

**BRIDGING THE INDUSTRY–ACADEMIA SKILLS GAP THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NIGERIA**

¹Obioma Wisdom NWAOKOKOROM

Accounting Education Department, School of Business Education,
Federal College of Education (Technical),
Omoku, Rivers State, Nigeria
obiwisy@fcetomoku.edu.ng

²Ogbonnaya Nwachuku OKIKE

Department of Entrepreneurship Education
Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka Lagos Nigeria
okikemog2016@gmail.com

&

³Euphemia Nkiruka ONYENEKE

Department of Business Education, Faculty of Technology and Vocational Education,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria
en.onyeneke@unizik.edu.ng,

ABSTRACT

The persistent mismatch between the competencies acquired by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates and the practical requirements of industries continues to raise concerns about graduate employability and occupational preparedness in Nigeria. This opinion paper examines experiential learning as an instructional approach for bridging the industry–academia skills gap in Nigerian TVET institutions. It discusses the relationship between institutional training and workplace requirements, experiential approaches for developing occupational competencies, and strategies for strengthening collaboration between educational institutions and industries. The paper draws on contemporary scholarly literature, relevant contributions to Business Educators, and institutional publications on skills development. Industrial training, structured apprenticeships, project-based learning, workplace simulations, mentorship and competency-based assessment are identified as approaches that connect theoretical knowledge with practical occupational performance. The paper argues that effective experiential learning requires clearly defined competencies, authentic workplace activities, appropriate supervision and active industry participation. Inadequate training facilities, limited industry collaboration, insufficient lecturer exposure to contemporary occupational practices and weak practical assessment constrain implementation. The paper concludes that bridging the industry–academia skills gap requires systematic integration of experiential learning into TVET curricula and sustained cooperation between training institutions and employers. It suggests strengthening industry-responsive practical instruction and establishing functional partnerships for curriculum development, workplace training and competency assessment.

Keywords: Experiential learning, industry–academia skills gap, TVET, occupational competencies, graduate employability.

Introduction

The increasing demand for technically competent and adaptable workers has strengthened the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in national development. TVET is expected to equip learners with occupational knowledge, practical competencies, professional attitudes and entrepreneurial capabilities required for productive employment and self-

reliance. Its effectiveness is therefore determined not only by the acquisition of theoretical knowledge but also by graduates' ability to demonstrate relevant competencies in actual workplace situations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2022) emphasised the importance of transforming TVET to support productive employment, technological adaptation and sustainable economic development.

In Nigeria, TVET programmes are provided through universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, technical colleges and other training institutions. These programmes prepare learners for occupations in business, agriculture, engineering-related trades, office administration, automobile technology, electrical and electronics technology, building construction and other technical fields. The relevance of such programmes depends on the relationship between institutional training and the competencies required by employers. Where this relationship is weak, graduates experience difficulties translating acquired knowledge into effective occupational performance.

The World Bank, International Labour Organization and UNESCO (2023) identified weak responsiveness to labour-market requirements as an important challenge facing formal TVET systems in low- and middle-income countries. Their report emphasised the need for demand-driven training, improved institutional capacity and stronger relationships between training providers and employers. This concern is relevant to Nigerian TVET institutions, where the practical orientation of occupational education requires continuous alignment with technological developments, workplace procedures and changing industry expectations.

The industry–academia skills gap represents the difference between the competencies developed through educational programmes and those required for effective workplace performance. The gap encompasses technical proficiency, practical experience, digital competence, problem-solving, communication, teamwork and adaptability. Although graduates acquire theoretical knowledge during their programmes, occupational competence requires the ability to apply such knowledge accurately and responsibly to practical situations. Consequently, instructional approaches that provide authentic workplace experiences are essential to improving the relevance of TVET.

Recent Nigerian Business Education scholarship has reinforced the importance of practical competence development. Akeke et al. (2023) examined competencies required of university Business Education graduates for employability, while Nwaokokorom and Ikpeama (2023) identified accounting and problem-solving skills required for job performance in contemporary organisations. These studies highlight the relationship between occupational preparation and the competencies expected of graduates. Similarly, Enang (2023) emphasised digital entrepreneurial skills and competencies required of Business Education students in the digital era.

Experiential learning provides a framework for strengthening the relationship between theoretical instruction and occupational practice. It involves learning through direct experience, reflection and the application of acquired knowledge to practical problems. Kolb (1984) explained that knowledge develops through the transformation of experience, involving concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Within TVET, these processes are reflected in workshop activities, industrial training, apprenticeships, simulations, practical projects and supervised workplace assignments.

Contemporary studies support the educational relevance of experiential learning. Obi et al. (2022) examined experiential learning activities for developing twenty-first-century competencies in Business Education. Motta and Galina (2023), through a systematic literature review, discussed the contribution of experiential learning to entrepreneurial skills and competencies. These perspectives demonstrate that practical learning activities provide opportunities for students to apply theoretical concepts, investigate occupational problems and develop relevant professional capabilities.

Within the Niger Delta, Akele and Duoduo (2024) examined mentoring and experiential learning strategies for improving entrepreneurship instruction in Business Education programmes in Bayelsa State. Ito and Okudaye (2025) investigated experiential learning, practical skills acquisition and entrepreneurial intentions among Business Education students in Delta State-owned institutions.

These studies provide regional support for strengthening practical instructional approaches in Nigerian vocational education.

The relevance of experiential learning has also been emphasised in the 2026 Association of Business Educators of Nigeria conference proceedings. Iyoha et al. (2026) discussed innovative pedagogies in business and entrepreneurship education, identifying experiential learning, project-based instruction, collaborative learning and simulations as approaches that strengthen practical competence and knowledge transfer. Their discussion reinforces the need to move beyond predominantly lecture-based instruction towards learning experiences that reflect contemporary occupational and entrepreneurial requirements.

However, the adoption of experiential learning alone does not guarantee that graduates acquire competencies relevant to industries. Practical activities must be connected to current occupational standards, supported by appropriate equipment and supervised by competent instructors. Industrial training also requires meaningful participation by employers. The International Labour Organization (2023) emphasised structured training, recognised competencies and stakeholder participation as important requirements for quality apprenticeships.

Industry–academia collaboration therefore occupies a central position in bridging the skills gap. Employers possess practical knowledge of contemporary production processes, workplace technologies, occupational standards and emerging skill requirements. Educational institutions contribute theoretical knowledge, instructional expertise and structured learning opportunities. Meaningful collaboration combines these contributions to improve curriculum relevance, practical training and graduate employability.

Despite the recognised importance of experiential learning, challenges involving inadequate practical facilities, limited industrial exposure, weak institutional partnerships and insufficient competency-based assessment continue to raise concerns about its effective implementation. The central problem is not merely the availability of practical training within TVET programmes but the extent to which such training develops competencies that correspond with actual industry requirements.

Against this background, this paper examines experiential learning as an approach to bridging the industry–academia skills gap in Nigerian TVET institutions. It discusses experiential instructional approaches, the relationship between practical training and graduate employability, strategies for strengthening industry–academia collaboration, implementation challenges and implications for improving occupational preparation in Nigeria.

Experiential Learning as an Instructional Approach in TVET

Experiential learning is an instructional approach through which learners develop knowledge, practical skills and professional competencies by participating in meaningful activities and reflecting on their experiences. It emphasises active engagement with occupational tasks rather than exclusive dependence on theoretical instruction. The approach is particularly relevant to TVET because occupational competence involves the ability to perform practical activities accurately, solve workplace problems and apply technical knowledge under varying conditions.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory provides a foundation for understanding the relationship between experience and competence development. The theory identifies concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation as interconnected stages of learning. Students participate in practical activities, examine their performance, relate their experiences to established principles and apply improved understanding to subsequent tasks.

In TVET, these processes are demonstrated through workshop practice, industrial attachment, apprenticeships, field experiences, simulations and practical projects. A student undertaking an electrical installation project, for example, applies theoretical knowledge to practical procedures, evaluates the outcome and improves subsequent performance through supervision and feedback. Similarly, Business Education students develop occupational competence by preparing financial records, managing simulated office operations, conducting market investigations and participating in enterprise projects.

Obi et al. (2022) identified experiential activities such as simulations, role-playing, business laboratory practice, real-life cases and self-directed projects as relevant to developing contemporary competencies in Business Education. Motta and Galina (2023) further highlighted the importance of learning through practical entrepreneurial experiences. These studies reinforce the value of connecting academic instruction with authentic occupational activities.

Experiential learning also supports the development of transferable competencies. Practical activities require students to communicate, collaborate, make decisions, manage resources and respond to unexpected problems. Such experiences strengthen the relationship between technical knowledge and professional behaviour. Larsen et al. (2024) emphasised the responsibilities of experiential educators in creating practical learning opportunities and supporting students' engagement with entrepreneurial activities.

Consequently, experiential learning should be treated as an integral component of TVET curriculum implementation rather than an occasional instructional supplement. Its effectiveness depends on purposeful activities, relevant occupational standards, structured reflection, appropriate supervision and performance-based assessment.

Industry–Academia Skills Gap in Nigerian TVET Institutions

The industry–academia skills gap arises when the knowledge, skills and professional capabilities acquired through institutional training do not adequately correspond with the competencies required for workplace performance. This mismatch affects the relevance of occupational education and raises concerns about graduates' preparedness for employment.

In TVET, the skills gap extends beyond technical knowledge. Employers require graduates who can operate relevant equipment, interpret occupational information, solve practical problems, communicate effectively, work collaboratively and adapt to changing technological conditions. Graduates who possess theoretical knowledge without sufficient practical exposure experience difficulty demonstrating these competencies in unfamiliar workplace environments.

Akeke et al. (2023) identified employability-related competencies required of university Business Education graduates, while Nwaokokorom and Ikpeama (2023) emphasised accounting and problem-solving skills relevant to job performance. Enang (2023) also identified digital entrepreneurial competencies associated with contemporary business activities. These studies indicate that occupational preparation requires a combination of technical, digital and transferable skills.

The industry–academia skills gap is reinforced when curriculum implementation relies predominantly on classroom explanations without corresponding practical activities. Students develop familiarity with concepts but receive insufficient opportunities to apply them to authentic occupational tasks. The problem becomes more pronounced when practical facilities do not reflect contemporary workplace technologies or when industrial training arrangements provide limited opportunities for meaningful participation.

The World Bank et al. (2023) emphasised that effective TVET systems require stronger responsiveness to labour-market demands, appropriate institutional incentives and improved training quality. This perspective indicates that bridging the skills gap requires changes in both educational delivery and the relationship between training institutions and employers.

Within Nigeria, the challenge also concerns the quality of industry participation in occupational preparation. Industrial attachments and workplace visits contribute to competence development when students undertake relevant assignments, receive appropriate mentoring and are assessed against established learning outcomes. Placement in an organisation without meaningful practical engagement does not achieve the full educational purpose of experiential learning.

Therefore, bridging the industry–academia skills gap requires systematic alignment among curriculum content, practical instructional activities, workplace expectations and competency assessment. Experiential learning provides the instructional connection through which this alignment can be strengthened.

Experiential Learning Approaches for Bridging the Industry–Academia Skills Gap

Bridging the industry–academia skills gap requires instructional approaches that enable TVET students to apply theoretical knowledge to authentic occupational tasks. These approaches should promote practical competence, professional judgement and familiarity with workplace expectations.

Industrial Training and Workplace Attachment: Industrial training provides students with opportunities to acquire practical experience in organisations where relevant occupational activities are undertaken. It exposes learners to workplace procedures, equipment, professional relationships, organisational expectations and industry standards. Within Nigerian TVET institutions, the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) serves as an established mechanism for connecting classroom instruction with industrial practice. Its educational relevance depends on the relationship between students' programmes and the duties assigned during placement. Effective industrial training requires clearly defined learning outcomes, relevant workplace assignments, institutional supervision and industry mentoring. Students should participate in occupational activities that reflect the competencies specified in their programmes.

The International Labour Organization (2023) emphasised the importance of structured workplace learning and recognised competencies in quality apprenticeship arrangements. These principles are equally relevant to industrial attachment because workplace participation should lead to identifiable learning outcomes. Industrial training strengthens occupational preparation by exposing students to practical conditions that cannot be fully reproduced in classrooms. It also develops workplace discipline, communication, teamwork and professional responsibility.

Project-Based Learning: Project-based learning engages students in practical assignments requiring the application of knowledge and skills to produce identifiable outcomes. It creates opportunities for learners to plan activities, organise resources, investigate problems, implement solutions and evaluate results. In TVET, project-based activities include designing technical products, maintaining equipment, developing business plans, preparing financial records and implementing supervised enterprise projects. Santoso et al. (2023) presented project-based entrepreneurial learning as an approach that connects higher education with practical start-up development. Their work demonstrates the educational value of organising learning around authentic projects and entrepreneurial activities.

Similarly, Iyoha et al. (2026) identified project-based learning as an innovative pedagogical approach for strengthening knowledge transfer and practical competence in business and entrepreneurship education. Project-based learning contributes to reducing the skills gap by requiring students to demonstrate what they can accomplish with acquired knowledge. Projects should therefore be designed around current occupational requirements and assessed through clearly established performance criteria.

Problem-Based Learning: Problem-based learning develops occupational competence by engaging students in the investigation and resolution of practical problems. It encourages learners to identify relevant information, analyse possible causes, evaluate alternatives and justify appropriate solutions. Within TVET, problem-based activities can be developed around equipment faults, production difficulties, inaccurate business records, workplace communication challenges and operational inefficiencies. The approach strengthens critical thinking and independent decision-making because students must apply knowledge to situations that require investigation rather than reproduce predetermined answers. Iyoha et al. (2026) included problem-based learning among the instructional approaches that improve practical learning and knowledge transfer. Effective implementation requires lecturers to develop realistic occupational scenarios, facilitate investigation and evaluate students' reasoning alongside the solutions produced.

Workplace Simulation and Digital Practical Activities

Simulation-based instruction provides students with opportunities to practise occupational procedures in controlled environments that reproduce important characteristics of actual workplaces. Business Education students can participate in simulated office operations, accounting exercises, customer-service activities and digital business transactions. Students in technical occupations can practise relevant operational procedures using suitable training equipment and simulation applications. Okpue and Eshemoghie (2025) examined virtual reality and augmented reality in enhancing experiential learning within Business and Entrepreneurship Education at Delta State University, Abraka. Their work reflects growing interest in using immersive technologies to strengthen practical instructional experiences. Simulation supports repeated practice, feedback and improvement. It is particularly useful for introducing students to unfamiliar occupational situations before they undertake comparable activities in actual workplaces. However, simulation should complement industrial exposure because real workplaces involve organisational relationships, production constraints and professional responsibilities that controlled environments cannot fully reproduce.

Mentorship and Industry-Guided Practical Learning: Mentorship connects students with experienced professionals who provide guidance concerning occupational procedures, workplace expectations and professional development. Industry mentors help learners understand how theoretical principles are applied to practical situations. They also provide feedback on performance, professional conduct and areas requiring improvement. Akele and Duoduo (2024) examined mentoring and experiential learning strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship instruction in Business Education programmes in Bayelsa State. Their work provides regional support for incorporating mentorship into practical occupational preparation. Mentorship is particularly valuable during industrial training, apprenticeships and enterprise projects because students receive guidance from individuals familiar with contemporary occupational requirements. Institutions should therefore establish structured mentorship arrangements with relevant industries, specifying expected competencies, supervision procedures and assessment responsibilities.

Competency-Based Practical Assessment: Competency-based assessment determines whether students can perform specified occupational tasks according to established standards. It provides a more direct measure of practical preparedness than assessment approaches that depend exclusively on written examinations. Practical assessment activities include performance demonstrations, completed projects, workplace supervisor reports, portfolios, technical presentations and documented industrial training activities. Okoro (2026) examined experiential learning activities within competency-based Business Education in Delta State universities. The study provides a relevant Nigerian context for linking practical instructional activities with competence development. Competency-based assessment strengthens the connection between educational certification and occupational performance. It also enables institutions to identify areas where students require additional practical instruction.

Industry–Academia Collaboration and Graduate Employability

Industry–academia collaboration involves cooperation between educational institutions and business or industrial organisations to improve curriculum relevance, practical training and occupational preparation. The relationship is important because educational institutions and employers possess complementary resources. Institutions provide theoretical instruction, structured learning activities and academic supervision, while industries provide workplace facilities, professional experience and knowledge of current occupational requirements.

Graduate employability refers to the competencies, attributes and capabilities that enable individuals to obtain employment, perform occupational responsibilities effectively and adapt to changing workplace demands. Akeke et al. (2023) examined competencies required of university Business

Education graduates for employability. Their study reinforces the importance of aligning educational preparation with practical occupational expectations.

Industry–academia collaboration strengthens employability by providing students with opportunities to encounter workplace requirements before graduation. Industrial placements, mentorship, collaborative projects and professional demonstrations expose students to occupational procedures and expectations that complement classroom instruction. The World Bank et al. (2023) emphasised stronger relationships between TVET systems and labour-market demands as essential to improving training effectiveness. Collaboration also supports curriculum development. Employers contribute information about emerging technologies, production processes, digital applications and professional competencies. Curriculum developers and lecturers translate these requirements into instructional objectives, practical activities and assessment standards.

Within Business Education, collaboration can improve students' exposure to contemporary accounting applications, office technologies, marketing procedures and business-management practices. In technical occupations, partnerships provide opportunities for training with relevant equipment and exposure to current production and maintenance procedures. The ILO (2023) emphasised employer participation and structured learning arrangements in quality apprenticeships. This demonstrates the importance of clearly defined responsibilities in workplace-based occupational preparation. Effective industry–academia collaboration should therefore extend beyond occasional visits or the signing of partnership agreements. It should involve continuous engagement in curriculum development, practical instruction, industrial training, professional mentoring and competency assessment.

Challenges to Effective Experiential Learning and Industry–Academia Collaboration

Several challenges affect the effective implementation of experiential learning and industry–academia collaboration in Nigerian TVET institutions.

Inadequate practical training facilities constitute an important constraint. Effective occupational preparation requires relevant equipment, workshops, laboratories, digital applications and instructional materials. Where facilities are inadequate, students have limited opportunities to practise occupational tasks under realistic conditions. Paul-Mgbeafulike and Onyeneke (2023) examined the adequacy of entrepreneurship resources for practical skills acquisition and effective Business Education instruction, highlighting the importance of instructional resources to competence development.

Limited industry collaboration also affects practical training. Institutions require sustained relationships with employers to provide industrial placements, professional mentoring and access to contemporary occupational practices. Where partnerships are weak, students experience reduced exposure to authentic workplace activities. The World Bank et al. (2023) identified labour-market responsiveness and institutional coordination as important considerations in improving TVET systems.

Insufficient professional development of TVET educators presents another challenge. Experiential instruction requires lecturers to design practical activities, supervise projects, facilitate reflection and assess demonstrated competencies. Larsen et al. (2024) emphasised the responsibilities of educators in supporting experiential entrepreneurship learning. Educators therefore require continuous exposure to contemporary occupational practices and practical instructional approaches. Financial constraints affect the provision and maintenance of workshops, equipment, digital facilities and industrial training arrangements. Practical projects and workplace supervision also involve operational expenditure. Without adequate financial planning, experiential activities become irregular or limited in scope.

Inadequate supervision of industrial training reduces the educational value of workplace attachment. Students require relevant assignments, professional guidance and feedback on their performance. Where supervision is weak, industrial attachment becomes an administrative requirement rather than a structured learning experience.

Curriculum implementation and assessment practices also create challenges. Although TVET programmes emphasise practical competence, assessment sometimes concentrates on theoretical understanding without sufficient evaluation of occupational performance. This weakens the relationship between intended learning outcomes and demonstrated skills.

Finally, rapid technological developments create additional demands for curriculum renewal and continuous professional learning. Enang (2023) identified digital entrepreneurial competencies relevant to contemporary business activities, demonstrating the importance of responding to emerging occupational requirements. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated institutional action, adequate resources, educator development and sustained industry participation.

Strategies for Bridging the Industry–Academia Skills Gap

Bridging the industry–academia skills gap requires deliberate strategies that strengthen practical instruction and improve cooperation between educational institutions and employers.

First, TVET curricula should be reviewed periodically to reflect contemporary occupational requirements. Curriculum development should involve relevant industry representatives, professional associations, employers and educational specialists. The World Bank et al. (2023) emphasised demand-driven training as an important requirement for improving TVET relevance. Curriculum reviews should therefore identify the practical competencies graduates must demonstrate and specify the instructional activities through which those competencies will be developed.

Second, experiential learning should be systematically integrated into TVET course implementation. Practical projects, workplace simulations, industrial training and competency-based assessment should be connected to clearly defined learning outcomes. Iyoha et al. (2026) emphasised innovative pedagogies that strengthen practical competence and knowledge transfer. Integrating these approaches into regular instruction ensures that practical learning becomes an essential component of occupational preparation.

Third, institutions should establish functional partnerships with industries and professional organisations. These partnerships should provide structured industrial placements, mentorship, collaborative projects and access to relevant workplace facilities. Agreements should specify institutional responsibilities, training expectations and evaluation procedures. The ILO (2023) emphasised structured arrangements and stakeholder participation in effective apprenticeship systems.

Fourth, TVET educators should receive continuous professional development in contemporary occupational practices and experiential instructional methods. Professional development should involve industrial attachment, technical workshops, collaborative industry projects and training in competency-based assessment. Larsen et al. (2024) demonstrated the importance of educator competence in facilitating meaningful experiential learning.

Fifth, practical learning facilities should be strengthened through institutional investment and industry-supported arrangements. Workshops, laboratories and digital learning environments should reflect relevant occupational requirements. Where resources are limited, institutions can establish shared training facilities and collaborative arrangements with nearby industries.

Sixth, industrial training should be supported by effective supervision and assessment. Students should undertake relevant workplace tasks, maintain training records and receive feedback from institutional supervisors and industry mentors. Assessment should focus on the competencies demonstrated rather than merely the duration of industrial attachment.

Finally, institutions should establish mechanisms for obtaining employer feedback and evaluating graduates' occupational performance. Graduate tracer studies, employer consultations and workplace assessment reports provide information for curriculum improvement. Such mechanisms strengthen accountability and help institutions respond to changing industry requirements.

Implications for TVET and Graduate Employability in Nigeria

The integration of experiential learning and industry–academia collaboration has important implications for occupational education, graduate employability and national development.

First, TVET institutions should place greater emphasis on demonstrated occupational competence. The relevance of educational programmes should be reflected in graduates' ability to perform practical tasks, solve workplace problems and adapt to professional expectations. Akeke et al. (2023) identified employability-related competencies required of Business Education graduates, reinforcing the importance of preparing students for practical occupational responsibilities.

Second, instructional delivery should connect theoretical knowledge with authentic workplace experiences. Experiential learning provides opportunities for students to apply concepts, reflect on performance and improve their competencies through guided practice. Obi et al. (2022) and Motta and Galina (2023) emphasised the relevance of practical experiences to competence development.

Third, industry participation should become an established component of TVET curriculum implementation. Employers should contribute to curriculum review, practical instruction, industrial training and competency assessment. This approach strengthens the relationship between educational preparation and contemporary occupational requirements.

Fourth, lecturer professional development should be regarded as an essential requirement for improving practical instruction. Educators require familiarity with current workplace procedures, emerging technologies and relevant instructional approaches. Industry-based professional development strengthens their capacity to provide authentic occupational learning experiences.

Fifth, assessment practices should increasingly recognise practical performance, workplace problem-solving and professional competence. Students should demonstrate the ability to apply acquired knowledge to relevant occupational tasks rather than depend exclusively on theoretical examinations.

Finally, stronger experiential learning and industry–academia collaboration contribute to the broader objectives of employment preparation, entrepreneurship and productive economic participation. However, graduate employment outcomes are also influenced by economic conditions, industrial development and available opportunities. The educational responsibility is to ensure that graduates possess competencies relevant to these opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Experiential learning provides an important pathway for bridging the industry–academia skills gap in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Nigeria. Its value lies in connecting theoretical instruction with authentic occupational experiences through industrial training, practical projects, workplace simulations, mentorship and competency-based assessment. The effectiveness of experiential learning depends on meaningful participation, appropriate supervision, relevant facilities and clearly defined occupational competencies. Practical activities should therefore become integral components of TVET curriculum implementation rather than occasional instructional supplements. Industry–academia collaboration is equally important because employers provide knowledge of contemporary workplace requirements, professional standards and emerging technologies. Sustainable partnerships strengthen curriculum relevance, industrial training, practical

instruction and graduate employability. Bridging the skills gap consequently requires coordinated efforts by TVET institutions, industries, professional associations and policymakers. When experiential learning and industry collaboration are systematically implemented, Nigerian TVET institutions are better positioned to produce graduates with the practical competencies, professional judgement and adaptability required for productive employment and economic development.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the issues discussed in this paper, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. Strengthening experiential learning in TVET curriculum implementation: TVET departments, curriculum developers and institutional administrators should deliberately integrate industrial training, project-based learning, problem-based learning, workplace simulations, mentorship and competency-based practical assessment into relevant courses. These activities should be linked to clearly defined occupational competencies and supported by appropriate facilities, supervision and continuous professional development of educators.
2. Establishing sustainable industry–academia partnerships: Government agencies, TVET institutions, professional associations and relevant industries should establish functional partnerships for collaborative curriculum development, structured industrial placements, industry-guided practical instruction and joint competency assessment. These partnerships should include clear responsibilities, adequate implementation arrangements and regular evaluation of graduate occupational preparedness.

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