosen vocation include services of guidance

counsellors (45.0%), friends research (42.5%), directorate of employment (26.3%), and self-conducted research (17.5%). Less than half of all respondents got inherited vocational/technical skills from their parents, and or family lineage.

The study shows that majority of the respondents raised their capital through the efforts of their parents and sales of personal belongings respectively. More than half (56.3% and 51.3%) got their capital through long-time personal savings and help from friends and well-wishers respectively. 36.3% of the respondents got their capital through grant given by the Directorate of Employment (NDE); 46.3% obtained loans from Bank of Industry (23.8%) and Commercial Banks (22.8%) respectively while the remaining 15.0% got support from various foundations.

The study also reveals respondents' knowledge and practice of safety measures as it affects their jobs. Respondents' knowledge regarding proper checking of all equipment before using was indicated by 95% of the respondents. However, only 46.9% of the respondents were aware of the need to always put on protective helmet while carrying out their jobs while only 67.6% of them made use of it. Majority of the respondents (87.5%) are aware of the need to seek medical attention if they sustained any wound while doing their job while 72.5% of them actually seek such assistance. 77.5% of the respondents had the knowledge that wrong handling of equipment/ materials may cause pain or permanent disability but only 48.8% of them do actually take precautions against it. Majority (75.6%) of the respondents were

aware of the need to always wear hand gloves and protective glasses whenever they are working but only 33.9% recorded the precautions when it comes to practice. 77.5% (majority) of the respondents were aware of the need to avoid smoking, eating and drinking while on the equipment; however, 43.3 practiced these safety measures respectively when it comes to reality.

In a similar study, Asoegwu (2022) reported that many technicians do leave their equipment unprotected from moisture, a practice that prone them to risk of electric shock apart from the fact that such equipment may get rust. 51.3% of the respondents were aware of the risks involved in leaving equipment that uses electricity power plugged undisconnected from the socket when leaving for home, only 48.8% actually practiced it so also, 48.8% and 41.3% of the respondents had knowledge of switching off every electrical apparatus before closing for the day. However, only 37.5% and 33.8% respectively do practice this. One would observe that while most of the respondents were aware of these safety precautions, only lesser percentages actually practice them, some of the reasons advanced by the respondents include lack of resources, lack of recent training on the safety precaution of their respective jobs as well as lackadaisical attitude of some of the respondents.

Data reveals the impact of vocational, technical education and guidance and counselling on combating corruption. Majority of the respondents (98.8%) agreed and indicated that VTE and guidance and counselling help youth to be self-reliant.

80.0% indicated that it solves the problem of unemployment; 77.5% said it discourages youth from engaging in criminal activities; 65.0% indicated that VTE, guidance and counselling promotes self-contentment; more than half of the respondents agreed that VTE, guidance and counselling provides ready employment for the youths (65.0%) and enhances the development of the economy (58.8%) respectively. 40.0% indicated that it helps to develop practical skills; 36.3% believes it reduces poverty among the youths. 11.3% of the respondents indicated that VTE, guidance and counselling promote dignity of labour while 6.3% agreed that it promotes self-esteem among the youths. This answers research question 3. Findings show the appearance of insecurity as observed by the respondents. 46.3% claimed that there is mild appearance of cultism, 51.3% acute and 1.3% chronic in their area. Respondents indicated 42.5% (mild), 45.0% acute, and 1.3% (chronic) appearance of hooliganism in their area. 42.5% (mild), 45.0% (acute), 2.5% (chronic). Furthermore, 31.3% of the respondents indicated that there was a mild appearance of assault in their area, 34.5% (acute), and 8.8% (chronic), pick-pocketing – 26.3% mild, 32.5% (acute) and 6.3% (chronic); there was acute and chronic appearance of rape carrying 36.3% and 22.5% respectively. Religion crises carries 30.0% (mild), 13.8% (acute) and 1.3% (chronic), there was also a mild appearance of ethnic crises (36%) and personal egoism which gulped 11.3% of the respondents without any acute or chronic appearance of any of the two.

Finally, the respondents indicated that a mild and acute appearance of armed robbery with 3.8% and 2.5% respectively without any chronic appearance. It is pertinent to note that even those appearances which are considered chronic may not be grouped as serious security risks after all. Hopster (2021) argued that many of these issues can be considered social vices that inevitably manifest in society due to the rapid advancement of science and technology in recent times. This perspective aligns with the findings of Bednar and Spiekermann (2024), Kaimara et al. (2022), and Usman and Negedu (2016), who reported that certain aspects of modern technology have adverse impacts on the morals of the youth.

The study shows that 64.2 percent of the respondents agree that there is synergy between vocational, technical education and guidance and counselling. 35.8 percent were of the opinion that they have no relationship in tackling security problems. The findings corroborate Agbakosi's (2019) assertion that causes of insecurity challenges encompass terrorism, governance deficiencies, inadequate education or training, insufficient basic infrastructure, governmental corruption and misconduct, weak security systems, porous borders, perceived discrimination, ethnic and religious tensions, dominance and exploitation, materialism and its ostentatious display, unemployment, and poverty (Ojukwu & Osigwe, 2023).

Findings show a significant relationship between vocational technical education guidance and counselling ($T=4.227$; $b=0.442$), level of education ($T=2.396$; $b=0.188$), training undergone

($T=2.561$; $b=0.260$) and the security measures. This translates that there is positive relationship between education level, training/workshop attended and security measures put in place is an indication that education/training would constitute major impact on security measures. Conversely, age ($T=-3.325$; $B=-0.334$) and business size ($T=-2.358$; $b=-0.332$) had significant but reverse relationship with respondents' means of security measures. This implies that the lower the age of the respondents and the business size, the lesser the practice of security measures. Practitioners with low age coupled with small business size due to inadequate fund and experience. Size of business had negative non-significant relationship with practice of security measures- while membership of cooperatives translates to better access to funds and this had positive but non-significant relationship with their practice of security measures.

Conclusion

The study delved into how vocational, technical education and guidance and counselling could be used as tools to combat security crisis in Nigeria. The study, based on its findings, discovered that there is high rate of insecurity in Nigeria. It was also discovered that major factors responsible for this are poverty and high rate of employment. Therefore, these two factors must be reduced, greater emphasis must be placed on practical skill acquisition as well as effective guidance and counselling services in schools.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Government at all levels should embrace the services of guidance and counsellors in all levels of schooling
2. Vocational and technical education courses should be made compulsory for students in all secondary schools and tertiary institution across the country; it should also be made one of the criteria for graduation
3. Non-governmental organizations, private enterprise should support VTE as well as engaging the services of guidance and counsellors by providing laboratory, equipment, workshop facilities and machines for technical schools.
4. More technical schools, mono and polytechnics should be established across the country.
5. Functional guidance and counselling offices should be opened in all schools from primary to tertiary with facilities in order to discover individuals' talents and in-born skills early.
6. There is a need for societal reorientation on the significance of vocational and technical education (VTE) by governments at all levels, along with an enhancement of the VTE curriculum to align with current trends and global practices.
7. Scholarship/loans should be granted to individuals in the field of VTE in order to grow academically and be self-reliant individual.
8. Automatic employments should be given to graduates of guidance and counselling in order to serve as encouragement for studying the course.

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