ACCESS TO TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE IN NIGERIA: INVESTIGATING THE ISSUES, PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDING

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Abstract

This study explored the state of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria, focusing on Osogbo and Ibadan. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were drawn from 225 survey respondents and documentary analysis. The findings reveal strong recognition of TVET's importance for human capital development and industrial growth, but also highlight chronic underfunding, policy inconsistency, infrastructural deficits, and a significant trust gap between government and private actors. Federal and state allocations to education consistently fall below the United Nation's Education Science and Cultural Organization's benchmark, reinforcing public scepticism about government's commitment. Respondents supported public–private partnerships as essential for TVET's sustainability, while also identifying corruption, duplication of agencies, and weak accountability as major barriers. Suggested reforms include enforceable memoranda of understanding, transparent fund management, and curriculum restructuring for job creation, and leveraging religious and community organisations as funding partners. The study concludes that repositioning TVET requires increased investment, harmonised policies, and inclusive partnerships to drive national development.

Keywords: Technical and Vocational Education (TVET); Public–Private partnership; Education funding; Policy framework; Skills development

1 Introduction

Technical and Vocation Education is a form of education that prioritizes the pragmatic approach to learning. UNESCO defines TVE as all forms and aspects of education that are technical and vocational in nature, provided either in educational institutions or under their authority, by public authorities, the private sector or through other forms of organized education.[419] The word 'Access' represents the extent to which academically qualified Nigerians who meet admission requirements are able to secure admission and the prospects of successfully running through the academic exercise.[420] In which case, when a student secures admission, the learning environment should support his development and should not be frustrating to the extent that he is expelled or has to abandon the programme. Access to technical and vocational education is provided for under the right to education because the former is a condition precedent to the enjoyment of the later.[421] The Universal Declaration of Human Right in its provision on the right to education alludes to the essentiality of the element of access as it provides that education at the elementary stage shall be free and be made compulsory for everyone.[422] Article 2(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) mandates each State to take the necessary steps, including the adoption of laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the right to technical and vocational education.[423] Towards meeting the demands of access

[419] UNESCO- UNEVOC in Action Report on Activities 2008 -2009 < https:// unevoc.unesco.org> Accessed 20 June 2022; SC Amobi, *et al*, 'Improving the Capacity of Technical and Vocational Education Programmes In Tertiary Institutions for Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition and National Development, (2021) (7) *Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies* 325.

[420] Sherifat Adesunkanmi, 'The Influence of the Demand for Public University Education on Government Budgetary Allocation for Education in Nigeria' <http://l09.cgpublisher.com/proposals/683/index_html> accessed 18 October 2025.

[421] Right to education is contained in international and regional instruments like Article 11 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) (ACRWC); and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) (African Women's Protocol). A.J. Isokpan, and E. Durojaye, 'Impact of the Boko Haram Insurgency on the Child's Right to Education in Nigeria' [2016](19) *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal* 3. Nigeria ratified and domesticated the African Charter vide the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act. Cap A9, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, the Act domesticates the Charter in accordance with sec 12 of the 1999 Constitution. The Court in *Fawehinmi v Abacha* (2000) 6 NWLR Part 660, 228 decided that the Charter is part of Nigerian Law.

[422] Article 26(1) Universal Declaration of Human Right (UDHR) 1948.

[423] Nigeria ratified the ICCPR on 29 July 1993. See OHCHR 'Status of ratification by treaty and by country' <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=127&Lang= EN> Accessed 5 January 2026; See also Article 2(1) International Covenant on Economic Social Cultural Rights, (ICESCR) 1966.

to education, the Government has the duty to offer technical and vocation education, which is affordable to every qualified Nigerian, regardless of one's economic status. The state is thus expected to set its minimum standards for the technical and vocational education,[424] in the areas of teaching infrastructure,[425] staffing and a general training environment. Individuals and private bodies can thus exercise the right to participate in the establishment and running of technical and vocational education.[426]

Access to technical and vocation education is not adequate, so much so that many intending students do abandon their quest for it. The gap is not filled by the fact that the community apprenticeship programmes are informal, not standardised and as such, not popular. It is branded as reserved for school drop-outs. There is a wide gap, in the demand for and the available training facilities given the fact that in Oyo and Osun State, the hundreds of secondary schools are not matched by the establishment of a couple of technical school and the technical and vocation based tertiary institutions in each state. Access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria faces several interconnected challenges, cutting across infrastructure, funding, policy, and social perceptions.

The purpose of this study was to examine the state of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria, with a focus on Osogbo and Ibadan. It aimed to assess how TVET is funded, the role of government and private actors, and the barriers that limit effective participation. The study also explored strategies to improve partnerships, accountability, and curriculum relevance. Its overall goal was to provide recommendations that can strengthen TVET as a driver of skills, employment, and national development.

1.1 Methodology

This research adopts a mixed methods design integrating both the doctrinal research and quantitative surveys with the supplement of analytical techniques to give the breadth and depth in understanding. Quantitative surveys were conducted among 200-300 citizens in the two cities,

[424]. Article 13(4) of ICESCR,

[425] Section 1(2)(c) of the University of Ibadan Act 2004 mandates the university to provide facilities for the pursuit of learning and acquisition of liberal education, essential for teaching and impartation of knowledge.

[426] See Andreas Schleicher in Yojana Sharma, A Focus on Skills Increasingly Links Higher Education with Employment, <www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130103154436919> accessed 4 October 2025.

which provided simple comparative statistical data analysis. The survey was conducted through a questionnaire distributed by hand and electronic means using Google Forms https://forms.gle/JiT4gZQEQwzme2j68. A total of two hundred and twenty-five (225) responses were obtained and analysed in the course of this study.

1.2 Low Funding and Investment

Government funding for TVET is lower compared to universities. The duty of the Government, which is to make education available to its citizens 62 is not discharged as adequate funds are not allocated. Between 2023 and 2025, Nigeria's federal budget allocations to the education sector have consistently fallen short of UNESCO's recommended benchmark of 15–20% of total national expenditure**.** 2023: Approximately 4.99%, with ₦1.09 trillion allocated out of a ₦21.83 trillion total budget. [427] 2024: Around 5.5%, amounting to ₦1.59 trillion from a ₦28.77 trillion budget.[428] 2025: Approximately 7.3%, with ₦3.52 trillion allocated from a ₦49.7 trillion budget. [429]

The paper notes that education falls within the concurrent legislative list and examined the pattern of funding at the federal and state levels. The Oyo State 2024 Budget Total Budget: ₦434.22 billion Allocation to Education: ₦90.6 billion, representing approximately 20.88% of the total budget dedicated to education.[430] The 2025 Total Budget: ₦678.09 billion Education Allocation (proposal): ₦145.35 billion, or about 21.44% of the total budget.[431] In Osun State, the total approved budget for 2024 was ₦273.91 billion, the Education Sector received ₦38.91 billion

[427] O.F. Olayinka & O.O. Oguntokun, 'Meeting the Demands of Access to University Education in Nigeria: An Assessment of the Government's Obligation' (2025) 2(3) *Fountain University Law Journal* 42.

[428] ICIR, 'Education sector gets N3.52 trillion allocation in 2025 budget proposal' 18 December, 2024<https://www.icirnigeria.org/education-sector-gets-n3-52-trillion-allocation-in-2025-budget-proposal/?utm>Accessed 25 August 2025

[429] Chiamaka Agwulonu & Muhammed Akanji, 'Analysing the impact of low education budget allocations on future generations' 15 January, 2025 <https://businessday.ng/analysis/article/analysing-the-impact-of-low-education-budget-allocations-on-future-generations/?utm> Accessed 25 August 2025

[430] Kayode Tokede, 'Makinde's 2024 Budget as Elixir for Oyo State' <https://www.thisdaylive.com/2023/12/13/makindes-2024-budget-as-elixir-for-oyo-tate/?utm_source=chatgpt.com>

[431]Rotimi Agboluaje, 'Makinde presents N678b budget for 2025, allocates 21.44% to education' 13 Nov 2024 <https://guardian.ng/politics/makinde-presents-n678b-budget-for-2025-allocates-21-44-to-education/?utm>gpt.com> Accessed 5 January 2026.

approximately 14.2 per cent of the budget.[432] In 2025, the total budget for Osun State was ₦427.75 billion, Education received ₦57.45 billion representing 13.4%.[433]

Private sector investment is limited due to weak public–private partnerships. Cost barriers for students, tuition fees, training materials, and tools are unaffordable for low-income families. Lack of scholarships or loans specifically for TVET students, inadequate infrastructure and facilities, many technical colleges and vocational centres lack modern workshops, laboratories, and learning equipment. Outdated or broken machines make it hard to train students in line with industry standards.

1.3 Limited Number of Institutions and Uneven Distribution

TVET institutions are not evenly spread across states, with rural areas having very few options. Students in remote communities face long travel distances or relocation costs to access training.

The National University Commission, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) set some minimum standards for running Technical and Vocation Education programmes. The NUC draws academic programmes for the universities on skills acquisition through Technical and Vocation Education (TVE).[434] These minimum standards include entry requirements for students, provision of teaching and learning resources, and the qualifications of personnel in the institutions. The Federal Government, acting through the Federal Ministry of Education makes policies to ensure that the standard of technical and vocation education improves, but the conceived policies are not implemented effectively and efficiently.[435] This is an anomaly that needs to be addressed.[436] (Olayinka Olatoke).

The 6-3-3-4 education system in Nigeria, introduced in 1987 was designed to provide a comprehensive educational framework comprising six years of primary education, three years each of junior and senior secondary education, and four years of tertiary education. A key feature

[432] Osun State, 'Osun Government Provides Analysis of Budget 2024' 4 January, 2024https://www.osunstate.gov.ng/2024/01/osun-government-provides-analysis-of-budget-2024/?utm Accessed 5 January 2026.

[433] John Adeyemo, 'Budgeting for Brilliance: Osun Allocates ₦18.7 Billion to Education, But Is It Enough to Fix the Cracks?' 11 July, 2025 <https://thenigeriaeducationnews.com/2025/07/11/budgeting-for-brilliance-osun-allocates-%E2%82%A618-7-billion-to-education-but-is-it-enough-to-fix-the-cracks/?> Accessed 5 January 2026.

[434] IS Ndubuisi, et al, 'Adequacy of Educational Resources For Enhancing Skill Acquisition Among Business Education Students For Job Creation in Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State,' (2021)8(1) *Nigerian Journal of Business Education* 41.

[435] Ndubuisi, et al, (as above) 42.

[436] Amobi et al, (n 1) 328.

of this system was its emphasis on technical and vocational education and training (TVET), aiming to equip students with practical skills for the workforce.

There are nine (9) state-owned Government Technical Colleges in Osun State. Osogbo Ile-Ife, Iwo, Ara, Gbongan, Inisa, Ijebu-Ijesa, Otan-Ayegbaju, Osu Federal Science Technical College, Ilesa (Federal Government owned). are publicly owned and those that are private.[437] Public Technical Colleges in Oyo State are based in Oyo, Ogbomosho; Igbo-Ora; Saki; Ibadan. These are are regulated by the state's Board for Technical & Vocational Education. At the tertiary level, Polytechnics and universities such as The Polytechnic, Ibadan and Abiola Ajimobi Technical University, Bolmor Polytechnic, Ibadan; City Polytechnic, Ibadan have training specialty on technical and vocational training.[438] Technical colleges and polytechnics are largely concentrated in urban and semi-urban areas, with very limited access to such training compared to conventional secondary schools, which are more evenly distributed.

Other features of TVET in Nigeria that make access more exclusive include the provision of infrastructure such as specialized workshops, machines, and ICT labs. They have to be serviced as at when due or completely replaced. Provision of consumables for training may have to be made by the Government or the cost pushed to the students.

2 PPP AND FUNDING OF TVET

Budgetary allocation to education is so low that priority is towards theoretical education which is cheaper to run. In the circumstances, the state has to first do its part adequately and that much should be seen to have been done by the state. Consequently, attention is on what the private sector can do to partner with the state on provision of TVEP seeking examples of PPP on TVET in other countries. Private sector participation can ensure Infrastructure Upgrade**,** Corporate investment can provide modern workshops, laboratories, ICT facilities, and industry-standard equipment. Reduces government burden on capital expenditure expanded to sector-specific partnerships,

[437] OSSBTVE, Osun state board for technical and vocational education <https://ossbtve.osunstate.gov.ng/?utm_source=chatgpt.com; ossbtve.osunstate.gov.ng> accessed 5 January 2026.
[438] School Drillers, 'Complete List of Higher Institutions In Oyo State' (Accredited). 4 July, 2021 https://www.schooldrillers.com/higher-institutions-in-oyo-state/?srsltid=AfmBOoqaWHep_utuX0XZjIo7UCAzCPwVOOicGk_27KA_aFWEMtujU4H1&utm_source=chatgpt.com; Exced, 'Technical Colleges In Nigeria' <https://exced.ucoz.com/index/technical_schools_in_nigeria/0-171?utm> Accessed 5 January 2026.

ensuring continuous funding streams. Nigeria can understudy several countries that have successfully run Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) in technical and vocational education. Nigeria shall gain from experiences of countries that Integrate industry needs into curriculum; Use private sector investment to provide desired infrastructure; Offer apprenticeships and work-based learning and conceive national qualification frameworks recognized internationally. Germany adopts a Dual Vocational Training System whereby classroom learning is combined with company-based apprenticeships. [439] Private companies directly fund and train students alongside public institutions. Experience on funding is further drawn from South Africa. The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) collect levies from employers to fund industry related training and apprenticeships, being funding drawn from employers in the private sector. [440]

For Nigeria to attain this feat, there has to be a pragmatic collaboration between government, industry associations, and employers. Curricula have to align with market demands. Employers share training costs as it benefits from training of skilled workforce. [441] The challenges in Nigeria is that the private sector has not been active owing to decades of decaying infrastructure and unconducive manufacturing environment. Withdrawal of fuel subsidy and payment of non-living wages explain low purchasing power of citizens.[442] Devaluation of the Naira owing to conditionality of foreign loans taken by the Federal Government affect citizens negatively. Companies are relocating to more conducive economies, [443] and the remaining that are struggling to survive battle with increasing cost of production and unsold stock, given the declining purchasing powers of citizens. Economic instability, fluctuating exchange rates, inflation, and insecurity make long-term investment planning in education difficult. Nigeria's large informal

[439] German Missions in the United States, 'The German Vocational Training System: An Overview' <'https://www.germany.info/us-en/welcome/wirtschaft/03-wirtschaft/1048296-1048296?utm>Accessed 22 August 2025.

[440] Ronald Ralinala, 'What Is SETA in South Africa? A Complete Guide to SETA, Learnerships & Skills Development' 27 July 2025<https://www.seta-sa.co.za/what-is-seta/?utm_source=chatgpt.com> accessed 22 August 2025.

[441] As above.

[442]Economic Confidential, 'Weak Purchasing Power Pushes Unsold Goods to N1.24trn, MAN Reveals,' 12 November 2024< https://economicconfidential.com/2024/11/weak-purchasing-unsold/> Accessed 16 November, 2025.

[443] OB Kenoll and EC Agedah, 'The Need for Diversification of the Nigerian Economy through a Low-Carbon Energy Mix Programme Using Nuclear Power,' (2024) 12 (2), *International Journal of Energy and Environmental Research* 58.

economy discourages the production of adequate supply of qualified TVET instructors and assessors and limits general training quality.

The private sector does not have full confidence to go into PPP with Government on funding of TVE. The trust deficit on government's management of funds and projects affect PPP long term funding.[444] The fact that governance does not encourage the members of the public to be privy to its decisions on financial issues is not encouraging to the private sector. Consequently, the private sector believes that political leadership has a different priority in its expenditures. The private sector seeks that the energy sector in the Country should be fixed,[445] such that can aid low cost production of goods, the government opts for building of roads and bridges, most times awarded to foreign based firms.

The closest Nigerian equivalent to South Africa's Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) is Nigeria's National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), [446] though the mandate and structure are not an exact match. The legal basis of the NBTE Act include the regulation and coordination of technical and vocational education at polytechnics, monotechnics, and technical colleges.[447] It develops and reviews curricula for National and Higher National Diploma programs.[448] It accredits institutions and programs. It liaises with industry for curriculum relevance. The difference from SETA is that the NBTE focuses more on institutional regulation and quality assurance, and not on direct employer levy collection or grant disbursement. The NBTE has less direct private-sector governance involvement than with SETA.

2.1 The Industrial Training Fund

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was established under the Industrial Training Fund Act, 1971.[449] It applies a levy system representing a percentage of payroll as training contribution. It is drawn from employers with not less than five employees, but with a turn-over of N50m and above

[444] Nimi Princewill, 'Nigerians outraged over government spending plans as millions face hardship' 3 November 2023<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/11/03/africa/nigerians-outraged-over-presidential-yacht-intl> Accessed 22 August 2025.
[445] Kenoll and Agedah (n 25) 58.
[446] Section 5 of NBTE Act *No. 9 of 1977* (as amended).
[447] NBTE Act (as amended).
[448] Section 5(b) NBTE Act *No. 9 of 1977* (as amended).
[449] Act No. 9 of 1977 (as amended).

per annum. [450] It provides funding, training, and apprenticeship schemes for industry-specific skills. It works closely with companies to upgrade workforce competencies. [451] The ITF and the SETA levy grant supports the employee-focused skills development. If Nigeria wants a true SETA-like model, it would need sector-specific skills authorities funded by levies and jointly governed by government, employers, and unions. There is a weak legal/policy framework for PPP in TVET that compares the PPP laws and frameworks for infrastructure in Nigeria, [452] which are money spinning projects.

Equally, there is a limited sector-specific policy guiding private funding of TVET.[453] Uncoordinated government's intervention in the TVET oversight is split between NBTE, ITF, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), and state ministries, which creates overlaps and inefficiency. There is no unified law that merges NBTE's academic oversight with ITF's levy-grant funding to create sector-focused partnerships, capable of positioning the nation on the path of economic development.

Another gap in the TVE is the absence of political will, such that may provide take off grants for trainees. Capital provision and adequacy of it is essentials if TVE will thrive.[454] There is the need to develop a Sector-Specific TVET PPP Policy capable of merging the NBTE's regulatory role with ITF's levy structure in a "Nigerian SETA" model. There is the need to build a strong monitoring and accountability framework to build trust in public-private funding management. TVET's curricula often do not match current labour market needs. [455] Thus, there is a disconnect between the current needs of the nation and what the university curriculum provides.

Policy and duplication of agencies[456] cause duplication and inefficiency.

[450]Section 6(1) ITF Act 2011.
[451] Section 4 ITF Act 2004(As amended).
[452] Ronald Ralinala, 'What Is SETA in South Africa? A Complete Guide to SETA, Learnerships & Skills Development' 27 July 2025<https://www.seta-sa.co.za/what-is-seta/?utm_source=chatgpt.com> accessed 22 August 2025.
[453] Section 4 ITF Act 2004(As amended).
[454]Ndubuisi, et al, (n 16) 43.
[455] Section 1(1) *No. 9 of 1977* (as amended).
[456] NBTE, ministries, state boards.

3 Data Presentation.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age Range	Frequency (N = 225)	Percentage (%)
18–25 years	55	24.66
26–35 years	77	34.25
36–45 years	71	31.51
46 years and above	22	9.58
Total	**225**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

The largest proportion of respondents were within the 26–35 years age group (34.3%), followed closely by those aged 36–45 years (31.5%). Younger respondents (18–25 years) represented nearly one-quarter (24.7%), while those aged 46 years and above accounted for the least share (9.6%). This distribution shows that technical and vocational education is most actively discussed among individuals in their productive and economically active years (26–45years).

Table 2

Highest Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency (N = 225)	Percentage (%)
Bachelor's Degree (B.Sc./B.Ed./B.A. or equivalent)	86	38.36
Postgraduate Degree (M.Sc./MBA/Ph.D.)	71	31.51
Higher National Diploma (HND)	40	17.81
Ordinary National Diploma (OND)/NCE	28	12.32
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

The majority of respondents possessed a Bachelor's degree (38.4%), followed by Postgraduate qualifications (31.5%). Those with HND and OND/NCE represented 17.8% and 12.3% respectively. This shows that the sample comprised mainly of individuals with tertiary-level education, indicating a well-informed respondent base.

Table 3

Occupation

Occupation	Frequency (N = 225)	Percentage (%)
Private Sector Employees	96	42.47
Public Sector Employees	83	36.99
Self-Employed/Entrepreneurs	31	13.70
Students/Unemployed	15	6.85
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

Most respondents were employed either in the private sector (42.5%) or public sector (37%), with a smaller proportion being self-employed (13.7%) and students/unemployed (6.9%). This occupational distribution reflects the relevance of technical education to diverse employment categories.

Table 4

Place of Residence

Residence	Frequency (N = 225)	Percentage (%)
Osogbo	129	57.53
Ibadan	96	42.47
Total	225	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Author's Compilation).

A majority of the respondents reside in Osogbo (57.5%), while 42.5% live in Ibadan. This indicates a fairly balanced representation from both study locations, ensuring that the findings reflect experiences across the two urban centres.

3.1 Research Question 1.

Current level and forms of public–private investment in technical education.

Table 5

Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Public–private sector funding is necessary for sustainable TVET in Osogbo and Ibadan.	143	67	8	4	3	225	4.52	Accepted
Religious organisations should partner with the Federal Government to co-finance TVET.	118	85	12	6	4	225	4.36	Accepted
Public sector should have the primary responsibility for funding TVET.	92	87	21	17	8	225	4.06	Accepted
Private sector should have the primary responsibility for funding TVET.	77	79	28	26	15	225	3.79	Accepted
Federal and State governments have made sufficient investment in TVET in Osogbo and Ibadan.	41	58	36	47	43	225	3.03	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Author's Compilation).

Decision Rule: Responses were weighted on a 5-point Likert scale as follows: **SA = 5, A = 4, N = 3, DA = 2, SD = 1**.

Mean score ≥ 3.00 → Accepted, **Mean score < 3.00 → Rejected.**

Findings reveal overwhelming support for public–private collaboration in TVET funding, with over 90% agreeing that joint investment is essential. However, respondents are divided on whether

funding responsibility should primarily lie with the public sector or private sector, and most disagree that governments have already made sufficient investment.

3.2 Research Question 2.

Influence of socio-economic, government policy, and infrastructural factors

Table 6

Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Socio-economic conditions in Osogbo and Ibadan significantly influence investment in TVET.	133	69	12	7	4	225	4.41	Accepted
A strong legal and policy framework encourages private sector funding of TVET.	128	74	13	7	3	225	4.41	Accepted
Levy systems requiring large employers to contribute a percentage of profit to TVET are desired.	119	79	14	8	5	225	4.33	Accepted
Increasing public–private partnerships in infrastructure building does not extend to TVET.	105	72	18	18	12	225	4.07	Accepted
Integrating NBTE's regulation with ITF's levy-grant system will enhance partnerships in TVET.	131	73	12	6	3	225	4.44	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

Respondents strongly agree that socio-economic conditions, legal frameworks, and levy systems play a major role in shaping private sector investment. The integration of regulatory and funding systems is seen as a crucial strategy for strengthening partnerships.

3.3 Research Question 3.

Barriers hindering effective private sector participation

Table 7

Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Corruption in public institutions discourages private sector participation.	137	61	11	9	7	225	4.39	Accepted
Frequent changes in government policies hinder long-term private investment in TVET.	132	66	13	9	5	225	4.38	Accepted
Overlaps and inefficiencies among agencies (NBTE, ITF, NDE, State Ministries) discourage collaboration.	124	71	15	10	5	225	4.33	Accepted
Lack of transparency and accountability in public sector fund management hinders co-funding of TVET.	135	64	13	7	6	225	4.40	Accepted
Over-reliance of states on Federal Government limits state funding of TVET.	121	73	14	11	6	225	4.30	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

The greatest barriers identified are corruption, policy instability, and lack of transparency in fund management. Respondents believe that inefficiencies among government agencies and over-reliance on federal funding discourage meaningful private sector engagement.

3.4 Research Question 4

Practical strategies for enhancing private sector engagement.

Table 8

Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Public–private partnerships in TVET should be guided by clear and enforceable MoUs.	141	64	10	6	4	225	4.48	Accepted
Transparency and sound financial management will improve sustainability of PPP initiatives in TVET.	136	69	11	5	4	225	4.46	Accepted
Religious organisations with large membership should sponsor members to enroll in TVET programs.	117	72	16	11	9	225	4.23	Accepted
TVET programs should prioritise production of job creators rather than job seekers.	139	67	9	6	4	225	4.47	Accepted
Industrialisation driven by TVET is essential for increasing employment in Nigeria.	144	63	8	6	4	225	4.50	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2025 (Authors' Compilation).

Respondents emphasized formalized partnerships (MoUs), transparency, and accountability as key to sustainability. Strong consensus also exists on the role of religious organisations, job-creation focus, and industrialisation through TVET in strengthening private sector engagement.

4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal the complex realities surrounding the funding, governance, and sustainability of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria, The results confirm existing literature while offering empirical evidence of stakeholders' perceptions and

aspirations for the future of TVET in the country. A central theme is the overwhelming consensus on the need for public–private collaboration in TVET financing and development. Respondents were nearly unanimous that sustainable technical education cannot rely on government alone but requires private sector involvement. This aligns with UNESCO's call for shared responsibility and reflects literature highlighting the inadequacy of state funding and the importance of partnerships with industry and other stakeholders. While public sector responsibility remains central, respondents also recognised the potential role of religious organisations and community actors as financiers, pointing to untapped opportunities within civil society to bridge funding gaps.

Despite this recognition, respondents expressed scepticism about government's commitment. A majority rejected the notion that adequate investment has been made in TVET, a perception supported by evidence that federal spending on education between 2023 and 2025 consistently fell below UNESCO's 15–20% benchmark, ranging from 4.9% to 7.3%. State allocations, particularly in Osun, also remained below recommended levels. Such underfunding highlights the gap between policy aspirations and institutional realities, reinforcing widespread distrust of government promises in the education sector.

The study further found the influence of socio-economic, policy, and infrastructural factors on private sector participation. Respondents strongly supported integrating the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)'s regulatory role with the Industrial Training Fund (ITF)'s levy system, reflecting demand for a more streamlined governance structure. This resonates with calls in the literature for a "Nigerian SETA model," inspired by South Africa's Sector Education and Training Authorities, which pool employer levies to fund industry-driven training. Such a system would address the current problem of fragmented oversight by NBTE, ITF, the National Directorate of Employment, and state ministries.

Barriers to private sector involvement remain significant. Respondents identified corruption, lack of transparency, frequent policy shifts, and duplication of agency roles as major impediments, all of which mirror concerns in the literature about weak governance and accountability. These systemic flaws have created a profound trust deficit between government and private investors, discouraging long-term engagement. Additionally, the heavy reliance of state governments on federal allocations was noted as a limiting factor that undermines state-led TVET initiatives.

In addressing these challenges, respondents expressed strong support for a range of reforms. These include the development of enforceable Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to formalise partnerships, the institutionalisation of transparency and accountability in fund management, and curriculum reforms that emphasise entrepreneurship and the production of job creators rather than job seekers. Such reforms are consistent with global best practices, including Germany's dual vocational training system, which integrates classroom learning with industry partnerships to ensure market relevance. The involvement of religious organisations in sponsoring trainees was also identified as a credible strategy, broadening the partnership landscape beyond government and corporations.

Overall, the findings present a dual reality: TVET is widely valued as essential for human capital development, yet its growth is undermined by underfunding, governance inefficiencies, and weak accountability. While there is willingness among stakeholders to pursue reform, systemic trust and policy stability remain critical obstacles. Sustainable public–private partnerships will therefore require not only increased funding but also stronger accountability frameworks, harmonised governance, and diversified stakeholder involvement, particularly from communities and faith-based organisations. Nigeria's TVET system stands at a crossroads. With adequate political will, transparent management, and inclusive partnerships, TVET can be repositioned from its current underfunded state into a central pillar of skills development, industrialisation, and employment creation.

5 Conclusion

This study examined the state of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria, with particular focus on Osogbo and Ibadan. The findings confirm that while TVET is widely acknowledged as central to national development, it remains constrained by chronic underfunding, policy inconsistency, infrastructural gaps, and a persistent trust deficit between government and private stakeholders. Respondents strongly supported public–private collaboration in financing TVET, recognising that government alone cannot meet the growing demand. However, widespread scepticism about government commitment reflects broader realities of inadequate funding. Between 2023 and 2025, Nigeria's federal allocation to education ranged from 4.9% to 7.3% of total budgets, well below UNESCO's 15–20% benchmark, while

states such as Osun consistently allocated less than 15%. These shortfalls reinforce doubts about the government's willingness and capacity to adequately prioritise TVET. The study also identified systemic barriers that deter private sector participation, these challenges mirror the inefficiencies of fragmented mandates within agencies such as NBTE, ITF, and state ministries, emphasizing the need for a unified governance framework. Despite these challenges, the findings point to clear opportunities for reform. Respondents endorsed enforceable Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to guide partnerships, stronger accountability in fund management, and curriculum reforms that emphasise job creation and industrialisation. Additionally, the involvement of religious and community organisations was highlighted as an under-utilised but credible means of expanding access and funding. Such reforms are consistent with international best practices. TVET in Nigeria stands at a crossroads: widely valued yet undermined by weak governance and funding. Its repositioning will depend on increased investment, institutional trust-building, harmonised policy frameworks, and inclusive partnerships that align education with national development needs.

6 Policy Implications and Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study proposes the following actionable measures to strengthen technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria:

6.1 Funding Priority

Federal and state governments should raise education allocations to align with UNESCO's 15–20% benchmark on funding of education, which ensures a dedicated share for TVET. Investment must focus on modernising workshops, laboratories, ICT facilities, and consumables to improve training quality.

6.2 Develop a Unified TVET Public–Private Partnership Policy

A coordinated framework should merge the regulatory role of NBTE with the levy system of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), in a way capable of creating a Nigerian equivalent of South Africa's SETA model. This would streamline oversight, reduce duplication, and ensure predictable funding streams from both government and industry.

6.3 Institutionalise Transparency and Accountability

To address the trust deficit, robust monitoring systems should be established, with mandatory public disclosure of TVET budgets and expenditures. Transparent fund management will encourage sustained private and community investment.

6.4 Strengthen Public–Private and Community Engagement

Enforceable Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) should guide all PPP arrangements. Religious organisations, professional associations, and community groups should be integrated as active sponsors and co-founders of TVET initiatives, given their credibility and wide social reach.

6.5 Curriculum Reform and Labour Market Alignment

TVET curricula should prioritise entrepreneurship and innovation, equipping learners to become job creators rather than job seekers. Partnerships with industries should be deepened to promote apprenticeships, dual training models, and practical, market-oriented skills development.