

EDUCATION REFORMS AND YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY IN TANZANIA: THE CASE OF TVET CURRICULA

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ABSTRACT

This study assesses the effectiveness of Tanzania's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curricula in addressing youth unemployment. Using a mixed-methods, cross-sectional design, data were collected from TVET students, instructors, employers, and policymakers across selected institutions. The findings reveal significant progress in private-sector collaboration, mentoring programs, and alignment of training with industry needs. Approximately 87% of respondents confirmed the inclusion of mentoring programs, while 68% acknowledged structured dual training at host companies. Stakeholder engagement and political commitment, as proven by increased budgetary allocations and policy reforms, have strengthened institutional governance under the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET). Nevertheless, gaps persist in financial assistance, job placement services, and the integration of SMEs within the informal sector. While most curricula now embed emerging technology modules, the translation of training into sustainable employment remains constrained by limited market linkages and access to start-up capital. The study concludes that Tanzania's TVET reforms have enhanced skill relevance and employability but require deeper integration of financing mechanisms, SME certification frameworks, and data-driven monitoring systems to maximize youth employment outcomes and structural transformation.

Keywords: TVET, youth unemployment, curriculum reform and employability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the generation of youth is the largest in history, with the vast majority living in developing countries. According to the United Nations World Population Prospects statistics, there were 1.2 billion young people aged 15–24 years worldwide in 2015, constituting nearly 30% of the world's population. Approximately 226 million of these young people lived in Africa, making the continent the most youthful in the world. Children under 15 years of age accounted for 41 percent of the population in Africa, and young people aged 15–24 years accounted for a further 19 percent (UN, 2019).

By 2030, the target date for the Sustainable Development Goals, it is projected that the number of young people in Africa will increase by 42 per cent to 321 million (ibid). While the size of the youth population has peaked in all other regions, Africa's youth population is expected to continue growing throughout the remainder of the twenty-first century, especially in low- and lower-middle-income countries (ibid).

Parallel to that, young people continue to face numerous challenges that limit their ability to achieve their full potential. Employment remains the main distress of young people in the region

(UN 2019). Unemployment increases over time, as the transition from school to work becomes difficult (REPOA, 2020). In Tanzania, for example, while every year over 800,000 young people enter the labour market (ibid), only 50,000 to 60,000 manage to secure jobs in the formal sector (Wijesekera, D. 2015). The inability to find decent and stable employment creates a sense of frustration among young people, which imposes economic and social costs, including risks of engaging in crime and being recruited to terrorist groups.

Getting youth into productive employment is an urgent policy issue for countries around the world. A successful transition to the labour force is essential for young people to be assured of success in life, but many young people encounter significant obstacles to this transition. Youth are three times more likely than adults to be unemployed; worldwide, almost 73 million youth are looking for work (Peter, et.al., 2018).

Unemployed, dissatisfied young people are more likely to actively challenge their situation and can become a socially destabilizing force, as evidenced by increasing demands for change on the continent. Unrest in some countries in Africa, such as Kenya in 2025 and North Africa, especially Tunisia and Egypt, illustrates the destabilizing potential of unmet aspirations of young people. The lack of skills and jobs, compounded by the mismatch between skills demanded and supplied, are some of the common hurdles for young people trying to enter the labour market (Wijesekera, N. 2015).

Tanzania is one of the countries with the youngest populations in the world (CIA World Factbook, 2023). It has a median age of 18 years, with youth and children accounting for 31% and 44% of the population, respectively. With a median age of 18 years, this population, like in other African countries, is preparing to enter the labour market but faces several barriers, including limited accessibility to financial services, a changing labor market, and the mismatch between skills demanded and supplied, which requires stronger linkages between education, vocational training, and industry needs. More emphasis on the relevance of vocational education to employment is made by Wößmann et al (2015), who maintain that for countries with vocational schooling, youth are more likely to be employed. According to Holzer (2019), the success of employment policies across the globe is often measured by the extent to which they can balance the supply of jobs with demand in an economy.

In addressing the aforementioned challenges, the 6th phase Government in Tanzania, under the leadership of Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, introduced a new curriculum with the option of Technical and Vocational Education and Training such as food processing, tailoring, leather, furniture and other timber products, mechanics, plumbing, and metal fabrication at the secondary school level to provide alternative career paths. This has been accompanied by the expansion and reforms of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) institutions to accommodate the desired changes.

This study is interested in exploring the relevance pathways for enhancing the impact of the introduced curricula changes in addressing youth unemployment in Tanzania.

1.1 Objective

Exploring an effective ecosystem for the TVET curriculum to enhance youth employability in Tanzania

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) include technical education, vocational education, vocational training, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship training (Huang, 2023). Unlike general education, vocational education is employment-oriented. It helps students to develop or enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities for specific occupations (Kaenong, 2023) by cultivating a group of students with high professional quality (Kantová, 2023). Another important feature of TVET is that students need to engage in hands-on practice continuously (Ye, et.al.,2024). Besides deliberate practice, another key educational characteristic is meaningful error-based learning, which allows TVET students to reflect on, internalise, and adjust from their error experiences (ibid).

2.1.1 *Entrepreneurship training and its impact on TVET programs*

Entrepreneurship training can increase rates of economic activity and business start-ups among youth, and sometimes their incomes as well (Peter, et. al., 2018). These positive outcomes result when training is combined with mentoring, support services, and financial assistance to start an enterprise. There is some evidence that providing outright grants rather than credit for starting a business will be more effective for youth, if also more expensive.

Does the teaching of the TVET curricula in Tanzania include mentoring, support services, and financial assistance to start enterprises?

2.1.2 *Private sector linkage and sustainable impact of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curricula*

The decisive factor in any successful Vocational Skills Development system is close collaboration between all the stakeholders, whereas the private sector, in particular, is playing an active role (SDC, 2016). Private sector involvement is a cornerstone of the vocational skills development policy (SDC, 2016). No VET system geared to the labour market (and thus imparting relevant skills to the beneficiaries) can be offered in the long term without the participation of employers (ibid). This can be affected in various ways, including the involvement of local companies throughout the entire training process, helping shape curriculum development, taking on apprentices or imparting training modules, and contributing to the certification and financing of training (ibid). For example, the Swiss vocational Educational Program Is designed to ensure that training takes place at the host companies' production facilities, not in a special, segregated training context. The principle of learning on the job is combined with targeted theoretical inputs imparted at a VET school (ibid).

Additionally, alternating school-based and in-company training phases can, in principle, increase the relevance, quality, and attractiveness of training (SDC 2016). Wanklin (2018), in the research of the VET system of Albania and Kosovo, suggests that the most relevant approaches of successful VET systems include, among others, the engagement with the private sector, work-based learning, and the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. Instruments such as the Professional Orientation Profile can help students in their vocational orientation phase to discover more about their personality, interests, capacities, and talents, and explore the professional careers they may be suited for, as well as the training programmes and pathways offered by different providers (Hilpert, 2020).

Larger domestic formal sector firms, including manufacturers and service providers, are similarly involved in training initiatives to ensure skilled labour, and also often engage with job-placement services (Peter, et. al., 2018). An important additional form of public-private partnership involving such firms has been national (and sometimes, subnational) level planning for youth skills development and employment, with the primary goal of ensuring that the skills are matched to employer needs (ibid). Small and medium enterprises, many of them in the informal sector, are also engaged in youth employment programs, but to a lesser extent than larger firms (ibid). The main focus of involvement of smaller firms is training, but an additional motivation to work with the public sector is to upgrade and formalize, and credentialize apprenticeship systems that are an important source of vocational training in the informal sector (ibid).

- i. *Do the introduced TVET curricula ensure engagement with the private sector, work-based learning, and the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders?*
- ii. *What instrument is applied in Tanzania to help students in their vocational orientation phase to discover more of their personality, interests, capacities and talents to explore the professional careers they may fit?*
- iii. *Is there a structured program in Tanzania to ensure Training takes place at the host companies' production facilities, not in a special, segregated training context?*
- iv. *Do the introduced TVET curricula provide for engagement of the Small and Medium enterprises, especially in the informal sector, in training as a motivation for them to work with the Public Sector to upgrade, formalise, and credentialize apprenticeship systems, which are an important source of vocational training in the informal sector?*

2.1.3 Internship provision program

Evidence indicates that programs that combine training with employment or job placement services—that is, comprehensive approaches—are the most effective (Peter, et. al., 2018). At the national level, public-private engagement in reforming systems for skills development to align with current and future labour market demands is another key modality for private sector engagement in demand-driven skills development, with some notable high-profile successes in East Asia. These partnerships are often motivated by the desire to develop national qualifications frameworks (NQFs), which can enhance labour market functioning for youth by providing clear signals to employers of their acquired skills.

Do the education reforms in Tanzania provide for a structured training with employment or job placement services?

2.1.4 Active Labour Market integration: The case of Albania

In Albania, the unemployment rate stood at 17%, even climbing as high as 33% among young people in 2014(SDC, 2020). Paradoxically, companies nevertheless struggle to fill the few vacancies that arise, due to the fact that most of the candidates lack proper qualifications (ibid). This has necessitated reforms in the Vocational Skills Development system, including the introduction of the new curricula (ibid). The reforms enabled the introduction of innovative learning techniques, the creation of about 20 new curricula for professions, and the development of appropriate teaching materials at 35 vocational schools. Also, through the reforms, hundreds of teaching staff were trained, and 4,000 apprentices helped take their first successful steps towards finding work (ibid).

Additionally, according to SDC (2020), various forms of training that combine the theoretical and practical were established. In technical areas such as heating installation, tin-smithing, plumbing, and IT, training courses last for three to four years. Practical work is carried out in class. For hairdressing and baking industry apprenticeships, on the other hand, dual training concepts containing a significant amount of on-the-job training have been introduced successfully in partnership with the private sector (ibid).

- i. *Do the education reforms in Tanzania guarantee the required skills for the job market, especially in the potential sectors identified in DIRA 2050?*
- ii. *Does the TVET reform in Tanzania help apprentices take their first successful steps towards finding work?*
- iii. *Does the TVET reform in Tanzania provide for on-the-job training in partnership with the Private sector?*

2.1.5 Active Stakeholders Engagement

In many countries or sectors, companies do not have a tradition or culture of training qualified, skilled labour autonomously (GIZ, 2016). This has been linked to the traditional definition of education or VET as a public responsibility (Euler, 2018). Consequently, companies in many countries criticise the quality of a school-based VET system, without seeing themselves as responsible for introducing changes (Euler 2015). However, according to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) (2016), Switzerland has proven to be the best practice by involving various state actors, vocational schools, employment agencies, and private companies in measures to improve the labour market's integration of young people. The various stakeholders were engaged and worked together to identify barriers to employment, seek solutions, and implement the measures adopted (ibid). According to SDC (2016), the approach has been successful in three regions of northern Albania, where 17 coordinated activities promoting youth employment have taken place. Consequently, several hundred young adults were given help in looking for work (ibid). State employment services have subsequently reported a rise in the number of job seekers who manage to find a position (ibid).

Is there a stakeholder engagement platform to improve the labour market's integration for young people in Tanzania?

2.1.6 The Light manufacturing sector and economic transformation

The manufacturing sector is highlighted to be a cornerstone of Tanzania's economic growth and diversification by 2050 (DIRA, 2050). While agriculture has long been the backbone of the economy, the country's heavy reliance on it exposes it to risks such as climate change, price fluctuations, and global market shifts (ibid). Several scholars, including Rodrik, D. (2016), and Wang, X., and Geng, X., (2018), have indicated that the migration of workers from agriculture to manufacturing has been the key driver of growth and structural change in other countries. For example, Asia has transitioned from a low to a middle-income status (ibid). This calls for a fundamental structural change in the economy, whereby workers transition from less complex, low-value sectors, such as agriculture, to more complex and higher-value ones, such as manufacturing (DfID, 2019). This will also mitigate the vulnerabilities associated with the agriculture sector, such as climate change, market fluctuations, and global market shifts, and enhance economic resilience (DIRA,2050).

Additionally, Light manufacturing, which includes sub sectors such as food processing, tailoring, leather, furniture and other timber products, mechanics, plumbing, and metal fabrication, has a high degree of interconnectedness with other sectors of the economy, through strong backwards and forwards linkages in the supply chain, as well as significant use of horizontal suppliers (DfID, 2019). This high degree of interconnectedness implies that direct job creation within manufacturing is likely to have a higher indirect jobs multiplier than in other industries (Diao et.al., 2017). The sector is also critical to structural change in reaching the upper-middle income status by its ability to create more and better jobs due to its potential to absorb large numbers of modestly skilled workers, reducing poverty, and diversifying the economy (DfID, 2019).

Does the education transformation in Tanzania facilitate migration of workers from agriculture to the manufacturing sector as a key driver of growth and structural change in attaining upper middle income country by 2050?

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: EFFECTIVE TVET CURRICULUM IN ENSURING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

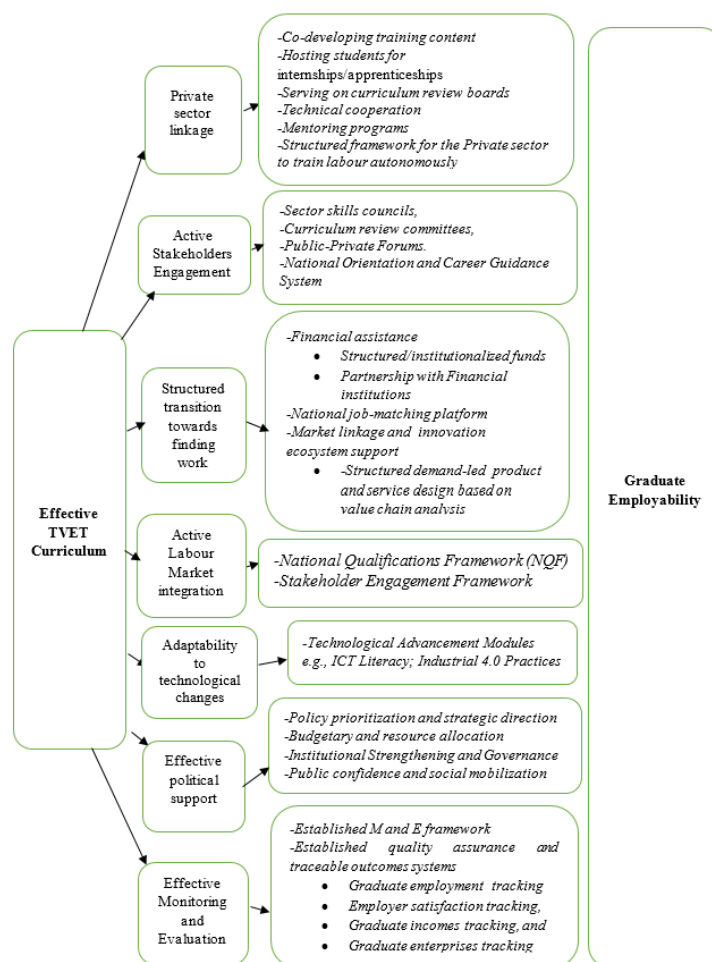


Figure 1.0: Conceptual Framework of Effective TVET Curriculum

Source: Own construct, 2025

4. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach combining literature review, direct observation, questionnaires, and focus group discussions (FGDs) to assess the effectiveness of the TVET curriculum in enhancing graduate employability. A theoretical literature review was adopted to analyse relevant theories and concepts guiding curriculum implementation. The FGD involved 14 key stakeholders, including officials from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), VETA, NACTVET, TIE, KTO, BAKWATA, and principals from Arusha and Dar es Salaam colleges, and Morogoro teachers' colleges, as well as representatives from Folk Development Colleges (FDCs). Additionally, 300 questionnaires were distributed to VETA institutions at national, regional, and district levels, the TVET department at MoEST, NACTVET, TIE, FDCs, and secondary schools implementing the AMALI curriculum.

The data collection focused on assessing curriculum effectiveness in areas such as private sector linkages, stakeholder engagement, labour market integration, adaptability to technological changes, political support, and monitoring and evaluation.

Data were analysed using Microsoft Excel and descriptive techniques, with qualitative insights presented through direct quotations from respondents. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods ensured a comprehensive understanding of TVET curriculum performance and its contribution to improving employability outcomes in Tanzania.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Private Sector Linkage

The new curricula also indicated to emphasise private sector engagement, as 265 (88.33%) of the respondents highlighted that the new curriculum ensures private sector participation, against 35 (11.67%) who disagree on the involvement of the private sector. While responding to the areas that accommodate private sector involvement, 166 (55.33%) times respondents indicated Co-developing training content, 154 (51.33%) times indicated Technical cooperation; 149 (49.67%) times respondents indicated Hosting students for internships; 125 (41.67%) times respondents indicated hosting students for apprenticeships; 89(31.45%) times respondents indicated structured framework for the private sector to train labour autonomously; and 88 (31.09%) times serving on curricula review boards as indicated in Table 1.0.

Table 1.0: Private Sectors' engagement areas in the implementation of TVET curriculum

S/No.	Sectors	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Co-developing training content	166	55.33
2.	Technical cooperation	154	51.33
3.	Hosting students for internships	149	49.67
4.	Hosting students for apprenticeships	125	41.67
5.	Serving on curriculum review boards	95	31.66
6.	Structured framework for the private sector to train autonomously	93	31.00
7.	Other	6	2.00

Availability of the dual training module

While enquiring about the availability of a structured dual training model with training at host companies' production facilities, 204 (68.0%) of the respondents indicated the availability of such a model. However, 96(32.0%) of the respondents mentioned their absence.

Responding to the sectors commonly involved in the implementation of the dual training model with training at host companies' production facilities, the responses are as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2.0: Common Sectors in Dual Training Model at host companies' production facilities

S/No.	Sectors	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Electrical and electronic	128	43.99
2.	Tailoring	106	36.43
3.	Plumbing	95	32.62
4.	Automotive	92	31.62
5.	Masonry	92	31.62
6.	Hospitality	86	29.55
7.	Metal fabrication	75	25.77
8.	Furniture and other timber products	63	21.65
9.	Food Processing	63	21.65
10.	Leather	36	12.37
11.	Other	18	6.19

For the case of constraints that affect implementation of the dual training model at host companies, the frequency of responses of 94 (32.3%) respondents who indicated the absence of the dual training module is as indicated in Table 3.0

Table 3.0: Constraints on the implementation of the dual training module at host companies

S/No.	Constraints	Frequency of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1.	Cost barriers	71	23.67
2.	Logistic issues	56	18.66
3.	Other	4	1.37

Additionally, while required to mention other constraints, lack of knowledge of vocational studies, insufficient infrastructure, machines and equipment, inadequate awareness and lack of consideration at the planning stage were mentioned.

Engagement with SMEs, especially the informal sector

While responding to whether the TVET curriculum provides for engagement with SMEs, especially in the informal sector, 230 (76.67%) indicated the provision of a room for Informal sector SMEs engagement in the TVET curricula, compared to 70(23.33%) who stated the absence of that opportunity. The indicated areas of engagement are as shown in **Table 4.0**.

Table 4.0: Informal Sector' SMEs Engagement

S/No.	Areas of engagement	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Short-course training tailored to the needs of the informal sectors	200	66.67
2.	Recognition and certification of skills gained informally	127	42.33
3.	Apprenticeship placements within SMEs	114	38.00
4.	Other	4	1.37

On elaborating the other areas of engagement that were highlighted four times by respondents, shown in Table 4.0, community-based practical projects, industrial attachments to SMEs, and mentorship from informal sector artisans (Fundi Mahiri) were mentioned.

Availability of the Mentoring Program

While required to respond to the availability of the mentoring program, 261 (87.00%) of the respondents reported that the new TVET curricula incorporate mentoring programs to bridge theoretical and practical learning, against 39 (13.00%) who indicated the absence of such a program. The identified areas of mentorship are as indicated in Table 5.0.

Table 5.0: The available Mentoring support program

S/No.	Areas of mentorship	Frequency of respondents	
		Yes	No
1.	Industry visits	230	76.67
2.	Structured internship mentorship	90	30.00
3.	Guest lecturers	84	28.00
4.	Others	11	3.67

Other forms of mentoring highlighted during the interviews include: Practical Training to industries; Interpersonal mentorship; Apprenticeship (e.g., Integrated Mining Technical Training (IMTT), *Fundi Mahiri* program, INTEPi); Inspectors; E-Mentoring, Group Mentoring, Peer Mentoring and Community-based mentoring programs involving local artisans and entrepreneurs who provide practical guidance and real-world exposure to students outside formal internship settings.

However, long-term support services, especially through structures such Alumni network, were not found during the survey.

Furthermore, 231 (77.74%) of the Respondents affirmed that these mentorship programs helped create a professional network that supports lifelong career development. However, 30 (10.00%) of the respondents indicated that the mentorship programs have added no value in creating a professional network that supports lifelong career development, while 34 (12.26%) did not respond to this question.

Additionally, in response to how the TVET curricula ensure the creation of a professional network, the reactions were as indicated in Table 6.0.

Table 6.0: Profession Network Creation

S/No.	Network creation item	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Linking students with Industry leaders	189	63.00
2.	Internship opportunities	128	42.66
3.	Long-term support (Ongoing advice and guidance)	103	34.33
4.	Direct connections with mentors and peers, and Participation in Events and group Activities	4	1.41
5.	Alumni and informal Graduate Networks, industrial Attachment and Apprenticeship programs and professional associations	3	1.05

Structured Transition towards finding work

While responding to the presence of a structured mechanism to facilitate students' transition to work in the new TVET curricula, 185 (61.67%) respondents indicated the presence of such a mechanism, 114 (38.00%) respondents indicated its absence, and 1(0.33%) did not respond. Further, on indicating the available structured mechanisms, the frequency of the respondents was as shown in Table 7.0.

Table 7.0: The available mechanisms to transition towards work

S/No.	Transition Mechanism towards work	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Market linkage and innovation ecosystem	111	37.00
2.	National job-matching platform	108	36.00
3.	Financial assistance	86	28.67
4.	Other	8	2.67
5.	No response	115	38.33

Further, while enquiring on the available national Job-matching platforms for the TVET graduates, respondents indicated TaESA Online Employment Services Portal, Ajira Portal (Public Service Recruitment Secretariat - PSRS), ESS Utumishi (Employee Self Service “Watumishi” Portal), and the **National Labour Market Information System (NLMIS, jobs.kazi.go.tz)** by TaESA. The response to the features of such platforms is shown in Table 8.0.

Table 8.0: National Job Matching Platforms

S/No.	Features	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Profiles, job search, CV/interview resources)	121	41.58
2.	Gov–Local Industry collaboration for skills-targeted listings	105	36.08
3.	Central job portal listing apprenticeships & jobs	95	32.65
4.	Competency self-assessment and tailored job recommendations	84	28.87
5.	Soft skills workshops/resources	73	25.09
6.	Reviews/feedback for continuous improvement	62	21.37
7.	Links to additional training resources (upskilling)	59	20.27
8.	Mobile-accessible (apply, listings, notifications)	52	17.87
9.	Analytics to track placement trends & success rates	43	14.78

Additionally, while enquiring on the availability of job placement units at TVET institutions to facilitate job placement among graduates, 196(67.35%) of the respondents indicated the availability of such units, against 37 (12.71%) who indicated their absence.

On the availability of Market linkage and innovation ecosystem support, 107(37.02%) times respondents indicated Demand-led product/service design (value chain analysis) as the available mechanism to transition towards work.

For the case of provision of start-up financial support for graduates starting enterprises, 189 (63.00%) and 111 (37.00%) of the respondents indicated the absence and availability of financial support for start-up capital to start an enterprise.

However, for the 111 (37.00%) respondents who indicated the availability of support funds, the frequency of the response on sources of such funds is as shown in as shown in Table 9.0.

Table 9.0: Sources of Financial Assistance for TVET graduates

S/No.	Funding source	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Financial Institution	78	26.80
2.	Structured Funds (e.g., Youth funds)	76	20.12

Furthermore, Government loans for youth, Skills development funds, Grants and scholarships, small-business loans, government grants and subsidies, community savings groups, and private

sector sponsorships or partnerships aimed at supporting entrepreneurs and students in starting their businesses are mentioned among the financial assistance available.

4.2 Adaptability to Technological Change

While responding to whether the introduced curricula enable graduates to adapt to technological changes, 252 (84.00%) of the respondents indicated the presence of such modules, against 48(16.00%) who indicated their absence. Further, on responding to how such curricula changes help students in adapting to technological changes, 204(74.08%) of the respondents have indicated the introduction of Modules on emerging technologies; 120(42.40%) have indicated the introduction of ICT literacy courses; and 74 (26.15%) have indicated the introduction of Industry 4.0 practices, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: The available modules for adaptability to technological changes

S/No.	Technological Advancement modules	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Emerging technologies	215	71.33
2.	ICT literacy	124	41.00
3.	Industry 4.0 practices	77	25.67
4.	Other	15	5.00

Furthermore, while required to mention the available Industry 4.0 practice, the responses from 77 respondents were as indicated in Table 11.

Table 11: The available Industry 4.0 practices

S/No.	Industry 4.0 practices	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT)	59	19.67
2.	Artificial Intelligence (AI)	38	12.67
3.	Cloud Computing	29	19.00
4.	Big data	24	24.00
5.	Advanced Robotics	21	20.33
6.	Others (e.g., ChatGPT)	4	1.33

4.3 Active Labour Market Integration

While required to respond to active labour integration in the TVET curriculum, Out of the 300 respondents, 211 (70.33%) indicated the presence of active labour integration in the TVET curricula compared to 88 (29.33%) of the respondents who stated the absence on labour integration. Moreover, while responding to how the labour market integration is considered in new TVET curricula, 175(58.33%) times respondents indicated stakeholders' engagement, while 102(34.33%) times respondents highlighted the National Qualification Framework. During the interview, a representative from NACTVET indicated that

“Through the National Qualification Framework, workers who have acquired skills informally or through work experience can have their competencies assessed and certified”

He further added that,

“For example, Artisans in construction or motor mechanics sectors can undergo Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessments conducted by VETA to gain formal qualifications under NVA

levels 1–3. This process supports labour mobility and reintegration, especially for youth and adults in the informal sector, thus expanding employability and productivity”.

Moreover, a representative from VETA headquarters has also indicated that,

*“The curriculum development involved the Industry in qualification design. For example, the development of TVET curricula in hospitality, construction, and renewable energy has involved the **Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI)** and employer associations to ensure relevance and alignment with National Qualification Framework levels.*

4.4 Inclusion of Stakeholders

The active stakeholder involvement —such as industry associations, employers, development partners, and government agencies highlighted by 220 (76.39%) of the respondents compared to 68 (23.61%) in the implementation of the new TVET curricula. The frequency of respondents on areas of inclusion indicated Table 12, whereas, 153(53.12%) times respondents cited curriculum review committees, 126(43.75%) times respondents cited industry associations, 125(43.30%) times respondents cited employers inclusion, 114 (39.58%) times respondents cited government agencies, 98 (34.03%) times respondents indicated sector skills council, 95(32.99%) times respondents cited development partners, and 91 (31.6%) times cited public-private forum.

Table 12: Inclusion Areas in TVET Curriculum

S/No.	Areas of Inclusion	Frequency of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Curriculum Review boards	153	53.12
2.	Industrial Associations	126	43.75
3.	Employers	125	43.4
5.	Government Agencies	114	39.58
6.	Sector Skills Councils	98	34.03
7.	Development Partners	95	32.99
8.	Public-private forums	91	31.6
9.	Other	2	0.69

4.5 Effective political support

Policy prioritization and Strategic Direction

While responding to the availability of political support in ensuring youth employability, a Director from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology highlighted that,

“The sector receives enormous political support from the government. For example, Her Excellency, Honourable Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, provided directives at various times, particularly on April 22, 2021, when addressing the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, as she said”:

“...We will focus on reviewing the 2014 Education Policy and making adjustments to the existing curriculum so that it is directed towards providing education and skills relevant to the country's environment and the job market...”

He further went on by indicating that,

“These directives laid the foundation for the review of the 2014 Education and Training Policy, which was conducted in conjunction with the review of curricula at various levels of Education, including Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, and Teacher Education”.

Budgetary and Resource Allocation

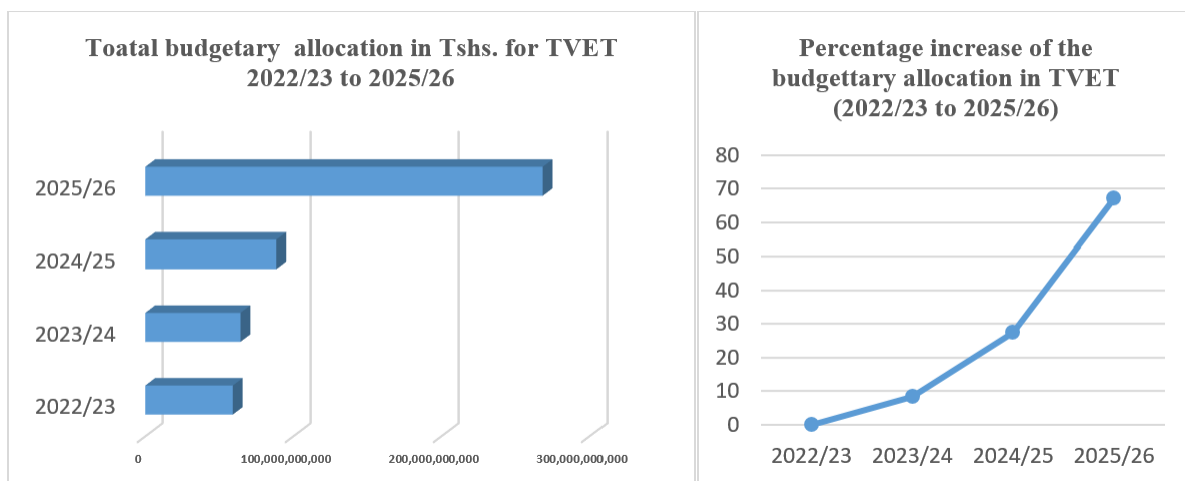
While responding to the budgetary and resource allocation in the implementation of TVET curricula, the director of Policy and Planning has indicated that,

“There is a substantial budget increase in the implementation of the TVET curricula. For example, for the last three years, there has been a 67.02% increase in the total budgetary allocation. There is also an increase in donor support and private sector involvement in resource allocation for the implementation of the TVET curriculum”.

The actual budget allocation is as shown in Table 13.0

Table 13.0: TVET budget allocation (2022/23 to 2025/25)

Year	Budget (OC)	Dev local	Dev Foreign	Total	Percentage
2022/23	1,659,692,550	55,300,000,00	2,152,089,167	59,111,691,717	
2023/24	1,659,692,550	55,300,000,00	7,177,089,162	64,336,691,712	8.12
2024/25	2,259,602,550	81,062,643,449	5,207,734,900	88,529,980,899	27.33
2025/26	3,373,195,540	80,112,613,449	184,965,557,017	268,451,366,066	67.02



Source: Field survey (2025)

Institutional Strengthening and Governance

While responding to the measures taken to strengthen institutions for the implementation of the TVET curriculum, a representative from the TVET Directorate in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology indicated that,

“The government has undertaken some reforms to enable smooth implementation of the TVET curricula to achieve the intended objectives”.

He further added that,

“The key undertaken reforms include legal integration and coordination by establishing NACTVET through merging NACTE (technical education) and VETA (vocational education oversight) functions at the coordination level. Also, the reforms involve the enactment of the NACTVET Act (2019), which clarified mandates, minimizing overlap between institutions and ensuring a single regulatory framework for quality and accreditation.

Additionally, a representative from the Directorate of TVET has indicated that,

“The reforms have also witnessed an infrastructure expansion and modernization. For example, the government has embarked on the construction of 64 district-level VTCs and one regional-level VTC in Songwe Region to expand access”. Also, VETA revised curricula to align with the competency-based training (CBET) approach under the AMALI model and the Integration of digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and green skills into training programs.

He further concluded that,

*“VETA has transformed from a provider-oriented agency to a **market-responsive and skills-oriented authority**, capable of supporting large-scale curriculum delivery under the AMALI reform”.*

Enhancement of public confidence and Social mobilization

While responding to political support towards influencing public perception of vocational education as a respected and viable career path, a representative from VETA indicated that,

“Hon President, Our Minister of Education, Science and Technology, and Regional and District Commissioners have been playing a significant role in shaping public perceptions of vocational education as a respected and viable career path. Consistent messaging from these leaders promotes community participation in TVET programs”.

He further added that,

“Consequently, this has increased enrolment, social acceptance, and parental support for vocational education, particularly among rural youth and women”.

4.6 Effective Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Established Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

While responding to the availability of a Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the introduced TVET curricula, 207 (69%) of the respondents indicated the presence of such mechanisms, as opposed to 93 (31%) who indicated the absence of such mechanisms.

Further, while enquiring to indicate examples of the available Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) systems, the results are as shown in Table 14.0.

Table 14.0: Availability of Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

S/No.	Available M and E Framework	Frequency of respondents	Percentage
1.	Established M and E Framework	180	60
2.	Quality assurance and traceable outcome	115	38.33
3.	Graduate employment tracking	109	36.33
4.	Employer satisfaction tracking	77	25.67
5.	Graduate income tracking	58	19.33
6.	Graduate enterprises tracking	56	18.67
7.	Other	5	1.67

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Overview of Key Findings

The findings show that Tanzania's improved TVET curricula have made credible progress toward aligning training with the demands of the labour market. Enhanced mentoring structures, practical learning, and private-sector collaboration have positioned TVET as a critical tool for enhancing youth employability and fostering structural transformation. The integration of competency-based education, through the AMALI model, underscores the government's commitment to promoting practical, industry-responsive training.

5.2 Mentorship and Work-Based Learning

The inclusion of mentorship programs, as reported by 87% of respondents, reflects a substantial improvement in bridging theoretical and practical learning. The mentoring model which featuring industry visits, internships, and guest lectures, corresponds to the global best practices in experiential learning. Likewise, the presence of dual training modules in 68% of institutions signals progress toward the German-inspired dual education system, which combines classroom instruction with hands-on workplace experience. These mechanisms enhance the fight against youth unemployment challenges by exposing students to real production environments and fostering long-term professional networks.

5.3 Private Sector and SME Linkages

The study found robust private-sector engagement, with employers co-developing training content, hosting apprenticeships, and serving on curriculum review boards. However, despite 77% of respondents acknowledging SME involvement, most partnerships remain informal and lack standardized certification mechanisms. The absence of structured frameworks for recognizing skills gained informally limits the scalability of informal sector integration, especially in tailoring, plumbing, and metal fabrication sectors where informal enterprises dominate.

5.4 Financial Support and Transition to Employment

Financial barriers remain a key constraint to youth entrepreneurship. Only 37% of respondents reported access to financial assistance or start-up capital through institutions such as youth funds, government grants, or community-based financing groups. Similarly, while national job-matching

platforms (e.g., TaESA and *Ajira* Portal) exist, they are not yet fully integrated with TVET institutions. Weak institutional linkages undermine graduates' transition from training to employment, particularly for those seeking self-employment or small-enterprise creation.

5.5 Political and Institutional Support

The study demonstrates that effective political leadership has been central to advancing TVET reforms. Directives from the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and increased budgetary allocations, which rise by 67% between 2022/23 and 2025/26, reflect a strong governmental commitment. The establishment of NACTVET and the revision of curricula under VETA and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) have streamlined governance and reduced institutional overlap. Nonetheless, sustained political will must be complemented by enhanced coordination and performance-based monitoring across implementing agencies.

5.6 Technological Adaptability and Innovation

Approximately 85% of respondents confirmed that the new curricula incorporate modules on emerging technologies, ICT literacy, and Industry 4.0 practices. This adaptation signifies responsiveness to global technological shifts. However, effective implementation requires consistent equipment upgrades, digital infrastructure, and instructor capacity-building. Without these, the gap between technological training and industry application may persist.

5.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Although 69% of respondents acknowledged the presence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms, most systems focus on compliance rather than outcome tracking. Few institutions conduct systematic follow-up on graduate employment, income levels, or employer satisfaction. Institutionalising robust, data-driven M&E frameworks is essential for assessing the long-term effectiveness of curricula reforms and informing continuous improvement.

5.8 Implications for Policy and Practice

The results imply that while Tanzania's TVET reform has advanced substantially, its full potential remains constrained by fragmented implementation. A coordinated framework linking training, finance, industry, and policy is necessary. Expanding financial access, establishing SME certification pathways, and strengthening job placement platforms will ensure TVET serves as both a skills development and employment generation mechanism.

6. CONCLUSION

Tanzania's new TVET curricula represent a decisive shift toward demand-driven, competency-based education. The integration of mentoring, dual training, and stakeholder collaboration has enhanced employability prospects for young people. Nevertheless, weak financial support systems, limited SME engagement, and inconsistent job placement mechanisms continue to impede large-scale impact. Strengthening institutional coordination, expanding financing access, and embedding robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks are crucial for sustaining gains. By addressing these gaps, Tanzania can position TVET as a cornerstone for inclusive economic growth, job creation, and structural transformation toward an industrial, knowledge-driven economy by 2050.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Institutionalize Mentoring Programs:** Standardize mentorship guidelines linking students to industry leaders, alumni, and long-term career support;
2. **Enhance Access to Finance for Graduates:** Strengthen partnerships with financial institutions, establish graduate empowerment funds, and business incubators;
3. **Expand Work-Based Learning Models:** Scale up dual training at host companies and ensure adequate incentives for private firms;
4. **Develop a National Orientation and Career Guidance System:** Implement aptitude testing and career counselling at the start of TVET programs;
5. **Strengthen SME Engagement:** Create certification frameworks and apprenticeships specifically for informal sector enterprises;
6. **Establish a National Job Placement Platform for TVET Graduates:** Integrate government, private sector, and training institution data to improve job matching; and
7. **Link TVET More Directly to Structural Transformation Goals:** Align curricula to industrial policy priorities and support migration from low-productivity agriculture to higher-value sectors.

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