

EMPLOYMENT CREATION BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND YOUTH POVERTY ERADICATION IN TAITA TAVETA COUNTY, KENYA: A CASE OF ACTION AID KENYA.

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ABSTRACT

Youth poverty remains a major development concern in rural Kenya, where limited access to decent employment and income-generating opportunities constrains young people's economic security. This study examined the influence of employment creation initiatives on youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County, Kenya, with a keen interest of Action Aid Kenya. The journal is drawn from a wider study on NGO economic initiatives and youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County, but focuses exclusively on the first objective: to assess the influence of employment creation on youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County. The study adopted a descriptive research design and collected quantitative and qualitative data. The target population comprised Action Aid Kenya employees serving in the county, leaders of youth groups, and a county government key informant. A sample of 53 respondents participated, comprising seven Action Aid employees, 45 youth group leaders and one county government key informant. Semi-structured questionnaires and an interview schedule were used. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and regression analysis, while qualitative information was analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that Action Aid Kenya supported employment creation through mentorship, start-up support, job-search information, vocational opportunities and professional networking, although the intensity of these interventions varied. Respondents particularly perceived entrepreneurship support, youth involvement in programme decisions and job-market readiness positively, while employer linkages and sustainability of employment outcomes remained weaker areas. Employment creation was strongly and positively associated with youth poverty eradication ($r = .879$). In the multiple regression model reported in the original study, employment creation had a positive coefficient ($\beta = .146$, $p = .013$), indicating a positive association with youth poverty eradication after accounting for the other economic initiatives in that model. Qualitative findings similarly pointed to gains in employability, confidence and self-employment, alongside constraints related to capital, programme awareness, labour-market mismatch and sustainability. The article concludes that employment creation initiatives can contribute to youth poverty reduction when employment support is connected to practical skills, enterprise opportunities and stronger labour-market linkages.

Keywords: Employment creation; youth poverty; non-governmental organizations; Action Aid Kenya; Taita Taveta County; youth employment

1. INTRODUCTION

Youth poverty is closely connected to access to productive economic opportunities. For young people, employment is not only a source of

income but also a route through which capabilities, economic independence and social participation can be strengthened. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have

consequently become important actors in poverty-reduction programmes, particularly where public institutions and formal labour markets do not adequately reach vulnerable groups. NGO interventions commonly include employment support, entrepreneurship promotion, vocational training, mentorship, market linkages and livelihood development. The wider project on which this article is based examined economic initiatives by NGOs and youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County, Kenya, with particular attention to Action Aid Kenya. The original study identified four areas of intervention: employment creation, small business financing, skill development and youth participation. This article majored on the first objective: to assess the influence of employment creation on youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County.

A Comprehensive Poverty Analysis report launched in August 10, 2020 by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) identified substantial poverty among young people, with rural youth particularly affected. It also reports that Taita Taveta County faces youth unemployment, limited access to income-generating opportunities and dependence on informal activities such as casual labour and bodaboda riding. The county's development planning documents similarly identify youth unemployment and economic empowerment as important development concerns. At the national level, the project report indicates that 44% of youth aged 15–24 years and 37% of youth aged 18–35 years were living in absolute poverty, while rural youth aged 18–35 years experienced higher poverty than their urban counterparts. The report further states that more than half of the population of Taita/Taveta County was below the poverty line. These conditions make employment creation an important area of investigation because employment and self-employment can improve income and reduce dependence on unstable livelihoods.

The NGO sector is also substantial in Kenya. According to the Annual NGO Sector Report 2023/2024, there were approximately 11,262 registered NGOs, of which 8,893 were active, and 82 NGOs operating in Taita Taveta County. Despite this institutional presence, the project identified limited empirical evidence on the extent to which NGO employment interventions translate into improved youth livelihoods in the county. Previous studies have examined youth employment and NGO poverty reduction, but much of the evidence has been national, regional or focused on broader poverty interventions rather than the relationship between specific NGO employment initiatives and youth poverty in Taita Taveta County.

The employment dimension is especially important because the availability of training or economic support does not automatically translate into employment. The literature reviewed indicates that young people may still face barriers such as weak connections to employers, inadequate labour-market information, insufficient demand for young labour, limited capital and mismatch between training and available economic opportunities. For instance, Zepeda et al. (2013) emphasized the need to expand employment opportunities in both formal and informal sectors, support apprenticeships and skills development and strengthen MSMEs. Fuseini et al. (2022) similarly identified weak linkages between young people and employers as a constraint on employment interventions.

Against this background, the study asks: What influence does employment creation have on youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County? The journal focuses on the employment-creation component of the wider NGO intervention framework and examines both the forms of employment support provided and their perceived relationship with poverty eradication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Employment Creation and Youth Poverty Eradication

Employment creation in the context of the study refers to interventions that expand young people's access to work, self-employment and income-generating opportunities (Gazi, 2021). The project measured employment creation through indicators including entrepreneurship, types of jobs secured and employment rates. In practice, however, employment interventions can operate through several pathways: preparation for work, job-search assistance, labour-market information, mentorship, networking, and entrepreneurship support and start-up assistance.

According to Ouko et al. (2022), the rationale for employment creation is that access to productive work can improve income and reduce economic vulnerability. Gazi (2021) associates poverty reduction with access to economic opportunities and emphasizes the role of education and skills in improving youth employability. Dahie (2021) argues that the difficulty of securing formal white-collar employment makes self-reliance and self-employment important for young people. The project also draws attention to the importance of the informal sector for vulnerable populations, including youth. However, the relationship is not automatic based on Fuseini et al. (2022), in their study of NGO poverty reduction in Ghana, found that employment interventions may have limited effects where there is insufficient linkage between young people and employers. This report similarly notes that public works and other employment interventions may provide short-term protection without necessarily resolving structural shortages in demand for young labour. Karakara, Inekwe and Rieger (2025) emphasize that youth unemployment remains a major challenge in emerging and developing economies despite investment in human capital and economic programmes.

Kenyan evidence points to the same concern. For instance, Zepeda et al. (2013) examined the insertion of Kenyan youth into formal and informal jobs and identified the need to expand employment opportunities across both sectors, apprenticeships and skills development, MSME support and attention to low-income youth and young women. The study provides a national perspective, but it did not specifically examine the influence of NGO employment initiatives on youth poverty in Taita Taveta County. Ouko et al. (2022) also linked youth involvement in agripreneurship with potential reductions in unemployment and poverty, although their work was a literature review rather than an empirical evaluation of a specific NGO intervention.

The literature therefore suggests that employment creation may influence youth poverty through income generation, self-employment, improved employability and access to economic opportunities. At the same time, the effectiveness of such interventions depends on whether young people can transition from training or programme participation into sustainable work or enterprise activity. The present study addresses this issue using empirical evidence from Action Aid-supported initiatives in Taita Taveta County.

2.2 Theoretical Framework: Empowerment Theory

The study was anchored primarily in Empowerment Theory. The theory is associated with Julian Rappaport, who developed and elaborated the empowerment perspective in the context of community psychology. Empowerment emphasizes processes through which individuals and communities gain greater control over their lives, develop critical awareness and increase their capacity to participate in decisions affecting them (Rappaport, 1987).

The theory is relevant to employment creation because employment is not merely an economic outcome; it can increase an individual's capacity to make choices, access resources and exercise

greater control over livelihood decisions. Employment-oriented NGO programmes can empower young people by expanding access to information, skills, mentorship, networks, enterprise opportunities and income-generating activities. Within this study, employment creation therefore represents a practical mechanism through which young people can strengthen their economic agency and reduce vulnerability.

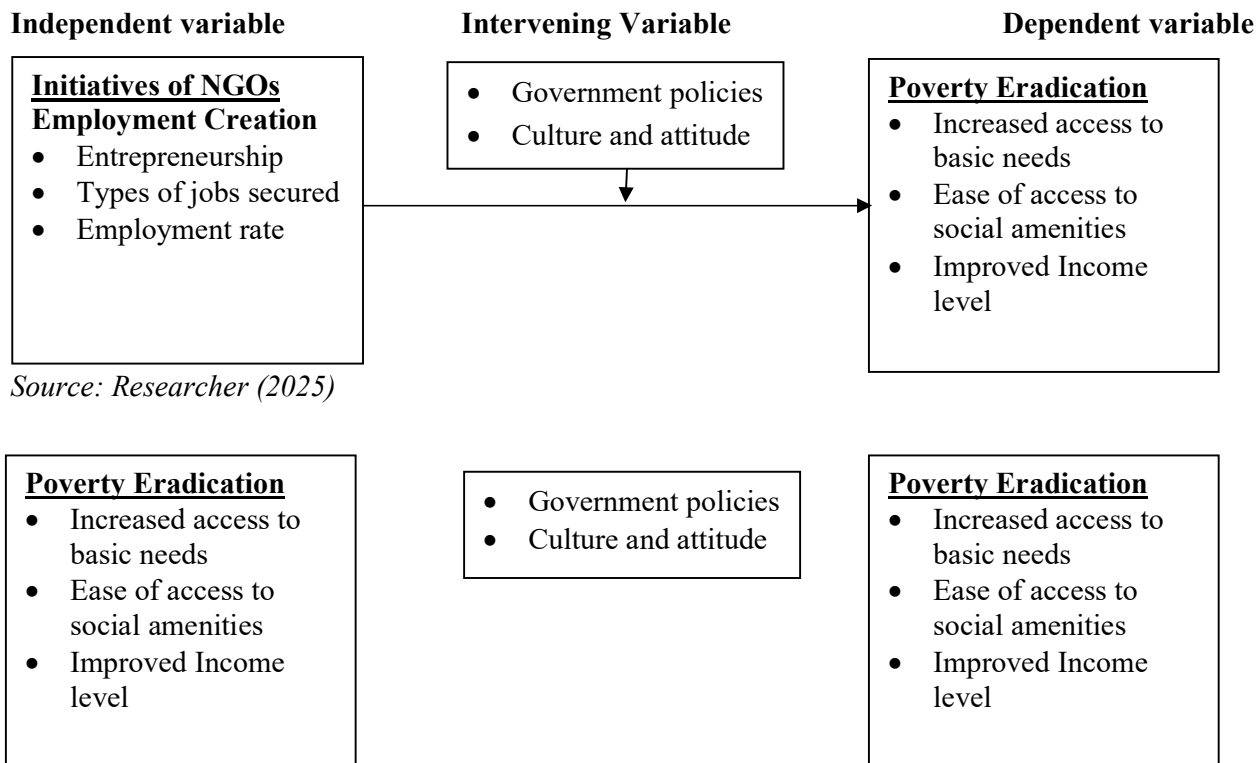
The theory also recognizes contextual and measurement challenges. Zimmerman (1990) noted that empowerment processes vary across social, economic and cultural settings and that empowerment is difficult to measure because it is multidimensional. This is relevant to the Taita Taveta context because access to an employment opportunity may differ from sustainable

employment, and the effect of a programme may depend on labour-market conditions, available capital and local institutions.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Employment creation was set as the independent variable and youth poverty eradication as the dependent variable. The framework assumed that relevant employment creation interventions can improve youths' access to income and livelihood opportunities and thereby contribute to poverty reduction. Government policies, labour market conditions, culture and attitudes may affect the translation of employment interventions into poverty outcomes, but these factors are not treated as independent variables in the present article.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



2.4 Research Gap

The literature reviewed in the project demonstrates a general relationship between employment opportunities and poverty reduction,

but several gaps remain. First, much of the existing evidence addresses youth employment at national or regional levels rather than county-specific NGO interventions. Additionally, studies

of NGOs frequently examine broad poverty reduction interventions without having not assessed employment creation as a specific mechanism whereas existing studies point to a persistent implementation problem where the youths receive training, mentorship or support without obtaining reliable connections to employers or sustainable income opportunities. Besides, evidence from Taita Taveta County on how NGO-supported employment initiatives relate to youth poverty eradication is limited. This study responds to these gaps by examining employment creation initiatives associated with Action Aid Kenya and their relationship with youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The design was selected because it enabled the researcher to describe the characteristics of NGO employment initiatives and examine their relationship with youth poverty eradication in the natural setting of Taita Taveta County without manipulating the study variables.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Taita Taveta County in Kenya's Coastal region. The county was selected because of the presence of NGO interventions, including Action Aid Kenya programmes, and the development challenges affecting young people. The project report describes youth unemployment, inadequate business skills and limited access to financing as important socio-economic challenges in the county.

3.3 Target Population

According to Kothari and Garg (2014), a population is the subject such as a person, organization, customer database or amount of quantitative data on which measurement is being taken. The population must include common

measurable traits and allow each element an equal probability to be part of the final sample. The study's focus on NGO economic initiatives in youth poverty eradication made the unit of analysis be set as the specific economic empowerment intervention strategies implemented by Action Aid in Taita Taveta County: employment creation, small business financing, skill development and youth participation). In order to undertake this, the study targeted a total population of 169. This comprised of 21 employees of Action Aid that serve within Taita Taveta County; 147 top leadership of 34 Youth Groups in the County and the Chief Officer in the ministry of Youth, Sports, Gender, Culture and Social Services, Taita Taveta County, all of whom acted as the practical units of observation. These groups were selected because they are directly involved in the running of their various organizations and therefore perceived to be knowledgeable in the topic under study.

3.4 Sample and Sampling

The study adopted a sample based on the target population, considering factors such as time, financial constraints and population characteristics. Based on the assertions by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), approximately 30% of the target population was selected using simple random sampling for Action Aid employees and youth group leaders. The study sampled 7 out of 21 Action Aid employees working in Taita Taveta County and 45 out of 147 youth group leaders from 34 youth groups. This included the chairpersons, secretaries, organizing secretaries, treasurers and their assistants. In addition, the Chief Officer in the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Gender, Culture and Social Services, Taita Taveta County, was purposively selected as a key informant to provide information on the government's role in policy development, enforcement and funding. Overall, the study had a sample of 53 respondents, comprising 7 Action

Aid employees, 45 youth group leaders and 1 key informant.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Two instruments were used: semi-structured questionnaires for Action Aid employees and youth group leaders and an interview schedule for the county government key informant. The questionnaire contained items measuring employment-creation activities and respondents' perceptions of their contribution to poverty eradication. The study collected quantitative and qualitative data.

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics included frequencies, means and standard deviations. Pearson correlation was used to examine the association between employment creation and youth poverty eradication. The original research also used multiple regression to examine the collective influence of all other independent variables that comprised of employment creation, small business financing, skill development and youth participation on youth poverty eradication. For this article, only the employment-creation coefficient from that model is reported because it

directly addresses the selected objective. Qualitative data from the key informant were analysed using content/thematic analysis and used to complement the quantitative findings.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Utilization of Employment Creation Initiatives

The respondents rated the extent to which different employment-creation initiatives were utilized by Action Aid Kenya. Mentorship programmes recorded the highest mean among the specific utilization measures ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.63$), indicating a large extent of implementation. Start-up support for income-generating activities also recorded a relatively high mean ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.59$). Access to job-search tools and labour-market information was reported at a moderate extent ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.71$). Technical or vocational training opportunities were also rated at a moderate extent ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.52$). Professional networks, industry linkages and peer-support groups received the lowest mean ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 0.76$), indicating a comparatively limited level of utilization.

Table 1: Utilization of Employment Creation Initiatives

Aspects	N	Mean	Std. Dev
The NGO provides both technical or vocational training opportunities to youths within the County.	53	2.74	0.52
The NGO facilitates mentorship programs to guide youths in their career or business development journeys.	53	3.85	0.63
The NGO supports youths with startup funding for income-generating activities.	53	3.58	0.59
The NGO provides access to job search tools and labor market information for youths.	53	3.30	0.71
The NGO connects youths to professional networks, industry linkages or peer support groups relevant to employment and entrepreneurship.	53	2.34	0.76

Source: Field Data (2025), $n = 53$.

The pattern indicates that Action Aid's employment support was more visible in mentorship and start-up assistance than in direct labour-market intermediation. The relatively low score for professional networking and industry linkages is particularly relevant because access to employment requires not only preparation but also connection to actual opportunities.

4.2 Perceptions of Employment Creation Initiatives

Respondents generally perceived employment-creation programmes positively, but the results also revealed specific weaknesses. The statement that youthful community members were involved in decision-making in the formulation and implementation of employment initiatives recorded the highest mean ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.41$). Support for youth entrepreneurship to reduce dependence on white-collar employment also

received a high mean ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.39$). Respondents agreed that the programmes improved beneficiaries' confidence and readiness for the labour market ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.41$) and that the initiatives raised demand for youth labour ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.57$).

The respondents agreed that the employment-creation programmes were effective overall ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.70$) and that youth had a positive perception of the initiatives ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.74$). However, the results were less positive regarding sustainability and employer intermediation. The mean for sustainability of employment outcomes was 2.85 ($SD = 0.89$), while the statement concerning effective intermediation between job seekers and employers through job-market information and job-search facilitation recorded a mean of only 2.09 ($SD = 0.69$).

Table 2: Perception on Employment Creation Initiatives

Aspects	N	Mean	Std. Dev
The NGO programs geared towards employment creation among the youths are effective.	53	3.53	0.70
The employment creation initiatives seek to enhance intermediation between job-seekers and employers through job market information and job search facilitation	53	2.09	0.69
The initiatives are geared towards raising the demand for youth labor	53	3.72	0.57
The NGO programs are effective in helping the beneficiaries improve their confidence and readiness for the job market	53	3.83	0.41
The employment creation initiatives seek to supporting the youth towards entrepreneurship so as to reduce demand on white-collar work opportunities	53	4.02	0.39
The youthful community members are involved in decision making process of formulation and implementation of initiatives on employment creation	53	4.36	0.41
There is a high level of sustainability among the youths brought about by employment creation initiatives in the poverty eradication program.	53	2.85	0.89

Aspects	N	Mean	Std. Dev
There is a high positive intake among the youths on the employment creation initiatives undertaken by the NGOs in eradicating poverty	53	3.75	0.74

Source: Field Data (2025, n = 53).

These results suggest a distinction between strengthening young people's capacity and successfully connecting that capacity to sustained employment. The intervention was viewed positively in terms of entrepreneurship, confidence and participation, but the weaker labour-market intermediation and sustainability scores point to a transition gap between programme support and durable employment.

4.3 Qualitative Findings

The key informant interview provided further explanation of the quantitative results. According to the interview findings, Action Aid Kenya's youth employment interventions emphasize on practical skills, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and institutional collaboration. Examples of practical training mentioned included carpentry, tailoring, agribusiness and small business management. The Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Livelihoods Project was identified as an intervention targeting out-of-school youth through agribusiness management, modern farming methods and poultry keeping.

The informant also described the Women and Youth in Enterprise (WAYE) Initiative as supporting financial literacy and business-management capacity, while youth groups and cooperatives were used to improve access to

microfinance and market linkages. Collaboration with county government departments was reported as a means of connecting young people to government opportunities, including procurement opportunities.

At the same time, the qualitative evidence identified constraints that help explain the weaker quantitative scores on sustainability and labour-market intermediation. Limited access to capital constrained some young people's ability to start or expand businesses after training. Awareness of programmes was reported to be lower among some rural youth. The informant also identified a mismatch between acquired skills and labour-market demand. Finally, dependence on donor support and inadequate coordination among stakeholders were reported as threats to the sustainability of some interventions.

4.4 Relationship between Employment Creation and Youth Poverty Eradication

Pearson correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between employment creation and youth poverty eradication ($r = .879$). The project reports that the correlation was significant at the 5% level. This indicates that higher levels of employment creation were associated with higher reported levels of youth poverty eradication among the respondents.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis – Employment Creation and Poverty Eradication

Variables	Pearson correlation	Significance
Employment Creation – Poverty Eradication	0.879	Significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Data (2025).

The project also reported a multiple regression model incorporating employment creation, small business financing, skill development and youth participation. The overall model had $R = .864$ and $R^2 = .746$, with $p = .001$. Because the article only discusses employment creation, the overall R^2 should not be interpreted as the proportion of poverty eradication explained by employment creation alone. Rather, it describes the explanatory capacity of the four-variable model used in the original project.

Table 4: Regression Coefficients – Employment Creation

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Employment Creation	.146	.047	.044	3.106	.013

Source: Field Data (2025), Note: The regression model also included small business financing, skill development and youth participation; therefore, this coefficient should not be interpreted as a standalone R^2 .

Within that model, employment creation had an unstandardized coefficient of $B = .146$, standard error = .047, $t = 3.106$ and $p = .013$. Thus, employment creation had a positive coefficient and the reported p-value is below the conventional 5% significance level. The coefficient indicates that, holding the other variables in the original model constant, a one-unit increase in the employment-creation measure was associated with a 0.146-unit increase in the youth poverty-eradication measure.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings provide evidence of a positive association between employment creation and youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County. The correlation coefficient of .879 indicates a strong positive relationship in the study sample. The descriptive results provide a practical explanation for this association: respondents reported that Action Aid-supported employment initiatives included mentorship, start-up assistance, job-search information, vocational opportunities and professional networking.

Mentorship recorded the highest utilization mean among the employment-creation activities. The finding suggests that employment support was not limited to providing financial or technical resources; it also involved guidance for career and business development. This is consistent with the literature reviewed in the study, that describe NGO youth-enterprise programmes as combining

training, mentoring, networking and seed support (Dahie, 2021; Gazi, 2021; Fuseini et al., 2022). The positive influence of entrepreneurship support also reflects the realities of youth employment in Kenya. The original literature review noted that the formal labour market cannot absorb all new labour-market entrants and that young people may need to combine formal employment with self-employment and informal economic activity. The high mean for support towards entrepreneurship ($M = 4.02$) therefore indicates a need of utilization of several approaches in enhancing economic activities among the youths. The findings are consistent with Zepeda et al. (2013), who identified the need to expand opportunities in both formal and informal employment and to support apprenticeships, skills development and MSMEs. Similarly, the findings support the argument by Dahie (2021) that youth self-reliance is important where formal employment opportunities are difficult to secure.

However, the study also identifies a significant implementation challenge: the connection between programme beneficiaries and actual employers. The mean of 2.09 for job-seeker/employer intermediation was the lowest among the perception measures. The professional networking and industry linkage measure was also relatively low ($M = 2.34$). These findings are consistent with Fuseini et al. (2022), who identified weak linkages between young people and employers as a constraint on employment

interventions. This result has an important implication for the interpretation of employment creation. Employment creation should not be equated simply with training or preparation for work. An intervention can improve confidence, skills and entrepreneurial orientation while still producing limited employment outcomes if beneficiaries cannot access employment. The qualitative findings reinforce this point: the key informant identified capital constraints, programme-awareness gaps, skills mismatch and weak stakeholder coordination as continuing barriers. Besides, the respondents were neutral about whether employment-creation initiatives produced a high level of sustainability among youth ($M = 2.85$). This is consistent with the assertions by Karakara et al. (2025) who point that NGO programmes may produce positive short-term outcomes without necessarily securing durable livelihoods. Similarly, they emphasize the continuing challenge of youth unemployment in developing economies despite investments in human capital and economic programmes. The high rating for youth involvement in programme decision-making ($M = 4.36$) also suggests that employment initiatives were implemented within a participatory environment.

The positive regression coefficient for employment creation provides additional evidence of its association with youth poverty eradication. The reported $B = .146$ and $p = .013$ indicate a positive and statistically significant association at the 5% level, within the original multiple regression model. However, this coefficient is an adjusted association other than evidence that employment creation alone influenced poverty eradication. The findings further supported the Empowerment Theory. Employment creation initiatives increase access to resources, information, skills, networks and opportunities that can strengthen the capacity among the youths to make decisions around their livelihoods. Nevertheless, the theory's emphasis on context is relevant because empowerment is constrained

where young people lack access to capital, markets, institutional opportunities and failed to be involved in the decision making process.

Overall, the findings suggest that employment creation contributes to youth poverty reduction through several related ways: strengthening employability and confidence, supporting entrepreneurship, facilitating access to start-up resources and expanding exposure to economic opportunities. However, the initiatives were weak on connecting the youths to employers and establishing sustainable employment, pointing out areas where employment programmes could be strengthened within the organization.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that employment creation initiatives associated with Action Aid Kenya were positively related to youth poverty eradication in Taita Taveta County. The interventions included mentorship, start-up support, job-search information, vocational opportunities and networking. Respondents particularly recognized entrepreneurship support, improved confidence and labour-market readiness and youth involvement in programme decision-making.

The empirical evidence showed a strong positive correlation between employment creation and youth poverty eradication ($r = .879$). In the original multiple regression model, employment creation had a positive coefficient of $\beta = .146$ with $p = .013$, indicating a statistically significant positive association at the 5% level after accounting for the other variables included in the model (small business financing, skill development and youth participation).

Qualitative findings further pointed to capital constraints, limited awareness among some rural youth, mismatch between acquired skills and labour-market demand and weak coordination among stakeholders. Besides, the study identified limitations relating to employment creation towards poverty eradication which included direct employer linkages, professional networking and

sustainability of employment outcomes received comparatively weaker assessments. Consequently, employment creation interventions appear more likely to support poverty reduction when they extend beyond training and preparation to include actual pathways into sustainable work, enterprise development and markets.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based specifically on the employment-creation findings, the study set the following recommendations:

First, NGOs operating in Taita Taveta County should strengthen formal partnerships with private sector employers, county government departments and other employment actors. Such partnerships can provide internship, job-placement and self-employment opportunities for beneficiaries.

Additionally, employment programmes should strengthen beneficiary follow-up after training or placement. Maintaining follow-up records for approximately 6–12 months would allow programme implementers to identify whether young people remain employed, establish businesses or require additional support. This would also improve monitoring of the sustainability of employment outcomes, since this was an area that received a low assessment in the study.

The study also recommends that NGOs should strengthen their labour to market intermediation and programme to market alignment. This includes improving access to current job-market information, developing professional networks and industry linkages and conducting periodic assessments of local employment opportunities. Training and mentorship should be connected to sectors where actual employment and enterprise opportunities exist within the county.

The county government, NGOs, vocational institutions and private-sector actors should therefore coordinate employment interventions rather than operating through isolated programmes. Such coordination can help reduce

duplication, improve employer engagement and create better avenues from programme participation to sustainable livelihoods.

8. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study was conducted using a descriptive design and a relatively small sample of 53 respondents. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted within the context of the sampled Action Aid employees, youth group leaders and the county government key informant rather than generalized automatically to all youth in Kenya. The study also relied majorly on perceptions of programme implementation and poverty outcomes hence the strong correlation demonstrates association and not experimental causation.

Future research should examine the long-term employment outcomes of beneficiaries, including whether young people remain employed, sustain enterprises and experience changes in household economic conditions after receiving NGO support. Comparative research across Kenyan counties could also establish how differences in NGOs, geography, partner institutions and local economic opportunities shape the effectiveness of NGO employment interventions.

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