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Original Article

Examining the Role of Stakeholders' Engagement on Students' Enrolment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions

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Stakeholder Participation, Student Enrolment, Management Practices, and TVET.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between stakeholder participation and student enrolment in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions in Gulu City, Uganda. Using a cross-sectional design, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews to assess stakeholder involvement, enrolment rates, and the influence of participation on institutional outcomes. Findings revealed that stakeholder engagement in monitoring, evaluation, and coordination significantly enhances enrolment, program relevance, and institutional performance, though planning was the weakest area, characterised by limited strategic alignment and inadequate data use. While government policies, economic factors, and community involvement influenced enrolment, infrastructure, gender policies, costs, and stigma were less decisive. Management practices, including Management by Objectives (MBO) and Result-Oriented Management (ROM), showed mixed effectiveness, with gaps in funding, staff capacity, and governance limiting their impact. Statistical analysis demonstrated a strong positive relationship between stakeholder participation and enrolment ($r = 0.624$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting the importance of meaningful engagement in enhancing institutional attractiveness and responsiveness to labour market needs. The study concludes that structured stakeholder participation is a critical driver of program quality, relevance, and enrolment, and recommends strengthening participatory frameworks, institutionalising data-driven decision-making, increasing industry representation, and building managerial capacity to improve TVET performance and enrolment outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a critical role globally and nationally in meeting labour market demands, a goal that is achievable when institutions are supported by strong and coordinated stakeholder participation.

Historically, TVET evolved from apprenticeship models to structured training systems, with countries such as Germany, the United States, and those in Europe institutionalising stakeholder-led reforms that strengthened enrolment and relevance, while African nations, including Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda, adopted similar approaches to combat youth unemployment and promote skills development. In Uganda, policy reforms under the BTVET Strategic Plan, Vision 2040, the TVET Policy, the TVET Act, and UBTEB assessment initiatives emphasise multi-stakeholder engagement to enhance programme quality and enrolment, although implementation remains uneven.

Theoretically, the study is grounded in Systems Theory and Stakeholder Theory, which together explain how government, educators, parents, employers, NGOs, and communities function as interdependent actors whose meaningful participation influences institutional performance and student enrolment. Conceptually, the study focuses on stakeholder participation through decision-making, monitoring, planning, and resource mobilisation and student enrolment, measured through indicators such as enrolment rates and intake ratios. Contextually, Gulu City presents a unique post-conflict setting where TVET has been central to reintegration and youth livelihood recovery, yet persistent challenges such as weak employer linkages, inconsistent policy implementation, limited infrastructure, and reduced community involvement hinder enrolment despite national reforms. Overall, the introduction establishes that while stakeholder participation is widely recognised as essential for enhancing the attractiveness, relevance, and enrolment levels of TVET programmes, its effectiveness in Gulu City remains limited, prompting the need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Despite Uganda's policy efforts since 2016 to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a response to youth unemployment and growing demand for skilled labour, enrolment has increased only modestly, with UBTEB registrations rising from 82,080 in 2021/22 to 166,218 in 2022/23. Ideally, active stakeholder participation by government, parents, educators, employers, and community leaders should enhance student enrollment, community support, labour-market relevance, and public perception of TVET through participatory decision-making, industry feedback, resource mobilisation, and institutional monitoring. However, in Gulu City and the wider Northern Uganda region, TVET institutions continue to face low enrollment, weak stakeholder engagement, and underutilised reforms, as many parents and students still prefer academic pathways, and TVET institutions struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and weak industry linkages. Although government interventions such as scholarships, modular assessments, decentralised admissions, and stakeholder feedback workshops have been introduced, they have not bridged the participation and enrollment gaps, particularly among vulnerable groups such as school dropouts, females, and rural youth. This study, therefore,

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seeks to examine why stakeholder participation remains weak in Gulu City's TVET institutions despite national reforms, and how this limited participation contributes to the persistently low levels of student enrollment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate stakeholders' participation and enrolment in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions in Gulu city.

Objective of the Study

Three objectives that guided this research study were;

- To investigate the relationship between stakeholders' participation and enrolment in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions in Gulu city.

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between stakeholders' participation and enrolment in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions in Gulu city?

Scope of the Study

This study focused on student enrollment in TVET institutions within Gulu City, covering the content, geographical, and time dimensions. Content-wise, it examined the relationship between stakeholders' participation and enrollment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions. Geographically, the study was conducted in Gulu City in northern Uganda, bordered by Gulu District to the north, parts of Gulu and Omoro to the east, Omoro to the south, Nwoya to the southwest, and Amuru to the west, located approximately 333 km north of Kampala at coordinates 2.830556°N and 32.320278°E. The area was selected due to the high levels of youth unemployment despite existing demand for skilled labour. The time scope covered the period from 2012 to 2022, during which TVET enrollment remained low, with a gross enrollment ratio of 9.4% compared to the global average of 38%, prompting increased stakeholder engagement efforts by the government to address this gap.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a structured representation of how the key concepts of a study are linked. It illustrates the relationship between the independent, dependent, and moderating variables, thereby guiding both data collection and analysis. In this study, the conceptual framework was based on the premise that stakeholders' participation influences students' enrolment in TVET institutions, while the relationship may be strengthened or weakened by the prevailing stakeholders' management styles.

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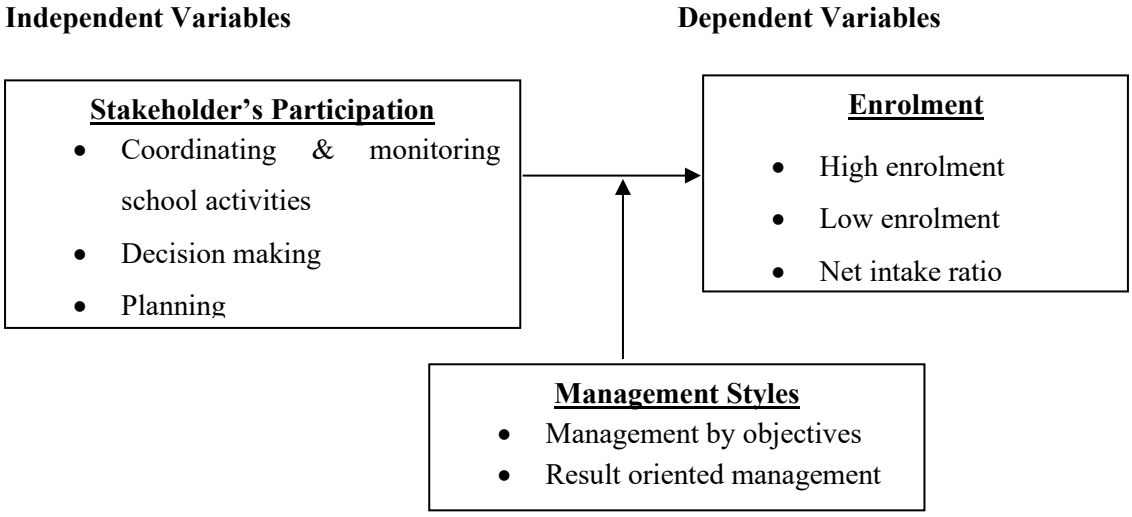
Figure 1: Showing Conceptual Framework



Source: *Adapted and modified by the researcher from system theory (Ludwig von Bertalanffy, 1969) and stakeholders' theory (R. Edward Freeman, 1984).*

The study conceptualises stakeholder participation as the independent variable, encompassing activities such as coordinating and monitoring school operations, participating in decision-making, and engaging in planning, all of which are expected to enhance institutional enrollment, governance, and the relevance of training programs. The dependent variable, student enrollment, is measured through levels of enrollment and quantitative indicators such as the net intake ratio, with the assumption that greater stakeholder involvement improves enrollment by fostering effective coordination, informed decision-making, heightened awareness, and increased institutional attractiveness. The relationship between stakeholder participation and enrollment is further moderated by management styles, where participatory, results-oriented approaches can strengthen the impact of stakeholder involvement, while rigid or non-inclusive management practices may weaken its influence and contribute to continued under-enrollment.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant to institutional managers, principals, BoG members, PTA executives, and instructors as it emphasises the value of participatory stakeholder engagement in improving enrolment strategies and strengthening decision-making aligned with learner needs and labour market demands. It also raises community and youth awareness on the importance of technical and vocational skills for self-reliance, employability, and unemployment reduction. For the researcher, the study fulfils part of the requirements for the Master of Education in Education Management at Gulu University and provides practical managerial insights. The findings further support policymakers and education managers in reviewing policies and curricula that link stakeholder involvement with effective enrolment strategies, contributing to national priorities such as industrialisation, employment creation, and poverty reduction. Academically, the study enriches existing knowledge on vocational education management and offers a basis for future research, while also contributing to global TVET discourse by presenting context-specific challenges and best practices relevant to international development partners and efforts toward achieving youth skills development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of related literature on stakeholders' participation and enrolment in TVET institutions. The review primarily focused on stakeholders' participation in management and how it influences students' enrollment and the relationship based on this study's objective.

Relationship between Stakeholders' Participation and Enrolment in TVET Institutions

Stakeholders in TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) systems typically include employers, government agencies, industry associations, TVET providers, instructors, students, unions, and community actors. Their active engagement is critical to ensuring that vocational programmes are relevant, high-quality, and aligned with labour market needs. In many African TVET systems, employer involvement is considered essential for skills anticipation—forecasting the skills required in the labour market and integrating this information into training programmes (UNESCO-UNEVOC Atlas, 2023). According to Allais (2023), such engagement contributes to the establishment of sector skills committees and national qualification frameworks that institutionalise industry input into TVET governance and curriculum design (UNESCO-UNEVOC Atlas, 2023).

Curriculum relevance is one of the most direct ways stakeholder participation influences enrolment. Active industry involvement in curriculum development ensures that graduates acquire skills in demand, enhancing both the perceived and actual value of TVET programmes. Studies from Sudan demonstrate that employer engagement improves curriculum relevance and institutional support; however, significant barriers persist, such as limited prioritisation by the government and weak capacity of curriculum authorities (Arafat, 2014). In Malaysia, stakeholders emphasise curricular collaboration, work-based learning, and strategic partnerships as effective strategies to close the skills gap (Lixuan, 2024). In contexts where such collaboration is weak or superficial, graduates' skills may not align with industry needs, potentially discouraging prospective students seeking employment-oriented training.

Work-based learning, particularly through cooperative training, apprenticeships, and internships, is another domain where stakeholder participation is crucial. In Ethiopia, a recent study of TVET instructors found that enterprises are often minimally involved in planning learning activities, assessments and trainee evaluations (Samson, Aimee and Gun-Britt, 2022). Such limited engagement can undermine training quality and reduce the attractiveness of TVET programs for students who prefer hands-on, industry-linked experiences that enhance employability.

Governance and institutional capacity also heavily depend on stakeholder participation. Formal mechanisms, such as sector skills councils and advisory boards, have been established in some countries to institutionalise employer input into TVET policy and decision-making. Yet, research indicates a persistent gap between policy and practice: although governance structures may exist, actual implementation is frequently weak (UNESCO-UNEVOC Atlas, 2023). In several African nations, employer associations report involvement in governance and skills anticipation, but their engagement in curriculum design or quality assurance remains limited (Skills for Employment, 2023). Additionally, a World Bank report highlights that social partners, including employers, are often reactive rather than proactive, restricting their influence on TVET system development (World Bank, 2023).

Perceptions, social norms, and career guidance are also central to the relationship between stakeholder participation and enrolment. In Nigeria, Oviawe et al. (2017) argue that low enrolment in technical education programmes is linked to negative parental and student perceptions, recommending stronger career guidance and occupational awareness campaigns

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to engage stakeholders such as parents, schools and communities in promoting TVET's value (Oviawe et al., 2017). Stakeholder-led advocacy can shift the perception of TVET from a "fallback option" to a viable and respected pathway. However, in many African contexts, public sentiment continues to undervalue vocational education despite increasing enrolments (African Development Bank, 2023).

The evolving industrial context, including the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also affects stakeholder readiness and engagement. A study assessing the preparedness of TVET institutions and industry partners for Industry 4.0 revealed varied levels of readiness across infrastructure, processes, and organisational capacity (AUDA-NEPAD, 2023). If stakeholders are not prepared to co-create and sustain technologically relevant TVET programmes, these programmes may fail to attract students seeking modern, future-oriented skills.

Workplace learning assessment represents another critical area of stakeholder engagement. In Uganda, Muhwezi (2025) found that industry partners actively assess students during dual-training placements, significantly contributing to learning outcomes (AUDA-NEPAD, 2023). The study also highlighted that formal agreements, such as memoranda of understanding between institutions and industry, could further enhance training quality and accessibility.

Finally, sustainability and green skills initiatives underscore the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration. The UNESCO-UNEVOC report on circular economy education in African TVET institutions emphasises that achieving access, equity, and training relevance requires robust partnerships among government, industry, and communities (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023). Without such engagement, TVET reforms may fail to meaningfully contribute to sustainable development goals.

Despite extensive research on stakeholder participation in TVET institutions, several gaps remain. First, there is a notable policy-implementation gap, where formal structures like sector skills councils exist but do not translate into meaningful engagement in curriculum design, governance, or quality assurance. Second, the depth of industry participation is often shallow, with employers minimally involved in planning, assessment, or evaluation of trainees, partly due to limited incentives or institutional support. Third, there is insufficient research on stakeholder readiness for emerging challenges such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and green skills development, as well as on the effectiveness of non-industry stakeholders, including parents, communities, and NGOs, in influencing enrolment. Additionally, the link between stakeholder interventions and actual enrolment trends remains underexplored, with few longitudinal or empirical studies quantifying how advocacy, career guidance, and partnership initiatives directly impact student enrollment. Finally, comparative studies on assessment practices and workplace learning across different contexts are limited, leaving questions about which stakeholder-led strategies most effectively enhance both learning outcomes and the attractiveness of TVET programs.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology of the research process applied by the researcher. It focuses on the Research Orientation, Research Designs, Target Population, Sampling Techniques, Sample Size, Data Collection Instruments and Techniques, Administrative Procedures, Ethical Consideration and Data Analysis.

Research Orientation

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative (mixed) approaches. Qualitative approach enabled the collection of non-numerical data through interviews from city inspectors of schools, BoG chairpersons, and Principals, which enabled the researcher to understand the opinions, attitudes, perceptions, attributes, and knowledge

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of these participants. According to Creswell & Plano-Clark (2018), mixed method approaches allow researchers to use a diversity of methods, combining inductive and deductive thinking, and offset limitations of exclusively quantitative and qualitative research through a complementary approach that maximises the strengths of each data type and facilitates a more comprehensive reporting.

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional research design, collecting data at a single point in time to provide a snapshot of the relationship between stakeholders' participation and student enrollment. This design was chosen for its efficiency and suitability in examining current attitudes, behaviours, and conditions without requiring prolonged data collection. It enabled the researcher to assess multiple variables simultaneously and apply statistical methods such as correlation analysis to explore their relationships. The approach was particularly appropriate for understanding the existing state of stakeholder involvement and enrollment practices within the selected TVET institutions, allowing for timely comparisons across respondents and supporting the study's overall objectives.

Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population for this study comprised stakeholders in TVET institutions in Gulu City, including principals, instructors, Board of Governors (BoG) members, Parents–Instructors Association (PIA) executives, and the City Inspector of Schools (CIS), totalling 104 individuals. Student enrolment records from 2012 to 2022 across five selected technical institutions indicated fluctuating trends, with a combined total of 17,426 learners over the 11 years. Using Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample of 96 respondents was selected: 5 principals, 70 instructors, 2 CIS officers, 5 BoG members, and 14 PIA members. The study employed both simple random sampling used for instructors and PIA members to ensure equal selection chances and purposive sampling, applied to principals, CIS officers, and BoG members due to their expertise and managerial insight in TVET operations. Data were collected from primary sources, including questionnaires and interviews, and secondary sources such as institutional reports, research theses, and textbooks related to stakeholder participation and enrolment in TVET institutions.

Data Collection Instruments

Data for the study were gathered using both questionnaires and interviews. Structured, self-administered questionnaires served as the primary tool for collecting information on stakeholders' participation and enrollment from instructors and members of the Parent–Instructor Association. To complement this, face-to-face interviews were conducted using an interview guide with the City Inspector of Schools, TVET principals, and Board of Governors chairpersons, focusing on student enrollment records, class registers, meeting minutes, and overall stakeholder involvement within TVET institutions in Gulu City.

Administration Procedures

After the approval of the research proposal, the researcher got a letter of instruction from the management of the Faculty of Education and Humanities, Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, Gulu University, which the researcher used for the introduction to the different Stakeholders in the study area. The researcher designed the research tools for data collection in the field of study. The instruments (tools) were administered by the researcher and his assistant to the different respondents. After the data collection, the researcher analysed and interpreted the findings and wrote a report under the guidance and supervision of the research supervisor and submitted it for final evaluation.

Validity and Reliability

The research instruments were validated through expert judgment, with adjustments made to ensure

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alignment with the study's objectives. The Content Validity Index (CVI) indicated acceptable validity, with questionnaires scoring 0.833, interview schedules 0.083, and an overall CVI of 0.916 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Reliability was assessed using the test-retest method and analysed with SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for all variables ranged from 0.685 to 0.997, exceeding the 0.7 threshold for acceptable reliability in most cases, demonstrating that the instruments consistently produced stable and reliable data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Data Analysis

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse the collected data. Quantitative data were processed using SPSS version 25, where descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were generated and presented in tables, while inferential statistics, including multiple correlation analysis, were used to examine relationships between the dependent and independent variables. Qualitative data from key informants were analysed through content analysis, grouping responses into recurring themes that reflected common experiences and viewpoints. For data management, all information was securely stored: electronic data was coded, encrypted, and saved on a computer, while hard copies were kept under lock and will be safely stored for up to ten years before final disposal. The study variables, community participation (independent) and solid waste management (dependent), were measured using a four-point Likert scale, chosen for its reliability, ease of construction, and ability to capture respondents' attitudes effectively.

Ethical Considerations

The study ensured that informed consent was obtained from the respondents who participated in the research study. Informed Consent documents were attached to each questionnaire for individual respondents to consent and voluntarily provide appropriate endorsement before answering the research instructions. Respondents were first asked for their free consent to participate in the research work. Confidentiality was guaranteed by hiding the identity of the respondents. All information given by respondents was kept secretly and their names were not disclosed when referencing their ideas. Privacy and use of unacceptable words that impact risk to the respondents were taken care of. Respondents were interviewed individually in a private setting, allowing them express their in-depth feelings about the study.

FINDINGS

The Relationship between Stakeholders' Participation and Enrolment in TVET Institutions

The study examined the relationship between stakeholders' participation and enrolment in TVET institutions, with the findings summarised in Table 1. The multiple correlation analysis revealed several important patterns regarding how management, planning, coordination, and stakeholder involvement influence enrolment dynamics.

Management styles emerged as the most critical factor influencing enrolment. The analysis showed extremely strong correlations between management styles and both high enrolment ($r = 0.923$, $p < 0.01$) and low enrolment ($r = 0.886$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that while effective leadership can create an enabling environment for enrolment growth through quality assurance, teacher motivation, and optimal resource allocation, it cannot fully counteract structural factors such as program attractiveness, societal attitudes, and labour market demand. Coordination and monitoring also played a significant role, with strong positive correlations with high enrolment ($r = 0.599$, $p < 0.01$) and management styles ($r = 0.520$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that proper supervision, follow-up, and monitoring mechanisms are crucial for student recruitment and retention, though outcomes may vary across departments.

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Planning demonstrated significant relationships with stakeholder participation ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.01$), overall enrolment ($r = 0.385$, $p < 0.01$), and net intake ratio ($r = 0.363$, $p < 0.01$). This reflects that structured planning ensures institutional objectives are aligned with community and labour market needs, reducing inefficiencies such as dropouts or delayed admissions. Similarly, decision-making correlated positively with stakeholder participation ($r = 0.466$, $p < 0.01$) and planning ($r = 0.280$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that inclusive and participatory decision-making strengthens planning processes and enhances stakeholder buy-in, though its direct effect on enrolment appears indirect.

Stakeholder participation itself is most impactful when integrated into decision-making and planning processes. The findings indicate positive correlations with planning, decision-making, and net intake ratio, but their direct influence on enrolment remains limited unless coupled with effective management practices. Overall, the results show that leadership, coordination, planning, and stakeholder participation collectively shape enrolment outcomes, but external factors such as labour market demand, societal perceptions, and gender stereotypes also significantly determine program-specific enrolment patterns.

Below is the table showing the relationship between stakeholders' participation and enrolment in TVET institutions

Table 1: Multiple Correlation

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Coordination & Monitoring	1								
2. Decision	.245*								
3. Planning	.119	.280**							
4. Enrolment	.124	-.130	.385**						
5. High Enrolment	.599**	-.060	.305**	.495**					
6. Low Enrolment	.527**	.112	.455**	.381**	.802**				
7. Net Intake Ratio	-.066	.150	.363**	.291**	.237*	.336**			
8. Stakeholders Participation	.176	.466**	.472**	.176	.079	.279*	.306**		
9. Management Styles	.520**	-.042	.392**	.674**	.923**	.886**	.299**	.195	1

Notes:
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); n=80.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Relationship between Stakeholder Participation and Enrolment

The study found a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between stakeholder participation and student enrolment ($r = 0.624$, $p < 0.01$). Institutions with higher levels of engagement from parents, industry, teachers, and policymakers attracted more students and achieved higher retention rates. This underscores the importance of participatory practices in enhancing institutional credibility, responsiveness, and overall attractiveness to prospective students. These findings align with UNESCO (2022), which emphasises that participatory engagement in governance and policy implementation increases the legitimacy and appeal of TVET programs. Similarly, Tekle *et al*. (2024) highlighted that inclusive participation ensures alignment between curricula, institutional

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strategies, and labour market needs. Kisubi and Nambusi (2024) further observed that stakeholder involvement in mentorship, advocacy, and awareness campaigns positively shapes societal perceptions of vocational education, thereby enhancing enrolment.

The Role of Management and Leadership

Management styles were found to significantly influence enrolment outcomes, corroborating earlier studies in African TVET contexts (Allais, 2023; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023). Effective leadership creates an enabling environment through quality assurance, teacher motivation, and resource allocation, fostering enrolment growth. However, the correlation with low enrolment ($r = 0.886$, $p < 0.01$) suggests that leadership alone cannot overcome structural challenges such as program unattractiveness, cultural perceptions, and fluctuating labour market demand. This supports Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), who argue that managerial effectiveness must be combined with stakeholder engagement to achieve sustainable educational outcomes.

Planning and Coordination

Structured planning and coordination emerged as key determinants of enrolment. Planning showed positive correlations with stakeholder participation ($r = 0.472$, $p < 0.01$) and net intake ratio ($r = 0.363$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that systematic planning aligns institutional objectives with labour market and community needs. This finding is consistent with system theory, which views organisations as interdependent units requiring coordination to achieve desired outcomes (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). Coordination and monitoring also correlated positively with high enrolment ($r = 0.599$, $p < 0.01$) and management styles ($r = 0.520$, $p < 0.01$), highlighting that oversight mechanisms are crucial for recruitment, retention, and quality assurance. Tekle *et al*. (2024) similarly found that supervision and follow-up mechanisms improve institutional efficiency and enrolment outcomes.

Stakeholder Participation in Decision-Making

The study revealed that stakeholder participation is most effective when integrated into planning and decision-making processes. Decision-making correlated positively with stakeholder participation ($r = 0.466$, $p < 0.01$), emphasising that inclusive governance strengthens institutional responsiveness. UNESCO-UNEVOC (2023) argues that participatory decision-making fosters ownership, increases buy-in from key actors, and enhances student recruitment. Nevertheless, the direct impact of stakeholder participation on enrolment remains limited unless combined with strong leadership and effective management practices, as Kisubi and Nambusi (2024), who cautioned that engagement without institutional support may remain symbolic.

Influence of Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors

External socio-cultural and economic factors also moderate enrolment outcomes. Cultural perceptions, gender norms, and community attitudes can influence the effectiveness of participatory practices. Negative societal perceptions of vocational education continue to deter some students despite institutional efforts (AUDA-NEPAD, 2023). Economic factors, including household income and program affordability, also affect enrolment decisions (Oviawe et al., 2017). These findings highlight the need for multi-dimensional strategies that combine stakeholder engagement with broader socio-economic interventions.

Alignment with Policy and Labour Market Needs

Aligning TVET programs with labour market demands was found to be essential for attracting students. Engagement from industry stakeholders ensures curricula are relevant, practical, and employment-oriented (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023). This alignment enhances institutional credibility, reinforces the perceived value of qualifications, and motivates student enrolment.

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Tekle *et al.* (2024) similarly emphasise that labour market-informed planning and multi-stakeholder collaboration are critical for improving enrollment and graduate employability.

Implications for TVET Sustainability

Meaningful stakeholder participation not only enhances enrolment but also contributes to institutional sustainability. Collaborative frameworks among government, industry, parents, and communities strengthen program relevance, improve resource utilisation, and support policy implementation (UNESCO, 2022). Furthermore, participation fosters the development of skills aligned with emerging market demands, including green skills and digital competencies, which are increasingly important in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023).

Conclusions

The study concludes that stakeholder participation is a critical determinant of student enrolment in TVET institutions. Active engagement enhances program quality, relevance, and institutional credibility, making institutions more attractive to learners. However, the effectiveness of participation is constrained by weak planning, uneven resource allocation, limited industry involvement, and inconsistent policy enforcement. While socio-cultural and economic factors moderate outcomes, participatory frameworks remain essential for sustainable enrolment and institutional performance.

Recommendations

Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement Frameworks: Develop structured, inclusive mechanisms for meaningful participation in governance, planning, and decision-making. Institutionalise Data-Driven Decision-Making: Enhance capacity to collect and utilize labor market data through centralised systems to guide planning and curriculum alignment. Increase Industry Representation: Ensure industry participation in governance boards and committees to improve program relevance and responsiveness. Multi-Stakeholder Planning Platforms: Promote collaboration among government, industry, and communities to reduce fragmented efforts. Policy Enforcement and Resource Allocation: Strengthen the implementation of government policies, such as competency-based curricula, with equitable distribution of resources across institutions. Capacity Building: Train institutional managers in Management by Objectives (MBO) and participatory governance to link objectives with measurable outcomes.

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