

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Vocational Education and Training

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ABSTRACT

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) agenda has been used in all and every disciplines of good-governance and development. But a significant portion of the population has largely been unable to participate in the development mainstream owing to their exclusion from the state's decision-making structures. Among the set goals of Education for All (EFA), National plan of Action (2001-2015), are developed in social inclusion perspectives. The challenges we face today are concerned making the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system more effective and need based, more dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to the changes taking place in the world of work. Vocational Education and Training (VET)'s contribution in inclusion will have added benefit to the developing countries as it underpins the fundamental values of society such as equity, justice, nondiscrimination, meaningful participation and social responsibility. This paper presents the case study on status of gender equality and social inclusion in TVET system of Nepal special focusing on Women's Participation in Non-Traditional Trades/Occupations. The main objective of the article is to explore the inclusion status of women in VET Programs. So, to find out the existing inclusion situation, data from the CTEVT constituted school has been collected and analyzed. It is found that most of the VET programs especially in traditional occupations have high inclusion of the women, whereas poor participation appeared in non-traditional trades. There is still the need to conduct awareness generation activities for the women to maximize their participation in the TVET programs especially in non-traditional occupations.

KEYWORDS

Social Exclusion, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), Gender Mainstreaming, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Non-Traditional Trades

INTRODUCTION

One of the most prevalent social, economic and political movements of the 20th century has been and continues to be the promotion of the inalienable human rights of women. All the developed and developing countries equally emphasized on gender equality, women's representation in all spheres of social activities and social inclusion (Sharma, 2006). Gender issues are matters of happening to women and men because of gender roles. Gender issues refer to all aspects of women's and men's lives: their different opportunities, access to and control over resources/benefits and needs. Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion aims gender equality and social justice of women and social excluded groups.

Gender inequality and social exclusion is the structural problem in terms of access to public services and the development opportunities and the others. Owing to deep rooted exclusion and subjugation of excluded groups, uneven geographical development and poor governance, Nepal, in recent times, was caught in a socio-political violence for over a decade.

It is ironic that while women covered a significant proportion of the workforce, their potentials are not realized because of discriminatory social norms and incentives. In this case, majority of them land in jobs with low security, low pay, and low conditions of work, low status and low bargaining power in a narrow range of occupations. From woman problems-woman issues-woman prospective, there had been a reshaping of paradigms of development. While women status has improved obviously, gender inequality remains pervasive. Despite the reforms, TVET continues to have difficulty in delivering equitable vocational outcomes. Women still face higher unemployment rates, receive lower wages than men. The volatile growth in the female workforce was not tied with true socio-economic empowerment, nor has it led to equal pay for equal work across the occupations. In short, true equality in the world of work is still out of reach (Park, 2006).

With social inequalities on the rise almost everywhere, poor and vulnerable population groups are more negatively affected by the current global crises than others. Economic crises, natural disasters, environmental degradation and conflict are inhibiting development in many regions across the world, and climate change threatens to amplify these by creating additional uncertainties and risks for vulnerable populations, increasing the severity and frequency of disasters and jeopardising development gains made to date. It is essential to continue supporting people's productive livelihoods and recovery from shocks and stresses but we must also work with them to try to find more lasting solutions that address the underlying drivers of both risk and vulnerability, strengthen existing adaptive capacity and build long term resilience. The Adaptation Learning Programme (ALP), implemented through the Vocational Education and Training (VET), promotes community based adaptation, where addressing social and in particular gender inequalities is key to successful outcomes (Jost, 2014). The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) includes provisions that support gender equality and social inclusion. It has a separate article for women's fundamental rights (Article 20) and is more inclusive toward Janajatis, Dalits, and Madhesis (the last was not even mentioned in the previous Constitution). It sets forth the right to equality and to rights against untouchability, racial discrimination, and exploitation (e.g., forced labor). It refers to the need for all groups to be proportionately represented in the state structure (Article 21) and the right to education in one's mother tongue (Article 17). It also authorizes the State to implement measures for the "protection, empowerment and advancement of women, Dalits, indigenous nationalities, and Madhesis" (Article 13). Nepal has undertaken a number of international commitments to nondiscrimination, gender equality, and social justice. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was ratified by Nepal in 1991, includes articles on the elimination of discrimination in public life, civil status, education, employment, health care, and other aspects of social and economic life (ADB, 2010)

Ensuring access to and completion of quality education for this "neglected majority" of the world's poor living in rural areas is a major challenge to the achievement of the EFA targets. Specifically, the need to include rural people in the education system is crucial to ensuring that, by 2015, all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality; achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015; and ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes (UNESCO, 2000). The lack of learning opportunities is both a cause and an effect of rural poverty. Hence, education and training strategies for rural people need to be integrated within all aspects of sustainable rural development and EFA, through plans of action that are multispectral and interdisciplinary (FAO/UNESCO-IIEP, 2006b).

Caste, ethnicity, regional identity and geographical location are strong determinants of poverty and unequal development outcomes. While Nepal Succeeded in reducing poverty rates from 42% in 1996 to 31% in 2004, some groups benefited more than others (Asian Development Bank, 2010). Poverty monitoring by the Central bureau of Statistics shows that Mid-Western Development Region has high poverty, and that the rate of poverty in rural areas remains high (35%) than in urban areas (10%). During the last decades, greater declines in poverty found in advantaged groups (with current rates among Newars 14% and Brahmin and Chetri 18%) than socially excluded groups (with current rates among Dalit of 46%, Muslims 41%, Hill Janajati 44%, and Tarai Janajati 35%). Other social development indicators also reveal unequal outcomes for women in different groups and regions (ADB, 2010).

Both TVET and social inclusion are in national priority in Nepal and the Nepal TVET Policy -2012 has made "inclusion of" and "access for" as one of the key policy areas, advocating for the massive expansion of the TVET. In this context, this study will attempt to assess the present situation of social inclusion with some recommendation for further improvement in this process.

Inclusive Development Programs in Nepal

With the concept of inclusive development women, indigenous people and ethnicities, neglected and Dalits, Madhesi, Muslim, disadvantaged class, remote and special area and programs like decentralized action plans are in operation. Similarly, as development of nation is not possible in absence of development of women, provision of incorporation of women-friendly and gender equity programs in every project and programs has been made mandatory. Efforts are underway for policy-wide and institutional development for establishing the concerned District Development Committee as a contact point at the local level by the government (GON), 2012).

As a part of the social inclusion, the Government of Nepal has launched the program for uplifting the Near Extinction Indigenous group aiming to promote them socially, economically and culturally bringing them in to the mainstream of national development. There are scholarships, vocational skill training, capacity building, language training, and educational and institutional development. Programs are in implementation targeting to Janajati and Chepang. Similarly, Dalit empowerment programs are in implementation targeting to the Dalit on conducting awareness programs, awarding scholarships to the Dalit students for up to higher studies. The government also has formed National Dalit Commission for

the protection of rights, entitlements and overall development of Dalit people. Recently, with the objectives of uplifting Madhesi, Muslims, and backward communities by formulating policies and raising their economic, social and cultural status, the GoN has launched the program in 26 districts. The programs are on awareness, reproductive health, health education, sanitation, language training, literacy and educational motivational programs.

There also exists the geographical/regional imbalance in the country. Noticing the regional imbalance in development activities the government has implemented remote area development program basically to support the poverty alleviation initiatives in 22 northernmost border, and geographically remote, economically backward. Under this program, suspension bridges, irrigation projects, drinking water and irrigation projects, mule tracks, educational programs for the dwellers were conducted.

CTEVT's Attempt in Gender Equality and social Inclusion

- Expansion of TVET programs
- Ensuring access of the DAG
- Special programs for Dalit and Muslims
- Quota's and Scholarships.

Objectives of the study

The government has focused on the expansion of the TVET programs in public as well as in private sector throughout the country. The CTEVT strategic plan also has envisioned increasing access, expansion of the programs and maximizing the social inclusion. With the expansion of the TVET programs, it is an important to assess the access and inclusion of women and other marginalized group on it. Approaches for equality, access and inclusion in the TVET along with all educational programs will assist the nation in balance growth. In this, the main objective of the study is to assess the women and disadvantaged group's participation in non-traditional occupations.

METHODS

In this study both quantitative as well as qualitative methods of analysis are utilized. Annual Reports of the Technical Schools were utilized as the secondary data sources of quantitative data on participation of male female and ethnic and general category are collected from the schools. This study utilized a survey research with a sample of public technical schools aiming to collect the information on gender equality and social inclusion status in TVET programs in Nepal, specially the participation of female and disadvantaged group in non-traditional trades/occupations are analyzed. A part from the secondary data's direct interview conducted with the school principals during the CTEVT 'Annual Management Review Conference' as the primary data sources.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

GESI Inclusion in Vocational Education and Trainings

There is the encouraging data of the female participation in overall Technical Vocational Education and Training in one side and in the same other side, this participation is very low in non-traditional trades and occupations (CTEVT, 2016).

Table -1: Village Training Center (VTC), Lamjung

Occupation	Janajati		Dalit		Brahman/ Chhetri		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Beautician	-	64	-	8	-	29	-	101
Building Electrician	11	-	2	-	8	-	21	-
Tailoring	1	36		17		25	1	78
Total	12	100	2	25	8	54	22	179

Annual Report of VTC, 2015

The above table shows that, female have participated in the traditional occupations only. Non-traditional occupations like Building Electrician have zero participation of the female. There is good participation of indigenous/ Janajati and dalit in the VET.

Table-2: Rapti Technical School, Dang

Occupation	Number of Graduates		Total
	Male	Female	
Agriculture	376	347	723
Health	326	477	803
Construction	485	166	651
Mechanical	58	--	58
Total	1245	990	2235

Source: Annual Report 2015, RTS, Dang

The table shows that there is good participation of the female in agriculture and health trades, which are regarded as the traditional women friendly occupations, but while seeing the mechanical trade there is no female participation.

Table-3: Manmohan Memorial Polytechnic, Kathmandu

Program/Occupations	Dalit		Janajati		Madhesi		Brahman Chetri		Other		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Tile/Marble Fitter	4	-	14	-	8	-	5	-	-	-	31	-
Building Electrician	2	-	30	8	-	-	12	1	-	-	44	9
Motorcycle service Mechanic	12	-	20	-	11	-	5	-	-	-	48	
Ref. and AC Mechanic	1	-	3	-	1	-	6	-	-	-	11	-
Brick Layer Mason	3	-	20	2	-	-	7	-	-	-	32	2
Total	22	-	87	10	20	-	35	1	-	-	166	11

Source: Annual Report 2015, MMP

This is the enrollment status of short-term skill training (3 months/390 hrs.) program run in public training institute. The table shows that in a polytechnic situated in Kathmandu has very poor representation of the female participants in non-traditional trades. There appeared very few participants in electrician and mason where as no participation from the women in the occupations like Tile/Marble Fitter, Motorcycle Mechanic and Ref. and AC Mechanics.

Trades	1 st Year			2 nd Year			3 rd Year			Grand Total	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Automobile Engineering	22	8	30	22	8	30	23	7	30	67	23
Electrical and Electronics Engineering	21	9	30	21	9	30	21	9	30	63	27
Mechanical Engineering	22	8	30	21	9	30	28	1	29	72	18
Total	65	25	90	64	26	90	72	17	89	202	68

Source: Annual Report, 2015, KNIT

Korea-Nepal Institute of Technology a public institute has run long-term (3 Years Diploma) academic technical program. The table shows that, participation of the female students in occupations like Automobile, Electrical/Electronic and Mechanical is very low (hardly about 25%).

Trades	1 st Year			2 nd Year			3 rd Year			Grand Total	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Diploma in civil Engineering	37	9	46	38	3	41	35	5	40	110	17
Diploma in Agriculture (Plant Science)	5	8	13	10	7	17	13	11	24	26	28
Total	42	17	59	48	10	58	48	16	64	136	45

Source: Annual Report, 2015, Sumnima Polytechnic Institute

The above table shows that, in the long term technical education programs there is good participation of the female students in agriculture, whereas the participation of female in civil engineering is very low.

S.N	Programs	Description of Students			Remarks
		Female	Male	Total	
1	Agriculture JTA (TSLC)	108	635	743	
2	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (TSLC)	--	719	719	
3	I. Sc. Agriculture (Plant Science)	10	28	38	
4	Diploma in Civil Engineering (DCE)	34	344	378	
5	Civil Sub-Overseer (TSLC)	4	275	279	
Total		156	2001	2157	

Source: Annual Report, 2015, STS

Similar to the other institutions, there is low inclusion of the women in the non-traditional occupations/ subjects in Seti Technical School. Even in agriculture related subjects there is only about 20% female participants.

Jiri Technical School (JTS), Dolakha

A tracer study conducted on the JTS graduates employment status on 2015 reported that, out of the 2861 graduates in agriculture, health and construction trades of TSLC programs 51% are female participants and 49%. The health ANM program is only for the women and 100% female participants but in the agriculture trade the proportion of male to female graduated students since beginning is 44.3% and in construction there is only 15.5 % females (Palme, 2015). This shows that in non-traditional trades like construction the participation of women is very low.

Female Participation in Training and Educational Program

A total of 32 observations' made in the study. Looking at the composition of the trainee participation as female it is clear that, female trainee are less significantly participated in different types of the training program. To strengthen the argument we further take the help of mean value of the female trainee participation in various training program in compare to the mean value of total trainee participated in different training programs. Group statistics are presented in table -7 below.

	Trainee category	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trainee	Male observations	32	95.37	161.510	28.551
	Female Observations	32	67.69	158.222	27.970

Source : CTEVT Management Review Conference 2015

It is clear that the mean value of the female trainee participation is equal only about two third of the mean of the male participant. That exhibits the ratio of the inclusiveness of training participation by female. Only looking at mean values, it might be too early to decide about failure or success of the equitable inclusiveness of training programs. So we further take the help of t-test for significance of difference between two means and analysis is presented in table 8.

		F-stat(p-value)	t-stat	df	p-value	Mean difference
Trainee	Equal variance assumed	0.542 (0.464)	0.693	62	0.491	27.687
	Equal variance not assumed		0.693	61.974	0.491	27.687

Source : CTEVT Management Review Conference 2015

Here p-value for f-stat is greater than 0.05, so according to Levene's Test of Equality of Variance, we should assumed that group variance are equal and need to select the first row for t-test analysis. Here obtained t-stat is equal to 0.693 with 62 degree of freedom, and the t-stat is not significant at 0.05 percent level. Thus we cannot reject the null hypothesis that concludes that the female have statically equally participated in the training and education programs.

Ethnic Groups Participation in Training and Educational Program

Here, the composition of the trainee participation from different ethnic groups (janjati, dalit and madhesi), exhibits that different ethnic trainees are less significantly participated in various training programs. To support the argument, we further take the help of mean value of the ethnic trainee's participation in various training and educational programs vis a vis the mean of general group trainee participated in different programs. Group statistics are presented in table 9 below.

	Trainee category	Observation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trainee	General trainee	32	150.28	263.043	46.4999
	Ethnic trainee	32	12.156	17.726	3.1335

Source : CTEVT Management Review Conference 2015

It is clear that the mean value of the ethnic trainee participation is equal about one twelfth of the general trainee participation. That clears the ratio of the inclusiveness of training participation by ethnic groups. Only looking at mean value, it could be too early to decide about failure of the inclusiveness of training programs. So we further take the help of t-test for significance of difference between two means and the analysis is presented in table 10.

		F-stat(p-value)	t-stat	df	p-value	Mean difference
Trainee	Equal variance assumed	41.717	2.964	62	0.004	138.125
	Equal variance not assumed	(0.0000)	2.964	31.282	0.006	138.125

Source : CTEVT Management Review Conference 2015

Here p-value for f-stat is less than 0.05, so according to Levene's Test of Equality of Variance, we should assumed that group variance are not equal and need to select the second row for t-test analysis. Here t-obtained is equal to 2.964 with 31 degree of freedom, it is significant at even at 0.01 percent level. Thus we can conclude that the ethnic groups are not equally participated in the training and education programs.

CONCLUSION

TEVT has been considered as one of the important means for promoting social inclusion. As highlighted by Tilak (2000), it has been considered as an anti-dote to urban biased elite education and an equity measure that promote equity and serve the needs of relatively poor people. Further since the very beginning of TEVT's evaluation in Nepal, it has focused on access, equity and integration which are basic tenets of social inclusion. Several initiatives of establishing technical schools in the rural areas of Nepal, providing scholarships, quota-based admissions, opening new programs in rural areas for the purpose of imparting relevant skills and knowledge to school dropouts and non-college bound youths including economically poor population were some of these examples (Sharma, 1999; Sharma 2010).

The concerns regarding social inclusion are continuously reflected in several policies developed in different times and programs and projects currently in the action. Sustainable development agenda for Nepal states the government's objective to make vocational training accessible to everyone (NPC2003). The tenth five year plan (2002-07) of Nepal has highlighted the importance of vocational training as a means of addressing the skill development needs of the marginalized and socially excluded (NPC-2003). Similarly, TEVT policy 1999; 2007 and 2012) have emphasized a need to make TEVT accessible to general public by emphasizing "inclusion of" and "access for" as one of the key policy areas that advocate the social inclusion process (MOE, 2007 and 2012).

Further, it is said that, over 80% of the world's work requires TVET education. An even larger percentage is needed in some countries to adequately skill their populations. If TEVT training is available to all who require it, there will be a reduction in poverty, a movement towards equity and fairness, and disadvantage will diminish (Maclean, 2009). The importance of TEVT is not only limited for the livelihood of those who are academically, geographically and socio-economically back warded, but also

for its vibrant role in developing a new generation of individuals who will face the challenges of achieving sustainable socio- economic development for the nation.

Nepal is the country of diversity. Women, Dalits, indigenous people, Madhesi, people living in remote areas, ultra poor and small farmers are deprived and excluded from the main stream of development due to the socioeconomic, political and cultural reasons. Realizing the importance of the agenda of social inclusion in the national development, this has been prioritized even in national constitution. The interim constitution of Nepal-2007 has highlighted the rights of women, dalit and discriminated groups as well as rights to equality, justice and employment (UNDP, 2008). The previous constitution of 1991 has also emphasized the need for adopting social inclusion in national policies. Accordingly, targeted programs are conducted for socially deprived groups to ensure their inclusion in the national development process.

Recommendation

Female participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training is in increasing trends, but there is not much encouraging data regarding to the women's participation in the non-traditional trades. On one hand, there are many technical training providers who are producing skilled workforce; on the other hand, enterprises are looking for skilled workforce. If we see the situation of technical training graduates about 50% are employed (Lamichhane, 2005).

All these notable policy and provisions are acknowledged as noteworthy efforts to promote social inclusion in TEVT sector in Nepal. However, equitable access to skills development is a critical problem as these efforts do not explicitly addresses the social inclusion need of all youth. Available information from several sources (CTEVT, 2005, ILO, 2009, ADB, 2003) quite frequently reveal that despite significant efforts to develop TVET for preparing youth for employment, success has been limited in terms of social inclusion efforts. A vast number of youth have either not been to school or not received any training that would impart them with employable skills (Sharma, 2008). The majority of these out-of school youth comprise of underprivileged groups such as dalit, ex-kamaiya's, haliya's badis, ethnic minorities and girls from the remote and isolated rural areas. (KUSOED, 2009). Although all these policies and provisions have helped to increase the TEVT opportunities for the wider segment of the population, equitable access and inclusion in the education and training opportunity remains to be a question yet to be answered.

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