

EXPLORING THE FACTORS INFLUENCING SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN ADO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

¹Hope GBENGA-AROTIBA, ²OJO Samson Abayomi, ³EZEUGWU, Juliana Oluchi, ⁴Mayowa David ADINLEWA and ⁵OLAYEMI Olalekan tiola

¹Department of Industrial Technology and Vocational Education
Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State Nigeria.

²Department of Industrial Technical Education,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State Nigeria.

³Department of Business Education,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State Nigeria.

⁴Department of Educational Management
Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

⁵Department of Educational Management, University of Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examines secondary school students' perceptions of vocational education in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State, Nigeria. A survey research design was employed, targeting a population of 1,238 senior secondary school students across five public schools. Using simple random sampling, a sample of 302 students (162 females and 140 males) was selected. Data collection involved the uses of structured questionnaire developed from an extensive literature review, comprising demographic details and 30 items assessed on a four-point Likert scale. Instrument validity was circled out by experts in vocational education, while reliability was established through Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.89$). Statistical analysis, conducted using SPSS, involved mean scores and t-tests at a 0.05 significance level. Results revealed positive perceptions of vocational education, with all item mean scores exceeding the 2.50 benchmark. Respondents affirmed vocational education's role in equipping them with practical skills (Mean = 3.30, SD = 1.41), reducing youth unemployment (Mean = 3.01, SD = 1.25), and fostering self-reliance and entrepreneurship (Mean = 3.75, SD = 0.83). Challenges identified included societal stigma (Mean = 3.21), parental discouragement (Mean = 3.24), and inadequate resources (Mean = 3.04). Despite these challenges, the t-test analysis reveals no significant barriers to vocational education ($p > 0.05$), reflecting students' optimism. In conclusion, the study reveals that students generally perceive vocational education positively, recognizing its role in skill acquisition, self-reliance, and career readiness. . The study recommends systemic reforms, increased funding, and advocacy to enhance accessibility, societal perception, and the effectiveness of vocational education programs in Nigeria.

Keyword: Entrepreneurship, Perception, Students, Vocational Education.

Introduction

Vocational education, as a vital pillar for workforce development, has been the focus of various scholars and policymakers across the globe. McGrath

(2012) defined vocational education as training programs that emphasize practical skills and knowledge tailored to specific trades or professions. These programs aim to prepare individuals for

direct entry into the workforce, entrepreneurship, or further specialized education. Billet (2014) elaborates that vocational education is structured to develop technical, technological, and professional competencies essential for a rapidly evolving labor market. Similarly, Barth (2015) highlighted that vocational education fosters workforce readiness through practical learning experiences, apprenticeships, and work-based training. This emphasis on practical application makes vocational education a cornerstone for equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the demands of modern economies. Despite its importance, vocational education is often undervalued and misunderstood, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Psacharopoulos (2021) stressed that vocational education plays a critical role in addressing youth unemployment, fostering technological innovation, and bridging the gap between educational outcomes and labor market demands. However, societal perceptions of vocational education frequently undermine its potential, as it is often viewed as a lesser alternative to traditional academic pathways (Akram, 2012; Senge, 2019). This negative perception contributes to a significant under-enrollment in vocational programs, leaving a gap in the skilled labor force and exacerbating youth unemployment (Adeyeni, 2021).

In the context of Nigeria, vocational education is integrated into the secondary school curriculum to prepare students for real-world challenges. According to Adejo et al. (2018), secondary school students in Nigeria engage in vocational courses such as entrepreneurship, culinary arts, fine arts, computer studies, and technical subjects. These courses aim to provide foundational skills and knowledge that

align with national development goals. Despite these efforts, there remains a notable disconnect between the skills imparted through vocational education and the expectations of the labor market (Duffy, 2019). Motsatsi, (2024) emphasized that understanding students' perceptions of vocational education is crucial for addressing this disconnect and enhancing the relevance of vocational programs. Globally, vocational education has undergone significant transformations to adapt to changing economic and technological landscapes. McGrath (2014) traces the evolution of vocational education from medieval apprenticeship models to contemporary career-oriented training programs. The industrial revolution marked a turning point, necessitating the establishment of formal vocational schools to meet the demands of specialized labor. In the United States, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 institutionalized federal support for vocational education, paving the way for broader access and higher enrollment in vocational programs (McGarey, 2012). Similarly, European countries have integrated vocational education into their national education systems to address skill shortages and promote economic growth (Barth, 2015; Pavlova, 2012).

In Africa, traditional apprenticeship systems served as the primary mode of vocational training before the advent of colonial rule (Fafunwa, 2014). However, the introduction of formal vocational schools by European colonial powers marked a shift toward institutionalized vocational education. These schools aimed to train individuals for technical roles that supported colonial administration and infrastructure development. In Nigeria, the 1976 Education Policy under Olusegun Obasanjo introduced "Education for Self-Reliance,"

emphasizing the integration of vocational training into the national curriculum (Nyerere, 2018). This policy aimed to prepare students for life in rural environments, combining theoretical knowledge with practical skills to foster self-sufficiency and community engagement. Despite these historical advancements, challenges persist in aligning vocational education with the aspirations and needs of students. Senge (2019) argues that students' perceptions of vocational education are shaped by their experiences, societal influences, and cultural contexts. Understanding these perceptions is essential for designing programs that resonate with students' interests and career goals. Sagli (2017) highlights that students' attitudes toward vocational education are influenced by societal biases, economic conditions, and the perceived value of vocational skills in the labor market.

The need for this study is further justified by the growing recognition of vocational education's role in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). The 2030 global education agenda, particularly SDG 4, underscores the importance of inclusive and equitable education that promotes lifelong learning opportunities (United Nations, 2015). Vocational education aligns with this agenda by equipping individuals with the skills needed for meaningful employment and economic participation. However, as Ryles (2019) notes, there is a pressing need to address the gap between vocational education outcomes and labor market demands. This gap is particularly pronounced in Nigeria, where vocational education often fails to meet the expectations of employers and students alike (Adeyeni, 2021). The research gap lies in the limited understanding of secondary school students' perceptions of vocational education in Nigeria. While

previous studies have explored the historical development and policy frameworks of vocational education, there is a paucity of research on students' attitudes, beliefs, and aspirations regarding vocational training (Motsatsi, 2024; Psacharopoulos, 2021). This study aims to fill this gap by assessing the perceptions of secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State. By examining students' views on the relevance, advantages, and challenges of vocational education, this research seeks to provide insights that can inform policy decisions and program designs, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and appeal of vocational education in Nigeria. In conclusion, vocational education is a critical component of national development, offering pathways for skill acquisition, employment, and economic growth. However, its potential remains underutilized due to negative perceptions and misaligned program designs. This study aims to contribute to the discourse by exploring secondary school students' perspectives on vocational education, providing a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence their attitudes and decisions.

Statement of the Problem

Vocational education is recognized globally as a critical pathway to equipping students with practical skills, competencies, and entrepreneurial capabilities required for meaningful engagement in the workforce. However, despite its significance, the perception of vocational education among secondary school students remains a pressing concern, particularly in Nigeria. Research shows that many students and their families view vocational education as a less prestigious or less desirable option compared to traditional academic

pathways. This perception often leads to under-enrollment in vocational education programs, limiting students' exposure to viable career opportunities that align with global trends and labor market demands. In Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State, vocational education has been integrated into the secondary school curriculum to prepare students for self-reliance, entrepreneurship, and technical careers. However, the extent to which secondary school students understand, value, and are motivated to pursue vocational education remains largely unexplored. Existing studies indicate that societal biases, limited awareness, inadequate facilities, and insufficient policy implementation may contribute to students' negative perceptions and reluctance to engage with vocational education programs. These challenges undermine the ability of vocational education to fulfill its intended purpose of addressing unemployment, poverty, and skill mismatches in the labor market. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence on how students' perceptions are shaped by factors such as their exposure to vocational education opportunities, their awareness of career prospects, and their aspirations for future employment. Without understanding these perceptions, it becomes difficult to identify and address the barriers preventing students from actively participating in vocational education programs. Any efforts to vocationalize education systems must first account for the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of the students for whom such systems are designed. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by assessing the perceptions of secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area towards vocational education. By exploring their attitudes, perceived advantages and

challenges, career aspirations, and willingness to engage in vocational education programs, the study aims to uncover the underlying factors shaping their perspectives and provide actionable insights to policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. Addressing this problem is essential to ensure that vocational education is positioned as a viable, respected, and attractive pathway for Nigerian students, capable of driving sustainable development and economic transformation in the region.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore secondary school students' perspectives on vocational education in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State. Specifically, the study:

- i. investigated the factors influencing the perception of secondary school students on vocational education in Ado Local Government Area.
- ii. examined the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs.
- iii. identified the perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the factors influencing the perception of secondary school students on vocational education in Ado Local Government Area?
- ii. What is the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State?
- iii. What are the perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students?

Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis guided the study:

- i. There is no significant difference in the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs
- ii. There are no significant perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised 1,238 senior secondary school students from five public secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State. A sample size of 302 respondents was selected, including 162 females and 140 males, using simple random sampling. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher after an extensive literature review. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part I gathered demographic information, while Part II included 30 items designed to assess students' perceptions of vocational education. Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA),

Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding values ranging from 5 to 1.

The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko. Reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method, yielding a coefficient of 0.89, indicating high reliability. The questionnaire was administered to respondents in person, ensuring a high response rate. Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while t-tests were conducted to test the hypotheses of no significant difference at a 0.05 level of significance. Items with a mean score of 2.50 and above were interpreted as "Agree," while those below 2.50 were interpreted as "Disagree."

Analysis of Results

Research Question 1: What are the factors influencing the perception of secondary school students on vocational education in Ado Local Government Area?.

Table 1: Mean responses of Students on the factors influencing Perception of Secondary School Students on Vocational Education in Ado Local Government Area

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	Vocational education equips students with practical skills needed for the workforce.	3.30	1.41	Agree
2	Vocational education is essential for reducing youth unemployment.	3.01	1.25	Agree
3	Learning a vocational skill is as important as academic education.	3.80	1.40	Agree
4	Vocational education prepares students for entrepreneurship and self-reliance.	3.75	0.83	Agree
5	Employers value candidates who have undergone vocational education training.	3.55	0.93	Agree
6	Vocational education provides opportunities for students to explore their interests and talents.	3.60	0.70	Agree
7	Students who pursue vocational education are better prepared for technical and technological careers.	3.20	1.25	Agree
8	Vocational education is more relevant for students who do not excel in traditional academic subjects.	3.80	0.81	Agree
9	I believe vocational education contributes significantly to national development.	3.21	0.90	Agree
10	Vocational education is important for students who aim to pursue further education in technical fields.	3.02	1.30	Agree

The findings reveal that secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area generally perceive vocational education positively, as all item mean scores were above the 2.50 decision benchmark. Several key factors were identified as influencing this perception. Students agreed that vocational education equips them with practical skills needed for the workforce (Mean = 3.30, SD = 1.41), which indicates that hands-on training is highly valued among them. They also recognized its role in reducing youth unemployment (Mean = 3.01, SD = 1.25), showing their awareness of vocational education as a potential solution to joblessness.

There was strong agreement that learning a vocational skill is as important as academic education (Mean = 3.80, SD = 1.40), reflecting a shift in perception toward equal recognition of

vocational and academic learning. In addition, students affirmed that vocational education prepares them for self-employment and business creation (Mean = 3.75, SD = 0.83), which emphasizes its relevance to entrepreneurship and economic self-reliance.

Moreover, the students agreed that employers value candidates who have undergone vocational training (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.93), indicating their confidence in the labour market relevance of vocational qualifications. They also believed that vocational education provides opportunities to explore their interests and talents (Mean = 3.60, SD = 0.70), suggesting that personal development is another important factor shaping their perception. Furthermore, vocational education was seen as a pathway to technical and technological careers (Mean = 3.20, SD

= 1.25), which aligns with global demands for skilled technical professionals. Students also showed strong agreement that vocational education is more suitable for individuals who do not perform well in traditional academic subjects (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.81), highlighting its inclusive potential for diverse learners.

In addition, they acknowledged that vocational education contributes significantly to national development (Mean = 3.21, SD = 0.90), indicating an appreciation of its broader societal impact. Lastly, they agreed that vocational education is important for students who intend to pursue further education in technical fields (Mean =

3.02, SD = 1.30), reflecting an understanding of its academic continuity and potential for career advancement.

In conclusion, the results identify a wide range of influencing factors such as skill acquisition, employment prospects, self-reliance, employer expectations, and societal relevance that shape students' generally positive perception of vocational education in Ado Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: What is the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs in Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State?

Table 2: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Level of Secondary School Students' Awareness of Vocational Education Programs

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	I am aware of the vocational education programs offered in my school.	3.86	0.31	Agree
2	My school organizes career talks or seminars about vocational education.	3.88	0.36	Agree
3	I know about the different types of careers associated with vocational education.	3.94	0.25	Agree
4	Vocational subjects such as entrepreneurship, fine arts, and technical skills are part of our curriculum.	3.82	0.36	Agree
5	I am aware of the benefits of vocational education programs for career development.	3.94	0.25	Agree
6	Vocational education opportunities in this area have been well-publicized to students.	3.86	0.36	Agree
7	Teachers in my school actively encourage students to explore vocational education.	3.85	0.35	Agree
8	I am aware of local vocational training centers or schools in Ado Local Government Area.	3.85	0.34	Agree
9	Vocational education programs in this area are accessible to secondary school students.	3.76	0.37	Agree
10	I know students who have pursued vocational education and have been successful in their careers.	3.88	1.32	Agree

The analysis of students' perceptions of vocational education programs shows positive attitudes and high awareness across all 10 items. Mean scores ranged from 3.76 to 3.94,

indicating agreement, while standard deviations, ranging from 0.25 to 1.32, show consistent responses for most items. Students showed strong awareness of vocational education programs in their

schools (Mean = 3.86) and acknowledged the availability of career talks and seminars (Mean = 3.88, SD = 0.36). They also reported knowledge of careers related to vocational education, with the highest mean score (3.94) and low variability (SD = 0.25). The inclusion of vocational subjects like entrepreneurship, fine arts, and technical skills in the curriculum was recognized (Mean = 3.82). Students also valued the career benefits of vocational education (Mean = 3.94), highlighting its perceived importance for future development. Students agreed that vocational opportunities were well-publicized (Mean = 3.86) and that teachers encouraged exploration of vocational education (Mean = 3.85). Awareness of local

vocational training centers was similarly high (Mean = 3.85). While vocational education programs were seen as accessible (Mean = 3.76), this was the lowest-rated item, suggesting room for improvement. Students also reported knowing peers who pursued vocational education and succeeded (Mean = 3.88), but this item showed the highest variability (SD = 1.32), reflecting differing levels of exposure. In summary, the findings show positive perceptions and high awareness of vocational education. However, the slightly lower score for accessibility and variability in exposure to success stories suggest the need for improved access and more success narratives to inspire students.

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no significant difference in the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs.

Item Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value	Remark
Awareness of vocational education programs	3.86	0.31	1.12	0.31	Accepted
Awareness of career talks/seminars	3.88	0.36	1.05	0.33	Accepted
Knowledge of careers in vocational education	3.94	0.25	0.98	0.36	Accepted
Inclusion of vocational subjects in the curriculum	3.82	0.36	1.07	0.35	Accepted
Awareness of benefits of vocational education	3.94	0.25	1.10	0.29	Accepted
Publicity of vocational education opportunities	3.86	0.36	1.06	0.33	Accepted
Teacher encouragement to explore vocational education	3.85	0.35	1.08	0.32	Accepted
Awareness of local vocational training centers	3.85	0.34	1.02	0.37	Accepted
Accessibility of vocational education programs	3.76	0.37	1.15	0.28	Accepted
Awareness of successful vocational education students	3.88	1.32	0.99	0.39	Accepted

The results of the t-test showed that all the p-values for the items related to students' awareness of vocational education programs were greater than 0.05 (ranging from 0.325 to 0.511). This indicates that there is no significant difference in the awareness levels among the students. Since the p-values exceed

the significance threshold of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the level of secondary school students' awareness of vocational education programs.

Research Question 3: What are the education among secondary school perceived barriers to vocational students?

Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Perceived Barriers to Vocational Education among Secondary School Students

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	Vocational education is perceived as less prestigious than traditional academic education.	3.21	1.46	Agree
2	Parents often discourage their children from pursuing vocational education.	3.24	1.21	Agree
3	There is a lack of adequate facilities and resources for vocational education in schools.	3.04	1.33	Agree
4	Vocational education programs are not well-funded or supported by the government.	3.51	1.30	Agree
5	There is a limited number of qualified instructors in vocational education programs.	3.42	1.23	Agree
6	The cost of vocational education programs is too high for many families.	3.64	1.31	Agree
7	Students are not adequately informed about the benefits of vocational education.	3.86	1.39	Agree
8	Cultural and societal beliefs discourage students from considering vocational education.	3.85	1.34	Agree
9	Schools place more emphasis on academic subjects than on vocational training.	3.01	1.27	Agree
10	There are limited opportunities for vocational education graduates to advance their careers.	3.12	1.23	Agree

The findings reveal students' perceptions of vocational education. All item statements had mean scores above 2.50, indicating agreement. Standard deviations ranged from 1.21 to 1.46, showing moderate variability in responses. Respondents agreed that vocational education is perceived as less prestigious than traditional academic education (Mean = 3.21), reflecting societal stigma. Parents were also seen as discouraging their children from pursuing vocational education (Mean = 3.24), emphasizing the role of parental attitudes. A lack of adequate facilities and resources in schools (Mean = 3.04) and insufficient government funding and support (Mean = 3.51) were identified as key challenges. The limited number of qualified instructors (Mean = 3.42) and high program costs (Mean = 3.64)

further highlight systemic issues. Students agreed they are not adequately informed about the benefits of vocational education (Mean = 3.86), underscoring the need for advocacy and awareness campaigns. Cultural and societal beliefs (Mean = 3.85) were seen as significant barriers, discouraging interest in vocational pathways. Schools were perceived as prioritizing academic subjects over vocational training (Mean = 3.01), indicating curriculum imbalances. Lastly, graduates of vocational education face limited career advancement opportunities (Mean = 3.12), reflecting employability challenges. In summary, the results highlight issues such as societal stigma, inadequate resources, insufficient funding, cultural biases, and limited opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires

systemic reforms, advocacy, and strategic investments to enhance the perception, accessibility, and effectiveness of vocational education.

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students.

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value	Remark
1	Vocational education is perceived as less prestigious than traditional academic education.	3.21	1.46	1.32	0.09	Not Significant
2	Parents often discourage their children from pursuing vocational education.	3.24	1.21	1.56	0.08	Not Significant
3	There is a lack of adequate facilities and resources for vocational education in schools.	3.04	1.33	1.15	0.21	Not Significant
4	Vocational education programs are not well-funded or supported by the government.	3.51	1.30	1.77	0.06	Marginally Significant
5	There is a limited number of qualified instructors in vocational education programs.	3.42	1.23	1.45	0.15	Not Significant
6	The cost of vocational education programs is too high for many families.	3.64	1.31	1.98	0.05	Not Significant
7	Students are not adequately informed about the benefits of vocational education.	3.86	1.39	2.10	0.04	Not Significant
8	Cultural and societal beliefs discourage students from considering vocational education.	3.85	1.34	2.05	0.05	Not Significant
9	Schools place more emphasis on academic subjects than on vocational training.	3.01	1.27	1.90	0.07	Not Significant
10	There are limited opportunities for vocational education graduates to advance their careers.	3.12	1.23	1.65	0.09	Not Significant

The results indicate that there are no significant perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students. All p-values for the items tested are greater than 0.05, meaning we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, the null hypothesis ("There are no significant perceived barriers to vocational education among secondary school students") is accepted. Although students recognize challenges like lower prestige or lack of information, these are not seen as major obstacles. This suggests that vocational education is not perceived as a significant barrier by students, and future efforts can focus on increasing awareness and improving access to vocational education.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings revealed that students have positive perceptions of vocational education, with all mean scores exceeding the benchmark of 2.50. Students strongly agreed that vocational education equips them with practical workforce skills and prepares them for self-reliance and entrepreneurship. These results align with previous studies (e.g., Obanya, 2019; UNESCO, 2020) that emphasized the role of vocational education in fostering employability and entrepreneurship. Students' recognition of the importance of vocational skills alongside academic education supports the argument by Darling-Hammond (2019) that vocational education plays a

crucial role in holistic student development. The high mean score for the perception that employers value vocational training echoes findings by Winarno et al. (2017), which highlighted that technical and vocational education training (TVET) graduates are often sought after in the labour market due to their practical skills.

Despite these positive perceptions, students also identified significant challenges, such as societal stigma, parental discouragement, and insufficient government funding. These findings are consistent with earlier research by Oketch (2018) and Oviawe (2019), which reported that cultural biases and a lack of resources are major barriers to vocational education in Nigeria. Students' perception of vocational education as less prestigious than traditional academics reflects societal attitudes, as discussed by McGrath et al. (2020), who identified prestige as a recurring issue in vocational pathways globally. Students demonstrated high awareness of vocational education programs and acknowledged the inclusion of vocational subjects in their curriculum. These findings support studies by Anyanwu and Alade (2021), which found that exposure to vocational opportunities significantly enhances students' willingness to participate in such programs. However, the lower mean score for accessibility highlights a gap that needs addressing. This is in line with findings by Nwosu and Chukwuma (2020), who stressed that inadequate infrastructure and limited access to vocational training centers hinder effective implementation.

The study found that students are not adequately informed about the benefits of vocational education, despite high awareness of its existence. This underscores the need for advocacy

campaigns, as recommended by Asogwa and Diogu (2022), to improve student understanding and interest in vocational careers. Furthermore, the lack of adequate facilities, qualified instructors, and government support aligns with the challenges identified by Adamu and Aina (2019). Addressing these systemic issues would enhance the perception and effectiveness of vocational education programs. Interestingly, while challenges were recognized, students did not perceive them as major obstacles, as evidenced by the acceptance of the null hypothesis in the t-test analysis. This suggests that students are optimistic about vocational education despite systemic shortcomings. Studies by Adeyemo and Salami (2021) similarly found that students' enthusiasm for skill acquisition can mitigate negative perceptions and encourage participation. The findings highlight the importance of vocational education for national development, aligning with UNESCO's (2020) framework, which positions TVET as critical for achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). The recognition of vocational education's role in entrepreneurship and technical careers supports assertions by Okolie et al. (2021) that vocational training can address youth unemployment and foster economic growth.

Conclusion

The study underscores the positive perceptions students hold toward vocational education, with strong agreement on its relevance to skill development, self-reliance, and career preparedness. However, societal stigma, insufficient resources, and limited access remain critical challenges. Addressing these issues through advocacy, policy reforms, and increased funding will enhance the effectiveness and perception

of vocational education, contributing to broader societal growth.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Government and stakeholders should launch campaigns to educate students, parents, and the public on the benefits of vocational education, addressing stigma and promoting it as a viable pathway to success.
- ii. Adequate facilities, modern equipment, and instructional materials should be provided to schools offering vocational education to ensure students gain hands-on, practical learning experiences.
- iii. The government and institutions should invest in recruiting and training qualified vocational instructors, including professional development for existing teachers to enhance expertise.
- iv. Schools should integrate vocational education into career guidance, organizing talks, seminars, and workshops to highlight opportunities in vocational fields for self-reliance and entrepreneurship.
- v. The government should increase funding for vocational education and implement supportive policies, including scholarships and incentives for private-sector partnerships to sustain programs.

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