

Financing Youth Skill Development Programs for Sustainable Employment and Economic Growth

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Abstract: Skill development contributes to future career preparedness and success, as well as the financial growth of youth. It addresses additional opportunities for positive outcomes. Skill development initiatives are crucial for fostering inclusive economic growth and social progress among youth, ensuring their mental health and well-being for the future. Any nation advances through the creativity and skills of its youth. Skill development programs create jobs for youth and align their skills with national prosperity, promoting social and economic well-being and growth. Youth Development Programs help kids grow physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and economically. Education, entrepreneurship, health, leadership, civic engagement, and life skills development are among the initiatives that strive to prepare youngsters for responsible, productive, and engaged citizenship. The United Nations Youth2030 Strategy, NYSC Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) – Nigeria, and Lagos State Employability Support Project enhance youth skills in Nigeria. This paper examines government grants and loans, international development aid, crowdfunding, student fees, and revenue-generating projects as financing mechanisms for youth skill development programs, evaluates their effectiveness, and suggests ways to improve them. This study uses a mixed-methods approach and One-Way ANOVA to assess how different funding sources affect Lagos State program outcomes. Funding strategies are critical to the success of youth skill development programs.

Keywords: Development Programs; Financing Mechanisms; Skill Development; Engaged Citizenship; Employability Support Project; Economic Well-Being; Civic Engagement.

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1. Introduction

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Youth development is fundamental to strengthening a nation's productive capacity because young people constitute an important human resource for economic, social and institutional development. Skill development is essential for young people's career readiness, employability, financial independence and long-term economic well-being. It equips individuals with practical knowledge and technical, interpersonal and entrepreneurial skills that enhance their ability to participate effectively in the labour market [6]. In today's increasingly competitive, rapidly changing economic environment, academic qualifications alone may not be sufficient to secure employment or advance careers [7]. Young people therefore need constant access to opportunities to learn, upgrade and apply skills that meet emerging labour market needs. Skill development can also create opportunities for entrepreneurship and self-employment, allowing young people to generate economic value rather than relying solely on formal employment [9]. Hence, effective youth skill development is an important mechanism for fostering inclusive economic growth, reducing unemployment, improving household income and promoting social progress. The availability and quality of opportunities provided by structured youth development programs are closely tied to young people's development. The programs aim to support young people's physical, emotional, social, intellectual and economic development, while preparing them to be responsible, productive and engaged members of society [10]. Youth development programs may include education and training, entrepreneurship development, health promotion, leadership development, civic engagement, financial literacy, communication skills, digital competencies and life skills. Such programs are especially important because young people face a range of social and economic obstacles during the transition from education to employment and independent adulthood [11].

Limited access to training, financial resources, employment opportunities and professional networks can limit their ability to reach their full potential without adequate support. Thus, skill development programs can act as an important bridge between education and practical participation in economic activities. Youth are a productive tool in driving the market at large. Skill development builds capabilities and significantly closes skill gaps, benefiting the nation [12]. The government's harsh policies affect available funds and funding mechanisms for developing such programs, undermining the impact of youth skills. Based on developmental theories of resilience, plasticity, and competency building, the positive youth development framework replaced the deficit view of youth as "problems to be managed" with a more positive image of youth as "resources to be developed" [2]. This perspective is important because it views young people as active contributors to development rather than simply beneficiaries of social interventions. With adequate resources, mentoring, training and opportunities for meaningful participation, young people can develop competencies that contribute to individual and community development Prasad [16]. Clarity of purpose should guide financing for youth skill development programs. The quest for the essential elements of a youth development program and the recent progress in measuring program quality, as discussed in this paper, illustrate the importance of accounting for the program context when investigating outcomes. Without contextual information, for instance, there is little way to compare the effectiveness of different programs [14]. Such comparisons are central to cost-effectiveness analyses in education and social services and should be a priority for youth programs [3]. This observation emphasizes the value of not only knowing whether a youth development program produces positive outcomes, but also how it is financed, implemented, managed and sustained [15].

With sufficient financial resources, a program may employ qualified trainers, provide adequate learning materials, maintain adequate facilities, embrace digital learning technologies, and offer practical experiences for participants. Conversely, inadequate and unstable funding can degrade program quality, restrict participation, and threaten the sustainability of program activities. Roth et al. [4] describe a youth development program as one that has goals that promote positive development while preventing problem behaviours, a climate that supports positive relationships with adults and peers, empowers youth, communicates expectations for positive behaviour, and provides opportunities for recognition, and activities that allow participants to build skills, engage in real and challenging activities, and expand their horizons [17]. These characteristics suggest that youth development should not be narrowly construed as technical or vocational training. Successful programs need a multi-dimensional approach to youth development and must provide opportunities for participants to develop competencies through hands-on experiences [18]. Hence, it is important to offer not only technical training, but also mentoring, counseling, leadership activities, community engagement, entrepreneurship support and other complementary interventions, to name a few. Eccles et al. [1] describe positive developmental settings as having eight characteristics: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities for belonging, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school, and community efforts. Young people need supports and opportunities to thrive, including positive relationships with caring adults, challenging experiences, and opportunities to build skills—all of which require funding. A good youth program will involve, motivate, and simulate real-world work for adolescents.

Adolescents in project-based programs often feel a strong sense of ownership and experience both positive and negative emotions as they work toward project goals, meeting both successes and challenges [8]. These results suggest that funding is perceived as an enabler of the overall quality of the youth development environment, rather than a regulatory requirement. Thus, the financial sustainability of youth skill development programs is a crucial concern for policymakers, educational institutions, development organizations, and community stakeholders. The financing mechanisms will shape the extent to which

programs can be created, grown, sustained and evaluated. Grants and loans from governments are important funding sources because governments have a direct responsibility to promote employment, human capital development, social inclusion and economic participation. Public financing can provide the institutional base for large-scale skill development programs and can support young people who lack the financial resources to participate on their own. Government funding may also develop training infrastructure, recruit instructors, establish vocational centers, provide equipment and support entrepreneurship initiatives. Overreliance on public money can leave programs vulnerable to budget cuts, policy changes, administrative obstacles and economic uncertainty. International development aid can also provide additional financing, especially for programs on youth unemployment, poverty alleviation, entrepreneurship, digital inclusion and social development. International organizations and development partners can provide technical assistance, training resources, grants and institutional support. This external financing can introduce new approaches and international best practices in youth development programs. However, international funding can be short-term or tied to specific projects, which can challenge long-term sustainability. Therefore, externally funded programs need to develop strategies to build local financial capacity and institutional ownership to ensure activities continue after external support ends. Another growing mechanism that can help to support youth development is crowdfunding. Digital platforms and social networks enable organizations to communicate their objectives directly to communities, donors, entrepreneurs and other interested parties.

Crowdfunding can be especially useful for smaller projects that need funds for equipment, training facilities, entrepreneurial activities, or community initiatives. It can also increase public awareness of the challenges of youth development and inspire community engagement. But crowdfunding success depends on public trust, effective communication, digital access, and organizations' ability to demonstrate measurable social impact. Programs can also face uncertainty because crowdfunding revenues are not always predictable. Institutions for youth development could tap additional resources through student fees and revenue-generating projects. Student contributions can help cover operational costs and provide some independence from government or donor funding. But an over-reliance on student fees can be a barrier for young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Financing strategies should therefore balance cost recovery, affordability and social inclusion. Revenue-generating projects could be a more sustainable option, allowing institutions to earn money from productive activities while also providing young people with practical learning opportunities. Entrepreneurship projects, agricultural production, digital services, consultancy activities and other commercial initiatives can potentially generate revenue while strengthening participants' practical skills. Measure the effectiveness of financing mechanisms not only by how much money is received, but also by how well financial resources translate into meaningful results. Key outcomes include employment rates, entrepreneurship creation, income enhancement, skills acquisition, career progression, financial independence and social participation. The program's quality should also be assessed based on participants' satisfaction, completion rates, trainer quality, access to equipment, curriculum relevance, and graduates' ability to apply the skills learned in real-world environments. Financing mechanisms that generate substantial funding but do not yield measurable outcomes may not be sound investments.

In this sense, financial evaluation must be linked to the program's performance and to its long-term social and economic outcomes. The link between finance and youth development is especially crucial because the lack of finance can create inequalities in access to training. Young people in more affluent households may have greater access to private training, technology, professional networks and entrepreneurial capital, and disadvantaged youth may rely almost entirely on publicly supported or community-based programs. Public and alternative financing mechanisms may be insufficient, thereby deepening existing socio-economic inequalities. Thus, inclusive financing strategies should target vulnerable groups and not restrict access to skill development based on ability to pay. Scholarships, subsidized training, targeted grants, low-interest loans, and community financing mechanisms can all contribute to more equitable participation. Skill development also affects young people's psychological and social well-being. Meaningful employment and productive engagement can provide a sense of purpose, confidence, identity and social belonging. Young people who develop employable and entrepreneurial competencies may feel more confident in their ability to manage future challenges. In contrast, long-term unemployment and lack of opportunities can lead to financial insecurity, social exclusion and uncertainty about the future. Youth development programs that include technical training, along with mentoring, counseling, leadership, communication and life skills, may thus contribute to broader well-being. Financing decisions should consider these broader outcomes, rather than focusing solely on short-term employment numbers. The youth population's importance to the country's future economic and social development makes the Nigerian context an important setting for examining the financing of youth skills development programs.

Some youth skills development initiatives are the United Nations Youth 2030 Strategy, the National Youth Service Corps Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development initiative, and the Lagos State Employability Support Project. They show different approaches to enhancing young people's employability, entrepreneurship and economic participation. Their performance partly depends on the availability of sustainable financial resources and on the capacity to allocate them to relevant training and support activities. Exploring various financing mechanisms can provide valuable evidence to enhance the design and implementation of youth development interventions. This paper explores the different financing options for youth skill development programs and their impact on program results. Envisaged financing mechanisms include government grants and loans, international development aid, crowdfunding, student fees and revenue-generating projects. The study uses a mixed-

methods approach better to understand the relationship between financing and program effectiveness. Quantitative analysis allows examination of measurable differences in program outcomes, while qualitative evidence can help contextualise experiences, challenges and perceptions across different sources of financing. One-way ANOVA tests whether differences in financing mechanisms are significant. Understanding how different financing mechanisms work can help policymakers and program managers make policies and manage programs more effectively. Policymakers require evidence on how to target scarce public funds to maximise employment, entrepreneurship, and social outcomes. Program administrators also need sustainable financing strategies to reduce dependence on a single revenue source and ensure service continuity during periods of economic or policy uncertainty. A diversified financing model may offer greater resilience by combining public resources, development assistance, contributions from participants, community support and internally generated revenue. But such diversification should occur within an ethical and inclusive framework that protects access for disadvantaged youth.

The study further acknowledges that financing alone cannot guarantee successful youth development. Program outcomes can be influenced by factors such as the relevance of training content, the quality of instruction, institutional governance, labour market conditions, access to technology, mentorship, and post-training employment opportunities. Financing should therefore be viewed as part of a broader youth development ecosystem. Sustainable financing mechanisms should be complemented by transparent governance, performance monitoring, accountability and regular evaluation. Programs should develop measurable indicators to link financial inputs to outputs and longer-term outcomes. This can support accountability and help stakeholders identify which financing approaches offer the best value. To summarise, investing in youth skill development is an investment in human capital and sustainable economic development. Effective programs can help young people develop the competencies needed to engage productively in employment, entrepreneurship, and community development. But the sustainability and effectiveness of these programs largely depend on appropriate financing mechanisms. Government grants and loans, international development aid, crowdfunding, student fees and revenue-generating projects each have their own benefits and limitations. A balanced, diversified financing approach may improve the program's sustainability and reduce dependence on a single funding source. The study thus highlights the need for evidence-based financing strategies combining financial sustainability with access, quality, equity and measurable outcomes. By investigating the link between financing mechanisms and youth development outcomes, the research adds to the wider discussion on how societies can create meaningful opportunities for youth and build their capacity to contribute to inclusive economic growth and social progress.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Active skill development programs lead to a creative workforce worldwide. Reawakening youth mindsets around skills development reopens a window of opportunity for Nigeria's development. Skill development harnesses human potential. Inequitable civic engagement constrains youth skill development. Youth skill development programs play a critical role in equipping young people with the practical competencies necessary for employability, entrepreneurship, and national development. Youth exposure to the workforce depends on financial mechanisms and adequate skill development, organized by the government and other bodies. Capacity-building and institutional frameworks are not well established to strengthen youth financial capacity. In Nigeria, limited funding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, inconsistent donor support, and inefficient financial management systems have hindered the reach and impact of such initiatives. Despite growing recognition of the importance of youth empowerment, many skill development programs are either short-lived or fail to achieve their intended goals because of inadequate financial planning, insufficient public-private partnerships, and limited access to innovative financing tools. In Lagos State, a commercial hub with a high youth population, this issue is particularly pressing. A significant gap remains in understanding the effectiveness of current financing strategies and how alternative mechanisms (such as social impact bonds, micro-financing, and government interventions) could better support sustainable youth development initiatives. This study will look at financing mechanisms for youth skill development programs.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- To identify the existing financing mechanisms used for youth skill development programs in Lagos State.
- To examine the challenges associated with financing youth skill development initiatives in the region.

1.3. Research Questions

- What financing mechanisms currently support youth skill development programs in Lagos State?
- What are the major challenges hindering the financing of youth skill development initiatives?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between financing mechanisms and the effectiveness of youth skill development programs.

2. Literature Review

Financing mechanisms for youth skill development have garnered increasing global attention, as effective funding strategies are critical to the success, scalability, and sustainability of such programs. Various studies and policy papers have explored the nature, sources and impact of different financing models used to support youth skill development initiatives [1].

2.1. Public Financing

Public financing remains one of the most common ways to fund youth skill development programs. Governments often allocate resources through national budgets, vocational education policies, and targeted employment initiatives. According to Maïga et al. [13], public-sector funding helps institutionalize training programs and expands access for marginalized populations. However, these initiatives are often underfunded, hampered by bureaucratic inefficiencies, and subject to political instability.

2.2. Donor and NGO Funding

International donors, development agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played a significant role in financing youth empowerment programs, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Donor funding brings not only financial support but also technical expertise, performance monitoring, and innovation. A study by Brixiová et al. [14] on donor-funded training programs in Nigeria found that these interventions often yield better training outcomes because of structured monitoring and capacity-building components.

2.3. Private Sector Involvement

The private sector plays an increasingly important role in financing skills development. Companies often contribute through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, industry partnerships, and training-for-employment schemes. According to Shahriar et al. [12], public-private partnerships (PPPs) help align training programs with labour-market needs and enhance their relevance. However, private investment is sometimes limited by a lack of incentives and unclear return on investment.

2.4. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

PPPs are a hybrid model in which governments collaborate with private entities to co-fund and manage youth training programs. This model is believed to combine the strengths of both sectors—public oversight and private efficiency. King [15] argues that well-designed PPPs can increase access to funding, improve infrastructure, and enhance accountability in training delivery. However, success depends on clear contractual arrangements and shared objectives.

2.5. Innovative Financing Models

Emerging literature indicates growing interest in innovative financing mechanisms such as social impact bonds, youth development funds, and microfinance schemes. These models aim to attract new capital, improve accountability, and align funding with measurable outcomes. For example, social impact bonds allow private investors to fund training programs, with returns tied to predefined outcomes [2].

2.6. Theoretical Framework

2.6.1. Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, developed by Becker [5], posits that individuals and societies derive economic value from investments made in people, particularly through education, training, health, and skill development. This theory posits that investment in education and training increases individuals' productivity and employability. Financing mechanisms are critical because they determine the level and quality of investment in youth skill development. Financial support in the form of grants, scholarships, or subsidies enhances youths' access to training, thus improving their capacity to contribute to economic growth. According to this theory, financing mechanisms are the primary means of making human capital investments. Whether through government funding, donor support, or private sector contributions, financial resources enable access to quality training, modern equipment, skilled trainers, and supportive infrastructure. These inputs are essential to transform raw youth potential into marketable skills that increase employability and income-generating capacity. For example, when governments or NGOs invest in youth through vocational training programs, the return on investment is realized through reduced unemployment, improved productivity, and national economic growth. Thus, Human Capital Theory supports the notion that financing youth skill development is not merely a social service, but a strategic economic investment. In summary, the theory underscores that effective and well-

structured financing mechanisms are critical to unlocking the economic benefits of youth-focused training programs, making them both a personal and societal asset.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, suitable for collecting data from a population to describe existing conditions, attitudes, or relationships. The design allows the researcher to assess how different financing mechanisms affect the effectiveness of youth skill development programs. It also allows the researcher to assess how different financing mechanisms affect the effectiveness of youth skill development programs. The study population comprises all youth participants enrolled in skill development programs across selected tertiary institutions, vocational centers, and government/private youth empowerment agencies in Akoka, Lagos State. A sample of 120 participants was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across three funding categories: government-funded programs, Donor/NGO-supported programs, and Privately Sponsored initiatives. Each stratum contributed 40 participants. The study used a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire had two parts: Section A (demographic information) and Section B (items measuring program effectiveness, e.g., skill acquisition, employability and business startup outcomes), rated on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Very Poor to 4 = Excellent). Experts in education and development studies validated the questionnaire, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded 0.73, indicating high reliability. The data were analysed using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Ethical clearance was obtained from the appropriate institutional review board. Participation was voluntary, and all respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The study collected no sensitive or identifying data. Data were collected in person and electronically, with trained research assistants administering the questionnaires at the selected institutions and centers. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, and the researchers obtained informed consent.

4. Results

Financing mechanisms are not significantly related to the effectiveness of youth skill development programs (Table 1).

Table 1: Hypothesis testing

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df.	Mean Square	F	Sig. (P-Value)
Between Groups	35.62	2	17.81	5.24	0.007
Within Groups	187.43	55	3.41		
Total	223.05	57			

Since the p-value (0.007) is less than 0.05, you reject the null hypothesis. This means program effectiveness differs significantly across financing mechanisms. The One-Way ANOVA results indicate that the type of financing mechanism significantly affects the effectiveness of youth skill development programs ($F(2, 55) = 5.24, p = 0.007$). Therefore, researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

4.1. Testing Research Questions

Table 2 shows that the BOI Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund has the highest mean score (3.13), while TETFund has the lowest (3.00). The SD values of 0.92 to 0.98 indicate that the responses on the present youth skill development finance mechanisms are broadly consistent.

Table 2: Respondents' existing financing mechanisms for youth skill development programs

No.	Items	Mean	SD
1	N-Power Program	3.07	0.95
2	Youth Enterprise with Innovation	3.11	0.95
3	CBN Youth Investment Fund	3.06	0.93
4	TETFund	3.00	0.92
5	BOI Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund	3.13	0.98
6	Tony Elumelu Foundation	3.00	0.94
7	Industrial Training Fund	3.08	0.97
8	National Directorate of Employment	3.03	0.97
9	ADB Youth Entrepreneurship and Skill	3.00	0.93
10	Lagos State Employment Trust Fund	3.11	0.95

As the main financial concerns, Table 3 shows corruption has the highest mean score (3.13), followed by insufficient online literacy among adolescents (3.11).

Table 3: Respondents' major challenges hindering the financing of youth skill development initiatives

No.	Items	Mean	SD
1	Inadequate government budgetary allocation	3.06	0.97
2	Corruption	3.13	0.97
3	Mismanagement of Funds	3.03	0.94
4	Lack of reliable data and tracking system	2.98	0.92
5	Limited private sector involvement	2.99	0.93
6	Inconsistent policy frameworks	3.00	0.96
7	Weak digital literacy among youth	3.11	0.95
8	Limited access to credit and collateral requirements	3.04	0.95
9	Poor monitoring and evaluation	2.95	0.92
10	Low public awareness of funding opportunities	3.08	0.97

Poor monitoring and evaluation had the lowest mean (2.95), with SD values ranging from 0.92 to 0.97, indicating somewhat consistent responses.

5. Discussions

The results show that financing mechanisms significantly affect the effectiveness and sustainability of youth skill development programs. With adequate financing, program administrators can offer appropriate training materials, modern equipment, qualified instructors, a suitable learning environment, mentoring services and monitoring mechanisms. Limited or irregular financial resources can interrupt programs, reduce training quality, limit participation and make it harder to achieve intended employment and entrepreneurship outcomes. The results thus lend support to the idea that financing should be viewed as part of youth development, rather than an administrative issue. Government funding remains an important mechanism for supporting youth skill-development programs. Public institutions can mobilise resources at scale and design programs to address unemployment, poverty, employability, entrepreneurship and social inclusion. But the effectiveness of government financing relies not just on the amount allocated, but also on the regularity, transparency and efficiency of fund disbursement. Training activities can be disrupted, equipment and materials purchases can be affected, and delayed releases can undermine participants' and trainers' confidence. Government funding should therefore be predictable and tied to clearly defined program objectives and measurable results. The study also emphasises the need to strengthen public-private partnerships. Private-sector organizations can also provide financial resources, practical knowledge, technology, equipment, mentorship, internships, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities. Such partnerships can help ensure that training programs align with real labour-market needs. Industries know the competencies required in their sectors and can therefore participate in curriculum development and practical training. Partnerships with financial institutions can also help to facilitate access to credit for young people who wish to start a business after their training. These arrangements can reduce dependence on government funding and build stronger links between training providers and employers.

Diversifying financing sources is particularly important for the long-term sustainability of youth skill development programs. Relying on a single funding source can create vulnerability if it is reduced or discontinued. Other sources of complementary income include government grants, international development assistance, private-sector contributions, crowdfunding, student fees and revenue-generating projects. A diversified funding model enhances institutional resilience and enables programs to continue operating when a single funding source is temporarily unavailable. But institutions must manage diversification carefully so financial sustainability is not achieved at the expense of access for economically disadvantaged young people. Another important consideration is providing scholarships, grants, stipends and affordable financing to disadvantaged youth. Training programs may be available, but indirect costs such as transport, learning materials, accommodation, access to digital technology and examination fees can prevent disadvantaged young people from taking part. Support for these groups can improve participation and reduce inequalities in access to skill development. This support is particularly important in environments where youth unemployment and household financial constraints limit individuals' ability to invest in their own training. Thus, financing mechanisms should balance institutional sustainability with mechanisms to protect affordability and social inclusion. The results also indicate the importance of transparent financial management to maximize the use of available resources. Increased funding does not necessarily improve program outcomes without effective accountability systems. Allocate financial resources based on clearly identified needs and support them with appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Regular audits, transparent procurement processes, financial reporting and performance-based monitoring can reduce the risk of resource misuse and improve stakeholders' confidence.

Program administrators should develop indicators that link financial inputs to measurable outcomes, such as training completion, employment, entrepreneurship, income generation and skills acquisition. The role of international development assistance also needs to be considered within a sustainable financing framework. Development partners could provide financial support, technical expertise, training tools and global knowledge that could improve youth development programs. But reliance on external temporary projects can present sustainability challenges as funding cycles expire. International assistance should therefore be integrated with local institutional capacity-building and domestic financing strategies. This approach lets programs draw on external expertise while building the financial and administrative capacity needed to operate long-term. Another avenue to address financial sustainability while also creating relevant learning opportunities is through revenue-generating projects. Youth development institutions can create income-generating productive activities where participants can apply technical, entrepreneurial and managerial skills. Such projects could be agricultural activities, digital services, creative industries, vocational production, consultancy and other market-oriented activities. This model can be mutually beneficial by combining revenue generation with training, where young people gain practical experience, and institutions generate additional resources. These projects, however, need appropriate business planning, market assessment, financial management and monitoring to ensure viability. Program financing may also include student fees, but over-reliance on participant payments could undermine the goal of inclusive youth development. Reasonable contributions can increase institutional ownership and generate revenue, but high fees can exclude young people from low-income families. A more balanced approach, therefore, would combine subsidised fees, scholarships, flexible payment mechanisms and targeted financial assistance.

This can help retain some contribution toward program costs and ensure that financial circumstances do not prevent qualified young people from participating. The One-Way ANOVA employed in the study provides an empirical basis for examining differences associated with financing mechanisms. The results suggest that variations in program outcomes are linked to how programs are financed, underscoring the importance of examining not only whether programs are funded but also how that funding is structured and managed. This links financial resources with program quality, implementation capacity and participant outcomes. So, instead of relying on traditional funding models, policymakers should embrace evidence-based financing decisions. The findings also have implications for youth employment and enterprise. Well-funded skill-development programs can equip young people with technical and professional skills to improve their job prospects or business startup opportunities. But training must be linked to post-training support. Young people who complete entrepreneurship-focused programs may need access to startup capital, mentorship, markets, business networks and financial literacy. Similarly, employment-oriented programs should develop links with employers and offer internships, apprenticeships or placement opportunities. Hence, financing should cover not only the training period but also the transition from learning to productive economic activity. In summary, the findings suggest that a sound financing framework needs to be sustainable, diversified, transparent, inclusive and aligned with labour-market requirements. The government remains a key stakeholder, but partnerships with private organizations, financial institutions, development agencies, communities and educational institutions can strengthen the overall financing ecosystem. Ultimately, the success of youth skill-development programs should be measured by their ability to create meaningful, sustainable outcomes for participants, rather than by financial inputs alone.

6. Conclusion

Financing mechanisms significantly affect the efficiency, duration and accessibility of programs that enhance young people's skills. Sufficient and timely financing enables programs to provide quality training, qualified trainers, appropriate facilities, modern equipment, mentorship and effective monitoring. The findings indicate that organizational sustainability challenges can arise when programs depend on a single funder. Conversely, using many sources of finance (such as government backing, partnerships with the corporate sector, development aid, participant contributions, and cash-generating activities) can help make a program more resilient. The government should also continue to lead funding for skills development for young people, while establishing open and responsible financial management systems. Promote stronger public-private partnerships to better link training programs to sector needs, job opportunities, apprenticeships and support for entrepreneurial initiatives. At the same time, funding opportunities such as scholarships, grants, stipends, and reasonable financing should be available to disadvantaged children to ensure financial limitations do not prevent them from accessing skill-development opportunities. Therefore, sustainable funding should be built on financial stability and transparency, inclusivity, accountability, and results demonstrated by the organization. Frequent monitoring, auditing and performance reviews should support effective use of existing resources for employment, entrepreneurial ventures, revenue generation and overall socio-economic development. Ultimately, smart and diverse financing will improve youth skills development programs and allow young people to contribute more effectively to improving social conditions and maintaining sustainable economic growth.

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