



Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

Skill Acquisition (TVET) and Empowerment: A Case Study of Returnee Migrants in Edo-State, Nigeria

Ohagwu Marcellinus Onyekachi

**Doctor of Philosophy
2023**

Skill Acquisition (TVET) and Empowerment: A Case Study of Returnee
Migrants in Edo-State, Nigeria

Ohagwu Marcellinus Onyekachi

A thesis submitted

In fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
(Social Work)

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

2023

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.



.....

Signature

Name: Ohagwu Marcellinus Onyekachi

Matric No.: 17010194

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Date : 18-12-2023

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester and Anna Ohagwu, who passed away in 2019 and 2016, respectively. May their souls rest in perfect peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to thank the almighty God for giving me the strength to complete this study, despite the challenges I faced from the very beginning to the end. I also thank him for keeping me focused on my study and alive up to this moment.

Secondly, it is my sincere desire to express my profound gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Zamri bin Hassan and Dr. Dolly bin Paul Carlo. Despite their busy schedules, they were always willing to go through my work thoroughly and offer assistance and constructive advice without hesitation. May God bless them abundantly, Amen. I also want to thank my friends and all the lecturers in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities for their support and guidance throughout my years of study. May God reward them plenteously, Amen.

Thirdly, I would also like to thank the management of the Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI); and my research participants for their cooperation and assistance during my pre-study and fieldwork. May God bless them profusely, Amen.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks and appreciation go to my family, particularly my siblings, who have been supportive, worked tirelessly in various ways to see me through my education, and given me the courage to overcome various challenges throughout my years of study. May God bless them plentifully, Amen.

ABSTRACT

This study explored ETAHT TVET programmes as a platform that equipped individuals (research participants) with relevant TVET skills, thus empowering them to attain self-reliance and improve their socio-economic status. Relevant literature relating to this study's core subject matters—skill acquisition (TVET), returnee migrants, and empowerment—was discussed, with overwhelming support in favour of the assertion that the TVET programme is a pathway to empowerment and improved socio-economic development. A qualitative approach and non-probability sampling methods, specifically the snowball sampling technique, have been employed to conduct this study. Based on the three objectives of this research and using qualitative analysis and discussion approach – the findings of this study are; (1), ETAHT TVET programmes positively impacted socio-economically, in the lives of returnee migrants; (2), the majority of the research participants (50%), were empowered by ETAHT TVET programmes – therefore, TVET programmes are considered an empowerment pathway; (3), aside from the fact that ETAHT significantly impacted in the lives of returnee migrants (research participants) by making the majority of them self-employed entrepreneurs (93.33%); these entrepreneurs created jobs and wealth, hereby reducing Edo State's unemployment indices. Also, both ETAHT TVET programmes graduates-turned entrepreneurs' and their employees, directly and indirectly, pay taxes/levies to the Edo State government; thus increasing the State's revenue generation – used in developing the state. Although this study achieved its objectives, however, it noticed challenges confronted by TVET programmes in Nigeria, and based on these challenges, research participants offered approaches to address empowered-targeted TVET programmes as follows; (i), awareness creation; (ii), sufficient funding; (iii), tackling corruption and financial mismanagement; and (iv), monitoring of TVET graduates post-training. Based on

the recommendations, this study created a tested practical framework that applies to empowerment-targeted TVET programme; including approaches that sustain empowerment. Above all, this study asserts that well-structured TVET programmes are an empowerment technique.

Keywords: Skill acquisition (TVET), empowerment, returnee migrants, unemployment, poverty

Pemerolehan Kemahiran (TVET) dan Pemeraksanaan: Kajian Kes Terhadap Migran yang Kembali ke Wilayah Asal di Edo-State, Nigeria

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menelusuri program TVET ETAHT sebagai satu wadah yang melengkapkan individu (peserta kajian) dengan kemahiran TVET yang relevan; sekaligus memperkasa mereka untuk memperolehi ketahanan diri dan memperbaiki status sosio-ekonomi. Kajian lepas yang berkaitan dengan kajian ini – peningkatan kemahiran (TVET), migran yang kembali ke wilayah asal, dan pemeraksanaan dibincangkan dengan kesimpulan kajian-kajian ini memberikan sokongan positif tentang perlunya program ini dilihat sebagai laluan memperkasa dan meningkatkan status sosio-ekonomi peserta program. Kajian lepas yang berkaitan dengan perkara teras kajian ini –pemerolehan kemahiran (TVET), migran yang kembali ke wilayah asal, dan pemeraksanaan turut dibincangkan dengan kesimpulan kajian ini yang memberikan sokongan padu tentang perlunya program TVET sebagai laluan kepada pemeraksanaan dan pembangunan sosio-ekonomi yang lebih baik kepada peserta program. Pendekatan kualitatif dan sampel bertujuan juga kaedah bebola salji digunakan dalam kajian ini, Pendekatan kualitatif dan kaedah persampelan bukan kebarangkalian, khususnya teknik persampelan bebola salji digunakan dalam kajian ini. Bertitik tolak dengan tiga objektif utama – kajian ini berhasil menemukan beberapa temuan penting iaitu: 1) program ETAHT TVET memberikan impak positif kepada sosio-ekonomi peserta, 2) sebahagian besar daripada peserta (50%) berjaya diperkasakan melalui program ini sehingga program ini dianggap sebagai laluan penting pemeraksanaan, dan 3) selain daripada fakta program ini berjaya meningkatkan status sosio-ekonomi peserta dengan menjadi pengusaha sendiri, para pengusaha ini juga dapat membantu kerajaan dengan mencipta kerja sekali gus mengurangkan kadar pengangguran di Edo State, Nigeria.),

Selain daripada fakta bahawa ETAHT memberi impak yang ketara dalam kehidupan migran yang pulang (peserta penyelidikan) dengan menjadikan sebahagian besar daripada mereka sebagai usahawan bekerja sendiri (93.33%); usahawan ini mencipta pekerjaan dan kekayaan, dengan ini mengurangkan indeks pengangguran negeri Edo. Program ini juga berjaya membantu Edo State meningkatkan pembangunan negara melalui sumbangan secara langsung dan tidak langsung – pembayaran cukai dan sebagainya. Kajian ini juga mendapati program ETAHT TVET ini mempunyai cabaran tersendiri – dan berdasarkan cabaran ini, peserta kajian mencadangkan beberapa langkah penyelesaian seperti i) mencipta kesedaran tentang kepentingan program ini, ii) dana yang mencukupi, iii) pembasmian rasuah dan salah-urus kewangan, iv) dan memantau peserta program selepas tamat tempoh program. Kesimpulannya, dengan pengurusan program yang berkesan, program ini dapat dilihat sebagai teknik pemerksaan terbaik bagi pembangunan negeri.

Kata kunci: *Peningkatan Kemahiran (TVET), pemerksaan, migran kembali ke wilayah asal, pengangguran, kemiskinan*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ABSTRAK	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 General Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.2.1 Skills Acquisition Programmes in Nigeria	5
1.2.2 Returnee Migrant	13
1.2.3 Study Related Government and Non-Governmental Agencies	17
1.2.4 Statistics and Explaining Nigerian Returnee Migrants	23
1.2.5 TVET, Empowerment, and Returnee Migrants	25
1.3 Problem Statements	28

1.4	Research Questions	34
1.5	Research Objectives	34
1.6	Significance of the Study	35
1.7	Chapter Summary	36
	CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	37
2.1	Overview	37
2.2	Understanding Empowerment	37
2.2.1	TVET as an Empowerment Process	43
2.2.2	Empowerment of Returnee Migrants through TVET	47
2.3	Theoretical Frameworks	56
2.3.1	The Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition	57
2.3.2	Critical Social Theory of Empowerment	59
2.3.3	Keiffer's Theory of Empowerment	60
2.3.4	TVET-Empowerment Model	64
2.4	Chapter Summary	66
	CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	68
3.1	Overview	68
3.2	Research Approach	68
3.3	Qualitative Methods	70
3.4	Study Instrument	73

3.5	Types of Data and Techniques of Data Collection	74
3.5.1	Personal In-Depth Interview	76
3.5.2	Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	78
3.5.3	Personal Observations	80
3.6	Research Population	82
3.7	Research Sample	83
3.7.1	Sampling Size	86
3.8	Study Areas	87
3.8.1	Ovia South-West	89
3.8.2	Benin City	91
3.9	Research Outsider and Insider	93
3.9.1	Researcher as Outsider	93
3.9.2	Researcher as Insider	94
3.10	Research Ethics	95
3.10.1	Issues of Confidentiality	96
3.10.2	Informed Consent	97
3.11	Research Limitations	98
3.12	Chapter Summary	99
	CHAPTER 4 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND ANALYSIS	101
4.1	Overview	101

4.2	Chapter Summary	118
CHAPTER 5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF ETAHT TVET PROGRAMMES ON RETURNEE MIGRANTS IN EDO STATE		
		120
5.1	Overview	120
5.2	Social Impacts of ETAHT TVET Programmes on Returnee Migrants in Edo State	122
5.3	Economic Impacts of ETAHT TVET Programmes on Returnee Migrants in Edo State	124
5.4	Chapter Summary	133
CHAPTER 6 EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ETAHT TVET PROGRAMMES		
		135
6.1	Overview	135
6.2	Empowerment through ETAHT TVET Programmes	135
6.3	Chapter Summary	150
CHAPTER 7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ETAHT TVET TO EDO STATE		
		152
7.1	Overview	152
7.2	Socio-economic Implications of ETAHT TVET Programmes to Edo State	152
7.2.1	Social implication of ETAHT TVET Programmes to Edo State	152
7.2.2	Economic Implications of ETAHT TVET Programmes to Edo State	156
7.3	Chapter Summary	159

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY	161
8.1 Overview	161
8.2 Conclusion	161
8.3 Policy Implications and Recommendations	163
8.3.1 Awareness Creation	163
8.3.2 Strengthening TVET Policies	164
8.3.3 Sufficient Funding and Resources for TVET Programmes	165
8.3.4 Tackling Corruption and Financial Mismanagement	167
8.3.5 Monitoring the Progress of TVET Graduates	167
8.4 TVET-Empowerment Model	168
REFERENCES	171
APPENDICES	204

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 4.1: Age Distribution	102
Table 4.2: Gender Distribution	103
Table 4.3: Marital Status	106
Table 4.4: Ethnic Distribution	108
Table 4.5: Location Distribution	109
Table 4.6: Year of Graduation from a Skills Acquisition Programme	110
Table 4.7: TVET Skills Acquired	111
Table 4.8: TVET Skills Acquired based on Gender	112
Table 4.9: Employment Status Frequency	114
Table 4.10: Focus Group Members Description	116
Table 4.11: Key Informants	117
Table 5.1: Entrepreneurship Status	124

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1: Returnee Migrants at ETAHT Vocational Training Centre, Ovia South-West, Edo State	20
Figure 1.2: Nigerian Returnee Migrants	23
Figure 1.3: Returnee Migrants in a Training Session	28
Figure 2.1: Youth Empowerment Process Concept	61
Figure 2.2: TVET Empowerment Model	65
Figure 3.1: Ovia South-West map	89
Figure 3.2: Map of Benin-City	91
Figure 4.1: Gender Percentage	103
Figure 4.2: Location Representation Percentage	109
Figure 4.3: Employment Status Percentage	115
Figure 6.1: ETAHT TVET Empowerment Percentile	137
Figure 8.1: TVET-Empowerment Model	169

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	Agricultural Development Programme
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
CEDD	Centre for Edo Delta Development Initiative
CNN	Cable News Network
EPRS	European Parliamentary Research Service
ETAHT	Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEEF	Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KI	Key Informant
MIDA	Malaysia Investment Development Authority
NAFOWA	Nigerian Air-force Officers Wives Association
NAWEF	National Women Empowerment Fund
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCFRMI	National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Person
NDE	National Directorate of Employment
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
R	Research Participant
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WDR World Development Report

WPC World Poverty Clock

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

This chapter discusses skill acquisition (TVET) and returnee migrants as the core subjects of this research by exploring skill acquisition programmes specifically established for returnee migrants in Edo state, Nigeria. This study focuses on empowerment through TVET programmes with returnee migrants in Edo state as a case study. However, it is important to explain key terms to be discussed in this chapter (i.e., TVET, and returnee migrants).

1.2 Background of the Study

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a form of training by individuals or a group of individuals that can lead to the acquisition of knowledge for self-sustenance (Idoko, 2014). Also, Chijioke (2013) asserts that TVET has been recognized as an approach that fosters sustainability, especially in economic and social development in our contemporary society. TVET as a vessel for economic development was regurgitated in a 2021 United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report, which postulates that TVET is a panacea for economic development, as it involves the training of people in different fields of trade under a legal agreement between the trainers and the trainees for a certain duration and under certain conditions (Idoko, 2014).

Furthermore, Ohagwu et al. (2021) assert that “*TVET equips individuals with transformative hands-on skills and knowledge for productive usage in the workplace.*”

Additionally, Silberman (2007) notes that TVET is a pattern of training that leads to productive outcomes connected with recalling, understanding, and applying specific skills and knowledge gained. This assertion was reaffirmed in the works of Nwogu et al. (2017) who stressed that TVET is a training process that imparts necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians, and other skilled professionals for enterprising and self-reliant purposes. As postulated by Ohagwu et al. (2022) – TVET is a process that equips individuals with technical and vocational “*know-how*,” thus enabling them to thrive within the technical and vocational industries.

Previous studies conducted posit that TVET presents an opportunity for participants to demonstrate the habit of active thinking or behaviour in a specific activity (Ochiagha, 2014). Ochiagha further stated that skill acquisition is the ability to do or perform an activity that is related to some meaningful exercise, work, or job. Furthermore, Olughu (2020) posits that in the process of skill acquisition, proper knowledge, attitudes, character, and habits are learned to facilitate the acquirer to develop an emotional, intellectual, and ethical character, thus prepares the acquirer for a promising future.

Similarly, Donli (2004) views skill acquisition as the exhibition of ideas and knowledge through training geared towards instilling in individuals the spirit of entrepreneurship needed for meaningful development. He stressed that if individuals are allowed to acquire relevant skills required for self-sustenance in the economy, it will promote their charisma in any work environment. Donli further maintains that acquisition of TVET skills – increases competition and cooperation among people (2004).

Hence, Magbagbeola (2004) notes that skills acquisition involves the accumulation of different skills that enhance task performance through the combination of practical and

theoretical knowledge. Magbagbeola enumerated the guidelines for the sustenance of the skillacquisition programme to include the followings:

- Provision of training that gives the trainees the opportunities to acquire skills that are appropriate for preparation in a field of trade for gainful employment.

- Provision of definite skills that relate to each trade makes one a professional in one field instead of the others.
- Training must be executed by competently qualified TVET instructors
- TVET entails consistent practice, perseverance, passion, and capability.
- Skill acquisition requires a conducive environment.
- TVET involves productive human capabilities, enterprising skills, and fruitful ideas.
- The principles guiding training in a particular field in terms of attitude, customer relationship, productivity, efficiency, supply, and demand need to be appreciated (Magbagbeola, 2004, cited in Adeyemi, 2020).

Different writer's views on TVET; for instance, Idoko (2014) posits that skill acquisition is the "form of training by individuals or group of individuals that can lead to acquisition of knowledge for self-sustenance;" Ikegwu et al. (2014) further asserts that skills acquisition is the recipe for eradicating extreme poverty by creating employment opportunities, an avenue for jobs and wealth creation. These assertions were reaffirmed by the submissions of this study's research participants – hence, this study postulates that by providing participants with practical knowledge and skills, TVET is a hands-on training process that enables participants the opportunities to use skills acquired to earn a living and therefore improve their socioeconomic living situations. This study also notes that ETAHT TVET programmes have assisted returnee migrants in the transformation of skills and knowledge into creative business ventures, and with the majority of the research participants considering themselves to have been empowered by the TVET programmes – a programme initiated by the Edo State's Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

As earlier mentioned, the main objective of this study is to explore and discuss whether skill acquisition (TVET) programmes, specifically ETAHT TVET programmes successfully empowered Edo state returnee migrants or not. However, at this junction, it is pertinent to highlight and explain the timeline and objectives of skill acquisition programmes in Nigeria.

1.2.1 Skills Acquisition Programmes in Nigeria

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, successive governments have instituted different skill acquisition programmes which according to Donli (2004), include the following:

- The green revolution programme was in response to the programme of operation feed the nation 1976.
- The 1978 school-to-land skills acquisition programmes.
- Youth vocational skills development and employment programme by (NDE) in 1986.
- The 1988 NDE small-scale programmes for industrial farmers and graduates.
- The national open apprenticeship scheme of 1988 (see, Idoko, 2014).

The need for citizens to survive through self-reliance programmes was a significant factor in the establishment and spread of TVET programmes in Nigeria. Donli (2004) claims that the government's original efforts to promote empowerment focused on agricultural production, but over time, the concept was diversified to include agricultural, industrial, and artisan productions that can earn money. However, in recent years, several training programmes have been established by the Federal and State governments to instil in

individuals and groups the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in order to attain the intended goal. Among other things, the training programmes are:

1.2.1.1 National Directorate of Employment

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) is a federal agency that trains people in employability skills. It was established in 1986 with the goal of reducing unemployment (Ngige, 2016). The National Directorate of Employment (NDE), according to prior analysis by Idachaba (2006), states that NDE seeks to accomplish this goal through a variety of means, including workshops, seminars, industrial lending programmes, and many more. NDE diversified the training programmes to ensure the success of these programmes. Among other things, the diversified training programmes include:

- **Workshop and Seminars**

In this case, the directorate organizes workshops and seminars on different trades and invited people to participate in such exercises. Experts were invited to workshops and seminars, thus enabling the trainee(s) to acquire the necessary knowledge for future productive usage.

- **On-the-job Training**

New workers of the NDE are customarily assigned specific jobs or work in shops, offices, and mechanics workshops, to enhance their creative ability (Idoko, 2014). The purpose of “On-the-job training” is to make use of experts to train new employees. This type of training according to Ochiagha (1995, 2014) is helpful because it makes the trainees master the job easily.