



Liberalism in Education and Employment Opportunities: A Reflection on Higher Learning Education and the Actual Labour Market in Tanzania

Godson Robert Mtallo¹ & Josephine Philip Churk²

¹Department of Business Administration

²Campus Director

College of Business Education, Tanzania

Email: godsonmtallo@gmail.com

Abstract: *This study examines the alignment between higher learning education and the labour market in Tanzania. The shift from a socialist ideology to a free-market economy, coupled with technological advancements and increased competition in the East African community, has led to a scarcity of employment opportunities. The current education system needs to adapt to the changing needs of the workforce and foster self-reliance and creativity. The study aims to assess the influence of liberalism on higher education and employment opportunities in Tanzania. Specifically, the study assesses the alignment of higher learning institutions' curricula with employment opportunities in Tanzania. The study utilizes a mixed research approach, including a survey of graduates. The findings reveal a skills gap in higher education curricula and employment opportunities in Tanzania. The findings contribute to evidence-based strategies and policies that improve graduates' employability and labour-market success. The study concludes that higher learning institutions should provide appropriate training to enable graduates to acquire employment skills. Also, the government should address the unemployment problem among graduates in the country by investing in projects that offer youth employment.*

Keywords: Liberalism in Education, Employment Opportunities, Labour Market, Higher Learning Education, Tanzania

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1. Introduction

After independence, Tanzania launched a policy of Socialism and Self-reliance that worked to transform the nation from a colonial mentality to self-governance (Nyerere, 1967). Elites who managed to get an education had free and assured opportunities for employment in nation-building. This happened when there were many opportunities, while the nation had a small elite to cover them all (Sanga, 2016). However, the country has grown, the population is huge, and employment opportunities are becoming scarce (Amani,

2017), which can also be regarded as a global crisis. The advancement of technology reduces some opportunities, which are replaced by machines, leaving white-collar jobs no longer readily available to everybody in the government sector. Also, the new integration in the East African community is expected to increase competition for employment opportunities among the countries. Thus, the mentality among Tanzanian graduates should now shift from readily available employment to a self-reliant struggle for employment, with much creativity. Although the unemployment crisis requires collective action by the

government and development partners, initial interventions within the country are needed. Attitudes should shift from what was seen as education for employment to education for self-employment, which requires a new curriculum structure at all levels of education. This educational approach should be launched and developed from lower to higher levels of education, reflected in the curriculum. This paper aims to assess the current situation in higher education institutions in comparison with actual employment opportunities in society, based on practical experience. This assessment will propose a way forward into the fulfilment of the vision of the government on attaining a well-educated and learned society, which requires the country to “brace itself to attain creativity, innovativeness and a high level of quality education to respond to development challenges and effectively compete regionally and internationally” (TDV 2025). The nation is now in a free-market, liberal economy where opportunities are created, developed, and accrued through vigorous effort. The young generation should be taught and trained to live in a liberal world.

The connection between Tanzanian employment opportunities and tertiary education warrants research, especially the shift from an education-for-employment mentality to an education-for-self-employment spirit. In the previous socialist regime, job opportunities for the educated population were abundant due to the limited population base and available vacancies (Sanga, 2016). However, the country's development and the general shortage of job opportunities necessitate a change of mind, urging graduates to become entrepreneurs (Amani, 2017). The research aims to assess the current state of universities and to provide recommendations for restructuring the curriculum to foster a spirit of self-employment (Mbise, 2014). Taking on a liberal education approach and equipping the emerging generation with the abilities necessary in an innovative and competitive world is the key to Tanzania's development vision under the Tanzanian Development Vision 2025 (TDV 2025, as cited in Amani, 2017). Faced with this research gap, the study aims to guide strategies that can help graduates thrive in a dynamic work environment.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The shift from a socialist ideology to a free-market economy in Tanzania, coupled with advances in technology and increased competition within the East African community, has led to a decline in employment opportunities (Amani, 2017). This has presented a pressing challenge for higher education institutions as they seek to prepare graduates for the job market. While the nation's education system worked to provide assured career opportunities to a select few in the past (Sanga, 2016), the current scenario demands a change in mindset from expecting ready jobs to acquiring self-reliance and innovation (TDV 2025).

The problem is the disconnect between the curriculum offered by higher education institutions and the experiential labour market needs. The education system needs to address the new needs of the workforce, not only employability but also entrepreneurship and self-employment skills. There is currently a mismatch between the skills acquired through liberal education and those required by employers, leading to high levels of unemployment among graduates (Amani, 2017).

By examining the existing mismatch between higher education and the labour market, this research proposes recommendations to improve the curriculum and enhance graduates' preparedness to meet the demands of Tanzania's changing employment landscape.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the role of liberalism in education for self-employment in Tanzania. This general objective will be achieved through the following specific objective:

To assess the alignment of higher learning institution curricula with the current employment opportunities in Tanzania

1.3 Specific Question

This research aims to address the following question:

To what extent do higher learning institutions' curricula align with the employment opportunities in Tanzania?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study aims to raise thinking to a new level beyond traditional thinking, encouraging students to study to secure decent jobs. The new thinking will encourage students to study to obtain a proper education for their personal and national development by working hard to achieve these goals. This will help address the psychological problem of students blaming the government for their failure to be employed and to accept their fate and struggle.

The study will serve as a foundation for enlightenment to address employment challenges in the country. Also, it will formulate ways to assist higher learning institutions in preparing their curricula to align with the principles of self-reliance. This will be achieved by changing the teaching and learning materials to focus on practical education rather than theoretical perspectives. Instead of continuing with traditional teaching and learning, where learners focus on preparing for white-collar jobs, institutions will be trained to prepare their students for blue-collar, pink-collar, and even “black-collar” jobs (a new job style).

The study will link the development stakeholders, the government through its sectors, individuals, private organisations, and institutions, on the harmonisation towards developmental plans for the country. This will be achieved through cross-cutting opportunities prepared by all of them, which will be readily available to job and opportunity seekers.

2. Literature Review

The alignment between higher learning institutions' curricula and the skills demanded by the labour market is a critical factor in ensuring graduates' employability and successful transition into the workforce. This comprehensive literature review aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the existing research on the relationship between higher education and the labour market in Tanzania, organized thematically around the following themes:

2.1 Skill Mismatch Between Higher Learning Institutions and Labour Market Demands

Evidence indicates a significant gap between the skills acquired through higher education curricula and those required in the Tanzanian labour market. Chachage (2016) observed a rising mismatch between the skills offered by higher education and those needed in the labour market, particularly in areas such as engineering and business. Similarly, Bulut (2018) conducted a case study in Sub-Saharan Africa and Tanzania, and determined that the skills gained in institutions of higher education were not adequately aligned with the demands of the labour market. The study found gaps in technical and practical skills, as well as a lack of focus on entrepreneurship and innovation, both of which negatively affected graduates' employability.

Despite such research, a knowledge gap persists regarding the extent of skill mismatch in specific fields or industries in Tanzania. Subsequent research should aim to conduct detailed studies to assess the alignment between tertiary curricula and the special skills demanded by the labour market across sectors. This would provide valuable information for curriculum updates and help curb the skill deficits faced by Tanzanian graduates.

2.2 Concluding Remarks

This review of the literature has presented the alignment of higher education curricula with the needs of the labour market in Tanzania and the role of liberal education in enhancing graduates' employability in response to these new needs. Filling these gaps would contribute to evidence-informed policy and strategy development that enhances graduates' employability and labour-market achievement.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

One of the most suitable theoretical frameworks to guide the study examining the congruence of higher education with the Tanzanian labour market and the effect of liberal education on graduates' employability is the Human Capital Theory. The Human Capital Theory, developed by economists Theodore Shultz and Gary Becker during the 1960s, emphasizes that investments in education and skills acquisition are necessary to enhance individuals' human capital, increase their employability, and raise their earnings (Becker, 1964). The theory provides a holistic framework for understanding the relationship among higher education, skills acquisition, and labour market performance.

In Tanzania, applying the Human Capital Theory would enable one to examine the extent to which the curricula offered by institutions of higher education align with the skills demanded by the labour market. According to the theory, individuals who achieve higher levels of education and the skills that accompany it are more likely to have improved employability. Therefore, assessing the alignment of the curriculum with the labour-market skills Tanzanian labour demands would provide insights into whether higher education is effective in boosting the human capital and employability of graduates.

Aside from this, Human Capital Theory can also be used to analyze the potential economic returns from investing in liberal education. Liberal education, through its emphasis on transferable skills, critical thinking, and adaptability, is argued to contribute to the accumulation of human capital among individuals (Rothwell, 2017). By investigating the influence of liberal education on graduate employability, the study can reveal how the acquisition of these skills enhances human capital and labour-market outcomes in Tanzania.

To conclude, the Human Capital Theory is a relevant and comprehensive framework for guiding the study. It allows for an examination of the congruence between higher learning education and the labour market, and of the influence of liberal education on employability. The theory provides a general understanding of the relationship between education, skills acquisition, and labour market performance in Tanzania.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In this study, the independent variables are the Higher Learning Institution Curriculum and Liberal Education Graduates, whereas the dependent variable is employment opportunities. To illustrate these independent variables, the Higher Learning Institution Curriculum is explained in terms of quality, relevance, and effectiveness. Also, Liberal Education Graduates

are described in terms of problem-solving skills, workforce readiness, and adaptability. Both independent variables are said to influence employment opportunities, as measured by unemployment rates. The

diagram below illustrates the study's assumption regarding the relationship between the liberal education curriculum and employment opportunities in Tanzania.

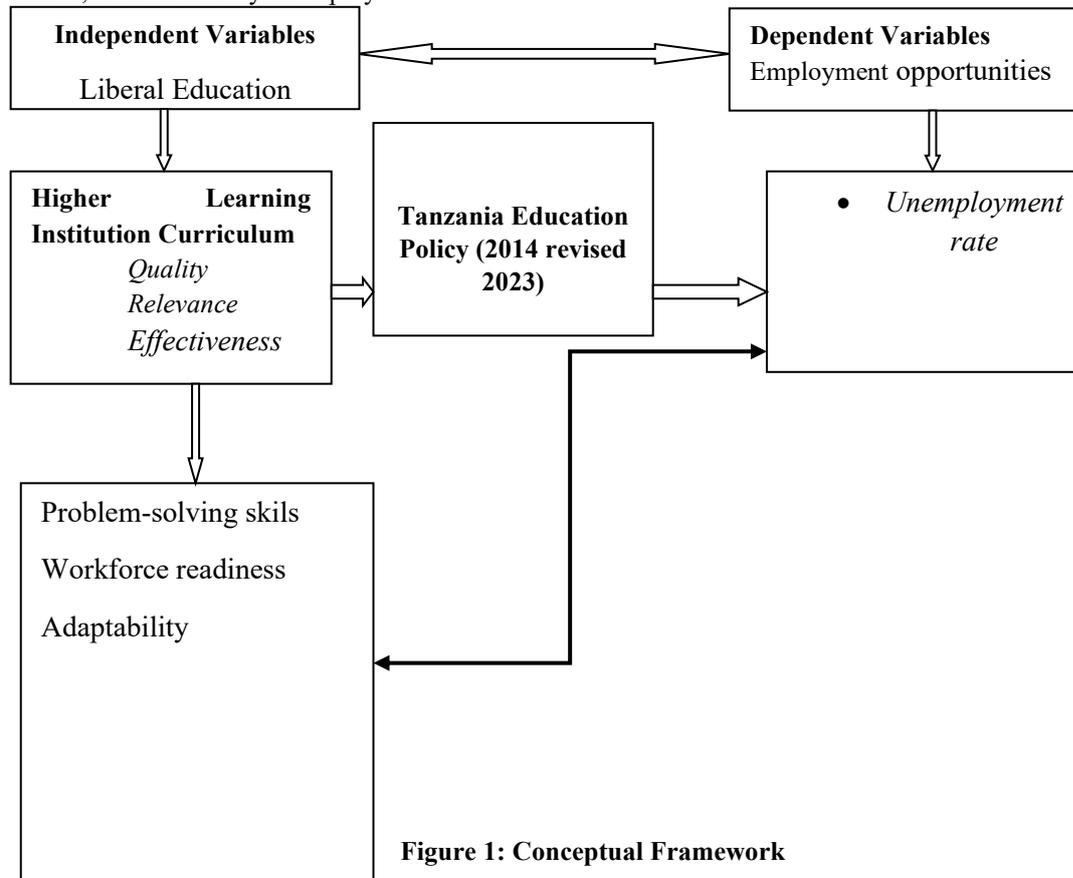


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

The study was conducted at three institutions of higher learning: the University of Dodoma (UDOM), the College of Business Education (CBE), and Saint John's University of Tanzania (SJUT), all located in Dodoma City. These institutions are selected based on the criteria of being giant higher learning institutions with many youths graduating annually and on the demand for job opportunities upon graduation (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2014). The study applies a quantitative approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) involving a survey of graduates to assess the alignment of higher education curricula with current employment opportunities in Tanzania. The list of names and mobile contacts of 2021 graduates was obtained from the academic offices of the three higher learning institutions available in Dodoma City, namely the University of Dodoma, the College of Business Education, and the Saint John's University of Tanzania (Tanzania Higher Education Commission, 2021), which constitute the study population. The survey employed a telephone-administered questionnaire since graduates were away from the institutions after graduation. The 2021 graduates were selected deliberately because they

had spent at least 1 year out of the education system after graduation and thus represent the relevant category to study their experiences of job searching and the availability of employment opportunities after graduation (Kumar, 2019). This study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. The sample for this study comprised 200 graduate students from three selected higher education institutions, whereas the formula for an unknown population was applied. For the sample size calculation of an unknown population size, the formula used was: $n = \frac{z^2 \cdot [p \cdot q]}{d^2}$, whereas n is the sample size, P is the estimated proportion of the study variable or construct based on previous studies or pilot studies (70%), $q = 1 - P$ (30%), and d is the margin of error (5%). z is the Z-score or a standard normal deviation corresponding to (100%, $\alpha/2\%$), where α refers to the significance level or the probability of making a type I error. The z-scores for different significance levels are 1.96 for 5%, 1.28 for 10%, and 2.58 for 1%.

The survey method was chosen because it allows researchers to collect a large amount of data on the alignment of higher education curricula with current

employment opportunities in Tanzania, as well as the implications of liberal education graduates for employment opportunities in Tanzania. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were used to present the distribution of data from the study sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Bar graphs were also used to display descriptive statistics. On the other hand, the chi-square statistic was used in inferential statistics to measure the association between variables. A p-value less than 0.05 was considered significant, indicating that the factor was associated with labour market demand. The analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Social-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study examined several demographic variables, including age, gender, institution attended, educational qualification, field of study, employment status, and the time for which a participant has been seeking employment, as shown in Table 1 below. This section provides an overview of the respondents' demographic profile and provides insight into the distribution of important demographic variables within the study population.

In terms of gender representation, the data reveal a notable balance, with the majority of respondents male (55.1%) and females accounting for a slightly smaller proportion (44.8%). In Tanzanian perspectives, social and cultural factors such as early marriages and household responsibilities limit girls' education and favour boys' education, a situation which may cause barriers to employment and career opportunities. However, the study reveals significant improvements in women's and girls' empowerment regarding educational access. Research shows that girls' access to education remains a challenge in some parts of Tanzania. For example, Mollel and Chong (2017: p121) argue that "Early marriage, traditional ceremonies (unyago), male preference, social perception, and social roles are among the key socio-cultural factors that hinder girls' education in Mtwara District in Tanzania". Study reveals that the percentage of girls completing a full secondary education was extremely low, 0.8% in 2010 (Mollel & Chong, 2017). However, after the Tanzanian government's 2016 efforts to remove secondary school tuition and make secondary education mandatory, a significant 4% increase in the number of girls who completed secondary education in 2015 was observed (Lianyu & Msafiri, 2022). This also implies a significant increase in the number of girls who have the opportunity to join tertiary education.

Table 1: Social demographic characteristics of respondents

		N	%
Age	Under 25	57	32.0%
	25 – 30	87	48.9%
	31 – 35	15	8.4%
	Over 35	19	10.7%
Gender	Male	98	55.1%
	Female	80	44.9%
Name of Institution Attended	CBE	73	41.0%
	UDOM	48	27.0%
	ST JOHN	57	32.0%
Degree/Diploma Earned	Certificate	1	0.6%
	Diploma	50	28.1%
	Degree	125	70.2%
	Masters	2	1.1%
	PhD	0	0.0%
Field of Study	Business administration	64	36.0%
	Marketing	7	3.9%
	Procurement and supply management	5	2.8%
	Human resource management	7	3.9%
	Education	55	30.9%
	Accountancy	4	2.2%
	ICT	4	2.2%
	Health	11	6.2%
	Others	21	11.8%
Current Employment Status	Employed	29	16.3%

	Self-employed	57	32.0%
	Unemployed	75	42.1%
	Further studies	17	9.6%
If employed, is your current job related to your field of study	Yes	67	67.0%
	No	33	33.0%
If unemployed, how long have you been actively seeking employment	Less than 3 months	29	25.0%
	3 - 6 months	21	18.1%
	7 - 12 months	24	20.7%
	Over 12 months	42	36.2%

Examining the educational qualifications of respondents, the data revealed that most respondents (70.2%) have a degree-level qualification, whereas certificate-level qualifications accounted for 0.6%. It was also seen that most respondents are unemployed (42.1%). The high rate of educated respondents who remain unemployed suggests a mismatch between what is taught in class and the employment opportunities available in the job market. A similar experience was found in other research. Studies show that academicians and curriculum developers are under constant pressure to equip students with skills that meet market requirements, especially in this era of technological advancement (Almaleh et al., 2019). This pressure put them under continuous pressure to update the skills required in the job market.

Regarding institutions, 41% of respondents were from CBE, while 32% and 27% were from SJUT and UDOM, respectively. Furthermore, it was observed that 36.2% of respondents have been seeking employment for over 12 months, 20.7% for 7-12 months, 18.1% for 3-6 months, and 25% for less than 3 months. This implies that limited job opportunities and high

competition reduce the likelihood of employment. It may also mean the skill mismatch between the employment seekers and the curriculum used for education. Similarly, studies conducted in Africa reveal that, as global market demand changes in the current era, employers fail to fill open positions due to a lack of technical skills and workplace competencies, including teamwork and communication (Bhorat, Naidoo, and Ewinyu, 2017).

4.2 The alignment of higher learning institutions' curricula with the current employment opportunities in Tanzania

The results of aligning higher learning institutions' curricula with **current employment opportunities in Tanzania** are shown in Table 2 below. The academic curriculum's relevance to the current job role was seen as relevant by 31.5% of respondents. 27.5% of respondents indicated that the academic curriculum was very relevant, while 26.4%, 5.6%, and 9.0% indicated it was neutral, irrelevant, or very irrelevant, respectively.

Table 2: The extent to which the curricula offered by higher learning institutions align with labour market demand

		N	%
How would you rate the relevance of your academic curriculum to your current job role	Very relevant	49	27.5%
	Relevant	56	31.5%
	Neutral	47	26.4%
	Irrelevant	10	5.6%
	Very Irrelevant	16	9.0%
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies are directly applicable to my current job."	Strongly agree	52	29.2%
	Agree	61	34.3%
	Neutral	46	25.8%
	Disagree	10	5.6%
	Strongly disagree	9	5.1%
Which of the following skills did you find most useful in your current job? (Select all)	Technical skills	25	14.0%

that apply)	Communication skills	43	24.2%
	Problem-solving skills	7	3.9%
	Analytical skills	5	2.8%
	Leadership skills	5	2.8%
	Teamwork	20	11.2%
	All of the above	60	33.7%
	Others	13	7.3%
	In your opinion, which areas of your curriculum were lacking or need improvement to meet the labour market demands?	Practical training/internships	44
Industry-specific courses		8	4.5%
Soft skills (e.g., communication)		10	5.6%
Technology and digital skills		19	10.7%
Research and analytical skills		9	5.1%
Entrepreneurship skills		22	12.4%
All of the above		57	32.0%
Others		9	5.1%
Have you undertaken any additional training or certification after graduation to improve your employability?	Yes	97	54.5%
	No	81	45.5%
If YES, please specify the type of additional training or certification: If NO, skip this question	Technical certification	18	10.1%
	Professional development	25	14.0%
	Online courses	25	14.0%
	Workshops/seminars	34	19.1%
	Others	76	42.7%

The above finding implies that, while just above half of the respondents, 31.5% and 27.5% suggest that the curriculum used was relevant and very relevant, respectively, a significant number of job seekers (41%) viewed that the curriculum used had a skills gap and that it has not prepared them to the job market and thus lack skills needed by employers. Similarly, scholars noted that employers face challenges filling some positions because applicants lack the skills and competencies (Bhorat, Naidoo, and Ewinyu, 2017). The lack of required skills is a call for the government to reform the curricula used in higher learning institutions to continuously assess labour market demand in the process of preparing graduates. Millington (2017:17) argues that policy intervention will be necessary, including labour market adjustment policies to support

workers whose task content is changing, and to adapt, expand, and upgrade systems for skills development, such as upskilling, training, and education for people entering the workforce.

In terms of the extent to which respondents agree with the statement: "The skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies are directly applicable to my current job", the results were as follows. 34.3% of respondents agreed, 29.2% strongly agreed, and 25.8% were neutral. On the disagreement side, 5.6% disagreed, while 5.1% strongly disagreed. The most recommended skills were communication (24.2%), followed by technical (14.0%) and communication (11.2%). 54.5% of respondents have undertaken additional training or certification after

graduation to improve their employability, while 45.5% have not.

The above finding implies that while the majority of respondents 34.3% and 29.2% agreed and strongly agreed respectively with the statement that "The skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies are directly applicable to my current job" however, we cannot ignore a significant number 36.5% of respondents who still have the view that the curriculum lacks significant skills that are directly applicable to their current job. However, it should be noted that "employer-driven lists do not address the full picture of what is required by the graduate facing the prospect of the labour market" (Bridgestock, 2009, p. 34). This notion reflects the view that employer requirements are not the only solution to graduate employability; the curriculum review is also essential. Studies show that employability focuses primarily on technical skills and attributes considered required for graduates to be considered work-ready, to a broader notion encompassing non-technical areas such as networking (Bridgestock, 2017).

The findings also reveal that more than half of respondents (54.5%) have attended additional training after graduation to improve their employability, and the majority (24.2%) suggest that communication skills are the recommended skill for improvement to meet labour market demands. This finding implies that graduates'

formal education didn't fully equip them with the specific skills employers require, especially in fields that demand practical or technical expertise beyond theoretical knowledge, such as communication skills. Similarly, Clokie and Fourie (2016) noted that employers believe everyone needs to be a good communicator and that communication skills are essential for a team to share information and success. However, it should be noted that communication skills are not the only factor in employability; they are an essential quality.

The study further examined the association between the curricula offered by higher learning institutions and labour market demand in Tanzania, as shown in Table 3 below. A Chi-square test for association statistics was used, and a p-value less than 0.05 was seen as significant, indicating that the factor had an association with labour market demand. Results show "the relevance of the academic curriculum to the current job role"; "The skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies are directly applicable to my current job"; "skills did you find most useful in your current job"; "areas of your curriculum were lacking, or need improvement to meet the labour market demands"; and "type of additional training or certification" had statistically significant (p-value less than 0.05) association with labour market demand.

Table 3: Association between the higher learning institutions' curricula and labour market demand

		Employment status				Chi-square	sig
		Employed		Unemployed			
		Column Count	N %	Column Count	N %		
How would you rate the relevance of your academic curriculum to your current job role	Very relevant	16	55.2%	33	22.1%	18.163	0.001
	Relevant	10	34.5%	46	30.9%		
	Neutral	3	10.3%	44	29.5%		
	Irrelevant	0	0.0%	10	6.7%		
	Very Irrelevant	0	0.0%	16	10.7%		
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies are directly applicable to my current job."	Strongly agree	13	44.8%	39	26.2%	10.872	0.028
	Agree	13	44.8%	48	32.2%		
	Neutral	2	6.9%	44	29.5%		
	Disagree	1	3.4%	9	6.0%		
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	9	6.0%		
Which of the following skills did you find most useful in your current job? (Select all that apply)	Technical skills	2	6.9%	23	15.4%	15.121	0.004
	Communication skills	3	10.3%	40	26.8%		
	Problem-solving skills	1	3.4%	6	4.0%		
	Analytical skills	0	0.0%	5	3.4%		
	Leadership skills	1	3.4%	4	2.7%		
	Teamwork	2	6.9%	18	12.1%		
	All of the above	20	69.0%	40	26.8%		
	Others	0	0.0%	13	8.7%		
In your opinion, which areas of your curriculum were lacking or need improvement to meet the labour market demands?	Practical training/internships	4	13.8%	40	26.8%		
	Industry-specific courses	0	0.0%	8	5.4%		

	Soft skills (e.g., communication)	1	3.4%	9	6.0%	20.928	0.004
	Technology and digital skills	2	6.9%	17	11.4%		
	Research and analytical skills	2	6.9%	7	4.7%		
	Entrepreneurship skills	6	20.7%	16	10.7%		
	All of the above	13	44.8%	44	29.5%		
	Others	1	3.4%	8	5.4%		
Have you undertaken any additional training or certification after graduation to improve your employability?	Yes	23	79.3%	74	49.7%	8.112	0.323
	No	6	20.7%	75	50.3%		
If YES, please specify the type of additional training or certification: If NO, skip this question	Technical certification	1	3.4%	17	11.4%	8.604	0.003
	Professional development	8	27.6%	17	11.4%		
	Online courses	7	24.1%	18	12.1%		
	Workshops/seminars	8	27.6%	26	17.4%		
	Others	5	17.2%	71	47.7%		

The findings above reveal a significant association between the higher learning institutions' curricula and labour market demand, with a p-value less than 0.05; however, only 16% of the respondents were employed while 42% were unemployed, as indicated in the table below, which implies that curriculum is not the only factor for increasing employment opportunities. Other issues, such as mismatches in skills and limited access to employment opportunities, need to be considered. This finding is supported by Clokie and Fourie (2016: p. 1), who noted that “local employers value communication competencies highly when recruiting new graduates, and specific communication skills required in an industry reflect course content”. Also,

Taghvaei (2023) noted that “low skills and technical incompetence of graduates, which constitute barriers to employment and entrepreneurship in Nigeria”. This implies that colleges and universities should provide appropriate training to enable graduates to acquire employment skills. Also, the government should address the unemployment problem among graduates by investing in projects that create youth employment.

The finding reveals that 32% of respondents reported that their curriculum needs improvement to meet labour market demand. In comparison, 25% had a view that they require practical training/ internship skills, as indicated in Figure 2 below:

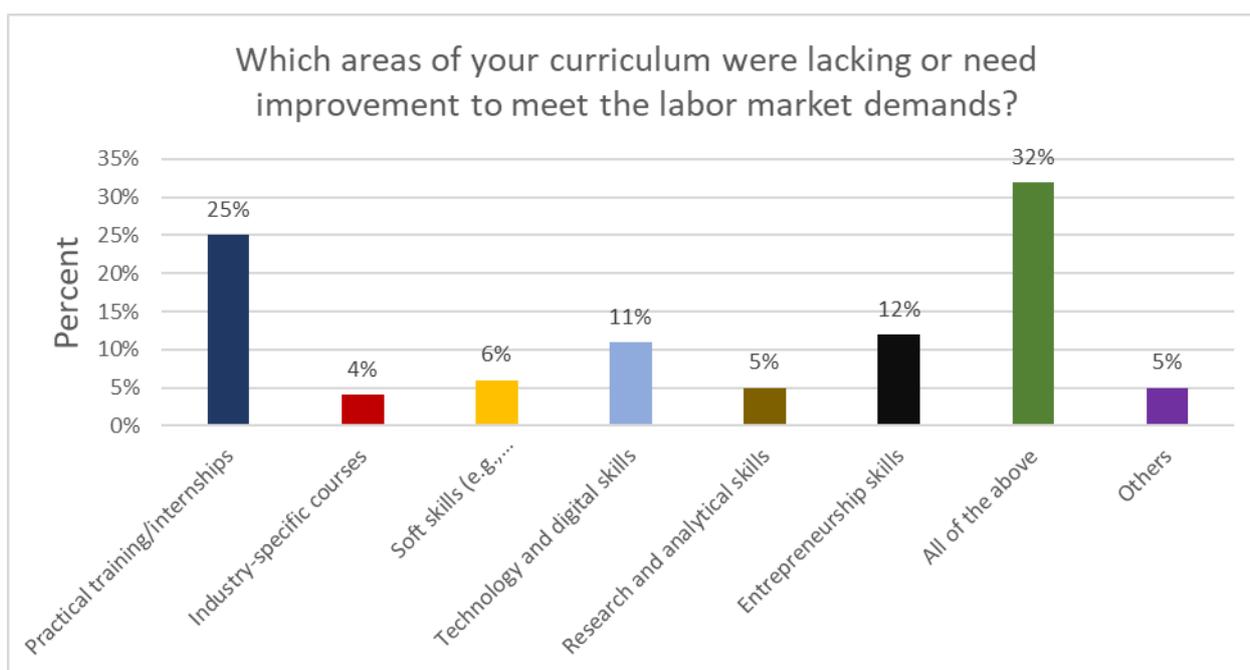


Figure 2: Areas that need improvement in the curriculum to meet labour market demand

The above finding implies that the curriculum for higher learning institutions in the study area requires refinement, suggesting the inclusion of additional skills such as practical training, entrepreneurship, technology and digital skills, soft skills, research and analytical skills, and industry-specific courses. These extra skills are key to reducing the potential skills gap in the labour market demand. Similarly, Nisha and Rajasekaran (2018) argue that grooming students in soft skills equips them with the employability skills required in the workplace, especially interpersonal skills. Such practice gives graduates the confidence to stand out to potential employers and make themselves more attractive candidates.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the alignment between higher learning education and the labour market in Tanzania. The findings show that there are skills gaps in the higher education curriculum for employment opportunities in Tanzania. In this regard, some skills should be incorporated into higher education curricula to reduce the potential skills gap in the labour market. These skills include practical training, entrepreneurship, technology and digital skills, soft skills, research and analytical skills, and industry-specific courses. These results align with the results from previous studies in many Sub-Saharan African countries. The study informs the body of knowledge on the skills employers require, which should now be incorporated into higher education for learners. Despite the small sample in this study, the results provide a clear picture of the current situation in higher education in Tanzania and Sub-Saharan Africa, thereby calling for policy and curriculum reforms. Future studies may consider expanding the geographic scope by including universities across the country, thereby achieving a larger sample. The government is also advised to address the unemployment situation among graduates in the country by investing in projects that offer employment to youths.

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