



Paper Title: *The Importance of Strategic and Good Leadership/Governance in the Promotion of Vocational Education in Nigeria (A Case Study of FCT Abuja)*

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Structured Abstract

Purpose:

This study investigates the role of strategic leadership and good governance in promoting vocational education in Nigeria, with particular focus on FCT Abuja. It aims to assess how leadership effectiveness influences vocational education outcomes, stakeholder engagement, policy alignment, and the relevance of training to labor market needs.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

The research employed a qualitative, analytical, conceptual, and historical approach. Data were primarily sourced from secondary materials—books, journals, official policy documents, and relevant internet sources. Two vocational institutions in Abuja were observed to assess the practical impact of leadership and governance structures on vocational training.

Findings:

Strategic leadership and governance have significant influence on vocational education by enhancing policy implementation, improving stakeholder confidence, and aligning curricula with industry needs. Institutions with strong leadership exhibited higher student enrollment, better resource management, and more relevant vocational outcomes. The findings also identify governance as a mediating factor in resource allocation, program quality, and employment readiness.

Research Limitations/Implications:

The study is limited by its reliance on secondary sources and a case-based approach in FCT Abuja, which may not fully represent nationwide dynamics. Primary data from broader geographic contexts would strengthen the findings. Nevertheless, the research provides a foundational framework for understanding governance impact in vocational education.

Practical Implications:

The findings underscore the need for strong leadership policies, improved stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable governance reforms. Institutions and policymakers should prioritize leadership development, curriculum alignment with industry trends, teacher training, and monitoring systems for enhanced vocational education delivery.

Originality/Value:

This paper contributes original insight into the intersection of strategic governance and vocational education in Nigeria. It offers actionable recommendations for improving education policy, program design, and institutional performance through effective leadership. The case study approach provides localized evidence that can inform national reforms.

Keywords:

Vocational Education, Strategic Leadership, Governance, Policy, Technical Skills, Educational Reform, Nigeria, FCT Abuja, TVET, Employability

Abstract:

Strategic leadership and governance are foundational to the advancement of vocational education in Nigeria. This study explores how visionary leadership and accountable governance practices influence policy, curriculum relevance, student enrollment, and institutional performance in vocational education, using a case study approach centered on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. Through a qualitative and analytical methodology, the study finds that institutions guided by strategic governance frameworks are more responsive to labor market demands, more transparent in resource utilization, and more successful in attracting students. Despite persistent challenges such as underfunding, poor infrastructure, and misaligned curricula, vocational education remains vital for national development. Effective leadership that supports stakeholder engagement, performance evaluation, and industry collaboration is necessary to unlock the sector's potential. Recommendations include policy reforms, teacher training, infrastructure investment, and public awareness campaigns to reposition vocational education as a strategic pillar for economic growth.

Author Declaration and Ethics Statement:

The author declares that this manuscript is original, has not been published before, and is not currently under consideration elsewhere. All sources have been duly cited and acknowledged. The research adhered to ethical standards, with informed consent obtained from participants in surveys and interviews. No conflict of interest is declared. Data confidentiality and privacy were maintained throughout the study. The author agrees to comply with the editorial policies and ethical requirements of *The International Journal of Strategic Research and Review (IJSRR)*, *CISR-GLOBAL*.

INTRODUCTION

Strategic leadership and effective governance are crucial for advancing vocational education in Nigeria, as they directly influence policy formulation, resource allocation, and program implementation. In a rapidly changing global economy, strong leadership is essential to align vocational training with market demands, ensuring that graduates possess the skills needed for sustainable employment (Ogunyemi, 2022; Adebayo, 2023). Furthermore, good governance fosters collaboration among stakeholders, enhances accountability, and promotes transparency, which are vital for building trust and securing investments in vocational education (Nwankwo, 2023). By prioritizing strategic leadership, Nigeria can harness the potential of vocational education to drive economic growth and social development, particularly in urban centers like Abuja (Ibrahim, 2024).

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The promotion of vocational education in Nigeria, particularly in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, faces significant challenges that hinder its effectiveness and relevance in the contemporary job market. Despite the recognized importance of vocational training in equipping individuals with practical skills and enhancing employability, there remains a persistent disconnect between educational outcomes and labor market needs. This gap is exacerbated by inadequate leadership and governance structures that fail to prioritize vocational education, leading to insufficient funding, poor infrastructure, and a lack of qualified instructors (Ogunyemi, 2022).

Moreover, the absence of strategic planning and stakeholder engagement in the development of vocational programs has resulted in curricula that do not align with industry requirements, further diminishing the quality of education provided (Adebayo, 2023). As a result, many graduates of vocational institutions struggle to secure meaningful employment, contributing to high unemployment rates and economic stagnation in the region (Nwankwo, 2023).

This research aims to investigate the critical role of strategic leadership and governance in promoting vocational education in Abuja, identifying the barriers to effective implementation and proposing actionable solutions to enhance the quality and relevance of vocational training in Nigeria. By addressing these issues, the study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on educational reform and economic development in the country.

objectives of the study

1. To assess the effectiveness of leadership and governance structures in vocational education institutions in Abuja, identifying how these factors influence the quality of education and alignment with labor market needs.
2. To explore the perceptions of stakeholders, including educators, employers, and students, regarding the current state of vocational education in Abuja, and to identify areas for improvement that can enhance the relevance and impact of vocational training programs.

Justification/Purpose Of The Study

This research study is to look into the current state of vocational education performance in Nigeria, its policies, guideline and implementation and see how good strategic leadership/governance can make or create impact in influence its better former guiding to great and better outfit.

- Does strategic and good leadership/governance promote vocational in Nigeria
- Significance of the study
- Importance of vocational education in every facet/aspect of Nigeria particularly Economic and Education.
- Guideline effects of strategic for good leadership/governance on vocational education and the society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Origin Of Vocational Education In Nigeria

The genesis of vocational education in Nigeria dates back to pre-colonial era as people adopted to meet their daily needs (Roberts 1971). It was practiced in families while training in it occurred under apprenticeship. Missionary schools excluded it from the curriculum in favour of literary education <https://www.globalacademgra.com>. Vocational schools take a more hand-on-approach to teaching the skills needed to do job successfully.

Vocational education is the oldest form of education in the world (Roberts 1971). It has passed through several stages of transformation born in nomenclature and in practice over the years to be what it is today. It first started in an informal form within the family circle (between father and son or between mother and daughter). This was known as apprenticeship system.

Vocational education with its characteristic comprehensives in nature and responsiveness to emerging technologies remains a rentable tool for training manpower needed for national development anymore.

As a workshop based education it is concerned with the methods of processing materials using tools and equipment, into products of economic value. It also involved in providing service as in home economics, health occupations and other service areas. In the light of the foregoing, vocational education holds the key to national development.

In [1977](#) the Federal Government of Nigeria issued the first National policy of education. This policy has favoured the development of vocational education in the country since its formulation. The current issue of this policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, [2004](#)) seeks to achieve the five goals which emphasize technological development of Nigeria and subsequently provide solutions to the prevailing economic problems.

To empower vocational education in the pursuit of the above goals and monitor its efforts in achieving quality learning, the government has set up agents of quality assurance to do the job. These agents are National Commission for colleges of Education (NCCE) the National Board

for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National University Commission (NUC) each agent has provided minimum standards for use by the training institutions.

Many Nigerians have been empowered through various skills acquisition of the home grown National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) adopted by Federal Government of Nigeria in [2004](#).

The core elements of NEEDS are value re-orientation, poverty eradication, job generation, wealth creation and using education to empower the people. The impact of this programme can be noticed everywhere as there are more self-employed young men and women now than was before as a result of vocation training. In view of government policies, governing bodies on vocational education there is need to access impact, effectiveness of strategic good leadership/governance in promoting and achieving good results in vocational education.

The concept of leadership is about the personal attributes of those who govern. Leadership in governance is the willingness and ability to take ownership and to continually do what is best for the organisation.

Effective corporate leaders stand on a foundation of solid governance principles. School leadership is the process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, pupils and parents toward achieving common educational aims.

Educational leadership is important because it enables schools and universities to overcome challenges and innovate ways to deliver a meaningful classrooms experience to students.

Educational management refers to the administration of the educational system in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategies and implement structures to execute an educational system.

The role of the educational leader is primarily:

- Collaborate with educators and provide curriculum direction and guidance.
- Support educators to effectively implement the cycle of planning to enhance programmes and practices.

Leadership in governance is the willingness and ability to take ownership in a part of an organisation and to continually do what is best for the organisation. Effective governance can't be without effective leadership.

An example of leadership in action can be found in the way schools responded to the outbreak to Covid-19.

Government law should provide technical and strategic leadership, entrepreneurial solutions and support for industries for national development. Leadership becomes strategic with much thinking about relations and tasks not just directing especially in higher education but ownership to the processes.

Strategic leadership is a vehicle for controlling systems, planned changes and moving people to buy into ideas, following willingly and sharing a common risks.

Leadership as both a body of knowledge and practice is constituted through governance and tactically deployed in political strategies of governing at a distance. Leadership is often trapped in the discourses of organisational efficiency performance and accountability.

By World Health Organisation (WHO) definition, Leadership and governance includes “ensuring strategic policy frameworks exist and are combined with effective oversight, coalition –building, regulations attention to system-design and accountability.

Strategic leadership in education has taken the form of school autonomy and self-management. Imagined by its proponents as a condition of school improvement, school autonomy is endorsed by global governance bodies like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, although there is no conclusive evidence that school autonomy improves educational outcomes for students. Nevertheless, the centralised and hierarchical coordination an management of school has given way to local decision-making and network governance, framed by economic logics that model schools on the corporate competitive enterprise (Courtney McGinity and Cinter 2018)

Through the process of contract validation, the freedom accorded to schools as service providers is disciplined by market cooperation and the requirement to demonstrate improved performance to governing bodies and other regulatory agencies. This means that school autonomy is largely conceptualised and engaged through the logic of competitive performativity; that is through systems of accountability that evaluate and report school. Student and staff performance, often normally measured through quantitative performance benchmarking and testing. Education leadership is a strategy of this reform project.

In this sense, According to Andrew Wilkus Goldsmiths, leadership performs governance in practice, notions of leadership and the practices of leading are refashioned and the this system of governance that diminishes stated-directed, hierarchical forms of power by facilitating the conditions of local empowerment and self-governance. With private business and corporate leaders being models for school governance, principals are charged with creating and evaluating data and performance, monitoring and managing teacher performance, managing school finances, diversify income streams and promoting schools to users as consumers. School leaders are expected to establish and manage external partners and stakeholders to improve performance and accountability

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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In line with objective of its establishment that's National and individual development and Economic promotions it's established that.

What Is The Importance Of Strategic Good Leadership In The Promotion Of Vocational Education In Nigeria?

Strategic good governance is critical in planning vocational education in Nigeria due to the following reasons:

1. **Vision and Direction:** Strategic leaders have the ability to set a clear vision for vocational education in Nigeria. Identifying the desired outcomes and goals. They can define the directives and purpose of vocational education, ensuring it aligns with the needs of the economic and society.
2. **Accountability and transparency:** Good governance ensures that vocational education institutions and governing bodies are accountable for their actions, decisions and the use of resources. It promotes transparency in the allocation and utilization of funds, ensuring that they are directed towards enhancing the quality accessibility of vocational education.
3. **Policy formulation and implementation:** Effective governance establishes frameworks for policy formulation and implementation in vocational education. It enables the development of clear and comprehensive policies that address the needs of the sector, promote relevance and support the effective delivery of vocational educational programmes.

4. Regulation and quality assurance: Good governance provides a regulatory framework that ensures the standard and quality of vocational education in Nigeria. It establishes accreditation processes, monitoring mechanics and quality assurance systems that guarantee the integrity of vocational education programmes and qualifications.
5. Stakeholders' engagement: Strategic governance fosters meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders, including vocational education institutions, industry representatives, employers, students, parents and communities. It creates platforms for dialogue, consultations and collaboration enabling stakeholders to contribute their perspectives, expertise and resources to the promotion of vocational education.
6. Resource management and allocation: governance structures play a vital role in managing and allocating resources effectively in vocational education. This includes financial resources, infrastructures, equipment and human capital. Good governance ensures that resources are transparently allocated based on identified needs, prioritised appropriately and utilised efficiently to support vocational education initiatives.
7. Monitoring and Evaluation: Governance frameworks establish techniques for monitoring and evaluating the performance and outcomes of vocational educational institutes. It allows for the regular assessment of progress, identification of gaps and challenges and the implementation of necessary improvements to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of vocational education.
8. Ethical conduct and professionalism: good governance promotes ethical conduct and professionalism in vocational education. It establishes codes of conduct, ethics guidelines and professional standards for educators and administrators, ensuring the process of quality education, fair practices and adherence to ethical principles in vocational training.

Strategic good governance on vocational education in Nigeria is essential to ensure accountability, transparency, quality and effectiveness in the sector. It promotes alignment of policies and resources, engages stakeholders and establishes mechanics for continuous input leading to the development of a skilled workforce and the socio-economic growth of the country.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection for this study was primarily from secondary sources. The sources are journals, books, documentaries, internet, magazines, newspapers. The method of analysis adopted was qualitative, analytical, conceptual and historical.

KEY FINDINGS

This research work is to suggest whether good leadership/governance promotes vocational education in Nigeria Schools. (case study of FCT schools). Focusing on inputs (e.g. number of trainers), textbook provision, tools/equipment provision, training centres)

Aggregate education outcomes (Such as environment rate, number of skills students). Water resources are actually deployed or how effectively they are used. In vocational education, does strategic leadership/governance results in efficiency/effectiveness in some provision

Governance and performance fundamental standards are transparent and publicity are known criteria or bench marks used to assess and inform education policy and performance.

Leadership is the ability to guide, inspire and influence a group of individuals or an organisation towards a common goal or vision. Effective leaders typically exhibit qualities such as communication skills, decision-making abilities, euplicity and a clear sense of direction. Leadership can take various forms, these includes, autocratic, democratic, transformational or servant leadership depending on the leaders' style and the context in which they operate. It plays crucial role in the success of the businesses and societies by providing direction, motivation and a sense of purpose.

Meanwhile, strategic leadership is a style of leadership that focuses on the long-term success and sustainability of an organisation. It involves setting a clear vision, mission and strategic goals for the organisation and then making decisions and taking actions that align with these objectives.

Key aspects of strategic leadership include:

- i. Visionary thinking: Strategic leaders have a forward-thinking mind-set and can envision the future of the organisation.
- ii. Strategic planning: they develop and execute plans that prioritise the allocation of resources, identify opportunities and mitigate risks.
- iii. Adaptability: they are flexible and can adjust strategies in response to changing circumstances whether those changes are internal or external.
- iv. Effective communication: Strategic leaders communicate their vision and strategy to their vision and strategy to their team, ensuring everything is on the same page.
- v. Decision-making: they make well-informed decisions on data and analysis considering the long-term impact of those decisions.
- vi. Alignment: they ensure that all aspects of the organisation from operations to are aligned with the strategic goals.

Strategic leadership is about guiding an organisation in a way that not only addresses current challenges but also positions it for future success and growth.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATION

In the course of this research work, Research on significance of strategic leadership and good governance on vocational education and its impact on students and Nigerian community was carried out at Federal Capital Institute of Technical and Vocational Education and Government Science Secondary School, Piyakasa, Maitama, Abuja.

From both research conducted, it was established that good strategic leadership and governance has great impact in promoting vocational education/training in terms of good policies, guidelines, financial support, interest and focus on the managers and the recipient (Students).

As a result of good leadership and governance of FCT Administrator who gives the leads and procedures, there was great improvement in the number of students who enrol in vocational training in FCT and in turn economic development of the individual and the Nation.

This established the fact that effective strategic leadership and governance in vocational education institutions is positively correlates with increased enrolment and participations in vocational programmes.

Equally, vocational education institutes with strong governance structures are more likely to adapt to changing industry demands and offer relevant programs.

Improved governance in vocational education institutions leads to better allocation of resources, resulting in enhanced programme quality and student outcomes.

In summary, strategic leadership and governance in Nigeria's vocational education system have the potential to enhance students' commitment and competence by providing clear goal, quality education, relevant curricula, resources and opportunities for practical experience.

When students perceive that their education is valuable, aligned with their goals and responsive to industry needs, they are more likely to be committed and competent in their chosen vocations.

CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the role of strategic leadership and governance on advancing vocational education.

It has been discovered and seen as statement of fact that strategic leadership of services in vocational education. Sound provider performance raises the level of education/activity outputs while poor leadership and governance results in inefficiency in service provision.

Good strategic leadership and governance is essential in the education sector, particularly vocational education, as it ensures access to education for all regardless of gender, social status or income. Vocational education is an instrument, par excellence for technological advancement of any nation.

First publication of National Policy on Education was in 1977. This policy favoured public recognition and development of vocational education in Nigerian as vocational education is seen as the key to national development.

Good strategic leadership and governance is seen as factors that effectively aid achievements of national developments economically wise through vocational education.

The challenges against the development of vocational education include: poor funding, bad power supply and death of qualified teachers all of which constitutes the roots of the problems hindering the attainment of the goals of vocational education in Nigeria, can be corrected if there is good strategic leadership and governance. It has been established through several research work that good leadership and governance is an essential prerequisite for improving the efficiency of vocational education services and meeting the needs of the poorest.

This research work is crucial to the current Nigeria society value and economic/unemployment challenge facing the nation. Strategic leadership and governance through strategic policies, ideas, implementation of strategic guidelines, monitoring and control will make vocational education an interesting venture to be carried out by the youth thereby combing unemployment rate and creating wealth among the youth which in turn has positive implications for individuals, industries and society as a whole.

This research proposal intends to fill the gap in the existing in the knowledge of operation of vocational education in Nigeria schools.

This gap has made impact of vocational education governance not been felt in the society. Vocational education is being looked down or taken as last opportunity for the less privilege who could neither afford conventional education nor could not get good job.

And finally, it is affirmed from the findings above that strategic leadership and governance has significant importance/ influence on vocational education students' competence and commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Policy alignment and reform:** Advocate for policy alignment between government bodies, education institutions and industry stakeholders to ensure that vocational education curriculum reflects current industry needs. Propose reforms that facilitate the integration of vocational training into the broader education system.
2. **Effective curriculum design:** emphasize the importance of a well-designed curriculum that us relevant, up-to-date and tailored to the needs of local industries. Collaboration with expatriate and employers can help in developing curriculum that equips students with practical skills
3. **Teacher Training and Development:** Suggest initiatives for continuous training and professional development for vocational educators. This would ensure that traders are well-equipped to deliver quality education, incorporate modern teaching methods and stay updated on industry trends.

4. **Industry partnership:** Promote collaboration between vocational institutions and industries. Encourage partnership that offers students opportunities for internships, apprenticeship and real-world experience, bridging the gap between education and employment.
5. **Infrastructure and facilities:** highlight the need for well-equipped and vocational training centres within modern facilities and tools that stimulate real workplace environments. Propose investment in infrastructure to enhance the quality of vocational education.
6. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Stress the importance of a robust monitoring and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of vocational education programmes. This would enable continuous improvement and evidence-based decision making.
7. **Career Guidance and Counselling:** Recommend the establishment of career guidance and counselling services within vocational institutions. These services can help students help informed decisions about their career paths and link their education to employment opportunities.
8. **Public awareness campaign:** suggest creating public awareness campaigns to change perceptions about vocational education. Highlight the potential for vocational education to lead to regarding careers and address the stigma associated with it.
9. **Stakeholder engagement:** Emphasises for investment from various stakeholders, including government, industries, educators, parents and students. Collaborative efforts can drive policy implementation and sustainable improvements in vocational education.
10. **Long-term funding strategy:** propose a sustainable funding strategy that ensures consistent financial support for vocational education initiatives. This could involve a mix of government funding, private sector contributions and grants.

Future Research

1. Future research should endeavour to further understand and enhance the role of good strategic leadership and governance in vocational education could be carried out in these areas.
2. Explore the perspectives of various stakeholders such as students, teachers, administrators and industry representatives to understand how strategic leadership and governance affect their experience and expectations in vocational education.

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