KENYA COAST NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC

Kisauni Road, P O Box 81220-80100 Mombasa, Telephone 0712725554, 0710389727

Email: info@kenyacoastpoly.ac.ke   Website: www.kenyacoastpoly.ac.ke

TRACER STUDY REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The Tracer Study FY 23-24, conducted by Kenya Coast National Polytechnic under the EASTRIP initiative, sought to evaluate the employment outcomes of graduates from the 2023 cohort. The primary objective was to assess the effectiveness of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs in equipping graduates with market-relevant skills and facilitating their transition into the workforce. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the employment rate, job relevance to training, and challenges faced by graduates in securing employment.

Key Findings

1. **Employment Rate**:

   The **overall** employability rate of KCNP graduates is **73.97%. 26.03% were** unemployed. Breaking down the employability rate further in terms of gender**, the employed 73.97% comprises 47.95% male and 25.34% female** while the unemployed 26.03% comprises 17.81% male and 7.53% female.

   Treating either gender individually shows a high employability rate whereby, females have a slightly higher employment rate (77.08%) compared to males (72.92%).

2. **Employability rates trend**: IN FY 2023/2024, there was a slight decline to **73.97%** from the previous **81.30%.** While this drop may raise concerns, it is not drastic enough to indicate a significant downturn. The decrease could be due to temporary factors such as market saturation, economic fluctuations, or changes in industry demand.

3. **Relevance of Training**:

Among the employed graduates, 78% reported that their current jobs were directly related to the skills and knowledge acquired during their studies. This indicates that the TVET programs at the polytechnic are well-aligned with industry needs. However, 22% of employed graduates noted a mismatch between their training and their job roles, suggesting areas for curriculum review.

4. **Challenges in Securing Employment**:

    i. **Limited Job Opportunities**: The most commonly cited challenge was the scarcity of job opportunities in the graduates' fields of study. Over 40% of unemployed respondents indicated that they had difficulty finding suitable job openings.

    ii. **Lack of Experience**: Employers often preferred candidates with prior experience, creating a barrier for fresh graduates. Around 30% of unemployed graduates highlighted this issue as a significant hindrance to securing employment.

    iii. **Job Market Competition**: The study also found that high competition in the job market made it difficult for graduates to stand out, especially in industries with a high concentration of job seekers.

5. **Employer Feedback**:

    i. **Technical Skills**: Employers generally expressed satisfaction with the technical competencies of the graduates, particularly in areas such as engineering, construction, and mechanical trades. Approximately 85% of employers rated the graduates' technical skills as satisfactory or above.

ii. **Soft Skills**: Despite the positive feedback on technical abilities, employers identified deficiencies in soft skills. Around 40% of employers mentioned that graduates lacked adequate communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. This feedback indicates a need for more emphasis on soft skills development within the training programs.

iii. **Adaptability and Continuous Learning**: Employers also emphasized the importance of graduates being adaptable and willing to engage in continuous learning to keep pace with technological advancements. This highlights the necessity of incorporating lifelong learning and adaptability into the polytechnic's curriculum.

6. **Graduate Satisfaction**:

i. **Positive Training Experience**: The majority of graduates (82%) expressed satisfaction with the quality of training they received, particularly in relation to the acquisition of practical skills. Graduates in technical fields such as automotive engineering and electrical installation were particularly satisfied with the hands-on training they received.

ii. **Need for More Industrial Attachments**: Despite the overall positive feedback, graduates indicated that more opportunities for industrial attachments and internships would significantly enhance their practical experience and employability. Nearly 60% of graduates recommended an increase in the duration and frequency of industrial placements.

Major Conclusions

1. **Positive Employment Outcomes**: The polytechnic's TVET programs have produced favorable employment outcomes, with a significant portion of graduates securing jobs within a relatively short period after graduation. However, the rate of unemployment and underemployment among graduates highlights the need for enhanced job placement and career support services.

2. **Skills Mismatch**: The findings reveal that while the majority of graduates find jobs relevant to their training, there is still a notable skills mismatch in certain sectors. This suggests that the polytechnic must continuously review and update its curriculum to ensure that it remains aligned with industry demands and technological advancements.

3. **Importance of Soft Skills**: Employers' feedback underscores the critical importance of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, in the workplace. The current focus on technical skills should be balanced with soft skills training to better prepare graduates for the realities of the job market.

4. **Challenges in the Job Market**: The challenges faced by graduates in securing employment, including limited job opportunities and a lack of experience, suggest a need for stronger industry engagement. The polytechnic should prioritize partnerships with employers to create more internship and employment pathways for graduates. Additionally, enhanced career services are essential to support graduates in navigating a competitive job market.

Summary of Recommendations

1. **Strengthen Industry Partnerships**:

    i. **Enhanced Collaboration**: Strengthen collaboration with industry partners to provide more internship opportunities and create a pipeline for graduate employment. Industry partnerships should also inform curriculum development to ensure that it reflects current and future job market needs.

    ii. **Regular Industry Feedback**: Establish mechanisms for regularly obtaining feedback from employers to continuously align the polytechnic's programs with industry expectations and emerging trends.

2. **Enhance Career Support Services**:

    i. **Comprehensive Career Guidance**: Implement more robust career guidance services to assist graduates in identifying job opportunities and preparing for the application process.

    ii. **Job Placement Services**: Support the Career Services Office to support graduates in securing employment. This could include networking events, job fairs, and direct engagement with potential employers.

3. **Focus on Soft Skills Development**:

    i. **Integrated Soft Skills Training**: Introduce dedicated modules or workshops focused on developing soft skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. These skills should be

integrated into the technical curriculum to ensure a well-rounded education.

   ii. **Employer-Led Workshops**: Invite industry professionals to conduct soft skills workshops and training sessions, allowing students to learn directly from employers about workplace expectations.

4. **Expand Industrial Attachments**:

   i. **Increase Internship Opportunities**: Increase the number and duration of industrial attachments and internships available to students. These opportunities provide critical real-world experience and enhance graduates' employability.

   ii. **Mandatory Industrial Placements**: Consider making industrial attachments a mandatory component of the curriculum for all programs to ensure that every graduate gains practical, hands-on experience before entering the workforce.

5. **Curriculum Review and Adaptation**:

   i. **Continuous Curriculum Updates**: Regularly review and update the curriculum to reflect changes in industry needs and technological advancements. This will help address any skills mismatches and ensure that graduates are equipped with the knowledge and skills required by employers.

   ii. **Incorporate Emerging Technologies**: Introduce training in emerging technologies, particularly in sectors like Information Technology and Engineering, to prepare graduates for the jobs of the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who made the Tracer Study FY 23-24 a success.

First and foremost, we are deeply grateful to our Chief Principal, Ms. Mary Muthoka, for her visionary leadership and unwavering support. Her dedication to the institution has been a source of inspiration, and her encouragement has driven us to deliver this comprehensive report.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the Project Implementation Unit members and the EASTRIP Office for their invaluable guidance and insights throughout the study. Your expertise and direction ensured that we remained on track and met our objectives effectively.

We are also immensely thankful to the graduates who took time out of their busy lives to provide honest and thoughtful feedback. Your contributions were vital in helping us understand the real impact of our training programs and how we can continue to improve.

Lastly, we wish to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the entire Tracer Study team. From the development of the questionnaire to the preparation of the final report, your commitment and collaboration were key to the successful completion of this project. Thank you for sharing the workload, supporting each other, and ensuring that every task was handled with professionalism and care.

Geofrey Kirui
Principal Researcher

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

This report presents the findings of the sixth Tracer Study facilitated by the Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP). The EASTRIP initiative, funded by the Government of Kenya in collaboration with the World Bank, is a strategic effort aimed at transforming the country's rapidly growing youth demographic into a catalyst for economic growth. By equipping young people with market-driven skills and knowledge, EASTRIP seeks to enhance employment prospects and foster entrepreneurship, thereby contributing to national and regional development. The initiative aligns with the Project Deliverable Objective (PDO) of EASTRIP, which is to increase access and improve the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs in selected Regional TVET Centres of Excellence, while also promoting regional integration. The program is implemented across Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia, focusing on three core areas to achieve its objectives:

1. **Increasing access to TVET programs:** Expanding opportunities for youth to enrol in vocational and technical education.

2. **Improving the quality and relevance of TVET programs:** Ensuring that the skills and knowledge imparted are aligned with market demands, thereby increasing the employability of graduates.

3. **Supporting regional integration:** Fostering collaboration among the participating countries to standardize and elevate the quality of TVET across the region.

In Kenya, EASTRIP's objectives align well with the government's broader agenda to restructure and strengthen the TVET sector. This Tracer Study, as part of the second focus area, is crucial in assessing the outcomes of TVET programs and ensuring that they meet the evolving needs of the labour market.

The 2023/2024 Tracer Study is the third such study conducted by the EASTRIP Project and focuses on graduates who completed their studies in 2023, specifically in programs identified as priorities by EASTRIP. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of these programs, guide future curriculum development, and enhance the capacity of trainers across all departments.

Reports from the previous five tracer studies have already had a significant impact on curriculum implementation within TVET institutions. By continuously monitoring and evaluating graduate outcomes, this Tracer Study plays a vital role in the ongoing effort to improve the quality and relevance of TVET education in Kenya, ultimately contributing to the creation of a skilled workforce that can drive the country's economic development.

1.2 Literature based on FY2022/2023 Tracer Study Findings

i. The **overall employability rate was 81.30%**, N = 121, broken down as either employed under formal employment terms which accounted for 31.08% of the graduates, self-employed graduates translating to 31.61% of the graduates or unemployed but pursuing further studies comprised 18.30% of the graduates. Graduates pursuing further studies are considered employed by the World Bank classification of employment statuses.

ii. The "situation of the traced KCNP graduates who undertook the EASTRIP priority programs in the first six months after graduating" from the polytechnic revealed that the *Overall employability rate six months after completion of study was 71.76%* broken down as follows; 28.67 per cent were "*Employed*" within the first six months after graduating. 28.61 per cent were "*Self-Employed*". 14.41 per cent were pursuing "*Further Academic Education*" in vocational centres, undertaking sea time and pursuing degree programs. Up to about 3 per cent pursued "*internship*" programs.

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iii. **Female employability rates;** the *proportion of female graduates employed 6 months after study completion in the current study was* **72.99%** distributed as 42.25% in formal employment, 20.31% of the graduates had started their own means of self-employment and 10.43% of the female graduates were pursuing further education. This resulted in an overall female employability rate of 72.99% six months after study completion.

iv. **Based on participation in Further Education that results in higher qualification;** the results of the survey revealed that 18.61 per cent (26 graduates) had *"Participated in Further Training"*. 78.59 per cent (113 graduates) *did not participate in further training"*. 2.8 per cent (4 graduates) *"did not disclose if they had (or had not) participated in further training"* after graduation. The 26 graduates who participated in further training were broken down as follows; 1 graduate participated in *"Further academic education"*. 8 graduates participated in *"Further vocational education/training"*. In addition, 11 graduates participated in *"Further professional certification/license to practice"*. While the remaining 3 joined the Kenya School of TVET for pedagogy training.

v. **The nature of wage employment the graduates secured;** the results of the study indicated that up to 8.10% of graduates were employed on casual terms, 11.78% were employed on contract and 4.20% were employed on part-time. In addition, 7.00% of the graduates were employed on permanent terms while 31.61% were engaged on self-employment.

vi. **In terms of employment classification by economic sectors;** the results suggested that 68.33% of the graduates were employed in the private sector, being the biggest employer. Under public sector employment, only 5.00% of the graduates secured opportunity while 1.67% were employed under SAGAs otherwise known as the

Parastatals. Proportion of the graduates in self-employment accounted for 16.67% while other unspecified sectors accounted for 8.33% of the graduate responses.

vii. **On transition rates by level of qualification;** Craft graduates had the highest level of employability at 17.48% followed by artisan certificate graduates with 10.49% and finally diplomas with 9.09%. There was a clear negative relationship between the incidence of unemployment and the level of one's education, with craft certificate graduates being the most employed. The attractiveness of Craft Certificate holders by the majority of them being employed full-time could indicate that the learning outcomes at this level are what employers require. Diploma graduates stay longer at in training to acquire their diploma certificates, which could have further refined their level of skill and competency to the desire of employers.

viii. **Considerations in making Career choice;** Apart from the already discussed results about graduate employability rates, 85.80% of the graduates considered as a top priority the job security, salaries and benefits as the driving factors for the jobs they applied for. Further statements that provide a good insight into the quality and nature of the employment of KCNP graduates: 34.7% of the graduates applied for jobs because it related to their skill areas; 28.6% of the graduates applied for the jobs because it had a relationship with their program areas of study; 16.3% of the graduates wanted a career challenge; 10.2% considered proximity to their residence.

ix. **In terms of Wage Employment of KCNP graduates by industry sector;** for purposes of this survey, the graduates were employed in 11 sectors. The survey findings revealed that accommodation and food services employed 27.60%, (n=16) graduates. 8.60%, (n=5) were employed in the Electricity, Steam, Gas and Air-conditioning sector. 12.10% (n=7) of the graduates were employed in the

transportation and storage sector. Manufacturing, Mining and Quarrying Sectors employed 5.10%, (n=3) graduates, while human health and social work activities employed 6.90% (n=4). 44.80% of the graduates are employed in other economic and service sectors.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The 2023/2024 Tracer Study aims to assess the outcomes of graduates from the Kenya Coast National Polytechnic (KCNP) who completed their studies in 2023, particularly those who participated in EASTRIP priority programs. The study is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs offered, with a focus on understanding the employment status, relevance of training, and challenges faced by graduates.

The specific objectives of the Tracer Study are as follows:

i.   **Assess Employment Status:** Determine the employment rate of KCNP graduates within the first year post-graduation. Analyse the types and nature of employment, including full-time, part-time, self-employment, and the sectors in which graduates are employed.

ii.   **Evaluate Job Relevance:** Examine the relevance of the training received by graduates to their current employment. Measure the level of job satisfaction, including aspects such as career progression, remuneration, and working conditions.

iii. **Identify Employment Challenges:** Identify and analyse the challenges faced by graduates in securing employment, including skill gaps, job market limitations, and barriers to self-employment.

METHODOLOGY

2.1. Study Design

The 2023/2024 Tracer Study was designed as a descriptive study aimed at assessing the employment outcomes of graduates from the Kenya Coast National Polytechnic (KCNP) who completed their studies in 2023. The study focused on graduates from programs identified as priorities by the Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP). The design of the study was structured to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a comprehensive overview of the graduates' post-education experiences.

2.2. Target Population

The target population for this study comprised graduates from the Kenya Coast National Polytechnic who completed their studies in 2023. These graduates were enrolled in programs prioritized by EASTRIP. The study aimed to reach as many graduates as possible within this cohort to ensure a representative sample, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

2.3. Data Sources

The primary source of data for this study was the Kenya Coast National Polytechnic's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System. This system provided records of the graduates, including their contact information, which was crucial for reaching out to the study participants.

2.4. Data Collection Methods

Data collection for the Tracer Study was primarily conducted online using KoboToolbox, with supplementary methods employed to reach graduates who had limited internet access.

i.   **Email and SMS Outreach:** The study team sent out invitations to participate in the survey through both email and SMS. The SMS and Email contained the link to access the online data collection tool (KoboToolbox). These methods ensured broad reach and facilitated participation across different communication platforms.

ii. **Phone Interviews:** For graduates who responded via SMS that they did not have internet access, phone interviews were conducted. The interviews were structured around the same questionnaire used in the online tool, ensuring consistency in the data collected. This approach allowed the study to capture information from graduates who otherwise might have been excluded due to technological barriers.

2.5. Data Handling and Analysis

The data collected through SMS, phone calls, and email were systematically handled to ensure accuracy and reliability in the analysis:

i.   **Data Cleaning and Coding:** After collection, the data were downloaded in spreadsheet format. The data were then cleaned to remove any inconsistencies, duplicates, or errors. Each response was carefully reviewed and coded to facilitate analysis.

ii. **Data Exportation to SPSS:** Once cleaned and coded, the data were exported to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software for detailed analysis. SPSS was used to perform both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, allowing for the identification of trends, patterns, and correlations in the employment outcomes of the graduates.

iii. **Quantitative Analysis:** In SPSS, quantitative data were analysed to determine employment rates, the nature of employment, sectoral distribution, and the relevance of jobs to the graduates' training. Frequency distributions, cross-

tabulations, and other statistical tests were applied as needed to interpret the data effectively.

iv. **Qualitative Analysis:** Responses to open-ended questions were analysed using thematic analysis. This method enabled the identification of recurring themes and insights related to graduates' experiences, challenges, and satisfaction levels.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted by ethical guidelines to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all participants. Graduates were informed of the study's purpose, and their participation was entirely voluntary. All data collected were anonymized, and the results were reported in aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual respondents.

2.7. Methodological Challenges and Limitations

While every effort was made to ensure a comprehensive and accurate study, several challenges were faced which were similar to the challenges in the past tracer studies:

i. **Response Rate**: Not all graduates responded to the online survey, SMS, or phone calls, which may have introduced non-response bias. Efforts were made to mitigate this by repeated attempts to contact non-respondents.

ii. **Self-Reported Data**: The study relied on self-reported data from graduates, which may be subject to recall bias or inaccuracies in reporting.

iii. **Access to Graduates**: Although the ERP system provided a reliable source of contact information, there were instances where contact details were outdated, leading to difficulties in reaching some graduates.

iv. **No Pre-Field Work Awareness and Sensitization**: Due to time limitations, there were no pre-field work awareness and sensitization meetings between field research staff and relevant stakeholders.

v. **Low Participation Rate**: A low percentage of graduates were willing to participate in the survey.

vi. **Low Study Completion and Pass Rates**: The study observed low completion and pass rates among the graduates.

vii. **Remoteness and Mobile Network Issues**: Some areas faced challenges with remoteness and unreliable mobile network coverage, impacting data collection efforts.

viii. **Lack of Commitment**: There was a lack of commitment from some respondents, affecting the quality and completeness of the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Response Rates

A total of 147 responses were received from a target of 290 students who went through the EASTRIP Priority programs. This number coincidently is the same as the number of responses from the past tracer study.

3.1.1 Response Rate by Program and Gender

The distribution of respondents by the program is shown in Responses by program**Error! Reference source not found.** below

Table 1: Responses by program

Course	F	M	-	Total
A. Shipping				
i. Certificate in Shipping and Logistics Management	6	7	0	13
B. Cruise Service and Management				
i. Artisan in Hairdressing And Beauty	5	0	0	5
ii. Craft Certificate in Cosmetology	3	2	0	5
iii. Craft Certificate in Food and Beverage Production Sales & Service	15	2	0	17
iv. Diploma in Catering and Accommodation Management	15	10	1	26
v. Diploma in Food and Beverage Management	13	4	0	17
vi. Diploma in Tourism Management	12	2	0	14
vii. Pastry Chef	8	6	0	14

C. **Marine Engineering**				
i. Artisan in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	0	9	1	10
ii. Craft in Marine Engineering	2	17	0	19
iii. Craft in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	0	8	0	7
Total	**79**	**59**	**2**	**147**

From Figure 1 below it can be observed that more females (53.74%) responded to the questionnaire as compared to males (40.14%). Only 1.36% preferred not to say their gender. The main reason for this is however because the majority of the courses in the table above are traditionally female-dominated. This shows that more targeted campaigns are needed to make the female-to-male ratio of the courses balanced.
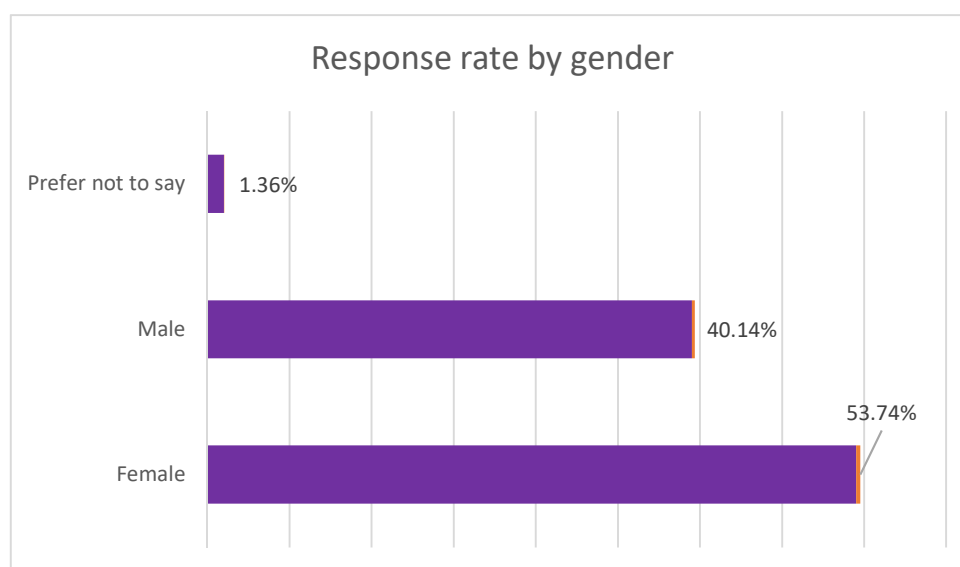
Figure 1: Response rate by gender

3.1.2 Response Rate by Age

In terms of age, the majority of respondents are ages below 35 years, an indication that the courses attract a youthful population who just completed high school or from lower

levels and wish to advance their training. Figure 2 below shows the distribution of respondents by age.

Figure 2: Response rate by age

3.2 Motivation to pursue the course

The graduates were asked to say what motivates them to pursue the course. The chart below shows a summary of their responses.

Motivation to pursue the course

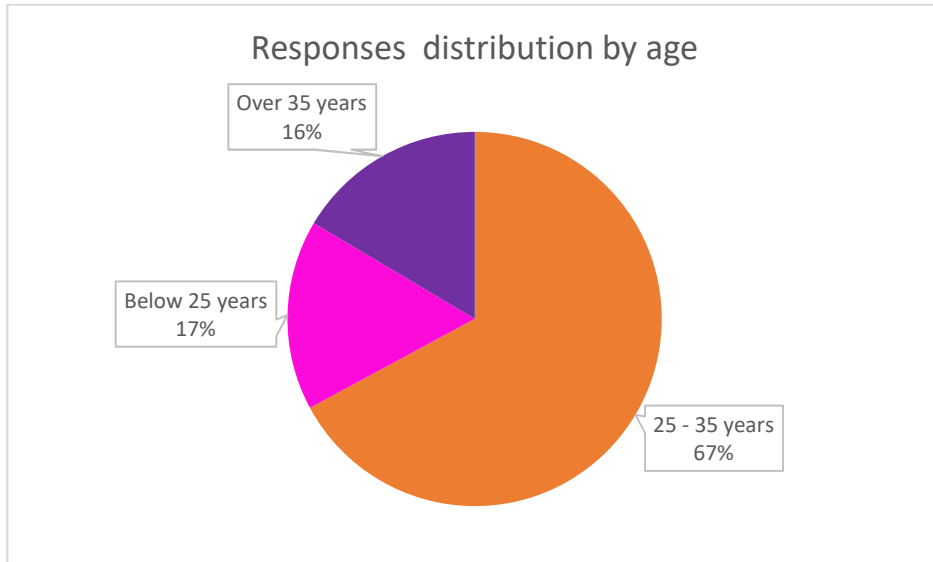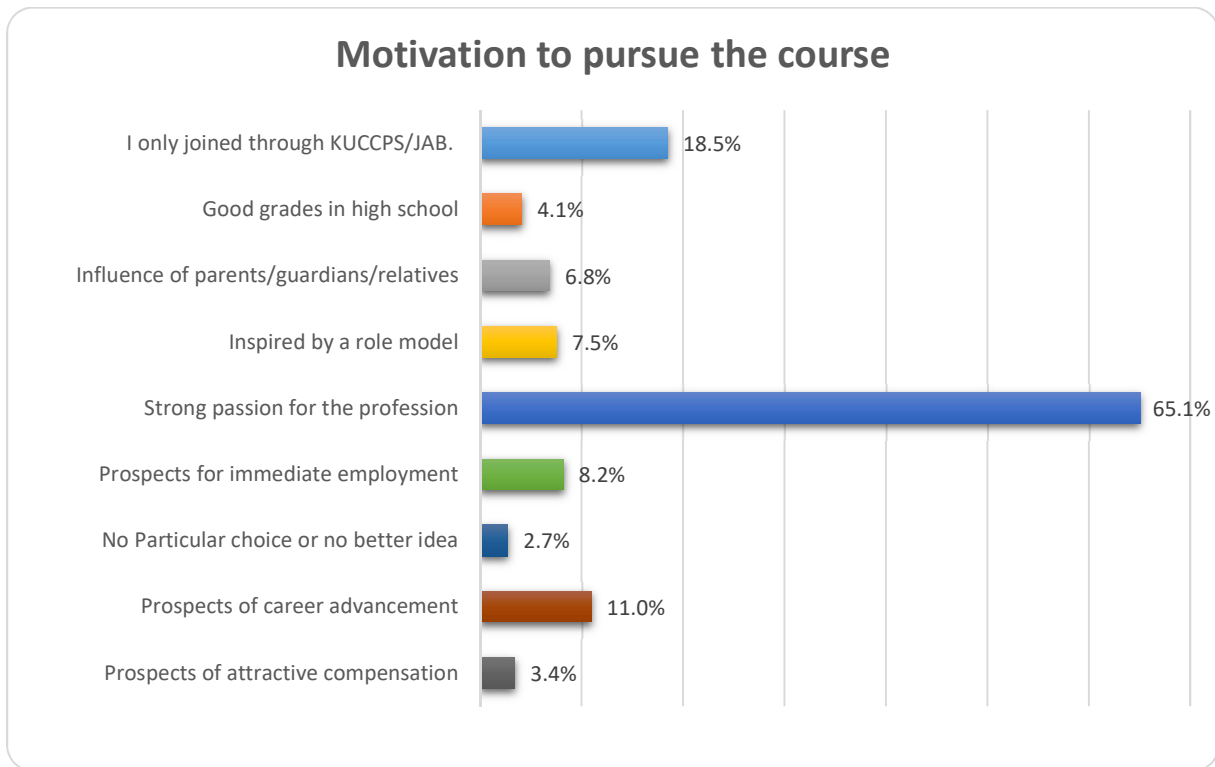| Category	Percentage
I only joined through KUCCPS/JAB.	18.5%
Good grades in high school	4.1%
Influence of parents/guardians/relatives	6.8%
Inspired by a role model	7.5%
Strong passion for the profession	65.1%
Prospects for immediate employment	8.2%
No Particular choice or no better idea	2.7%
Prospects of career advancement	11.0%
Prospects of attractive compensation	3.4%

Figure 3: Motivation to pursue the courses

From the figure above, the motivations for graduates to pursue their courses reveal a variety of influences, with the most prominent factor being a strong passion for the profession, cited by 65.1% of respondents. This suggests that a majority of graduates are driven by genuine interest in their field of study.

A smaller portion, 18.5%, joined their course through the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) or Joint Admissions Board (JAB), indicating that some students were guided into their programs by these placement processes rather than personal choice.

Career-related factors also play a role, with 11.0% motivated by prospects of career advancement and 8.2% by the potential for immediate employment. The influence of parents, guardians, or relatives motivated 6.8% of graduates, while 7.5% were inspired by a role model.

Other factors, such as the prospect of attractive compensation (3.4%) and good grades in high school (4.1%), had a lesser impact. Additionally, a small percentage (2.7%) reported having no particular choice or better idea when selecting their course, suggesting a lack of strong motivation or direction for some students

3.3 Employment Rates

The primary objective of the survey was to find out the employment status of graduates who pursued EASTRIP Priority programs. Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 below break down the employability rates of the traced graduates:

3.3.1 Overall Employment Status.
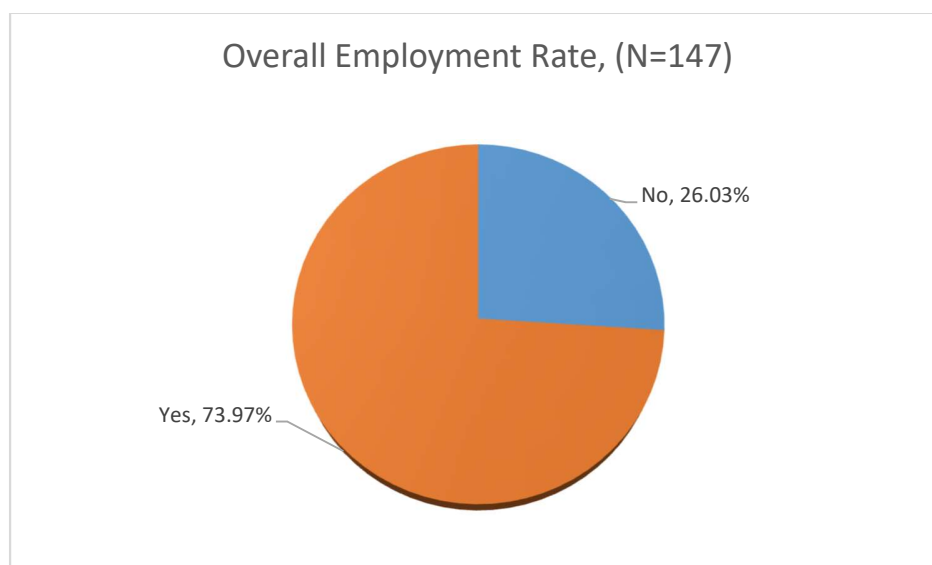
From the data, the **overall** employability rate of KCNP graduates is **73.97%. 26.03% were** unemployed.

3.3.2 Employability Rate by Gender.

Breaking down the employability rate further in terms of gender, the employed 73.97% comprises 47.95% male and 25.34% female while the unemployed 26.03% comprises 17.81% male and 7.53% female. There was an equal number of unemployed and employed graduates who did not reveal their gender.

Despite a higher percentage of females in the sample (53.74%) compared to males (40.14%), there is a greater number of employed males overall. Specifically, 47.95% of the employed graduates are male, while 25.34% are female. This suggests that, even with a larger female presence in the study, males were more successful in securing employment. On the other hand, the unemployment rate is higher among males (17.81%) compared to females (7.53%), indicating that while more males found jobs, a significant portion also remained unemployed.
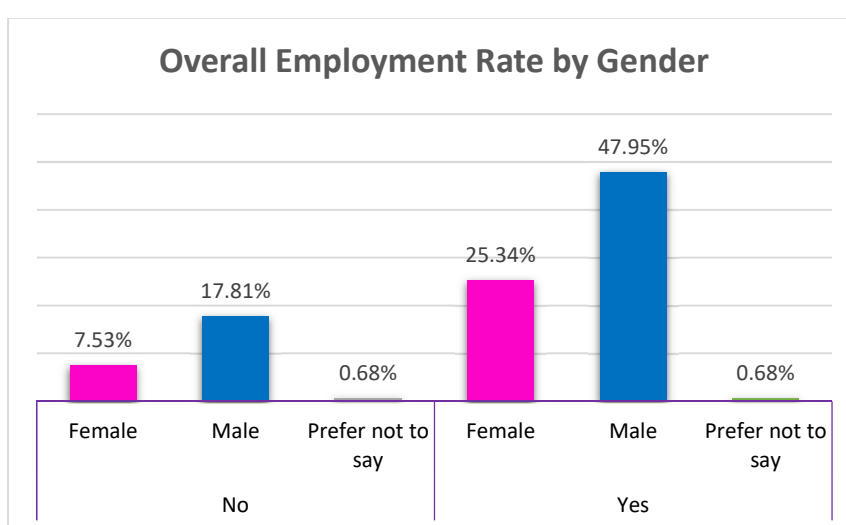
Figure 4: Overall Employment Rate broken done by gender

3.3.3 Gender-specific employability rates

Treating either gender independently, the employability rate is represented in Figure 5. While both genders show high employability rates, females have a slightly higher employment rate (77.08%) compared to males (72.92%). However, males dominate the sample size, making up a larger portion of both the employed and unemployed populations.
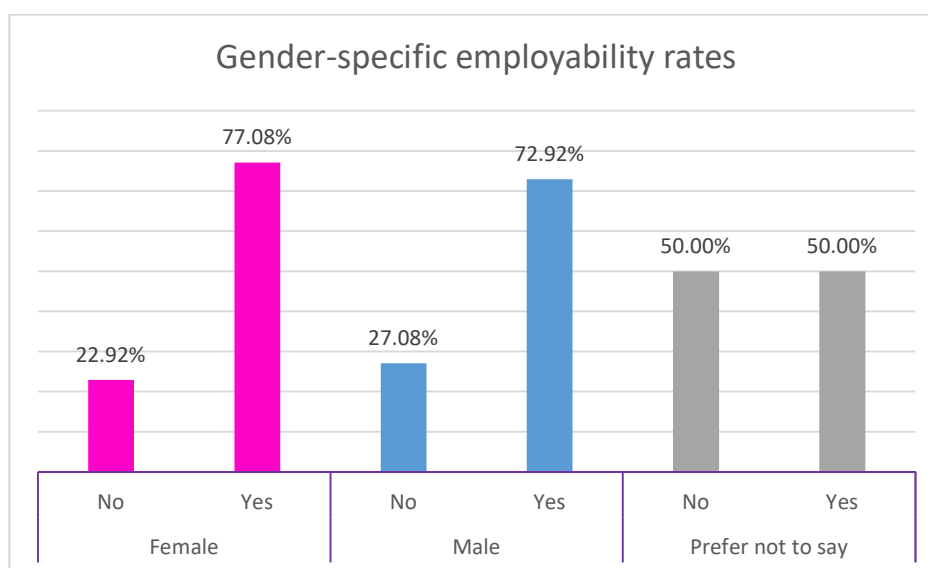
Figure 5: Gender-specific employability rate

3.4 Employability Trends

The employability rate for graduates has shown a steady and significant improvement over the years, starting from **30%** in FY 2018/2019 and rising sharply to **42.50%** in FY 2019/2020. This increase indicates a positive shift, possibly due to an improving economy, better alignment between training programs and job market needs, or enhanced graduate support systems.

The trend continued upward, with the employability rate reaching **64.60%** in FY 2020/2021. This substantial rise could be attributed to the economic recovery post-COVID-19, where industries began to rehire, and the demand for skilled labour increased.

In FY 2021/2022, the employability rate peaked at **77.75%**, suggesting that the training programs were highly effective, and graduates were in demand. The highest rate was observed in FY 2022/2023, where employability reached **81.30%**. This peak might reflect optimal conditions in the job market and the successful integration of graduates into the workforce.

However, in FY 2023/2024, there was a slight decline to **73.97%**. While this drop may raise concerns, it is not drastic enough to indicate a significant downturn. The decrease could be due to temporary factors such as market saturation, economic fluctuations, or changes in industry demand. Therefore, while the trend has shown an overall positive trajectory, this recent dip should be monitored to ensure it does not signal the beginning of a more significant issue.
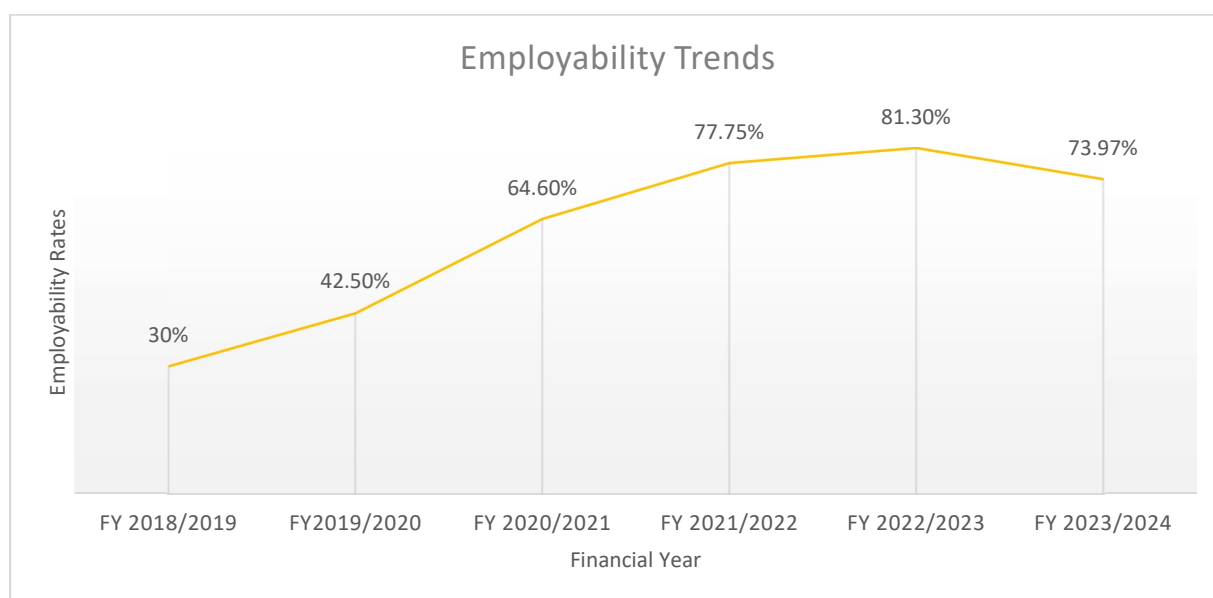
Figure 6: Employability rate trends

EMPLOYED GRADUATES

3.5 Nature of employment

The data on employment types among graduates illustrates the current job market conditions they face. A substantial majority, 85.71%, are in full-time roles, with most of these positions being contract-based (66.67%) and a smaller fraction being permanent (19.05%). Part-time employment accounts for just 14.29% of job opportunities. This distribution reflects the nature of job availability for graduates, indicating that full-time,

particularly contract-based, roles are the most prevalent in the job market. The chart below represents the nature of employment the graduates are in.
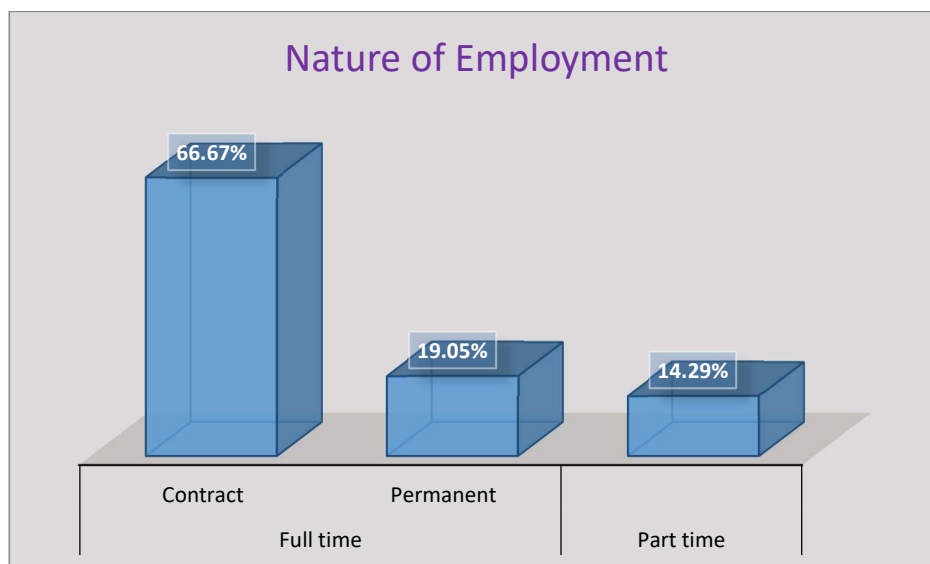
Figure 7: Nature of employment

3.6 Employment Sectors

The distribution of employers by sector among graduates shows a strong predominance of the private sector, which employs 62.69% of individuals. The public sector, encompassing national and county governments, employs 13.43% of graduates, while 11.94% are self-employed. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) account for 5.97% of employment, with parastatals or semi-autonomous government agencies and other sectors each representing 2.99%. This distribution highlights that the private sector is the primary source of employment for graduates, with a significant but smaller share in the public sector and self-employment.

Figure 8: Type of employer

3.7 Employment Sub-sector

The six sectors in Section 3.5 above were further broken down into subsectors. The chart below shows distribution of graduates into the derived subsectors:
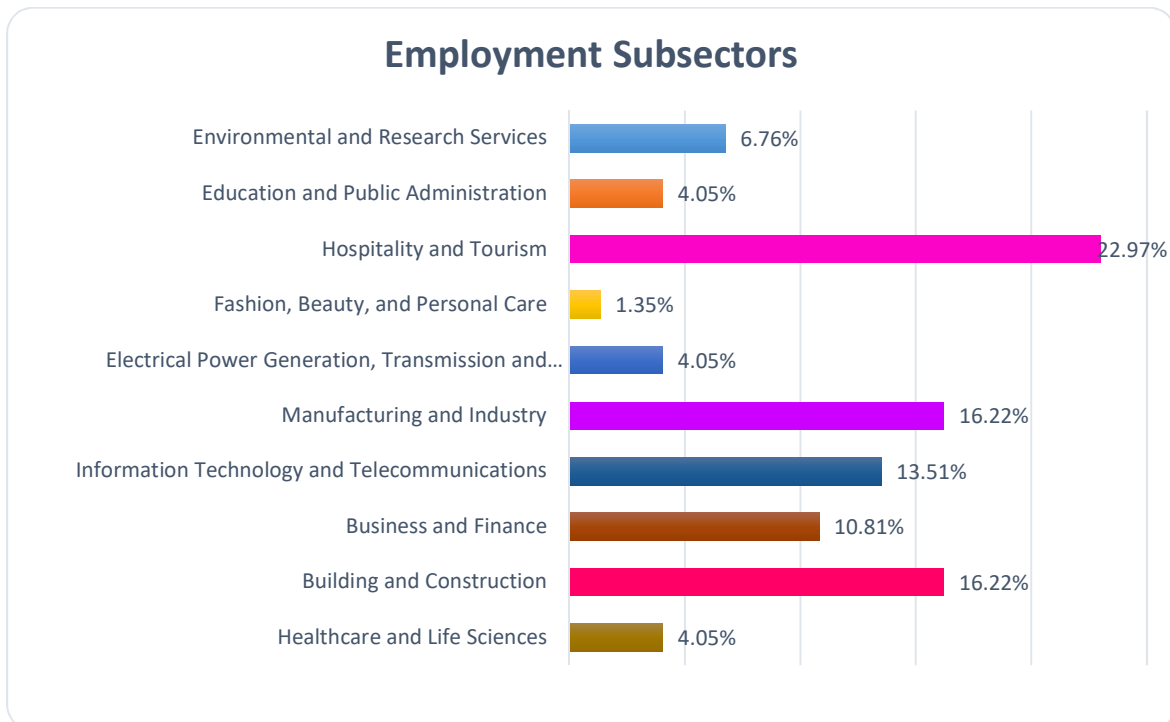
Figure 9: Employment subsectors

From the responses received, Hospitality and Tourism is the leading subsector, with **22.97%** of graduates employed here, reflecting a strong demand for roles in this field. Both **Manufacturing and Industry** and **Building and Construction** each employ **16.22%** of graduates, highlighting their crucial role in providing em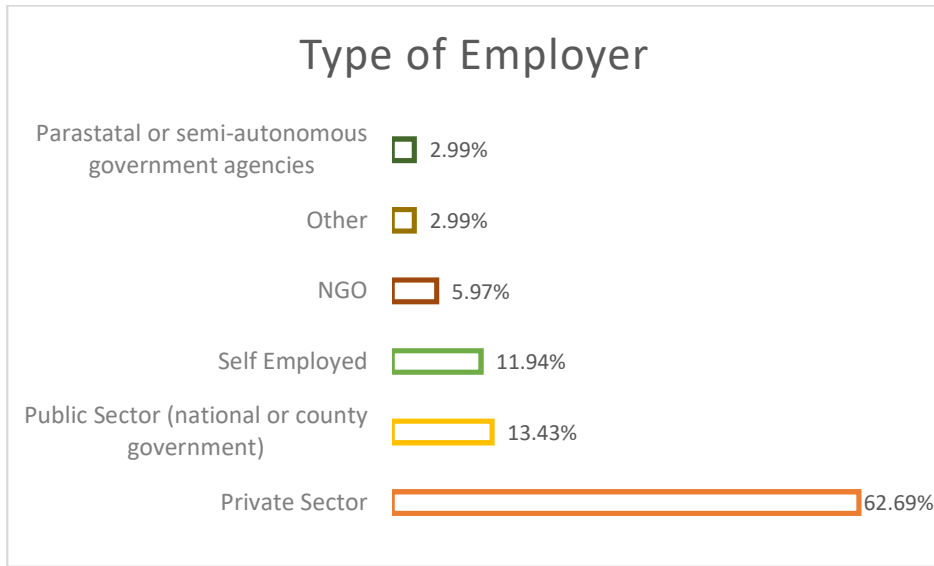ployment opportunities. **Information Technology and Telecommunications** follows, employing **13.51%** of graduates, underscoring the sector's growing importance. **Business and Finance** accounts for **10.81%** of employed graduates, indicating its significant, though smaller, role. **Healthcare and Life Sciences**, **Education and Public Administration**, **Environmental and Research Services**, and **Electrical Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution** each employ **4.05%** to **6.76%** of graduates, showing their smaller but notable impact. Lastly, **Fashion, Beauty, and Personal Care** have the lowest representation at **1.35%**, suggesting limited job opportunities in this sector.

3.8 Job-hoping

The respondents were asked if their employment was their first. 58.21% said it was indeed their first. 41.79% however, said they had done other jobs prior. This suggests that a majority of the graduates are in their first employment position, highlighting the entry-level nature of the jobs many are securing after completing their studies
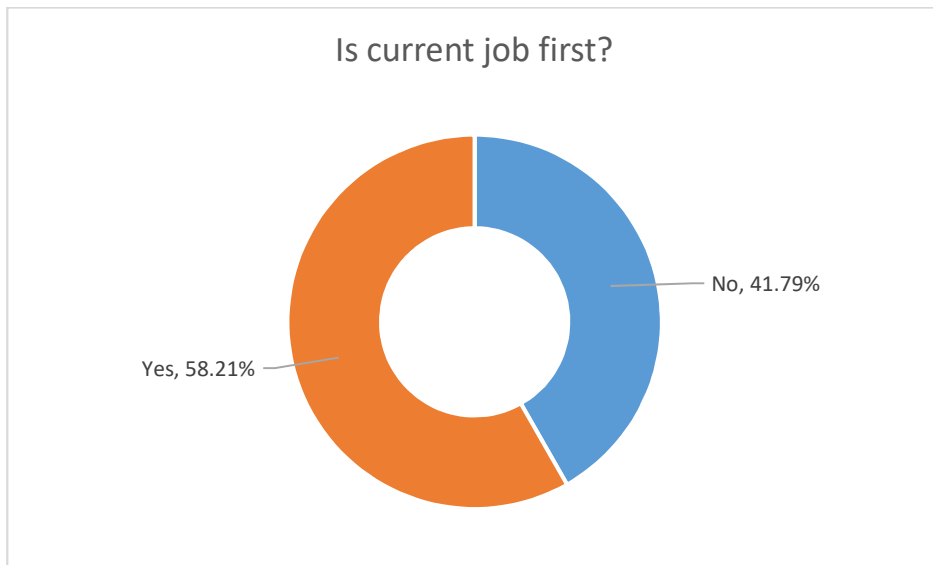
Figure 10: Job-hoping

3.9 Reasons for job-hoping

The graduates were asked what caused them to move from job to job. The data below summarizes their reasons:
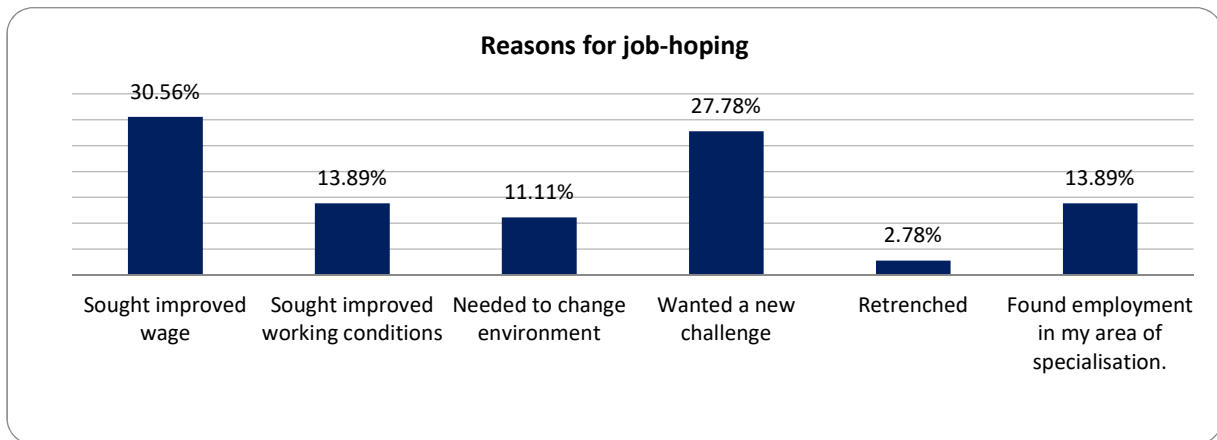
Figure 11: Job hopping reasons

The reasons for changing jobs among graduates reveal a focus on improving employment conditions and career advancement. The most common reason, cited by 30.56% of individuals, is the pursuit of better wages. This is closely followed by the desire for new challenges (27.78%) and improved working conditions (13.89%). A notable portion of respondents also changed jobs to align with their area of specialization (13.89%).

Relatively few individuals changed jobs due to retrenchment (2.78%) or the need for a new environment (11.11%). Overall, the data indicates that financial and professional growth are primary motivators for job changes among graduates.

3.10 Job-seeking methods

The data on job-seeking methods among graduates indicates varied approaches to finding employment. The most common method, used by 40.30% of graduates, is applying as a walk-in applicant. Recommendations account for 26.87% of job-seeking efforts, while responses to advertisements make up 13.43%. Connections with friends and relatives are utilized by 11.94% of individuals, and family business opportunities are pursued by 5.97%. Arrangements made through KCNP staff are the least common, at 1.49%. This distribution highlights a reliance on direct applications and personal networks in the job search process. The chart below shows a comparison of how graduates look for jobs:
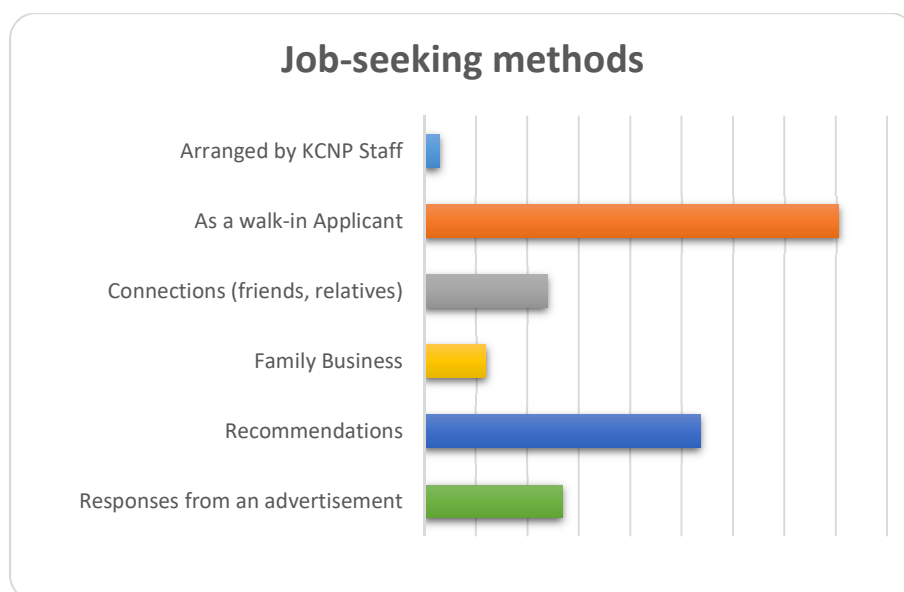
Figure 12: Job-seeking methods

3.11 Number of employers contacted

The distribution of the number of employers contacted by graduates before securing employment shows a range of job search experiences. A majority, 55.88%, contacted

between 0 to 5 employers, indicating a relatively efficient job search for these individuals. Conversely, 32.35% of graduates reached out to more than 10 employers, reflecting a more prolonged search process. A smaller portion, 10.29%, contacted between 6 to 10 employers. The data also includes a minor percentage of invalid responses at 1.47%. This distribution suggests a varied experience in job searching, with some graduates finding employment quickly and others facing a more extended and challenging search.
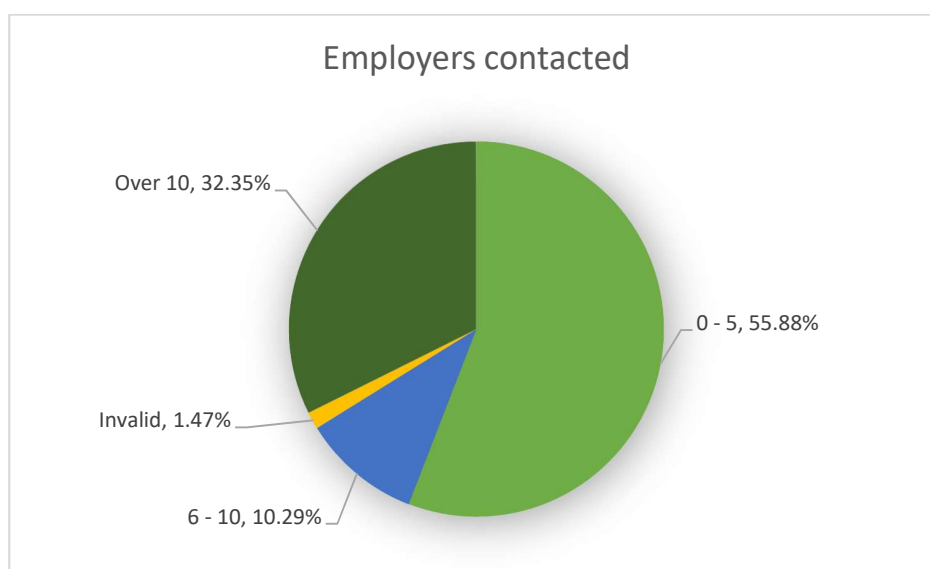
Figure 13: Number of employers contracted

3.12 Lead time to employment

Lead time to employment is the duration of job-hunting. Different graduates take different lengths of time to secure employment. From the data, there is a revelation that a significant portion of graduates has been searching for employment for extended periods. The largest group, **38.81%**, has been looking for a job for **6 to 12 months**, followed by **31.34%** who have been searching for **13 to 24 months**. A smaller percentage, **11.94%**, has been job-seeking for **25 to 36 months**, while **13.43%** have been searching for less than **6 months**. Notably, **4.48%** of graduates have been seeking employment for over **3 years**, highlighting the challenges some face in securing a job over a prolonged period.
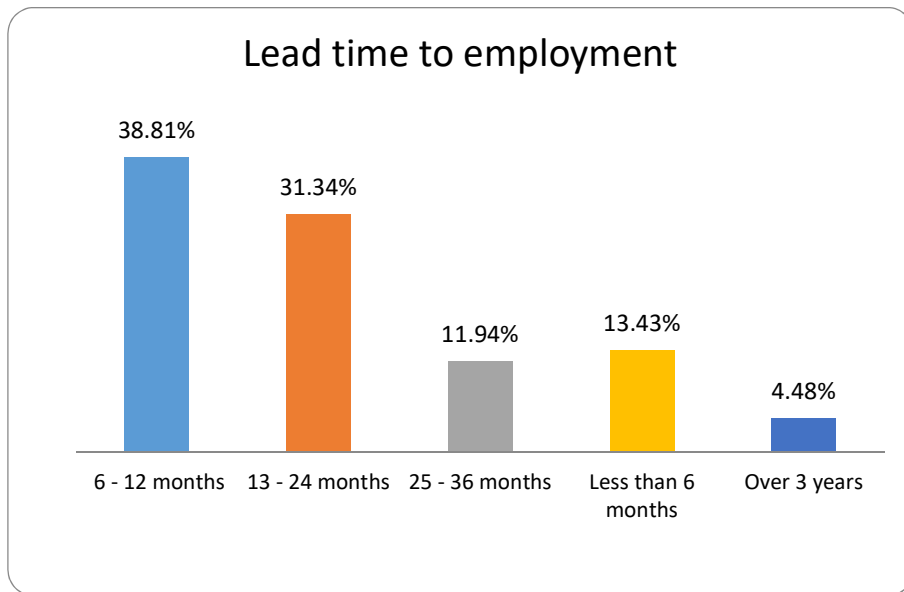
Figure 14: Lead time to employment

3.13 Salary Range

The data indicates that most graduates are in entry-level jobs, with 71.43% earning between KSh. 20,000 and KSh. 45,000. This range includes positions that are considered entry-level, suggesting that a significant portion of graduates are starting their careers in roles with lower salaries. Additionally, 6.35% earn below KSh. 15,000, further reflecting the prevalence of entry-level positions among the graduates. The chart below shows the salary distribution earned by our graduates:

24

Salary Rang

Over Ksh. 75,000, 6.35%

Below KSh. 15000, 6.35%

Ksh. 50,000-75,000 , 15.87%

Ksh. 20,000-45,000 , 71.43%
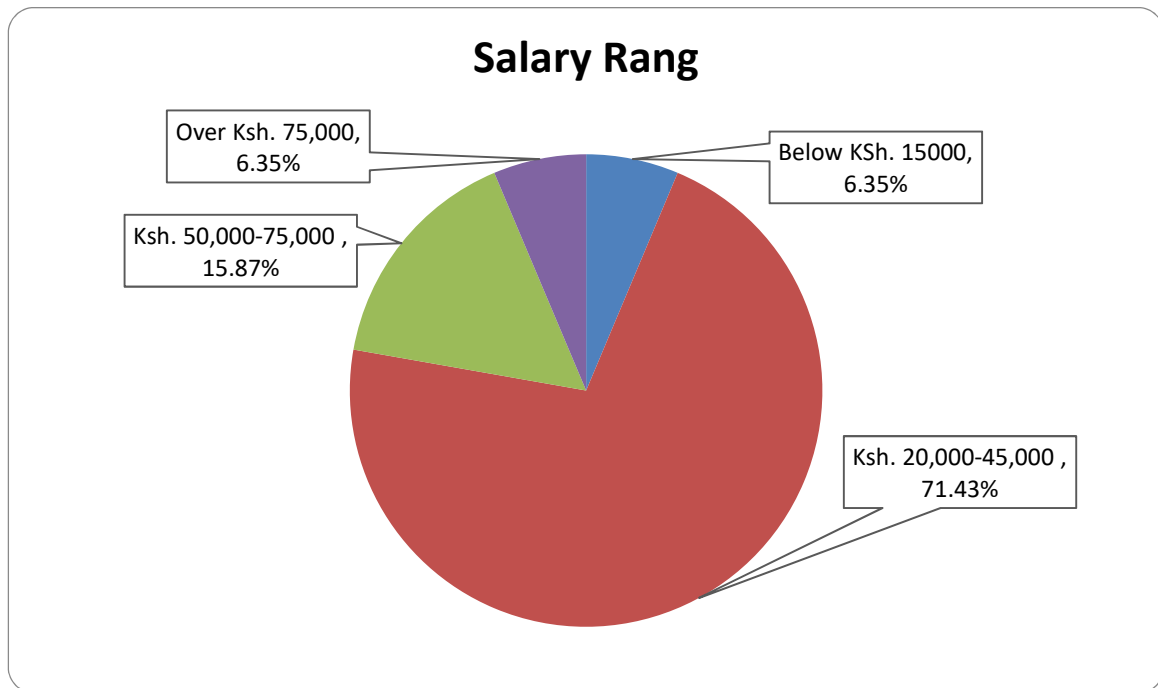
Figure 15: Salary Range

3.14 Job relevance to the training area

Job relevant to training area?

No, 20.90%

Yes, 79.10%

Figure 16: Job relevance to the training area.

Discrepancies between acquired skills and job requirements can affect career progression and earnings[1]. This aligns with the data showing that while a majority of graduates are

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[1] Galí, J. (2018). The skills mismatch and the unemployment rate in Europe. *European Economic Review, 104,* 220-239. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2017.10.003

employed in relevant fields, the presence of a notable skills mismatch among some individuals underscores ongoing challenges in achieving full alignment between education and employment.

As shown in Figure 16, the data on job relevance to training shows that 79.10% of graduates are working in roles aligned with their field of study, while 20.90% experience a skills mismatch, taking jobs unrelated to their training. This finding reflects a general trend where most graduates find employment relevant to their education, but a significant portion faces challenges in aligning their job roles with their qualifications.

3.15 Difficulties in job-seeking

The difficulties encountered by graduates in their job search reveal several significant challenges. The most commonly reported issue, faced by 31.58% of graduates, is limited empl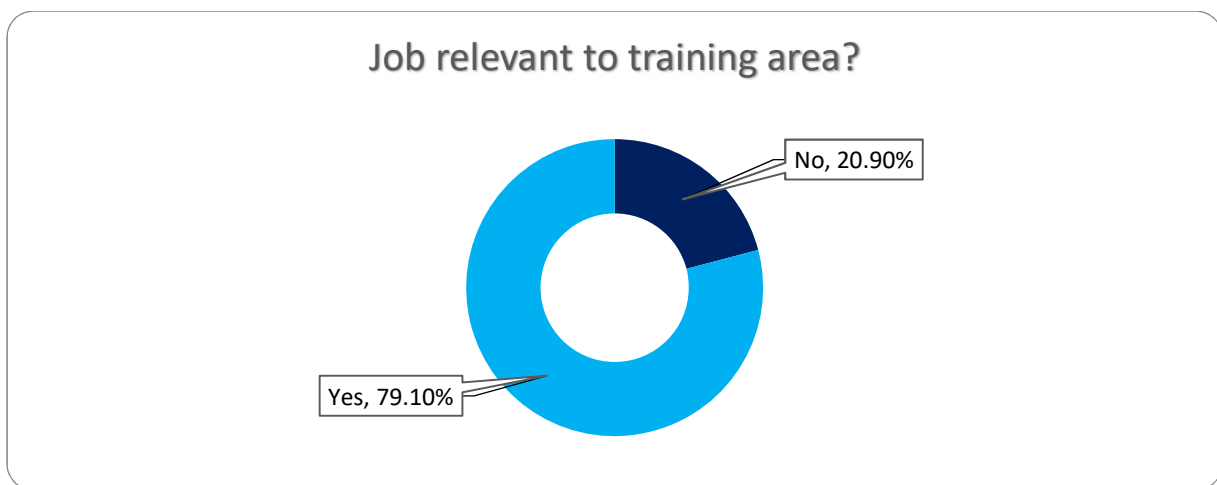oyment opportunities in their area. Additionally, 29.47% of graduates struggle with a lack of work experience. The process of finding a job taking too long is a concern for 26.32% of respondents. A smaller portion, 7.37%, faces challenges with employers not valuing their qualifications, while only 1.05% encounter issues related to their area of specialization. The "Other" category, encompassing 4.21% of responses, suggests additional, less common difficulties among the responses provided. The other reasons included nepotism, tribalism, stereotypes and language barrier. One graduate in a phone interview mentioned that he could not get a job he had applied for because he did not speak Italian, - a language that was not taught in his course. Overall, the data highlights that limited local opportunities and insufficient work experience are the primary obstacles in the job-seeking process. The chart below shows the distribution of job challenges faced in job-seeking.

Difficulties in Jobseeking

Takes too long to find one	26.32%
Employers not interested in my level qualifications	7.37%
Employers not interested in my area of specialisation	1.05%
Lack of work experience	29.47%
Limited employment opportunities in my area	31.58%
Other	4.21%
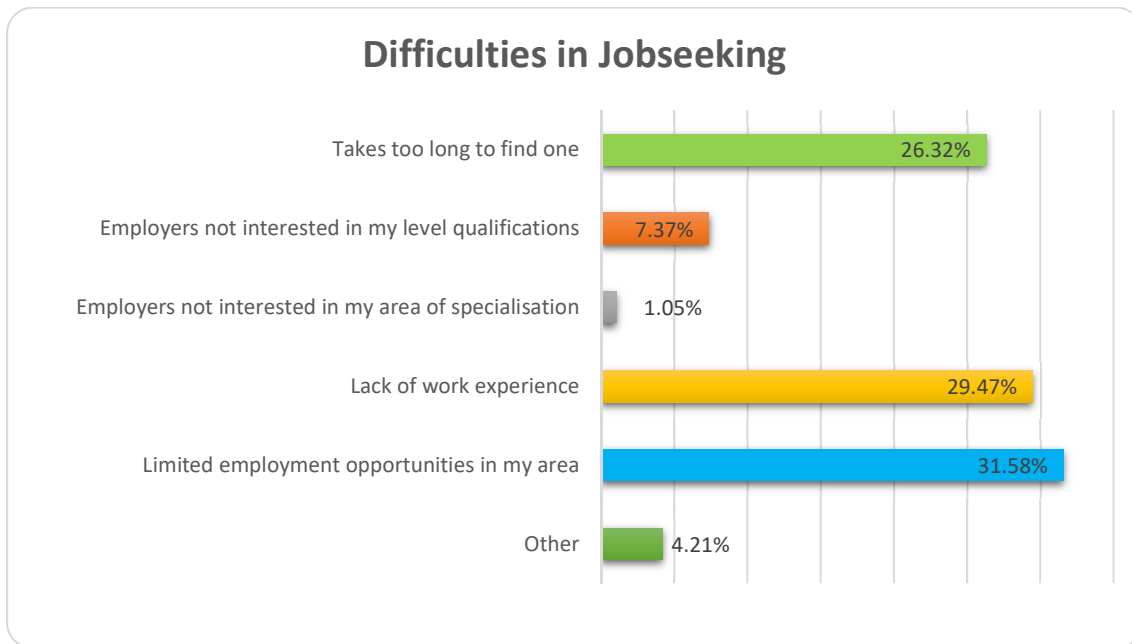
UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES

3.16 Status of unemployed graduates

The status of unemployed graduates shows varied activities, with 71.1% actively seeking work. A notable portion, 12.1%, is occupied with family and children, while 6.0% are engaged in internships. Additionally, 1.2% are currently studying, and 9.6% fall into other categories.

Status of unemployed graduates

I am currently studying	I am busy with my family and children	I am in an internship	I am actively looking for work	Others
1.2%	12.1%	6.0%	71.1%	9.6%
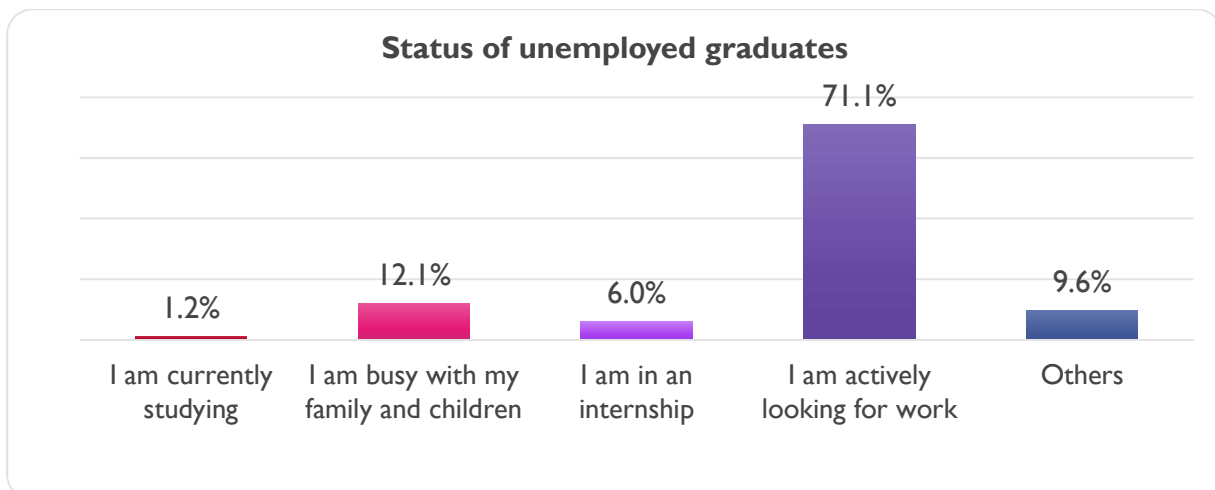
Figure 17: Status of unemployed graduates

According to the World Bank's classification, individuals in internships and those pursuing further studies are considered employed. Therefore, while the data shows 71.1% actively looking for work, the inclusion of those in internships (6.0%) and further studies (1.2%) in the employment category could alter the overall employment status of these graduates.

3.17 Challenges in job-seeking

The reasons for unemployment among graduates highlight several key challenges. The most common reason, cited by 38.95% of respondents, is the lack of job opportunities. Additionally, 30.53% attribute their unemployment to a lack of connections, reflecting the importance of networking in job acquisition. A smaller portion, 10.53%, indicates that lack of work experience is a barrier to employment, while 8.42% face difficulties due to not meeting professional eligibility requirements.
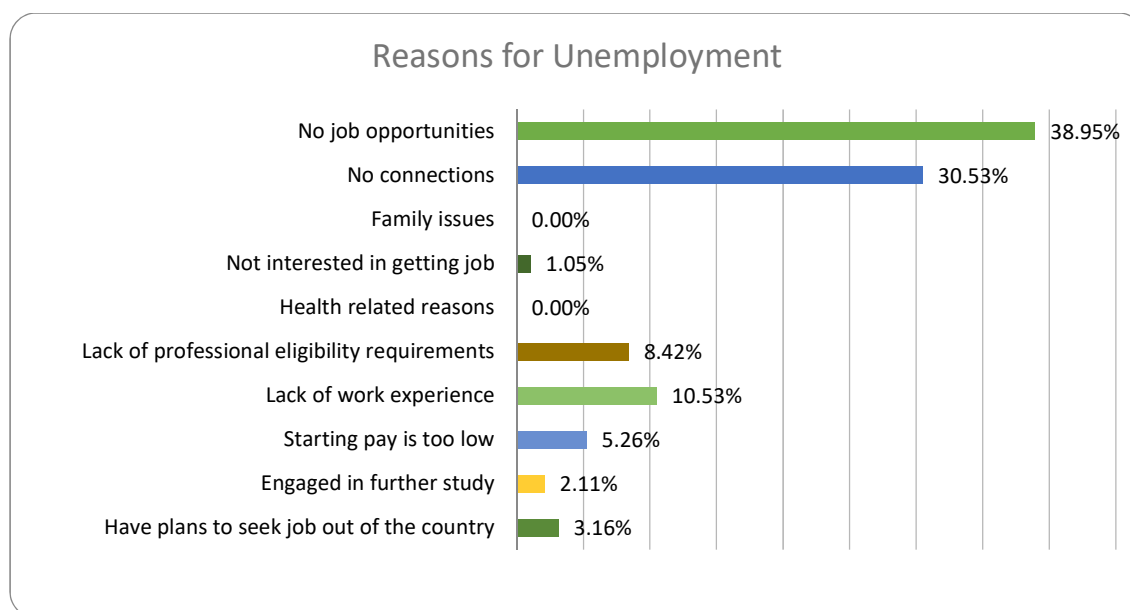
Figure 18: Reasons for unemployment

Other factors include low starting pay (5.26%), plans to seek jobs abroad (3.16%), and engagement in further study (2.11%). Notably, none of the respondents cited family issues or health-related reasons as barriers, and only 1.05% expressed disinterest in getting a job. These findings emphasize that structural issues like job availability and

networking opportunities are the primary obstacles to employment, with a notable impact also from the skills mismatch and entry-level barriers.

ATTITUDE OF GRADUATES TOWARDS THE COURSES THEY PURSUED

3.18 Whether they would recommend the courses to others

To assess their attitude, the graduates were asked whether they would recommend the courses they pursued. The responses were clustered according to the employment status of the graduates. The chart below shows how their responses compare.
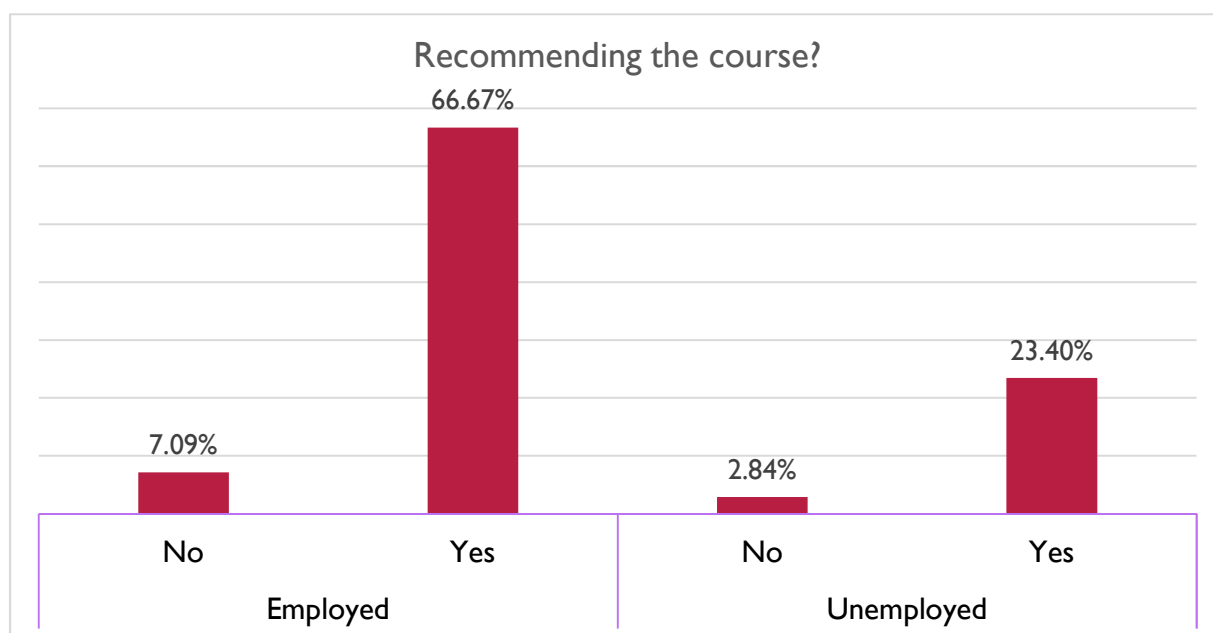
The graduates' responses regarding whether they would recommend their courses provide insights into their attitudes toward their education based on their employment status. Among employed graduates, a strong majority of 66.67% would recommend their course, while 7.09% would not. This suggests a generally positive attitude towards their training among those who have secured employment.

For unemployed graduates, 23.40% would still recommend their course, indicating some level of satisfaction with their education despite their current job status. However, a smaller percentage of unemployed graduates, 2.84%, would not recommend their course. Overall, the data reveals that employed graduates are more likely to endorse their courses compared to those who are unemployed, highlighting a potential link between positive employment outcomes and satisfaction with their educational choices

3.19 What lacked in training

The study also aimed to find out what the graduates perceived lacked in their training. Their feedback highlights several areas for improvement. The most significant concern, cited by 35.6% of respondents, is the training of practical skills, suggesting a perceived gap between theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience. Training materials and equipment also emerged as a critical area of need, with 22.5% indicating that these resources were inadequate.

Other areas of concern include the transfer of theoretical knowledge (11.0%), commitment of teaching staff (11.0%), and teaching/training methods (8.4%). An additional 11.5% of respondents mentioned other unspecified issues.

This feedback underscores the importance of enhancing practical skills training and improving access to necessary materials and equipment. Addressing these gaps could potentially lead to better employment outcomes and greater satisfaction with the courses among future graduates. Figure 19 below shows graduate's opinions on what they feel lacked in their training.
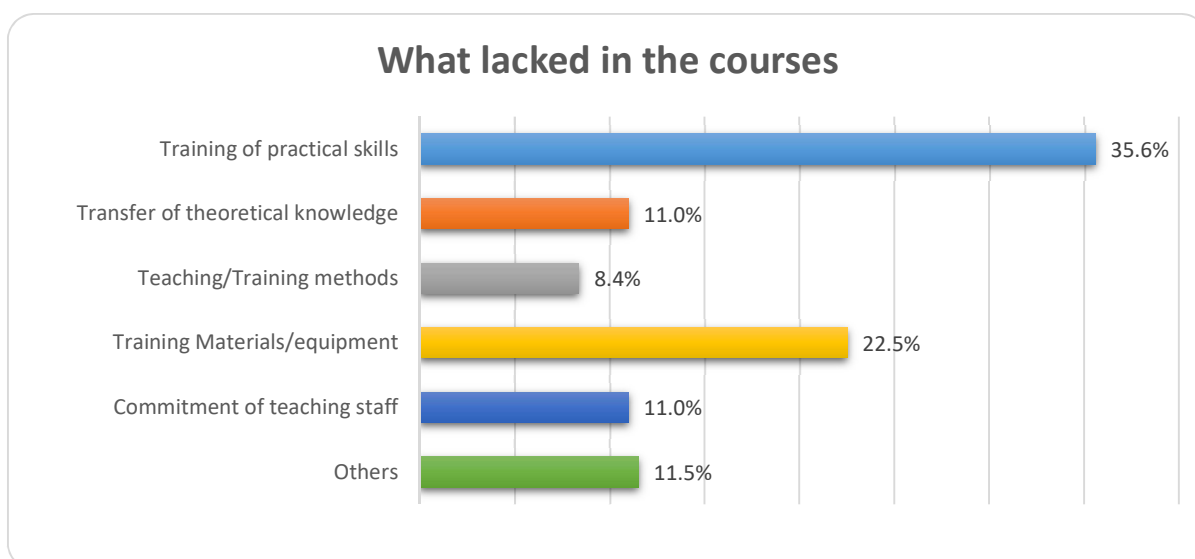
Figure 19: What was lacking in the courses graduates pursued

3.20 Suggested Areas of Improvement

Having had the idea about what was lacking in the courses, the respondents were asked to identify the areas they felt needed improvement, and the extent to which the improvement was needed. Their responses are represented in a 1 5-point Likert Scale, as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**. Here's a summary of the key trends:

i. **Training in Practical Skills**: This area stands out as needing the most improvement, with 28.9% of respondents indicating it needs 100% improvement and 36.4% suggesting 75% improvement. This aligns with earlier feedback highlighting the gap in practical skills training.

ii. **Industrial Attachments**: Another critical area, 42.1% of graduates believe industrial attachments need 75% improvement, and 25.6% think they need 100% improvement, pointing to a significant need for better integration of practical, real-world experience.

iii. **Course Content and Instructional Materials**: Course content and instructional manuals are also areas of concern, with 30.6% and 33.1% respectively needing 50% improvement, and significant portions of respondents suggesting higher levels of improvement (24.8% and 20.7% needing 100% improvement, respectively).

iv. **Workshop Equipment**: 28.1% of graduates indicate that workshop equipment needs 75% improvement, and 23.1% believe it needs 100% improvement, underscoring the necessity for better resources in hands-on training environments.

v. **Teaching and Delivery Methods**: Teaching and delivery methods also require attention, with 33.9% suggesting 50% improvement and 21.5% indicating a need for 100% improvement, emphasizing the importance of effective instructional strategies.

vi. **Laboratory Work and Trainers' Practical Skills**: Both laboratory work and trainers' practical skills have significant portions of respondents calling for

substantial improvements (24.8% for 100% improvement in laboratory work and 24.0% for trainers' practical skills).

vii. **Quality of Trainers**: 26.4% of graduates believe the quality of trainers needs 100% improvement, and 27.3% suggest 75% improvement, indicating that the competency of trainers is a crucial area for development.

In summary, the **trends reveal a strong desire** among graduates **for enhancements in practical, hands-on training and the resources necessary to support it**. The feedback suggests that while theoretical knowledge is important, the practical application of skills and the quality of instructional methods and materials are critical areas needing substantial improvement.

Table 2: Areas of Improvement

Area	Needs 0% Improvement	Needs 25% Improvement	Needs 50% Improvement	Needs 75% Improvement	Needs 100% Improvement	Trend
Knowledge (Theory)	6.6%	14.9%	27.3%	34.7%	16.5%	
Training in practical skills	3.3%	12.4%	19.8%	36.4%	28.9%	
Industrial attachments	7.4%	7.4%	17.4%	42.1%	25.6%	
Course content	6.6%	13.2%	30.6%	24.8%	22.3%	
Instructional	5.8%	14.9%	33.1%	24.0%	20.7%	
Textbooks	9.1%	14.0%	24.8%	26.4%	19.8%	
Workshop	8.3%	13.2%	19.8%	28.1%	23.1%	
Teaching and delivery	4.1%	8.3%	33.9%	27.3%	21.5%	
Laboratory work	14.0%	9.9%	24.8%	23.1%	24.8%	
Trainer's knowledge of theory	5.0%	16.5%	23.1%	29.8%	19.0%	
Trainer's practical	8.3%	10.7%	25.6%	28.1%	24.0%	
Duration of training	13.2%	14.9%	15.7%	31.4%	20.7%	
Quality of trainers	6.6%	14.9%	21.5%	27.3%	26.4%	

3.21 Employers' Consideration during Employment

What employers consider during recruitment is essential for a learning institution to know in order to package its curriculum in a manner that will make the graduates marketable. Graduates were asked to mention the extent to which some factors are taken

into consideration by employers during recruitment and employment. The table below summarizes the graduates' respondents

Table 3: Employer Considerations during Recruitment

Criteria	To a very great extend	To some extend	Don't Know	Not at all	Very Little Extent	Trend
Exact matching professional qualification	33.9%	47.7%	11.0%	4.6%	2.8%	
Reputation of TVET college that I graduated from	29.0%	38.3%	20.6%	4.7%	7.5%	
The grades in my diploma	26.7%	41.9%	15.2%	7.6%	8.6%	
Shortage of employees	11.3%	37.7%	24.5%	8.5%	17.9%	
Social and individual	21.2%	50.0%	20.2%	1.9%	6.7%	
Relations/Connecti	22.9%	40.0%	16.2%	13.3%	7.6%	

The Likert scale responses provide insights into graduates' perceptions of the criteria employers prioritize during recruitment. Here's a summary of the key observations.

i.   **Exact Matching Professional Qualification**: This criterion is viewed as highly important, with 33.9% of graduates believing it is considered "to a very great extent" and 47.7% "to some extent." Only a small percentage (7.4%) think it is of little or no importance, indicating that graduates perceive matching qualifications as a critical factor in recruitment.

ii. **Reputation of TVET College**: The reputation of the institution is also considered significant, with 29.0% of graduates believing it matters "to a very great extent" and 38.3% "to some extent." However, 20.6% are uncertain, reflecting some ambiguity in how much this factor actually influences hiring decisions.

iii. **Grades in Diploma**: Graduates see their grades as moderately important, with 26.7% viewing them as critical ("to a very great extent") and 41.9% as somewhat

important. Nevertheless, a noticeable portion (16.2%) thinks grades have little or no impact on employment opportunities.

iv. **Shortage of Employees in Profession**: Only 11.3% believe that a shortage in their profession is considered "to a very great extent" by employers. The majority, however, view it as somewhat important (37.7%), but a significant 26.4% are either unsure or believe it has minimal influence. This suggests that while graduates recognize market demand, they are uncertain about its impact on hiring.

v. **Social and Individual Competencies**: These are seen as highly valued by employers, with 21.2% believing they are considered "to a very great extent" and 50.0% "to some extent." This indicates that interpersonal skills and personal attributes are perceived as key factors in the hiring process.

vi. **Relations/Connections**: Connections or networking are viewed as important, with 22.9% of graduates stating they are considered "to a very great extent" and 40.0% "to some extent." However, 13.3% believe they are not important at all, highlighting a divide in perceptions about the role of personal networks in securing employment.

From the above summary, **graduates believe that exact professional qualifications, the reputation of their institution, and social competencies are the most critical factors considered by employers.** In contrast, there is more uncertainty and mixed views regarding the influence of market demand, grades, and personal connections in the recruitment process.

3.22 Impact of training

The self-assessment results indicate that graduates generally perceive their training as impactful, especially in terms of **Theoretical Knowledge**, with **40.37%** rating its impact as "to a very great extent" and **43.12%** "to some extent." **Practical Skills** were also positively rated, with **32.43%** feeling they were greatly impacted and **42.34%** to some

extent. **Necessary Social Competencies and Skills** were similarly rated, with **28.44%** greatly impacted and **43.12%** to some extent. In terms of **Preparation for Self-Employment**, **30.91%** felt the training had a great impact, though a notable **16.36%** were unsure of its influence. **Training for Independence in Life** had a more varied response, with **29.09%** rating it as very impactful, but a significant **22.73%** were uncertain about its effect.

Error! Reference source not found. below shows a summary of the graduates' self-assessment of how impactful the training they went through was to some attributes. The colour scale was used to indicate the number of responses.

Table 4: Impact of Training to basic graduates' attributes

Element	To a very great extend	To some extend	Don't Know	Very Little Extent	Not at all	Trend
Theoretical Knowledge	40.37%	43.12%	11.01%	4.59%	0.92%	
Practical kills	32.43%	42.34%	13.51%	9.01%	2.70%	
Necessary Social Competencies and Skills	28.44%	43.12%	16.51%	7.34%	4.59%	
Preparation for self employment	30.91%	38.18%	16.36%	10.00%	4.55%	
Training for Indepence in Life	29.09%	30.00%	22.73%	12.73%	5.45%	

0%   100%

3.23 Relevance of TVET Training

The graduates' self-assessment reveals generally positive perceptions of their training's impact. **30.17%** strongly agree and **37.93%** agree that their training adequately prepared them for work, while **28.32%** strongly agree and **39.82%** agree that their employers were satisfied with their knowledge and skills. However, only **10.53%** strongly agree that it

was easy to get a job, with **23.68%** disagreeing, indicating challenges in job acquisition. On a more positive note, **50.00%** strongly agree that they can easily be trained to improve their skills in their work place, and **35.40%** strongly agree that they are very effective in their jobs. The ability to change employers within their specialization sees more moderate agreement, with **22.12%** strongly agreeing and **31.86%** agreeing, but **26.55%** remain neutral.

The following table shows the extent to which they agree with the relevance of their training in various aspects.

Table 5: Relevance of TVET Training

Aspect	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Trend
My training adequately prepared me for work	30.17%	37.93%	19.83%	9.48%	2.59%	
My employer/ former employer is/was satisfied with my level of knowledge and skill	28.32%	39.82%	21.24%	7.96%	2.65%	
It was/is easy for me to get a job	10.53%	21.05%	24.56%	23.68%	20.18%	
I can easily be trained to improve my level of skill	50.00%	34.75%	11.86%	3.39%	0.00%	
I can easily change employers within my area of specialisation	22.12%	31.86%	26.55%	13.27%	6.19%	
I find myself to be very effective in my current/previous job	35.40%	36.28%	18.58%	6.19%	3.54%	

0%   100%

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Enhancing Practical Skills Training

Actionable Steps:

i. **Expand Hands-On Learning Opportunities**: Increase the availability and variety of hands-on learning experiences, such as workshops, labs, and simulations. Encourage industry professionals to participate in the design and delivery of practical training sessions.

ii. **Industry-Based Internships**: Strengthen internship programs by forming partnerships with leading companies and organizations to offer students industry-based experiences that align with their academic studies.

iii. **Regular Skill Assessments**: Implement regular practical skills assessments to monitor students' proficiency and adjust the curriculum to address any identified gaps.

Rationale: Practical skills are critical for employability, particularly in technical and vocational fields. By enhancing practical training, students will be better equipped to meet the demands of the workplace, reducing the skills gap between education and industry needs.

5.2 Strengthening Entrepreneurial Support

Actionable Steps:

i. **Entrepreneurship Training**: Integrate comprehensive entrepreneurship training into the curriculum, covering business planning, financial management, and marketing.

ii. **Incubation Centres**: Establish incubation centres within the institution to provide resources, mentorship, and support for students interested in starting their businesses.

iii. **Networking Opportunities**: Organize events and workshops that connect aspiring entrepreneurs with successful business leaders, potential investors, and relevant industry experts.

Rationale: With the increasing importance of self-employment and entrepreneurship in the economy, it is crucial to equip students with the skills and resources needed to start and grow their businesses. Strengthening entrepreneurial support will help graduates create job opportunities not only for themselves but also for others.

5.3 Aligning Programs with Job Market Needs

Actionable Steps:

- **Regular Industry Consultations**: Establish a framework for ongoing consultations with industry stakeholders to ensure that the programs remain relevant and responsive to market demands.

- **Labour Market Analysis**: Conduct regular labour market analysis to identify emerging trends, in-demand skills, and employment opportunities. Use this data to update and refine academic programs.

- **Flexibility in Course Offerings**: Introduce flexible course options that allow students to tailor their learning to the specific needs of the job market, including short courses and certifications in high-demand areas.

Rationale: Aligning educational programs with job market needs ensures that graduates are well-prepared for employment. This alignment reduces the risk of

unemployment and underemployment among graduates and increases the value of the education provided by the institution.

5.4 Improving Job Placement Services

Actionable Steps:

i. **Dedicated Placement Office**: Strengthen the institution's job placement office by hiring experienced staff who can build strong relationships with employers and assist students in finding relevant job opportunities.

ii. **Career Fairs and Recruitment Events**: Organize regular career fairs and recruitment events on campus, inviting a diverse range of employers to interact with students and discuss potential job openings.

iii. **Resume and Interview Workshops**: Provide targeted workshops to help students improve their resumes, cover letters, and interview skills, thereby increasing their competitiveness in the job market.

Rationale: Effective job placement services are essential for connecting graduates with employment opportunities. By improving these services, the institution can enhance its graduates' chances of securing meaningful employment in their field of study.

5.5 Focusing on Employment Security

Actionable Steps:

i. **Training on Employment Rights**: Incorporate training on employment rights, contracts, and labour laws into the curriculum to empower students to secure stable and fair employment conditions.

ii. **Long-Term Career Planning**: Provide guidance on long-term career planning, helping students understand the importance of job security and

how to achieve it through strategic career choices and continuous professional development.

iii. **Employer Partnerships**: Foster partnerships with employers who are known for offering stable, long-term employment opportunities, and encourage them to recruit from the institution.

Rationale: Employment security is a key factor in job satisfaction and career longevity. By focusing on this area, the institution can help graduates secure stable positions that offer long-term growth and development opportunities.

5.6 Improving Teaching and Training Methods

Actionable Steps:

i. **Faculty Development Programs**: Invest in ongoing professional development for faculty members, including training in the latest pedagogical techniques and technologies.

ii. **Student-Cantered Learning Approaches**: Promote student-cantered learning approaches that encourage active participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

iii. **Use of Technology in Education**: Expand the use of educational technologies, such as e-learning platforms, virtual simulations, and interactive tools, to enhance the teaching and learning experience.

Rationale: High-quality teaching and training are fundamental to student success. By continuously improving these methods, the institution can ensure that its graduates are well-prepared for the challenges of the modern workplace.

5.7 Addressing Salary Expectations

Actionable Steps:

i. **Salary Expectation Workshops**: Conduct workshops to help students understand realistic salary expectations based on their field of study, industry standards, and regional economic conditions.

ii. **Salary Negotiation Training**: Provide training on salary negotiation techniques to equip students with the skills needed to secure fair compensation in their first job and throughout their careers.

iii. **Alumni Salary Data**: Collect and share salary data from alumni to provide current students with a clear understanding of potential earnings in their chosen fields.

Rationale: Understanding salary expectations is crucial for graduates as they enter the job market. Proper guidance in this area can help them make informed decisions and negotiate effectively, leading to greater job satisfaction and financial stability.

5.8 Exploring Opportunities in Diverse Sectors

Actionable Steps:

i. **Sector Diversification Awareness**: Raise awareness among students about career opportunities in diverse sectors, including those outside their primary field of study.

ii. **Cross-Disciplinary Programs**: Develop cross-disciplinary programs that allow students to gain skills and knowledge applicable to multiple industries, increasing their versatility and employability.

iii. **Industry Exposure Visits**: Organize visits to different industries and sectors to give students a first-hand understanding of various career paths and opportunities available to them.

Rationale: Diversifying career opportunities allows graduates to be more adaptable and resilient in a changing job market. Encouraging exploration of various sectors can open up new career paths and reduce dependency on a single industry.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

The tracer study conducted for the FY 23-24 cohort provided valuable insights into the post-graduation experiences of our students. The key findings of the study are summarized as follows:

i. **Employment Outcomes**: A significant number of graduates have successfully secured employment in their respective fields of study, reflecting the overall effectiveness of the institution's programs. However, there is a notable variation in employment rates across different programs, with some graduates struggling to find relevant job opportunities.

ii. **Skills Alignment**: While technical skills imparted by the institution are generally well-received by employers, there are gaps in the areas of practical, soft, and entrepreneurial skills. These gaps highlight the need for continuous curriculum updates and a stronger focus on experiential learning.

iii. **Entrepreneurial Activity**: There is growing interest among graduates in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures, yet the study revealed that many lack the necessary support and resources to succeed in this path. This underscores the need for strengthened entrepreneurial education and incubation facilities.

iv. **Sectoral Employment Trends**: Graduates have found opportunities in a range of sectors, though some industries remain underexplored. There is

potential for the institution to guide students towards emerging and non-traditional sectors, broadening their employment prospects.

6.2 Final Thoughts on the Study's Implications

The findings of this tracer study carry significant implications for the institution, its stakeholders, and the broader education sector. The study has revealed both strengths and areas for improvement, particularly in aligning educational offerings with the evolving demands of the job market. The identified skills gaps indicate the necessity of a dynamic and responsive curriculum that not only equips students with technical expertise but also enhances their practical, entrepreneurial, and soft skills.

6.3 Vision for Future Graduates

Looking forward, the institution envisions producing graduates who are not only technically proficient but also adaptable, innovative, and prepared to thrive in a rapidly changing world. This vision will be realized by:

i.   **Continual Curriculum Improvement**: Ensuring that programs remain current, relevant, and aligned with industry needs through regular reviews and updates, incorporating feedback from both employers and alumni.

ii.   **Comprehensive Skill Development**: Fostering a holistic education experience that develops both hard and soft skills, equipping graduates with the versatility needed to succeed in diverse roles and sectors.

iii. **Enhanced Career and Entrepreneurial Support**: Expanding career services and entrepreneurial initiatives to better prepare students for the realities of the job market and to empower those who aspire to create their own opportunities.

iv.   **Global and Local Opportunities**: Preparing graduates to excel not only in local markets but also in global contexts, with an understanding of how to navigate and capitalize on international opportunities.

Kenya Coast National Polytechnic remains committed to the continuous improvement of its educational offerings, ensuring that future graduates are well-equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st-century workforce.