

Where to Vocational Education in Kenya? Is Analysing Training and Development Needs the Answer to the Challenges in this Sector?

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Abstract:

This paper examines training and development (T&D) systems in the technical, vocational education and training (TVET) in Kenya. It is in response to the Kenya Vision 2030 document that identifies TVET as the anchor of its economic pillar through science, technology and innovation to boost Kenya's industrialisation status. The document notes that skills training faces challenges such as mismatch of skills between the training institutions and the industry, and disparities in accessibility at all levels. This paper seeks to explore whether the accurate assessment of training needs is the answer to the challenges faced by the training program. Data for this study were collected from scrutinising previous research papers and government documents, interviews with four senior education officers drawn from the education ministries and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), six trainers from technical training institutes and two from a youth polytechnic. Observations were made in the TVET institutions participating in this study. Data were analysed using content analysis and presented by means of description. Findings identified the following challenges: a rigid and unresponsive curriculum, inadequate methods of training and development needs assessment (T&DNA), lack of stakeholder involvement in curriculum design, inadequate numbers of specialised staff at the KICD, poor training methods, obsolete tools and insufficient equipment, political interference and multiple providers. The author concludes that the introduction of a comprehensive T&DNA is indeed a prerequisite for a relevant and adaptive T&D program; however, additional factors such as the right equipment, qualified trainers, a conducive economic, social and political environment, and sound program coordination are also essential to its success. The paper is divided into seven sections: introduction, background to the research, problem statement, methodology, findings, discussion and research conclusions.

Keywords: Technical vocational education and training, skills, Kenya, training and development needs analysis, training objectives

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