Influence of Policies, Politics and Ethnicity on Implementation of Industrial Technology Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of policies, politics and ethnicity on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain: the influence of policies on implementation of industrial technology education, the influence of politics on implementation of industrial technology education and the influence of ethnicity on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria. Policy has been described as an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place. One major policy in education is the National Policy in Education (NPE). Political instability and corruption amongst political leaders were highlighted to have influence on industrial technology education. Also, ethnicity has been defined as the term for the culture of people in a given geographic region, including their language, heritage and customers. Ethnicity has been identified as a likely influencing factor for student success in the classroom. However, this study concludes that policies have great influence on industrial technology education and that political instability and corruption among political leaders affects industrial technology education. Furthermore, the study concludes that ethnicity directly or indirectly influences students in industrial technology education programme. It was recommended that the Federal Government whistle blowing policy should be strengthened to check mate fraudulent act in the educational sector to help in prosecuting every politician who embezzles fund meant for industrial technology education. This will help in ensuring that adequate facilities are provided for industrial technology education.

Keywords: Education, Ethnicity, Implementation, Industrial, Policy, Polity, Technology.

Introduction

Industrial Technology Education (ITE) is an educational programme that was introduced to help in transferring skills from one generation to another. According to Okoye and Okwelle (2014), ITE can be defined as a formal training that enables application of the techniques of applied sciences and mathematical principles for the services of humankind. Ochogba et al (2019) defined ITE as the type of education that is designed to equip individuals with skills needed by industries for employment or for self-employment.

Through ITE youths are trained for employment in technology related field. Apart from training youths for employment, which is generally known to be one of the major aims of ITE, it also encourages self-reliance/self-employment which in turn creates job for the

unemployed (Lawal, 2010). This is because the skills acquired through ITE can develop an individual into establishing small scale enterprise that can absorb other youths. In line with this, Ogundele (2013) asserts that the acquisition and usage of skills for a particular job can be able to transform a trainee to become self-employed and to contribute to the development of the society. Therefore, the importance of ITE in manpower development cannot be overemphasized, but over the years, several factors have hampered the achievement of ITE in the country. Some of these factors could be political, related to policies and ethnicity.

According to Terry in Okoroma (cited in Amaechi, 2018), policy is an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place. Hence, government policy could be seen as an overall guide that gives the general limits and directions in which administration action will take place. On the other hand, politics could be described as the competition among individuals, groups or states pursuing their interests. More so, Nta (2018) defined ethnicity as the term for the culture of people in a given geographical region, including their language heritage and customs. Also, Christopher (2018) opined that ethnicity is an anthropological grouping of human into cultural commodities and genetic impacts of one's environment on those grouped in specific region. From the foregoing, it could be said that any nation's development cannot be possible without adequate and clear-cut policy on the way to educate its citizens in order to achieve set national objectives or goals. But according to Richardson (2012), ethnicity has been identified as a likely influencing factor for student success in the online classroom. Consequently, policy, politics and ethnicity could be major factors in the achievement of educational objectives. However, this paper is designed to address the influence of these three factors on implementation of ITE in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, so much criticism has been made around Nigerian educational system, particularly industrial technology education. Some school of thought argue that industrial technology education has not achieved its aim of training competent manpower for Nigerian development. Others are of the opinion that industrial technology education is programmed to equip individuals with skills necessary for employment or self employment but due to so many factors such as teacher related, student related, administrative, psychological and infrastructural factors within the school system, the programme has not been able to achieve much. Meanwhile, apart from internal factors bedeviling the implementation of industrial technology education, Amaechi (2018) asserts that industrial technology education is influenced by policies, politics and even ethnicity. According to Okoli et.al (cited in Nnodim and Ochogba, 2018), the implementation of industrial technology education is hampered because political class plays ethnic and party politics, which manifest in majority of craftsmen and graduates of industrial technology education graduating without acquiring the skills required in industries. Also, Amaechi (2018) opined that the constant change of government in Nigerian political arena invariably leads to

inconsistency in terms of policy implementation which affects the implementation of industrial technology education and contributes to students' skills incompetence. Therefore, it will be worthwhile to investigate the influence of policies, politics and ethnicity on the implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria. On this note, the researchers deemed it fit to review the influence of policies, politics and ethnicity on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the influence of policies, politics and ethnicity on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the influence of policies on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the influence of politics on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria
3. Determine the influence of ethnicity on implementation of industrial technology education in Nigeria

Conceptual Review

Concept of Industrial technical education

ITE is a type of education that has attracted so many authors attention hence; there has been several descriptions of ITE. According to Akaninwor (2010), ITE is that type of education that prepares individuals for occupational positions at the skilled level. In another definition, Okoye and Okwelle (2014) described ITE as a formal training that enables application of the techniques of applied sciences and mathematical principles for the services of humankind. More so, Ochogba and Deebom (2019) described ITE as the education that provides the requisite skills needed for self-employment or for gainful employment in industries. From the foregoing, ITE could be described as the education that provides the requisite skills needed for self-employment or for gainful employment in industries.

Relevance of ITE

The success of ITE in any country can be seen as a vehicle for technological development. In conformity, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2011) stated that ITE is a determinant to the sustenance of the complex structure of modernization which includes economic and social development. Therefore, for any country to transform technologically, ITE must have been a major contributor. Usoro, et al (2010) assert that the impact of ITE in Nigeria is enormous with regards to the socio-economic lives of the people.

Usoro et al (2010) further stated that ITE has the potential for developing manpower in over one thousand careers represented in all departments of human endeavours. According to Ndagi in Umunadi (2014), ITE develops manpower for employment through the provision

of requisite skills, knowledge and attitude. In consonance with the above assertion, Amedu (2013) opine that ITE provide the skills that are required to equip an individual to become a productive citizen in global society.

Apart from training youths for employment, ITE also encourages self-reliance/self-employment which in turn creates opportunities for employment. The skills acquired through ITE can develop a trainee into establishing small scale enterprise that can absorb other youths. According to Lawal (2010), ITE prepares individuals who could apply relevant practical skills to make better changes within their society through a self dependent life. With this, aside from providing job opportunities in related industries, ITE also contributes in taking youths off the streets by making them to be self-reliant.

Influence of Policy on Implementation of ITE in Nigeria

Policy has been described as an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place (Terry in Okoroma, 2006). There would either be a policy change or a reform. Policy change refers to incremental shifts in existing structures, or new and innovative policies (Bennett & Howlett in Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development, 2013). Reform usually refers to a major policy change. Whichever way, policy would either affect or transform a system based on whether it is good or bad (Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development, 2013).

Good policies emerge from a combination of the political (mobilising support and managing opposition, presenting a vision, setting strategic objectives) and the technocratic (evidence of what works, robust policy design, realistic implementation plans) (Michael, et al, 2011). In Nigeria, one good policy that is contributing towards the development of the country through manpower development is the National Policy on Education. The need for a national policy on education came about as a result of the 1996 National Curriculum Conference which was attended by a cross-section of Nigerians. The conference was a culmination of expressions of general dissatisfaction with the existing education system which had become irrelevant to national needs, aspirations and goals.

Educational Policies Influencing the Implementation of ITE in Nigeria

Educational policies are initiatives mostly by governments that determine the direction of an educational system (Okoroma cited in Amaechi, 2018). According to Osokoya (cited in Ugbe and Ogunleye, 2020), Education is a distinctive way in which the society inducts its young ones into full membership. So every modern society needs some educational policies to guide it in the process of such initiation. In the view of Kabiru (2022), educational policy is directed towards increasing the quality of life of a people. Kabiru (2022) further explained that the objective of any policy is to satisfy individual needs, community pressures and the degree of complexity and sophistication to which socialised personnel must be educated and trained to meet these demands.

The educational policy that influences ITE is the National Policy on Education which ensures that the following aims and objectives are achieved in ITE:

- To provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development.
- To give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.
- To form a practical segment of education concern or targeted at skill acquisition.

The achievement of this policy comes along with the provision of facilities and other relevant materials that will ensure that the best is given to the students. However, Oguejiofor and Ezeabasili (2014) lamented that most vocational education departments in Nigerian universities have limited workshop space and usable facilities and where these facilities exist, they are said to be grossly inadequate. Also, materials and facilities in technical programmes are grossly inadequate for student's population, most are outdated or stolen and funds are not made available to produce the required instructional materials, equipment and provision of the necessary facilities (Ochogba, 2017). This responsibility lies on the table of federal, state and possibly local government areas in the country. Indirectly, it is the politicians who mane the affairs of these arms of government that are expected to ensure that the goals of ITE is achieved. Therefore, the inability of political leaders to put some of these facilities in place could influence ITE negatively.

Influence of Politics on Implementation of ITE in Nigeria

Education in Nigeria is characterised by myriad of challenges, among which is political influence. An effective political system is supposed to give rise to an effective educational system like in some developed countries. This means that there is a synergy between education and politics. Basically, with the political challenges experienced in Nigeria, it could be a factor bedevilling education in the country. This article will examine political instability and corruption among politicians as factors that influences implementation of ITE in Nigeria.

Political Instability

Political system in Nigeria is such that is rotated every four years. According to Okoroma (2006), between the era of 1960-2018, Nigeria has been governed by 15 different presidents. This rotation results in a change in ideology in virtually every sector in the country, which includes ITE. This includes both the educational sector. This change in ideology could affect the stability of the various institutions in the country, which includes ITE.

Hodges (cited in Enyiazu, 2022) avers that Nigeria's development failures have sprung from the lack of success in achieving an effective model of governance. At the head of this problem has been the instability generated by the rivalry for control of the huge resources accruing to the State from the oil industry, and the use of political power to milk the state

for personal gain rather than promote economic and social development. Okweite in Osam (2013) noted that the achievements of leaders are influenced by their interests and priorities and this produced often conflicting policies for the state educational system. Some leaders during their tenure of leadership have relegated ITE to the background while some have favoured it.

Corruption among Political Leaders

If anything has contributed greatly to the stagnation of corporate development of Nigeria, it is this virus called 'corruption'. It is found in all aspects of human endeavour in Nigeria. Its prominence in Nigeria has earned our nation a place of negative prominence in the world. Shaibu (2024) stated that Nigeria ranked 145 out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index, released by Transparency International (TI) Nigeria. Corruption has contributed to the stunted growth of education in Nigeria. Olagboye (2023) opined that corruption has been a longstanding problem in Nigeria, affecting various aspects of society, including the educational system. The impact of corruption on education in Nigeria is multifaceted, with consequences that extend beyond the classroom and affect the country's socio-economic development.

Over the years, some good educational policies have been put in place but corruption has made it impossible for it to surface. One of such policies is the National Policy on Education already discussed. The designers of the policy, from all intents and purposes, were quite visionary. The objectives of most policies in Nigeria are often derailed at the implementation stage due to a number of reasons, which could be linked to political lapses or corruption among political leaders. According to Aghenta in Okoroma (2006) laments that the money the government votes for running the schools does not get to the schools and the little that gets there is normally wasted by those whose responsibility it is to manage the schools. Adighije (cited in Ezeyi, 2021) confirmed that bribes to the National Assembly are a normal practice. These unfortunate and corrupt practices affect implementation of educational policies as they occur at the various stages of program execution (Ejiogu cited in Ezeyi, 2021)

The cankerworms of corruption and gross mismanagement of resources have been blamed for the deplorable state of the country's educational system. As a result of these two factors, the sector has consistently witnessed scarcity of resources. In line with this, Nnodim and Ochogba (2017) opine that corruption in Nigeria has resulted to poor funding, inadequate facilities, lack of in-service training, inadequate teachers, lack of training of allowance and ill-equipped workshop for Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Considering the fact that ITE is practically oriented and demands facilities to be able to carry out these practical activities, it then means that the absence of facilities will influence the programme negatively. Hence, corruption amongst political leaders influences ITE negatively.

Influence of Ethnicity on ITE in Nigeria

Ethnicity is another factor that is influencing the implementation of ITE in Nigeria. Amanda (cited in Amaechi, 2018), defined ethnicity as the term for the culture of people in a given geographic region, including their language, heritage and customers. Nta (2018) defined ethnicity as a group of people who identify with each other based on common ancestral, social, cultural or rational experiences. Also, Amaechi (2018) defined ethnicity as a group of people who are bounded by certain cultural, religion, ancestral and history.

Ethnicity is considered a phenomenon that mediates between diverse human relations and between different values and norms expressed and utilized differently at both the individual and collective levels and can influence the life processes of ethnic groups either positively or negatively (Seol, 2008). Perhaps, this is the reason why ethnicity has been considered an aspect of the social relationship between agents – social, political and economic – who see themselves as being traditionally unique – in culture, language, beliefs, among others – and different from members of other ethnic groups with whom they have regular socio-political and economic relations. This informs us about why ethnicity has been described as a frame within which certain socio-political and economic disputes are conducted.

However, ethnicity has been noted to have influence over student's academic performance. Richardson (2012) state that student ethnicity has been identified as a likely influencing factor for student success in the online classroom. Traditionally, at predominately white colleges in the U.S., ethnic minority students often receive lower grades, take longer to graduate, and generally struggle with course work.

This achievement disparity has been demonstrated to exist in equal measures in both traditional education and online education (Richardson, 2012). However, some researchers have suggested that Hispanic and African American students may prefer face-to-face instruction due to cultural influences which place emphasis on community; especially since there is an emphasis on community and social ties within these ethnic identities (Ashong & Commander, 2012). Furthermore, a majority of African American students have cited not enjoying using computers for schoolwork and low confidence levels in the online classroom as reasons for preferring traditional learning (Ashong & Commander, 2012). Basically, with the introduction of computer in ITE, students from ethnicity that does not support the use of modern facilities may not participate fully in the programme.

Conclusions

This study concludes that policies are very important in ITE since it helps in terms of achieving the set goals for the programme. One major policy in ITE is the National Police on Education. However, the policies to be made must be very good before it can be able to achieve its own aims. More so, the study concludes that due to the kind of leaders and the political system in Nigeria, ITE is not receiving the required influence from political leaders. Finally, it was deduced that ethnicity plays a very important role in the implementation of ITE programme in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Good policy should be made by both federal and state governments to take care of factors that are presently playing out in ITE and Technology programme. This will help in achieving a more effective ITE and Technology Programme.

2. The Federal Government whistle blowing policy should be strengthened to check mate fraudulent act in the educational sector to help in prosecuting every politician who embezzles fund meant for ITE and Technology Programmes. This will help in ensuring that adequate facilities are provided for ITE and Technology.

3. There should be awareness programme for rural areas that do not support the use of modern facilities for teaching. This will re-orient students in such areas on the importance of these modern facilities.

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