

Presentation at the 41st AEAA Annual Conference (25–29 August 2025)

ARE THE NEW TVET REFORMS IN UGANDA PRODUCING A HIGHLY SKILLED AND COMPETITIVE WORK FORCE?

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE


1. Introduction
2. What is the Issue?
3. Objectives of the Study
4. Findings and Discussions
5. Recommendations & Conclusions

Introduction

- In the recent past Government of Uganda (GoU) has reinstituted numerous major reforms in its Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector.
- The enactment of the Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTJET) Act of 2008, and provided the first Ugandan legal framework for vocational education at secondary and tertiary level
- GoU developed the TVET Policy 2019 to align itself to the East Africa Community Commitments on TVET and also address the other socio-economic requirements of the new era.
- The most recent reform was the gazetting and commencement of TVET Act 2025 which has called for among other things the establishment of two assessment Boards. UVTAB
- These Boards provide a strong foundation for assessment and certification of competencies acquired through formal TVET training.

What is the Issue?

TVET systems are failing to adequately prepare young people for the future work, leading to the mismatch between skills taught in TVET institutions and the demands of the industry. This mismatch partly explain why youth unemployment stands at 16.7% and the percentage of the population who are NOT in employment, education or training is 42.6% (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2024).



Objectives of the Study

The study sought to investigate the causes of the gaps in TVET labour force in Uganda.

The other objectives were:

- i. To investigate whether the TVET-acquired skills matched with industry.
- ii. To investigate factors that affect employability of graduates.
- iii. To investigate the influence of continuous professional development on quality training.

Findings and Discussions

Trainees' personal information

- The gender distribution of trainees shows a pronounced imbalance, with 86.0% being male and only 14.0% female.
- In terms of age, the majority of students (88.1%) fall within the 20–30 years bracket, indicating that most learners are young adults who likely joined TVET programs soon after completing secondary education.
- This age distribution suggests that TVET institutions primarily cater to early-career individuals seeking to develop technical skills for entry into the workforce
- The data further shows that 94.4% of the students are enrolled on a full-time basis, while only 5.6% are part-time students

Findings and Discussions Cont'd

- Regarding the effectiveness of teaching methods, a majority of respondents expressed positive views, with 30.2% strongly agreeing and 25.9% agreeing
- 69.6% of trainees and 92 % of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that they were given basic skills that enable them to carry out simple tasks.
- 66.8% of trainees and 96 % of the instructors affirmed that the skills acquired were aligned with industry standards.
- 83.4% of the employers were satisfied the way TVET graduates applied technical skills in the workplace.

Findings and Discussions Cont'd

- However, a combined 16.1% of trainees disagreed or strongly disagreed indicating inconsistencies in industry alignment still exist.
- On Industry-specific skills of TVET graduates, 33.3% of the employers were dissatisfied. This indicates that a significant number of graduates may not be fully aligned with sector-specific requirements.
- A majority (70%) of respondents agreed that the current diploma-level curriculum lacks certain practical components sought by employers
- Does the curriculum address the technologies or processes used in most industries today?
- Only 36% strongly agreed and 34% somewhat agreed (total 70%) that the curriculum reflects current industry technology. However, 28% expressed neutrality or disagreement, one of the highest levels of concern in this section. This signals a potential curriculum lag in incorporating modern technologies.

Findings and Discussions Cont'd

- The majority of the TVET instructors (74%) have participated in CPD programs, reflecting a commendable level of professional engagement aimed at enhancing their instructional capacity.
- However, 26% have not undertaken any CPD, which highlights a gap that may affect the uniformity of teaching quality and adaptation to modern pedagogical and industry demands.
- Training facilities and training materials/equipment were both rated as being adequate only "to some extent" by 42% of respondents.
- However, about a third (34% for facilities and 32% for materials/equipment) felt that availability is either poor or minimal. These findings suggest that infrastructural inadequacies are a key barrier to effective skills development

Findings and Discussions Cont'd

- Ability to use research skills to gather evidence. With only 41.7% satisfaction, this is a clear weakness. Limited research skills can restrict innovation and problem-solving
- Oral communication skills. Only half of the employers (50%) were satisfied with graduates' oral communication, while the other half were neutral or disagreed. This highlights a significant gap that can hinder workplace collaboration
- Written communication skills. Only 58.4% of employers were satisfied, while 33.4% expressed dissatisfaction. This indicates a weakness that could affect documentation and reporting tasks.

Recommendations and Conclusion

- The study recommends among others curriculum review to include certain practical components; continued investment in and maintenance of teaching equipment to enhance TVET; review the short training periods that may limit learners' opportunities to gain confidence.
- Institutions should prioritize communication training through oral presentations, debates, and customer interaction exercises.
- Institutions should expand industry partnerships for workplace-based learning to sustain and improve technical competence
- Lastly, basing on the findings the new TVET reforms in Uganda are producing a highly skilled and competitive work force although there is need to fix some of the mismatches.

Real Life Projects Inspection



Building Construction trainees during a Practical Session



UVTAB ASSESSMENT CENTRE

