

**AN ANALYSIS OF COMPETITIVENESS OF NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE
FORM FOUR SCHOOL LEAVERS COMPETENCIES IN THE JOB MARKET
A STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to analyse the competitiveness of National Youth Service form four school leavers' competencies in the job market. The study objectives were; to establish the employment status of NYS graduates in the last five years from 2012 to 2008, to find out what the market demands in regards to competencies of NYS trained school leavers, to analyse the relevance of NYS training programmes in the job market, in view of finding answers to the questions for the benefit of the school leavers and the nation as a whole. The study was to inform the stakeholders on the need to tailor and re-engineer NYS programmes in order to equip the school leavers with skills and competencies they require to be employable and also be able to create their own jobs to match the technological changes, globalization and new trends in the labour market today. Both primary and secondary data was sought. Primary data was obtained using questionnaires and interview schedules where all the data collection instruments were pre-tested prior to main study by use of NYS other training college in industrial area. The pre-testing was done to refine the instruments used to ensure validity and reliability. Cronbach's α was used to test questionnaires for reliability while content validity was discussed for the interview schedules to test appropriateness of the content and if evaluated against desired outcome. Ambiguous questions and unclear items were re-constructed to ensure clarity. Secondary data was obtained by review of documents in the office on graduate employment status. Mixed methods design was utilized where both qualitative and quantitative paradigms were employed to enhance research quality and results reported using figures, tables and charts. Creswell design and analysis of cognitive interviews for comparative multinational testing was applied for data evaluation. Data description involved a discussion on the sources of data and definition of the dependent and independent variables. Target population for the study were; the NYS trainees, their three principals, the program co-ordinator, and a labour officer. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 106 from a target population of 1062. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics which included percentages, frequency distributions, modes, means, standard deviation and inferential statistics-analysis model of variance ANOVA. The findings of the study reported 98.19% response return which indicated a high rate of return and very good, regarding gender, 80% of the respondents were male, showing a male dominated institution. Regarding age, majority 78.64% of the trainees were in the age bracket 18-24, which noted a highly productive age, while their principals were on age bracket 35 and above which depicted maturity and experience. Regarding the employment status of the graduates, documents reviewed indicated 91.74% of graduates were unemployed for the period 2012 to 2008, attributed to lack of competences required for the job market thus; youth employment remained a major challenge for the government. Regarding findings on market demands on trainee's competencies, data gathered on modules used for training indicated saturation of courses that lacked global outlook and used vintage technology in skills development training. Programme re-engineering through curriculum development was found necessary. Further findings on opinions sought on programme relevance revealed that 57% of the respondents thought NYS programmes were relevant to current job market but lacked appropriate training infrastructure hence; lack of infrastructure was seen as hinderers to quality

deliverance of training. The study recommends that NYS and other technical oriented tertiary institution in the country adopt global outlook approach to training programmes, train using modern technology if the trainees have to remain competitive and develop new programmes in line with the current trends in the labour market.