

## **An Investigation on Youth Employability Skills in TVET Institutions in Mombasa County**

<sup>1</sup>Kiruga Abraham Mutitu, <sup>2</sup>Wandago Odongo Benson & <sup>3</sup>Miano KihuBTC SSU-IrishAid

<sup>1</sup>University of Nairobi, <sup>2</sup>Kenya coast National Polytechnic &

<sup>3</sup>Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, Kenya

### **Abstract**

*Employability and technical skills are critical to the job market in the 21st century. Relevant technical skills as well as soft skills are required by industry employers in hiring competent employees as we move towards the realization of Vision 2030. The purpose of this study was to establish the employability competency skills needed of TVET graduates in the organizations as the country is geared towards the actualization of the economic pillar to be an industrialized nation. The study achieved this by establishing the various types of skills impacted by courses offered by TVET institutions and determining whether the youth have the skills required for sustainable development. The study adopted a cross sectional descriptive design. The study population of 115 respondents included 5 human resources managers from the industry, 10 heads of departments and 100 graduates from electrical, automotive, mechanical, textile, business, hospitality, secretarial, medical and applied science, and building and construction departments of 2015 to 2016. Respondents were randomly selected from Technical University of Mombasa and Kenya Coast National Polytechnic, departmental heads in the institutions and human resource managers in 5 firms within Mombasa County. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data and the results were analyzed by inferential and descriptive statistics adopted from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The findings revealed that TVET institutions offer many courses which do not give the student the appropriate employability skills needed in the industry. The study recommends collaboration between institutions and the industry in the development of competitive skills*

**Key words:** *Employability skills, technical, soft skills, TVET*

### **Introduction**

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) provides one of the most recognized and effective means by which developed nations such as Germany and Australia, through quality and up-to-date information, have been able to prepare and train workers to be both knowledgeable and proficient in particular skill areas. This by no means indicates that TVET is a form of education that particularly seeks to equip individuals with capacities, skills, knowledge and understandings in a specific vocation or trade to enable such individuals become productive citizens of their nations and also to enable the individuals live productive and meaningful lives (Chinedu & Olabiyi, 2015). TVET therefore, is an important skill-oriented education with prospect of stimulating employability and national development.

The importance of TVET as a change agent for social, economic, technological and

national development has been a subject of discussion at summits, academic conferences and at policy circles in Kenya and other developing nations (Ojimba, 2012; Ladipo et al., 2013). In all the discussions, there is a consensus among scholars and professionals that TVET is the secret behind the technological advancement and economic fortune of several developing nations across the globe (World Bank, 2008; Besmart-Digbori, 2011; Dangote, 2013). For Kenya to meet up with industrialized nations, it must deploy adequate human and material resources into TVET as a viable education orientation.

Technical education has great prospect for tackling poverty, enhancing employability through skills acquisition and boosting sustainable development in different continents, (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). The UNESCO (2012) research report which was carried out in different parts of the continent to determine whether TVET education has impact in enhancing youth skills concluded that, in Africa, TVET is imperative for boosting the skills of learners in secondary schools, polytechnics and TVET-oriented institutions to meet the expectations of the world of work (industry). It also highlighted that, in Asia especially Arab states where youth restiveness has resulted in violent protests and endemic demonstrations styled Arab Spring, TVET has deep potential of redirecting the energy and zeal of the unemployed and unskilled youth to practical hands-on skills for self-employment and self-reliance. TVET has become a tool for enhancing social protection for the excluded/disadvantaged members of the society as well as a catalyst for economic development. For the Latin America with massive number of youth engage in violence activities, TVET has become a strategy for engagement of restive youth thereby keeping them away from the street and scenes of crime. Even in Europe and America perceived as highly industrialized, the report noted that TVET is vigorously being promoted to redress the lingering challenge of number of skilled personnel required to manage industries as a result of aging population in developed nations. Therefore TVET has found relevance across the globe in enhancing employability skills (Raimi & Akhuemonkhan, 2014).

## **Theoretical Framework**

Transformation learning theory (TLT) has been described as a complex but vital theory of learning articulated by several proponents like Freire (1970), Habermas (1981), & Collins (1991), but the work of Mezirow (1997) is well known as a well-articulated TLT. Transformation learning connotes ‘conscientisation’ or the process of raising the consciousness of adult learners. This is a perspective which triggered the development of critical perspective in adult education and other fields of knowledge. Further, Collins (1991) described transformation learning as a critical consciousness that learners must acquire in the learning process.

More importantly, TLT presupposes that adult learning or knowledge experience generally must be problem-solving rather than confined to experience sharing alone (Habermas, 1981). In other words, learning in the contemporary times with daunting environmental challenges should imbibe in the learners the proficiencies to make personal interpretations of knowledge acquired rather than

limit learning to common experiences to what was conveyed in the learning environment or experiences acquired from others (Mezirow, 1997).

TVET systems tend to vary from country to country and reflect specific national socio-economic situations. Effective TVET programs must be embedded in the socio-economic context, encompass various policy areas and be sufficiently flexible to ensure graduates, successful transition from school to work. Skills are vital for poverty reduction, economic recovery and sustainable development. Therefore, policy attention to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is increasing worldwide.

### **Empirical Issues**

The Educational Agenda of Vision 2030 (RoK, 2007) documented that, vocational studies development needed a fundamental rethink and transformation to respond to the current and future skills requirements, including for example transversal and entrepreneurial skills in the education and training policies and strategies. TVET thus equips people not only with vocational skills, but also with a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes recognized as indispensable for meaningful participation in work and life.

It is therefore evident, that TVET prepares humans for the ever changing world of work. It has as one of its core goals the quest to prepare people for employment and also to be as a source of change for people in the world of works (Chinedu & Olabiyi, 2015). Through TVET individuals can aspire to have a better life and then develop the necessary skills needed to attain such aspirations. Consequently, TVET is seen as an instrument for reducing extreme poverty. These distinctive features of TVET make it an effective tool that can be used to achieve a globally recognized workforce, peace and development for a nation. According to Zarini, Wilson, Mar, and Varis (2009), TVET facilitates the development and strengthening of youths around the world thereby enhancing peace and bolstering national development (Chinedu & Olabiyi, 2015).

Raimi and Akhuemonkhan (2014) posit that empowering young people is the process of encouraging them to be active citizens in their community. Youth mentoring can provide young people with positive role models, support and encouragement, and is thus considered one of the most effective ways of helping them reach their fullest potential as productive members of the society. TVET aims to promote the social inclusion of young people of diverse ethnic, religious, educational and socio- economic backgrounds with vocational skills. This would help reduce unemployment among youths and as a result their energy, time and effort would be channeled into more productive efforts. Hence, youths will be better equipped for work and would not be susceptible to socially degrading activities that could disrupt the peace and stability of the nation (RoK, 2007). TVET programmes offers training to people in areas including auto-mechanics, building, metalwork, woodwork, plumbing and fitting, electrical work, business, home economics, agriculture among others. However, based on current needs of the nation, it is expedient that these youths are trained in specific areas that have been identified

from market surveys, needs analysis and employers of labour as gap skill areas. This is necessary to maintain a balance in the spread of workers across all sectors of the economy and to reduce the duplication of skilled workers in already populated skill areas (Olabiyi, 2015).

Education is widely seen as one of the most promising paths for individuals to realize better, more productive lives and as one of the primary drivers of national economic development (UNESCO, & ILO (2001). The citizens and the government of Kenya have invested heavily in improving both the access and quality of education in order to achieve the education-related Sustainable Development Goals and Vision 2030 (RoK, 2007).

Kenya Vision 2030 places great emphasis on the link between education and the labour market, the need to create entrepreneurial skills and competences, and strong public and private sector partnerships. It articulates the development of a middle-income country in which all citizens will: have embraced entrepreneurship, be able to engage in lifelong learning, perform more non-routine tasks, be capable of more complex problem-solving, be able to take more decisions, understand more about what they are working on, require less supervision, assume more responsibility, and as vital tools towards these ends, have better reading, quantitative reasoning and expository skills. This has considerable importance for the kind of education and training system required to deliver the requisite skills, competencies and attitudes. As such there will be need to address issues related to quality, service delivery, curriculum, relevance, teacher development and management at all levels as well as trainers in the areas of technology and entrepreneurial skills development (RoK, 2007).

In order to address these issues, the government provides policy direction for reforms in education service delivery through introduction of technical, talent and academic curriculum pathways. Kenya Vision 2030 also recognizes that ICT is compelling as a teaching-learning tool and therefore there is need for a literate citizenry (RoK, 2007).

Training in Kenya has experienced moderate growth over the last 40 years. However, TVET is yet to produce adequate and skilled middle level human resource required to meet the demands for national development. The Vision 2030 has however placed special demands on TVET as the leading engine that the economy must essentially rely upon to produce adequate levels of middle level professionals needed to drive the economy towards the attainment of the vision. Developing competencies and skills for today and the future

In any society, be it middle or low income, rapidly or slowly growing, young people need to possess skills for both the economy and citizenship. Without knowledge and skills for the economy, young people will be excluded from it, lacking the basic necessities to survive and succeed in the community (Hargreaves, 2003). Similarly, without skills for citizenship, they cannot be responsible citizens to help build a coherent society. One of the main purposes of education is to enable and empower people of all ages to participate in society (both local and global) and contribute

effectively to sustainable development and social cohesion. In the context of globalization and competitiveness, it is crucial for young people to understand different cultures and beliefs, be tolerant of these differences, respect others, be able to work individually and in a team, and be responsible citizens (Reimers, 2006).

### **Focusing on Teachers and Soft Skills**

In today's world of knowledge and information, teachers are expected to be change agents and catalysts for nurturing the younger generation, complete with skills to help build nations of the twenty-first century. In order to prepare a capable generation of the future, teachers must be clear on their mission and be competent in developing students' competencies and skills. Hargreaves (2003) notes that in the knowledge society, teachers must build new professionalism which allows them to: promote deep cognitive learning, learn to teach in ways that they themselves were not taught, commit to continuous professional learning, work and learn in collegial teams, treat parents as partners in learning, develop and draw on collective intelligence, build a capacity for change and risk, and foster trust in processes.

There is a fundamental difference between teaching for the knowledge society, for the labor market, and for examinations. To teach for the knowledge economy and the labor market—that is, to develop students with lifelong skills (including the skills to learn)—teachers have to focus on what and how students learn best, instead of teaching to pass a test. In an economy dominated by teamwork and communications, high-stake examinations can be extremely harmful. When teachers have to focus on standardized reforms and examinations, they have neither the time nor energy for their own self-development or even focus on students' work and skills (Hargreaves, 2003).

Workforce development programs in community colleges in the United States demonstrate effective ways of teaching soft skills, including integrating soft skills training into every element of the curriculum. This training includes practicing social interactions that are likely to arise on the job, such as interviewing techniques, negotiating with team members and supervisors, creating work-like tasks and establishing teams to complete them, putting students in the employer's position to let them experience the needs and pressures of those who give directions, establishing disciplines of the workplace in all aspects of the program, and giving students opportunities to meet successful people in order to overcome intimidation and alienation (Houghton & Proscio, 2001).

### **Linking Supply to Demand for Skills**

To effectively prepare students with the skills needed in a rapidly changing economy requires at least two conditions: a system that quickly responds to labor market demand and mechanisms that transmit labor market signals to the supply side (UNESCO & ILO, 2001). In general, traditional four-year universities, which mainly prepare high-level professionals, such as engineers and physicians, are not seen as effective in preparing middle-level labor force for the job market, a group

needed in large number by that market. Short-term vocational educational institutions, such as two-year community colleges, polytechnic institutions, or high-level technical institutions, were thus created in the middle of the twentieth century to quickly respond to the needs of the industrial sector (Mazeran, 2007).

In Malaysia, graduates of vocational tertiary education institutions have better employment opportunities than do those of traditional universities (Salmi, 2005). For low-income countries, where there is an oversupply of low-level skills and large demand for high-level skills, a balanced approach is needed to develop both sets of skills. In addition, skills development policy needs to be linked to national strategies and economic structures now and in the future in order to match the supply of and demand for skills. With regard to marketable skills, the sector matters. In the United Kingdom, the Commission for Employment and Skills was established in 2008 to strengthen employers' voice in education, reduce skills gaps and shortages, and achieve the best from existing employment and skills systems (UNESCO & ILO, 2001).

### **Strengthening School-to-Work Linkages for Employment**

The school-to-work transition is influenced by the education sector, the labor market, and the business sector. Educators tend to look at the employment and/or unemployment rate and educational attainment. Labor economists, on the other hand, often focus on macroeconomic stability, the investment climate, job availability, and active labor market policies. The business sector is concerned with certificates and qualifications. Indeed, the school-to-work transition is a Government-business partnership. Employers play an important role in the school-to-work transition by providing work experience and, eventually, jobs - particularly in fast-growing economies. A number of governments have tried to involve employers in providing work experience, apprenticeships, and employment for young people. In reality, however, their involvement in the process is problematic due to lack of corporate responsibility and incentives, as well as the high cost of employer training programs (Hargreaves, 2003).

### **Engaging Local Industry in Developing Relevant Skills and Choices**

No matter what level of education students attain, most are likely to be employed locally. Therefore engaging local industries in education is crucial in order to deliver relevant education and enable choices that ease the school-to work transition. This is particularly true for TVET, which is relatively expensive and whose only outcome is gainful employment related to the training provided.

Thus Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, (2005), posit that closer ties between workforce development and employers are the key to TVET. In many Asian countries - including Korea, China, Singapore, and Malaysia - TVET is recognized as an asset in national human development strategies. Employer involvement is equally critical to general education programs that have a TVET component designed to lead students to employment. The CTE program in the state of Maryland gives students a choice of further education or the world of work. Partnerships between Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore and local industries, for example, have led to the

formation of a board consisting of employer representatives, instructors from various industries, and the donation of updated equipment to schools. Through these partnerships, firm staff helps the polytechnic with project work and the school in turn helps firms develop business processes. At the same time, teachers at the polytechnic participate with their industrial counterparts in developing innovations, technologies, and products. The partnerships also produce graduates that are in high demand among local industries, especially new-generation industries (Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005).

Involving industry in TVET programs and encouraging them to provide work experience to students is critical to the future employment of these students. However, industrial partnerships do not come naturally since interventions by and incentives from the government play an important role in bringing industry to the table as a training partner. To make school curricula relevant to employers' needs, Kenya has a well-established partnership that allows business representatives to participate in the program committees of the Kenya Institute of Education. Both partners decide what is to be taught in vocational education and the business representatives who are responsible for teaching are given seats on the governing board (World Bank, 2008).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Kenya Vision 2030 places great emphasis on the link between education and the labour market, the need to create entrepreneurial skills and competences, and strong public and private sector partnerships. It articulates the development of a middle-income country in which all citizens will: have embraced entrepreneurship, be able to engage in lifelong learning, perform more non-routine tasks, be capable of more complex problem-solving, be able to take more decisions, understand more about what they are working on, require less supervision, assume more responsibility, and as vital tools towards these ends, have better reading, quantitative reasoning and expository skills. This has considerable importance for the kind of education and training system required to deliver the requisite skills, competencies and attitudes. As such there will be need to address issues related to quality, service delivery, curriculum, relevance, teacher development and management at all levels as well as trainers in the areas of technology and entrepreneurial skills development.

In order to address these issues, the government provides policy direction for reforms in education service delivery through introduction of technical, talent and academic curriculum pathways. Kenya Vision 2030 also recognizes the need for a literate citizenry and sets goals for eliminating adult illiteracy while increasing learning achievements. Therefore this paper answers the following question, what is the employability competency skills needed in the organizations from Technical Vocational Education Training Institutions (TVET)?

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to establish the employability competency skills needed in the organizations from TVET Institutions as the country is geared towards the actualization of the economic pillar to be an industrialized nation. Specifically, the study determined the youth employability skills required by youths for promoting sustainable development in TVET institution in Mombasa County in driving sustainable development.

## **Methodology**

The design of the study was a descriptive survey where the research researchers used a mix of qualitative and quantitative. .

## **Population and Sample**

Data was collected from 115 respondents who included 5 human resources managers from the industry, 10 heads of departments in TVET institution and 100 TVET graduates of 2015 to 2016 for the study. The population for the study was defined as TVET lecturers who are heads of departments in vocational institutions, human resource managers and TVET graduates in Mombasa County. To ensure that a representative sample was selected from the population, the researchers defined specific selection criteria used in selecting participants for the study. TVET heads of departments with a minimum of five years teaching and research experience and a significant contribution to issues in TVET were considered the base selection criteria for participants for the study. From the industry, human resource managers who had significant knowledge and experience with TVET issues and requirements in the industry were also selected. Also, 50 recent graduates of the period 2015 to 2016 who had been placed in the industry and 50 graduates not yet in the industry were selected for the study. Hence, a total of one hundred and fifteen respondents were first listed as potential participants for the study having met the base selection criteria. After several considerations and review the list was reduced to a total of one hundred participants selected. Participants were purposively selected to ensure that only those with adequate knowledge of TVET related issues were chosen, and also to ensure that quality data was generated.

## **Research Instruments**

Data for the study collected using a questionnaire developed by the researcher known as the Youth Employment Skill Checklist (YESC). The YESC is a structured questionnaire that consists of two sections, A and B. Section A sought personal information from respondents which included: institution name, position, gender, qualification, work experience, teaching and research experience. Section B contained 15 items specifically aimed at determining the employment skills required by youths for sustainable development. The YESC was structured on a five point Likert scale and was subjected to face and content validity by four TVET program experience experts, two from industry and two from TVET institutions under study.



The expert's suggestions and recommendations were duly incorporated into the final draft of the YESC. The alpha coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the items was 0.839, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

## Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Out of a total of 100 questionnaires that were packaged and distributed, 95 of them were returned, making up a good 95 % response rate.

## Findings

### Employment Skills Required by Youth TVET Graduates in Mombasa County

#### Comprehensive Types of Skills Impacted by Courses Offered by TVET

#### Institutions

**Table 1** Core subject Skills Framework

Employment Skills in Demand in the Global Economy	Respondents	%	Mean	Standard Deviation
Reading skills	95	75	2.8956	.8952
Writing skills	95	56	2.0125	.2654
Arithmetic/Computation skills	95	65	2.5624	.6523

The respondents indicated that skill impacted most by the course they pursued was reading skills, which had the highest percentage of 75 and mean of 2.8956 and standard deviation (SD) of 0.8952, followed by arithmetic/computation skills with mean of 2.5624 and SD of .6523 and the least was writing skills with mean of 2.0125 and SD of .2654. Also the respondents agreed that these skills were very important in

21st century but that the level in which the students were prepared to acquire these skills was very low. This is reflected by the low number of TVET graduates who have a lot of challenges in written communication skills, this was confirmed by the oral interview conducted by the researcher with TVET student who could not write simple reports. The respondents agreed that they had challenges in writing formal reports.

**Table 2** *Cs-Learning and Innovation Skills*

<b>Employment Skills in Demand in the Global Economy</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Critical thinking and problem solving skills	95	52	1.5268	.0235
Communication skills	95	60	2.0561	.1265
Collaboration skills	95	40	1.1256	.2654
Creativity and innovation skills	95	45	1.3658	.1256

On the level of agreement on whether the courses offered by TVET institutions impacted youth with the 4 Cs-Learning and innovation skills demanded by job market, the respondents indicated that the courses they pursued incorporated communication skills, which had the highest percentage of 60 and mean of 2.0561, and standard deviation of 0.1265; followed by critical thinking and problem solving skills with mean of 1.5268 and SD of .0235; creativity and innovation skills with percentage of

45, mean of .1256; and the least was collaboration skills with percentage of 40, a mean of 1.1256 and SD. of .2654. The respondents agreed that these skills were very important in 21st century towards sustainable development but the level of in which the students were prepared to acquire these skills varied. This is reflected by the analysis, which indicated that the student had not been prepared to acquire learning and innovation skills in TVET institutions. There is very big gap in these skills as Kenya is moving towards attaining vision 2030.

**Table 3** *Information Technology Skills*

<b>Employment Skills in Demand in the Global Economy</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Information skills	95	65	2.4879	.4895
Media skills	95	52	1.9864	.02647
Technological skills	95	72	3.1256	.3256

On the level of agreement on whether the courses offered by TVET institutions impacted on the youth with the information technology skills demanded by job market. The respondents indicated that the courses they pursued incorporated Technological skills, which has the highest percentage of 72 and mean of 3.1256, and standard deviation of 0.3256, This is because many TVET institutions have ICT course which involves practical work and this has given the students the impression that technology towards was important in sustainable development and

in achieving an industrialized nation. This is followed by informational skills with 65 percentage, mean of 2.4879 and SD of .4895, and followed by media skills with percentage of 52, mean of 1.9864. The respondents agreed that information technology skills and information skills were very important in 21st century towards sustainable development.

**Table 4** *21st Century Themes*

Employment Skills in Demand in the	Respondents	%	Mean	Standard Deviation
Health Literacy skills	95	52	1.1648	.01248
Entrepreneurial Literacy skills	95	56	2.6598	.5846
Global Awareness Literacy	95	41	1.5984	.2154
Financial Literacy skills	95	36	1.9587	.3265

On the level of agreement on whether the courses offered by TVET institutions creates awareness of 21st century themes for sustainable development in the global economy, the respondents indicated that the courses they pursued incorporated entrepreneurial literacy skills with the highest percentage of 56, a mean of 2.6598, and standard deviation of .5846, This is means that many TVET institutions did not train their students with appropriate entrepreneurial skills that prepare them partake in driving the nation towards becoming industrialized and for sustainable development. This prepares students to be job makers and not job seekers. On health literacy skills a score of 52 percent, a mean of 1.1648 and a SD of .01248, global awareness literacy skills had 41 percent, with a mean of 1.5984 and a SD of .2154. The least score was on financial literacy skills with a percentage of 36, mean of 1.9587, and a SD of .3265. This implies that the respondents were not aware of 21st century themes as analyzed in table 4 and which suggests the need to prepare the student for the job market.

Table 5 shows the responses on the youth employment skills required by Mombasa youths in order to promote sustainable development. Items had mean values ranging from 7 to 3 respectively. Findings revealed that youth employments skills should focus on, business, engineering and construction, which has mean of 6.9658 and SD of .5689 financial planning skills, with mean of 4.5468 and SD of .5894, basic computation skills, with mean of 5.3659 and SD of .9865, communication skills, with mean of 7.598 and SD of .9865, lobbying and negotiation skills, with mean of 3.5648 and SD of .9867, industry linkages with mean of 3.3659 and SD of .5987 as well as adaptation skills with mean of 4.5689 and SD of .2548 which are necessary for youths to cope with the ever changing business and work environment.

**Table 5** *Employment Skill Required by Youths for Sustainable Development (N=95)*

<b>Employment Skills Required for sustainable Development</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Develop in youths financial planning skills to enable the sustainability of their life	95	55	4.5468	.5894
Instill in young people the attitude of participating in the national economy	95	62	5.9865	.9548
Develop in youths the techniques of maintaining customer relations	95	68	7.0592	.56842
Develop appropriate communication skills to meet clients and customer's expectations	95	70	7.598	.9865
Develop in youths character and general discipline of work environment	95	65	6.5986	.5984
Develop computation skills	95	71	5.3659	.9865
Vocational skills in areas such as horticulture, business, engineering and construction works	95	51	6.9658	.5689
Develop a strategic linkage between industry and Education skills	95	48	3.3659	.5987
Lobbying and negotiation skills	95	50	3.5648	.9867

Based on the data collected and analyzed, findings indicate that TVET experts recommend that employability skill areas should focus on horticulture, business, engineering and construction. Furthermore, respondents agree that specific skills which include: business planning skills, financial management skills, computation skills, communication skills, customer relation skills and adaption skills should be the focus of youth training programmers. The emphasis that it is rare to see those who are vocationally trained and gainfully employed become delinquents and anti-socials of the society perhaps brings justification to the need for empowering youths with vocational skills. Okorie (2001) reported that TVET has a good potential of creating jobs for the unemployed graduates, and reducing poverty level in the society. Hence, a focus on horticulture, business, engineering and construction is thus a necessary way of creating jobs and empowering unemployed youths. To elucidate this, (Shields & Willits, 2003) in a survey carried out to determine the growing importance of horticulture in the agricultural economy of the north-eastern United States, reports that the sector generates an estimated \$3.3 billion and creates over 107,000 jobs. This goes a long way in exposing the need for this skill area to be vastly developed especially in the African economy. Business, engineering and construction are complimentary skill areas which should not be left unattended to.

Therefore, youth empowerment programmes aimed at preparing youths for work should focus on training youths specifically more on these identified skill areas.

Findings from the study respondents agree that some of these employability skills should include: utilizing apprenticeship training to prepare youths to develop and master work skills and establish computer literacy programme to empower youths with basic IT Skills; standardizing certificates and diplomas from training institutes to enable youths gain employment; creating business awareness through entrepreneurship programmes; utilizing distance learning programmes to train youths outside the reach of vocational colleges; and developing in youths the required vocational skills needed to create and sustain viable enterprises. The findings are congruent with the reports of the Botswana Core Welfare Indicators Survey of 2009 (Ministry of Sports & Youth Culture, B. (2009), which emphasized that youths can be empowered for employability through the following programmes: life skills and capacity building, youth entrepreneurship, attachment to public, attachment to mega projects, and basic computer literacy training programme. MacFarlane and Khong (2006) and Paleri (2008) also asserted that the provision of jobs also make it possible for a country to be secured economically and that third world countries were less stable as a result of unemployment for its citizens. Therefore, in order for developing nations like Kenya to become economically stable, necessary action must be taken to integrate these skills into its existing systems to bring about the desired change Kenyans seek.

Furthermore, findings on the employability skills that can be adopted to empower youths also revealed approaches such as; conducting public education campaigns and activities to educate and inform youths about the opportunities of vocationally inclined youth training programmes. Youth training programmes however carefully planned and structured, would be deemed irrelevant if they failed to address the sole purpose for which they were established. Therefore adequate measures should be taken to ensure that opportunities for training programmes are well communicated to the youths. Administrators with vast experience and knowledge of vocational education should be selected to administer vocational colleges. This would be necessary to curb issues of losses and wastages that lead to the non-implementation of established training programmes in the way they were originally planned and conceptualized. Also, qualified instructors and trainers (sector-specific with adequate experience and teaching qualifications) should be recruited to ensure that up-to-date content is taught to trainees who participate in these programmes.

## **Conclusions**

The study sought to determine employability skills required by Kenyan youths through TVET institution for sustainable development. The results of the study revealed that employability skills in training programmes have not been well structured to accommodate the required skills by the industry. The analysis show soft skills such as financial literacy skills, global awareness literacy skills and health literacy skills have not been adequately impacted on students in TVET institutions.

Very few students could appreciate the importance of having good skills and knowledge on what is happening internationally. However a majority indicated that technological and informational skills were taught in TVET institutions and could apply the skills conveniently. On the other hand media skills were not highly appreciated and therefore students could not express themselves effectively either in writing or orally.

The study also indicated that TVET institutions should specifically focus on hard skill areas such as horticulture skills, engineering and construction skills. The result also shows that students were acquiring very little knowledge and skills on, lobbying and negotiating skills, attitude toward participations in national development, how to develop linkage and networking and customer relations skills. Developing skills in these areas are very essential for youths as it enables them to be gainfully employed and productive, enabling them to become responsible citizens, thereby promoting national development. The study shows that if these soft and hard skills are duly adopted, it would ensure that the country will be moving toward becoming industrialized and equip youths with adequate and up-to-date skills for economic and sustainable development.

## **Recommendations**

The study recommends that; vocational trainers should develop vocational and soft skills in areas such as critical thinking, adoption of the changing business environment, good communication, horticulture, business, engineering and construction works that will develop in youth character and general discipline of a work. Managers in TVET programmes should utilize apprenticeship training to prepare youths to develop profitable social habits required by the society and basic computer literacy training programme to empower youths with IT skills. The Ministry of Education through TVET should conduct public education campaigns and activities to sensitize, educate and inform youths in various communities about the significance of TVET programmes. Efforts should be made to strengthen the collaboration between industries and TVET providers so as to ensure that relevant content that meets Labour needs are taught to participants of various vocational training programmes. Government through technical education boards should offer counseling, mentorship and entrepreneurial skills as well as basic computation skills needed to enable them start viable and sustainable enterprises.

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