

TVET Quality Assurance in Nigeria Towards Achieving SDG 2030: Ending Poverty Through Skill Development

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DOI: 10.56201/rjpst.vol.8.no2.2025.pg75.89

Abstract

This research assessed quality assurance mechanisms in Nigerian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system and proposes strategic interventions aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to poverty reduction and economic growth. The study identifies key barriers impeding effective TVET implementation, including inadequate funding, a shortage of qualified instructors, outdated curricula, weak regulatory frameworks, and insufficient industry collaboration. These factors have led to skills mismatches, limiting graduates' employability and hindering the economic potential of the TVET system. Additionally, cultural perceptions of vocational education and a lack of coordination between public and private sectors further contribute to the inefficiencies within the system. The research proposes several strategic interventions to strengthen TVET quality assurance, beginning with the development of a national framework that ensures standardized quality benchmarks across institutions. It emphasizes the need for continuous teacher training and professional development, industry collaboration for curriculum alignment, and the adoption of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) to focus on practical, real-world skills. The study also advocates for increased funding to improve infrastructure, the integration of digital literacy and e-learning, and the strengthening of public-private partnerships to enhance the quality and relevance of TVET programs. The research concludes that by implementing these interventions, Nigerian TVET system can better align with labor market demands, improve graduate employability, and contribute to poverty alleviation.

Keywords: *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Poverty Eradication, SDG 2030, Quality Assurance, Nigeria, Skill Development.*

Introduction

Education is widely acknowledged as a fundamental solution to global socio-economic challenges. Nations and individuals turn to education to combat issues such as poverty, ignorance, climate change, malnutrition, unemployment, hunger, inadequate housing, poor governance, and communication systems (Elujekwute, 2019). Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has gained global recognition as an empowering tool for the youth, promoting sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic development (Ike, Okanya & Opeyemi, 2020; UNESCO, 2022). TVET encompasses education, training, and skills

development across a wide range of occupational fields, including production, services, and livelihoods (UNESCO, 2015).

TVET plays a crucial role in sustainable development, particularly in reducing poverty and achieving social inclusion. Central to poverty eradication is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with SDG 1 emphasizing inclusive economic growth, social protection systems, and interventions designed to lift people out of poverty while ensuring access to essential services. The United Nations highlights poverty eradication as the most significant global challenge and an essential prerequisite for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Effective poverty alleviation strategies focus on empowering marginalized communities such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples enabling their full participation in society and improving access to opportunities for socio-economic advancement. Addressing structural inequalities, promoting equitable resource distribution, and fostering inclusive governance are key elements of the SDGs' poverty reduction efforts.

Aluko (2017) defined poverty as a lack of essential life necessities, including adequate food, healthcare, water, education, housing, and employment. The World Bank reports that over 700 million people worldwide still live in extreme poverty, struggling to meet basic needs for food, shelter, and healthcare (World Bank, 2021). SDG 1 offers a comprehensive framework for mobilizing resources, building partnerships, and implementing interventions aimed at reducing poverty and promoting shared prosperity. It aligns with other SDGs such as SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 4 (Quality Education) (Campagnolo & Davide, 2019). The rise in youth unemployment is largely attributed to the absence of functional education systems that prioritize practical skills training and encourage self-employment (Nwachukwu, Ohanele & Egoronu, 2024). There is an urgent need to revitalize TVET to address societal needs and equip individuals with the competencies required for self-reliance, job creation, and wealth generation. Countries like Germany and Singapore, known for their robust dual education systems, demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating classroom learning with industry-based training to improve employment outcomes (Schwab & Zimmermann, 2022).

Nigerian TVET system must adopt a comprehensive approach to quality assurance, focusing on curriculum design, training delivery, infrastructure, and graduate assessment. Such efforts are vital not only for producing industry-ready graduates but also for ensuring TVET serves as a tool for poverty eradication by fostering economic participation and inclusivity. Quality assurance is central to TVET's success in fulfilling its poverty-alleviation mission. It ensures that qualifications, assessments, and program delivery meet certain standards, fostering confidence among stakeholders such as students, employers, and policymakers (Gwang-Chol, 2021). Global examples underscore the importance of quality assurance in TVET. However, despite its potential, the effectiveness of TVET in Nigeria is hindered by systemic challenges, including inadequate quality assurance mechanisms, insufficient funding, and mismatches between training and labor market needs (Adebayo, Adekunle & Abimbola 2023). The intersection of TVET quality assurance and SDG 1 presents a unique opportunity to address Nigerian broader development challenges. Recent policies, such as the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) and the establishment of Sector Skills Councils, aim to standardize training and align programs with labor market needs, signaling a growing recognition of TVET strategic importance (FGN, 2023). However, these initiatives require

effective coordination, stakeholder buy-in, and sustained funding to achieve their desired impact (Bolarinwa, Osifo & Aluko, 2023).

In Nigeria, the absence of standardized frameworks and effective monitoring and evaluation systems undermines the outcomes of TVET programs. Issues such as discrepancies in curriculum implementation, varying trainer competence, and the lack of systematic accreditation processes have been linked to the subpar performance of TVET institutions (Oseni, Ajibola & Ugochukwu, 2023). This study aims to address these shortcomings by aligning Nigeria's TVET system with international best practices to maximize its potential in contributing to SDG 1.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria

Nigeria, like many nations, recognizes the critical role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in fostering technological progress and socio-economic development (Tripney & Hombrados, 2013; Ezenwafor, 2015; Akanbi, 2017; Okorafor & Nnajiifo, 2017). TVET has emerged globally as a key strategy for skill acquisition in both developing and developed countries (Olabiyi & Chinedu, 2018). In British Tropical Africa, the 1925 Memorandum on Education policy mandated technical education to address the growing demand for middle-level technical workforce (Ogundele, Waziri & Idris, 2014). Nigeria further prioritized TVET with its Ten-Year Plan for Development and Welfare in 1946, leading to the establishment of educational institutions dedicated to technical training (Bello & Muhammad, 2021).

The early vocational institutions included the Hope Waddell Training Institute in Calabar, Boys' Vocational Schools in Ibiono, and Blaize Memorial Industrial School in Abeokuta. These institutions, staffed primarily by foreign expatriates and missionaries, focused on trades such as blacksmithing, weaving, farming, and canoe-making through informal apprenticeship systems designed to meet colonial labor needs (Akpan, Usoro & Ibritam, 2013). Admission to trade centers was open to primary school graduates, who underwent three years of residential training and two years of apprenticeship, culminating in City and Guilds certification. Technical Institutes provided more advanced training, offering two years of post-secondary coursework followed by industrial training for an Ordinary National Certificate (Kilby, 1964). The colonial administration further supported technical training through government department programs, including those in agriculture, marine, public works, and railways. Between 1930 and 1960, institutions like the Yaba Technical Institute and Kaduna Technical Institute were established, forming the foundation of Nigeria's first tertiary technical institutions (Bello & Muhammad, 2021).

Addressing the shortage of technical manpower remained a priority before and after Nigerian independence in 1960. In 1959, a nine-member committee, chaired by Ashby and comprising Nigerian, American, and British experts, was tasked with reviewing the education system. Their recommendations shaped the National Policy on Education, first introduced in 1977 and revised multiple times (Okoye & Okwelle, 2017). A key outcome was the adoption of the 6-3-3-4 education system in 1973, which integrated vocational and technical education at all levels, from primary to university (Wodi & Dokubo, 2012; Oyeleke & Akinyeye, 2013). The Ashby Committee emphasized expanding vocational and technical education to include both youth and adults, viewing this as essential for economic growth, technological innovation, industrial expansion, and equitable opportunities (Bello & Muhammad, 2021). Their report

advocated introducing pre-vocational and pre-technical subjects in secondary schools and craftsman training at Technical Colleges, trade centers, and vocational schools. It also called for embedding technical education in Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology curricula (Anibueze, 2013; Akpan, Usoro & Ibritam, 2013).

Post-independence, Nigeria upgraded several Technical Institutes to Polytechnics, such as Yaba College of Technology in 1963, Kaduna Polytechnic in 1968, Auchu Polytechnic in 1972, and the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) in Enugu in 1973 (Ogundele, Waziri & Idris, 2014). These advancements aimed to enhance technical education role in national development. To improve access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), the Federal Polytechnic Act was passed in July 1979 and later amended to facilitate the establishment of additional Federal Polytechnics across Nigeria (Akpan, Usoro, & Ibritam, 2013). State governments also contributed by creating Polytechnics, Technical Colleges, and Vocational institutions, particularly during the Second Republic when education became a concurrent responsibility under the Nigerian Constitution. This evolution highlights a shift from traditional methods of skills transfer to a structured system aimed at fostering economic growth and empowering youth (Okorafor & Nnajiifo, 2017; Zite & Deebom, 2017; Oviawe, 2018; Ayentimi, Burgess & Dayaram, 2018).

TVET encompasses a range of stakeholders, including Technical Colleges, Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs), Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), Monotechnics, Specialized Institutions, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education (Technical). Universities, informal TVET providers, the Nigerian Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), industry players, regulatory bodies, and funding agencies also play a role (Ogwo & Ezekoye, 2020). The Nigerian National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) defines TVET as an educational process combining general education with the study of technologies, sciences, and practical skills relevant to various economic and social sectors. According to Ayonmike, Okwelle, and Okeke (2015), Edokpolor and Owenvbiugie (2017), TVET equips individuals with essential skills for productive work, empowerment, and socio-economic development, ensuring sustainable livelihoods in a rapidly changing work environment. Regulatory agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) are tasked with ensuring quality standards. The NUC oversees universities' programs, infrastructure, staff, and instructional materials (Ovbiagele, 2015; Oladele, 2015; Olaleye & Oyewole, 2016; Ijeoma & Adaora, 2021), while the NBTE is responsible for monitoring and accrediting Polytechnics, Technical Colleges, and other TVET institutions (NBTE, 2013; Ovbiagele, 2015; Oladele, 2015).

Despite TVET potential, Nigeria has not fully realized the benefits, as evidenced by persistent issues such as illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty (World Bank, 2018; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2019; AUCDIC, 2017), shortage of qualified TVET instructors (Ayonmike, Okwelle & Okeke, 2015), poor remuneration (Nwogu & Nwanoruo, 2011), and inadequate supervision and evaluation of programs. Odukoya, Bowale, and Okunlola (2018) identify barriers such as career stagnation for educators, discrimination against TVET graduates, and low enrollment rates. Bolarinwa (2015), Okadi, Agu, and Onu (2021) highlight additional issues, including insufficient infrastructure, limited industry collaboration, and inadequate in-service training for educators. Other challenges include poor public perception of TVET, procrastination in implementing reforms, ineffective curriculum designs, and the absence of a dedicated quality assurance unit. Furthermore, instructional methods often fail to adopt

competency-based approaches essential for skill assessment and poverty alleviation. TVET educators are also frequently excluded from poverty eradication policy formulation, hindering effective policy implementation. These challenges collectively undermine TVET role in addressing unemployment, poverty and advancing socio-economic development.

Concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), introduced by the United Nations in 2015, are a global initiative aimed at eradicating poverty, protecting the environment, and fostering peace and prosperity by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets, the SDGs address critical challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and environmental degradation (Abraham & Pingali, 2017; United Nations, 2015). These goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and advocate for a holistic approach to sustainable development (Abraham & Pingali, 2017). Central to the SDGs is the principle of inclusivity, ensuring no one is left behind in the quest for a sustainable future. A key aspect of the SDGs is their interconnected nature, which necessitates integrated solutions. For example, progress in quality education (Goal 4) has direct implications for gender equality (Goal 5), economic growth (Goal 8), and reduced inequalities (Goal 10) (Le Blanc, 2015). This interdependence highlights the need for collaboration among governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals to address global challenges comprehensively (Sachs et al., 2019). Achieving the SDGs demands innovation, resilience, and coordinated efforts from all stakeholders. Despite existing barriers, the global community must remain committed to transforming aspirations into tangible actions to secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Among the SDGs, Goal 1 (SDG 1) seeks to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere" by 2030. It addresses the multidimensional nature of poverty, encompassing income, access to basic services, and social protection. Poverty is recognized not just as a lack of income but as a condition of deprivation that limits individuals' opportunities for a dignified life. SDG 1 emphasizes inclusive economic growth, robust social protection systems, and targeted interventions to lift people out of poverty while ensuring access to education, healthcare, and clean water. The goal also acknowledges the cyclical relationship between poverty and environmental degradation, framing poverty eradication as essential to sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). The implementation of the SDGs requires a multi-stakeholder approach. Governments are pivotal in establishing policies, allocating resources, and monitoring progress, while the private sector contributes through innovation and technological advancements (Griggs et al., 2014). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups play a critical role in ensuring accountability and inclusivity, particularly for marginalized populations (United Nations, 2015).

Poverty eradication, as emphasized by SDG 1, is fundamental to achieving sustainable development. The United Nations describes it as the greatest global challenge facing the world today (United Nations, 2015). Addressing the root causes of poverty through targeted interventions and promoting inclusive growth can create a world where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and realize their potential. The success of the SDGs hinges on collective efforts and the determination to overcome obstacles, ensuring that the transformative agenda of sustainable development becomes a reality for all. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) presents considerable challenges; including inadequate funding, political

instability, and climate change (Barbier & Burgess, 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic has further hindered progress by exacerbating inequalities and disrupting global systems. To overcome these obstacles, innovative financing mechanisms, adaptive governance structures, and fostering sustainability awareness through education are essential for building resilient communities (Sachs et al., 2019).

Nigerian 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the SDGs focused on critical priorities: poverty (SDG 1), inclusive economy (SDG 8), health and well-being (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), peace and security (SDG 16), and partnerships (SDG 17). These areas align with Nigeria's development objectives under President M. Buhari administration, even as the country grapples with challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the collapse of oil prices. Nigeria, where 86% of public revenue relies on oil and gas, continues to face hurdles in diversifying its economy and bolstering public health systems. Nigerian 2017 VNR highlighted institutional strategies for implementing the SDGs through the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017–2020. This plan emphasized economic, social, and environmental dimensions consistent with the SDGs. The 2020 VNR outlines the alignment of national policies with the SDGs, showcasing progress in creating a policy environment conducive to sustainable development.

To strengthen SDG implementation, Nigeria has undertaken several initiatives. The National Statistical System (NSS) is being realigned with SDG indicators, and a home-grown Integrated Sustainable Development Goals (iSDG) model has been developed to analyze policy-making for the SDGs' interconnected nature. Evaluations across priority SDGs, including ongoing assessments of SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 4 (Quality Education), reflect a systematic approach to monitoring progress. Such efforts underscore the importance of evidence-based planning and accountability mechanisms, particularly at the state level. The post-ERGP National Development Plan (2021–2030) will be instrumental in advancing the SDGs. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria can play a pivotal role by aligning research, teaching, and capacity-building initiatives with the SDGs. This alignment creates opportunities to evaluate progress and strengthen the country's commitment to the SDG decade of action. Through a multi-stakeholder platform, Nigeria can accelerate its development priorities and create a robust foundation for sustainable growth.

Poverty Eradication Programmes and TVET Quality Assurance in Nigeria

Nigeria faces persistent challenges in eradicating poverty and improving the socio-economic well-being of its rural and urban populations (Abduallahi, Husseini & Musa, 2021). Historical efforts by military regimes include initiatives such as the Farm Settlement Scheme in the 1960s, the National Accelerated Food Production Project (1972), Operation Feed the Nation (1976), and the Green Revolution (1980). Other programs, like the Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs), Rural Electrification Scheme, and National Directorate of Employment, also aimed to tackle poverty. Despite these interventions, socio-economic challenges persisted (Ogwudire, Egesi, & Okarouga, 2013; Taiwo & Agwu, 2016).

Democratic administrations have continued the fight against poverty with initiatives such as the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 1999, Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 2000, and the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2003. More recently, the Buhari administration introduced policies like the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), Vision 20:2020, N-Power, and the Medium-

Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) (Premium Times, 2020). However, despite these efforts, over 87 million Nigerians remain in poverty, signaling the limited success of these programs (Demuren, 2018; Iheonu & Urama, 2019; Olayinka, 2019). The shortcomings of poverty eradication initiatives in Nigeria are linked to several factors. These include failure to target the poor effectively, policy inconsistency, corruption, and governance issues (Obikeze, Ananti, & Onyekwelu, 2015). Political and policy instability has led to frequent changes and inconsistent implementation, hindering sustained progress. Inadequate coordination among programs results in duplication of efforts and inefficient resource use, while institutional rivalries and conflicts exacerbate the problem. Additionally, severe budgetary and management challenges have stalled program completion and effectiveness.

Poor accountability and transparency have further reduced program efficacy, as some initiatives become avenues for resource misappropriation (Taiwo & Agwu, 2016; Okadi, Agu, & Onu, 2021). Another critical issue is the overextension of activities across numerous institutions, leading to thinly spread resources and inefficiencies. Inadequate program design, often excluding beneficiary involvement, has also hampered success. Furthermore, the lack of target setting and mechanisms for collaboration among government tiers weakens the overall impact of poverty eradication efforts. These structural and administrative flaws have contributed to the persistence of poverty across Nigeria.

Nigeria is endowed with abundant natural and human resources, including its status as Africa's largest crude oil producer and the holder of the second-largest gas reserves globally. The country is also a significant player in agricultural production, with fertile lands conducive to cultivating cassava, yam, cotton, and more. Despite these assets, poverty remains endemic, with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line (Obi & Chukwu, 2023; World Bank, 2023). Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a critical role in addressing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1, which targets poverty eradication by 2030. By providing individuals with market-relevant skills and knowledge, TVET equips participants to secure employment and sustainable livelihoods. This direct linkage between skills development and poverty alleviation is widely recognized for breaking the poverty cycle through economic empowerment (UNESCO, 2022). In Nigeria, where poverty remains a significant issue, TVET holds transformative potential for enhancing economic productivity and reducing unemployment (Adebayo, Adekunle & Abimbola 2023; Bolarinwa & Adeyemi, 2023).

Ensuring quality in TVET is vital for its effectiveness in achieving poverty reduction. Quality assurance (QA) mechanisms are essential for standardizing curricula, improving instructor qualifications, and addressing infrastructural deficits that undermine TVET programs in Nigeria (Dansabo, 2017; Obi & Chukwu, 2023). QA involves assessing educational institutions to ensure outcomes align with societal needs (Onyesom & Ashibogou, 2013). It encompasses processes to meet specified standards in teaching, learning, administration, assessment, and achievement documentation (Nwachukwu, Ohanele & Egoronu, 2024). Furthermore, QA enables policymakers to identify national educational needs, evaluate strategies, and ensure policy effectiveness (Akhuemonkhan, Raimi & Dada, 2014). Critical QA elements include access, funding, relevance, and quality in TVET programs (RECOUP, 2011).

Globally, countries implement various QA mechanisms tailored to their socio-economic and educational goals. The United States employs accreditation systems at multiple levels for monitoring and coordination, while Australia has established the Australian

Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) for tertiary education QA (Mohsin & Kamal, 2012). In Nigeria, agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) oversee QA in their respective domains. Quality assurance in education entails setting and adhering to standards across all processes that produce skilled graduates. This includes entry requirements, program duration, curricula quality, instructor qualifications, infrastructure, and examination procedures (Boyi, 2013; Elujekwute, 2019; Abdullahi, Abdulgerniyu & Rabiati, 2020). Consistently maintaining high standards fosters effective teaching and learning at every educational level (Ogba & Igu, 2014). QA is a process of refining inputs and transforming them into outputs (students) who contribute effectively to national development (Daura & Audu, 2015). Okebukola (2013) describes QA as a comprehensive system aimed at enhancing academic, administrative, and infrastructural quality.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) emphasizes the importance of proper planning, efficient administration, and adequate funding to ensure educational success. The policy highlights QA through continuous supervision of instructional and administrative services to maintain and improve system standards. Despite the importance of QA, Nigeria's TVET programs face numerous challenges that hinder their effectiveness. These include inadequate funding, outdated curricula, poor infrastructure, a lack of qualified instructors, insufficient supervision, and the absence of institutionalized QA units (Okoye & Okwelle, 2013; Onyesom & Ashibogou, 2013; Uwaifo & Uwaifo, 2012). Moreover, corruption exacerbates these issues, leading to the proliferation of substandard goods and services (Ayonmike, Okwelle & Okeke, 2015). For example, Elujekwute (2019) highlights how corruption undermines QA, resulting in consumers paying for unrendered services and substandard goods. This lack of QA contributes to systemic inefficiencies, including the collapse of poorly constructed buildings and the prevalence of inferior products in the market (Achor, 2013).

Efforts to address these challenges have been undertaken in different parts of the world. However, Nigeria still struggles to overcome the barriers that compromise TVET quality (Ayonmike, Okwelle & Okeke, 2015). The emphasis on QA is not only aligned with SDG 1 but also with SDG 4, which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education. Quality enhancement remains a core objective of the TVET system, as it ensures the education system addresses societal needs effectively (Ugwuegbulam, 2021).

Barriers to Effective TVET Quality Assurance to Eradicate Poverty in Nigeria

Several barriers impede the effective implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in TVET in Nigeria. These challenges undermine the potential of TVET programs to address poverty alleviation through skills development as follows:

- 1. Inadequate Funding:** A key obstacle is insufficient financial resources. Many Nigerian TVET institutions lack the funding necessary to upgrade infrastructure, purchase modern equipment, and retain skilled staff. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) highlights that financial constraints also hinder curriculum updates and the modernization of training facilities (NBTE, 2022). This funding shortfall limits the ability of institutions to conduct evaluations and implement effective internal quality assurance measures, leaving many programs outdated and misaligned with labor market needs.

2. **Shortage of Qualified Instructors:** The availability of well-trained educators is crucial for ensuring TVET quality. However, Nigeria faces a significant shortage of qualified instructors, particularly those with up-to-date industry expertise and pedagogical skills. Poor incentives, limited opportunities for professional development, and an inefficient recruitment process exacerbate this issue. Consequently, many students are taught by under-qualified trainers, leading to subpar education and diminished prospects for poverty alleviation through TVET (Bolarinwa & Adeyemi, 2023).
3. **Outdated Curriculum:** The curriculum in Nigerian TVET institutions often fails to align with labor market demands or technological advancements. Many programs emphasize outdated skills, creating a disconnect between training and employer needs. Additionally, rigid curriculum delivery methods do not cater to diverse learning styles or emphasize practical, hands-on training. The lack of regular updates and market-responsive revisions further hampers the effectiveness of TVET programs (UNESCO, 2022).
4. **Weak Regulatory Framework:** Despite the presence of oversight bodies such as the NBTE and the Federal Ministry of Education, regulatory frameworks in Nigerian TVET remain inconsistent and poorly enforced. Limited coordination among stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector players, and industry representatives, results in fragmented governance. Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms reduce accountability, causing disparities in educational quality across institutions and limiting TVET's impact on poverty reduction (World Bank, 2023).
5. **Negative Perceptions of TVET:** Cultural biases and societal attitudes toward vocational education represent significant barriers. In Nigeria, TVET is often stigmatized as an inferior alternative to university education. This perception leads to underinvestment in vocational programs and discourages student enrollment, even though the demand for skilled labor continues to grow. The devaluation of vocational training perpetuates poverty, as young people are less likely to acquire marketable skills through TVET (Adebayo, Adekunle & Abimbola 2023).
6. **Poor Industry Collaboration:** Effective TVET requires strong partnerships between educational institutions and the private sector to ensure that training aligns with industry needs. In Nigeria, however, collaboration between TVET providers and employers is limited. Many employers are not involved in curriculum design or in offering practical training opportunities. This disconnect leaves graduates ill-equipped for workforce demands, reducing their employability and the overall effectiveness of TVET in addressing poverty (Obi & Chukwu, 2023).

Strategies to Strengthen TVET Quality Assurance in Nigeria to Achieve SDG 2030

The following recommendations were made to strengthen TVET quality assurance in Nigeria to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

1. **Development of a National TVET Quality Assurance Framework:** Create a unified framework to standardize quality benchmarks for TVET institutions, emphasizing curriculum relevance, accreditation, and labor market alignment.
2. **Strengthening Teacher Training and Development:** Implement regular training programs for instructors to enhance their technical expertise and modern teaching methods aligned with industry needs.

3. **Industry Collaboration and Curriculum Alignment:** Partner with industries to align TVET programs with current market requirements, equipping graduates with job-ready skills to reduce unemployment and poverty.
4. **Adoption of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET):** Focus on practical, hands-on learning to foster real-world skills, improving employability and entrepreneurial opportunities for students.
5. **Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation:** Develop robust systems for continuous program evaluation to ensure adherence to quality standards and drive ongoing improvements.
6. **Increased Funding and Infrastructure Investment:** Prioritize financial support to modernize infrastructure, tools, and facilities, enabling students to train in industry-standard environments.
7. **Promotion of Digital Literacy and E-Learning:** Incorporate ICT and digital tools to expand access, especially in underserved areas, and prepare students for the demands of a digital economy.
8. **Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Foster collaboration between the government, private sector, and development partners to provide resources, internships, and expertise.
9. **Integration of Life Skills and Entrepreneurship:** Embed essential skills like financial literacy and entrepreneurship into curricula, empowering graduates to establish businesses and improve livelihoods.
10. **Creation of National Accreditation and Certification Bodies:** Establish independent bodies to certify institutions and programs, ensuring global competitiveness and compliance with international standards.

Conclusion

To effectively address the barriers hindering the implementation of quality assurance in TVET in Nigeria, strategic interventions focusing on improving infrastructure, curriculum relevance, and instructor expertise are essential. Establishing a standardized national framework for quality assurance, strengthening teacher training, and aligning curricula with industry needs will ensure that TVET institutions produce graduates who are well-equipped for the labor market. Collaborative partnerships between TVET institutions, industries, and the government are crucial to bridging the gap between education and employment, reducing skills mismatches, and ultimately contributing to poverty alleviation. Additionally, integrating life skills and entrepreneurship into TVET programs can empower graduates to create job opportunities, fostering economic growth and stability.

Furthermore, enhancing monitoring and evaluation systems, alongside increasing investment in TVET infrastructure, will ensure continuous improvement and adherence to quality standards. The promotion of digital literacy and the adoption of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) are critical to preparing students for the demands of an increasingly digital and globalized economy. By implementing these interventions, Nigeria can strengthen its TVET sector, ensuring that it meets the requirements of both the labor market and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to decent work, economic growth, and poverty reduction. Through these efforts, TVET can play a pivotal role in driving the nation's socio-economic development.

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