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Attitudes of Youth-Trainees towards Technical, Vocational Education and Training in VETA Institutions in Arusha City, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the attitudes of youth trainees towards technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in VETA institutions in Arusha City in Tanzania. It was guided by two research questions: i) what is the rate of youth enrolment in TVET in VETA institutions in Arusha City? ii) what are the attitudes of the trainees towards the offered courses? The study employed a cross-sectional research design. The sample had 130 trainees, 15 trainers and 3 programme coordinators making 148 total participants. Data collection was done using questionnaires, interview and document analysis guides. Data were analysed statistically and thematically. Results also show that, enrollment is very high based on the institutions' admission capacities and a majority of trainees has positive attitudes towards the offered TVET courses and perceive them beneficial. The study concludes that, the youth-trainees enrollment rate meets the admission capacity by 100% and the trainees' attitude towards TVET is positive in the studied VETA institutions. This study recommends for more sensitization and advertisement of TVE to the public for skilling of many youths possible.*

KEYWORDS: Attitudes, Enrollment, Youth-trainees, TVET, Arusha City, VETA

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education continues to be given important attention in different countries in the world due to its practicability. Research has found that, investment in human capital by public, firms and households has a significant impact on economic performance as well as individual and social well-being (Hanni, 2019). Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is considered among the United Nations Sustainable Development goals. It is SDG4, of which 4.4. states that, by 2030, substantially, increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills including technical and vocational skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (United Nation [UN], 2015; UNESCO, 2021). Furthermore, a study by Setiyawami, Sugiyo and Rahrdjo (2019) in Indonesia revealed that, the role of vocational education is to prepare a generation that has appropriate skills in the field and a generation that has good

character. In Pakistan, Nasir, Alvi and Tarar (2021) assessed the role of TVET in promoting youth employment. Their findings showed that TVET played a dynamic role in income generating activities for youth and increasing their employment rate due to possession of vocational skills. In Nigerian context, Opoko, Badmus, Abiola et al. (2018) investigated the role of TVET in national building and concluded that TVET plays vital roles in national building especially in the areas of socio-economic development (employment and income generation, and poverty alleviation), development of indigenous technological base and mitigation of rural-urban migration.

In Tanzanian context, the Research on Poverty Alleviation organization [REPOA] (2020) found that, the percentage of college graduates enrolled in TVET centers is low, meaning TVET courses are still regarded by parents and students themselves as inferior to tertiary education and training or higher education. In addition, the number of females enrolling for hard technical skill is also low. The conclusion by REPOA is that the public perceptions shape the views of students about vocational education in general and about gender specializations during training. That study mentions that recent estimates suggest that at least 2 out of 5 youth are in a state of long-term joblessness or unemployment for a period of one year or more. The overall youth participation in the labour market is low and transition from school to work is slow. This echoes National Council for Technical Education [NACTE] (2022) newsletter that, many employers are complaining about low skills and low volume of high skills which results into low productivity and unsustainable growth. Richard (2018) explains that, skill gap in Tanzania is attributed to inadequate right graduates as there are more theoretical than practical. He adds that, more institutions have been converted into higher education institutions hence suffocating the growth and development of technical education.

Consequently, the ratio between vocational skilled and professionals becomes more unbalanced in the country. It has been reported by employers in Tanzania that skill-gaps are common in agribusiness, welding technology, plumbing, energy electrical installation and management, tracking technologies, customer care and services, software management, digital and e-marketing to mention some (NACTE, 2020). Furthermore, some skills are totally missing in different sectors as NACTE elaborates: Agribusiness (leather technologists, wine making, sugar technologists, milk processing, food processing and packaging, agriculture engineering, greenhouse farming); in energy (drillers and miners' technologists, solar and alternative sources of energy, air conditioning mechanics); in construction (concrete technologists, technicians specializing in reinforced concrete finisher, stones bridge design technologist); in tourism and hospitality (high level hotel management, multi-lingual skill, tour guiding, taxidermy, cast/replica production); in ICT (artificial intelligence, robotics, cyber security, and network security technologists), in transport (aircraft mechanics, railway construction, ship, marine, maintenance and repair, navigation, warehousing and inventory control Technologist, telematics etc.). The skill gaps can be filled by investing in technical education and accelerating the attainment of Tanzania Vision 2025 under the current five year national development plan III objective number 2 which aims at

strengthening capacity building in the areas of science, technology and innovation to enhance competitiveness and productivity in all sectors especially the productive, manufacturing and service sectors to enable Tanzanians to benefit from the opportunities available within the country (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2021).

According to NACTE (2021), in the move to realize radical change in the current mid-income economy status in Tanzania, consolidation has to be in educational field particularly technical and vocational education and training (TVET). NACTE cautions that, unfortunately in many countries including Tanzania for many years, technical education and training (TVET) has been the last choice for students scoring high in secondary school final examinations thus TVET not considered a desired career alternative in the eyes of the youth. The government of Tanzania has taken deliberate initiative of increasing budgetary allocation to TVET from 4% in the year 2016/2017 to 15% in 2020/2021 through the national skills development strategy (URT, 2021).

Furthermore, the government of Tanzania through the Prime Minister's Office- Work, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities has in recent years put more effort supporting vocational education and training to youth in different TVET institutions in the country. In the year 2022 for instance, the Government of Tanzania has sponsored TVET for 7,760 youths in 62 Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) institutions in the country (URT, 2022). In addition, 3,765 youths were sponsored by the Government of Tanzania (GoT) to pursue TVET studies in 28 selected VETA colleges in Tanzania in 2023 (URT, 2023). However, it is not known whether the youth have interest in the TVET courses hence appreciating this opportunity and support given by the government. There has been unconfirmed feeling of society that, the youth are not willing to go for vocational education and training. If the youth are not seriously taking this opportunity, consequences are likely to be; unemployment challenge continues to persist and slowing the human resource development process for enhancing industrialization of the country. There was therefore a need to find out the youth-trainees' attitude towards TVET in selected VETA institutions in Arusha since the region has several VETA institutions offering TVET courses sponsored by the Government of Tanzania. This study intended to answer the following research questions: i) What is the rate of youth enrolment in TVET courses in institutions in Arusha City? ii) What are the attitudes of the trainees towards the offered trainings/courses?

Empirical Literature Review

Nath, Babu, Kalam and Hossain (2019) established that, youth participation in TVET Bangladesh is low. It was also found that, the perception score lied between neutral to positive towards TVET and majority of the respondents perceived TVET as a way of preparing youth for employment. It was also established that, the opportunity of getting a job shortly was the biggest motivation for those who studied TVET. In Hairpur district, Nazakat, Shah and Ahmed (2017) investigated on awareness and choice of

secondary school students towards vocational education after completing secondary education. It was found that a majority of students considered vocational education as essential for future job, but did not recommend it for female students. This is an indication that the students perceived vocational education positively. However, the issue of gender stereotyping seems to be common as this kind of education was not so attached to girls.

Matenda (2019) mentions that, South African government is supporting TVET sector through funding improved infrastructure and staff training. Nevertheless, findings of Matenda revealed that none of the women participant of that study wanted to enroll at TVET college, yet ended up opting for it owing to constraints to afford university education and having dropped out of university for various reason. That finding implies low enrolment of students in TVET colleges was due to the perceptions they have. The TVET seems to be made the last option when other opportunities are not successful.

Oviawe (2017) reports that, the average enrollment of students in technical colleges in Nigeria is very low (about 1%) implying that there is death in production of technicians in the country. This affects negatively the country's quest of national development and advancement. The authors attributed that low enrollment to: low self-esteem towards technical education, poor societal perception and attitude, and lack of exposure of students to the world of work through work-visits. Wasike and Maiyo (2020) conducted a study to investigate the government's initiative in TVET institutions on students' enrollment in Bungoma County, Kenya. Their findings indicated an increase in enrolment rate generally in the studied county. However, majority of the respondents (73%) opined that the enrolment was not adequate.

In Kenya, Kamau and Ngumbu (2017) investigated the influence of community attitudes towards technical and vocational education on students' enrolment for training in polytechnics in Gatundu distirct. The sample was comprised of 50 community members who were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using interview schedules and analysis was done using content analysis. Findings showed that, negative community attitudes and poor image on youth polytechnic, was a main factor that highly influenced enrolment level of the youths. This kind of education was perceived as a preserve for poor and non-academic performers, courses offered only lead to blue-collar jobs not perceived as of any economic benefits. Kiplangat (2020) also established the determinant of enrollment in VTC in Elgeyo-Marakwet County-Kenya. The determinants were found to be: i) the high cost for vocational education, and ii) level of awareness of existing sources of funding by students and school leavers contributed to low enrolment rates in vocational colleges.

Makato, Mugambi and Kalai (2022) investigated whether trainees' attitude had influence on enrolment in public TVET institutes in Kenya. A cross-sectional survey design was used and it involved 12 TVET institutes, 30 trainers, 331 trainees. However, the findings of that study showed that there is no significant correlation between attitude

and enrolment in the TVET instituted. It was concluded that, the trainees' attitudes do not negatively influence enrolment in the TVET since the trainees willingly chose to enroll in TVET regardless of negative publicity towards TVET. The study further found that, the trainees indicated that they are gaining important technical skills which will enable them to be employed. In Bosnia, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation[SDC] (2020), found that most secondary school students are interested to go for university degree as their highest level of education than going for vocational or technical education.

In Tanzanian context, Mgogo (2014) found that, secondary school students have negative attitude towards vocational education and training (VET) and their willingness to join TVET after completion of O-level education is relatively low. Mgogo concluded that, students are lacking adequate parental advice and teachers' guidance regarding TVET. Also, school curriculum does not explicitly address the vocational subjects. A study conducted by Leyaro and Joseph (2019) examined the employment, mobility and return to technical and vocational education and training relative to general education in Tanzania. The study used data from the 2014 Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS). The results showed that, TVET facilitates individual easy transition into employment. The authors concluded that, to make TVET attractive to parents and students, governments have to work towards raising the return to TVET. Luhala and Yuting (2021) did a study on the contribution of TVET towards Tanzania's industrial development using a qualitative approach. Sampling of TVET stakeholders was done using purposive technique and data were collected using in-depth interview and document analysis. From the findings, it was established that, TVET can solve the problem of graduate unemployment, and industries are the first consumers of the TVET product (student graduates), and participants highlighted the need for acceptable policy as a stepping-stone towards Tanzania industrial development. The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1.

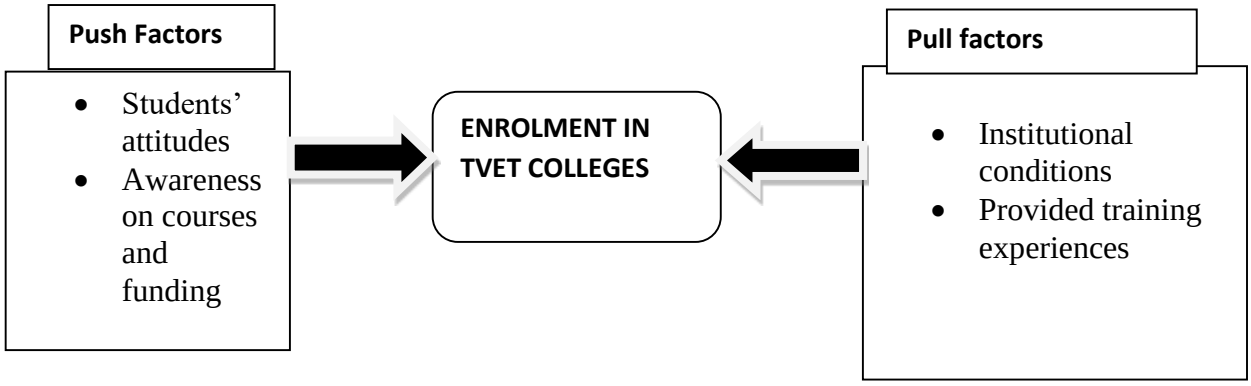

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the study
Sources: Borrowed and modified from Abdul-Aziz, Zulkifli, Nashir and Karim (2020)

The study adopted and modified the push-pull factor model proposed by Abdul-Aziz, Zulkifli, Nashir and Karim (2020). According to this model, enrolment in TVET colleges is an outcome which is influenced by two factors (pull and push factors). The push factors include the aspects such as students' attitude, society/parents' perceptions, awareness about the programme and funding information. On the other hand, the institutional-related attributes form the pull factors, which characterize the condition of the TVET institution, which determines the training experiences. When the prospective students have positive towards vocational education and training, and awareness about the TVET training and funding opportunities, the youth are likely to enroll in the TVET institutions in large numbers. The conditions of the TVET institution can play a significant role attracting the youth to enroll TVET institutions.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The design was considered relevant to find out the opinions and views of the participants from the VETA institutions offering TVET courses in Arusha City focusing sponsored by the Government of Tanzania. The design enabled the researcher to establish the enrollment rates of youth into TVET courses and the attitude of the TVET trainees towards the TVET courses. The survey design provides description of trends, attitudes and opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Mligo, 2016)

Population, Sample and Sampling procedures

Four VETA institutions offering government sponsored courses in academic year 2021/2021 in Arusha region formed the target population of this study. Three VETA institutions were sampled for this study. Selection of the TVET trainees was based on the courses they study therefore stratified-random sampling techniques was applied to ensure representation of the respondents from different courses in the sample. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) state that, stratified sampling method is advantageous as it guarantees equal representation of each stratum. The researcher selected 20 trainees from each course from three studied institutions making a total of 135 trainee' respondents. TVET trainers/facilitators were sampled from different courses using stratified sampling of which 15 trainers/tutors were selected. Three programme coordinators/administrators were purposively selected from the three institutions. This method of sampling was used since the randomization was not possible. It is a deliberate choice of the participants due to the qualities they possess (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). In this case, administrators/coordinators were selected due to their role in coordination of the TVET programme in the studied institutions. The study therefore had a total sample size of 153 respondents.

Data collection instruments

Data for this study were collected using questionnaires for TVET trainees and trainers, interview guides for coordinators/administrators of the institutions/programme and document analysis guide for capturing trainees' enrollment data. The questionnaires had both closed-ended and open-ended items. This structure of the questionnaires was preferred as it made the data collection in self-administered questionnaires responding to possible answers to closed-ended items without requiring assistance. The open-ended questions on the other hand provide opportunity for the research respondents to use their own words (Taherdoost, 2022). The interview guides were semi-structured. This gave the researcher opportunity to develop on-spot questions and probing during data collection process. The triangulation of the instruments and the preferred structure was for purposes of getting comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. Triangulation of data collection instruments enables the researcher to have findings from all methods pointing in a particular direction (i.e., results are confirmed). It helps to achieve validity and credibility in research (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

Data analysis procedure

Data were analyzed systematically whereby; data were first organized, sorted and cleaned. Thereafter, the quantitative variables were coded and data were entered into SPSS programme version 22. Data were processed and output were in descriptive statistics such frequencies and percentages which were presented using tables and graphs.

Ethical considerations

The study adhered to research ethics. The researcher first sought consent from relevant authorities by formal request for permission to conduct the research in the selected institutions. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents and requested to participate willingly. The research tools instructed the respondents to respond to the questions anonymously for protection of their identities and enhancing freedom in information provision. There was no conflict of interest from the researcher in this study. Data were captured and reported objectively without any falsification.

RESULTS

Respondents' demographic data

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Gender	**Trainees**		**Trainers**		**Coordinators**	
	F	%	F	%	f	%
Male	70	54	9	60	2	67
Female	60	46	6	40	1	33
Total	**130**	**100**	**15**	**100**	**3**	**100**

As shown in Table 1, male trainees' respondents were slightly more than the females. That was attributed by the fact that, the trainees' enrollment was not proportionate in different courses with respect to gender. Like-wise, majority of the trainers and programme coordinators in the studied TVET institutions were males. This could be explained that, the TVET courses are more preferred by males than females hence male being more in numbers in all the categories of the respondents. The next table gives the teaching experiences of the TVET trainers

Table 2: Teaching Experiences of the Trainers

Years of teaching experience	**Frequency**	**Percent**
1 year	2	13.3
2 years	2	13.3
3 years	1	6.7
4 years	2	13.3
5 years	1	6.7
6-10 years	1	6.7
More than 10 years	6	40.0
Total	**15**	**100.0**

Table 2 shows that, the trainers' experience of teaching ranged from 1 year through 10 years and above. A relatively large proportion of the respondents had a teaching experience of more than 10 years. This means, the majority of the TVET facilitators in the studied institutions had long time of experience in technical and vocational education.

Rate of youth enrolment in TVET courses in the selected VETA institutions in Arusha

The researcher sought to find out the enrolment rates of the youth in the academic year 2021/2022. The data about enrollment were provided form the programme coordinators' offices. The statistics were captured using document analysis guide. The main focus was to capture statistics of the youth who reported for registration in the said year. The data for three selected VETA institutions in Arusha City are presented in Table 3

Table 3: Students' enrollment in academic year 2021/2022 in the studied VETA institutions

Institution	Course	Males	Females	Admitted total	Reported	Registration Percentage
A	Computer maintenance	19	11	30	30	100
	Domestic electrical installation	26	4	30	30	100
	Solar installation	26	4	30	30	100
Total		**71**	**19**	**90**	**90**	**100**
B	Food production/culinary Arts	7	18	25	25	100
	Tour guide	16	9	25	25	100
	Food and beverage service	12	13	25	25	100
	Pastry & Bakery	5	20	25	25	100
Total		**40**	**60**	**100**	**100**	**100**
C	Masonry & brick laying	41	3	44	44	44
	Electrical installation	60	31	91	91	91
	Designing, sewing and cloth technology	2	46	48	48	48
	Plumbing Pipe Fitting	78	55	133	133	133
	Welding and fabrication	32	1	33	33	33
	Carpentry and joinery	15	2	17	17	17
	Agro mechanics	45	13	58	58	58
Total		**273**	**151**	**424**	**424**	**106**
Grand total		**384**	**230**	**614**	**614**	

Sources: Programme coordination/Administrator offices from institution A, B and C (2022)

Data in Table 3 shows that, generally the selected applicants reported by 100% in two and 106% in one of the studied VETA institutions in Arusha City. This is an indication that, youths are accepting the opportunity provided by the Government of Tanzania through the Office of the Prime Minister- Labour, Youth, Employment and Person with disabilities for them to acquire technical and vocational skills. The enrolment rate was also supported by the TVET trainers' responses shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Teachers' Responses on the Trainees' Enrollment rate in TVET Institutions

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very high	2	13.3
High	10	66.7
Low	3	20.0
Total	**15**	**100.0**

Data in Table 4 indicate that, majority of the respondent tutors (66.7%) stated that the enrollment is high and 13% rated the enrollment as very high, making 80% cumulative percent for very high and high. This finding supports the statistics in the previous Table 3, which showed that, the registration rates of the trainees were very high as the selected applicants reported massively. The study also inquired about the prior-education levels of the trainees enrolled in the studied VETA institutions. The answer to this is provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Prior-level of education of the enrolled TVET trainees (n=128)

Prior education level	Frequency	Percent
Standard 7	3	2.3
Form Four	106	82.8
Form 6	6	4.7
Certificate	7	5.5
Diploma	3	2.3
Other	3	2.3
Total	**128**	**100.0**

Data in Table 5 show that of 128 trainees who responded to this item, the majority (82.8%) were Form four leavers. This implies that tertiary training and education such as TVET has potential prospective applicants who are largely O-level graduates. The TVET courses thus provide a chance for massive numbers of Form four graduates who may not have gone through A-level pathway to get trained in various fields for skills development, which will be beneficial to both the trainees themselves and the society. Engaging the form four graduates in technical and vocational education enables many youths to acquire technical and vocational skills while they are still young and become potential producers in the society using the skills they gained. Enrollment of youth can be influenced by the prospective trainees' awareness on the information about the TVET courses offered and training costs. The researcher sought also to find out about the trainees' awareness on the provided TVET courses and sponsorship. The following section presents the trainees' responses about their awareness about exiting TVET courses sponsored by the Government of Tanzania.

Youth awareness on existence of the TVET courses sponsored by the government

The study was interested to find out the trainees' awareness of the TVET courses and funding information in the institutions offering these courses before being admitted.

They were first asked about how they came to know the courses. Their responses are as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Trainees responses on how they came to know about TVET courses offered

Responses	Frequency	Percent
through a friend/relative	69	53.1
government announcement	39	30.0
Television	2	1.5
social medial	17	13.1
Institute's website	2	1.5
Other means	1	.8
Total	**130**	**100.0**

Data in Table 6 show that, a large number of trainees got information about the training opportunity through three ways mainly which are; friend or relative (53.1%) for most, government announcement (30%) and social media (13.1%). It was expected that the trainees got information from the institutions' websites or televisions but very few (1.5%) mentioned institutes websites and televisions. This possibly may be due to lack of information by youth on such courses available in VETA institutes or they are in areas without, televisions, computer and internet services hence lacking information about such institutes and the courses offered. This implies that, more effort should be made by the institutions offering TVET courses to advertise their courses vigorously through websites and televisions to make themselves well known to the public, which is the source of their prospective trainees. The researcher wanted to know about the funding for the offered TVET courses. The answer to this given in the following graph in Figure 2.

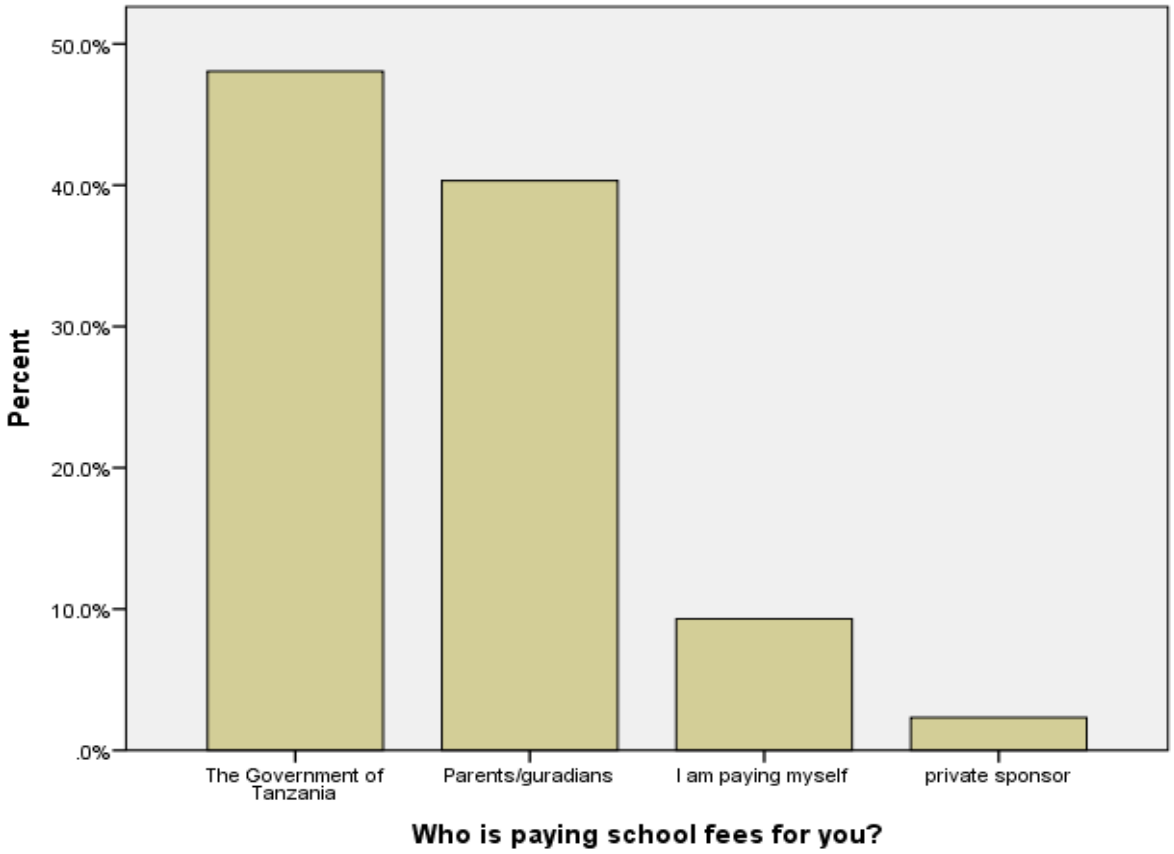

Figure 2: Trainees responses to question about college fees payment

Results in the Figure 2 show that tuition fees are paid by either government, parents/guardian or students themselves. However, the finding here is that, the main sponsor for the TVET courses to majority of trainees (47%) covering tuition fees is the Government of Tanzania. This is very commendable for the government taking a key responsibility of providing this kind of practical education to the youth. This is capacity building to the society by enhancing training to the youth who are the backbone of the nation in production. A good number of the trainees (40%) also mentioned that they are supported by their parents/guardians in paying tuition fees. This is good investment in preparing potential technical human resource for national development. The involvement of parents in sponsoring the youth technical training is an indication of parents valuing technical education hence being responsible for enhancing training to the youths. The researcher further asked the trainees about cost bearer for meals and accommodation while in studies. Their responses shown by the bar chart in Figure 3.

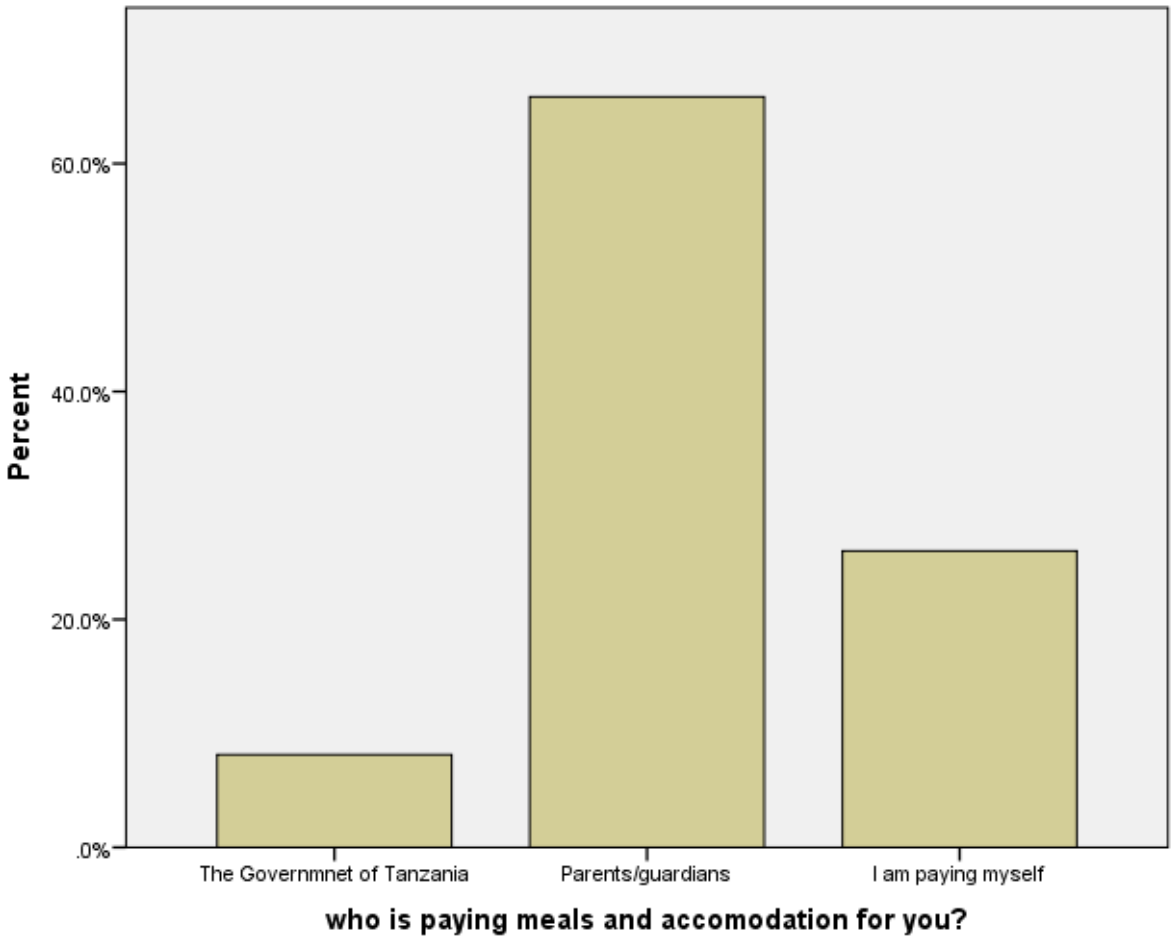

Figure 3: Trainees responses about meals and accommodation cost bearer

About meals and accommodation, a majority (65.9%) of the trainees mentioned that it is taken care of by parents and some trainees are covering that cost themselves (26%). This implies that parents/guardians and trainees themselves are playing their part in cost-sharing by supporting the youth while they are studying. This is a sign that the parents are taking their responsibilities to ensure their children get education. With effective cost-sharing in education and training, the desired knowledge and skills can be given to target group efficiently.

Attitudes of the trainees towards the offered TVET courses

Another aspect of interest in this study was to analyse the attitudes of the youth trainees towards the TVET courses. This was to capture their feelings about the TVET trainings they are given. The data were captured using the questionnaires administered sampled TVET trainees. The trainees were first asked to given their view about the importance of TVET to them. The responses are given in Table 7 which follows shortly.

Table 7: Trainees views about the importance of TVET courses to them

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very important	110	84.6
Important	20	15.4
Total	**130**	**100**

Data in Table 7 indicates that the majority of the TVET trainees (84.6%) see the courses as very important and 15.4% see them as important to them. The trainees were also asked about the level to which they are benefiting from the TVET courses. Their responses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Trainees' responses on to what level are they benefiting from TVET courses

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Highest	39	30.0
High	39	30.0
Average	46	35.4
Low	3	2.3
Not benefited yet	3	2.3
Total	**130**	**100**

A majority of the trainees also feel that they have benefitted from the courses ranging from highest to high (60% cumulatively), while a significant number has felt that the benefit is average (35%) as shown in Table 8. This implies that, TVET is bringing significant changes in the lives of the trainees while they are still in training session. They may be in terms of skills and knowledge they are gaining for application in daily life. More impact positive impact is thus expected when the youth successfully complete their courses in the VETA institutions. The researcher furthermore inquired from the respondent trainees whether they would advise a friend, or relative to join the TVET courses. The responses are shown in Table 9

Table 9: Trainees' responses whether they would advise a friend to enroll in TVET

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	127	97.7
No	3	2.3
Total	**130**	**100.0**

The data in Table 9 show that, majority (97.7%) of the trainees are ready to invite other youth to join TVET courses. This is an indication that the trainees are seeing the value for technical training. With a positive attitude that the trainees have towards TVET courses, the publicity is likely to increase hence becoming popular to Tanzanian youth. However, when comparing being in general education or TVET, a majority of the trainees seemed to prefer general education than TVET (Table 10).

Table 10: Would you prefer being in general education than TVET?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	76	62.8
No	45	37.2
Total	**121**	**100.0**

The results in Table 10 indicate that, the youth are more used to general education as majority (62.8%) would preferred being in general education. Majority may attribute this to general image of TVET in the public or lack of vocation education experience. This finding implies that, strong sensitization needs to be done to educate the public about TVET.

DISCUSSION

The finding of the current study showed that enrollment rates are very high. This is different from that of Wasike and Miyo (2021) in Bungoma County in Kenya who found that the majority of TVET institutions were operating below capacity as they registered low numbers of students. The current finding also opposes that by Okinyi, Nyerere and Kariuki (2021) which reported low enrolment of students in vocational training centers (VTC) in Nairobi City County. However, some courses are lesser enrolled by either gender. Courses such as electrical installation, tour guide, welding and fabrication, masonry & brick laying, carpentry & joinery and agro mechanics had few females compared to males. On the other hand, pastry & bakery and designing, sewing & cloth technology are fewer numbers of male than female trainees.

These results are in line with the ones found in Lebanon as USAID-Lebanon (2017) reported that, courses such topography, mechanics, aircraft, accounting and electronics were male dominant, while hotel management, interior design, information technology, and business were more preferred by females. The gender disparity in enrollment into different TVET courses may be caused by perceptions that the youth and public in general might have towards particular courses, which are wrongly perceived that they are tied to certain gender. This perception hinders both genders from acquiring necessary knowledge and skills for betterment of their lives and contributing to national development. The wrong perceptions that either gender has needs to be abandoned to fully benefit from various vocational training field This implies that, more effort should be made by the institutions offering TVET courses to advertise their courses vigorously through websites and televisions to make themselves well known to the public, which is the source of their prospective trainees.

Findings further showed that, the trainees got information about the courses through three means which are friend/relative, government announcement and social media. This implies that, more effort should be made by the institutions offering TVET courses to advertise their courses vigorously through websites and televisions to make themselves well known to the public, which is the source of their prospective trainees. Information delivery methods such as receiving information from teachers, parents,

peers and internet platforms with motivation have a significant relationship for students to choose TVET (Omar, Rauf, Ismail & Rashid, 2020).

The information about the TVET courses and funding information needs to be availed in primary and secondary schools since these are places where majority of the youths are found. Teachers can deliver the information effectively. Omar et al. (2020) found that large number of students got information about TVET through teachers who play a significant role in raising awareness and motivation of students to pursue TVET education. In Bangladesh, Nath, Babu, Kalam, and Hossain (2019) also report that, role of teachers is crucial for creating a positive image of TVET among the youth. Lack of correct information about the TVET courses makes students miss opportunities for them to learn and acquire important skills for their lives and the society. In India, Rathidevi and Sudhakaran (2019) found that majority of students in secondary schools were not aware about vocational education, its scope, eligibility opportunities and scholarship available.

With regard to the youth attitudes towards TVET, results showed that all of them considered TVET important. The majority rated it very important to them. Furthermore, they would recommend to other youths for TVE studies. This implies that, the youth-trainees have a positive attitude towards such a training. The finding is similar to the one by Adewale et al. (2017) who found that the majority of students had positive attitude towards TVET considered it very important. However, the current study revealed that the majority would still prefer being in general education. This is may be due to lack of vocational training experience in previous level of education. Currently, every secondary school graduate seems to like going up to university; this is purely general education, which has less practical orientation compared to TVET. A study by Mohamed (2022) in Ethiopia concluded that, socioeconomic factors, parental influence, quality of TVET education and peer influence are the main predictors of attitude of students towards TVET education.

Implications of the study

This study implies that, if the Government of Tanzania supports TVET sustainably, vocational skills can be enhanced to majority of the youths. This would build a society with skilled youth who either can employ themselves or be employed hence addressing a challenge of youth unemployment. The findings of this study may convince other stakeholders like NGOs and vocational related industries to collaborate with the government for more enhancement of skills by supporting the training of many youths. The TVET institutions have potential prospective trainees who are form four graduates whom majority are not skilled for economic production. Information about TVET opportunities and funding should be given to secondary school graduates for the opportunity of going through TVET pathway instead of hoping for purely general tertiary education, which is less-skill-based. Providing TVET opportunity is capacity building and investment for a better nation with strong productive labour force for industrialization of Tanzania. The findings also imply that, the TVET institutions need

to be established at community level so that many youths can benefit more at easy access to them without incurring more cost or reducing cost of attending the courses regularly.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several conclusions were made. With regard to the rate of enrollment of youth in the TVET courses, it is concluded that enrollment rates of the students in the studied VETA institutions are very high and corresponding to the available admission capacities. The enrollment rates are attributed to the government support to the TVET programme. However, many advertisement means are not effectively used for information spreading to many. About attitudes of the youth-trainees, it is concluded that the attitude of the youths in the studied institutions is positive. Based on the findings and those conclusions, the researcher recommends for more advertisements to sensitive the public on the importance of TVET courses. VETA institutions should make themselves more visible and advertising the skill-based courses. Nevertheless, both genders should be encouraged to enroll in any TVET courses. The results showed that, the government of Tanzania is the main agent taking the tuition fee cost. Collaboration of other stakeholders/partners with the government is needed for enabling of more youths to be trained. TVET institutions need to be established at community level for majority to access skill training at easy reach.

Future research

Research needs to be done to explore the aspirations of the youths at basic education level towards TVET related future careers and factors associated with those aspirations. Further research should investigate on the factors influencing gender-related preference of some TVET courses among TVET trainees.

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