



PORT HARCOURT
JOURNAL
of
EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
(PHAJOES)

VOL. 5, NO. 1, 2020

**A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,
FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA.**

PORT HARCOURT JOURNAL of EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

(PHAJOES)

VOLUME 5, Number 1, March; 2020.

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Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt.

ISSN: 2682-633X

website: www.phajournal-uniport.org

Email: editor@phajournal-uniport.org or phajournal-uniport@gmail.com

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,
FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT – NIGERIA.



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Abstract

Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) has been recognised as a great impetus for national development in both developed and developing countries. However it appears that it has functioned better in developed rather than in developing countries. Therefore, the study investigated comparative analysis of the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the UK. The study employed a descriptive survey type. The population comprised all technical, vocational education stakeholders in the two countries. The target population comprised educational administrators from the Federal Ministry of Education in Abuja, Nigeria and Department of Education in the UK, as well as teachers of Technical Colleges in Nigeria and the UK. Out of 179 Technical Colleges in both countries, 16 Technical Colleges were purposively sampled and a total of 106 education stakeholders. Two instruments were used in the study, a questionnaire and a Structured Open-ended Interview Schedule (SOIS) with psychometric properties of content value of 0.72 reliability. The result of the study revealed that the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the UK aims at cultivating in the learners essential skills for self-employment and self-reliance; although this is more visible in the UK than in Nigeria. The study concluded that the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level is better implemented in the UK than in Nigeria. This implies that TVE needs more attention in Nigeria. The study recommended that Technical and Vocational Education should be well funded and better implemented in Nigeria.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Philosophy, Objectives, Technical and Vocational Education, Nigeria and United Kingdom

Introduction

Education is the process through which an individual acquires the intellectual, vocational and moral requirements needed to live a useful and responsible life in the society. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in the National Policy on Education indicates that Nigerian philosophy of education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen amongst others. Education, according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) is an instrument for national development and social change. It makes best use of an individual's creative potentials and skills for self-actualisation and all round development of the society (FRN, 2013). Therefore, in achieving the above aims of education, the society cannot de-emphasise certain important aspects of formal education required for realising these objectives. Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is key in this connection.

Realising the importance of skills to the survival of the individual in the world of work, it is necessary to build up skills in individuals in the society since skill development is important for harnessing the natural resources of a nation to promote economic stability. If resources are to be properly harnessed, emphasis must be placed on the acquisition of skills by individuals (Adeyonu & Carim-Sanni, 2015). Thus, TVE is critical to human capital development in any nation. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2010) indicates that TVE is an integral part of general education which



offers those learning experiences, which assist learners to understand the industrial and technical aspect of life that will contribute to the satisfaction of their purposes, needs and wants. The awareness for the provision of TVE is known all over the world (FRN, 2013; & Government of the United Kingdom, 2011). TVE fosters the development of a strong foundation in skills, knowledge and attitudes related to various aspects of economic and social life (FRN, 2013).

The goal of TVE is to enable the individual advance economically and socially by virtue of their capabilities and enhancing their sense of individual adequacy through the release and exercise of the creative potentials within them (UNESCO, 2010; FRN, 2013). Furthermore, FRN (2013) indicates that TVE aims at developing individuals intellectually, technically, morally and socially in order to prepare them for productive engagement and equip them for employment. An empirical study carried out in Nigeria by Arfo (2015) reveals that in practice, graduates of TVE do not have skills and knowledge to function efficiently in order to prepare them for future life. It was further discovered from the study that the implementation of TVE has been stifled with fund and facilities. Dike (2011) notes that, although the philosophy and objectives of TVE in Nigeria are comprehensively drawn, their implementation has been stifled with funds, inadequate number of required staff, equipment and facilities.

TVE in the United Kingdom (UK) is based on the philosophy of making the individual live a full-functional and satisfying life in the world of work after graduating from high school (West & Steedman, 2003 and Wolf, 2011). The objectives of TVE in the UK are: (a) to stimulate in individuals the ability to solve problems; (b) to foster pride in work and an appreciation for craftsmanship (Wolf, 2011).

In the United Kingdom, high school level TVE played a crucial role of fostering in learners experiences that would enable them apply technical knowledge to improve and provide solution to environmental and domestic challenges for the use and convenience of man (Wu, 2003). One of the goals of TVE in Nigeria is to help the individual enter and find a rewarding place in the world of work, the practical activity of everyday living (FRN, 2013).

Ajere & Akinbi (2017) indicate that many developed nations of the world have undergone series of reforms in TVE. For instance, the UK structured its TVE policy and practice by making it utilitarian, rather than ornamental; in order for the individual to fulfil his basic needs of life (European Commission, 2007). (FRN, 2013). The quality of TVE offered at the high school level in developed countries such as the UK, makes an individual become self-reliant because education is mandatory to the end of secondary education (Strong, 1990 & Gov. UK, 2015). This practice is quite different in developing countries such as Nigeria where the formal statement on compulsory education terminates at the end of Junior Secondary School (FRN, 2013). Osam (2013) asserts that high rate of social insecurity in Nigeria is as a result of high rate of unemployment in the country. According to Obanya (2009), for Nigeria to respond to the changing needs of the world of work, formal education must move towards cultivating in learners knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for creativity and adaptability that will help facilitate individual's self-reliance. Nigeria got her political independence from Great Britain, UK; the UK belongs to the G8 countries in the world (these are the group of eight highly industrialised and educationally advanced nations of the world); Nigeria and the UK have bilateral relations. The rationale for comparing Nigerian and British TVE at the secondary/ high school level is based on the fact that Nigerian TVE was patterned after the British TVE system. Bereday (1958), Brickman (1966), Adeyinka (1994) and Adejumo (1990) assert that comparative studies in education provide opportunity for identifying best practices in education and training. Hence, if TVE is an effective tool for national and socio-economic development in both developed and developing countries, there is need to check how it is done in order to bring about an improvement in the systems of TVE in both countries.



TVE is interested in making individuals self-employed and self-reliant through technological and vocational oriented subjects taught in senior secondary schools and other levels of education (FRN, 2013 & British Council, 2015). While developed nations appreciate the importance of TVE for their socio-economic development, developing nations do not appear to appreciate its importance as much as the developed nations (UNESCO, 2014; British Council, 2015 & FRN, 2013; Umunadi, 2014). The focus of TVE in the UK and Nigeria at the senior secondary school level appears to be the same (FRN, 2013 & British Council, 2015) but the implementation of the expectations of TVE in both countries is different; while the implementation is higher in the UK it is lower in Nigeria (UNESCO, 2015 & Osam, 2013). This informs why there is large scale employment in the UK and large scale unemployment in Nigeria (UNDP, 2010 & Winch, 2018).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were

- a) Find out the similarities in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom.
- b) Find out the differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

- a. What are the similarities in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom?
- b. What are the differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom?

Method

This study focused on comparative analysis of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. A descriptive survey type was used for the study. The population for the study comprised all TVE stakeholders in both countries, while the target population comprised the Director(s), Deputy Director(s) and Inspector(s) of Technical and Vocational Education as well as Policy Makers and Computer Analysts who have spent at least three years in the Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, Nigeria and Department of Education in England and Wales, United Kingdom. In addition, teachers of Technical Colleges in Nigeria and United Kingdom were part of the target population.

A total of 120 educational administrators and teachers of Technical Colleges were purposively sampled from Nigeria and United Kingdom. 60 educational administrators and teachers of Technical Colleges were sampled from Nigeria (20 educational administrators and 40 teachers); while 60 educational administrators and teachers of Technical Colleges were also sampled from the UK (20 educational administrators and 40 teachers). Sixteen Technical Colleges were purposively sampled from the North, South, West and East of Nigeria and United Kingdom (8 from Nigeria; 8 from United Kingdom).

A questionnaire and an interview schedule were used to elicit information from 106 respondents drawn from educational administrators (Directors, Deputy Directors, Inspectors and Computer Analysts) and teachers of Technical Colleges in the two countries. The questionnaire: Technical and Vocational Education at the Senior Secondary School Level in Nigeria and the UK (TVESL); and the interview schedule, Structured Open-ended Interview Schedule (SOIS) were both adapted from Ajala (2015). Finally,



quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used to analyse the data gathered. The quantitative data gathered for the study were analysed using the percentage, while the qualitative data gathered for the study were analysed using thematic and content analyses.

Data Analysis and Results

The data collected for the study were analysed using the percentage, thematic and content analyses

Research Question One: What are the similarities in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom?

Table 1: Respondents' Opinions on the Philosophy and Objectives

Note: Percentage of respondents in each country is in parentheses

Code	Items	Country	To a large extent (%)	To a fairly large extent (%)	To a little extent (%)	Not at all (%)	Total (%)
A1	TVE at the senior secondary school level provides necessary skills to individuals for vocational development	Nigeria	16 (29.1)	19 (34.5)	11 (20.0)	9 (16.4)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	25 (49.1)	17 (33.3)	8 (15.7)	1 (2.0)	51 (48.1)
A2	TVE at the senior secondary school level provides technological development	Nigeria	15 (27.3)	19 (34.6)	13 (23.6)	8 (14.5)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	20 (39.2)	22 (43.1)	8 (15.7)	1 (2.0)	51 (48.1)
A3	TVE at the senior secondary school level provides practical and technological attitude	Nigeria	9 (16.4)	20 (36.4)	19 (34.6)	7 (12.7)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	16 (31.4)	28 (54.9)	7 (13.7)	0 (0.0)	51 (48.1)
A4	TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to economic development	Nigeria	10 (18.2)	20 (36.4)	15 (27.3)	10 (18.2)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	10 (19.6)	26 (51.0)	15 (29.4)	0 (0.0)	51 (48.1)
A5	TVE at the senior secondary school level provides agricultural development	Nigeria	7 (12.7)	14 (25.5)	25 (45.5)	9 (16.4)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	7 (13.7)	18 (35.3)	18 (35.3)	8 (15.7)	51 (48.1)
A6	TVE at the senior secondary school level provides social life development	Nigeria	9 (16.4)	18 (32.7)	20 (36.4)	8 (14.5)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	8 (15.7)	30 (58.8)	9 (17.6)	4 (7.8)	51 (48.1)
A7	TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to national development	Nigeria	11 (20.0)	13 (23.6)	20 (36.4)	11 (20.0)	55 (51.9)
		United Kingdom	12 (23.5)	23 (45.1)	15 (29.4)	1 (2.0)	51 (48.1)

Source: Author's computation from survey, 2018

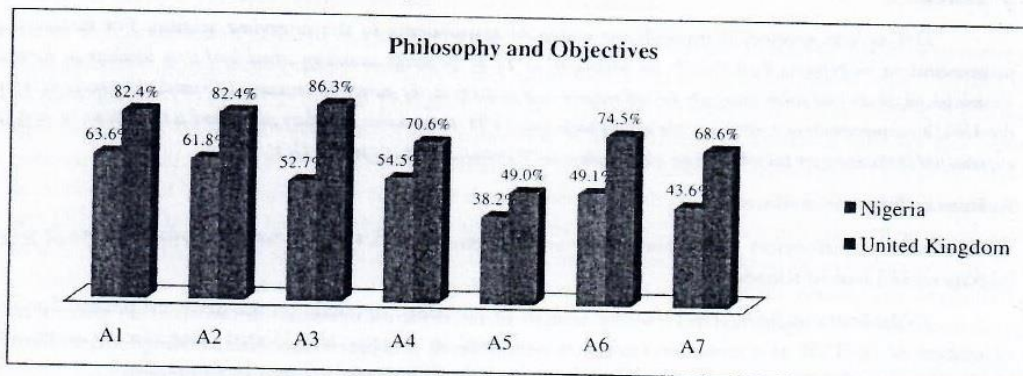


Figure 1: Opinions on aspect of philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom.



Table 1 and figure 1 above present the analysis of respondents' opinions on the items on philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom to show the similarities and differences in both countries; from where the similarities can be extracted separately from the differences.

Table 1 shows the analysis of opinions on the items on philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom to certain extents. Figure 1 shows opinions on the aspect of philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom (UK). Therefore, it could be seen that 63.6% of Nigerian respondents agree that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides necessary skills to individuals for vocational development while 82.4% of their counterparts in the UK affirm it. On the question whether TVE at the senior secondary school level provides technological development, 61.8% of Nigerian respondents respond positively while 82.4% of respondents in the UK succumb to this. In the same vein, 52.7% of Nigerian respondents agree that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides practical and technological attitude while 86.3% of respondents in the UK affirm this.

On the issue of whether TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to economic development, 54.5% of Nigerian respondents respond positively while 70.6 % of the respondents in the UK confirm this. In Nigeria, 38.2% of the respondents agree that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides agricultural development while 49.0% of their counterparts in the UK claim so. On the issue of social life development, 49.1% of respondents in Nigeria agree that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides social life development while 74.5% of respondents in the UK affirm it. Also, 43.6% of Nigerians accept that TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to national development while 68.6% of the respondents in the UK attest to it.

In an open ended question, some of the respondents in Nigeria suggest that teachers, students, parents/guardians, community leaders, religious leaders, etc. should be enlightened on the importance of TVE at the senior secondary school level. Also, in the United Kingdom, some respondents suggest that there should be constant monitoring of teaching and learning activities to ensure proper and adequate implementation and evaluation of TVE philosophy in schools. In addition, the respondents suggest that governments should employ experts who are efficient and knowledgeable who would practically train pupils in the UK so as to ensure the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in the UK are realistic.

This was supported through the opinions of respondents in the interview session. For instance, a respondent in Nigeria said that "*the philosophy of TVE at the senior secondary school level is to inculcate in learners knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-reliance and useful living in the society*"(Interviewee 1, Female; Appendix III). In the UK, a respondent said that "*the overall philosophy of TVE at the senior secondary school level is to cultivate in learners essential skills necessary for self-reliance after graduation*"(Interviewee1, Male; Appendix IV).

Research Question Two

What are the differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom?

Table 1 and figure 1 present the analysis of respondents' opinions on the items on philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and United Kingdom to show the similarities and differences in both countries; from where the differences will now be presented.



On the issue of differences in the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the United Kingdom, the results from the respondents reveal that:

- a. Education stakeholders feel that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides technological development more in the UK than in Nigeria (82.4% & 61.8% respectively);
- b. Education stakeholders feel that TVE provides technological and practical attitude more in the UK than in Nigeria (86.3% & 52.7% respectively);
- c. Education stakeholders feel that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides social life development more in the UK than in Nigeria (74.5% & 49.1% respectively);
- d. Education stakeholders feel that TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to national development more in the UK than in Nigeria (68.6% & 43.6% respectively).

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study show that both developed and developing nations of the world emphasise the role of Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) towards national development. All over the world, TVE is seen as an instrument for socio-economic development and advancement of the people and nations. Nations that have realised the need for development of TVE are adequately funding TVE in order to actualise its philosophy and objectives. Comparing TVE in different countries helps in understanding and improving educational philosophy and objectives, structure, curriculum content, as well as administration and funding of TVE. This

Similarities in the Philosophy and Objectives of TVE at the Senior Secondary School Level in Nigeria and United Kingdom

The findings of this study have shown that the philosophy and objectives of TVE at the senior secondary school level in the two countries are the same and they emphasise TVE as a means to cultivate in learners essential skills for self-employment and self-reliance (FRN, 2013 & Department of Education, 2011). This is consistent with Ravi (2015) who also found out that the philosophy of TVE should make the individual self-reliant and self-supporting which in turn increases the productivity of the individual in the society. The findings of this study have also shown that Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) provides necessary skills for vocational development in both countries. The philosophy and objectives of TVE in both countries as stated in the Nigerian National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) and the United Kingdom's National Curriculum (Department for Education, 2014) indicate that TVE provides technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for economic, agricultural and social life development.

For this development to take place, TVE in both countries must emphasise the development of technical and vocational skills. UNESCO (2010) had earlier found that the philosophy and objectives of TVE in most nations of the world include provision of skills necessary for vocational, technological, economic, agricultural, and social life development; and cultivation in the learners' fundamental qualities and values necessary for useful living in the society. The findings of this study have also shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to economic development in both countries. Both FRN (2013) in Nigeria and DfE (2011) in the UK have the philosophy and objectives of TVE to include provision of necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically. This implies that the philosophy and objectives of TVE in both countries recognise the role of TVE in the economic development of the nation. This is consistent with Arfo (2015) who also found that TVE is capable of providing knowledge, skills and attitude for employment and self-reliance and economic development of any nation.

Likewise, the findings of this study have shown that TVE at the senior economic, agricultural, and social life development; and cultivation in the learners' fundamental qualities and values necessary for useful



living in the society. The findings of this study have also shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to economic development in both countries. FRN (2013) in Nigeria and DfE (2011) in the UK state that the philosophy and objectives of TVE include the provision of necessary skills to individuals who shall be economically self-reliant. This implies that the philosophy and objectives of TVE in both countries recognise the role of TVE in the economic development of the nation. This is consistent with Arfo (2015) who also found that TVE is capable of providing knowledge, skills and attitude for employment and self-reliance and economic development of any nation. Likewise, the findings of this study have shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level is for provision of agricultural development in both countries. FRN (2013) and Department of Education (2011) state that TVE is for provision of technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development.

It is tailored towards developing individuals for gainful self-employment and semi-skilled work or sub-professional work in recognised occupations and to prepare individuals for involvement in advanced agricultural programmes. This shows that the two countries are very similar in their thinking about TVE at the senior secondary school level in terms of provision of vocational skills, economic and agricultural development (Department of Education, 2011 & FRN, 2013).

Differences in the Philosophy and Objectives of TVE at the Senior Secondary School Level in Nigeria and United Kingdom

The findings of this study have shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides technological development more in the UK than in Nigeria. Technological development relates to inventions or innovations or the systematic use of scientific, technical, economic and commercial knowledge to meet specific business objectives. Thus, this implies that adoption of technology in classroom instruction follows sequentially from the stage of procurement of technological resources to acquisition of technological skills and lastly utilisation of such skills to achieve set goals (IGI Global, 2019). UNESCO (2010) indicates that TVE practices are activities, mechanisms, innovations and strategies undertaken that have proved to be effective in reforming, improving and developing TVE. In addition, some kind of collaboration should exist between industries and technical schools, such that new innovations discovered in industries are exposed to students by the collaborators in the industries.

In Nigeria, the implementation of the 6-3-3-4 system of education which began in 1982 has led to many reforms in the education system. Among the reforms is the vocationalising of secondary school curriculum. In response to national and global reforms in technological and economic development, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2009 introduced a new Senior Secondary Education Curriculum (SSEC) which includes 34 Trade/Entrepreneurship subjects that aim at meeting technological and economic development goals and bridging the gaps in contents and delivery processes of the old curriculum (FRN, 2009 & 2013). In line with this, one of the respondents to the interview items in the UK affirms that there is a need for improvement of TVE for the development of skills that will encourage inventions (Interviewee 3, female, Appendix IV). This implies that both Nigeria and the UK are aware of the crucial role of TVE in providing technological development. Yet, there is need for improvement of TVE for technological development more in Nigeria than in the UK.

Moreover, the findings of this study have shown that TVE provides technological and practical attitude more in the UK than in Nigeria. Technological and practical attitude relate to the intellectual, moral and technical capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environment (Dike, 2011). This shows that the development of intellectual, moral and technical capacities of individuals to understand and



appreciate their environment is more provided in the UK than in Nigeria. Although, Nigerian philosophy and objectives of TVE emphasise provision of skills, knowledge and attitude necessary for employment and self-reliance (FRN, 2013), there is evidence that provision of technological and practical attitude is more pronounced in the UK TVE than in Nigerian TVE. Likewise, the findings of this study have shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level provides social life development more in the UK than in Nigeria. UNESCO (2010) indicates that the goal of TVE is to equip individuals with relevant knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes that would integrate them into the labour market, and develop individuals socially and economically.

FRN (2013) indicates that Nigerian government sees education as an instrument for national development and social change. The emphasis is that it makes best use of an individual's potentials and skills for self-actualisation and all round development of the society. Therefore, Technical and Vocational Education is seen as a means to achieve this. Despite this awareness, TVE at the senior secondary school level provides social life development more in the UK than in Nigeria. Moreover, findings of this study have shown that TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to national development more in the UK than in Nigeria. Although, the indispensable role of TVE in bringing about national development and progress is well recognised by many nations of the world (Agbonhale & Uddin, 2015), TVE at the senior secondary school level contributes to national development more in the UK than in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The philosophy and objectives of vocational and technical education at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria and the UK include provision of necessary skills to individuals for technical and vocational development towards self-employment and national development. They also include encouragement of practical and technological attitudes towards economic and agricultural development. Moreover, they include cultivation of dispositions that could enhance social life development and national development. However, these features of philosophy and objectives exist more at the theoretical level than at the implementation level in Nigeria than in the UK.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions the following recommendations are made. The philosophy and objectives of technical and vocational education which have been found to promote development of technical and vocational skills, practical and technological attitudes, and cultivation of entrepreneurial dispositions need to be pursued more in practical terms in Nigerian secondary schools than hitherto. The study also recommended that Technical and Vocational Education should be well funded and better implemented in Nigeria in order to realise its philosophy and objectives.

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