



The Effects of Curriculum Innovation in Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training: Perspectives from Technical and Vocational Teachers' College, Zambia.

Besa Michael Chunda & Martin Banda

Zambia

***Corresponding Author:** Besa Michael Chunda, Zambia

Abstract: This study explored the effects of curriculum innovation in Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) faced by Technical and Vocational Teachers' College (TVTC) in Zambia. Through a descriptive research design and using the questionnaire, interview guide and focus group discussion guide as means of data collection instruments, the research showed that the existence of curriculum innovation at TVTC resulted in enhanced use of pedagogical approaches in the teaching and learning. Further, curriculum innovation has fostered collaboration with the industry and stakeholders hence leading to the empowering of students with relevant knowledge and skills which will in turn address the needs of society and the labour market. Findings offer valuable insights to planners and curriculum implementers, policy makers in the field of education at the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Technology and Science, and other stakeholders such as Technical Education Vocational Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions.

1. BACKGROUND

Curriculum innovation in the training system specifically in the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) system is required as Boahin (2019) observed that in order to bring out new content and teaching methods that will lead to better updated outcomes and performance of learners. Such outcomes include relevant knowledge, skills and competencies that are marketable either for the organization and their staffing demands, or for individuals to secure greater employability in the wider world of work.

Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions particularly in developing countries including Zambia need to provide increasing number of learners with specialized skills because specialists are increasingly in demand in all sectors of the world economy. Furthermore, it must provide the kind of education that encourages flexibility and innovation to allow the continual renewal of economic and social structures relevant to the fast changing world (Brown et al., 2008). Both technical and core competencies have become increasingly valuable in the rapidly changing labour market that requires employees to adapt to new development in technology and working operations (World Bank, 2008). It is against this background, that it has become crucial for developing nations to adopt a more innovative view of learning that emphasizes active intellectual engagement, participation and discovery, rather than passive absorption and reproduction of facts. This reform requires re-design, review and implementation of new curricula of academic programmes that would transform the teaching and learning process. Effective reform or innovation in TVET in developing countries also requires high-level support from educators, industry, government, prospective learners and other relevant stakeholders. Such innovation must be customized to fit the nation's stage of development, political system, social structure, economic capacities, history and cultural system (OECD, 2019).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Supriani et al. (2022) stated there are two types of models of the curriculum innovation process, namely individual-oriented innovation process, and organizational-oriented innovation process. Therefore, the model of curriculum innovation process known as organizational-oriented innovation process guided this study. The model has the following stages. First, the initiation stage is the process

of collecting, conceptualizing, planning, directing, and preceding the decision to adopt innovation in the organization. The stage of initiation consists of two main activities, there are agenda-setting and matching.

Additionally, other scholars such as Zaltman et al. (1973) indicated that organisational innovation process involves the initiation stage and the implementation stage. Each stage is further divided into several steps (sub-stages). The initial stage is divided into the step of knowledge and awareness, forming an attitude towards innovation step, and decision-making. Step of knowledge and awareness are ideas, activities, or materials observed by the adoption unit (recipient of innovation), then knowing the existence of innovation becomes a major problem. Before innovation can be accepted the prospective recipient already realizes that there is innovation, and thus there is an opportunity to use innovation in the organization (Cooper, 2017).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term curriculum is from a Latin word for 'race-course' referring to the course of deeds and experiences through which children grow to become mature. Curriculum is all the selected activities done in the society that are used in the learning process. It is a race experience, planned learning and instruction which requires a learner to know things taught in class producing and understanding language used, solving problems and making their own decisions (Ogwo et al., 2013). A curriculum embodies the intentions of education, it is the programme of education. A curriculum carries the beliefs, values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and all that education is about. One would wonder how especially formal education can take place without a curriculum (Mulenga, 2018). In view of the above, different scholars have defined the concept of curriculum differently.

The term "innovation" comes from a Latin background and means "renewal, novelty or change" (Gonta & Tripon, 2022). In common parlance, the term innovation refers to the introduction of a new idea, method, or device. From a management perspective, Peter Drucker suggested that innovation is a "change that creates a new dimension of performance" (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, and Somerville, 2002).

Gonta & Tripon (2022) observed that curricular innovation means redesigning the curriculum in order to adapt it to current requirements. These changes may have different perspectives. In TEVET, curricular innovation aims to modify one or more curricular components, through changes regarding the content of education, teaching methods, teacher-learner interaction, the organization of activities. Curricular innovation involves reconceptualizing, modernizing, and optimizing the university curriculum. This is referring to the organizational, methodological, and content side of the educational process.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING CURRICULUM INNOVATION PROCESS

There are various factors that influence curriculum innovation process. Some of the factors that influence curriculum innovation according to the study that was conducted Supriani et al. (2022) include the following.

Population growth factor has far-reaching consequences on various dimensions of life, especially education. Many educational problems are closely related to the exploding number of school-age children. The issues directly related to education are lack of learning opportunities, the issue of the quality of education, and the issue of the relevance of education.

The other factor is the demands for relevant educational processes. The educational problems now faced are a very complex problem. Dalin (1978) noted that the basic factors as drivers of educational innovation have dimensions that include technological change, behavioural change, organizational change, social change, centrality, complexity, nature and amount of change, goal fit, and goal stability. Technological changes are essential to the innovation process. The use of technology has an impact on changes in methods, learning facilities, and systems in educational institutions.

In line with the previous factor are the financing factors and technical support that are a concern in adopting technological change. Changes in the field of education along with changes in the behaviour of the teachers, students, administrators, parents, and also other stakeholders involved. Change efforts

are characterised by changes in behaviour and it is increasingly important to involve users in all aspects of educational implementation from the process of initial identification of needs to the process of implementing education.

Organizational change is another factor that was identified by Supriani et al. (2022) and it can be interpreted as a change in the structure, decision making, role of human interaction, and organizational functions and technologies. Changes that occur within the organization are strategic changes for educational change in other words educational changes need to involve the entire organization and more complex change strategies related to processes and outcomes. Social change is said to be the redistribution of power, resources, and opportunity in a system. It is possible to facilitate social change in the education sector through the internal redistribution of resources and an opportunity in the system. The higher the level of social change, the more important it is the link (relationship) with the environment, and in particular the support of political and social forces that will help change efforts.

The centrality of an innovation influences interest and commitment to adopt programs at all levels of the institution. The importance of administration inherent in innovation provides a signal for program implementers. In a centralized system and parliamentary engagement, ministries of education and innovation institutions maximize opportunities for the implementation of programs, but that is not guaranteed. Complex programs generally pose at least two conditions for planners and implementers. First, is the initial support and commitment involved in implementation. Second, innovations are adapted and modified during implementation to accommodate the various needs and priorities of the different individuals and organizational units involved (Supriani et al., 2022).

Supriani et al. (2022) further highlights that in innovation, the nature and number of changes are assumed to refer to the completeness or meaning of the change effort i.e. the individual acquires a new technical skill or redefines or replaces an old practice. Strategies that enable individual development and learning are essential for the successful implementation of innovation. The larger and more difficult the changes needed will provide a more efficient strategy.

In general, individuals will work to implement innovation if the real values they embrace are aligned with the values and goals of reform or change. If individuals do not believe in the goal of innovation then it is highly unlikely that they will propose a learning behaviour effort or a new role. For that, it seems necessary for the successful implementation of innovative programs to include modifications in the design and innovation programs that are appropriate to the climate and certain priorities of the institution. Where modifications are made in a serious attempt to make changes, instead those modifications result in more relevant innovations and more success for the institution (Supriani et al., 2022).

5. REASONS FOR CURRICULUM INNOVATION

Curriculum innovation is viewed as a crucial element for the future of education development. Curriculum innovation is necessary in TEVET for teacher and learners as it serves as a guide to educational programmes. In this regard, curriculum innovation creates newness of requirement that schools must meet in learning and teaching. They are equally regarded as an essential for lasting or permanent learning. It contributes to social and cultural understanding and intellectual ability (Dorgu, 2020). Various scholars have echoed various reasons for curriculum innovation. In a study that was undertaken in Nigeria, Abdulgafar et al. (2012) noted the following as reasons for curriculum innovation:

5.1. Societal Demands for Quality Education

Since the function of education is the liberation of minds through intellectual activities that are capable of engendering socio-economic, political and cultural development in the world of mankind, education cannot afford to be stagnant in the scheme of events. Therefore, there is need for curriculum change that would provide quality education for the citizens.

5.2. Malfunction of the Existing Curriculum Contents

There is always a provision for curriculum evaluation in the curriculum planning and development process. Thus, if after assessment, the expected goals and objectives are found short of achievement,

then, there is need for either partial or a holistic curriculum change. Hence, Obaa (2009: 7) admitted that “there is need for appropriate institution curriculum that is designed to be adapted to the needs of society”.

5.3 Technological Demands

Education is a powerful instrument if well managed. In this era of global economic challenges, many countries of the world are making effort towards the provision of technologically driven education in order to achieve an accelerated national growth and development. It is worthy noting that Zambia is not an exceptional in this struggle. Thus, the desire or technological advancement remains the bane for the series of her curriculum Reforms.

5.4 Dynamic Nature of the Society

Curriculum by nature is dynamic and it is expected to change in response to the dynamic nature of any society. For instance, Zambia’s desire to respond to the changing needs of the society regarding the education of her citizens became noticeable after her independence in 1964. To respond effectively to any nation’s educational needs, there must be effective concern about seeking innovation and quality in the nation’s TEVET (Mbong, 2010).

Therefore, it is worthy to make mention that the process of curriculum innovation in any educational system needs not to be denied the attention which it deserves if the curriculum is to address the needs of society and stand the test of time. A well-designed innovation ought to be pursued with seriousness, using efficient implementation strategies without any obstacles to the intended goals and objectives.

6. CURRICULUM INNOVATIONS AND PRACTICE

The analysis of the literature on this subject matter according to Gonta and Tripon (2022) shows that curricular innovation has been and is being studied in terms of changes in methods, forms, techniques, means, contents, and objectives. Studying curricular innovation by defining and creating the curriculum serves to develop and implement educational policies. Studies that approach curricular innovation from this perspective aim to develop effective, sustainable, and developmental strategies such as that of Bovill and Woolmer (2019) on how conceptualizations of the curriculum in higher education influence student-staff co-creation or the studies of Franco et al. (2019), which argue about the influence of higher education in sustainable development: introducing global goals in policy, curriculum, and practice.

Other scholars such as Davis and Krajcik (2005) have researched and notes that the great influence that designing educational curriculum materials has on promoting teacher learning while other scholars in the field of education studies the curriculum development process by using three models: the modern model, the postmodern model, and the model suggested by the actor-network theory. Wall and Ryan (2010) described the design process of curriculum innovation in terms of learning styles, policies and procedures, curriculum tools, collaboration resources, social networking tools.

According to Ponnusamy (2019), the role of knowledge in curriculum innovation creates unique learning trajectories, in which teacher capacities and the contexts for curriculum innovation plays an important role.

Other researchers like Drake, Land and Tyminski (2014) suggest that using educational curriculum materials will support the development of prospective teachers’ knowledge. In light of the process of curriculum design, Huizinga (2014) argues the importance of collaborative teams in developing curriculum design expertise through teacher design teams. This type of research grants teachers opportunities for continuous development, improvement, and advancement from a didactic point of view.

7. METHODOLOGY

This researcher employed a qualitative method approach with minimal quantitative approach to gather data from TVTC. A purposeful sampling technique was used to select participants that included members of staff and students at TVTC. The researcher used three instruments to collect data namely: the questionnaires, interview guide and Focus Group Discussion guide. The data were analyzed using

thematic analysis for the qualitative interviews and minimal quantitative data that was collected through questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency and graphs.

8. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings reveal several significant effects of curriculum innovation in TEVET. Curriculum innovation has brought about changes in the methods of teaching and improved ways of the assessing and feedback to the students such as the use of the Learning Management System (LMS). This has led to the lecturers using the modern way of teaching which has also brings about efficiency in the delivery of the lessons. Further, the study revealed that curriculum innovation has brought up about new programmes being introduced at the institution to match up with the needs and demands of the society hence leading to improved access of education. One of the members of staff confirms this as follows: *“...content modification help us to align with advancements in knowledge, technology, or societal changes. Curriculum innovation allows pedagogical changes focusing on introducing new teaching methods, techniques, or instructional strategies to enhance the learning experience for students.”*

Additionally, the study revealed that the impact of these innovations is reflected in the institution's ability to maintain its status as a grade one institution (as rated by TEVETA) and attract clients hence creating linkages with the industry and other relevant stakeholders. However, challenges in implementing curriculum innovation, as recommended by educational experts, have arisen due to various reasons.

Reasons for Curriculum Innovation at TVTC

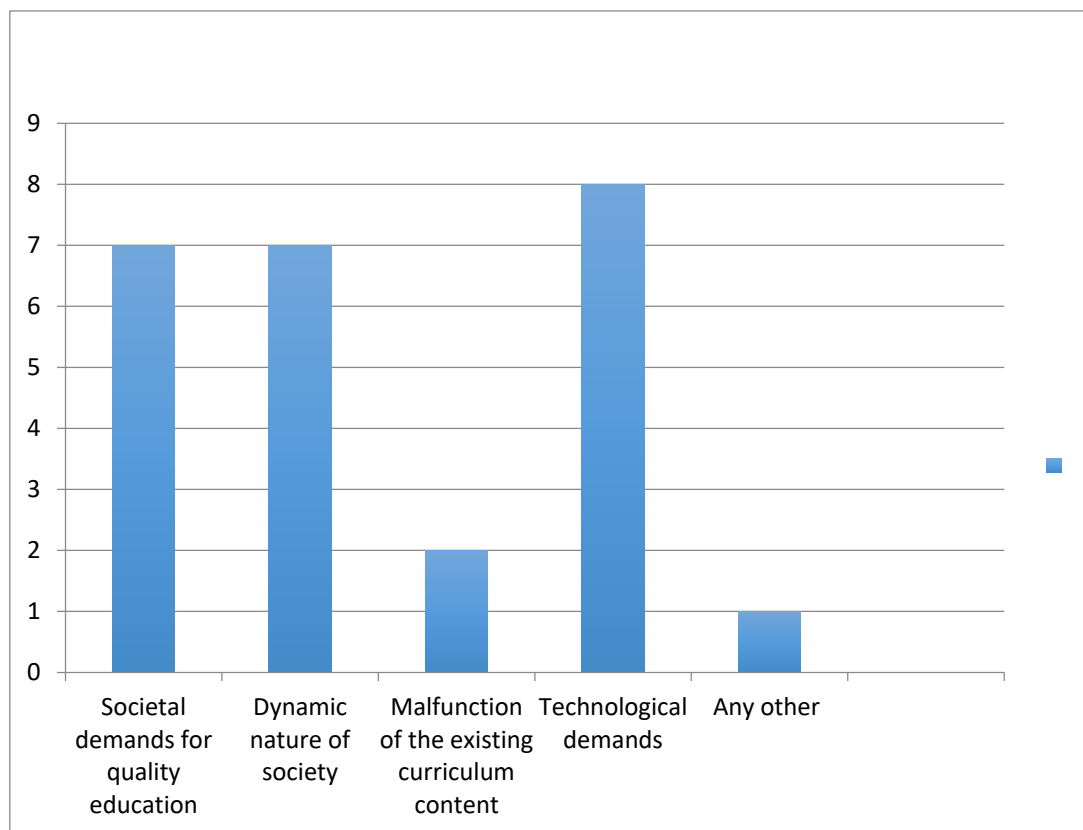


Figure1: Field work (2023)

The findings of the study are clearly evident that the major reasons for curriculum innovation at TVTC as indicated by the participants is as a result of technological demands, societal demands for quality education and dynamic nature of society. One of the students remarked, *“...the impact of curriculum innovation at TVTC is not deniable because we can not learn how our parents and teachers learnt during their time because we need to move with time and technological modernity...”*

9. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study reveal that curriculum innovation has enhanced the pedagogical approaches that lecturers use at the institution that has led to efficiency in the delivery of the lessons and use of

the LMS. Further, curriculum innovation has paved way to the introduction of new programmes that are responsive to the needs and demands of the society and industry. The study has also revealed that curriculum innovation leads to graduates to acquire necessary skills and knowledge that is demanded by the labour market. Further, it can be safely be concluded that curriculum innovation enhances the partnership and collaboration between TVTC, the industry and other stakeholders that in turn promotes quality assurance. In light of the effect of curriculum innovation, the study went to identify the reasons for curriculum innovation namely technological demands and dynamic nature of society and societal demands for quality education.

Therefore, the study underscores that TEVET institutions such as TVTC need to draw up a policy for curriculum innovation that will indicate how periodically the curriculum should be reviewed to ensure that the institution remains relevant and effectively in the preparation of students and introduction of new programmes in order to meet the demands of the labour market and challenges of the modern world.

REFERENCES

- Abdulgafar, T. O., Tinja, M. R., Umar, M. K. (2012). Curriculum Innovation in Primary Teacher Education: Prospects and Challenges in Nigerian Primary Schools. <https://www.globalacademicgroup.com/journals/pristine/CURRICULUM%20INNOVATION%20IN%20PRIMARY%20TEACHER.pdf> (19.05.23).
- Boahin, P. (2019). Policy Innovations in the VET Sector: The Role of Instructors in Competency-Based Training in Ghanaian TVET Institutions. *European Journal of Training and Development Studies*, 6 (1): 42-57.
- Bovill, C., & Woolmer, C. (2019). How Conceptualisations of Curriculum in Higher Education influence Student-staff Co-creation in and of the Curriculum. *The International Journal of Higher Education Research*, 78, 407-422.
- Brown, P., Lauder, H., & Ashton, D. (2008). Education, Globalisation and the Future of the Knowledge Economy. *Europeans Educational Research Journal*, 7 (2): 131-156.
- Cooper, C. B. (2017). Exploring the Challenges of Developing Student Teacher Data Literacy. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 24 (2): 147-63.
- Darlin, P. (1978). *Limits to Educational Change*. New York: St Martins Press.
- Davis, E. A., Krajcik, J. (2005). Designing Educative Curriculum Materials to Promote Teacher Learning. *Educational Researcher*, 34 (3), 3-14.
- De Otero, J. P. G. (2019). Innovation in TVET: New Opportunities and Challenges - Trend Mapping. https://unevoc.unesco.org/pub/tm_innovation.pdf (14.05.23).
- Dorgu, T. E. (2020). Curriculum Innovation in Nigeria Higher Institution. *Journal of Curriculum & Instructions*, 13 (1).
- Drake, C., Land, T. J., & Tyminski, A. M. (2014). Using Educative Curriculum Materials to Support the Development of Prospective Teachers' Knowledge. *Educational Researcher*, 43, 154 - 162.
- Franco, I.B., Salto, O., Vaughter, P., Whereat, J., Kanie, N., Takemoto, K. (2019). Higher Education for Sustainable Defelopment: Actioning the Global Goals in Policy, Curriculum & Practice. *Sustainability Science*, 14 (2).
- Gonta, L., & Tripon, C. (2022). An Analysis of Curricular Innovation in Higher Education: Challenges and a Possible Solution. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, XXI, 2 (42).
- Hesselbein, F., Goldsmith, M., & Somerville, I. (2002). *Leading for Innovation and Organizing for Results*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Huizinga, T. (2014). *Developing curriculum design expertise through teacher design teams*, PhD Thesis, Enschede, Universiteit Twente. http://doc.utwente.nl/93179/1/thesis_T_Huizinga.pdf (02.02.2024).
- Mbong, A. U. (2010). Teacher Education Curriculum Innovations and the Challenges of Implementation in Nigeria. *Journal of Childhood and Primary Education*, 7 (1).
- Mulenga, M. I. (2018). Conceptualization & Definition of a Curriculum. *Journal of Lexicography & Terminology*, 2 (2): 1 - 23.
- Obaa, G. C. (2009). Innovations and Issues in Inspection/Supervision in Primary and Teacher Education in Nigeria. A Paper Presented at the 6th National Conference of Nigerian Primary and Teacher Education in Nigeria. 27th - 31st July.

- Ogworu, T. E., Kuria, G., Nyamwaka, E., Nyakan, B. (2013). Philosophy as a Key Instrument in Establishing Curriculum, Educational Policy, Objectives, Goals of Education, Vision and Mission of Education. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4 (11): 95 – 101.
- Ponnusamy, L. D. (2019). Teacher Learning in Curriculum Innovation, the Unique Case for Embedded Learning. In Peters M., Heraud R. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Innovation*. Singapore: Springer.
- Supriani, Y., Meliani, F., Supriyadi, A., Qiqi, Y. Z. (2022). The Process of Curriculum Innovation: Dimensions, Models, Stages, and Affecting Factors. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5 (2): 485 - 500.
- Wall, J. & Ryan, S. (2010). *Resourcing for Curriculum Innovation: Learning in a Changing World*. London: ACER Press.
- World Bank. (2008). *Linking Education Policy to Labour Market Outcomes*. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Zaltman, G., Duncan, R., & Holbeck, J. (1973). *Innovation and Organizations*. New York: John Wiley.

AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHY

Besa Michael Chunda is a lecturer in the Department of Education at Technical and Vocational Teachers' College. He holds a Master of Philosophy in Higher Education from the University of Oslo and Master of Education in Curriculum Studies from Mulungushi University, a Bachelor of Adult Education from the University of Zambia. His research interests are in Curriculum Studies and Teacher Education, Education and Society, Inclusive Education and Instructional Pedagogy.

Professor Martin Banda, PhD, is a distinguished scholar in the field of Education and Curriculum Studies, currently serving as a Professor in the Department of Education at the University of Edenberg. His academic journey is rooted in a deep commitment to understanding the intersections of education, society, and curriculum development.

Professor Banda earned his PhD and MA:Ed in Sociology of Education from the University of Zambia, complemented by a Bachelor of Arts with Education from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. His educational background underscores his comprehensive grasp of educational theory and practice, preparing him to make significant contributions to the field.

Throughout his career, Professor Banda has focused his research on several pivotal areas within the Sociology of Education. His scholarly interests include the dynamics between education and society, the role of teachers in community engagement, sex education, curriculum studies, and teacher education. His work is characterized by a nuanced exploration of how educational practices intersect with broader societal issues, aiming to enhance educational outcomes and societal well-being.

As an accomplished author, Professor Banda has published a notable book and numerous papers in esteemed national and international journals. His publications reflect his expertise and dedication to advancing knowledge in the field, offering valuable insights into educational policies, practices, and their implications for society.

At the University of Edenberg, Professor Banda plays a crucial role in shaping the next generation of educators and researchers. His teaching philosophy integrates theoretical rigor with practical applications, equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to address contemporary educational challenges.

Professor Martin Banda's scholarly achievements, extensive research contributions, and dedication to education underscore his influential role within the academic community. His ongoing pursuit of excellence continues to enrich the field of Education and Curriculum Studies, making a lasting impact on educational practices and policies worldwide.

Professor. Martin Banda can be reached through his profiles on [LinkedIn](#), [ORCID](#) and [ResearchGate](#).

Citation: Besa Michael Chunda & Martin Banda, " *The Effects of Curriculum Innovation in Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training: Perspectives from Technical and Vocational Teachers' College, Zambia.*" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, vol 12, no. 2, 2025, pp. 67-73. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.1202006>.

Copyright: © 2025 Author. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.