Business Education Lecturers’ Acuity of Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Universities in South-East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
This study assessed the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of technical and vocational education and training in universities in South-East Nigeria as perceived by Business Education lecturers. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population, which also served as sample comprised all business education lecturers in South East Nigeria. The questionnaire was used for data collection, which was validated by 4 experts; 2 from Vocational and Technical Education and 2 from measurement and evaluation department. The instrument has a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.84. The mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study showed that the challenges facing VTE include apathy towards VTE, inadequate curriculum and inadequate infrastructural facilities. Others include remuneration of teachers, inadequate funding, and government neglect among others. The study also revealed that Government positive attitude toward vocational education, provision of adequate funding, provision of infrastructure and teaching facilities are strategies to improve the teaching and learning of VTE. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Government should provide adequate funding for the vocational and technical education programme.

Keywords: Technical education, vocational education, training, strategies, business education

INTRODUCTION
Education in general is an exercise that engages everyone. It enriches culture, creates mutual understanding globally, underpins democratic societies, and builds respect for the rule of law (Kingibe, 2008) in (Okeke & Eze, 2010). Nwankwo (1999), defined education as what one learns from the day one is born till the day he dies. Osuala (1999), stated that adults who did not have an opportunity for formal education at youth are directly or indirectly involved in education because education means more than going to school.

Supporting this assertion, Kingibe (2008), pointed out that economic and social prosperity in the 21st century depends on the ability of nations to educate all members of their societies to be prepared to thrive in a rapidly changing world. An innovative society prepares its people to embrace change. It implies the provision and augmentation of skills and capabilities of the people in the country. This is made possible through a well-designed and efficiently executed programme of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE).

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), defines technical education, as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. Basically, vocational education programmes are designed to facilitate the development of success in any occupation. It is a learning process that is practically-oriented and learning outcomes are determined through event practice of what is taught and learnt. Also business education is an integral component which vocational in nature and Opens Avenue for increased youths interest in business occupations (Aina, 1993).
Ehiametalor (1990), Contents that every area of specialization can be regarded as vocational if the ultimate object is to provide the student with requisite skills to enable him/her function in a work situation. Akereeja (2000) affirmed that the TVE is one of the most powerful instruments that will enable all members of the society to face such new challenges and also enables them to find roles as productive members of the society.

Vocational Technical Education and Training (TVET) is a study of programmes that skillfully prepare people for effective performance on practical tasks. It involves the acquisition of skills and competencies that can help individuals to function productively in industrial and commercial occupations. UNESCO (2005) viewed TVET as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related science, the acquisition of knowledge, practical skills and attitude relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Oni (2007) posits that vocational education is an aspect of education that provides the recipients with the basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the world of work as employees or self-employed. FRN (2013) in its National Policy on Education defined vocational and technical education as a form of education which is obtainable in technical colleges. This is equivalent to senior secondary education but designed to prepare individuals to acquire practical skills, basic and scientific knowledge and attitude required as craft men and technicians at sub-professional level. Sabo (2008) opined that vocational technical education is a form of education that prepares mankind in terms of acquisition of practical skills ahead of a chosen career or profession. Vocational technical education and training is also seen as an occupational orientation type of education that is expected to produce personnel for such areas as Agriculture, Business, Home Economics, Industry, Transportation, Communication and Housing among others.

According to the UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, UNESCO-UNEVOC, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work. TVET is an incredibly diverse sub-sector of education and training. It comprises formal, non-formal and informal learning. It develops skills and knowledge from basic to advanced levels, and shapes people’s attitudes. It takes place across a wide range of institutional settings, including schools, public and private vocational institutes, tertiary education institutions, community projects, at home and the workplace, in both the formal and informal economies. TVET enhances skills for working, further learning and living, and for contributing to human, economic, social and environmental aspects of development. TVET thus equips people not only with vocational skills, but with a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are now recognized as indispensable for meaningful participation in work and life. Examples of the benefits include self-awareness and self-esteem, and strengthened interpersonal, citizenship, communication and entrepreneurial skills. Much of TVET also reaffirms the value of traditional knowledge and skills, as well as of knowledge and skills acquired outside formal settings. The complexity of TVET does not end here, however, as it is essentially experienced throughout the course of a person’s life. Throughout the course of history, various terms have been used to describe elements of the field that are now conceived as comprising TVET. These include: Apprenticeship Training, Vocational Education, Technical-Vocational Education (TVE), Vocational Education and Training (VET), Workplace Education (WE), and Lifelong learning (LLL). Several of these terms are commonly used in specific geographic areas (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2010).

The FRN (2013) outlined the following objectives for TVET:
- To provides trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce particular at sub-professional level.
- To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural,
industrial, commercial and economic development.

- To prove people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man.
- To give an introduction to professional studies in engineering and other technologies.
- To give training and impart the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.
- To enable our young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

The role of technical, vocational education and training TVET towards sustainable national development cannot be overemphasized. The concept of sustainable development has to do with balancing environmental, societal and economic considerations in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life without compromising to meet the needs of the future generations. European Commission (2014) described sustainable development as development that meets the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs – in other words, a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It offers a vision of progress that integrates immediate and longer-term objectives, local and global action, and regards social, economic and environmental issues as inseparable and interdependent components of human progress including provisions for safety in work environment.

The recognition of the importance of vocational education, also known as education for self-reliance and fulfillment, is as old as education for self-reliance and fulfillment is as old as education itself. This is because the African traditional education which was the mode of educating the people during the pre-colonial years in Nigeria is vocationally oriented (Osuala, 1995). Hence the apprenticeship method was used in training by trainers. Koko (2010), stated that learners were therefore exposed to learning activities through the use of trial and error teaching approaches and performance was based on successful practice of what was taught. Nwosu and Igwe (1995) in Elaigwu (2002) view vocational and technical education as the study of technology and related science and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupation in the various sectors of the economy and social life.

Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria today, is a child of necessity. Okwelle (2006), stated that skill training provided by VTE enhances employment and productivity as well as sustains competitiveness in the global economy. Supporting this view, Okolocha (2006) stated that technological advances draw the world closely together and Vocational and Technical Education becomes increasingly important. Olaitan (1995), pointed out that the aspiration of the government and people of Nigeria was to use this system of education to fight unemployment, economic recession and shortage of skilled manpower. VTE plays an indispensable role in the technological advancement of any nation since according to Okwori (2006), equipping an individual with technical skills is like offering a country the hope of technological development.

Since the establishment of vocational institutions in this country, the expectations of the people are yet to be realized. Nevertheless, Nigeria has been trying through different ways to satisfy the needs of the people and continuously tackle the task involved in securing the essentials of modern life in a changing contemporary and technological world. The realization of past government that VTE has an answer to such situation led to the formulation of policy statement that established VTE with the following goals. Such goals according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) include among others to:

(a) Provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technological levels.
(b) Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agriculture, commercial and economic development.

(c) Give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

It is obvious from the above goals, that if VTE programmes are effectively implemented, the Nigerian society would be moving in the right direction to industrial development and at the same time improve the standard of living of the people. Unfortunately, it appears that VTE in Nigeria is not adequately addressing the country’s economic and technological problems, despite the policies and reforms by past government. Reacting to this statement, Daudu (2008), pointed out that the economic and technological problems in Nigeria have never been with the constitution. Daudu stated that Nigerians are the cause of technological backwardness which amendment and replacement of policy document cannot solve unless basic values like honesty, respect and love for things Nigerian are maintained.

Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) otherwise referred to as Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is widely recognized as a vital driving force for the socio-economic growth and which can engender the anticipated economic bloom of the Nation. However, for the survival of the economy, attention should be given to the major areas that make up VTE such as agricultural education, business education, fine and applied arts education, home economics education and technical education.

1. **Agricultural Education:** This is the training for jobs on farms and for occupations in such fields as food processing, and marketing farm produce. Agricultural education graduates through the training and retraining in vocational education are expected to establish farms to provide adequate food to the teeming population of Nigeria which will engender job creation and self-reliance. This will help to reduce poverty and bring about rural development in Nigeria since there will be no need for rural to urban migration; and thus engender economic development

2. **Business Education:** Business education is a field of study and training in business practices and in specific skills such as accounting, information processing, keyboard \ typewriting techniques, secretarial studies, business management, marketing and record--keeping, which could be used in offices, for setting up of business organizations and for teaching others. It covers:

I. **Accounting Education:** Accounting education graduates are expected to have knowledge in modern accounting principles and Information and Communication Technology for proper accountability in this new era. Ability to manipulate ICT for proper records of businesses to avoid fraud. This will help to promote proper financial management and in turn spur up economic bloom.

II. **Secretarial Education:** Secretarial education graduates as expected to have vast knowledge of keyboarding and application of information and communication technology in database management. Modern secretaries should have knowledge using computer and all the relevant packages in processing information. This will also help to promote economic bloom

iii. **Marketing Education:** Marketing education graduates can also be self-employed in buying and selling. Graduates can obtain loans to buy products and open up shops through product packaging and sales achievement, marketing strategy and proper distribution can increase the rate of turnover and increase income. This will help to promote economic bloom.
iv. **Business & Management Education:**
Management education graduates are expected to have relevant skills, knowledge on product development and initiatives. Vocational education should inculcate on the students corporate strategies, vision, mission, goals, purpose, and objectives of businesses and ability to identify all the environmental factors that affect business operation such as demography, economic, political, social, cultural and physical in order to manage them to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

3. **Fine and Applied Arts Education:** Fine and Applied Arts aims at developing student’s aesthetic perception, artistic talents and expression as well as stimulate interest and enquiries in the practical and theoretical areas of arts. It covers areas such as sculpture, painting, drawing, architecture, photography, textiles, ceramics and graphics. Graduates of Fine and Applied Arts can establish art houses, set up art studios, create modern graphic business to will boost the development of the Nation

4. **Home Economics Education:** Home economics education is the training for home making and for occupations in such fields as child care, clothing and textiles, home management, food services and interior decoration. Home Economics education graduates with the relevant skills and knowledge they have acquired in their training are expected have practice skills in clothing and textile designs. Ability to open catering services and employ others without depending on government for survival. Thereby transiting from oil gloom to economic bloom.

5. **Technical education:** It is the training for technical or semi-professional occupations. It is generally more practical than other vocational training and less theoretical and more specific than professional training. Areas where students specialize in are: automobile technology, building technology, electrical electronics technology, metalwork technology and woodwork technology. Graduates of technical education can establish mini automobile industries, electronic workshops, welding and fabrication companies, building firms etc. as all these can bring about tremendous increase in the economies development.

In Nigeria today, there exists various types of vocational and technical institutions outside the universities. At the post primary level, there exists the pre-vocational and vocational schools in one hand and technical colleges, the polytechnics, colleges of Education (Technical) also exist at the post secondary level. These institutions are faced with the task of promoting VTE. Regrettably enough, this vision has remained an illusion due to poor state of VTE in Nigeria. Obi and Uneze (2000), agreed that while VTE has saved many developed countries like America, Japan, China and so on to grow technologically, the system has not fared well in Nigeria. According to Obi and Uneze, the problems that have rendered this system of education non-functional are Nigerian factors which pose big challenges to VTE.

1. **Government Neglect:** This has contributed to the poor state of VTE in Nigeria despite the setting up of the 6-3-3-4 and recently 9-3-4 systems of education. In situations where policies are formulated and programmes mounted, there is the challenge of poor implementation and supervision, which work against the achievement of the laudable goals of VTE in Nigeria. This implies that adequate technical teachers are not trained to meet the demands of VTE.

2. **Inadequate Funding:** Finance constitutes a serious challenge to the successful implementation of VTE in Nigeria. It is generally accepted that VTE is capital intensive. Fund is needed to procure relevant machines, equipment, materials, staff development and maintenance of equipment. Regrettably, Odenu
(1994) pointed out that sufficient fund has not been channeled to VTE which is a major problem plaguing the system.

3. Remuneration of Teachers/Technical Personnel: Curiosity and interest promote teaching and learning efficiency and make for the realization of the aims and objectives of an educational system. Thus the need to sustain the interest of teachers particularly the technical teachers cannot be over emphasized. Interest is defined as the quality that arouses concern or curiosity that hold ones attention. In the same vein, Toby (1995), stated that technology itself is dynamic which means that skills acquired could be obsolete in 2 and 3 years time. The implication is low morale and esteem of technical teachers in carrying out their duties. Also where the technical teachers are not re-trained they will continue to pass obsolete ideas and facts to the students which will make them not to fit into the rapidly changing world of technology

4. Infrastructure: These include adequate workshops, laboratories, electricity, safety gadgets, training equipment and materials which are essential for good training. The infrastructure with which to impart the knowledge is grossly inadequate. Nnubia (2000), noted that at present, the state of the nation’s institutions seems pathetic because of inadequate infrastructure and the deplorable state of available ones to support technological programmes. Despite the inadequacy of the infrastructure, the few available ones suffer neglect and maintenance. Underscoring the importance of maintenance, Elobuike (1996) and Storm (1999), opined that routine maintenance helps to provide a safe working environment. The implication is that many students are not exposed to the use of facilities like machines, basic hand tools, among others and they graduate with little or no practical skills. Also due to lack of maintenance of existing facilities, they tend to be out use and so make the facilities unavailable.

5. Curriculum: Another major challenge confronting VTE in Nigeria is inadequate curriculum to meet with the current technological development which is hinged on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Aghenta (1985), after analyzing the wide range of courses offered in our technical colleges concluded that some of the courses provided skills that were not in line with current labour market demands. This is believed to be responsible for the low level of production skills and poor job performance exhibited by technical college graduates as well as high incidence of unemployment among these graduates.

6. Apathy towards VTE: VTE has not been accorded the befitting regard it deserves in the society. The reason, according to Igbo Mauchey (1995) is that VTE is meant for those who could not cope with other areas of education, drop outs or under privileged members of the society. People prefer to be doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, engineers, accountants, among others. They distance themselves from VTE despite the fact that technology is the spring board to industrial advancement.

Vocational technical aspects of our educational system has placed high premium on national development considering its importance to the production of skilled and competent workmen. The minister of education having realized the importance of VTE in economic development of the nation is to make Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) a top priority of his education agenda because of its importance to the realization of vision 020, stated Adenipekun (2009). This, according to Adenipekun can be realized if TVET is properly repositioned to make its products better skilled and knowledgeable. Other areas to be addressed to make VTE more functional and relevant to the growth of the nation in the 21st century include:

1. Government Neglect: Government positive attitude toward vocational education through appropriate policy formation and programmes that can promote vocational education like law and medicine.

2. Adequate Funding: Adequate funding should be provided in funding vocational education
programme. I suggest that 20% of the budget in education should be directed toward vocational education and training in higher institution.

3. **Increase in Infrastructure and Teaching Facilities:** Adequate infrastructure and teaching facilities should be provided by the government in higher institution to enable teachers and students do sufficient practice work.

4. **High Regard to TVET:** Government have high regard for vocational and technical education in Nigeria.

5. **Improved Government Commitment:** Improved government commitment and private sector assistance through provision of adequate funding.

6. **Reviewing the TVET Curriculum:** Reviewing the curriculum to reflect the changes in technology like ICT. Reviewing technical teachers remuneration.

7. **Correcting Misconceptions about VTE:** Correcting misconceptions about VTE through recognition and involvement of technical personnel in policy formulation and other government affairs- teaching of pre-vocational subjects in the primary and junior secondary schools to raise the interest of the students for vocational programmes.

**Statement of the Problem**

Vocational technical education training as panacea to transit the nation from oil gloom to economic bloom. Vocational Technical Education (VTE) has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact on human resource development, productivity and economic growth. Unfortunately, this aspect of education in Nigerian education has been neglected by government due to inadequate funding of school activities. Students are taught without the relevant facilities resulting to the production of unqualified graduates.

**Purpose of the Study**

The objectives of the study is to examine the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of technical and vocational education programme in universities. Specifically, the study will:

i. Examine the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

ii. Examine the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions shall guide the study:

1. What are the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria?

2. What are the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria?

**Research Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the strategies for improving vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population comprised all business education lecturers in South East Nigeria, there was no sampling as the population was manageable. The questionnaire was used for data collection, the instrument comprised 32 items, which was divided into 2 sections; section A, contained the demographic variables of the respondents such as gender and
educational qualification, the section B contained 30 items which were based on the research questions. Items in section B were structured in 4-point scale of SA for Strongly Agree (4), A for Agree (3), D for Disagree (2) and SD for Strongly Disagree (1). The items were validated by 3 experts; 2 from Vocational and Technical Education and 1 from measurement and evaluation department. In order to establish the reliability of the items, the instrument was administered to 30 lecturers from Delta State University, Abraka, who were not part of the study. A Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to analyse the data and a coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The mean, standard deviation and t-test were used to analyses the data at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULT

Research Question 1: What are the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Challenges of Vocational and Technical Education</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Apathy towards VTE by the public</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Inadequate Curriculum</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Inadequate Infrastructure</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inadequate Remuneration of Technical Personnel</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Inadequate Remuneration of Teachers</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Inadequate Funding</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Government Neglect</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Inadequate technological equipment</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that the mean rating for the challenges facing the teaching and learning of VTE ranges from 2.57 to 3.59. This mean that the challenges facing VTE include apathy towards VTE, inadequate curriculum, inadequate infrastructure and remuneration of technical personnel. Others include remuneration of teachers, inadequate funding and government neglect.

Research Question 2: What are the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Strategies for Improving Vocational and Technical Education</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government positive attitude toward vocational education</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adequate funding should be provided in funding vocational education programme</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adequate infrastructure should be provided</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adequate teaching facilities should be provided</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Government should have high regard for vocational and technical education</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Improved government commitment</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Improved private sector assistance</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Review of the curriculum to reflect the changes in technology</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Correcting misconceptions about VTE</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Mean rating of the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria
Table 2 shows that the mean rating of the lecturers concerning the strategies for improving the teaching and learning of VTE ranges from 3.30 to 3.68. This showed that all the items are accepted as strategies for improving the teaching and learning of VTE.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**Table 3:** t-test result of the difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-tab</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the table, the calculated t-value of 1.79 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the strategies for improving vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**Table 4:** t-test result of the difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers on the strategies for improving vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-cri</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On table 4, the calculated t-value of 1.63 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers on the strategies for improving vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria.

**DISCUSSION**

This study has shown that the challenges facing VTE include apathy towards VTE, inadequate curriculum, inadequate infrastructure and remuneration of technical personnel. Others include remuneration of teachers, inadequate funding and government neglect. The hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the challenges facing the teaching and learning of vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria. This study is consistent with the finding of Obi Uneze (2000), who outlined similar challenges facing VTE in Nigeria.

The study has also shown that the strategies for improving VTE include Government positive attitude toward vocational education, provision of adequate funding, provision of infrastructure and teaching facilities and high regard for VTE by the government. Others include improved government commitment, improved private sector assistance Review of the curriculum to reflect the changes in technology and correction of misconceptions about VTE. The finding also shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating between male and female lecturers on the strategies for improving VTE.
vocational and technical education in universities in South-East Nigeria. This finding is in line with the finding of Adenipekun (2009), who suggested similar areas that need to be addressed for the improvement of VTE.

CONCLUSION

In a face of declining economy occasioned by the gloom in the oil sector of the Nigeria economy, we are left with no better option than to embrace VTE as a sure alternative to the anticipated economic bloom that the nation desires. Therefore, it behooves on us (lecturers) that are the major drivers of VTE in our tertiary institutions to give the programme all it takes, to forestall future economic gloom and for Nigeria to take its rightful place as the giant of Africa. Sure, transition from oil gloom to economic bloom via VTE can be a reality for Nigeria. It has worked for the Asian tiger Countries such as Japan and China, ours is not an exception. However, the goals and objectives of VTE must be pursued with all the seriousness it deserves.

I conveniently conclude that vocational technical education can play a major role in transiting from oil gloom to economic bloom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are given:

1. Government should provide adequate funding for the vocational and technical education programme
2. Qualified teachers and technical personnel should be employed
3. Infrastructure and teaching materials should be adequately provided

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