



An Exploration of Funding Avenues in Technical, Vocational Education and Training That Promote Gender Equity of Students in Uganda

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Abstract: The realisation of gender equity through education and training has captured global and national attention. Despite the multiple strategies for achieving gender equity in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), studies have revealed that funding challenges continue to hamper its realisation in TVET institutes. Thus, this study explored funding avenues in TVET that promote gender equity of students in TVET institutes in Uganda. A descriptive survey design with quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to collect, analyse and present study findings. 260 informants including institutional leaders, instructors, students, district leaders, ministry officials, and civil society gender advocates participated in this study. Purposive, convenient, and stratified random sampling techniques were used in selecting the study informants. Questionnaire and interview guides were used to collect the desired data. The quantitative data was cleaned, coded, and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21 for analysis. Percentage, mean, and standard deviations were used to present the quantitative data. Thematic method and verbatim reporting were used to analyse and present qualitative data respectively. The results revealed that: *privatisation of TVET access, increasing TVET budgets, timely and adequate government grants, timely and adequate staff remunerations, bursaries and scholarships, public-private partnerships, affirmative strategies, and boosting parents' income*, promote gender equity of students. The study recommended that supportive loan schemes for TVET students be instated, capital grants per student need to be increased, with a slightly higher amount for females to meet their sanitary needs, capital grants to TVET institutes should be dispatched before the start of new terms/semesters, incorporation of the gender lens in the allocation of bursaries and scholarships, encouraging policy formulation and memoranda of understanding between institutes and industries, building linkages with other institutions and seeking donor funding from organisations.

Keywords: Funding Avenues, Realisation, Gender Equity, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

1. Introduction

1.1. Gender Equity in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Attainment of gender equity in education and training continues to attract attention at national and global agendas. Gender equity signifies fairness in students' participation and allocation of resources in TVET programs. Several strategies have been developed to promote inclusive TVET. Globally,

goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable economies emphasizes the necessity for inclusive and equitable education, including TVET for all nations and genders [1]. Additionally, gender equity is one of the three pillars of the 2016 strategy for TVET [2]. Despite these efforts, the crisis in the acquisition of technical and vocational skills for employment, decent work, and entrepreneurship is evident. According to an evaluation of the 2010-2015 strategy for TVET, 73 million youths were unemployed, in addition to the 40 million annual entrants to the labour market

worldwide. As a result, many people particularly women lack opportunities for skills development and decent work [2]. Therefore, they ought to be prepared for potential employment opportunities through seeking employment, self-employment, and entrepreneurial activities [3]. Such preparations require the attainment of quality TVET, as a foundation for the acquisition of vocational and technical skills in schools, VET institutes, and workplaces.

Accordingly, Webster and Sausner reported the creation of multiple opportunities for investing and engaging youth in TVET, as avenues for addressing poverty and unemployment in Nicaragua [4]. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) further cited that the high demands for technical and vocational skills in the labour market in Mongolia have led to positive trends in students' enrolment in TVET [5]. However, their report showed that funding for TVET was centralised, based on a fixed rate for the students regardless of the programme, with minimal flexibility of institutions generating their funding from the market. Thus, only 10% of the employment promotion fund was spent on vocational training and retraining in 2009. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), insufficient funding for TVET affects training schools that need to meet the costs of high infrastructure, equipment, teacher training, and qualifications [5]. In India, the enactment of the 11th five years Skills' Development Mission in 2012 did not fulfil the demand for skilled workforce [6]. Despite her high unemployment rate (3.1%) among the educated youth aged (15-29 years), low participation in TVET is apparent. For instance, participation in formal TVET dropped from 2.4% in 2005 to 2% in 2009-2010, with less than half female representation [6]. Likewise, global TVET statistics revealed mostly informal TVET training in South Asia, with diversified inequities [7]. Thus, exploration of other contributors to formal TVET participation in middle-level TVET institutions was imperative.

To address gender inequities in Africa, Article 12 of the African Union Commission's (AUC) protocol titled 'the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights' advocates for gender equity in education and training, and discourages gender stereotypes in science and technology [8]. More so, aspiration 3 of "The Africa We Want" by 2063 proposes well-educated and skilled citizens and emphasizes gender equity, while aspiration 6 commends upholding the potential of every person in Africa basing on their gender [9]. As a result, countries have responded by enacting policies to implement the suggestions. The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) of Kenya developed the education and training sector gender policy to address gender inequities [10]. Additionally, the Fast-Track Initiative Assessment done in 2006 in Rwanda revealed unemployment of up to 61% among primary education leavers compared to SSA's average of 29% [11]. The TVET policy was thus established to create employment opportunities.

However, equitable access to skills development remains a critical issue, as notable policies and provisions have not

addressed the social inclusion need of the youth [12]. Moreover, the attainment of equitable participation in TVET requires adequate financing. According to findings by Ndayambaje and colleagues in Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda, funding challenges stalled formal education including TVET [13]. Similarly, inadequate funding for activities geared towards gender equity impedes sustainable gender interventions [14]. Similarly, low government funding and budget allocation to TVET have a ripple effect on teacher-training and poorly equipped institutions, which culminate into inadequately trained graduates for the world of work [15-16]. Significantly, the contribution of financing avenues to the promotion of gender equity of TVET students cannot be underrated.

1.2. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Uganda

TVET in Uganda incorporates Business Education and is thus referred to as Business Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTNET). It is guided by the BTNET act of 2008, which was modified into the BTNET strategic plan in 2011 and the National Strategy for Girls Education (NSGE) in Uganda [17-19]. These policies are guiding frameworks to state and non-state actors to address gender inequities in their areas of mandate.

The BTNET system offers training in public, private, or firm-based institutions. Referring to the Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance report, ESSAPR (2016-2017), BTNET institutions increased from 119 (103 public, 16 private) to 129 (115 public, 14 private). Likewise, enrolment of students increased by 3.2 percent from 105,905 students (41,943 female, 63,957 male) to 109,305 (39,325 female, 69,980 male) [20]. Despite the increase in the number of institutions, gender disparities are evident with a decline of female students' enrolment from one financial year to another.

Additionally, the BTNET strategic plan designated a budget of 870 million United States Dollars (USD) for BTNET over nine fiscal years (2012/13-2021/22). Forty percent of this budget was earmarked for raising access and quality of TVET, while 433 billion Uganda Shillings (UGX) were for capital grants and bursaries of students in formal TVET. Consequently, enrolment for formal TVET was projected to rise from 42000 trainees to 103000 in 2019/2020 [18]. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) affirmed the release of students' capital grants in 2957 technical schools, community polytechnics, five training institutions, and colleges of commerce respectively [21]. However, the 2013-2014 ESSAPR revealed a drop in BTNET enrolment by 7.5 percent. No study has been conducted to establish the contribution of such funding avenues to the promotion of gender equity of students in formal TVET in Uganda.

1.3. Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study

Whereas several strategies for promoting gender equity in

education have been laid, studies have revealed that funding challenges continue to ripple the participation of students in TVET [12-16]. Despite earmarking budgets for BTNET in Uganda, and the release of capitation grants to nearly 3000 TVET institutes, participation in TVET was noted to decline with noticeable gender disparities [18, 20-21]. This study thus sought to explore funding avenues in TVET that can promote gender equity of students in Uganda.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by conceptualisations of the Feminist Socialisation Theory (FST) in education [22]. The theory suggests identical treatment of men and women, using its liberal approach to solving problems like gender inequities. Therefore, TVET was the liberal dimension through which gender inequities can be addressed using funding avenues commended in TVET policies and strategies. FST further posits increment improvements as a long-term strategy to a more equitable society [22]. These increments may include increased budget allocation, staff remunerations capital grants, students' loans, and scholarships which motivate administrators, instructors, and students, contribute to a conducive learning environment, and improve enrolment and participation in TVET.

However, the liberal dimension is not static and depends on the larger support system like the social-economic status of the country and parents or guardians, parents' attitudes towards gender equity, among other factors.

2.2. Empirical Studies and Gaps

Several studies have been conducted about funding avenues and equitable students' participation in TVET.

According to a study by Wheelahan and Moddie titled 'Global TVET trends', TVET was reported to be the most privatized sector, which was hoped to stabilise the education quality [7]. Their study noted that government-backed contingent loans in Technical and Further Education (TEFA) were given to both public and private TVET providers, which led to exponential enrolment growth in Australia. Therefore, TAFE produced 81% of Equivalent Full-time (EFT) students in 2009, which regrettably reduced to 56% in 2014. Contrary, private TVET providers recorded an increase in publicly-funded EFT students from 15% in 2009 to 40% in 2014. Likewise, Mpho, Ningpuanyeh, and Susuman cited a strong correlation between the fees owed and students' enrolment rate while bursaries and fees weavers had a weak correlation [23]. Their studies were however limited to enrolment rate and not equitable participation in TVET.

A compilation of assessment studies on TVET in Lao DPR and Mongolia revealed that TVET funding was majorly met by the government [6]. In Mongolia, each youthful student aged below 25 years and enrolled in a public or private TVET centre received a fixed monthly stipend of 45,000 Mongolian Tugriks (MNT). This entitlement was however

limited to youth below 25 years, hence presenting an equity challenge for those above that age. Conversely, Lao PDR varied her government budget share to TVET schools from 30% to 98%, with the remaining budget being met by students' fees and other contributions. Conversely, Orodho, noted that technical education in Kenya received a low budget percentage, where TVET received 4.5% of the total education budget compared to 70% awarded to basic education in 2009/2010 [16]. His study cited that Kenya shillings (KSh.) 10,265 were grossly inadequate to meet the financial needs and operations of each student in school. Besides, this fee was dispatched late which impacted regular school attendance, especially for students from low socioeconomic status. It is unknown whether TVET budgets impact the gender equity of students.

Furthermore, expensive provisions and up-to-date technological needs probed training institutions in Lao PDR to partner with private companies like Lao Toyota, among others [6]. The institutions were also encouraged to build linkages and obtain donor funding, where one of their institutions received USD 800,000 from the government of Korea, in addition to an exchange programme for teacher training [6]. Similarly, Oviawe affirmed that participation in TVET can be revamped through public-private partnerships (PPP). Thus, the private sector may intervene through technical support in terms of training and retraining of staff and students, provision of capital and expertise participation in curriculum development, networks and access to modern production equipment, tools, machines and technical know-how [24]. These suggestions were also made by Ndayambaje, Ampoto, Bizimana, Otieno, Ogeta, and Orodho that PPP would address funding challenges for TVET [13] and linking graduates' output to the world of work [3, 15]. However, these studies did not show whether PPP can contribute to equitable participation in TVET.

Studies have also shown that family income and socioeconomic status influence students' participation in TVET. A study by Shahrin, Normala, Irdyanti, and Noor in Malaysia cited that familial factors significantly influenced students' enrolment in TVET [25]. Likewise, Bhattarai, Bernasek, and Pena in Nepal noted that higher school attendance rates were related to wealth and fines for absence from school. Thus, females' attendance rates decreased with age while males' school participation depended on wealth proxy [26]. In Turkey, Gimus confirmed the results of earlier studies that household-level factors including household poverty and income significantly impacted children's school participation [27]. Equally, Orodho in Kenya opined that parents' financial situation, economic status, and attitude towards educational policies influenced regular school attendance, which affected students' participation in school [16].

Additionally, staff salaries and rewards have been urged to promote equitable participation of students in TVET. In the USA, the Economic Policy institute assessment cited in Miles and Katz revealed an increase in the salary gaps of teachers, with teachers earning 17% less than their

peers by 2015 [28]. Therefore, the average teacher salary was less than the family living wage in about half of all states, thus insufficient to meet their regular expenditures on basic needs. A study by Gemedu and Tynjala in Ethiopia noted that teachers' salaries and rewards were key issues in their motivation and development [29]. Consequently, low teachers' salaries had a distressing impact on the whole education process, devaluing their work thus leading to the loss of teachers to better-paying professions. Similarly, Obikwelu and Nwasor reported that male and female teachers perceived remunerations to influence their motivation [30]. Moreover, Molyneux argued that equitable salary allocation would minimise moonlighting of staff from one school to another, thus improving the participation of students [31]. These studies did not however show if instructors' remunerations impacted gender equity of students in TVET.

Equally, Adelakun, Oviawe, and Barfa suggested that poor provision of instructional materials to TVET institutions hampered the training of females in TVET [32]. This study was however limited to female students' participation in TVET.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design, Locale, Target Population, and Sample Size

This study adopted a descriptive survey design; where data collection and analysis for the different variables in this study was done at a single point in time [33]. Justifiably, this design supports the collection of qualitative and quantitative data about funding avenues that promote the gender equity of TVET students using multiple methods [34]. Likewise, the design enabled the researchers to describe informants' opinions about existing funding avenues in TVET that contribute to gender equity of students in Uganda using a sample of the target population. The study locale was TVET institutions in the Central Region, Uganda. The Central Region exhibits metropolitan features and high literacy levels which enabled the identification of informants with the required information for the study [20].

The target population comprised students, institutional leaders, instructors, ministry officials for MoES and Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), district leaders, and gender advocates from civil society organisations (CSO). Thus, a sample size of 260 informants participated in this study: 185 students, 56 instructors, 9 institutional leaders, 3 district leaders, 2 ministry officials, and 5 gender advocates of CSO.

3.2. Research Methods, Pilot Study, and Ethics

Questionnaire and interview guides developed by the researchers were used in this study. Questionnaire guides were used to collect data from institutional leaders, instructors, and students while interview guides were used for ministry officials, district leaders, gender advocates, and

role-model students and instructors. The use of these methods was convenient for a large study locale and generated diversified ideas from informants which supported triangulation of the findings. The questionnaire guides comprised two parts. Part I had 5 questions related to informants' bio-data including gender, age, academic qualification, TVET field, and years of study /working experience. Part II comprised 7 closed and open-ended questions about financing avenues that promote gender equity of students in TVET. The five-point Likert scale was used to obtain informants' views about funding avenues that promote gender equity of students in TVET. Similarly, the interview guides had three items about funding avenues that promote gender equity.

Piloting was done to check the content validity of research tools and improve items, scales, and formats [32]. Thus, a pilot study was done in two TVET institutes, where one IL, two instructors, and three students per institute participated in the study. Their responses were analysed, and unclear items were simplified and improved in the students' questionnaire guide. The data from 12 questionnaires was entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)-version 21 and its reliability was tested using the split-half method. As a result, a Spearman-Brown prophecy value of 0.77 was obtained, showing strong reliability of study findings.

Equally, the study followed clear ethical procedures. Firstly, the researchers sought approval of an ethical review committee of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST). Secondly, the researchers obtained administrative clearance from the Ministry of Education and Sports, participating institutions, and Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, to conduct this study in TVET institutions in Uganda. The purpose of the study was explained to all participating informants, and willing participants signed the written consent that was approved by the ethical review committee. Lastly, the principle of anonymity was utilised where serial numbers and codes were used instead of names. Confidentiality of collected data was guaranteed to all respondents and pseudonyms were used in reporting the data.

3.3. Data Analysis and Presentation

Data for this study was collected by researchers and research assistants. Collected data was cleaned, coded, and organised into themes. Quantitative data from questionnaires was coded into SPSS-version 21 for analysis. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse Likert-scale data about funding avenues that promote gender equity, while percentages were used to present informants' perceptions about these funding avenues. Qualitative data from interviews was analysed using the thematic method. Data from different informants was triangulated to generate a diversified understanding of the aspects being studied [33]. Verbatim and indirect reporting were utilised to present the qualitative results.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Bio-data of Informants

Table 1 presents data about gender, age, and years of study/ service of informants. Results showed nearly parity participation of female and male informants in the study. Similarly, most of the informants 42.8% (107) were aged 21 to 30 years, while more than a quarter 33.6% (84) were aged less than 20 years. These results are synonymous with the percentage representation of different study informants in this study, with the highest representation 71.2% (185) for students who were the youngest and a quarter 25% (65) representation for older instructors and inst. leaders.

Table 1. Percentages for Bio-data of Respondents.

Bio-data Characteristics	Categories	Percentages (%)
Gender (N=260)	Female	40.8 (106)
	Male	59.2 (154)
Age in years (N=250)	Below 20	33.6 (84)
	21-30	42.8 (107)
	31-40	12.4 (31)
	41-50	6.4 (16)
	Above 50	4.8 (12)
Years of Service (N=65)	Below 2 Years	10.8 (7)
	2-5 Years	29.2 (19)
	6-10 Years	30.8 (20)
	Above 10 Years	29.2 (19)
Years of study (N=185)	1 st Year	36.8 (68)
	2 nd Year	48.1 (89)
	3 rd Year	15.1 (28)

Table 2. Percentages for Use of Funding Avenues.

Funding Avenues	Status and Perceptions	Percentage (%)
Sponsorship (N=185)	Privately-sponsored	61.7 (114)
	Government	31.4 (58)
	Bursaries/scholarships	3.7 (7)
	Others	3.2 (6)
Receipt of Grants (N=9)	YES	100 (9)
	NO	0 (0.0)
Dispatching period (N=9)	Below 2 months	0 (0.0)
	2-4 months	57.1 (4)
	More than 4 months	42.9 (3)
TVET Budget (N=9)	Low Salaries	88.9 (8)
	Increase salaries	11.1 (1)
Staff remunerations (N=65)	Low salaries	48.3 (29)
	Gender equity in salaries	3.3 (2)
	Fairly adequate salaries	5.0 (3)
	Un-motivating salaries	10 (6)
	Increase salaries	28.3 (17)
Adequate Resources (N=56)	Yes	35.7 (20)
	No	64.3 (36)
Parents' SEC (N=185)	High	16.2 (30)
	Middle	52.4 (97)
	Low	31.4 (58)
Alternative Sources of Funds	Working after school	36.7 (66)
	Parents/guardians	47.8 (86)
	Savings	1.7 (3)
	Others	13.8 (25)

SEC- Social Economic Classification.

Table 1 further shows the participation of informants for different years of study and working experiences. The

variations in years of study implied that views for students of different years were captured. Likewise, informants varied in working experiences with the majority 60% (39) working above 5 years. Their length of service was presumed to duplicate into quality data about funding avenues in TVET that promote gender equity of students in Uganda.

4.2. Use of Different Funding Avenues in TVET in Uganda

Table 2 reveals funding status and informants' perceptions about different funding avenues in TVET comprising: - sponsorship, receipt of capital grants, budgeting for TVET, staff remunerations, adequate instructional resources, and parents' Social-Economic Classification (SEC).

4.2.1. Fees Payments and Sponsorship

Table 2 showed that the majority of students were privately sponsored 61.7% (114), more than a quarter of the students were sponsored by the government 31.4% (58) while few had their fees paid through bursaries or scholarships 3.7% (7). Likewise, interview data from students affirmed these findings. At KNVI004 a female student of electricity cited that:

The government is currently promoting the education of females in institutes like giving them sponsorships because I am equally government-sponsored... (Akol, interview data, 5/09/2019).

Similarly, a male student at MMNS006 said:

I am sponsored by government and this sponsorship supports the timely payment of my school fees (Luket, interview data, 14/09/2019).

Interestingly, one female student at MCPR001 reported:

Both my parents and boyfriend pay my school dues and meet my needs (Agupo, interview data, 17/08/2019).

These results implied that privatization of education access including TVET has boosted TVET participation, with the majority accessing TVET through private sponsorship, thus consistent with earlier studies [7, 16, 23].

4.2.2. Receipt of Capitation Grants and Dispatch Time

Results in table 2 also affirmed that all the six TVET institutions (100%) were receiving capital grants from the government. However, the period of dispatching funds for the majority 57.1% (4) ranged from 2 to 4 months, which impacted daily operations in the institutes. Similarly, interviews with some informants avowed these sentiments. According to a male inst. Leader at WMTS002, timely receipt of grants and teaching materials motivates instructors to work and conduct practical lessons. He noted:

We train students between November and February but the materials for practical lessons are supplied at the end of the program. Do you expect instructors to get morale to train...? (Mr. Okullo, interview data, 14/09/2019).

These results implied that capital grants as a form of increment improvement to a more equitable society [22] can contribute to the gender equity of students if dispatched in time. Delays in dispatch would promote inequities. These findings are consistent with studies by ILO [6] and Orodho [16].

4.2.3. Perceptions About TVET Budgets

Table 2 further cited perceptions of institutional leaders about TVET budgets. Majority of their views related to inadequate salaries 89% (8). Similarly, interviews with a female gender advocate from CSO revealed that:

...if the TVET budget was sufficient, adequate facilities would have been provided. The biggest challenge facing rural schools is inadequate staffing. If resources were enough, we would have more and quality teachers recruited. I think it is also about the remuneration. Most of the teachers gamble to survive. They get little money... (Ms. Yadak, interview data, 25/09/2019).

These results disclosed that insufficient budget allocations replicate adequate remunerations, training facilities, staffing, and resources, which impact the participation of students in TVET. Consequently, TVET instructors would be unable to meet their basic needs, which impact their morale and commitment to perform their duties diligently. This results in an un-conducive learning environment for students. These have a replica effect on the gender equity of students [5, 12, 14-15, 29, 31].

4.2.4. Perceptions About Staff Remunerations

Instructors and inst. leaders presented their insights about staff remunerations in TVET. Table 2 showed that nearly half of the informants avowed low salaries 48.3% (29), more than a quarter suggested salary increments 28.3% (17), while a tenth 10% (6) cited un-motivating salaries. Additionally, interviews with instructors and CSO advocate confirmed their views. At WMTS002, a female instructor noted:

...they have to improve our salaries so that the profession can be admired by students. But if they see you wearing the same dress or sandal for the whole term, it demotivates them. Many of us are surviving on loans, which are also insufficient. That is why we end up with part-time work here and there which affects our students because we don't have enough time with them (Ms. Jadika, interview data, 18/08/2019).

More so, an advocate from CSO said:

...you know remuneration affects someone's morale, diligence, and level of care. If one is not well-paid and has things to take care of, she/he will not concentrate a hundred percent.... (Ms. Taweno, interview data, 27/09/2019).

These results corroborate previous studies that postulated that staff remunerations motivate staff and minimise moonlighting [28-31].

4.2.5. Receipt of Adequate and Timely Resources

Results in table 2 further showed that nearly three-quarters of the instructors did not receive timely and adequate instructional resources 64.3% (36). Additionally, one male instructor and Head of Department at WKT1003 reported that:

We do not receive teaching resources in time. Sometimes we ask students to contribute money for the practical lessons. At times, we use our money to purchase the materials needed.... (Mr. Lumok, interview data, 22/08/2019).

Equally, a male student at LBAC005 affirmed:

...We lack teaching materials and resources, yet our instructors give us a lot of coursework (Oumo, interview data, 16/09/2019).

Therefore, increments in terms of the provision of adequate and timely resources would motivate students and instructors to actively participate in TVET, hence leading to gender equity [14-16, 22, 32].

4.2.6. Parents' Income

According to a three-class version of SEC [35], table 2 showed that the majority of the informants' parents 52.4% (97) were of middle SEC while more than a quarter 31.4% (58) were of low SEC. Importantly, nearly half of the students 47.8% (86) depended on their parents to meet their needs while more than a quarter worked after school 36.7% (66) to address their financial challenges.

Additionally, interviews with students confirmed these results. One female student at MCPR001 said:

My parents are farmers; they pay my fees and meet some of my needs. Sometimes, my boyfriend meets the rest of my needs...When they provide the money; I do not miss school... (Agupo, interview data, 14/08/2019).

Similarly, a male student asserted:

My aunt is paying my tuition fees. To meet other needs, I supply chapattis at the school canteen during break time. During holiday times, I work at a restaurant to get school requirements for the next term (Atiku, interview data, 15/08/2019).

These findings seemed to reveal that parents' SEC as a source of TVET funding may either promote or impede students' participation in TVET. Whereas TVET is expensive, parents of middle and high SEC, whose children were the majority in the study sample 68.6% (127), are likely to enrol and complete school. Conversely, children of parents of low SEC 31.4% (58) were prone to deficits for personal and scholastic needs, which encouraged them to engage in part-time jobs and getting funds from boyfriends. Thus, their study time was compromised with these jobs and pre-marital relationships, resulting in irregular school attendance or even drop-outs. These findings are consistent with earlier studies [16, 25-27].

4.3. Perceptions of Informants About Funding Avenues That Promote Gender Equity in TVET

This study also sought for informants' perceptions about funding avenues that promote gender equity of students using a five-point Likert scale with numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree respectively. Means and standard deviations of their views are represented in table 3.

Findings in table 3 showed that informants agreed with 8 items with means greater than 3.5 (1-4, 4-9) as funding avenues that promote gender equity of students in TVET. Likewise, the standard deviation of the 9 test items ranged between 0.8 and 1.34, suggestive that their responses were close to their means.

Furthermore, interviews with key informants also proposed these strategies. Accordingly, a male district leader cited:

Just like how the government promotes science education,

it has to find a way to promote these vocational courses too. For example, the students' loan scheme that takes up science students can also be introduced for vocational courses... (Mr. Mamiso, interview data, 14/08/2019).

Table 3. Means Responses of Funding Avenues that Promote Gender Equity.

S/N Funding Avenues (N=250)	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Privatization of TVET access	3.51	1.34	Agree
2. Increasing TVET budgets	3.76	1.32	Agree
3. Timely and sufficient government grants	3.98	1.19	Agree
4. Timely and adequate staff remunerations	3.88	1.29	Agree
5. Increasing school fees	1.84	1.19	Disagree
6. Bursaries and scholarships in TVET	4.30	1.11	Agree
7. Public-private partnerships	4.14	1.07	Agree
8. Affirmative strategies	3.98	.81	Agree
9. Boosting parents' income	4.05	1.15	Agree

SD- Standard Deviation S/N- Serial number.

Similarly, a CSO gender advocate asserted:

Poverty and lack of political will influence the allocation of resources. For example, while one thinks that education should be given enough resources, that is not the case. Priorities differ and more money is being given to security while education is not given that priority. If the citizens could also get involved in the budget processes, sections like education would be given adequate resources... (Ms. Yadak, interview data, 25/09/2019).

Conversely, one institutional leader at WMTS002 noted: *Students sponsored by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) are complicated. They don't care about their learning and participation in school activities which affects their stay in school (Mr. Okullo, interview data, 18/08/2019).*

These findings are consistent with previous studies that suggested funding avenues that promote students' participation in TVET including privatisation of TVET [7, 16, 23], increasing TVET budgets [6, 16], timely and sufficient government grants [6, 14, 16], timely and adequate remunerations [28-31], bursaries and scholarships [16, 23], public-private partnerships [3, 6, 13, 15, 24], and boosting parents' income [16, 25-27].

5. Conclusions

According to the results, the informants posited that privatisation of TVET access, increasing TVET budgets, timely and adequate government grants, timely and adequate staff remunerations, bursaries and scholarships, public-private partnerships, affirmative strategies, and boosting parents' income were funding avenues that promote equitable participation of students in TVET.

6. Recommendations

Basing on the challenges students faced in meeting their financial needs for TVET, this study recommends that:

- The government of Uganda prioritizes education during budgeting for each financial year, to enable the sector to

receive sufficient funds which align with the current education needs.

- A supportive loan scheme for TVET students is instated to support more students to access TVET through private sponsorship.
- The amount of money given to each student as a capital grant needs to be increased, with a slightly higher amount for female students to meet their sanitary needs. This will reduce students' contributions to the programs in form of fees, which will enable even those from low SEC to participate in TVET with ease.
- The government grants need to be dispatched before the start of each new term/ semester to enable institutes to have proper plans for them and adequately use them for quality instruction and learning.
- Allocation of bursaries and scholarships needs to be done with a gender lens so that inequities are addressed.
- There is a need to revisit the policies on the supply of instructional materials to institutions, to counteract delays in procurement and supplies.
- Staff remunerations need to be increased to competitive amounts so that instructors' morale and diligence are upheld.
- Policy formulation and memoranda of understanding are encouraged between TVET institutions and the industries to support up-to-date skills training and reduce training costs.
- TVET institutions are encouraged to seek donor funding and build linkages with other institutions and organisations, as a benchmark for supporting activities geared towards gender equity.

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