

Inculcating Generic Skills in the Technical Higher Education Institutions (Theis) for Youth Employment Opportunities in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) take initiatives and measures towards contributing to the production of enterprising graduates with generic skills for employment opportunities. However, the HEIs are blamed for producing graduates who fail to meet employment demands in the labour market. This contradiction brought forth this study to assess inculcating generic skills for employment opportunities in Tanzania. It specifically addressed questions such as to what extent the graduates are inculcated with generic skills? what is the relationship between pursued course programmes and the generic skills' knowledge; and what is the relationship between generic skills and youth employment opportunities among the graduates in the Technical Higher Education Institutions (THEIs)? The data were collected using a questionnaire from 300 THEIs' graduates sampled through a stratified random sampling technique. The collected data analyzed using Descriptive Statistics and Simultaneous Multiple Linear Regressions. The findings show that the majority of the surveyed graduates were inculcated with generic skills to a small extent when pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs. Although the pursued programmes had statistical significance on the knowledge of generic skills, still the same graduates lacked adequate generic skills. Finally, the generic skills were found to have positive and significant relationship with employment opportunities. The THEIs should therefore revise their curricula for inculcating generic skills adequately to their students leading to employment opportunities.

Keywords: Generic skills, Employment opportunities, THEIs

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary planet is speedily changing and is characterized with increasing longevity, high technology in production systems, larger and more integrated organizations, global connectivity, global recession, stress in daily life, competition to excel, limited resources and more demand, pervasive technological innovation, the incessant processes of globalization and institutional transformations and all these are the challenges facing everyone [1-3]. All these changes led to employment challenge worldwide.

The employment challenge worldwide is experienced as a competitive and flexible labour market [4]. The labour market is now inundated with graduates with similar qualifications competing for graduate jobs; organizations and companies are now shrinking their workforce due to unpredictable and inconsistent economies [5]. The employment challenge is currently not only based on quantity but also on quality [2]. Graduate employability has become therefore a thorny issue in the economies of developed and developing countries like Tanzania [6]. Indeed, young job-seekers around the world endure high unemployment, extended unemployment periods

and deteriorating job quality [7]. The situation for Tanzania's graduates in the labor market today seems disappointing with many of these graduates failing to gain employment or ending up working in poor conditions in the informal economy [8]. The expansion of higher education provision, globalization, and the expansion of the global economy influenced the changes in hiring needs of the employers [5].

The changes call for competent and highly qualified professionals who are transformed from routine task-centered work activities to multiform and process-centered activities [3]. The current employment requires lifelong learning,

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flexibility, creativity, emotional mastery, and ability to take on many different tasks and to learn from the experiences [1]. This implies that, graduate employability is a concept that is becoming increasingly popular in the higher education sector; with the underlying assumption that graduates need attributes other than those skills needed in the subject-specific discipline [5]. It further means that, graduates should be prepared in skills other than subject-specific discipline when in the college or university as the way of addressing the employment challenge after their graduation.

One of those skills and attributes other than subject-specific discipline mostly include Generic Skills [9]. Several studies [1,10,11,3] have shown generic skills as the significant skills to succeed and accommodate the situation of employment challenges mentioned earlier. The same studies indicate that, the generic skills play a significant role in new and complex situations, achieving goals, lifelong learning, problem solution than formulation, right decisions in uncertain and predictable circumstance.

The Generic Skills are expected to be principally obtained in HEIs. This means that, the HEIs are always anticipated to fully prepare their students in Generic Skills for facilitating employability after graduation. Research [10] supports this by stressing that, HEIs play a key role in developing appropriate strategies for a competences-based approach with learning activities defined in terms of knowledge and skills. The HEIs have responsibility for helping students gain the skills, knowledge and personal attributes required of them in the initial stages of their careers [12]. This expectation comes in the sense that, the decision to hire a graduate is based on the graduate's qualities and abilities in addition to discipline-specific knowledge and skills from their respective Higher Education Institutions [5].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Generic Skills are expected to be principally obtained by the graduates from the HEIs [10,12,5]. However, the HEIs are blamed for producing graduates who fail to meet employment demands in the labour market [13,14,2,5]. This implies that, many graduates leave HEIs without the requisite skills or competences to meet employment demands in the labour market in today's economy and society. The graduates from HEIs therefore face difficulties in securing employment mainly due to mismatches of skills and a high number of candidates for every job.

Is this claim true or not? Why does the claim contradict the efforts of different HEIs' initiatives and measures towards contributing to the production of enterprising graduates through introduction of various courses [15]? Munishi [16] likewise maintains that, many African countries including Tanzania have made significant efforts to promote HEIs with an aim of enhancing graduates' employable skills and boost economies. Furthermore, Dasmani [17] stresses that; one of the salient features of HEIs is their alignment towards

equipping graduates with employable skills through Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET). The HEIs are committed to the challenge of providing students with all the skills that enable them to respond to the ever-changing needs of contemporary society and the workplace [3].

The above literatures have shown the current employment being a challenge due to numerous changes occurring worldwide. One of the proposed solutions for such employment challenge is Generic Skills. The same literatures show the HEIs being blamed for not preparing well their students in Generic Skills in meeting the challenge of unemployment. While the HEIs are blamed, some literatures again show the efforts made by the same HEIs in producing the graduates with competencies required to tackle the unemployment challenge. These are contradictions which are not yet settled down especially in this era of globalization, science and technology.

The contradictions bring forth this study to assess the preparation of graduates in generic skills for employment opportunities by THEIs in Tanzania by specifically tackling the following questions:

- i. To what extent the graduates are inculcated with generic skills in THEIs?
- ii. What is the influence of pursued course programmes on the generic skills' knowledge among the graduates from THEIs?
- iii. What is the influence of generic skills on youth employment opportunities among the graduates in THEIs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generic skills

The Generic Skills are defined as the non-cognitive abilities, qualities, habits, personality, traits, attitudes and social graces necessary for everyday life and in employment including practicing time management, solve problems and work independently, interpersonal skills, communication skills, decision making skill, creativity/innovations and adaptability [2]. Singh and Gera [1] explain generic skill is as the skills which can be used in transversely numerous subject domains and they are learned longer than hard skills remaining through individual life. Accordingly, they include basic/fundamental skills (literacy, using technology, numerical ability etc.; people related skills (communication skills, inter-personal relationship, teamwork, etc.; personal skills (responsible, emotional mastery, resourcefulness, etc.); thinking/conceptual skills (collecting or organizing information, problem-solving, planning, learning to learn, creative skills, etc.); business related skills (enterprising and innovative); and community-related skills (skills related to civic sense).

Asonitou [11] addressed Generic Skills as teamwork and communication skills. On the other hand, Meager, Martin and Carta from Institute of Employment Studies (2011) established Generic Skills as values, beliefs and attitudes, action orientation, desire for independence, initiative and creativity, interpersonal, communication, networking, persuasion/selling, awareness of own skills gaps and awareness of own strengths, general knowledge about risks, realistic awareness of benefits, and value of weighing up employment as own career option; financial management, human resource management, market research, planning and goal setting; employment legislation, compliance with tax requirements, knowledge of potential financing sources and knowledge of potential arrangements.

In this study, the generic skills refer to basic/fundamental skills (technical, literacy, using technology, knowledge of task, numerical ability, hands-on ability); people-related skills/interpersonal qualities (Communication, inter-personal relationship, teamwork); thinking/conceptual skills (planning, collecting and organizing information, problem-solving, learning to learn, creativity); business-related skills (Innovation and enterprising); community-related skills (civic and citizenship sense/knowledge) as according to [18,1].

Employment opportunities

International Labour Organization ([ILO], 2018) denotes the first dimension of employment measurement referring to the quantity of jobs created by a youth employment intervention, with the primary indicator being the employment rate of project beneficiaries. It is one of the measurement indicators for decent work with the menu of indicators such as employment creation, status in employment, and new businesses. This study uses this ILO notion as its authoritative meaning of employment opportunities.

Technical higher education institutions (THEIs)

THEIs in Tanzania are the institutions offering course programmes which are technical in nature at undergraduate or postgraduate levels. Their course programmes are generally based on engineering, science and technology. Their course programmes include civil and irrigation engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and electronics engineering, computer engineering, mining engineering, telecommunication engineering and computer science. Other programmes include laboratory science and technology, food science and technology, architecture technology, information, communication and technology. Most of the teaching and learning process is spent in the field-work, laboratories and workshops in these Technical Higher Education Institutions.

The human capital theory

The Human Capital theory was originally developed by Schultz in 1963 and later on improved by Berker in 1964 [19]. It is noted as one of the exemplary works in economics stating that the economic benefits are obtained by individuals and

society by investing in people [20]. Education emerges constantly as one of the human capital investments apart from health and nutrition [20]. The theory further states that education provides individuals with knowledge, skills and abilities i.e. the more the individuals are educated, the more they are able to perform in their jobs for increasing productivity [19].

This study is mainly guided by the Human Capital theory. The variable “education” from the theory is termed as “generic skills” in the study at hand. On the other hand, the variable “job performance” from the theory is termed as “youth employment opportunities” in this study. The theory relates to the study in the sense that, the generic skills influence youth employment opportunities. It must be remembered that, the generic skills are obtained through education and the given skills in turn lead to youth employment opportunities after graduation.

Role of the HEIs in inculcating generic skills

Various literatures address positively the roles played by the HEIs in inculcating generic skills to their students. For instance, Olomi and Sabokwigina [15] show the efforts of different HEIs’ initiatives and measures towards contributing to the production of enterprising graduates through introduction of various courses including entrepreneurship education. Munishi [16] likewise maintains that, many African countries including Tanzania have made significant efforts to promote HEIs with an aim of enhancing graduates’ employable skills and boost economies. Furthermore, Dasmani [17] stresses that; one of the salient features of HEIs is their alignment towards equipping graduates with employable skills through Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET). The HEIs are committed to the challenge of providing students with all the skills that enable them to respond to the ever-changing needs of contemporary society and the workplace [3].

On the other hand, the HEIs are blamed not to play well their role in inculcating the generic skills. Ndyali [13] demonstrate that, the HEIs are blamed for producing graduates who fail to meet employment demands in the labour market. This implies that, many graduates leave school without the requisite skills or competences needed in today’s economy and society [13]. The HEIs fail to meet the current labour market expectations and they are blamed for producing graduates who fail to meet employment demands in the labour market [14]. The HEIs are claimed to miss qualified skills or competences needed in today’s economy and society; and they lack attributes other than those skills needed in the subject-specific discipline i.e. Generic Skills [5]. The graduates from HEIs face difficulties in securing employment mainly due to mismatches of skills and a high number of candidates for every job [2]. This means that, graduates across the world are often accused of lacking employable and generic skills.

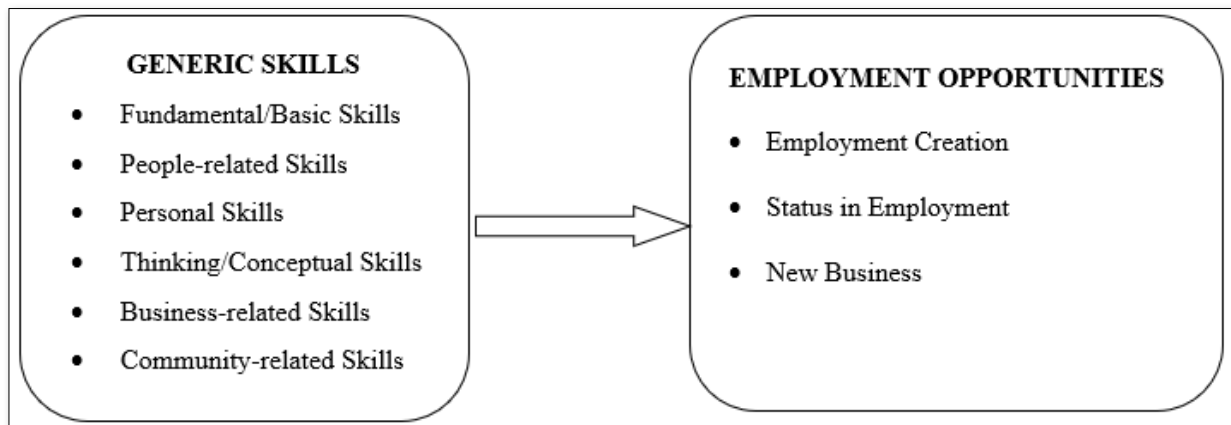
Generic skills and youth employment opportunities

Several studies show the influence of generic skills on youth employment opportunities particularly as important skills for successful employment. Singh and Gera [1] find generic skills to influence positively youth employment opportunities in sense that they generate new skills that help to succeed in new situations, manage and adapt to changes and to flourish by creating what matters even in the face of diversity. Generic Skills play a major role in employability, as well as in achieving well-being and personal goals [3]. Generic skills are very important traits that employees should possess in a demanding business environment and for their respective professional success [11]. The generic skills prepare employees for lifelong learning, complex judgments about their work performance, right decisions making in uncertain and unpredictable circumstances, problem solution than formulation and future development [10]. Furthermore, generic skills are significant in increasing productivity and sustainability of organizations and working environment by enhancing graduates to acquire, retain and flexibly move on with the acquired employment opportunities in the labour market [21].

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the theoretical and empirical review presented in the previous sub-sections. Two chief variables are predominantly taken into account in this study: generic skills and youth employment opportunities. The generic skills comprise of fundamental, people-related, personal, thinking, business-related and community-related skills [18,1]. Alternatively, youth employment opportunities infer the quantity of jobs created by a youth employment intervention by including employment creation, status in employment, and new businesses (International Labour Organization, 2018).

The independent variable of this study is generic skills while the dependent variable is youth employment opportunities. The Human Capital theory and some empirical studies (e.g. studies [1,10,11,3] demonstrate on the relationship between generic skills and youth employment opportunities. This implies that generic skills were thought to influence significantly youth employment opportunities in this study. In other words, the logical relationship between the variables of this study is made by the given theory and empirical review as demonstrated in **Figure 1**.



Source: Theoretical and Empirical Review, 2020

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

METHODOLOGY

This study was approached quantitatively. The quantitative approach dominated this study due to the nature of the study’s main questions with causal-effect. This nature of questions always requires the study to be approached quantitatively. The study of this nature is usually supported with quantitative data. The approach of the study facilitated understanding of the research problem more completely by explaining relationship between the variables i.e. generic skills and employment.

The study used descriptive and explanatory cross-sectional survey design. The design was appropriate for the study as it assisted in studying every final year student as a unit of

analysis. The design as well provided a quick, efficient and accurate means of assessing information about the study population by describing and explaining the true nature of generic skills and employment. The “what” questions of the study also necessitated the survey design to be applied in the study at hand.

The data were collected from Mbeya city, Dar es Salaam city, Mwanza city and Arusha city in Tanzania. The cities were chosen because of being big cities in Tanzania absorbing a large number of entrepreneurial business activities. They are the cities with several zonal headquarters of government and private sectors. They are full of businesses and several entrepreneurial enterprises compare to other cities in

Tanzania. Several Higher Education Institutions are likewise located in these cities and may in one or another way influence self-employed enterprises covering and meeting the needs of the students. There is also presence of several agents and middlemen for various companies in the given cities.

Stratified simple random sampling was used in this study. The technique aided the classification of the studied population of graduates as from 2015/2016 into strata on the basis of their characteristics such as course programme pursued in the institutions. The graduates were now picked randomly from each stratum. Since the technique was random, it likewise provided an equal chance of selecting each final year student from the strata identified. The availability of complete list, accurate and up-to-date sampling frame of all the final year students in the institutions facilitated the use of the stratified simple random technique.

The sample size of this study was 400 graduates. There are criteria of obtaining sample size including formula, small population as whole, saturation point, and nature of data analysis. However, this study obtained its sample size based on nature of data analysis i.e. Multiple Linear Regression (MLR). The sample size requirements for MLR is calculated using the formula “ $N > 50 + 8m$ (where $m =$ number of predictors”) [22]. After calculation, it was noted that, this study has not violated the sample size assumption i.e. $N > 50 + 8(6) = 98$. It must be noted that, this study had maximum six predictors and 400 cases which are more than 94 obtained from the formula above. However, 300 questionnaires were received and found complete and useful for the data analysis. The response rate was 75% (Table 1).

Table 1. Proposed and field obtained sample size.

City Surveyed	Proposed Sample Size	Surveyed Sample Size	Percentage
Mbeya	95	75	25.0
Dar es Salaam	115	80	27.0
Mwanza	92	71	23.0
Arusha	98	74	25.0
Total	400	300	100.0

Both sexes of THEIs’ graduates were surveyed in this study, whereas the majority of them were the male. This implies that, the bigger number of THEIs graduates are the male compare to female in surveyed cities in Tanzania (Table 2). Concerning the variable age, the majority of the surveyed THEIs graduates had therefore the age between 25-29 years old. Furthermore, marital status was one of the demographic information explored among the surveyed THEIs graduates in this study. The results show that, the majority of the graduates were single meaning that, graduates who were surveyed in the four cities of Tanzania were single (Table 2). Moreover, the lowest education level considered in this study is certificate

while the highest level is postgraduate and the results in Table 2 show that, the majority of the graduates had bachelor degree in the surveyed cities of Tanzania.

Since the location of this study was four big cities in Tanzania, the majority of the surveyed graduates were therefore living in Dar es Salaam though the insignificant difference is observed from graduates living in other cities as shown in Table 2. The study at hand likewise established the programmes pursued by the graduates when at the THEIs. Table 2 indicates that, the majority of the THEIs graduates pursued engineering programmes as from 2015/2016 academic year.

This study used principally primary data. The data were gathered using questionnaires. Since the data were collected from 400 graduates in Mbeya city, Dar es Salaam city, Mwanza city and Arusha city in Tanzania; the questionnaire became relatively cheap, quick and efficient way of obtaining large amounts of information from that large sample of people. The questionnaire became a successful means of measuring the attitudes and opinions from relatively large numbers of graduates more cheaply and quickly than other methods. The questionnaire had closed-ended questions with multiple choice answer options and they facilitated analyzing those using quantitative methods i.e. descriptive statistics and Multiple Linear Regression.

The gathered data were analyzed mainly using descriptive statistics and Multiple Linear Regression. The Descriptive Statistics was used to analyze the characteristics of the respondents, to check variables for any violation of the assumptions and to address specific objective number one of this study. On the other hand, Multiple Linear Regression was used in order to test and establish relationship between pursued course programmes and knowledge level of generic skills; generic skills and youth employment. It was used to address specific objective one and two that had causal-effect relationship. Each objective had more than one predictor and one dependent continuous variable i.e.

Specific Objective 2: $Y = \alpha + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \beta_3\chi_3 + \epsilon$

where:

Y-Criterion (i.e. Generic Skills)

α -constant (intercept)

β 1-3-Regression Coefficients

χ 1-3-Predictors (i.e. Engineering, Science, Others)

Specific Objective 3: $Y = \alpha + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \beta_3\chi_3 + \beta_4\chi_4 + \beta_5\chi_5 + \beta_6\chi_6 + \epsilon$

where:

Y-Criterion (i.e. Youth Employment Opportunities)

α -constant (intercept)

β 1-6-Regression Coefficients

χ 1-6-Predictors (i.e. Basic Skills, People Related Skills, Related Skills, Community Related Skills) Personal Skills, Thinking Skills, Business

Table 2. Demographic information of the THEIs’ graduates.

Personal Information	Scale	Frequency	Percent
Sex	1. Male	211	70.0
	2. Female	89	30.0
	Total	300	100.0
Age	1. 25-29 years	99	33.0
	2. 30-34 years	85	28.0
	3. 35-39 years	60	20.0
	4. 40 -44 years	30	10.0
	5. 45 and above years	26	09.0
	Total	300	100.0
Marital Status	1. Single	159	53.0
	2. Married	67	22.0
	3. Divorced	48	16.0
	4. Widow	26	09.0
	Total	300	100.0
Residential and Working Area	1. Arusha	74	25.0
	2. Dar es Salaam	80	27.0
	3. Mbeya	75	25.0
	4. Mwanza	71	23.0
	Total	300	100.0
Education Level	1. Certificate	30	10.0
	2. Diploma	111	37.0
	3. Bachelor Degree	129	43.0
	4. Postgraduate Education	30	10.0
	Total	300	100.0
Programme Pursued	1. Engineering (e.g. civil, electrical, etc.)	140	47.0
	2. Science (laboratory, food, etc.)	100	33.0
	3. Others (e.g. business, architecture, etc.)	60	20.0
	Total	300	100.0

This study has variables whose measurements are well stipulated in the **Table 3**.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The extent to which graduates are inculcated generic skills in THEIs

This section specially determined the extent to which the surveyed graduates were prepared in generic skills when pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs. The

Table 3. Measurement of variables.

Variable	Construct	Measurement	Scale	Source
Programme	Pursued Programme	-Engineering, -Science, - Others (Architecture, Business)	0 = Not at all 1 = To a small extent 2 = To some extent 3 = To a moderate extent 4 = To a great extent 5 = To a very great extent	Fagenson & Burke (1994)
Generic Skills	Basic or Fundamental Skills	Technical, Literacy, using technology, knowledge of task, numerical ability, hands-on ability	1. Not sure at all 2. Very Unsure 3. Somewhat sure 4. Very Sure 5. Extremely Sure	Cleary, Flynn, & Thomasson (2006); Singh & Gera (2015)
	People-related Skills (Interpersonal Qualities)	Communication, interpersonal relationship, teamwork		
	Personal Skills	Responsibility, emotional mastery, resourcefulness, self-confident		
	Thinking or Conceptual Skills	Planning, Collecting and organizing information, problem-solving, learning to learn, creativity		
	Business-related Skills	Innovation and enterprising		
	Community-related Skills	Civic and citizenship knowledge/sense		
Youth Employment Opportunities	Employment Creation	Employed project beneficiaries, unemployed project beneficiaries, full-time equivalent jobs	Number or rate of	International Labour Organization (2018)
	Status in Employment	Employees, self-employed: employers, self-employed: own-account workers		
	New Businesses	Newly created firms with more than one employee, annual sales revenue for beneficiary firms, share of newly established firms still operational after X months		

majority of the surveyed graduates were inculcated in basic skills, and people-related skills to a small extent when

pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs (Table 4). Furthermore, the majority of the graduates were prepared in

thinking/conceptual skills, personal skills, and business-related skills to a very small extent in thinking skills when pursuing various programmes in the THEIs (**Table 4**).

Generally, the majority of the surveyed graduates were inculcated in basic, people-related, thinking, personal, business-related, and community-related skills to a small extent when pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs. This implies that, the graduates were inculcated with

generic skills to a small extent when pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs. These results are supported by previous studies [13,14,2,5]. These studies previously proved the graduates to have inadequate generic skills leading them not acquiring the employment opportunities. This implies that, many graduates leave THEIs without generic skills to meet employment opportunities in the labour market in today's economy and society.

Table 4. The extent to which graduates are inculcated with generic skills in THEIs.

Scale	Basic or Fundamental Skills		People Related Skills		Thinking or Conceptual Skills		Personal Skills		Business Related Skills		Community Related Skills	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very Small Extent	59	20	86	29	68	23	71	24	65	22	86	29
Small Extent	150	50	132	44	143	48	148	49	161	54	132	44
Neutral	43	14	23	08	17	06	09	3	12	4	23	8
Large Extent	27	09	30	10	50	17	47	16	47	16	30	10
Very Large Extent	21	07	29	10	22	07	25	8	15	5	29	10
Total	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100

Influence of pursued course programmes on generic skills' knowledge

This section presents question two results, which aimed at examining the influence of pursued course programmes on the generic skills' knowledge among the graduates from THEIs. The MLR results specify that generic skills knowledge (outcome variable) was explained by the pursued course programmes (predictor variable) by 32%. The value obtained was 0.320, which implies the model explained 32% of the variance in generic skills' knowledge (**Table 5**). In testing how well the regression model fitted the data, it was found that the computed F statistics was 26.091 with an observed significance level of 0.000. The models reached the statistical significance which was $p < 0.001$ (**Table 5**).

It was projected that, the course programmes by the THEIs' graduates had a significant and positive relationship with generic skills' knowledge in the surveyed cities in Tanzania. The digest of regression analysis done exposes the results in **Table 5**.

Moreover, the results show that the studied course programmes (other course programmes, engineering and science) in the THEIs had a statistically significant and positive relationship with generic skills' knowledge. These results necessitate that the more the THEIs' students pursued the given course programmes, the more they gained

knowledge on generic skills in Tanzania. However, other course programmes facilitate more acquisition of generic skills knowledge to students compare to engineering and science. Furthermore, although the programmes were found significant to generic skills' knowledge, their contributions to the knowledge is still small, i.e., 32%. It seems that, 68% of generic skills' knowledge among the THEIs' graduates is contributed by other factors which are not established in this study.

These results can adhere to what is suggested in several previous researches, which suggest the improvement of methods in inculcating generic skills to the students in Higher Education Institutions in Tanzania and the world at large. For example, Federica [3] stresses the redoubling and improvement of training and inculcating generic skills by avoiding the use of traditional teaching methods and teach generic skills in a particular separate course. Research further recommends that the graduates should be equipped well with generic skills to satisfy the prospective employers, and educators should have instructional courses and some courses for inculcating generic skills.

Influence of generic skills on youth employment opportunities

This section entails the results for the third research question of this study, which intended to establish the relationship

between generic skills and youth employment opportunities among the THEIs' graduates. The MLR results indicate that youth employment opportunities were explained by generic skills by 52% (.515), i.e. the model explained 52% of the variance in the youth employment opportunities (**Table 6**). Testing how well the regression model fitted the data, it is noted that the computed F statistics was 47.131 with an observed significance level of 0.000. The models reached the statistical significance, which was $p < 0.001$ (**Table 6**).

Table 5. Influence of pursued course programmes on generic skills' knowledge.

	B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.19	16.101	<0.001
Other Course Programmes	0.213	6.314	<0.001
Engineering Course Programmes	0.197	5.232	<0.001
Science Course Programmes	0.196	5.129	<0.001
Multiple R	0.588 ^a		
R Square	0.341		
Adjusted R	0.320		
ANOVA (F, SIG.)	26.091 (< 0.001)		

Table 6. Influence of generic skills on youth employment opportunities.

	B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.473	5.281	0.010
Basic/Fundamental Skills	0.436	7.073	< 0.001
People-related Skills	0.442	8.385	< 0.001
Thinking/conceptual Skills	0.279	2.319	0.021
Personal Skills	0.569	10.083	< 0.001
Business-related Skills	0.479	4.511	< 0.001
Community-related Skills	0.319	2.501	0.011
Multiple R	0.783 ^a		
R Square	0.536		
Adjusted R	0.515		
ANOVA (F, SIG.)	47.131 (< 0.001)		

The results further show that the analyzed skills (basic, people-related, thinking, personal, business-related, community-related) had a statistically significant and positive relationship with the youth employment opportunities. These results imply that the more the THEIs' graduates acquire the

given analyzed skills, the more they get youth employment opportunities in the surveyed cities in Tanzania.

These results are supported previously by numerous researchers. For example, Singh and Gera [1] found that generic skills facilitate the graduates to find employment opportunities as they can succeed in new employment situations and cope with changes. The skills can likewise facilitate the graduates to become confident, informed and knowledgeable in technology, competitive, adhere to work demands, interact and socialize well with customers and enjoy other employment opportunities. Studies noted that employers such as business executives consider generic skills (integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic) being very important attributes of graduates in attaining and exploiting employment opportunities. Asonitou [11] also found that generic skills are termed as very vital traits that graduates should acquire in a demanding employment environment for their successful profession, benefiting and improving emotional intelligence, and demonstrating other employment progress. Generic skills are of vital importance for graduates to gaining and retaining appropriate employment opportunities for a long-time benefit of improving life quality.

CONCLUSION

This study assessed the preparation of students in generic skills in Technical Higher Education Institutions (THEIs) for employment opportunities in Tanzania. It is concluded that, the majority of the surveyed graduates were inculcated with generic skills to a small extent when pursuing their respective programmes in the THEIs. In other words, the surveyed graduates in Tanzania do not have adequate generic skills for employment opportunities.

Although the pursued programmes by the surveyed graduates when THEIs influence significantly the knowledge of generic skills, still the same graduates are found to lack adequate generic skills. Although the generic skills influence significantly and positively employment opportunities, the surveyed graduates are found to lack adequate generic skills in Tanzania.

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