CURTAILING CHALLENGES OF JUVENILE VIOLENCE THROUGH VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

SALIHU, Umar Olaitan

Department of Fine/ Applied Arts School of Vocational and Technical Education,

Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin.

Umarsalihuolitan1964@gmail.com

And

Yusuff Abdulrasaq Aroworeyin

School of E.C.C.E and PES

Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin.

08066414848

Aroworeyin1990@gmail.com

Abstract

Juveniles violence poses a significant threat to the social fabric and development of communities worldwide, and Kwara State is not exempt from this challenge. Factors such as unemployment, poverty, lack of educational opportunities, and social dislocation contribute to the vulnerability of young people to engage in violent behaviors. Recognizing the potential of vocational and technical education to address these factors and equip youth with essential skills, this study seeks to explore its impact in curbing youth violence. The study used survey research design and one hundred and twenty (120) male and female students of School of Vocational and Technical Education, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin A questionnaire was developed on Curtailing challenges of youth violence through Vocational and Technical Education to collect the data. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested using t-test mean and standard deviation. Based on the findings, the study recommends providing in-service training for lecturers in the School of Vocational Technical Education to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills. This training would enable them to better address the challenges of youth violence through effective instructional strategies and interventions.

***Keywords**: Juvenile* violence, Vocational and Technical Education, Vocational skills, College Students in Nigeria

Introduction

Juvenile violence refers to criminal and delinquent behavior among young people transitioning into adulthood. This persistent issue manifests in various forms, including drug abuse, bullying, cultism, truancy, and school violence. Addressing juvenile violence is crucial for ensuring a safer and more prosperous Nigeria (Mobolaji & Ezekiel, 2020).

The family, as the primary socializing unit, plays a vital role in shaping children's behavior. A stable

family fosters discipline and respect, while exposure to violence at home increases the likelihood of delinquency (Dodo-Ahmed & Kamaldeen, 2019; Gafar & Raheem, 2022). Changes in family structures, such as single-parent households, can impact children's development and contribute to juvenile violence (Abubakar, 2021). Parental monitoring significantly influences children's association with delinquent peers (Daniel, 2019).

Research highlights various forms of juvenile violence in Nigerian schools, including bullying, theft, drug abuse, truancy, and sexual immorality. Amos (2019) reported that 2,635 teens drop out of school daily, while a minor is arrested for violence every five minutes. Delinquents often come from "broken homes," lacking the stability of an intact family (Kudus & Basheer, 2022).

Vocational and technical education (VTE) can mitigate juvenile violence by equipping youths with practical skills for employment, fostering ethical decision-making, and reducing unemployment and moral decay. This study examines the impact of VTE in addressing youth violence among Colleges of Education students in Kwara State.

Statement of the Problem

Juvenile violence threatens community development in Kwara State, fueled by unemployment, poverty, and lack of education. Studies emphasize the role of VTE in providing marketable skills and reducing youth involvement in violence (Agbola & Ojo, 2017; Ogunleye & Ogundele, 2019). This research seeks to enhance understanding and effectiveness of VTE in curbing youth violence.

Aim and Objectives

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of VTE in curbing youth violence in Kwara State. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Examine male and female students' perspectives on addressing youth violence through VTE.
2. Investigate the views of NCE II and NCE III students on the role of VTE in reducing youth violence.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses are tested in the study:

$H0_1$: There is significant difference between the views of male and female students on curtailing the problems of juveniel violence through Vocational and Technical Education.

$H0_2$: There is significant difference between the views of NCE 11 and NCE 111 students on curtailing the problems of juveniel violence through Vocational and Technical Education.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Behavioral Theory, specifically Smith's (1978) Social Strain Theory (Dikko, 2019). The theory suggests that when individuals face limited opportunities to achieve societal goals, they may resort to delinquency. Strain theorists argue that crime increases when success is prioritized over lawful means. Removing frustration reduces delinquent behavior (Henry et al., 2021).

Overview of Juvenile Violence

Juvenile violence includes bullying, gang activities, and crime, negatively affecting individuals and society. High-profile incidents like the 2018 Parkland school shooting and the 2020 London knife crime surge highlight its severity. Causes include firearm access, mental health issues, and social exclusion (Hemenway, 2019). Urban areas experience youth violence due to gang disputes and economic disparities (Wintemute et al., 2020). Preventive strategies are essential.

Concept of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE)

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2018) defines VTE as training for practical skills and scientific knowledge for employment. Christopher (2019) describes it as a lifelong skill-building process. Nigeria has implemented policies to promote VTE, such as:

- Phelps-Stokes Report (1979) – Recommended industrial and technical training.
- Technical Education Development Plan (1964–1974) – Expanded technical schools.
- National Policy on Education (1981) – Strengthened VTE institutions.

UNESCO (2019) defines Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) as education combining theory, practical skills, and occupational training for economic development. VTE goals (FRN, 2018) include:

1. Training manpower for applied sciences, technology, and commerce.
2. Providing technical skills for economic self-reliance.
3. Producing skilled professionals like technicians and craftsmen.
4. Solving environmental problems using scientific knowledge.

Factors Contributing to Juvenile Violence

Key factors influencing youth violence in Africa:

- Poverty and Inequality – Limited resources push youth toward violence (Nkomo & Mathebula, 2018).
- Poor Education – High dropout rates and poor quality education increase youth crime (Alemu & Chalchisa, 2019).
- Unemployment – Joblessness leads to frustration and violence (Adebowale & Adebisi, 2017).

Solutions should reduce poverty, improve education, and create jobs for youth.

Impact of VTE on Juvenile Violence Reduction

Studies show VTE reduces youth violence by providing skills and employment opportunities:

- Johnson et al. (2017) – South Africa: Vocational training reduced violent behavior by boosting self-esteem and career opportunities.
- Adu-Gyamfi & Asare (2019) – Ghana: VTE programs promoted discipline, responsibility, and teamwork, lowering crime rates.

VTE addresses unemployment, poor education, and social exclusion, offering alternative paths to success.

Methodology

This study employed a empirical methods research design to investigate the curtailment of

challenges of youth violence through vocational and technical education in Kwara State, Nigeria. The research design included surveys, interviews, and document analysis to gather a wide range of data from various sources. The population for this study consists of youth in Kwara State, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was employed to select representative samples. The sample size was determined based on the principles of saturation, ensuring that data saturation is achieved in qualitative data collection. The target population for this study consists of all students in the school of Vocational and Technical Education, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin. A sample of sixty each of male and female students was randomly select to give a sample of 120 students used as respondents in the study. Quantitative data was analyses using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The qualitative data from interviews and document analysis was transcribed, coded, and thematically analysed to identify key patterns, themes, and narratives related to the curtailment of youth violence through vocational and technical education.

Results

$H0_1$: There is significant difference between the views of NCE II and NCE III students on curtailing the problems of youth violence through Vocational and Technical Education.

Table 1: t-test analysis of opinions of NCE II and NCE III student on curtailing the problems of youth violence through VTE.

Variable	N	-	S.D	Df	t-cal. Value	T-ab. Valve	Decision
NCE II student	60	92.0	25.88				
				4	9.91	2.10	H01 is rejected
NCE III student	60	88.0	25.88				

At 0.05 alpha level (2- tailed)

Table 1 shows the analysis of opinions of NCE II and NCE III students on curtaining challenge of youth violence through Vocational Technical Education (VTE). It was observed from the table from that the t-test calculated, 9.91 is greater than the t-test critical value, 2.10 at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis one is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the opinions of NCE II and NCE III on

potency of vocational and technical education(VTE) to curtail youth violence in Kwara Sate.

H0$_2$: There is significant difference between the views of male and female student on curtailing the problems of youth violence through Vocational and Technical Education.

Table 2: T-test analysis of opinion of male and female students on curtailing challenge of youth violence through vocational and technical education (VTE)

Variable	N	-	S.D	Df	t-cal. Value	T-tab. valve	Decision
Male student	60		78.0	18.71			
				4	9.94	2.10	Ho2 is rejected
Female students	60		70.0	18.71			

at 0.05 alpha level 2-tailed

Table 2 shows the analysis of opinions of male and female students on curtailing the challenge of youth violence through Vocational and Technical Education in Kwara State. It is observed from the table that the t-test calculated, 9.94 is greater than the t-test critical value, 2.10 at 4 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis two is rejected students on ability of VTE to curtail challenges of youth violence in Kwara State

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this research, the NCE II and NCE III students in the study area demonstrated high optimism on the ability of Vocational and Technical Education to address the problems of youth violence among youth in Kwara State and elsewhere. There were no significant differences on account of gender and geographical locations and level on the opinion of students in that regard. The objectives of producing self-reliance citizenry are being achieved through Vocational and Technical Education despite some constraints. Also, it been established that Vocation and Technical Education is still an indispensable subject when it comes to promoting vocational skills and discouraging undesirable ones especially among youths.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended as follow:

1. There is the need for the government to provide equipment needed to facilitate the teaching and learning of Vocational and Technical Education at higher level of education.
2. There is the need for Vocational and Technical Education teachers to attend seminars, workshops, conferences and in-service training. This will enable them attain professional qualification needed for efficient functioning in the classroom. Further, authorities concerned should help them in that regard with some financial and moral support.
3. Adequate and qualified and well-motivated Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) teachers should be used in the teacher of Vocational and Technical Education in order to ensure its effective teaching.

Funding

(TETFund/DESS/COE/ILORIN/ARJ/) "TETFund Projects 2024"

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