

## STRATEGIES FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE MANAGEMENT OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN SOUTH EAST STATES OF NIGERIA

By

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### **Abstract**

*The task of harnessing the human and material resources to enhance the learning and teaching process is the most fundamental objective to which management is concerned. Management presides over all organizations where people work together to achieve their objectives; it's essentially concerned with output performance and the way of achieving objectives, especially in vocational and technical education and training. The study, therefore, was designed to identify strategies for solving the problems affecting the management of TVET in the South East States of Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted for the study. A proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to select three states out of the five in the South East to represent 12 Technical, Vocational and Science Secondary Schools under investigation. Three research questions guided the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.92 using the test-retest method, while three experts carried out face and content validations. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the three research questions. It was found that the use of non-technical professionals as administrators in technical colleges, Insufficient qualified and ill-experienced technically trained staff, inadequate funding, and improper accounting affected the management of TVET in South East Nigeria. Recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.*

### **Introduction**

The recognition of the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training by individuals, the State and the Federal Government makes it a fundamental issue. The policy governing the present and future development of Technical and Vocation Education and Training in Nigeria is embodied in the National Policy on Education [2013] which defines Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as that aspects of education process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of the economy and social life.

Strategies for solving the problems affecting the management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training could be referred to as the techniques or methods that can be adopted in organizing and mobilizing the human and material resources for effective management of the institution. Strategies are the methodologies used to achieve a target as prescribed by a policy. It

defines the overall mission, vision, and direction of an organization. The objective of a strategy is to maximize an organization's strength. It is concerned with those organizational decisions that have not been dealt with or handled before in the same form. These problems consist of two major components – leadership and management. Leadership can be defined as an influential power relationship in which the power of one the leader promotes, motivates, change in followers. Leadership involves traits, situational interaction, function, behavior, power, vision and value, charisma, and intelligence. Saffold 2021), (Grint 2005), (Western 2013). The function of a leader is to initiate new procedures for accomplishing the organization's goals and objectives. The educational leader is expected to supply initiative and direction to the school in order to further the educational objective. Leadership is about taking risks and challenging the status quo. Leaders motivate others to achieve something new and better, thereby calling attention to success. Interestingly, leaders do what they do to pursue innovation, not as an obligation. They measure success by looking at the team's achievements and learning. A good leader takes decision and communicates to their subjects, maintaining and developing skills, knowledge, and experience in themselves and others. Management, on the other hand, requires the utilization of existing structures and procedures in order to achieve the goals of the institution. The management function in Technical and Vocational Education and Training is perhaps more important than the leadership function since the administrator is expected to implement policies handed down to him by the state or federal government. These functions include planning, organizing, staffing, funding, and monitoring.

Technical and Vocational Education is a merger of technical education and vocational education, in other words, fusing together basic technical and scientific knowledge with the skill-based programs. Orji (2023) noted that with effective and efficient leadership, right policies are formulated, relevant goals are set, strategies and programs are implemented, and effective measures are put in place to monitor and evaluate programs for a desired outcome. Technical and Vocational Education and Training comprises the learners who are desiring to acquire skills, hereafter referred to as trainees; those who impart the skills, knowledge, and attitudes, hereafter referred to as technical teachers; and those who manage the system, hereafter referred to as administrative and supporting staff.

OECD. (2019) noted that human relations, communication, decision making, and problem solving are basic to management responsibilities. With Information as the core of the management process, the success of any organization depends on the effectiveness with which the above responsibilities are carried out with respect to application in technical and vocational education and training to enhance the effectiveness of the school system. The present economic situation in the country shows clearly that the government alone can no longer bear the burden of providing all these financial and material needs for TVET, since it requires expensive equipment to operate effectively. UNESCO (2019) noted that “Lack of funds to finance TVET is undoubtedly the most

serious constraint to its development and expansion”; therefore, alternative sources of funding should be explored.

The management of TVET is usually capital intensive; the scarce resources from government subvention result in underfunding. The little money that schools try to generate through tuition fees paid by students, Parents Association (PA) / School Based Management Committee (SBMC) levies, charges on caution and game fees, appeals from some spirited individuals, and philanthropy do not help matters. Researchers Ogbonda and Wobi (2014), Adekoye (2009), and Ayonmika (2010) identified adequate funding of education, recruitment of qualified technical teachers, improved management/supervision strategies, and provision of teaching and learning facilities as measures to address the managerial challenges in technical and vocational education and training.

### **Problem Statement**

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TEVT) plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the skills necessary for the labor market, thereby contributing to economic development and social equity. TEVT institutions struggle to secure the financial resources necessary for maintaining facilities, purchasing equipment, and providing adequate training for instructors. Furthermore, the lack of collaboration between TEVT institutions and industry stakeholders results in a disconnect between the skills taught and those required by employers, exacerbating unemployment rates among graduates. The perception of TEVT as a less prestigious educational pathway compared to traditional academic routes further complicates recruitment efforts for both students and qualified educators

The fact that Technical and Vocational Education and Training is poorly managed is evidence on the findings of Danko (2002), Musa (2007), and Michael (2012), who observe that poor management contributes to low regard held for Technical and Vocational Education and Training among youths and their parents. Nevertheless, there have not been many empirical studies to confirm the appropriate strategies for solving the problem affecting the management of TVET. The inadequately qualified and inexperienced technical education teachers in most of the technical colleges pose a major challenge in TVET. The practical and scientific nature of technical and vocational education drives so many students away from choosing technical subjects as a course of study in tertiary schools. This has affected the production of qualified technical education teachers, which results in a shortage of qualified teachers and the production of half-baked technicians. The school management, in order to fill the gap, makes use of unqualified teachers. The implication of this is the practice of cheating “instead of the act of teaching”. Its consequences are the graduation of untrained and unqualified technicians and job seekers instead of self-employed and job creators. The issue that arises from this study is to what extent planning, organization, staffing, funding, and monitoring improve the Management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

### **Objectives of the Study;**

The major purpose of the study is to identify strategies for solving the problems affecting the management of technical and vocational education and training. Specifically, the study will

1. Identify problems that affect the management of technical and vocational education and training
2. Find out strategies for solving the affected problems
3. Determine how management problems affect the interest of students and parents in technical and vocational education and training.

### **Research Questions**

The following research question guided the study

1. What are the problems affecting the management of technical and vocational education and training?
2. What are the solutions to the problems facing technical and vocational education and training?
3. To what extent are management problems in technical and vocational education and training affecting the interests of students and parents?

### **Literature Review**

In an attempt to provide answers to the problems of this study, this literature review will examine the conceptual framework of the problems militating against the aforementioned issues. Under the following subheadings

- i. Planning
- ii. Organization
- iii. Staffing
- iv. Monitoring
- v. Funding

#### **Planning:**

He that fails to plan is bound to fail is a popular statement. Planning is a very important aspect of the management of TVET. Improper planning brings problems, and it disorganizes the management of TVET. Okoro (1999) categorized the planning function in TVET into two: planning the curriculum and planning the courses.

Planning the curriculum involves determining what courses or educational programs should be offered by the school or college. It includes developing the syllabus or course of study and guiding and planning the physical facilities and equipment. In planning the curriculum, the administrator will need to determine what new courses or programs should be started and whether any existing programs should be revised, expanded, or terminated.

Planning the curriculum is a policy-making function. In many cases, the school principal will, on appointment, meet an already existing program, and he may have little authority to make changes in curriculum offering, physical facilities, or equipment since decisions on such matters are usually made by examination bodies and by federal and state government agencies. However, the principal may be directly involved in planning new programmes or in planning the expansion of existing programmes. He may be asked to submit specifications for new workshops, classroom blocks and equipment and to make proposals on course offering.

Planning of courses involves planning how approved courses could be effectively and advantageously taught using the facilities and resources available. It involves the allocation of resources between various competing alternatives, the management of time and the effective distribution of tasks between various members of teaching staff so that the best possible use can be made of each staff member.

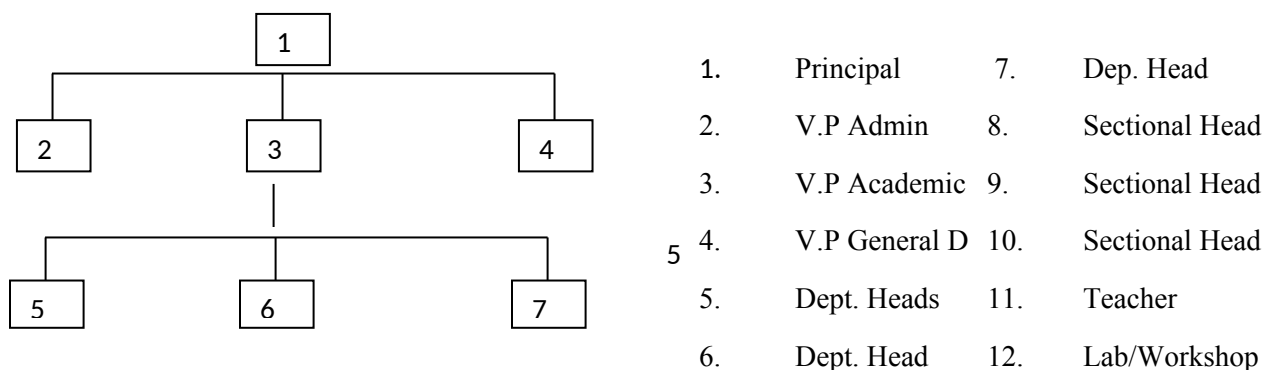
### Organizing

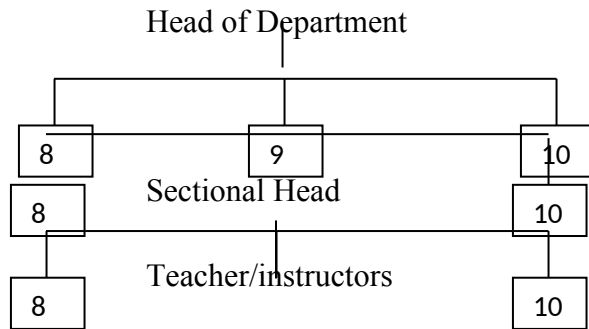
This can be viewed as the act of an ordered manner, orderliness by virtue of being methodical and well-coordinated. It is most closely associated with the administrator. Beneath et al. (2021) and the World Bank (2021) noted that the administrator of TVET in Technical Colleges is the Principal. He carried out the policies of the federal government and its agencies such as the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), the State Ministry of Education, the State School Board, and the Board of Governors. He works with his vice principals and other staff such as the Vice Principal of Administration, Academic (Sometimes called the Dean of Studies), General Duties, Heads of Departments, and Sectional heads. NBTE (2011)

Teachers may report directly to the principal on some matters. The principal handles external matters, especially the relationship of the school with the government and its agencies, community, parents, and guidance.

The principal ensures that all government regulations and directives are properly carried out. He is involved in all financial matters, especially the collection of fees, procurement of some equipment and materials, the calculation of the entitlement and salaries of staff (voucher), and accounting for all monies collected from students or received from government. It is not the responsibility of the principal to decide on the purchase of new equipment or employment of new staff; such necessities have to be taken up with the appropriate government body.

A sample of a schematic organogram for technical colleges is outlined in Figure 1.





### Staffing

The quality of any TVET depends to a large extent on the quality of staff the school has and on the inter-relationship between the personnel administration (principal) and his staff and between individual members of his staff. In solving some problems affecting the management of TVET, the principal should not see his staff's effort as of little consequence, whose duty is to his directives, rather as a companion in the difficult task of carrying out of educating the youths. His philosophy is the reflection of what the government has in mind on TVET.

A situation where principals are not involved in the selection of their staff creates problems in the management of TVET. Teachers are often employed by the state education board and posted to schools without any consultation between the board and school principals. Such a teacher may not be the type of teacher required by the school. This could pose problems for the school management. Every new staff member ought to be properly oriented and absorbed into the school functions and what part he is expected to play in promoting the aims and objectives of the school.

The insufficient qualified and experienced technical teachers in most of the technical colleges are one of the major challenges in TVET. The practical and scientific nature of technical and vocational education drives many students away from choosing technical subjects as a course of study in tertiary schools. This has affected the production of qualified technical education teachers, resulting in a shortage of qualified teachers and the production of half-baked technicians. The school management, to fill the gap, makes use of unqualified teachers. The implication of this practice is cheating “instead of the act of teaching”. Its consequences are the graduation of untrained and unqualified technicians and job seekers instead of qualified, self-reliant individuals who will turn to job creators.

### Monitoring

Monitoring, which is an act of observing and supervising, brings the manager into direct contact with operatives; the objective behind the performance of these functions is to bring stability, standards, and soundness in the organization. The work of supervision in TVET may be done by

the principals, the vice principal, the head of department, or the sectional heads in their respective trades or vocations.

The supervisor assists teachers in directing the educational development of children. A school supervisor should be able to encourage the teachers and motivate them to adopt more modern instructional methods. He is not expected to be an authoritarian figure; he is more effective if he relies on his influence rather than on his authority. He should, as much as possible, not impose his ideas on his teachers; he should rather guide teachers to understand why some methods are better than others.

Supervisors should appreciate the skills and abilities possessed by individual teachers and guide them to make optimum use of such skills and abilities. They should try to adopt attitude which encourage the development of mutual trust between them and teachers. If teachers have enough trust in the supervision, they would go to him with their problems. Nnabuo (1996) noted that the transition from an educational manager to business empire mentality, whose aim is to make profit, has continued to cripple the managerial skills and affect the development of technical education programmes.

### **Funding**

Events of the past couple of years show that government alone can no longer bear the burden of providing all the materials and financial resources necessary for operating our educational system effectively. UNESCO (1984) and Okala (2003) noted that lack of funds to finance technical and vocational education is undoubtedly the most serious constraint to its development and expansion. Oranu (1989) observed that the “present method of financing technical education is inadequate” because of its over-reliance on government as a major source. He suggests that industries and other commercial enterprises should participate in the funding of technical education since they are the users of the product. This will help in solving the problems affecting the management of TVET.

In his own contribution, Aturu (2000) and UNESCO – UNEVCO (2006) pointed out that the realization of the objective of technical education is made possible with adequate finance with which essential facilities are procured, and human capacity is developed. Sustainable and adequate financial support for education is a panacea to the present groaning of TVET, since changes in the educational system require not only policy-making but implementation through adequate financial support. Budgeting and accounting are important functions since educational programmes generally involve the expenditure of funds. In making plans for educational programmes or for the expansion of existing programmes, cost should always be considered. If two educational programmes are capable of achieving the same result at different costs, the one that costs less to implement should generally be adopted. However, care should be taken to ensure that the cheaper programme is not really inferior to the costlier programme. The benefits of an educational programme are difficult to quantify and compare; too much insistence on cheapness could jeopardize what could have been a perfectly good programme.

Budget evaluation is a very important factor that will help to solve management problems in TVET. A good budget should employ a good accounting system and should provide a good record of all receipts and expenditures. An accounting system leaves a record which can be checked by external personnel to ensure that there has been no mismanagement of funds. This will ensure that resources available are properly utilized. Budget evaluation may involve a comparison of funds spent and benefits derived in order to justify the expenditure of funds.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design:**

A survey research design was used for the study. The survey design was used because the study merely sought information from the respondents as the situation exists without manipulation of any variables.

### **Study Area**

The study was carried out in twelve technical, vocational and Science secondary schools in the southeast states of Nigeria comprising Enugu, Abia, Anambra, Imo and Ebonyi State.

### **Population of the study**

The population of the study consists of the principals, vice principals, head of departments and unit heads hereafter referred to as management staff. This staff administratively organizes and controls other staff and students in the school.

### **Sampling technique**

Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select three states. Fifty-five management staff from Enugu State, thirty-two management staff from Anambra State, and twenty-three management staff from Ebonyi State with the ratio of 5: 4: 3 to represent twelve Technical, Vocational and Science secondary schools under investigation.

### **Validity of the instrument**

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by subjecting it to scrutiny by three of my research colleagues, experienced in instrument development.

### **Reliability of the instrument**

The instrument was administered two times on a sample of 10 schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, and Kogi State. The correlation between the mean score of the first and second administration of the instrument was used to determine the reliability of the instrument.

### Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire titled Strategies for Solving Problems Affecting the Management of Technical and Vocational Education (SSPAMTVE) was developed by the researcher based on a literature review.

The data were collected by administering the questionnaire to the respondents; six research assistants were used, three from Enugu State, two from Anambra State, and one from Ebonyi State. The respondents were allowed a period of two weeks to respond to the items, after which the instruments were collected. In other words, the instrument was administered and collected on two different days.

### Data analysis

The data collected were organized, computerized, analyzed, and expressed in mean (X). The mean rating of 2.5 was used for decision-making, such that a mean rating on any item of the assumption by the respondent less than 2.5 was regarded as Disagree, and any mean rating above 2.5 was regarded as Agree.

### Results

**Table 1**

**Means Responses of the Respondents on Strategies for solving the problems affecting the management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

S/N	Item statements	Mean	S.D.	Remarks
<b>Problems affecting the management of technical and vocational education and training in south east Nigeria</b>				
1	Use of non-technical professionals as administrators in Technical colleges	3.75	1.26	Agree
2	Insufficient qualified and experienced technical training staff	3.05	1.51	Agree
3	Too much government control	2.45	1.66	Disagree
4	Overloaded work on the principal	2.81	1.70	Agree
5	Insufficient equipment and tools in the workshop	3.94	1.18	Agree
6	Poor planning	2.26	1.91	Disagree
7	Inadequate funding	3.71	1.42	Agree
8	Improper accounting	3.10	1.49	Agree
9	Poor practical facilities (workshop, laboratory)	3.70	1.46	Agree
10	Lack of support to creativity from teachers	3.8	1.51	Agree
11	Ill-equipped college Library	3.42	1.57	Agree

Key; X- = Mean SD = Standard Deviation

Table 1 above shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the problems affecting the management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South East Nigeria. Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. Have their mean value ranged from 2.81 to 3.94. This shows that the mean value of these items was above the cutoff point of 2.50, indicating that all are problems affecting the management of technical and vocational education in South East Nigeria. Items 3 and 6 had mean values of 2.45 and 2.26, respectively, implying that the items are not a problem affecting the management of TVET in South East Nigeria. Table 1 also shows that the standard deviation of the item is within the range of 1.26 – 1.91; this indicates that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

Table 2

**Means Responses of the Respondents on Strategies for solving the problems affecting the management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Solution to the problems facing Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South East Nigeria.**

S/N	Item	Mean	S.D.	Remark
1	Allow school authority to recruit staff	3.91	1.15	Agree
2	Commercialize TVET workshop	3.36	1.54	Agree
3	Only professionals should take charge of TVET	2.79	1.45	Agree
4	Involving technicians and artisans in TVET training	4.00	1.33	Agree
5	Remove some duties from the principal	2.52	1.58	Agree
6	Regular training of staff	4.51	1.12	Agree
7	Harmonious relationships between staff	2.80	1.68	Agree
8	Total finance of TVET by the government	3.09	1.47	Agree
9	Payment of special allowance to technical teachers	4.21	1.03	Agree
10	Introducing elementary technology in primary school curriculum	3.84	1.30	Agree
11	Evaluation of staff performance	3.22	1.63	Agree
12	Joint partnerships with organized bodies	3.87	1.38	Agree

Key; X- = Mean SD=Standard Deviation

Table 2 above

Data in Table 2 on research question two revealed that all the 12 items have their mean values ranging from 2.52 to 4.21. This shows that the mean value of each item was above the cutoff point of 2.50, indicating that all the items are solutions to the problem facing Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South East Nigeria. Table 2 also shows that the standard deviation of the item is within the range of 1.03 to 1.68. This indicates that the mean values of the respondents were not far from one another in their responses.

**Table 3**

**Means and Standard Deviation of Responses of the Respondents on the extent to which management problems affected the interest of students and parents in Technical Vocational Educational and Training (TVET)**

S/N	Item	X-	S. D	Remark
1	Ill functional 1 curriculum	3.16	1.58	Agree
2	Inappropriate courses	3.35	1.55	Agree
3	Irrelevant subject	3.25	1.57	Agree
4	Irrelevant programme	3.96	1.16	Agree
5	Insufficient time	3.40	1.47	Agree
6	Programmed choked with too much academic work	3.96	1.34	Agree
7	Too much power on the principal	2.41	1.58	Disagree
8	Unqualified and ill-experienced technical training staff	3.13	1.61	Agree
9	Insufficient workshop practice	4.05	1.19	Agree
10	Production of ill-trained and unqualified technicians	3.68	1.44	Agree
11	Non- provision of practical materials	3.32	1.54	Agree
12	Lack of societal awareness	3.07	1.60	Agree

Key; X- = Mean SD = Standard Deviation

Table 3

The data presented in Table 3 reveal the extent to which management problems affect the interest of students and parents in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The mean ranged from 2.41 to 4.05; only item 7, with 2, 41 mean has cut off point below 2.50. This implies that the principal does not exercise too much power or have undue influence on the management of TVEY in South East Nigeria. Other items' mean values are 2.50 cut-off point, which indicates that they affect the interest of students and parents to a great extent. The standard deviation value for the 12 items ranged from 1, 61 were less than 1.96, that is, the 95% confidence limit. This shows that the respondents were not far from the mean; this added some value to the reliability of the mean.

### **Discussion of findings**

#### **Problems Affecting the Management of Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

The study revealed that the following problems affected the management of TVET: use of non-technical professionals as administrators in Technical Colleges, insufficient qualified and experienced technically trained staff, overloaded work on the principal, insufficient equipment and tools in the workshop, inadequate funding, improper accounting, poor practical activities, lack of support to creativity from teachers, and an ill-equipped college library. This finding agrees with Okoye and Arimonu (2016), Okolocha (2012), and Ebete, Ojule and Akpele (2019),

who observed that a lot of constraints hindering the management of TVET are internal and external factors which need special attention.

It was also revealed that Government control constitutes a problem in TVET management. As observed by Edna (2022) and Alston, Alston and Mueller (2021), who lamented that the government refuses to allow school management free hand to employ their initiative based on the structure on the ground. Poor planning resulted in inadequate budgeting, insufficient staff and resources, and lack of coordination between school, labour market and the society. This is in line with the findings of Ogbuanya and Izuoba (2015) and Oduma (2007), who noted that adequate planning and good management will propel TVET and solve unemployment and underemployment problems among school leavers.

The finding also revealed that all items in research question 2 will solve major problems facing TVET. This is in agreement with Nwachukwu (1998) as cited in Nwodo, Eze, and Ede (2020), ILO (2021), which stated that increased funding for TVET programs in developing countries can lead to significant improvement in the quality of training and employment outcomes for graduates. Also, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) found that effective coordination among all stakeholders involved in TVET can lead to better planning, implementation, and evaluation of training programs.

In research question 3, the respondents agree in 11 out of 12 items listed in the questionnaire. The finding reveals that the respondent disagrees with item seven, statements which stated too much power on the principal. This finding seems to be in disparity with Nwokoma (1996) and Nnaobuo (1996), who accused the principals of being a cog in the wheel of progress in TVET programs, which can be as a result of their training and orientation. Most of the principals passed through liberal and science education. In 11 items, 91 per cent received ratings above the cut-off point of 3.00 on the five- point Likert scale. This implies that the students and their parents agree to a large extent that all constitute management problems.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study serve as the basis for making the following conclusions:

1. That most of the management staff of technical colleges in South East Nigeria lack technical ideas.
2. That the school principals are bothered with too much work.
3. Inadequate funding and improper accounting hinder the effective management of technical colleges.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been proffered.

1. Professionals and technocrats should be employed to manage TEVT.
2. The Government should allow the managers of technical education to exercise some control, such as recommending technical staff for employment based on their needs.

3. TEVT should be funded adequately for it to achieve the desired aims and objectives.

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