



Training for the Future: Addressing the Needs of Nigeria's Emerging Workforce

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores strategies for advancing workforce development in Nigeria, focusing on overcoming the key challenges hindering the country's economic growth. The objectives of the study are to identify the major issues affecting workforce development, such as educational deficiencies, skills mismatch, high unemployment, and limited access to technology, and to propose viable solutions to these problems. The research also aims to investigate the role of government policies, vocational training, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy in enhancing workforce capabilities. A qualitative research methodology was employed, utilizing a comprehensive literature review to analyze secondary data from governmental reports, academic studies, and international development organizations. The study highlights several critical problems, including an outdated education system that fails to meet the demands of the labor market, the lack of integration between education and industry, and the limited digital literacy that hinders workforce readiness in a global tech-driven economy. Furthermore, the research examines issues such as high youth unemployment, gender disparities in workforce participation, and the problem of brain drain, where skilled professionals seek better opportunities abroad. The findings indicated that to address these challenges, a holistic approach is required, including education reform, enhanced vocational training, stronger partnerships between educational institutions and industries, and significant investments in digital infrastructure. Additionally, the study emphasized the need for policies that promote gender equality, improve working conditions, and support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as key drivers of job creation.

Keywords: Workforce development, Nigeria, education reform, vocational training, SMEs, digital literacy, gender equality, youth unemployment

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, with an estimated population exceeding 200 million people, is Africa's most populous nation and one of the most demographically dynamic countries in the world (Kouassi, Cilliers & le Roux, 2025). What makes Nigeria particularly unique, and potentially powerful, is the age structure of its population. Over 70% of Nigerians are under the age of 30, representing one of the largest concentrations of youth globally (Ojo, 2024). This youthful population, often referred to as a demographic dividend, can be a significant driver of economic transformation if adequately nurtured and equipped. However, if not properly managed, this same demographic trend could lead to widespread unemployment, social unrest, and deepening poverty. The potential of Nigeria's young population to serve as a catalyst for innovation,

entrepreneurship, and economic growth is well acknowledged. A youthful labour force has the energy, creativity, and adaptability needed to embrace new technologies and drive industries forward (Li, 2024). Yet, for this potential to be realized, Nigeria must make strategic and inclusive investments in education, vocational training, digital skills development, and employment opportunities. Without a focused and deliberate approach to capacity building and workforce development, the country risks a future where its greatest asset becomes its greatest liability.

One of the most critical issues confronting Nigeria's workforce today is the disconnect between educational outcomes and labour market demands. Traditional education systems continue to emphasize theoretical knowledge and rote learning, with little focus on practical, hands-on experience and critical thinking skills (Thankachan, 2024). As a result, many graduates emerge from universities and polytechnics without the competencies required by modern employers. This education-employment mismatch has contributed to a youth unemployment rate that hovers above 30%, with many young people either underemployed or engaged in informal or precarious work. Compounding this issue is the rapid pace of global technological advancement. The nature of work is evolving due to digital transformation, artificial intelligence, automation, and shifts in global economic structures (Faishal, Mathew, Neikha, Pusa & Zhimomi, 2023). Skills that were once considered essential are becoming obsolete, while new competencies—particularly in digital literacy, coding, data analysis, cyber security, green technologies, and creative industries—are becoming central to employability and career progression. The World Economic Forum projects that by 2030, over 1 billion people globally will need to be reskilled to meet the changing demands of the labor market (World Economic Forum, 2025). For a country like Nigeria, where large segments of the population still lack access to quality education and digital infrastructure, the challenge is even more pronounced.

Moreover, the changing structure of employment, such as the rise of the gig economy, remote work, and freelance platforms, demands that workers possess not only technical knowledge but also soft skills like adaptability, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving (Maharjan, 2023). These are areas where Nigerian graduates often fall short, primarily due to systemic deficiencies in the education and training systems. The Nigerian government, private sector, and civil society organizations have recognized these challenges and have initiated several programmes aimed at bridging the skills gap and preparing the workforce for the demands of the 21st-century economy (Goyol & Sunday, 2020). However, these efforts remain fragmented, underfunded, or poorly coordinated. There is a pressing need for a national framework that aligns education and training systems with labor market requirements, fosters innovation and entrepreneurship, and ensures that all Nigerians—regardless of gender, geography, or socioeconomic status—have access to lifelong learning opportunities.

This paper seeks to explore the multifaceted dimensions of workforce readiness in Nigeria. It will analyze the current state of the Nigerian labor force, highlight critical skills gaps, assess government and private sector interventions, and offer evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice. The central argument is that investing in the training and development of Nigeria's emerging workforce is not merely a matter of economic necessity but a foundational pillar for national development, social cohesion, and global competitiveness.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopted a scoping review method to explore and map the existing literature, policies, and practices surrounding the development of Nigeria's emerging workforce. This approach is particularly suitable for identifying the breadth of knowledge available on workforce training, assessing key trends, challenges, and opportunities in skill development for future employment.

A scoping review differs from systematic reviews in that it aims to address broader questions, focusing on understanding the overall landscape and guiding future research by identifying gaps in the existing knowledge. This method involved reviewing a wide range of materials, including government reports, academic papers, industry surveys, and training programs. The data extracted will be organized and analyzed to identify common themes, trends, and challenges affecting workforce preparedness. Furthermore, the study will highlight areas where further investigation is needed, particularly in aligning training programs with the emerging needs of sectors such as technology, manufacturing, and services. This method enables a comprehensive mapping of the current state of workforce development, providing actionable insights for improving training programs in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept Clarifications

Training

Canova and Gaudino (2022) define training as any type of repetitive activity that forms the foundation of a learning concept. This definition emphasizes that training is not a one-off event but rather an ongoing process that requires repeated engagement to effectively reinforce skills and knowledge. The repetition aspect is crucial, as it ensures that learners internalize and master concepts through continuous practice. By repeatedly engaging with a particular task or skill, individuals can move from initial learning to deeper understanding and proficiency, which is essential for applying that knowledge in practical, real-world situations. In this context, training is viewed not just as a tool for enhancing immediate performance but as a broader learning strategy. The idea that training is part of a "learning concept" suggests that it is integral to an individual's overall educational development, evolving with the learner's needs, experiences, and external changes in the environment. Training becomes a dynamic and adaptable process, where the goal is to provide learners with a comprehensive framework for ongoing improvement.

According to Adebisi, training plays a critical role in fostering self-reliance, employability, and productivity among individuals. He underscores that for individuals to thrive in today's competitive job market, they must not only acquire theoretical knowledge but also practical skills that are directly relevant to the workforce. Adebisi's perspective aligns with the broader view that education, while crucial, needs to be interconnected with employment through systematic and targeted training programs. This approach ensures that individuals are adequately prepared to meet the demands of various industries, reducing the gap between educational outcomes and labor market requirements. Furthermore, he highlighted that the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE) recognizes this connection between education and employment. The NPE outlines objectives that are geared toward ensuring that education equips individuals with both academic knowledge and vocational skills that can improve their employability. Through comprehensive training programs, individuals can develop technical skills, enhance their capabilities, and gain the experience needed to secure jobs, especially in areas where there is a shortage of skilled workers.

Theoretical Underpinning

This study is anchored on the Human Capital Theory which was first conceptualized by economist and philosopher Adam Smith in 1776 and was popularized by Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz primarily developed the human capital theory in the 1950s and early 1960s. The theory posited that individuals and nations derive economic benefits from investing in

people's education, training, health, and skill development, as these constitute forms of capital that enhance productivity and income generation over time (Matache, 2023; Marginson, 2017). Human Capital Theory argues that just as businesses invest in physical assets to boost production, societies should invest in their citizens to foster economic growth and national competitiveness.

In Nigeria's context, where youth unemployment and skill mismatches persist, Human Capital Theory provides a compelling rationale for prioritizing vocational training, technical education, and digital literacy. By improving the capabilities of Nigeria's emerging workforce, the nation positions itself to better exploit the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and participate in the global knowledge economy. For example, the National Digital Literacy Framework by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) reflects this theory in practice. It outlines structured pathways for equipping citizens, especially youth, with essential digital competencies that can drive innovation and increase employment opportunities (National Information Technology Development Agency, 2023).

Similarly, initiatives in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are increasingly recognized as crucial drivers for sustainable development in Nigeria. TVET programs are designed to equip individuals with practical skills and competencies that align with industry needs, thereby enhancing employability and fostering economic growth. These initiatives are particularly important in a country like Nigeria, where the demand for skilled labor in various sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and technology continues to rise. Oviawe (2018) emphasizes that human capital development through vocational education plays a pivotal role in boosting economic productivity and reducing poverty. By offering specialized training that meets market demands, TVET programs help bridge the skill gap, ensuring that the workforce is better equipped to contribute to national development. As such, investing in TVET not only improves individual livelihood opportunities but also supports the broader goal of inclusive and sustainable economic growth in Nigeria.

Workforce Demographics and Employment Trends: Youth Unemployment and Underemployment in Nigeria

Nigeria's workforce is undergoing profound and multifaceted transformations, driven by a combination of persistent structural unemployment, rapid population growth, and a widening disconnect between educational outcomes and labor market expectations. These evolving dynamics carry significant implications for the nation's economic resilience, social cohesion, and long-term development. At the forefront of these challenges is the alarming rate of youth unemployment, which continues to erode the productive potential of one of Nigeria's most critical demographic assets. Despite a growing population of educated and working-age individuals, the labor market has failed to generate adequate employment opportunities, especially for the youth.

Recent data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) highlights the severity of this issue. The Nigeria Labour Force Statistics Report for the third quarter of 2023 indicates that the national unemployment rate increased to 5.0%, up from 4.2% in the previous quarter. More concerning, however, is the rising unemployment among individuals aged 15 to 24, which escalated to 8.6% in Q3 2023 from 7.2% in Q2 2023 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). This increase underscores the growing difficulty faced by young Nigerians in accessing stable, meaningful employment, even when armed with formal educational credentials. The mismatch between the skills acquired in educational institutions and those demanded by the labor market remains a key contributor to this challenge.

In addition to unemployment, underemployment is pervasive and deeply rooted in Nigeria's employment structure. According to recent reports, approximately 87% of working Nigerians are self-employed, while only 12.7% are engaged in wage employment (Tunji,

2024). This skewed distribution reveals a labor market heavily dominated by informal and precarious jobs. Many of these self-employed individuals operate in low-productivity sectors with little to no social security, career growth, or financial stability. Consequently, a significant segment of the population remains trapped in economic vulnerability, with limited prospects for upward mobility. This reliance on informal employment exacerbates income inequality and undermines the prospects for inclusive and sustained economic growth.

Gender and Urban-Rural Disparities in Nigeria

Employment statistics in Nigeria reveal persistent and troubling disparities across both gender and geographic locations, highlighting entrenched inequalities in access to labor market opportunities. According to the Nigeria Labour Force Statistics for Q2 2023, the unemployment rate for women stood at 5.9%, significantly higher than the 3.5% recorded for men (Ojo, 2023). This gender gap reflects longstanding structural and socio-cultural barriers that hinder women's full participation in the labor force. Women often face limited access to quality education, vocational training, and financial resources (Reshi, Sudha, Dar & Dar, 2022). Additionally, patriarchal norms and discriminatory practices continue to restrict women's employment choices and upward mobility, particularly in male-dominated sectors such as engineering, construction, and information technology. The burden of unpaid care and domestic work, which disproportionately falls on women, further constrains their ability to pursue full-time, formal employment (Ifeoma, 2023). In many cases, women are relegated to low-wage, informal, or part-time jobs that offer minimal security and few prospects for advancement. This not only perpetuates economic dependence but also contributes to the feminization of poverty in both urban and rural contexts.

Geographic disparities present another layer of complexity. Urban areas in Nigeria recorded a higher unemployment rate of 5.9%, while rural areas reported a considerably lower rate of 2.5% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). On the surface, this may seem counterintuitive, given that urban centers typically offer more diversified employment options. However, this discrepancy can be attributed to several factors. Urban labour markets tend to be more competitive and demand higher levels of education and skills, which many job seekers may lack. In contrast, rural areas are dominated by informal economic activities, such as farming, petty trading, and artisanal work that absorb a large portion of the working-age population, often without official recognition in employment statistics. Moreover, rural underemployment and disguised unemployment remain critical issues, as many individuals may be engaged in work that is inadequate in terms of income, hours, or productivity. These conditions are often masked in official data but contribute significantly to economic stagnation and social vulnerability in rural communities. The gendered and geographic disparities in employment underscore the urgent need for inclusive and targeted labor market interventions. Gender-responsive employment policies should prioritize the removal of barriers to women's economic participation by investing in girl-child education, expanding access to credit, supporting women in non-traditional occupations, and implementing affirmative action in both public and private sector hiring. For urban areas, enhancing access to skill development programs, digital literacy, and job placement services can help bridge the employment gap. In rural regions, scaling up agricultural value chains, improving access to markets and infrastructure, and promoting rural enterprise development are critical strategies.

Education System and Skills Mismatch in Nigeria

Despite the increasing number of graduates in Nigeria, many young people find it difficult to secure employment due to a significant skills gap. This challenge is exacerbated by the lack of practical, hands-on experience in their education. A large proportion of employers—47%—report that finding candidates with the right technical skills is a persistent problem

(Network of Youth for Sustainable Initiative, 2024). This issue is especially pronounced in critical areas such as technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship, where the demand for skilled professionals continues to outstrip supply (Adelaja, 2024). A major contributing factor to this skills mismatch is the traditional focus on theoretical knowledge in Nigerian educational institutions. While academic institutions provide a strong foundation in theoretical concepts, they often fail to equip students with the practical skills necessary for today's job market. This disconnect between educational content and industry requirements means that many graduates are ill-prepared for the demands of the workforce. As noted by Okeke (2020), many university curricula do not align with current industry trends, leaving students without the technical expertise and practical experience needed to thrive in dynamic fields.

Digital Skills Deficit in Nigeria

In today's rapidly evolving digital economy, proficiency in digital skills is essential for both personal and professional success. However, a significant challenge facing Nigeria is the growing digital skills deficit among its youth population. More than 50% of Nigeria's youth are confronted with a mismatch between the education system and the demands of the job market, especially in areas critical to digital literacy (Ahiuma-Young, 2025). The traditional education system, often slow to adapt to emerging technologies, has contributed to a situation where many Nigerian graduates are ill-prepared for the digital workforce. A considerable proportion of Nigerian graduates lack foundational digital skills such as coding, data analysis, and digital marketing, skills that are increasingly in high demand across various sectors (Orji, 2024). This gap places them at a disadvantage in securing employment opportunities, particularly in an era where businesses are leaning heavily on technology and digital platforms for growth and development.

Study by Popoola, Adebayo, Oyedeji and James (2024) highlighted how a lack of digital competency hinders the potential of Nigerian youth to contribute meaningfully to the digital economy. Employers often report difficulties in finding qualified candidates with the necessary skills to navigate digital tools and systems, further exacerbating unemployment rates in the country. Recognizing the importance of addressing this gap, the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) has taken proactive steps to bridge the divide (Bello & Ajao, 2024). NITDA has initiated programs aimed at integrating digital literacy into the formal education system. Their strategic goal is to achieve 95% digital literacy among Nigerians by 2030, with an interim target of 70% by 2027. This ambitious goal is part of a larger vision to equip Nigeria's workforce with the skills needed to thrive in the global digital economy.

Vocational and Technical Training Gaps in Nigeria

The vocational and technical education (TVET) sector in Nigeria has long been underdeveloped and underfunded, despite its critical role in producing skilled labor essential for economic growth. This neglect contributes significantly to the widening education-to-employment gap, especially in sectors that demand hands-on, practical expertise such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing, automotive repairs, plumbing, electrical installation, and ICT-related trades.

One major issue is the poor state of infrastructure in existing technical and vocational colleges across the country. Many of these institutions lack up-to-date equipment, workshops, laboratories, and materials necessary for modern skill acquisition (Ayoko, Peter & Jegede, 2023). In some cases, institutions are using outdated curricula that do not reflect technological advances or current industry practices, resulting in graduates who are ill-prepared for today's labor market.

Vocational and technical careers in Nigeria often carry a social stigma, especially when compared to white-collar jobs associated with university degrees (Aldossari, 2020). Many parents and students perceive vocational training as inferior or a "last resort" for those who fail to gain university admission. This perception reduces enrollment and discourages investment in the sector, both from the government and private actors.

Despite the presence of government institutions like the *National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)* and initiatives under the *National Policy on Education*, actual budgetary allocations to the TVET sector remain insufficient. Most government efforts are either poorly implemented or lack sustainability due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption (Ayonmike, 2014). Without sustained investment and monitoring, vocational education cannot evolve to meet global standards.

There is a limited collaboration between industries and vocational institutions in Nigeria. This weak link results in a curriculum that does not reflect the practical needs of employers (Sharmeentariq, 2024). Unlike in countries like Germany or South Korea where apprenticeships and dual-training systems are deeply institutionalized, Nigerian students rarely receive structured, supervised industrial training that could translate into immediate job placement or entrepreneurship. Young people, especially in rural areas, often have limited access to quality vocational training programs. In many states, there are only a handful of functioning technical colleges, and most are concentrated in urban centers. Gender disparities are also evident—young women, in particular, face barriers accessing TVET due to cultural biases, safety concerns, or lack of targeted outreach.

Nigeria's large informal sector, which includes artisans, tradespeople, and small-scale manufacturers, operates largely without formal training or certification (ACIOE Associates, 2023). While many young people are informally learning trades through apprenticeship models, these are rarely standardized or linked to a broader system of skills recognition and career progression. Formalizing these pathways through certification, quality assurance, and business training would strengthen the informal economy and create more resilient employment opportunities.

Challenges in Workforce Development in Nigeria

Workforce development in Nigeria faces a myriad of challenges that impact the nation's ability to effectively harness its human capital for economic growth and development. These challenges are multifaceted and stem from issues such as inadequate education, lack of vocational skills, unemployment, and limited access to technology. Below are some of the key challenges:

1. Inadequate Educational Infrastructure: Nigeria's educational system, from primary through tertiary levels, suffers from a lack of adequate infrastructure, which affects the quality of education. Many schools, especially in rural areas, are underfunded, with overcrowded classrooms, insufficient learning materials, and poor teacher quality. This leads to a situation where graduates often lack the necessary skills to thrive in the workforce. Additionally, the disparity between urban and rural education systems further exacerbates the issue.

2. Skills Gap and Mismatch: A significant challenge in workforce development is the mismatch between the skills graduates possess and the needs of the labor market. The Nigerian education system predominantly focuses on academic qualifications, neglecting the development of practical, technical, and vocational skills that are necessary in the job market. This has led to an oversupply of graduates with theoretical knowledge but little to no practical skills that employers require. Consequently, many educated Nigerians remain unemployed or underemployed, unable to find jobs that align with their qualifications.

3. Unemployment and Underemployment: Nigeria has one of the highest unemployment rates in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly among young people. The country faces a rapidly growing population, with a youth bulge that enters the labor market each year. However, the economy has not been able to generate enough jobs to absorb this increasing workforce. Underemployment, where individuals work in jobs that do not fully utilize their skills or offer adequate compensation, is also a persistent problem. This situation has been exacerbated by the lack of industries and a strong private sector to provide sufficient employment opportunities.

4. Limited Access to Vocational Training: Vocational training programs, which are crucial for developing the practical skills required in sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and technology, are limited and underfunded in Nigeria. Although there are some initiatives to promote vocational education, they remain inaccessible to many Nigerians, particularly those in rural areas. Without robust vocational training systems, the country cannot build a skilled workforce that is adaptable to the evolving demands of the global economy.

5. Lack of Continuous Professional Development: In Nigeria, many professionals do not have access to continuous development opportunities that would allow them to stay up-to-date with industry trends, new technologies, and best practices. This lack of professional development not only affects the productivity of workers but also limits their potential for career advancement. Continuous professional education is essential in a rapidly changing global economy, especially with the rise of automation and digital technologies.

6. Brain Drain: Nigeria has been experiencing a significant brain drain, with many skilled professionals leaving the country in search of better career opportunities abroad. The mass exodus of doctors, engineers, educators, and other professionals is partly due to poor working conditions, low salaries, and the lack of career advancement opportunities in Nigeria. This results in a loss of talent and further exacerbates the challenge of workforce development, as it depletes the pool of skilled labor available to drive economic growth and development.

7. Inadequate Investment in Technology and Innovation: While global economies increasingly rely on technology, Nigeria's workforce development efforts remain largely disconnected from advancements in technology. Limited access to the internet, poor digital literacy rates, and the lack of infrastructure to support tech-driven industries make it difficult for Nigerian workers to develop the technological skills needed to succeed in the digital economy. The country's inability to integrate technology into workforce development initiatives hinders its progress in the fourth industrial revolution.

8. Gender Inequality: Gender inequality in the Nigerian workforce continues to be a significant barrier to the development of a fully inclusive workforce. Women, particularly in rural areas, often face cultural and societal barriers that limit their access to education, vocational training, and employment opportunities. This results in a significant underrepresentation of women in key sectors like technology, science, engineering, and leadership positions. Addressing gender inequality is crucial for ensuring a more diverse, innovative, and productive workforce.

9. Corruption and Poor Governance: Corruption within the public and private sectors significantly hampers workforce development in Nigeria. Mismanagement of resources, lack of accountability, and poor policy implementation undermine efforts to improve education, training, and job creation. Many programs designed to enhance workforce development suffer

from inefficiencies, which prevents them from achieving their goals and contributing to economic growth.

10. Poor Work Conditions and Low Wages: For those employed in Nigeria, many face poor working conditions, such as inadequate health and safety measures, poor infrastructure, long working hours, and low wages. These unfavorable conditions reduce job satisfaction, employee productivity, and morale, making it difficult to attract and retain skilled workers. As a result, even when there are job opportunities, many Nigerians may be unwilling to pursue them due to the unattractive working conditions.

Strategies for Advancing Workforce Development in Nigeria: Overcoming Challenges and Unlocking Potential

The way forward for workforce development in Nigeria requires a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to tackle the challenges that hinder the country's potential for economic growth. A key area of focus is the reform of the education system, which must be aligned with the demands of the labor market. The education system, particularly at the technical and vocational levels, needs to be revamped to ensure that students acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The curriculum must evolve to incorporate the necessary skills for today's industries, with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). In addition, the involvement of the private sector in shaping educational programs through partnerships can help bridge the gap between the skills students learn and the needs of employers. Ensuring equal access to quality education in both urban and rural areas will also help address regional disparities.

Another vital aspect is the promotion of vocational and technical education. By expanding and modernizing technical institutions and offering incentives such as scholarships for vocational training, Nigeria can begin to address the skill gap that exists between what graduates know and what is required in the workforce. Linking these programs with industry through internships, apprenticeships, and practical job placements can enhance their relevance. Furthermore, the government must also focus on creating a conducive environment for the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), as they play a significant role in job creation. SMEs can be supported through access to financing, technical training, and mentorship to expand their operations and hire more people.

Given the rapid digital transformation globally, it is essential that workforce development in Nigeria embraces technology. Expanding digital literacy programs and improving access to technology, especially in underserved regions, is crucial. This would empower individuals to thrive in a tech-driven global economy. A focus on improving the nation's digital infrastructure would not only support education but also create opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, driving the development of new sectors within the economy.

As Nigeria faces high levels of youth unemployment, strategies must be developed to create more job opportunities. This includes developing large-scale infrastructure projects, which can generate immediate employment, as well as fostering entrepreneurship through improved access to capital and business training. The public and private sectors should work together to create policies that encourage job creation and provide support for startups.

Additionally, gender equality in the workforce must be prioritized. Women often face barriers to accessing education, job opportunities, and career advancement, especially in rural areas. Promoting policies that ensure equal access to education and employment for women, along with initiatives that support female entrepreneurs, can help unlock the full potential of the workforce.

The issue of brain drain also needs attention, as many skilled professionals are leaving Nigeria for better opportunities abroad. Addressing this requires improving working conditions, offering competitive salaries, and creating an environment conducive to innovation and growth. In particular, enhancing infrastructure, healthcare, and security would make the country more attractive to professionals and encourage them to stay or return.

Lastly, for workforce development to be sustainable, good governance is essential. A transparent and accountable government can ensure that resources allocated for workforce development are used effectively, and policies are implemented consistently. Combatting corruption and improving the management of public resources will also help ensure that workforce development initiatives reach their full potential.

Conclusion and Remark

Workforce development in Nigeria is a critical pillar for unlocking the nation's economic potential and achieving sustainable development. The challenges faced, including inadequate educational infrastructure, skills mismatch, high unemployment, limited access to technology, and gender inequality, require urgent and comprehensive interventions. A holistic approach that reformulates the education system to focus on both academic and vocational skills, while also promoting continuous learning and digital literacy, is essential for equipping the workforce with the necessary tools to adapt to the demands of an evolving global economy. Additionally, fostering collaboration between the government, private sector, and educational institutions is crucial for bridging the gap between education and job market needs. Job creation, particularly in SMEs and entrepreneurial ventures, should be prioritized through targeted support and policies. Equally important is the creation of an inclusive workforce that provides equal opportunities for women, ensuring that the potential of every Nigerian is maximized. A transparent and accountable governance system is foundational for the success of workforce development initiatives. Good governance, anti-corruption measures, and strategic investments in key sectors such as education, infrastructure, and healthcare will contribute to creating an environment that supports workforce growth and retention.

Remarkably, while Nigeria faces substantial challenges, the potential for positive transformation is immense. By taking bold, targeted actions and leveraging the country's human capital, Nigeria can address its workforce development issues and pave the way for a prosperous and inclusive future. Harnessing the skills, innovation, and creativity of its people will be the key to driving economic growth, reducing poverty, and achieving long-term sustainability.

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