

# Going for Diversified Curriculum (Education) for Industrialization and Employment in Tanzania Universities

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## Abstract

Though diversified curriculum evaluation results are more or less disappointing, the paper provides justification for continuing to embrace it. From justifications provided in this paper, we still hold that it will culminate in industrialisation and employment. The paper provides five reasons to continue embracing diversified curriculum in education systems, specifically in Tanzania. The proposed diversified curriculum comprises professional specific competencies, embedded skills (extra-skills), and industrial 4.0 capabilities. These are key areas to concentrate to produce graduates who will not only act as seeds for industrialization, but also who can create employment in Tanzania. Through diversified curriculum, we intend to create graduates who are bold enough to face future uncertainties, which include the looming problem of unemployment in Tanzania. A number of models are proposed to adopt in implementing the diversified curriculum in higher learning institutions. However, one implementation model is assumed to be the most appropriate given the current context in higher learning institutions, namely optional extended model. To implement the curriculum innovation successfully, we propose one additional training year in undergraduate degree programmes. Importantly, the paper forecasts possible challenges and solutions ahead of establishment and implementation of the curriculum innovation.

**Keywords:** diversified curriculum, industrialization, employment, embedded skills, industrial 4.0 capabilities

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## 1. Background information

In Tanzania 2025 vision, as a nation, we would like to create a semi-industrialised country (URT, 1999). Moreover, in recent years, there have been complaints on dwindling formal sector employment in Tanzania. Nevertheless, most of the education and training offered in our higher learning institutions do not comprise specific skills for organic emergence of industrialization. As it is, concentration seems to be on making a graduate get employed in the formal sector. This means that the flavour of running undergraduate degree programmes is not inclined toward industrialisation and self-employment.

In the light of the above orientation, no wonder it contributes to graduates reluctance to employ themselves through the informal sector. While some of the programmes offered can make one employ one-self, such as Bachelor in Laws (LLB), Education programmes, Business programmes to mention, but a few. Yet, the influx of graduates from universities to labour market each year is nagging. This makes opportunities for formal employment and self-employment through professional degrees keep shrinking year after year. Furthermore, it makes a university degree sound like it is of no use for some graduates. It is from this juncture we think that we need to introduce diversified curriculum to our degree programmes to have embedded vocational skills. Diversified curriculum refers to offering education or training with wider future job options, education with practical (vocational subjects) and academic orientation (Psacharopoulos, 1985; Offorma, 2010).

In relation to diversified curriculum in Universities, embedding vocational skills in the exiting traditional degree programmes offered in higher education, it amounts to diversification of curriculum. In so doing, we open chances for organic industrialization in the country and for self-employment on the part of university graduates. Self-employment is especially important because formal employment opportunities have been increasingly declining while the number of graduates from higher learning institutions has been exponentially increasing.

As hinted earlier, graduates from the present curricula do not possess technical education or vocational skills. Since the graduates, do not have vocational skills; it is difficulty for a country to industrialise, and for a graduate to get self-employed. Indeed, we are aware that self-employment is not solely dependent on the acquisition of vocational skills or creative minds, but is dependent up on multiple forces (Kinyaduka, 2020). Therefore, the proposed curriculum intends to enhance the possession of profession specific competencies and the vocational skills to promote industrialisation initiatives and self-employment orientation among University graduates. This is going to be enhanced through the introduction of embedded skills and the change of student mindset in training cycle. Vocation skills have been earmarked as important for self-employment (Kinyaduka, 2012, Kinyaduka, 2014, Kilasa, Kinyaduka & Kalimasi, *in Press*). Importantly, the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) in its constitution of 1977 as amended in 2005 emphasizes academic and vocational education at all levels of education (URT, 2005). This implies that the quest of diversified curriculum is not a matter of choice, but it is mandatory at all levels of education in Tanzania.

## 2. Diversified curriculum and industrialisation

As a country, we will grow to one of the richest countries in the world through home grown industries. To come up with home grown industries, it is a function of curriculum. This is because it carries and translates the expectations of society from an education system into reality (Offorma, 2010). In Tanzania, diversified curriculum today appears to be the best preference among Tanzanians (Kinyaduka, 2013). Therefore, as higher learning institutions, we may need to rethink about our curricula to create a society potential for industrialization. According to Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, industrialization involves activities culminating in the development of industries. We assume that organic industrialisation is possible through diversified curriculum.

As we may be aware, what is permanent is only change (Heraclitus 540 BC-480 BC). From this “golden rule”, we know that curriculum is not immune from change; consequently, higher learning institutions have to introduce educational innovations. Curricula and the institutions are not immune from change because of constant changes of needs of society in all spheres of life. We all know that Tanzania craves for industrialization or creation of semi-industrialised economy similar to middle income countries by the year 2025 (URT, 2000). As education institutions, we need to improve our programmes to support the achievement of our desire as a nation. In diversifying curriculum, the purpose should be to develop skills contributing to prosperity of diverse sectors, namely agriculture, services, industry and manufacturing. This is because the sectors are interlinked to industrialisation (URT, 2000). This is to say in developing programmes we need to consider the said sectors. Without doubt, diversified curriculum is an answer to industrialization because in a situation where we have all graduates possessing vocational skills, it is easy for them to start small production works which will overtime grow to large industries, service companies and so on. For example, graduates with shoe making skills may join their efforts and skills to start shoe making centres/businesses. The shoe making centres will later grow into shoe manufacturing industries. The same may apply in other vocational skills. From this understanding, diversified curriculum is closely associated with industrialization. However, it should be noted that it is possible to have people with vocational skills, and yet no signs of industrialization may be realized. This can happen if students or rather graduates lack competency in vocational skills they are trained in. Therefore, for industrialization to happen organically in a country, each child who goes to school must graduate with total mastery of specific vocational skills. The mastery of vocational skills is important because industries need vocational education to emerge and sustain (Tarat & Sindecharak, 2020). This view signals that personnel with vocational skills are of paramount importance for industrial sector development in Tanzania. Universities need to be at the forefront in offering some of vocational skills necessary for industrialization in the country. Importantly, during training, it is important to develop competencies in the selected vocational skill courses in respective universities, or we should expect industrialization at snail’s pace. In essence, diversified curriculum caters for quicker industrialization. We understand that the traditional role of universities has been to develop critical thinking, creativity and other important soft skills such as sense of teamwork. However, with time it seems it is important to develop hard skills in all disciplines, but with varied degree. For example, engineering students may need more hard skills than social sciences ones.

## 3. Diversified curriculum and employment

Apart from diversified curriculum promoting industrialisation, it is also important to emphasise it in the education system in Tanzania to prepare students become employers. Upon graduation, the graduates can venture starting their own businesses (enterprises). In this way and with time, they become employers through their own enterprises from the vocational skills embedded in their traditional programmes. Further, during training cycle, the curriculum informs students about the decline of formal employment in the country, and the importance of embedded vocational skills in their future self-employment endeavours.

From the aforementioned critical consciousness development and through this orientation to be initiated in the education system, students will change their mindsets from formal employment syndrome to becoming employers or self-employed. The change of mindset is possible because the proposed curriculum provides graduates with more diverse survival skills (Offorma, 2010). Survival skills are more important today than yesterday. This is because presently university graduates are not guaranteed for formal or informal employment through their professional degrees. This is from the lack feasible skills relating to the world of work ecology, and at times from lack of pre-requisite job experience (SERI, 2015). As noted earlier, formal employment is increasingly declining. Though Ndyali (2016) asserts that one of reasons university graduates remain unemployed for a long time is preference to formal employment among others.

Given the above claim, the proposed curriculum intends to change graduates’ mindsets during training cycle. This will mitigate the problem of unemployment among university graduates in Tanzania. Moreover, diversified curriculum is a pre-requisite requirement from school ecology (Zhongren, 2014). This is to say the proposed curriculum caters for the student needs and interests from their intelligence diversity in schools. Therefore, the education system will gratify their needs and interests of students. Moreover, we understand that the question of unemployment is a function of a number of factors some of which are not associated with attained competencies.

This means that one may attain the competencies for self-employment, and yet remained unemployed. There are numerous factors that may result in such situation. For instance, issues relating to lack of capital, unpopular policies, unscrupulous government machinery, and the list goes on have their contribution to an individual's inability to get self-employed. Despite these circumstances, education institutions have to play their noble role to develop competencies necessary for one to get self-employed.

#### **4. Critical reflection on proposed curriculum**

Given the importance of diversified curriculum, some universities have introduced entrepreneurship and computer as compulsory education (offorma, 2010). The higher learning institutions in Tanzania may consider doing the same; however, other skills considered important by stakeholders may be introduced. Such skills may include animal husbandry and business studies (Kinyaduka, 2013) these may also be made part of compulsory skills. Further, we may conduct studies to identify other hard skills educational stakeholders (students, parents and employers) consider important for higher learning institutions graduates. Worth to note that, hard skills identified as most important for industrialization and self-employment; it is important for students to attain *the highest level of competency*.

To emphasise, a scholar (Psacharopoulos, 1985) asserts that diversified curriculum is slightly superior to academic curriculum in Tanzania. Though Psacharopoulos' study is very old, its findings are in line with those of Kinyaduka (2013) who posit that diversified curriculum has an upper hand compared to general education one. However, we cannot rely on this proposition by the renowned scholar (Psacharopoulos, 1985) because his study was conducted when Tanzania adopted Education for Self-Reliance which did not directly teach vocation skills through experts in the respective skills. The curriculum was more or less in a form of orientation to work. Second, the education for Self-Reliance did not focus on industrialization, but on making the young join rural communities in production after completing their respective education cycles. The study is too old to hold its results today for action because since then Tanzania has drastically changed in many respects. Importantly, our present interest is to offer specific vocational skills to students to facilitate organic development of industrial sector and of self-employment in Tanzania.

When all Tanzanians have vocational skills, it is feasible to talk about industrialisation, and especially home-grown industries. This is because they (Tanzanians) already possess the skills necessary for the purpose. Similarly, education offered must be connected to what happens in the industry (Tarat & Sindecharak, 2020). Moreover, Norbert (2016) suggests that it is better to combine vocational skills and traditional programmes in the education system. In essence, industrialization is inseparable from growth of employment in society.

Based on the literature and arguments presented above, it should be noted that the concept of diversified curriculum is not new in Tanzania and elsewhere in the world. However, the concept has been largely associated to creation of self-employment opportunities. Nevertheless, if competencies are developed diversified curriculum stands a good position in promoting the industrial sector and employment in Tanzania. Therefore, it is important to change key stakeholders' perception (mindset) in the education system to realise the intended objective of creating home-grown industries and employment in the country. As has been noted, diversified curriculum has other accompanied merits, first, catering for student diversity- students are different equally the needs and interest vary; second, getting rid of abject poverty in society- with mastery of a particular skill that is linked to informal sector one is likely to earn living through it; third, student love for manual work- the skills may make students value both, white- and blue-collar jobs. In this way, we will be able to create productive individuals contributing to the economy of the country. Therefore, it is from the diversified curriculum benefits, the higher learning institutions in Tanzania need to reform their curricula to accommodate embedded vocational skills in traditional programmes, of course in the education system as a whole.

#### **Rationale of proposed curriculum innovation**

The proposed improvements of programmes are in line with the Sustainable Development goals agendum number 22 which strives to eliminate challenges that middle income countries encounter. In the context of Tanzania, there is a fast-growing problem of unemployment among graduates from the education system. In addition, the proposed curriculum is in line with agendum number 24 on ending poverty; agendum number 25 on provision of quality education and agendum number 27 on increasing employment, production and growth of economy. The proposed curriculum captures all these agenda in the Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2015).

Moreover, the proposed curriculum is in line with the Tanzania 2025 vision. The vision shows that Tanzania strives to be an industrial country (URT, 2000). However, most of Tanzanians go through education system which is characterized more with academic rationalism curriculum orientation. This curriculum traditionally discourages vocational subjects (Halvorsen, Nelson, 2022). As such, most Tanzanians are deprived of vocational skills necessary for self-employment; thus, hindering them from self-employment in the informal sector through starting income-generating activities upon graduating at different levels of education. Some of income generating activities may be directly linked to industrial sector evolution if the graduates are competent

in related skills. Therefore, providing Tanzanians with vocational related extra-skills at university level, it is a window for economic and industrial sector development in Tanzania. From the technical skills, Tanzanians can start micro-industries which as time goes can grow to tertiary industries in the country. Arguably, it is not possible to claim that we create an industrial society without strong technical education for every Tanzanian. From this backdrop, it is critical to introduce a diversity of vocational skills from which students choose as seeds for industrialization in Tanzania. It should be noted that the universities go for “weak” version of vocation skills; the “strong” version will be catered for by the vocational education institutions. Therefore, higher learning institutions do not turn into vocational education institutions, but strive to contribute to achieving the national development aspirations.

Importantly, the move towards improving programmes in higher learning institutions creates job options available in the real world of work, that is, graduates will have chances to work productively in the informal sector, get employed in the formal or in the informal sector.

Therefore, from the improvement of programmes higher learning institutions offer, it will enhance the employability chances among graduates. From the alignment of the proposed curriculum innovations with global, national and local community level goals and targets, this curriculum innovation is important for action. To recite, the proposed curriculum responds to promotion of industrial sector and the looming problem of unemployment among university graduates in Tanzania. Kinyaduka (2014) contends that a hundred percent of all studied teachers and students prefer diversified curriculum in secondary education. However, a recent study by (Kilasa, Kinyaduka & Kalimasi, *in press*) assert that students have positive attitude towards vocational skills (education), but they are not ready to join vocational education institutions despite appreciating that vocational skills are important. This tendency is associated with placing more importance and respect on white-collar jobs than on blue-collar jobs. This propensity makes the diversified curriculum assume the role to change the attitude of students specifically on the behavioural dimension of the same.

## 5. Expected broad outcomes

- a) Graduates entering the job market with increased confidence gained from extra-skills offered during training cycle.
- b) Organic emergency and development of industrial sector
- c) Graduates will possess a sense of love and respect for both, blue- and white-collar jobs
- d) Reduced complaints on unemployment among graduates from universities
- e) Increased number of graduates starting income generating activities immediately after graduating from universities
- f) Reduced sense of dependence syndrome on society among graduates from our universities
- g) Reduce the grace period for university graduates starting contributing to the economy of the country

*NB: these are broad outcomes from extra-skills; the training course outlines will identify narrower learning outcomes which reflect one or two of the achievement of the broad outcomes.*

## 6. Extra-skills proposed and naming of programmes in certificates

A student will choose an extra-skill of his/her interest that shall be embedded in his/her programme. For example, a nomenclature for student studying LLB opting to study Photography as an embedded skill shall read as LLB-Embedded skill-Photography. This shall appear in their certificates. This will mean that the graduate is also competent in photography. Where a graduate does not achieve the required standard of performance in the skill within the prescribed time; a respective graduate shall receive a certificate with a traditional nomenclature. The name of the degree shall not include the extra-skill, for example LLB, without the opted extra-skill, photography as indicated in this paragraph.

Therefore, the following are tentative proposed embedded skills. The proposed skills are of two categories, namely soft and hard skills. Soft skills are meant to make graduates become successful in their life endeavours, particular in running businesses they start, or find ways to start business. In view of this, soft skills shall be compulsory to all students. Hard skills are directly connected to embedded skills (extra skills), for example, photography etc. A student shall choose a hard skill of his/her interest. Table 1 shows soft and hard skills that shall be exposed to students. Embedding extra-skills into undergraduate programmes shall apply in all present and new programmes (programmes to come).

**Table 1: Tentative soft and hard skill to offer**

<b>Soft skills</b>	<b>Hard skills</b>
Teamwork	Graphics
Financial management skills	Programming
Establishing and running business (company)	Website development
Writing persuasive project proposal	Networking
Human resource management	Tailoring
Conflict resolution	Welding/metalwork
Principles of successful business	Animal husbandry
Creativity	Poultry production
Networking etc.	Mining
	Carpentry
	Masonry
	Shoe making
	Small business
	Food and packaging
	Motorcycle Repair
	Fine art
	Decoration e.g. (Batiki)
	Weaving
	Hair plaiting
	Laundry
	Ceramics
	Aluminum work
	Brick making
	Hair cutting

Source: Author 2021

#### **Soft skills**

Duration for training of soft skills: 1 month

Mode of delivery for soft skills: student presentations (lecturers shall not teach, but lead discussions). The purpose is to develop lifelong learning orientation among students.

Mode of assessment: No assessment shall be carried out, but compulsory attendance.

#### **Hard skills**

Duration for training hard skill- 6 months or will depend on the nature of skill, and student commitment and mastery.

Model of delivery: learning by doing, practical and apprenticeship (the tutor shall, guide, demonstrate, work shoulder-to-shoulder with a learner)

Evaluation: student shall display successful demonstration based on specified standards; e.g., developing websites, programmes, producing cartoons, mending clothes, etc.

### **7. Implementation models**

One of the following models shall be the model for implementation of an extra-skill.

#### **“Strong” form of diversified curriculum**

In this form of diversified curriculum, all students are supposed to select one embedded skill of their interest. This is to say the skills are made compulsory to all students. In this regard, the following are proposed implementation models. The models are as indicated under:

**Side-by-side model:** in this model the extra-skills shall be taught all students alongside with courses offered in traditional programmes. This can happen through proper coordination using the extended time of one year of training of a programme.

**Apprenticeship model:** for some skills selected, it may not be favourable to offer in the higher learning institution campus, but can be effectively offered through apprenticeship. The students may be directly attached to renowned people earning their living through the skills. For example, a student who wants to master animal husbandry, she/he shall be attached to people who or organisations which keep cattle and work there consecutively shoulder to shoulder with the cattle keeper for 6 months. As for someone who wants to learn about welding, he/she can be attached to people who everyday work in the industry for 6 months. It will be the role of a higher learning intuition to develop a mechanism for ensuring that the intended learning outcomes are adequately achieved.

**Extended model:** another model for implementation shall be through letting students complete the first phase of their traditional programmes and allow them to go for phase two of training which involves extra-skills only.

For example, a student studying BAED (Economics & Mathematics) studies about a selected extra-skill for a year after completing three years of the first phase which is meant for a traditional programme. However, the challenge ahead of this model is likely to be on accommodation and venues.

**Collaborative extended model:** this model involves attaching university students in VET institutions after completing the traditional degree cycle to obtain training on the selected extra-skill for a defined time. Advanced and well documented arrangements on the modality to work have to be established between VET institutions and higher learning institutions. However, in this model the University shall remain the sole degree conferring institution.

#### **“Weak” form of diversified curriculum**

In this form of diversified curriculum, the students take an embedded skill as an optional subject or course; therefore, it is only students who opt to study the skill. The following is a proposed implementation model for embedded skills. The implementation model is indicated under.

**Optional extended model:** one opts to study extra-skills after completing traditional programme training cycle, but one has to inform higher learning institution of his/her decision at the time of first registration to allow training arrangements, including financial arrangements to be made well in advance by an institution responsible for offering financial support to a student, or any other operating system. In this model, extra-skills are optional; this is unlike the strong form of diversified curriculum, which all students have to study one of the extra-skills.

As said earlier elsewhere in the paper, we suggest one additional academic year for training in our programmes to cater for extra-skill competency development. This is because without additional year students are likely to be too overloaded in the training cycle. Therefore, in this context additional training time for students who study optional skill is mandatory.

### **8. Opportunities relating to proposed curriculum**

Presence of highly experienced people in society who are good at some of extra-skills we may choose to offer  
Presence of experts in theories of change/innovation and adoption renders possibilities of success of the curriculum innovation.

Strong leadership which is ready to welcome and face new ideas and challenges; this, can be substantiated by the commitment of the government of Tanzania, the fifth phase to reform lower levels of curricula to reflect vocational education and the construction of VET institutions all over the country.

#### **Threats to proposed curriculum and possible solutions**

**Resistance to change:** this is because of university traditions and/or negative attitude towards vocational skills among key stakeholders (professors, parents and TCU officials) is likely to be a big setback: - creating awareness on potential benefits for our nation and for individuals.

**Lack of political will:** for the curriculum to be supported and adequately implemented political will is inevitable. Politicians have to support it before we mainstream it for implementation.

**Lack of effective commitment:** edification and cultural literacy will be used in changing attitude and perspectives.

**Lack of funds (shrank university budgets):** infrastructure development-workshops, functioning computer labs, equipment, materials and resources, qualified teachers to teach embedded/extra-skills, unscrupulous actors to support implementation- Writing persuasive project proposals to the World Bank and other financial institutions to support the implementation of the curriculum. To add, provide orientation seminar on the curriculum innovation so that every participant acts with transparency in the process.

**Number of credits:** this can be discussed and agreed by stakeholders on whether or not to count credits from embedded skills.

**Negative behavioural attitude toward VET among students:** - we need to have deliberate efforts to change the attitude of students towards VET during training process at all levels of education.

### **9. Pre-conditions for launching proposed curriculum**

Before launching the diversified curriculum, it is important to establish a check list of skills to allow key education stakeholders to identify potential skills for industrialization and employment in Tanzania. In so doing, we will be in a position to offer valuable skills for the nation and individuals. Of course, the type of skills to offer must consider the context of our country.

When the potential skills for industrialization and employment are identified, the skills with the highest frequency will be given priority during offering. The skills will be imbedded in programmes in phases, and after piloting their implementation in some programmes we offer in one University. The pilot implementation will assist in identifying the pre-conditions for sufficient implementation of a respective skill before it is scaled up in all universities and programmes in the country.

Before introducing the selected skills to be taught, it will be mandatory to have all resources, physical infrastructure and equipment should be in place. This is important for realising adequate implementation of the

curriculum.

**10. Timeliness:** we estimate that in 50 years higher education country master plan, which will enable an effective implementation of vocational skills, embedded in undergraduate degree programmes. Indeed, there should be pilot implementation in a few higher learning institutions before scaling up the curriculum innovation. In this regard, purpose of purpose of pilot implementation, among others, it is to identify key aspects to consider during and before scaling up the innovation.

## 11. Conclusion

Diversified curriculum is panacea to lagging behind indigenous people investment in their own country, and to the nagging predicament of unemployment facing the country, Tanzania. Though the question of industrialization and employment do not solely rely on the type of education offered to people; it is by-and-large attributable to the kind of education offered in a respective country. As a nation, and as higher learning institutions, we need to take holistic immediate measures to reform higher education for industrialisation and self-employment.

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