



The Role of Curriculum Development by TVET Institutions in Advancing Social Development in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: The cornerstone of social development is anchored in the effectiveness of curriculum development. Education and curriculum development are not merely processes of knowledge acquisition; rather, they serve as transformative social forces that shape ethical, competent, and responsible individuals while fostering cohesive, inclusive, and resilient communities. Consequently, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions have a responsibility to develop a competency-based curricula responsive to labour market needs. However, most studies conceptualize the role of TVET in curriculum development as an instrument for employment-related outcomes rather than social development. This study examined the role of TVET institutions in curriculum development in advancing social development in Uasin Gishu County using a descriptive survey design. The target population included 225 trainers in TVET institutions in Uasin Gishu County. The study used Slovin's formula to calculate a sample size of 144 trainers using simple random technique. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using inferential statistics in SPSS version 30. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.450$) indicated that curriculum development explained 45.0% of the variation in social development. The findings further showed that curriculum development had a statistically significant positive effect on social development in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya ($B = 0.822$, $t = 9.452$, $p < 0.001$). The study concludes that curriculum development is a critical mechanism through which TVET institutions contribute to social development. It recommends that TVET institutions continuously review and align curricula with emerging socioeconomic dynamics and deliberately integrate cross-cutting competencies to prepare graduates to contribute effectively to inclusive and sustainable social development.

Keywords: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Curriculum development, Social development, Uasin Gishu County.

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1. Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) functions as a unifying force, empowering communities to collaboratively drive lasting social change and sustainable development (Moodie, Wheelahan, & Lavigne, 2019). Therefore, education and curriculum development are not

merely processes of knowledge acquisition; rather, they are catalytic in shaping ethical, competent, and responsible individuals while fostering cohesive, inclusive, and resilient communities. Consequently, TVET institutions have a responsibility to design, review, and implement demand-driven and competency-based curricula that are flexible to labour market needs (Massi, Anangisye, & Sarakikya, 2026).

In the context of TVET, social development refers to the process through which individuals acquire knowledge, competencies, values, attitudes, and social capacities that enable them to participate effectively in economic, community, and national development (Tikly, 2013). It extends beyond employment and income generation to encompass social inclusion, gender equity, civic participation, improved livelihoods, social cohesion, entrepreneurship, and the ability of individuals to contribute positively to their communities. TVET, therefore, serves as an important mechanism for social development because it equips learners with practical and transferable competencies that enhance their capacity to secure employment, create enterprises, participate in productive activities, and respond to changing socioeconomic conditions. In this regard, effective curriculum development is important because the competencies and values embedded in curricula influence the degree to which graduates can contribute to both economic and social transformation (Yorke & Knight, 2006). The effectiveness of TVET curricula, therefore, has implications for both individual development and broader societal transformation.

TVET institutions enhance curriculum development by identifying labour-market and societal needs, participating in curriculum design and review, implementing competency-based training, and evaluating the relevance of training programs. Their proximity to trainees, employers, industries, and local communities enables them to identify emerging skills requirements and incorporate these requirements into training programs. According to Ortiz-Terrinches, Sánchez-Cabrero, and Sandoval-Mena (2026), TVET institutions have a responsibility to design, review, and implement demand-driven and competency-based curricula that respond to labour-market needs. Such responsiveness ensures that training remains relevant to technological, economic, and occupational changes. The relationship between curriculum development and social development can therefore be understood through the competencies and opportunities that education provides to individuals. Kariuki and Kiende (2024) argue that while integrating social cohesion into TVET curricula has positive effects, implementation remains inconsistent because many institutions lack adequate curriculum support and staff capacity. Thus, Kenya continues to experience persistent youth unemployment, underemployment, social exclusion, and widening socioeconomic disparities that hinder inclusive and sustainable development. According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2025), Kenya's youth unemployment rate stood at 15.5% in 2024, while 27.8% of young people were classified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), indicating that a major proportion of the youth remain excluded from productive economic and social participation.

This conceptualization recognizes that the success of TVET should be measured by the number of graduates produced and the extent to which graduates are able to input their competencies to improve their livelihoods and promote the development of their communities and the wider economy. However, despite this consensus, several studies present findings that broaden or challenge the dominant employability perspective. For example, Ngware et al. (2022) attributed the acquisition of whole youth development skills primarily to institutional resources; Biswal, Sahoo, and Mishra (2024) found that social stigma and cultural exclusion remained the greatest barriers to vocational participation among tribal populations in India despite government investment. These contrasting findings imply that social development outcomes cannot be explained solely by institutional capacity but are also shaped by broader social and cultural contexts. Thus, this study examined the role of curriculum development by TVET institutions in advancing social development in Uasin Gishu County.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework refers to a structured set of concepts, theories, and principles that guide the study by providing a foundation for understanding the relationships between variables (Bryman, 2023). This study was grounded in Human Capital Theory, as introduced by economists Gary Becker (1993) and Theodore Schultz (1961), which emphasizes that education and training are investments in human capital, enhancing individual skills and capabilities. In the context of TVET, this theory highlights how vocational education empowers individuals with the knowledge and practical skills necessary for employment, thereby fostering social mobility, reducing inequalities, and promoting social inclusion. Human Capital Theory is particularly relevant to the role of curriculum development in advancing social development because the curriculum determines the knowledge, skills, competencies, values, and attitudes that learners acquire through TVET. Curriculum development therefore provides the mechanism through which TVET institutions align training with labour-market requirements, emerging technologies, community needs, and national development priorities (Kana & Letaba, 2024). A relevant and responsive TVET curriculum equips learners with practical and transferable skills that can improve access to employment and self-employment, enhance livelihoods, and increase participation in productive economic activities.

2.2 Curriculum Development by TVET Institutions and Social Development

Abbas and Cheema (2026) found that integrating sustainability competencies into Pakistan Vocational curricula significantly enhanced institutional outcomes, despite local contextual constraints. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was used, where 120 TVET institutions were surveyed. The study showed that the sustainability of the TVET is positively correlated with the effectiveness of the programs through curricula reforms that enhance competency. Tao et al.(2024) showed that integrating Taylorist efficiency with connectivist learning in the Thai TVET programs creates a practical course model that substantially elevates the students' operational proficiency.

Recent literature underscores the pivotal role of educator agency in modernizing TVET curricula. Hasan, Hasnat, and Khandakar (2026) demonstrated that in Bangladesh, curriculum innovation is driven by competency mapping, Recognition of Prior learning, and digital pedagogy, thus enhancing self-efficacy by the educator. The relationship promotes professional development and peer mentoring. Contrarily, Kana and Letaba (2024) identified major structural constraints within South African TVET institutions, where rigid, top-down directives from the Ministry of Higher Education marginalized lecturers, hence impeding their capacity to adapt training programs for Fourth Revolution Workforce demands

Abba (2024) examined the intersection of TVET curricula and student well-being among agricultural educational cohorts in Nigeria, thus expanding the holistic nature of vocational education. Thematic analysis identified three

critical imperatives: cultivating social engagement, delivering robust academic support, and embedding wellness content. Additionally, the study encourages a holistic pedagogical framework that couples diverse instructional methodologies with comprehensive institutional support services to enhance the vocational learning experience.

Muchira et al. (2023) assessed TVET institutions' curriculum in Kenya, where uneven integration of soft and technical skills, compounded by resource deficits and outdated equipment, severely restricted the practical skills acquisition necessary for youth employment. To mitigate these systemic barriers, Motuka (2024) identifies adequate funding, qualified instructional staff, and strict curriculum alignment with evolving labor market demands as foundational determinants of a responsive TVET ecosystem. Ultimately, Moustafa et al. (2023) corroborate that strategic curriculum implementation, which involves the integration of emerging technologies and industry-driven practical training, serves as the key component of enhancing graduate employability.

3. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey design to examine the current state of TVET in Uasin Gishu County and its contribution to economic growth and social development. The findings were based on trainers' perceptions of the impact of curriculum development rather than objective downstream measures of social development. The study therefore targeted all 8 public TVET institutions and 225 trainers across the six sub-counties of Uasin Gishu County, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Target population

Institutions	Trainers
Ziwa Technical Training Institute	23
Moiben Technical Training Institute	22
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	35
Ngeria Technical Training Institute	20
Kipkabus Technical Training Institute	26
Turbo Technical Training Institute	28
Koshin Technical Training Institute	24
Eldoret National Polytechnic	47
Total	225

Source: (Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority, 2021)

The study employed Slovin's formula to determine the required sample size of TVET trainers at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. All TVET institutions in the County were included through a census technique, while trainers were selected using simple random sampling.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where

- N is the total population,
- e is the margin of error

To calculate the sample size using a 5% margin of error (e=0.05):

Using Slovin's formula

$$n = \frac{225}{1+225 \cdot (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{225}{1.5625} = 144$$

So, the sample size needed is 144 trainers.

Table 2: Sample Size

Institutions	Trainers
Ziwa Technical Training Institute	15
Moiben Technical Training Institute	14
Rift Valley Technical Training Institute	22
Ngeria Technical Training Institute	13
Kipkabus Technical Training Institute	17
Turbo Technical Training Institute	18
Koshin Technical Training Institute	15
Eldoret National Polytechnic	30
Total	144

Source: (Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority, 2021)

A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect data. To ensure a systematic and ethical data collection process, the researcher first obtained the necessary approvals from University of Eldoret, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Kenya, and the Uasin Gishu County government. The completed questionnaires were cleaned, coded, and analyzed using inferential statistics, including simple linear regression, to estimate the magnitude and direction of the relationship between curriculum development and social development.

The regression model was specified as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 1}$$

Where: Y = social development; β_0 = constant; β_1 = regression coefficient; X_1 = curriculum development; and ε = error term

This study will address several ethical considerations to protect participants' rights, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary, respect local cultures, seeking approval from

relevant ethical bodies, and participants can withdraw or skip questions without consequence and ensure research integrity

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Regression Analysis

The study obtained 111 valid responses from the 144 sampled trainers, representing a response rate of 77.1%. The results in Table 3 present the model summary of the simple linear regression analysis. Curriculum development explained 45.0% of the variation in social development in Uasin Gishu County ($R^2 = 0.450$). The remaining 55.0% was attributable to other factors not included in the model.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.671 ^a	.450	.445	.460	1.940

a. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Development

b. Dependent Variable: Social development in Uasin Gishu County

Source: Research Data, (2025)

Finally, the study findings in the table indicated that the independent variables explain significantly more variation than what would be expected by chance, as evidenced by an F ratio of 89.347 with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ (level of

significance). Thus, the model was fit to predict social development in Uasin Gishu County using Curriculum Development as a role of TVET. The regression model is a good fit for the data.

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.899	1	18.899	89.347	.000 ^b
	Residual	23.057	109	.212		
	Total	41.956	110			

a. Dependent Variable: Social development in Uasin Gishu County

b. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Development

Source: Research Data (2025)

The coefficients table provides insights into the contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable in a simple regression model, as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	.578	.340		1.699	.092
Curr Deve	.822	.087	.671	9.452	.000

Dependent Variable: Social development in Uasin Gishu County

Findings in Table 5 showed that curriculum development provided by TVET has a statistically significant role in advancing social development in Uasin Gishu County ($B = 0.822$, $t = 9.452$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that each additional unit of curriculum development provided by TVET is associated with a 0.822-unit increase in social development in Uasin Gishu County. Since the t-statistic is significant, the study concludes that curriculum development provided by TVET has a statistically significant effect on advancing social development in Uasin Gishu County. These findings are supported by Muchira et al. (2023), UNESCO-UNEVOC (2023), and Abba (2024) that a well-designed TVET curriculum significantly contributes to social development and is underpinned by the Human Capital Theory.

From the Human Capital Theory perspective, TVET curriculum development contributes directly to social development by enhancing employability, reducing unemployment, and fostering entrepreneurship among youth (Afeti, 2022). Furthermore, embedding social competencies within curricula strengthens workplace values such as accountability, cooperation, and respect, which are crucial for building inclusive, cohesive communities (UNESCO, African Union, & UNICEF, 2025).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that curriculum development provided by TVET institutions has a statistically significant effect on advancing social development in

Uasin Gishu County. By aligning curricula with local and national labour-market needs, TVET institutions increase the stock of human capital, ensuring that graduates possess relevant skills that support both economic productivity and social cohesion. The implication is that curriculum development in TVET is not only about technical skills transfer but also about cultivating holistic human capital that supports sustainable social development. Human Capital Theory thus provides the theoretical foundation for justifying continuous investment in TVET curriculum reforms to promote employability, entrepreneurship, and social integration, thereby bridging the gap between labour markets, education, and society at large.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are presented below in a more concrete, actionable, and implementation-oriented form, while maintaining alignment with the study findings on CBET implementation, curriculum relevance, and digital transformation in TVET.

TVET institutions, TVETA, and CDACC should ensure 100% implementation of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) across all programmes through regular compliance audits, trainer retooling, and quality assurance mechanisms.

1. KICD, TVETA, and TVET institutions should revise curricula during the next review cycle to incorporate entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability, ethics, civic responsibility, and digital literacy across all programmes.

2. TVET institutions and the Ministry of Education should adopt digital assessment systems and competency-tracking platforms.

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