

## LINKAGES OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO EMPLOYMENT IN NEPAL

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### Abstract

*Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) contribute to human resources development. The job market can be enhanced through it that can enable youth to enter into the workforce, cope with unemployment problem and contribute to the nation development. TVET can only do this if the graduates could meet the market demand. On the above background and within the framework of qualitative research methodology, this paper reviews the information of the written documents related with TVET development in Nepal. The paper concludes that TVET should create new opportunities for students and the market requirement should attract skillful students. It also requires bringing systematic changes in TVET according to the changed values of society. For the success of TVET, it needs to ensure that young people are equipped with social and market-related skills so that they can easily enter into the job market.*

**Keywords:** Education, Employment, Job market, Skillful people,

### Introduction

The more a person has professional and vocational skills, the more chances are there for her/him getting a job or being self-employed (Khanal, 2015). Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) can equip people with such skills. The job market can be enhanced through it that can enable youth to enter into the workforce, cope with unemployment problem and contribute to the nation development. Though the history of TVET in Nepal goes back to *Araniko* (1245 – 1306 AD), still it is striving for producing skilled human power for matching the market needs. TVET system should create new opportunities for students through innovative approaches and pathways, and develop a coherent policy that integrates different dimensions in skill training and value formation as part of the strategy for global economy (CPSC, 2013). In Nepal it is still striving for better result as they unable to provide the desired and neither marketable vocational skills nor the students could be attracted then away from the formal and higher education (Cited in Joshi, 2014). On this scenario, this paper presents the information based on the written documents related with TVET development in Nepal and its linkages into the job market of Nepal.

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## **Objective**

The overall objective of this study is to generate the linkages between TVET and employment through the review of written documents on TVET development in Nepal.

## **Methodology**

Within the framework of qualitative research method, the data was gathered through the examination of written documents related with technical education and vocational training. The author then used the thematic analysis to analyze and present the data findings. The information as well as findings presented in this paper is based upon the information found in the literatures on TVET. Author reviewed reports from government as well as non-government institutions, academic research articles, newspaper evidences, educational policies, government database and so on. Then the information generated from literatures are presented through interconnecting with the author's individual experiences and observation on TEVT system of Nepal.

## **Discussions**

### **Overview of TVET in Nepal**

The Technical Education in Nepal goes back to the Malla Era (1201–1769). Araniko (1245 – 1306 AD) was skilled in arts and crafts, which helped Malla Dynasty to promote the economy of the nation. Jayasthiti Malla place in the valley is eminent for numerous social and economic reforms (Shrestha, 2011). The report of the first Education Commission (Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1956) highlighted the need of serious focus on producing 'skillful' and 'employable' students proposing some technical and vocational subjects from class 6 to 10. The first development plan (1956-61) of the country strongly emphasized the training of technical and other personnel in accordance with estimated requirements for each year of the Five Year Plan” (p. 30).

Following this, the effort to integrate vocational skills into the formal education system has been begun in 1967 by establishing National Vocational Training Center (NVTC). Then the National Education System Plan (NESP), 1971-76, integrated the vocational education in secondary education.

After all those efforts, the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) constituted in 1989, a national autonomous apex body of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector committed for the production of technical and skillful human resources

required to the nation (CTEVT, 1989). After the establishment of CTEVT, there is increase in the debate of producing skillful and employable citizen for the nation. Government of Nepal also introduced different programs with financial aid from different donors.

Some of them are as Skills for Employment Project (SEP) with ADB, Enhanced Vocational Education and Training (EVENT) with World Bank, Poverty Alleviation Program, Youth Self – Employment Program, Micro Enterprise Development Program (MEDP), etc. Many NGOs and private technical training providers are also working through different projects in the sector of TVET.

In 2012, government of Nepal developed TVET policy for building coordination for institutional arrangements and information management. But bringing several ministries (currently 14 ministries conduct TVET) and institutions under one umbrella is practically very difficult (UNDP, 2016). Even the Vocational training courses under the donor funding projects are also questionable where resource is not the constraint. It is therefore a challenging task to assure quality of vocational training programs in future (Khanal, 2013).

Government institutions like Department of Cottage and Small Industries (DCSI), Cottage and Small Industries Development Board (CSIDB), Department of Labor and Employment Promotion (DOLEP) and Training Institution for Technical Instruction (TITI) also conducting and contributing on TEVT promotion, with emphasis to their connection with the local labor market. In 2016, more than 14 ministries conducted TVET in Nepal (UNDP, 2016). Besides the efforts of CTEVT and other institutions, the idea also emerged to include the TVET in the formal school level curriculum. SSRP 2009 to 2014 (MoE, 2009) has given due importance in implementing TVET in schools on piloting basis. As the vision of SSRP was to continue it beyond the project period, the extension of SSRP up to 2017 has also included the TVET component (MoE, 2014). Currently 101 schools are providing TVET education in 70 districts (MOE, 2015). Now the country is in the process of to institutionalize the federal democracy in Nepal. The government is also in the process to federalize the TVET institutions and committed to promote the TVET in Nepal.

### **TVET for employment**

In the new global economy, young people need to acquire more than just basic education (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2013). This statement emphasizes the importance of knowledge beyond basic education, including technical and vocational education. This lays the ground for the importance of Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET). Because even if skilled people

are unable to pursue higher studies, they will at least be ready to accept any job as a middle-level technical staff with greater possibilities of getting 'better salaries (ibid). But TVET system could deliver the intended results if and only if it is well connected with the emerging local economic activities, which are integrated first with national then global economy (Sharma, 2013). TVET only cannot meet the national or global economy unless it is linked with local economic activities. In this regard, established linkages between TVET system and labor markets (local economy) are fundamental. Otherwise, TVET could not contribute to reduce unemployment and improve income of the youth. The current increasing interest of youth to the foreign markets is the outcome of the same although it has the positive influence to TVET. Lamichane (2014) states, the increasing trend of foreign employment has influenced positively to TVET programs, youths prefer to go for foreign employment after getting certain skills.

### **TVET and economic growth**

Besides the importance of TVET to increase youth employment, it also plays important role in the economic growth of the country. The role of vocational education and training programs or human capital management is to foster economic growth (Bhatta, 2014). Vocational education and training produce human capital, which is the major indicator of economic development. Sinha (2013) has the following to say, it's a clear indication now that human skills plays an important role in sustaining the current pace of growth and development through enhanced productivity of human capital. A country can be economically developed if there is well TVET system.

In most of the developed countries in the Asian region, like Japan, signature Vocational Education Training (VET) system has played a major role in their economic development (ibid). To meet the development need, Nepal has given due importance in distinct streams of educational development, particularly at the school level and post-secondary level; general education, and technical and vocational training (ibid.). The technical and vocational education is not only to provide the education, skills and training but by enabling appropriate environment to skill utilization, increasing employment, earning and promote economic growth (Bhatta, 2014).

TVET not only contributes to human resources development and training but also emphasizes the fundamental values of society – equity, justice, gender equality, nondiscrimination, social responsibility, and participation (Usman & Pascal, 2010). It also requires bringing systematic changes in TVET according to the changed values of society. For the success of TVET, it needs to ensure that young people are equipped with social and market-related skills, which enable them to be well integrated into the labor market and the society (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2013).

The relevance of linking the actors of the education and employment systems through social institutions is frequently mentioned as an important determinant of TVET's reform and success (UNESCO, 2015).

### **National and International policies on TVET**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) recommended to integrate literacy programs and skill training initiatives and implements all strategies that facilitate skills learning opportunities (NPC, 2015). It also further re-established by emphasizing the challenges the youth labor market situation around the world. It is further re-enforced by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with explicit target "by 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship" (UN, 2015).

Government of Nepal developed TVET policy in 2012 with the aim of providing national TVET guidelines for systematizing TVET provisions in Nepal. The newly promulgated Constitution of Nepal 2072 has included the right of education and right of employment as fundamental rights of people (GON, 2072). Similarly, since the first (1971-76) five years' development plan, technical and vocational education is in priority. All these efforts of the government are to reduce unemployment and improve the country economic growth. CTEVT is the apex body to coordinate and promote TVET system to develop a competent workforce for national and international market needs (CTEVT, 1989). TVET in specific, has two purposes: 1) to provide individuals with the skills and knowledge needed for productive employment and 2) to meet skilled human resource needed for national development as well as employers' needs for trained workers (Joshi, 2014).

### **Linkage of TVET with job market**

The skill is important to youth for gainful employment, increase income and reduce unemployment. There is no doubt that skillful people are always in the high priority of employers (Khanal, 2015). It is important to provide skill to people. But after being skillful, another biggest challenge is their linkages to market for gainful employment and increased income. It is not only important to provide skills to people, but also require ensuring their linkage to the local economy. Linked with adequate employment opportunities and local economy, technical education and vocational training (TEVT) can assist people increase their skills, raise their productivity and increase their personal incomes leading to overall raised living standards and stronger, competitive economies (cited in Sharma, 2013). TVET in Nepal is still striving for better result as they unable to provide the desired and marketable vocational skills nor the students could be attracted then away from

the formal and higher education (Cited in Joshi, 2014). This implies that, the main reason for not getting success is lack of education - employment linkage. The direct relation between industry and technical institutions is obvious (Bagale, 2018). When the industry has the good relation with the TVET institutions, the graduates can directly have linked at the industry. Without the linkage with the industry TVET graduates cannot maintain professional competencies and also the industrial productivity can't be developed only with low-level human resource (ibid.).

### **Conclusion**

The above discussion and findings help me to conclude that TVET should create new opportunities for students and the market requirement should attract the skillful students. It is also required to bring systematic changes in TVET according to the changed values of society. For the success of TVET, it needs to ensure that young people are equipped with social and market-related skills so that they can easily enter into the job market. But the TVET development as well as experiences from Nepal apparently shows that TVET program alone is not sufficient to create or ensure employment for the youth. The employment rate will only improve when synergies among the education providers, companies, employers, family, industry and other intermediary institutions are promoted with their linkages to TVET. They should all be properly aligned and functions for economic reform through promoting employment opportunities for youth.

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