

Relationship between Staff Competencies and Graduates Employability in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions: A Case of Nyandarua County, Kenya.

Kihara, Daniel Wambugu

Department of Educational Management and Curriculum Studies, Machakos University.

Abstract

While the main goal for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is to prepare young people for work, industries have continued to express dissatisfaction with skill levels of TVET graduates in Kenya. There are various aspects that could be attributed to the low levels of employability skills, such as changing technology, the state of equipment and training facilities in TVET institutions, and competencies of instructors among others. This study aimed at establishing the relationship between staff competencies and graduate employability in TVET institutions in Kenya. The study was underpinned on Romiszowski's (2009) concepts of Instructional theory for skill development. Quantitative research approach and correlational design were adopted to guide the study processes. Two hundred and eighty-five former students who had graduated from two TVET colleges in Nyandarua county in 2021 formed the study's target population. Linear snowball sampling strategy was used to identify 49 respondents. Data was collected through structured questionnaires. The instruments were sent through email to each of the participants. The results indicated that 53.3 percent of the respondents rated the influence of staff competencies with high agreement levels, compared to 46.7 percent who rated the same variable with low agreement levels. The results further indicated that there was significant positive relationship between staff competencies and graduate employability scores ($r(45) = .40, P = .006$). The study recommends that the Ministry of Education through Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification Council, and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development ought to embark on curriculum reform towards inculcation of skills and abilities that would enable graduates to market themselves in the job market. There is need for TVET institutions to embrace new technology in order to engage learners in a digital rich environment that can prepare them for current demands of the job market.

Keywords: *Staff Competency, Graduate Employability Skills, Skill Development, Curriculum Development, Knowledge Management, Socioeconomic Development*

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is to develop young people towards acquisition of qualities and skills sought out in the labour market (Chang, 2021). Graduate employability is a fundamental concept for explaining the relationship between training, skill acquisition and labour market. Graduate employability is described as a set of educational achievement, such as specific abilities, skills, and quality attributes possessed

by a graduate (Clarke, 2018). Commonly referred to as Vocational Education and Training (VET) or Vocational Education (VE), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) entails a form of formal education aimed at fostering knowledge and skills for employment (UNESCO, 2015).

In Kenya, since its introduction by colonialists early in 19th century, technical and vocational education has since undergone major changes from what was then perceived as a weapon against the academically underprivileged natives to being a solution to youth unemployment and a tool for socioeconomic development (Ngure, 2022). Currently, the type of curriculum offered by Kenya's TVET institutions is devised through concerted efforts of various agencies, including National Industry Training Authority (NITA), Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC), and Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examination Board (KASNEB) (Akala & Changilwa, 2018).

The main goal of TVET curriculum is to provide life-long learning with view of producing skilled graduates who can find employment, become productive and self-reliant. This is consistent with the observation by Ngure (2022) that school curriculums are expected to promote students' moral, emotional, and sociocultural development in addition to preparing them for opportunities and life experiences. That said, however, recent studies show that Kenya still faces the challenge of unemployed youth despite government's commitment to revive TVET institutions. According to Kailo (2020), in a study carried out in Kilifi, Kenya, the state of joblessness and poverty continues to rise, occasioning the need for immediate solutions to foster employability skills among the young people. The study suggested that there was need for teachers to refine their skills through industrial attachments and workshops in order to be effective in imparting the trainees with employable skills.

According to Ligami (2018), based on findings presented at a regional universities' conference held in Nairobi, the curriculum being applied in TVET institutions seems to be too theoretical to provide practical skills sought by industries. It was further noted that employers have registered

their dissatisfaction with the level of skills possessed by most of TVET graduates. These insights come against a backdrop of various challenges facing the livelihoods and socioeconomic development of families in Nyandarua County, including poverty among rural based communities (Mwangi, 2015). Further, a recent county report indicated that unemployment rates were highest among the youth, implying that most of the young people being produced by TVET institutions were not being absorbed by the service and manufacturing industries (Nyandarua County Government, 2018). This begs the question as to whether TVET institutions in Nyandarua county are doing enough in preparing skilled workers and promoting socioeconomic empowerment among the communities in the area. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to establish the relationship between staff competencies and graduates' employability in TVET institutions in Nyandarua County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technical and vocational training staff play an important role in fostering employability skills among their students. Adequate competencies among the teaching staff are essential for students' academic development and skill acquisition in vocational and technical colleges (Omar, Ahmad, Hassan, & Roslan, 2018). Vocational education varies across different countries and professions of vocational instructors differ depending on one setting from the other (Antera, 2021). However, technical and vocational teachers' competencies are generally described as knowledge and a set of abilities, including those touching on pedagogical, professional, technological and vocational domains (Wahyuni & Sugihartini, 2020).

The terms knowledge, abilities, attitudes, behaviour or skills can be summed up into quality, which further can be referred to as "competence". Derived from a Latin word "competere" competent refers to an individual's who operates with a high level of knowledge, skill, behaviour or attitude in their tasks and responsibilities. This can therefore be explained as having a certain level of quality to carry one's responsibilities competently (Sern, Hamisu, & Salleh, 2017).

There is need for quality educational standards in vocational and technical training colleges, if such institutions are to produce skilled, qualified and competent graduates who can demonstrate

mastery of skills sought out in the labour market. Such educational achievement can only be attained under the guidance of qualified and competent educators, who have mastered curriculum related resources (Bakar, 2018). Unlike their counterparts in general schools, who are expected to impart students with typical learning skills, educators in technical and vocational schools have a greater burden of ensuring that students achieve job-specific and directly employable skills (Zilic, 2018). Some of the essential competencies that teaching staff in vocational institutions ought to possess include proficiency of actual work and emerging challenges in the rapid changing labour market. Others include knowledge of technical skills, understanding work procedures and mechanisms for application of work tools, and ability to present industry experiences through instructional activities (Wahyuni & Sugihartini, 2020).

Globally, scholars and educational researchers have explored on the relationship between vocational educators' competencies and students' skill acquisition in readiness for the competitive labour market. Research from Dominican Republic indicates that there are five operational and organisational inputs in technical and vocational schools that influence students' academic success. Among these include recruitment and retention of competent teachers, continued training of instructors, and effective learning strategies (Haegg, 2020). This suggests that teaching staff's competencies play an important role in maximizing students' learning and skill acquisition, which are key factors in fostering employability and occupational success (Tran, 2019).

Research indicates that teachers' proficiency on what is required to produce impactful employees is crucial for inculcation of employability skills among students. For instance, Sakam, Jamaluddin and Wahat (2022) in their work based in Malaysia affirm that teachers in vocational and technical schools can inculcate specific employability skills in students in preparation for employment. The researchers found that increase in teachers' competencies increased the tendency of inculcation of employability skills among the trainees. This is also consistent with Ismail, Nopiah, and Rasul's (2017) views that a competent teacher acts as a quality assurance for students learning outcomes. The authors however noted that a number of concerns exist about TVET teachers in Malaysia. These include failure to use English language for instruction, poor

instructional skills in technical courses, information and communications technology (ICT), and lack of competency model, as well as absence of job profiles for TVET teachers.

Similarly, Omar, Ismail, Abdullah, and Pyng (2021) note that in light of increasing concerns expressed by leaders of industries about lack of skills among TVET graduates in Malaysia, teachers have a role to play in inculcation of technical and non-technical skills in students under their tutorship. This can be attained by having the teaching staff in TVET institutions comply with requirement to upgrade their knowledge both in theoretical and practical realms. This would be essential in making such instructors more competent and resourceful in fostering key skills that correspond with today's requirements in the labour market (Ugochukwu, Elisha, Igwe, & Ntasiobi, 2020). As such, there is need for continued efforts to develop TVET teachers specific competencies, skills and professional traits in educational, as well as other soft skills that can help them match the requirements of the ever-changing teaching and learning settings.

From Indonesia, Nurjanah (2021) notes that while TVET graduates are expected to have high capabilities in order to be competitive in finding employment in the industrial market, TVET institutions still lack optimal systems for preparing students for work readiness. It was however noted that this challenge could be resolved by among other actions, establishment of a training programme to provide continuous education to teachers and utilization of new and innovative learning strategies. This underlines the significance of teaching staff competencies and application of innovative, multi-teaching approaches in enhancing students' employability skills (Peng, Wang, Yue, & Feng, 2021).

In Europe, the available literature shows that there are different concepts about vocational education and training. In Finland for instance vocational education is part of continuous education (Cedefop, 2020). The Finnish National Agency for Education (2020) states that the objective of vocational education and training (VET) is to support students' skill development towards enabling them secure employment and become better members of the society. In this regard, there is need for teachers in VET institutions to be competent, and possess exemplary

skills, abilities and motivation requisite for guiding their students towards such important goals (Rinne & Raudasoja, 2020).

The available literature from the African continent portrays TVET as a critical component with regard to the role it plays in boosting employment and economic growth (Diallo, 2023). Based on a study from Nigeria, Emuji, Mkpong and Okon (2019), establish that acquisition of students' employability skills largely depends on instructors' competence. The researchers suggest that there is need for education system to devise ways and practical mechanisms for sustaining teaching staff competencies regarding the levels of knowledge, communication, creativity, discipline and lesson preparation. This however does not mean that students should be passive in acquisition of employability skills as they need to develop skills, values and attitudes that can encourage the acquisition of employability skills. Principally, however, it is upon teachers to impact students through various competencies, including different teaching strategies, identifying their learning needs and imparting them with technical and vocational skills they will need in the workplace (Okoye, 2015).

According to Sern, Hamisu and Salleh (2017), like most of other developing nations, Nigeria's vocational education and training has been through numerous challenges that have negatively affected the rate of competent teachers, resulting in poor quality of graduates and low employability. In this regard, there is need for teachers to have access to continuous professional development programmes in order to satisfy the need for competency, skills and work abilities that teachers in TVET institutions require in the core context of curriculum delivery, meeting students' learning needs and impacting them with employability skills.

Recent statistics from South Africa indicate that poor preparation of students is associated with growing levels of unemployment. The records indicate that over six million people were unemployed by the year 2019 (StatsSA, 2019). The poor prospects of employment in the country have been attributed to various challenges, among them being lack of sufficient educational preparation and inadequate schooling system (Rogan & Reynolds, 2016). Such challenges are an indication that more needs to be done to address issues affecting students' acquisition of

knowledge and key skills deemed essential for employability and ability to become impactful employees.

Recent studies in Ethiopia generally indicate that there is a mismatch between employability skills and employment rates of TVET graduates. In one of such studies, Geressu (2017) established that the general performance of TVET institutions in the country has been below expectations in terms of devising and applying competence-based programmes that could bolster employability skills among the graduates. This has as a result led to reduction of TVET graduates' employment opportunities in Ethiopian industries by nearly half in the last two years. This reinforces the findings by Mengistu and Negasie (2022), who observed that in a sample of randomly selected participants from three TVET colleges in Ethiopia, the scores of perceived employability of students was found to be lower than expected.

As Pusriawan and Sunaryo (2019) explain, technical skills alone are not adequate factors for employability. In addition to such technical skills, students must also acquire other soft skills that employers find to be more nuanced and essential for making employees adaptable to different work environments (Mengistu & Negasie, 2022). This is an indication that employment of TVET graduates and the recorded reduction of employability is largely dependent on the level of employability skills acquired in training colleges (Michelle & Tendai, 2016). This demonstrates the need for competency of the teaching staff in TVET colleges if such institutions are to produce graduates that are capable of making positive contributions in the workplace.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The objective of the study was to establish the relationship between staff competencies and graduate employability in TVET institutions in Nyandarua County, Kenya. The study was guided by Romiszowski's (2009) concepts of Instructional Theory for Skill Development. Quantitative research approach and correlational design were adopted to guide the study processes. Two hundred and eighty-five former students who had graduated from two TVET colleges in Nyandarua county in 2021 formed the study's target population. Linear snowball sampling strategy was used to identify 49 respondents. Data was collected through structured

questionnaires that were sent through email to each of the participants. Data analysis was carried out in descriptive and inferential statistics. The specific descriptive statistics involved the analysis of frequency distribution, dispersion of variance and symmetrical distribution. Inferential statistics were carried out in Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) for the purpose of hypothesis testing and making inferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of findings

Response Rate

Questionnaires were sent electronically to all the 49 identified respondents. Out of those emailed, 45 were returned and following inspection were found to be eligible for inclusion in the analysis. The returned questionnaires represented a response rate of 92 percent, which was ideal for making generalization, given that Fincham (2008) recommends a rate of not less than 80 percent for surveys involving schools and colleges.

Description of Staff Competencies and Graduate Employability

The study sought to establish the relationship between teaching staff competencies and graduate employability skills in TVET institutions in Nyandarua County. The measures of staff competencies were obtained based on students' perceptions, who were asked to indicate their satisfaction about teachers' competencies. The scores were computed and analysed so as establish the mean scores and standard deviations for each of the items as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Staff Competencies Scores

Variable	Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Staff	Possession of technical competencies such as mastery and delivery	3.95	1.1
Competencies	of curriculum, instructional planning and evaluation		
	Communication and language skills	4.02	0.89
	Creativity, analytical thinking and decision-making skills	4.2	0.91
	Leadership skills such as ability to listen, synthesize and clarify	4.2	0.99

issues, and identify with other peoples' perspectives		
Good system thinking skills such as abilities to make distinctions, have multiple perspectives and opting to experiment to find solutions rather than speculating	4.33	0.85
Professional competencies such as ability to distinguish oneself in specific tasks and being able to fast adapt to the profession's changing needs	4.22	0.87
Skillful in technology application	3.73	1.05
Self-motivation, initiative and adaptable to different work environments	3.73	1.19

Note. $N= 45$, $M=$ Mean, $SD=$ Standard Deviation.

The results in Table 1 demonstrate that on whether teachers possessed adequate levels of system thinking skills had the highest rating with a mean score of 4.33 ($SD= .85$). The results imply that TVET teachers generally possessed acceptable levels of abilities to understand, and evaluate individual decisions and find solutions to complex problems. The results further indicate that whether teachers possessed professional competencies to stand out in specific tasks and being able to adapt to the changing needs of their environment was the second highest rated with a mean score of 4.22 ($SD= .87$). On proposition that teachers possessed adequate skills in creativity, analytical thinking and decision-making generated a high mean score of 4.20 ($SD= 4.91$).

The participants were also asked to rate how much they agreed with the measure that teachers exhibited leadership skills such as the ability to listen, analyse and clarify issues, and identify with other peoples' perspectives. The measure was rated with a mean score of 4.20 ($SD= .99$) implying that the participants mostly agreed with the proposition. With regard to whether teachers demonstrated good communication and language skills, the measure was rated with a mean score of 4.02 ($SD= .89$). The high mean score indicates that the participants generally consented that teachers possessed such skills.

The participants were also asked to rate their level of agreement on the measure that teachers held good levels of technical competencies such as abilities in curriculum delivery, instructional

planning and evaluation. In response, the measure generated a relatively high mean score of 3.95 ($SD= 1.10$), implying that the participants generally approved such skill levels. The measure as to whether teachers were well skillful in technology application received the least mean score of 3.73 ($SD= 1.05$), same as the response on whether they demonstrated good levels of self-motivation, initiative and adaptability to excel in different work environments with a mean of 3.73 ($SD= 1.19$).

The results have generally shown that teaching staffs' competencies, including technical competencies, system thinking skills, professional competencies, and communication and language proficiency enhance graduates' employability skills. The results are consistent with those of Omar et al. (2021) in a study from Malaysia, that emphasized about TVET teachers significance in inculcating technical and other non-technical skills sought by employers today.

The results however indicate that the participants relatively disapproved the usefulness of teachers skills of technology application and self-motivation, and adaptability of different work environments in enhancing their employability skills. This implies that more needs to be done to revitalize teachers' skills on application of new technology in their evolving practices. This lends credence to a study by Changilwa (2016) in Nigeria that TVET has become ineffective in developing graduates' employability skills due to inadequate use of technology.

The scores on staff competencies were further analysed in order to categorise the participants into different levels taking into considerations those whose agreement levels were high or low on the scale as reported in Table 2.

Table 2: *Participants' Rating Levels on Teachers Competencies*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Low	21	46.7
	High	24	53.3
	Total	45	100.0

Note. N= 45.

The data in Table 2 shows that slightly more than a half (53.3%) of the participants rated the measures of staff competencies with high agreement levels compared to 46.7% who rated the same with low agreement levels. This demonstrates that the students were moderately satisfied with the levels of their teachers' competencies. The findings imply that the teaching staff in TVET institutions in the area of study had considerably good levels necessary for imparting employability skills in their students. The scores on graduates' employability skills were also obtained in order draw comparisons between teaching staff's competencies and graduate employability. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Graduates' Employability Scores

Variable	Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Graduate Employability Skills	My integrity and responsibility have been influenced by teachers' professional competencies	4.51	0.69
	Teachers leadership skills such as ability to listen, and identify with other peoples' perspectives enhanced my interpersonal skills	4.26	0.65
	Creativity, ability to generate new ideas and solve complex problems has been influenced by teachers system thinking skills	4.00	1.20
	Acquisition and development of problem-solving skills is enhanced by teachers analytical and creative thinking skills	3.95	0.95
	Communication skills has been nurtured by teachers language skills	3.88	0.93
	Level of my basic skills such as reading, writing, and ability to maintain dialogue is enhanced by teachers' proficient delivery of curriculum	4.20	0.81
	My level of professionalism has been enhanced by teachers professional competencies enhanced	3.84	1.18
	My ability to respond positively to changes has been influenced	4.15	0.85

by teachers' skills of self-motivation, and adaptability to
different work environments

Note. $N= 45$, $M=$ Mean, $SD=$ Standard Deviation.

As shown in Table 3, the results indicate that the statement on whether graduates perceived their personal qualities such as integrity and responsibility to have been influenced by their teachers leadership skills was rated with the highest mean score 4.51 ($SD= .69$). The high rating implies that graduates were generally contented with the contribution of teachers' leadership skills such as ability to listen, synthesize, clarify issues and appreciate other peoples' views. The statement on whether graduates perceived teachers' leadership skills as significant in imparting their interpersonal skills generated the second highest rating with a mean score of 4.26 ($SD= .65$).

The measure on whether graduates acquisition of basic skills was influenced by teachers proficiency in curriculum delivery generated a mean score of 4.20 ($SD= .81$). The high rating indicated that graduates generally consented that teachers' technical competencies enhanced their basic skills. The results further indicate that the statement on whether graduates' skills of positively responding to changes were influenced by their teachers' adaptability and self-motivating competencies was rated with a mean score of 4.15 ($SD= .85$). The high rating score suggests that graduates generally agreed that teachers' adaptability and self-motivating skills were essential in enhancing their employability skills of positively responding to change.

The results indicate that the measure on whether graduates' skills of creativity, ability to generate new ideas was influenced by teachers system thinking skills was rated with a mean score of 4.00 ($SD= 1.20$). This relatively high score is an indication that the participants generally concurred about the influence of teachers system thinking competency on their employability skills of creativity and ability to generate new ideas. On whether graduates' problem-solving skills were enhanced by the teaching staff's competencies of analytical and creative thinking was rated with a mean score of 3.95 ($SD= .95$), with the relatively high rating suggesting that graduates were largely in agreement about the influence of teachers competencies in enhancing the stated type of employability skills.

The results also indicate that the measure as to whether graduates' communication skills were enhanced by teachers competencies of language proficiency was rated with a mean score of 3.88

($SD=.93$), implying that the participants by and large agreed about the influence of teachers' competencies in enhancing this form of employability skills. Lastly, the results indicate that the statement that graduates' professionalism was enhanced by teachers' professional competencies generated a mean score of 3.84 ($SD= 1.18$). Despite this being the least rated measure, the results suggest that the participants still had a fairly high perception on influence of teaching staff's professional competencies on their professionalism skills.

The scores were further analysed in order to group the participants in different levels considering those who rated graduates' employability with high or low levels. The results are presented in

Table 4: *Participants' Rating Levels on Graduate Employability Skills*

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Low	19	42.2
	High	26	57.8
	Total	45	100.0

Note. N= 45.

The results in Table 4 indicate that majority (57.8%) of the participants rated the measures of graduate employability skills with high agreement levels, compared to 42.2% who rated the same measures with low agreement levels. The findings are supportive of those of Emuji et al. (2019) from a Nigeria that even though TVET graduates' employability may be developed through other mechanisms, such as market needs and relevant experience, skill training and instructor competence remain the most essential factors.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the relationship between the teaching staff competencies and graduate employability, the following hypothesis was advanced:

H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between staff competencies and graduate employability in TVET institutions in Nyandarua County, Kenya.

The mean scores of staff competencies and graduate reliability were subjected to bivariate correlation using Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) so as to establish if any relationship existed between the two variables. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: *Correlation Matrix for Staff Competencies and Graduate Employability*

		Staff Competencies	Graduate Employability
Staff Competencies	Pearson Correlation	1	.40**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	45	45
Graduate Employability	Pearson Correlation	.40**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	45	45

Note. N= 45

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results from correlation matrix as demonstrated in Table 5 indicate that a statistically significant relationship was established between staff competencies and graduate employability scores ($r(45) = .40, P = .006$). The results therefore indicate that a positive and statistically significant relationship was found between the two variables since the p value of .006 is lower than 0.05 as the level of significance. This implies that various teachers competencies including technical skills related to curriculum delivery; leadership skills and technology application among others are instrumental in enhancing graduate employability skills. It can thus be inferred that increased competencies in TVET teaching staff positively influence employability skills among the students.

Discussion

The results of the present study revealed that TVET teachers possess satisfactory levels of competencies. It was established from descriptive results that the proficiencies held by the teaching staffs in TVET institutions such as technical competencies, skills for language and communication, professional competencies and system thinking positively influence graduates' employability skills. The results support those of Omar et al. (2021) from a study carried out in

Malaysia that competencies of TVET instructors play an essential role in influencing graduates' employability skills.

While various forms of competencies held by the teaching staff were found to be key in enhancing graduates' employability skills, the study established that instructors' proficiency in application of technology had less impact in enhancing graduates' employability skills. These findings also corroborated those of Changilwa from a Nigerian based study in which it was found that inadequate application of technology had negative effects in enhancing graduates' employability skills in TVET institutions.

From inferential analysis, it was established that there was a statistically significant relationship between teaching staff's competencies and graduate employability ($r(45) = .40, P = .006$). The study established that various TVET teachers' demonstrate various competencies such as technical skills for curriculum delivery, professionalism, language and communication skills that have positively influenced graduates' employability skills. The study established that an increase in teachers competencies resulted in enhanced graduate employability skills. The findings are in harmony with those of Tran (2019) in a study from Vietnam that equipping TVET students with the right skills during training processes remains the most significant approach for enhancing employability skills that employers are looking for.

The findings are also consistent with those of Kailo (2020) in a study carried out in Kilifi, Kenya, which found a statistically significant relationship between TVET teachers' qualification and graduates' acquisition of employable skills. The findings however contradict those of Tran (2019) who reported that even though equipping students with knowledge and skills was instrumental, TVET institutions should do more by sensitizing students about external societal dynamics of the labour market in order to prepare them for greater flexibility to the local and global working environments.

The study findings revealed that increased competencies in TVET teaching staff positively influence employability skills among the students. The results support those of Tran (2019) based

on research in Vietnam, in which it is argued that even though there are no common ‘ingredients’ for employability, the dominant discourse for advancing graduate employability still remains the instrumental approach of equipping students with the skills sought by employers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on descriptive findings, the study has concluded that teaching staff’s competencies such as system thinking skills, technical skills for curriculum delivery, language, communication and professional skills are helpful in enhancing graduates’ employability skills. The study concluded that teachers’ system thinking skills had the greatest influence in enhancing graduates’ employability skills. It was also concluded from descriptive results that application of technology and adaptability to different work settings had the least influence on trainees’ employability skills. The study concluded that there was statistically significant relationship between staff competencies and graduates’ employability skills. The study concluded that increased staff competencies resulted in enhanced graduates’ employability skills.

Based on the findings and conclusions the study recommends that the Ministry of Education through Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification Council, and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development needs to consider curriculum reform towards inculcation of skills, and abilities that would invigorate students’ human capital and enable them to market themselves in the job market. There is need for TVET institutions to embrace the application of new technology during curriculum delivery in order to engage learners in a digital rich environment that can prepare them for current demands of the job market.

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