

**THE PERCEPTION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ON THE  
ROLES OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN REDUCING  
UNEMPLOYMENT IN EDO STATE**

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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**MARCH 2025**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND  
TECHNICAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF  
BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELORS DEGREE (B.Sc Ed) IN AGRICULTURAL  
EDUCATION**

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## CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, certify that Oloyede Racheal Ifeoluwa, with the matriculation number EDU2006051 in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria in partial fulfilment for the award of the B.Sc (Ed) Degree in Agricultural Education

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## **DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for his unending blessings and guidance throughout my studies. To my Parents, Pastor Matthew Oloyede and Mrs. Funke Oloyede and my brother, Emmanuel Oloyede for their unwavering support throughout my school year.

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## ABSTRACT

*This study was conducted to assess the perception of Agricultural Education students on the roles of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment in Edo State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Four research questions were raised and one hypothesis was formulated to guide this study.*

*The population consisted of 135 students from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin. The entire population was used as the sample due to its manageable size. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire titled “The Perception of Agricultural Education Students on the Roles of Vocational and Technical Education in Reducing Unemployment” (PAESRVTERU). The instrument was validated through expert judgment by the researcher’s supervisor and two specialists in the department. Its reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.77, indicating good internal consistency. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-test at 0.05 level of significance using statistical package for the social science (SPSS).*

*Findings revealed that Agricultural Education students perceived vocational and technical education as significantly contributing to skills development, economic growth, and entrepreneurship promotion, all of which influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo State to a high extent. Specifically, skill development was recognized as a vital engine of job creation, economic growth was seen as a driver of labor demand, and entrepreneurship promotion was acknowledged as a viable tool for empowering graduates and reducing social vices.*

*The study affirmed the critical role of vocational and technical education in combating unemployment but emphasized that its full potential is yet to be realized due to systemic challenges. The study recommended enhanced funding and infrastructure for VTE programs, stronger collaborations between educational institutions and industries, and aggressive public re-orientation to change the societal perception of vocational training as inferior.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

Agricultural Education is a program which involves the teaching and learning of agricultural practices including farm practices and production as well as sustainable farming. It focuses on teaching student's productivity patterns and fosters an understanding of food systems and environmental stewardship. According to Moore and Weller (2016), Agricultural education can be defined as a process of supplying individuals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to thrive in the agricultural sector. In corroboration with the above view, Matthew and Nkandu (2021) viewed the program as the systematic training available to students, farmers or individuals interested in the business, science and technology of agriculture as well as land management, environment and natural resources. The National Future Farmers of America Organization (2020) also defined Agricultural education as a systematic program of instruction available to students desiring to learn about the science, business and technology of plant and animal production and the environmental and natural resources systems.

Agricultural education is a field of study in the area of agriculture prepared to train and educate individuals for profitable ventures in animal or crop production including their associated subdivisions. This program does not only focus on individual training, it also contributes to national development by providing economic growth, food security, environmental stability and rural development. Agricultural education is one of the most important factors that helps a nation's GDP (Gross domestic product) by creating jobs especially in underdeveloped countries like Nigeria where agricultural

practices is one of the major sources of living. By equipping farmers and agricultural professionals with modern techniques and knowledge, agricultural education leads to higher crop yields and increased livestock productivity.

According to the Nigerian Certificate in Education (2019), the objectives of agricultural education include:

- To prepare graduates with the right attitude to and knowledge/ professional competence in vocational agriculture.
- To produce teachers who will be capable of motivating students to acquire interest in and aptitude for agriculture.
- To develop in the students-teachers the appropriate communicative skills for effective transmission of agricultural information and skills to the students in the context of their environment.
- To equip the student-teachers with adequate knowledge and ability to establish and manage a modern school farm effectively
- To provide a sound background to enhance further academic and professional progression of the student-teachers.

For the above objectives to be achieved, the students must undergo training in vocational and technical education so as to be sellable in the world of work.

Vocational and technical education is defined as an educational programme that inhaber individuals with practical skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a trade or occupation, this is done by preparing individuals for the world of work through hands-on learning and real world application of their skills. Ikpe (2010) defines Vocational and technical education as a branch of education that facilitates the learning of practical and applied skills together with fundamental scientific knowledge. In line with this definition, Ewere (2014) also defines Vocational and technical education as a specialized type of

instruction aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed for various sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and commerce, This programme focuses on providing job opportunities for graduates, increasing their productivity and enhancing them with skills for continuous professional development. Vocational and technical education plays vital roles in national development. According to UNESCO (2019), The roles of Vocational and technical education are: skill development, economic growth, entrepreneurship promotion and employment generation.

Skill development can be defined as a process of acquiring and improving learned ability in a particular area within a given period of time and energy. According to International Labour Organization (ILO, 2022), skill development is the acquisition of practical abilities, knowledge and attitudes required to engage in a trade or profession within the labour market. In corroboration with the above view, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA, 2022) also defined skill development as the process through which learners and workers are systematically provided with specific instructions required as qualifications for a job or range of jobs in a given occupation area. Vocational and Technical education provides individuals with practical skills that are aligned with the various demands of industries enhancing their employability by the industries or to be self-employed. Skill development is one of the major ways of contributing to a nation's economic growth because it focuses on improving acquired abilities so as to be sellable, exceptional and efficient in that area.

Economic growth can be defined as the improvement in the economic inflation of a country in a financial year, it is a process whereby a nation's overall income and income per person increases over a long period of time. Mankiw (2016) defined economic growth as the increase in a nation's output of goods and services over time, usually accessed by the growth rate of real GDP. (Gross Domestic Product). It indicates

an improvement in the economy's capacity to produce and a potential rise in the standard of living for its citizens. Economic growth is majorly attributed to the accumulation of human and physical capital and the increase in productivity and creation of new goods arising from technological innovations. Most of the economic growth in the 20th century was a result of increase in output per unit of labor and materials, the balance of the growth in output has come from using more inputs, increase in output leads to increased productivity which in turn facilitates economic growth. Vocational and Technical education plays a vital role in boosting a nation's productivity and overall economic expansion by enhancing individuals with skills necessary to be self-employed and to create employment opportunities, individuals develop skills that are needed to thrive in entrepreneurship and also develop ideas into practical business ventures which leads to reliable income stream and finances required for entrepreneurship promotion.

Entrepreneurship promotion can be defined as the strategies aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills involved in creation or extraction of economic value. According to European Commission (2020), entrepreneurship promotion can be defined as a series of strategic actions and policies designed to create a conducive environment for business creation and growth. This includes providing financial assistance and guidance, improving skills through education and fostering collaboration among various stakeholders to support aspiring and established entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship promotion entails developing and enhancing entrepreneurial values VTE also fosters an entrepreneurship spirit by teaching individuals not only technical skills but also business-related skills. VTE programs helps individuals to be self-employed equipping graduates with needed knowledge to start, manage their own businesses and fostering the creation of new job opportunities which is a way of battling unemployment and increasing the employment rate of a country.

Employment can be defined as work for employer for which an employee receives payment for his services, employment generation can be defined as creation of job opportunities for individual. According to International Labour Organization (2020), employment can be defined as a situation in which individuals engage in activities that provide them with financial remuneration contributing to economic productivity and personal livelihoods. This body also defined employment generation as the development of policies and programs that aim to create a significant number of jobs in various sectors particularly in areas that have high potential for growth and development (ILO, 2020). Vocational and Technical education significantly contributes to job creation by equipping individuals with the necessary skills to fill available positions. One of the major importance of VTE is battling unemployment by making individuals well skilled for self-reliability, through VTE graduates do not need to wait for job opportunities, they have the skills to create job opportunities themselves. By focusing on practical skills, VTE enhances employability and helps to reduce unemployment rates.

When these roles are adequately met, there will be supply of jobs to graduates and it will lead to reduction in unemployment which is one of the major problems of national development of a country. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020), Unemployment can be defined as a situation whereby individuals who are ready to work are actively seeking for a job but are unable to secure a job. In line with the above view Jimaza (2020) defined Unemployment as a situation whereby one has no job and is prepared to take a job at the ongoing rate but the job is nowhere to be found. Unemployment is one of the main factors reducing economic growth and development of a nation, it affects the country adversely by causing increase in criminal activities by individuals who are unable to find a job as a way of providing for their daily needs. When the economy fails to create enough jobs for all who are

willing and able to work, potential production of goods and services is greatly lost thus unemployment is a waste of manpower.

In summary the roles of Vocational and Technical education is vital in reducing unemployment by empowering individuals with skills which can contribute to the economic growth of their country, Vocational and Technical education also impact individuals with ideas and knowledge needs to creatively transform this ideas into practical skills as a way of generating employment for themselves.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Vocational and technical education is designed to teach those values, attitudes, skills and experience which each learner should possess in order to understand the working of the society he resides and to raise a generation of people who are self-reliant, it is expected that when individuals acquire skills in this area, there is supposed to be reduction or permanent eradication of unemployment but unfortunately due to several factors like societal stigma associated with vocational training, insufficient industry partnerships, economic factors, limited job opportunities available to vocational and technical education graduates, this factors has been major setbacks affecting VTE making its main role unachievable.

As a result, unemployment is still a major problem facing graduates because they only having skills is not enough there needs to be availability of partnership with industries, support from society for these skills to be effectively utilized. It is against these problems that the researcher intends to determine the roles of vocational and technical education in providing employment, the solution to the problems facing the programme and the perception of students on how the programme can battle unemployment.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to assess the perception of Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment. Specifically, the study determined:

1. The extent to which agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state.
2. The extent to which agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state.
3. The extent to which agriculture education student perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state
4. The extent to which agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent does agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?
2. To what extent does agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?
3. To what extent does agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?
4. To what extent does agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?

## **Hypothesis**

The hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study would be of benefit to teachers, general society, students and government when it is published in reputable journals, conference proceedings and workshops.

The study will help the teachers by providing insights into effective teaching strategies and informing them about industry needs, helping them organize the program by inputting curricula's which adequately prepare students for the workforce and aligning them to the current demands of the labour market.

The study will help the general society by increasing the knowledge of people on what vocational and technical education entails, this will help reduce societal stigma towards the program and educated individuals on how the program significantly provide employment opportunities

The study will help students understand the role of vocational and technical training as a viable career path in providing employment, enhancing self-employability and improving practical experience as well as skills development.

The study will be beneficial to the government by providing support strategies that foster a skilled workforce contributing to national development, If the government provides funding for the vocational and technical education sector there will be reduced unemployment in the country and increase in the quality of training received in the program, it will also offer recommendations to the government in improving vocational and technical systems to align with industrial needs and addressing unemployment.

## **Scope of the Study**

This study focused on determining the perceptions of agricultural education students on the roles of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment in Edo State. It was carried out in the University of Benin, Benin City among the undergraduates of Agricultural education program. The specific variables of the topic include skill development, economic growth, entrepreneurship production, employment generation as well as unemployment.

## **Definition of Terms**

The following terms were operationally defined:

**Vocational and Technical Education (VTE):** A form of education that equips individuals with practical skills and technical knowledge required for specific trades, occupations, or professions.

**Agricultural Education Students:** Students enrolled in educational programs focused on agriculture, which include theoretical and practical instruction in areas such as crop production, animal husbandry, soil science, and agribusiness.

**Perception:** The way Agricultural Education students understand, interpret, and form opinions about the role and significance of Vocational and Technical Education in addressing employment-related issues.

**Unemployment:** The condition where individuals who are capable of working and actively seeking employment are unable to find suitable jobs. In this study, it refers to the lack of job opportunities among graduates or youth.

**Self-employment:** The condition in which an individual works for themselves and operates a business or trade as their primary source of income, as opposed to being employed by an organization.

**Challenges:** The difficulties or obstacles that hinder the effective implementation and success of Vocational and Technical Education programs in reducing unemployment.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature is reviewed under the following sub-headings:

- Concept of Agricultural Education
- Challenges of Agricultural Education in Nigeria
- Concept of Vocational and Technical Education
- Concept of Unemployment
- The Role of Skill Development in Reducing Unemployment
- The Role of Economic Growth in Reducing Unemployment
- The Role of Entrepreneurship in Reducing Unemployment
- The Role of Employment Generation in Reducing Unemployment
- Review of Related Empirical Studies
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

#### **Concept of Agricultural Education**

Agricultural education is a process that seeks to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes in agriculture to learners at various levels. Its significance lies in bridging the gap between theoretical agricultural knowledge and practical applications. Agricultural education aims to improve productivity and promote sustainable development. According to Ogbuoka and Ajibo (2023), agricultural education trains learners in both the basic art of farming and the science of teaching agriculture. Similarly, Adisa *et al.* (2024) emphasized its role as a developmental process crucial for cultivating skilled manpower, directly impacting societal progress.

There are several objectives of agricultural education in Nigeria. It aims to provide youths with the principles and techniques of agriculture while motivating them to apply this knowledge practically. It emphasizes preserving cultural practices aligned

with modern agricultural methods, equipping farmers with foundational knowledge for rural community development, and promoting an understanding of the interdependence between rural and urban lives. Also, agricultural education provides specialized training in occupations such as livestock management, horticulture, food processing, and agricultural financing, while also counseling individuals on agricultural career pathways.

### **Challenges of Agricultural Education in Nigeria**

Despite its potential, agricultural education in Nigeria faces significant challenges, categorized into fundamental problems and emerging global issues.

#### *Fundamental Challenges*

One of the primary issues is the lack of qualified agricultural science teachers, particularly at the pre-tertiary level. Many teachers lack adequate educational training, leading to theoretical teaching methods that fail to translate agricultural concepts into practical applications. Consequently, students are discouraged from pursuing careers in farming, which undermines the broader objective of creating a skilled agricultural workforce. Curriculum development is another critical challenge. Agricultural education curricula in Nigeria are often misaligned with local needs, relying heavily on imported content from developed nations. This disconnect creates a gap between the skills taught in educational institutions and the demands of the agricultural labor market. As Rebecca and Ayodeji (2023) pointed out, this misalignment limits the commercial applicability of agricultural graduates' skills.

The quality of teaching methods is often subpar, with lecture-based approaches dominating over hands-on, competency-based methods. This traditional approach restricts students' ability to develop practical skills essential for modern agricultural practices. Compounding this issue is the poor motivation of teachers, driven by inadequate salaries, insufficient teaching materials, and limited infrastructural support.

Inconsistent educational policies further worsen the problem. Frequent changes in government policies lead to a lack of continuity and clarity in the implementation of agricultural education initiatives. This instability hinders long-term planning and sustainable development.

Another significant barrier is inadequate funding. Research and practical agricultural training require substantial investment, which is often unavailable due to limited budget allocations. This shortfall affects the quality of education, research, and the overall learning environment in agricultural institutions.

### *Emerging Global Issues*

The rapid pace of technological advancement presents a unique challenge for agricultural education. Modern agricultural innovations require swift assimilation, yet many educational institutions struggle to keep up with these changes. For example, advancements in food processing, storage, and marketing necessitate updated curricula that reflect current trends and prepare students for a dynamic agricultural landscape. Environmental factors, including climate change, also present significant challenges. Issues such as desertification, soil degradation, and erratic weather patterns demand innovative solutions and adaptive agricultural practices. Agricultural education must address these realities, equipping learners with the tools to mitigate these challenges effectively. Finally, changing job patterns require a shift in focus from purely academic training to employment-oriented education. The agricultural sector increasingly demands a workforce with practical skills and the ability to adapt to diverse roles, from farm management to agribusiness.

### *Prospects of Agricultural Education in Nigeria*

Despite these challenges, the prospects for agricultural education in Nigeria are promising. It holds the potential to significantly enhance food production, diversify

incomes, and create employment opportunities, making it a cornerstone for national development.

Agricultural education is crucial for transforming subsistence farming into mechanized farming, as it provides farmers with the necessary knowledge and skills to adopt modern agricultural practices. Agriculture offers numerous avenues for income generation, including livestock production, fisheries, forestry, and agro-processing. With approximately 70% of Nigerians engaged in agriculture, expanding agricultural education can create a vast array of job opportunities. Areas such as agricultural processing, storage, marketing, and land resource management offer significant employment potential. Agricultural education also plays a vital role in addressing global challenges. Integrating new technologies and sustainable practices into curricula prepares learners to tackle issues such as climate change and environmental degradation. This adaptive approach ensures that agriculture remains resilient in the face of emerging global issues.

### **Concept of Vocational and Technical Education**

Vocational education can be defined as a skill-based program which is designed for skill development and skill acquisition (Singh, 2023). It is the aspect of education which deals with general education; the study of sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge, good attitude to work and skills relating to occupations in various sections of economic and social life. Vocational education prepares individuals for occupational fields and effective participation in the field of work. Technical education is a program concerned with qualitative technological human resources development directed toward a national pool of skilled and self-reliant craftsmen, technicians, and technologists. It is the training of individuals to be technologically literate to be initiators, facilitators and implementers of technological development of a nation.

According to Akinsanmi (2023), Vocational and technical education can be defined as a program designed to develop individuals in the fields of vocation and technology in order to improve their expertise and contribute to the general growth and development of a nation and the world at large. Okolocha and Baba (2016) cited Ojimba (2012) and defined vocational and technical education as a form of education whose primary aim is to prepare individuals for employment in recognized occupation and encompasses field of study (agricultural education, business education, home economics and industrial technical education). The National Policy on Education (2013) defined vocational and technical education as a professional education of teachers implemented according to the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behavior and skills they require to perform their tasks in the classrooms, schools and wider community. Vocational and Technical Education is one of the driving force of a country because it specialize on formal and non-formal training of individuals.

Agha *et al.* (2020) opined that vocational and technical education is fundamental to the development and industrialization of nations thus the abilities, skills and competencies required by the nation are situated in vocational and technical education. In the words of Lin (2019) he asserted that Vocational and Technical Education is linked to employment generation and it facilitates the creation of employment opportunities for young and growing population. Through Vocational and Technical Education graduates can gain employment in both private and public work sector or become self-employed.

Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) is a pillar of sustainable economic growth and human development. The Federal Government of Nigeria in 2004 defined VTE to encompass educational processes that integrate general education, technological studies, and related sciences with the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes,

understanding, and knowledge essential for occupations across various economic and social sectors. This blend of education is fundamental in preparing individuals for the workforce, equipping them not only with theoretical knowledge but also with hands-on experience and industry-relevant competencies.

Vocational education focuses on skill-based programs designed to train individuals at lower levels of education for specific occupations. These programs aim to instill expertise in defined vocations, ensuring that graduates are ready for immediate employment in designated fields. On the other hand, technical education transcends specific job preparation and offers broader technical knowledge, often at a post-secondary level, to produce technicians and technically proficient individuals. It acts as a bridge between vocational training and professional education, targeting occupations that require advanced technical skills yet do not necessarily demand a first degree.

The integration of technical and vocational education creates a comprehensive system that merges theoretical knowledge with practical applications. This dual emphasis, as Akinsanmi (2023) points out, positions VTE as an important force in the technological advancement of nations. VTE promotes self-reliance and sustainability by training technically oriented personnel, thus enabling individuals to contribute directly to national development through various industries such as electrical engineering, metalwork, mechanical technology, and building construction. The practical orientation of technical education, coupled with its unique curriculum structure, ensures that graduates are equipped with the skills to drive innovation and economic progress.

Despite its importance, vocational and technical education in Nigeria faces systemic neglect. This lack of attention has dire consequences, including rising unemployment, poverty, and increasing crime rates. According to Okolocha and Baba (2016), shifts in the economic system necessitate equipping young people with skills that align with

emerging job demands, a role that VTE is ideally suited to fulfill. However, the persistent underfunding and undervaluing of VTE have left many institutions ill-equipped to meet these challenges. May (2007) points out the neglect of VTE in areas such as funding, personnel, and infrastructure, which affects the potential contributions of graduates to national development (Onwenonye, 2023).

### *Issues Surrounding Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria*

One of the primary objectives of VTE is to empower individuals to improve their general proficiency, particularly concerning current or future occupations. However, the sector faces numerous hurdles that hinder its effectiveness. Technological and organizational changes, trade deregulation, and the evolving labor market demand a highly skilled workforce, yet VTE institutions in Nigeria struggle to adapt to these dynamics (Fajana, 2019).

The overemphasis on university education in Nigeria compounds these issues. This cultural bias marginalizes vocational and technical pathways, often relegating them to a lower status. Jiboku *et al.* (2021) laments the reduced economic opportunities for work-oriented individuals who do not pursue university degrees. Paradoxically, many expatriate engineers employed in infrastructure projects in Nigeria are graduates of vocational colleges abroad. This clearly shows that the potential of VTE within Nigeria is still untapped.

Inadequate funding remains a critical challenge with respect to VTE in Nigeria. Vocational and technical institutions frequently lack the resources to build and maintain workshops or laboratories, purchase modern equipment, or attract and retain skilled instructors. Consequently, these institutions produce graduates who are ill-equipped for the labor market. Dike (2010) observe that underfunding leads to half-baked graduates, contributing to unemployment and underemployment.

In addition to funding issues, infrastructural deficits plague VTE institutions. Many universities offering technical education lack adequate laboratories or workshop spaces. Even when such facilities exist, they are often obsolete or poorly maintained (Ojimba, 2012). This scarcity of resources diminishes the quality of education and undermines the practical training necessary for technological proficiency. Akpan *et al.* (2018) estimates that 45% of professionals in Nigeria, including technical educators, have emigrated in search of better opportunities. This exodus deprives the nation of the expertise needed to sustain its technological and economic development.

The curriculum of VTE is another area of concern. Technical education programs often allocate a disproportionate amount of time to theoretical studies, leaving insufficient room for practical training. Olayele (2021) criticizes the curriculum for being overly academic and disconnected from industry needs. The reliance on foreign models and outdated teaching methods further alienates students from the realities of the Nigerian labour market.

The disconnect between curriculum design and industry requirements points the need for a complete overhaul of VTE programs. Curricula must balance theoretical knowledge with practical skills while incorporating entrepreneurial and business management training to prepare graduates for self-employment and industry leadership.

The sociocultural value system in Nigeria also impedes the growth of VTE. University qualifications are often prioritized over technical skills, creating a stigma around vocational education. This bias discourages students from pursuing technical pathways and limits their career prospects. In advanced economies, however, technical skills are highly regarded, reflecting a stark contrast in societal attitudes (Nworlu-Elechi, 2013). Lawmakers and policymakers have historically undervalued technical education, resulting in inadequate resource allocation and policy support. Without a concerted effort

to prioritize VTE, Nigeria risks perpetuating its dependence on foreign expertise and remaining technologically stagnant.

### **Concept of Unemployment**

Unemployment is a phenomenon that lacks a universally accepted definition, as nations define it according to their unique socio-economic contexts and priorities. In its broadest sense, unemployment refers to a condition where individuals who are capable of working and are actively seeking employment fail to secure jobs within a given period. This economic state of joblessness has significant implications for individuals and societies, influencing economic growth, social stability, and the quality of life.

To quantify unemployment, Nigeria adopts the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition, which classifies the unemployed as persons above a specified age who are not engaged in paid employment or self-employment but are actively seeking work. The ILO employs a labour force framework that categorizes the working-age population into three groups: employed, unemployed, and those out of the labour force. The first two categories constitute the labour force, representing the total supply of labour at any given time. This framework distinguishes unemployment through three conditions: being without work, being available for work, and actively seeking work. These criteria ensure that unemployment is measured with precision, separating it from voluntary inactivity or delayed job starts.

Unemployment can be understood through various types. Structural unemployment arises from changes in economic structures, such as technological advancements or shifts in consumer preferences. For example, industries may collapse due to technological obsolescence, leaving workers with outdated skills. Frictional unemployment, on the other hand, is temporary and occurs during the transition between jobs. It often results from mismatches in skills or geographic location.

Seasonal unemployment reflects the periodic nature of certain industries, such as agriculture or tourism, where demand fluctuates based on climatic or market conditions. Cyclical unemployment, or Keynesian unemployment, is tied to economic recessions, where reduced aggregate demand leads to job losses. Residual unemployment results from personal challenges, such as health issues or inadequate training, while voluntary unemployment occurs when individuals choose to remain unemployed, often in pursuit of specific jobs. Disguised unemployment or underemployment highlights a situation where individuals are not fully utilized in their roles, which is a common issue in economies with labor surpluses.

In Nigeria, unemployment is a persistent challenge, and is influenced by various socio-economic factors. One critical factor is the low economic growth rate, which has historically hindered job creation. Corruption, mismanagement, and unstable political environments have stifled investments and economic expansion. Similarly, poorly timed economic policies, such as the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) introduced in 1986, led to widespread job losses as local industries collapsed under the pressures of liberalization and devaluation.

Another significant factor is the societal undervaluation of technical and vocational education. Despite the potential of vocational skills to promote self-employment, many Nigerians prioritize conventional academic qualifications, resulting in a mismatch between labor market demands and the skills of graduates. This is further exacerbated by the neglect of the agricultural sector, which once provided the bulk of employment in Nigeria. With the discovery of oil, attention shifted away from agriculture, leaving many job seekers without viable opportunities.

The poor enabling environment in Nigeria also contributes to unemployment. Inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, and an unfavorable business climate discourage

entrepreneurship and investment. Rural-urban migration intensifies the issue, as individuals flock to urban centers in search of better opportunities, often exceeding the capacity of urban labor markets to absorb them.

Rapid population growth compounds the unemployment challenge. With an annual population growth rate of 3.2 percent, the labor force expands at a rate that outpaces job creation. This demographic pressure, coupled with an outdated education system, further exacerbates the problem. Many graduates lack the employable skills demanded by modern industries, leaving them ill-equipped for the workforce.

### **The Role of Skill Development in Reducing Unemployment**

Skill development plays a vital role in addressing the challenge of unemployment. As a key driver of socio-economic transformation, skill provides individuals with the capabilities to navigate evolving labor markets, promotes entrepreneurial growth, and equips them for self-reliance.

Economically, skills acquisition invigorates markets by enabling individuals to establish small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), which serve as engines of job creation. SMEs not only provide alternative employment opportunities but also contribute significantly to gross domestic product (GDP) growth. For unemployed graduates and youth, skill acquisition programs represent a pathway out of dependency on formal sector jobs, which are increasingly scarce. As the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) observed, skills acquisition promotes adaptability, enabling individuals to navigate changing economic circumstances while fostering self-reliance. This adaptability is crucial in an economy where job security in traditional employment has been significantly eroded.

Socially, skill development empowers individuals, promotes innovation, and catalyzes mindset shifts. The United Nations in 2010 aptly noted that skills acquisition

generates innovation, allowing individuals to identify and exploit opportunities in emerging sectors. This innovation is particularly vital in an era of rapid technological advancement, where traditional employment pathways are being replaced by dynamic and often non-linear career trajectories.

In Nigeria, tertiary institutions play a significant role in the ecosystem of skill development. These institutions serve as resource pools, supplying graduates who are essential to the economic framework. However, the transition from education to employment often reveals a gap in the practical skills required to succeed in the labor market. As Salihu (2014) highlights, the world of employment is changing. The notion of permanence in formal sector jobs is increasingly outdated, replaced by a reality where individuals must embrace self-employment and entrepreneurship as viable career options. This shift necessitates the integration of skill acquisition programs into the fabric of tertiary education, ensuring that graduates are prepared not only for employment but also for creating employment opportunities.

The evolving dynamics of the labor market further points to the need for skill development. Traditional career paths, once characterized by stability and longevity, have given way to a market marked by uncertainty and flexibility. Parents' long-held belief in formal education as a guaranteed route to secure white-collar jobs is no longer tenable. In response, skill acquisition programs have emerged as a critical strategy for reducing unemployment, enabling individuals to diversify their income streams and explore innovative career paths. For graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions, skill development is increasingly recognized as a means to mitigate the challenges of unemployment. The importance of skill development extends beyond immediate economic benefits. It addresses the structural issues underpinning unemployment by bringing about a workforce that is both resilient and adaptable.

## **The Role of Economic Growth in Reducing Unemployment**

Economic growth help in mitigating unemployment. Economic growth can help in driving demand for labor, promote industrial expansion, and create sustainable employment opportunities. Before the oil boom of the 1970s, Nigeria was predominantly an agrarian economy, with agriculture contributing over 60% of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the country. The sector not only fueled foreign exchange earnings and government revenue but also served as the backbone of employment. The agricultural sector supplied food for local consumption, provided raw materials for industries, and absorbed a significant portion of the labor force.

However, the discovery of crude oil and the subsequent oil boom marked a turning point in economic landscape of Nigeria. The shift from agriculture to oil as the primary source of revenue and foreign exchange led to the neglect of the agricultural sector. This overdependence on oil revenues had far-reaching consequences. The unanticipated wealth from oil created a culture of wasteful public expenditure and distorted revenue planning. It also dislocated labor from productive agricultural pursuits, leading to widespread unemployment and underemployment.

The relationship between economic growth and unemployment is well articulated in Okun's Law, which posits a negative relationship between the two variables. As economic growth accelerates, aggregate demand increases, driving industrial production and consequently the demand for labor. This relationship shows the importance of sustained economic growth in reducing unemployment rates. However, as Kemi and Dayo (2014) observe, unemployment in Nigeria extends beyond the absence of jobs to include underemployment and disguised unemployment.

Underemployment is characterized by workers receiving insufficient compensation or working below their capacities. This phenomenon affects their ability to

meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Disguised unemployment, on the other hand, involves individuals taking up roles that do not align with their qualifications or experience. To address unemployment effectively, Nigeria must prioritize inclusive economic growth that includes multiple sectors. Revitalizing the agricultural sector, for instance, would not only restore its role as a key employer but also enhance food security and provide raw materials for industries. Similarly, investing in industrialization and the development of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) can expand labor absorption capacity, creating jobs across diverse skill levels. Targeted policies are also needed to address structural unemployment and skill mismatches.

Economic growth also has a broader impact on reducing unemployment by improving living standards and alleviating poverty. A growing economy generates higher incomes, increasing consumer spending and further stimulating demand for goods and services. This cyclical effect creates a virtuous cycle of growth and employment. However, for this dynamic to be effective, growth must be inclusive, ensuring that its benefits are equitably distributed across different regions and demographics.

### **The Role of Entrepreneurship in Reducing Unemployment**

Entrepreneurship contributes to unemployment reduction through its focus on skill acquisition and practical training. Ogundele, Akingbade, and Akinlabi (2012) argue that entrepreneurship training and education significantly empower youth by equipping them with the ability to create their own employment. This empowerment is critical, especially in economies like Nigeria, where formal job opportunities are limited.

One of the defining characteristics of entrepreneurship is its inter-disciplinary approach to training, which focuses on acquiring skills needed to start and manage a business. Akpama, Esang, Asor, and Osang (2011) observe that entrepreneurial studies are instrumental in reducing unemployment and poverty. Such programs instill practical

knowledge and skills, enabling participants to transform ideas into profitable ventures. This process not only creates employment for the entrepreneurs themselves but also for others, thereby multiplying its impact on the labor market.

Entrepreneurship also addresses unemployment by setting in motion processes that create job opportunities. According to Onyeizugbe, Orogbu, and Oyigbo (2015), entrepreneurial ventures solve societal problems while generating employment. When entrepreneurs establish businesses, they require human resources to manage various aspects of their operations, from production and marketing to administration. This demand for labor directly reduces unemployment levels by providing jobs for individuals with the requisite skills and competencies.

Tijani-Alawiye (2004) emphasizes the sustainable impact of entrepreneurship in job creation. Entrepreneurs, through their innovative enterprises, nurture businesses to growth and stability. As these ventures expand, they engage more people, thereby increasing employment opportunities. This dynamic illustrates the compounding effect of successful entrepreneurship, as each new business not only addresses the unemployment of the entrepreneur, but also contributes to the broader goal of reducing unemployment in society.

Beyond job creation, entrepreneurship development helps in redirecting youth energy and focus away from societal vices such as crime and militancy. When youths are productively engaged, they are less likely to participate in negative activities. Entrepreneurship empowers young individuals by providing them with a sense of purpose and a means to achieve financial independence. Rasmussen and Stroheim (2005) further highlight the wealth creation aspect of entrepreneurship, noting that entrepreneurs pursue opportunities regardless of resource constraints, thereby driving economic development and improving living standards.

The empowerment of youth through entrepreneurship is particularly important in harnessing their potential and intellectual creativity. Enahwo (2011) pointed to the potency of youth entrepreneurial empowerment in reducing unemployment and poverty. Entrepreneurship also contributes to sustainable economic development by supporting self-reliance and resilience. Entrepreneurs learn to adapt to changing economic conditions, develop innovative solutions, and manage resources efficiently. These attributes are critical in building a workforce that is not only productive but also capable of driving long-term economic growth. In this way, entrepreneurship creates a cycle of empowerment and employment, where successful entrepreneurs inspire and mentor others to pursue similar paths, thereby multiplying the impact on unemployment reduction.

### **The Role of Employment Generation in Reducing Unemployment**

Employment generation reduces poverty and boosts economic activities resulting in economic growth. Unemployment is a major issue in Nigeria and it needs to be eradicated through meaningful and effective action. One of the ways of alleviating unemployment in Nigeria is through the informal sector. The informal sector is a significant source of employment, particularly in low-income countries where formal job opportunities are scarce. Studies indicate that the sector contributes significantly to the global labor market, generating approximately 80% of employment in India, 22.3% in China, and 6.2% in the United States (Maryland, 2004). In Nigeria, the informal sector accounts for about 70% of total industrial employment, making it a cornerstone of the labor market in Nigeria. The Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) estimates that the informal sector creates an average of 25,000 to 35,000 jobs annually.

The informal sector promotes small-scale enterprises. These enterprises often rely on labor-intensive production processes, and this further enhance their capacity to

provide employment. Ajibefun and Daramola (2003) found that microenterprises in Nigeria exhibit significant variations in technical and allocative efficiencies. This variability suggests the potential for targeted interventions to improve efficiency and expand employment opportunities within the sector. Similarly, Sanda (2006) highlighted that small firms are relatively better at creating employment opportunities compared to larger firms. This finding justifies policies that prioritize support for small-scale enterprises, recognizing their vital role in addressing unemployment.

The informal sector also plays a crucial role in empowering women and addressing gender disparities in the labor market. Fapohunda (2012) observed that women have a high labor absorption capacity within the informal sector, particularly in urban areas like Lagos.

Beyond employment creation, the informal sector stimulates innovation and resource mobilization. Entrepreneurs in the informal sector often operate with minimal capital, relying on creativity and adaptability to sustain their businesses. This environment promotes innovation, as individuals develop unique solutions to challenges within their industries. The informal sector also mobilizes capital and human resources that might otherwise remain idle, increasing the utilization of reusable materials and contributing to sustainable economic practices. The informal sector also help in integrating local and regional markets, thereby strengthening economic linkages and promoting trade.

Despite its contributions, the informal sector faces significant challenges that limit its effectiveness in addressing unemployment. Poor job security, low wages, and lack of access to formal credit and training hinder the growth of informal enterprises. Also, the absence of regulation often results in poor working conditions and limited opportunities for professional development. To fully harness the potential of the informal sector, governments must implement policies that provide the necessary support and

regulatory framework. This includes access to credit, training programs to enhance skills and efficiency, and measures to integrate informal enterprises into the formal economy. Such interventions can amplify the impact of the sector on unemployment reduction while addressing its inherent challenges.

### **Review of Related Empirical Literature**

Olajide (2015) studied the repositioning of vocational and technical education towards eradicating unemployment, this study was carried out in Federal polytechnic, Ado Ekiti. The research delved into unemployment rates in Nigeria and strategies through which the program can be more efficient in curbing unemployment. Among 100 sets of questionnaires administered 78 were retrieved upon which the analysis is based. The findings revealed that a significant number of students strongly agree with VTE as an antidote for eradicating unemployment if well positioned. The insufficient funding of the program with over 60 students admitting too low to no funding of the program in Nigeria. It also admits that there is a disconnection between the program and industries facilities and infrastructure for practical hands-on training. Over 60% of the students strongly agreed that unemployment is a problem in Nigeria. In light of these findings, the study listed out recommendations that will enable vocational and technical education effectively battle unemployment by innovating a curriculum in the program they can stand the test of time and battle current challenges, promoting skill acquisition as benchmark for students and need for staff development and training.

Ogunlade (2018) in a research delved into the perception of students on the role of vocational and technical education in reducing unemployment in College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti. The tool employed for the study is questionnaire and interview of students by the researcher, the population of the study was 810 students and 12 head of departments from three technical schools, a total sample of 265 respondents was

selected by cluster sampling while simple random sampling was used to select from students and twelve (12) heads of departments. The findings indicated the extent to which students perceive training in woodworks, metal works electrical engineering provide skills to students to become self-employed and reduce unemployment, 74.6% of the respondents agree that training in woodwork provide students with the ability to be self-employed, 59% disagree that training in metalworks can serve as a means of self-employment and 56.6% strongly agree that training in electrical engineering can serve as a means of self-employment. The study concluded by suggesting the need for federal and state governments to establish tertiary institutions where students will be provided with useful facilities for learning and professional training in vocational skills like woodwork, metalwork and electrical training.

Ekezie and Deebom (2019) in their research studied the perception of agricultural education on the role of vocational education in reducing unemployment among Nigerian graduates in Rivers State. The instrument for the study was a survey questionnaire tagged ‘Vocational Agriculture Education Unemployment Reduction Questionnaire’. The population of the study comprised 11,683 Nigerian graduates in Rivers State out of which 7,947 were male and female through simple random Aquaculture is one of the skills in agriculture that effectively reduces unemployment with over 90% of female and over 70% of male admitting to it. The study concluded by recommending awareness on the part of the graduate about the opportunities in vocational and technical education for self-employment and also governments should ensure that vocational centers are public owned for reduced price in cost of training.

### **Summary of Reviewed Literature**

This chapter discussed the concept of agricultural education as a process that seeks to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes in agriculture to learners at various levels

focusing on the challenges of agricultural education in Nigeria both the fundamental challenges, emerging global issues and Prospects of agricultural education. The concept of Vocational and Technical Education as a method of acquiring and developing skills was also discussed including issues surrounding Vocational and Technical Education. Lastly, the concept of unemployment and the factors that reduce unemployment was discussed, highlighting their roles in effectively reducing unemployment, the factors include Skill development, Economic growth, Entrepreneurship and Employment generation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHDOLOGY**

This chapter is based on the research procedures and methods that will be used for this study. These includes:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

#### **Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. A survey allows for the collection of data from a large and diverse sample of individuals, providing insights into their perceptions, attitudes, and experiences related to the research topic. The design was used to essentially determine the extent the independent variable (roles of Vocational and Technical Education) will influence the dependent variable (reducing unemployment).

#### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study was one hundred and thirty-five (135) Vocational and Technical Education Students in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education,

Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State This is shown in Table 1

**Table 1: Population of Agricultural education students**

S/N	Level of Students	Number of Students
1	100 Level	55
2	200 Level	48
3	300 Level	9
4	400 Level	23
	<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

(The office of the head of Department, 2024)

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size for this study comprised 135 students from the Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education. The sample represented all four academic levels (100, 200, 300 and 400) within the Department. As a result of the manageable size of the population, the entire population was used as the sample size. Hence, census.

### **Research Instrument**

The research instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire titled “The Perception of Agricultural Education Students on the Roles of Vocational and Technical Education in Reducing Unemployment” (PAESRVTERU). The instrument was segmented into two sections: A and B. Section A measured demographic variables of the respondents such as gender, institution and level of students while section B which contained twenty (20) item statement in which five items were drawn from each research questions. These items were rated on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE)

### **Validity of the Instrument**

The questionnaire was subjected to face validity by the researcher's supervisor and two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin. It was suggested by the experts that This research instrument (questionnaire) adopted was adequately checked and validated by the experts, necessary contributions and corrections were included into the final draft of the research instrument used.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

To establish the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) Agricultural education students in the University of Benin who were not part of the sample size. Thereafter, Chronbach alpha statistics was used to measure the level of constituency of the items. A coefficient of 0.77 was obtained which indicated that the instrument was reliable.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The instrument was administered to the respondents with the help of two research assistants. The research assistants were briefed on the purpose of the study, questionnaire, distribution and collection. The assistants helped in the distribution and retrieval of the questionnaire. Completed copies of the questionnaire were checked at the point of retrieval to ensure a high level of completeness by the participants.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (SD) and two sample independent t-test. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the data collected for the research questions while two sample independent t-test was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Decision rule

was based on mean value of 2,50 such that any calculated mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) equal or greater than 2.50 was regarded as high extent while any mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) less than 2.50 was regarded as low extent. On the basis of the hypothesis, the probability value (p) was used. If p-value was less than or equal to 0.05, null hypothesis was not retained, but if p-value was greater than 0.05, null hypothesis was retained.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter deals with presentation of results and discussion of findings.

#### Presentation of Results

##### Research Question One

To what extent does agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of agriculture education students of perceive skills development on the reduction of unemployment**

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Skill development serves as engines of job creation	135	3.50	.679	High Extent
2	Tertiary institutions contribute to skill development through vocational and technical program for students	135	3.00	.930	High Extent
3	Skill development is a reliable method of complete eradication of unemployment	135	3.19	.865	High Extent
4	Skill development program is heavily funded by state and federal government	135	2.66	.938	High Extent
5	Skill development enable individuals to diversify their income streams and explore innovative career paths	135	3.26	.763	High Extent
<b>Cluster Mean</b>			<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

In response to research question one, Table 2 showed that the respondents rated item one to five as high extent with a mean rating ranging from 2.66 to 3.50 while the standard deviation also ranges from .679 to .938. The cluster mean showed a mean of

3.12. With these results, the above mean score shows that agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.

### Research Question Two

To what extent does agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of agriculture education**

<b>students perceive economic growth on the reduction of unemployment</b>					
<b>S/N</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>6</b>	Economic growth drives demand for labor and create sustainable employment opportunities	135	3.39	.588	High Extent
<b>7</b>	Students are imparted with the knowledge of how economic growth reduce unemployment in tertiary institutions	135	2.87	.796	High Extent
<b>8</b>	A growing economy generates higher incomes and further stimulates demand for goods and services	135	3.48	.571	High Extent
<b>9</b>	Investing in Agricultural sector provide food security, growth in economy and employment opportunity	135	3.36	.642	High Extent
<b>10</b>	The focus of the government on one sector e.g. oil sector can adversely affect economic growth	135	3.45	.631	High Extent
<b>Cluster Mean</b>			<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

The data analysis presented in Table 3 depicts that the respondents' rated item six to ten as high extent with a mean rating ranging from 2.87 to 3.48 while the standard deviation also ranges from .571 to .796. The cluster mean showed a mean of 3.31. The above mean score shows that agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.

### Research Question Three

To what extent does agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion on the reduction of unemployment**

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
11	The problem of unemployment can be completely eradicated through entrepreneurship promotion	135	2.50	1.091	High Extent
12	Entrepreneurship promotion in agriculture can be achieved by exposing students to hands-on training	135	2.50	1.245	High Extent
13	Empowerment of graduates through entrepreneurship promotion redirects them from social vices such as crime and militancy	135	2.60	1.121	High Extent
14	Resource constraints is a major problem facing entrepreneurship development	135	2.53	1.138	High Extent
15	Entrepreneurship promotion contribute to economic development by supporting self-reliance and resilience	135	2.55	1.056	High Extent
<b>Cluster Mean</b>			<b>2.54</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

Research question three reveals that the respondents rated item eleven to fifteen as high extent with a mean rating ranging from 2.50 to 2.60 while standard deviation also ranges from 1.056 to 1.245. The cluster mean indicated a mean of 2.54. With these

results, the above mean score shows that agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment to a high extent.

#### Research Question Four

To what extent does agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state?

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviation showing the influence of agriculture education students perceive employment generation on the reduction of unemployment**

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
16	Employment generation reduces poverty and boosts economic activities	135	3.48	.530	High Extent
17	Generating employment opportunities in the agricultural sector is an effective method of reducing unemployment	135	3.33	.656	High Extent
18	Students' knowledge in vocational and technical education improve their survival in the world of work	135	2.96	.805	High Extent
19	Self-employment is a reliable method of employment generation	135	3.58	.566	High Extent
20	Employment opportunities created by individuals require less capital and focus more on their creativity and adaptability to sustain their businesses.	135	3.06	.817	High Extent
<b>Cluster Mean</b>			<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

**Note: SD (Standard Deviation), N (Sample Size)**

The result in research question four as indicated in Table 5 showed that the respondents rated item sixteen to twenty as high extent with a mean rating ranging from

2.96 to 3.48 while the standard deviation also ranges from .530 to .817. The cluster mean showed a mean of 3.28. With these results, the above mean score shows that agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment.

**Table 6: t-test analysis showing mean difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	64	3.00	0.26	133	-1.826	0.07	<b>Significant</b>
Female	71	3.08	0.23				

**P-Value Not Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed) (Retain Hypothesis) SD: Standard deviation DF: Degree of freedom**

Table 6 showed the mean difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment. The Table revealed a mean score of 3.00 and 3.08 for male and female respectively while their corresponding standard deviation are 0.26 and 0.23. The degree of freedom is 133 with a calculated t-val of -1.826. The t-value was significant at p-value of 0.07, because it is less than alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of research question one revealed that agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent. This is because they have been exposed to diverse ways in which skills development can serve as an empowerment for self-employment, this implies that one of the ways in which vocational and technical education can curb unemployment is by creating awareness of the importance of skill development. This finding supports that of Ngbongha et al (2020) who posited that skill development is a vital tool which enables agricultural education students to be self-sustained without depending on jobs from external forces.

The result of research question two showed that agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent. This is as a result of the awareness they have in the ways demand for labor and acquired skills reduce unemployment and positively affect the economy of the country. The finding is in line with that of Kemi & Dayo (2014) who was of the opinion that increase in the demand for labor lead to increase in employment level and reduction in unemployment.

Research question three output indicated that agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment to a high extent. This is because they are aware that supporting business initiatives and providing a conducive environment for skill acquisition and training is an effective way of reducing unemployment. The finding is in agreement with that of Swanepoel et al who assumed that entrepreneurship promotion is an incitement for positive growth and development of the economy.

The findings of research question four depicted that agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent. This is because they are aware that the creation of job opportunities for individuals in both formal and informal sector will effectively curb unemployment, when employment opportunities is made available to graduates there will be massive reduction of joblessness and all of its negative effects. This finding aligns with that of the International Labour Organization (2020) who concluded that the provision and creation of jobs to individuals in various sectors contribute effectively to the growth, development and reduction in unemployment rate of a country.

The finding in hypothesis one indicated there is a significant difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Summary**

The study determined the perception of Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment. Four research questions were raised to guide the study and one hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

The population of this study was one hundred and thirty-five (135) Vocational and Technical Education Students in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. The sample size for this study comprised 135 students from the Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education. The sample represented all four academic levels (100, 200, 300 and 400) within the Department. As a result of the manageable size of the population, the entire population was used as the sample size. Hence, census. The research instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire titled “The Perception of Agricultural Education Students on the Roles of Vocational and Technical Education in Reducing Unemployment” (PAESRVTERU). The instrument was segmented into two sections: A

and B. The questionnaire was subjected to face validity by the researcher's supervisor and two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin. To establish the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) Agricultural education students in the University of Benin who were not part of the sample size. Thereafter, Chronbach alpha statistics was used to measure the level of constituency of the items. A coefficient of 0.77 was obtained which indicated that the instrument was reliable. The data collected from the respondent were analyzed using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), Standard deviation (SD) and two sample independent t-test using statistical package for the social science (SPSS). The findings generally showed that the perception of Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education will help reduce unemployment. The findings of the study were as follows:

1. Agriculture education students perceive skills development influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.
2. Agriculture education students perceive economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.
3. Agriculture education students perceive entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment to a high extent.
4. Agriculture education students perceive employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment in Edo state to a high extent.
5. There is a significant difference between the perception of male and female Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the perception of Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education will help reduce unemployment. This simply means when agricultural education students developed the right mentality on the role vocational and technical education plays, it will help to foster entrepreneurial spirit and self-reliance.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Government should ensure that skill acquisition centers are made available, effectively equipped and accessible to all individuals to enable them become self-reliant.
2. Tertiary institutions should incorporate skill acquisition programs to their curriculum and this programs should be made available to every student.
3. Government should implement policies that promote entrepreneurship and positively contribute to economic growth.

## **Suggestion for Further Studies**

This study examined the perception of Agricultural Education students on the role of Vocational and Technical Education in reducing unemployment. The following suggestions for further research were outlined:

1. The influence of entrepreneurial skill acquisition on the job attraction and retention of Agricultural Education students in public universities in Edo State.
2. Factor affecting the Agricultural Education programme in public universities in Edo State.

3. Skill acquisition in Agricultural Education programme as a correlate of reduction of unemployment in public universities in Edo State.

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## **APPENDIX A**

Department of Vocational  
and Technical Education,  
Faculty of Education,  
University of Benin, Benin  
City,  
Edo state.  
15/03/2024

Dear Respondent,

### **LETTER TO RESPONDANTS**

I am an undergraduate student of the above-named institution. I am conducting a research on “The Perception of Agricultural Education Students on the Roles of Vocational and Technical Education in Reducing Unemployment” (PAESRVTERU)”. The attached questionnaire is designed to collect data for the study. Your kind assistance

is hereby solicited in completing the questionnaire with the assurance that your responses will be treated confidentially and use for academics purpose only.

Thank you immensely for your anticipated cooperation.

**Yours,**  
**Oloyede Racheal Ifeoluwa.**  
**EDU12334**  
**(Research Student)**

## **APENDIX B**

### **SECTION A: Personal information of respondents**

Demographic data

**Gender:** Male ( ), Female ( )

**Institution:** University of Benin ( ), Ambrose Ali University ( )

**Level:** 100 ( ), 200 ( ), 300 ( ), 400 ( ).

### **SECTION B**

Key: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (VLE), Very Low Extent ( LE)

<b>S/N</b>	<b>To what extent does agriculture education students perception on skill development influence the reduction of unemployment</b>	<b>VHE</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>VLE</b>
1	Skill development serves as engines of job creation				
2	Tertiary institutons contribute to skill development through vocational and technical program for students				

3	Skill development is a reliable method of complete eradication of unemployment				
4	Skill development program is heavily funded by state and federal government				
5	Skill development enable individuals to diversify their income streams and explore innovative career paths				
<b>Q2</b>	<b>To what extent does agriculture education students perception on economic growth influence the reduction of unemployment</b>	<b>VHE</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>VLE</b>
1	Economic growth drives demand for labor and create sustainable employment opportunities				
2	Students are imparted with the knowledge of how economic growth reduce unemployment in tertiary institutions				
3	A growing economy generates higher incomes and further stimulates demand for goods and services				
4	Investing in Agricultural sector provide food security, growth in economy and employment opportunity				
5	The focus of the government on one sector e.g. oil sector can adversely affect economic growth				
<b>Q3</b>	<b>To what extent does agriculture education students perception on entrepreneurship promotion influence the reduction of unemployment</b>	<b>VHE</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>VLE</b>
1	The problem of unemployment can be completely eradicated through entrepreneurship promotion				
2	Entrepreneurship promotion in agriculture can be achieved by exposing students to hands-on training				
3	Empowerment of graduates through entrepreneurship promotion redirects them from social vices such as crime and militancy				
4	Resource constraints is a major problem facing entrepreneurship development				
5	Entrepreneurship promotion contribute to economic development by supporting self-reliance and resillience				
<b>4</b>	<b>To what extent does agriculture education students perception on employment generation influence the reduction of unemployment</b>	<b>VHE</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>VLE</b>
1	Employment generation reduces poverty and boosts economic activities				
2	Generating employment opportunities in the agricultural sector is an effective method of reducing unemployment				
3	Students knowledge in vocational and technical education improve their survival in the world of work				
4	Self-employment is a reliable method of employment generation				
5	Employment opportunities created by individuals require less capital and focus more on their creativity and adaptability to sustain their businesses				

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## APPENDIX C

### DATA ANALYSIS FOR THE RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY USING CRONBACH'S ALPHA

**Scale: ALL VARIABLES**

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.774	20

## APPENDIX D

### DATA OUTPUT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### Research Question One

##### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	135	1	4	3.50	.679
Q2	135	1	4	3.00	.930
Q3	135	1	4	3.19	.865
Q4	135	1	4	2.66	.938
Q5	135	1	4	3.26	.763
Valid N (listwise)	135				

##### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00001	5	2.66	3.50	3.1220	.31420
VAR00002	5	.68	.94	.8350	.11186

Valid N (listwise)	5				
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**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q6	133	1	4	3.39	.588
Q7	135	1	4	2.87	.796
Q8	135	1	4	3.48	.571
Q9	135	1	4	3.36	.642
Q10	135	1	4	3.45	.631
Valid N (listwise)	133				

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00003	5	2.87	3.48	3.3100	.25050
VAR00004	5	.57	.80	.6456	.08906
Valid N (listwise)	5				

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q11	135	1	4	2.50	1.091
Q12	135	1	4	2.50	1.245
Q13	135	1	4	2.60	1.121
Q14	135	1	4	2.53	1.138
Q15	135	1	4	2.55	1.056
Valid N (listwise)	135				

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00005	5	2.50	2.60	2.5360	.04159
VAR00006	5	1.06	1.25	1.1302	.07136
Valid N (listwise)	5				

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q16	135	2	4	3.48	.530
Q17	135	1	4	3.33	.656
Q18	135	1	4	2.96	.805
Q19	134	2	4	3.58	.566
Q20	135	1	4	3.06	.817
Valid N (listwise)	134				

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00007	5	2.96	3.58	3.2820	.26612
VAR00008	5	.53	.82	.6748	.13260
Valid N (listwise)	5				

**APPENDIX E**

**DATA OUTPUT OF HYPOTHESIS**

**Group Statistics**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Role of Vocational and Technical Education	Male	64	3.00	.264	.033
	Female	71	3.08	.227	.027

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
				F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
									Lower	Upper

Role of Vocational and Technical Education	Equal variances assumed	.976	.325	-1.826	133	.070	-.077	.042	-.161	.006
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.811	124.974	.072	-.077	.043	-.162	.007

**APPENDIX F**  
**VALIDATED INSTRUMENT**