

Foster TVET Regime for Vibrant Economy

A country's economy is determined by the status of employment to its active population. Both the government and private sectors have significant role to create employments that propel economic activities. In order for the economy to achieve national ambition of development and prosperity, it needs the employees with proper skills and expertise in any field they engage with. Similarly, the formal and informal education and training provide necessary skills and build expertise in the workforce that ultimately spur entrepreneurs and industrial activities.

Nepal is currently at watershed-exodus of youths is a mounting concern. Creating jobs within country and retaining youths have been an uphill task. It has also stirred a debate why the youths' emigration is on rise and what sorts of job they want at home to fulfill their needs and ensure secure future. It is after all linked to the creation of decent works for them, which warrants attention and engagement from wider stakeholders.

However, the government institutions are working hard to this end. The Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) is the apex body of TVET in Nepal that has been producing skilled workforce on several fronts for the national and international job markets since its establishment in 1989. It has been providing pre-diploma, diploma, and market-driven short courses and expanding its programs in various sectors across the country.

In addition to this, CTEVT has continued its academic endeavor- the publication of the Journal of TVET, which is expected to foster TVET regime in the country. The academic debate and discussions to be spurred by this publication ultimately contribute to identify gaps in TVET, relevant policy and laws on it. The practices, policies and other issues surrounding TVET which are reflected in this journal not only promote value of technical education and vocational training but also enhance academic discourse.

There are ten research articles, including the one focused on West African context which helps compare TVET practices across different continents and learn lessons for reform. Most of the articles in this journal underline the need for the country like Nepal to strengthen TVET system with modern features. Reinforcement of quality and relevance of TVET in Nepal is a major focus. Equally important is the effective integration of TVET products in the national workforce which evidently enriches labor market, thereby backing national economy.

The '**Recognition of Prior Learning in Nepal: A Gateway to Socio-Economic Inclusion**' is an article, authored by Dr. Usha Bhandari, which brings to light the importance of recognition of prior learning (RPL). She argues, RPL can become a vital tool to boost socio-economic status in the country. She underlines significance of proper plan and implementation of RPL to validate existing skills of workforce that

opens pathway for them to obtain higher level skills at chosen stages of their lives.

The article penned by Mr. Rajendra Bahadur Shrestha, '**Labor Market Information System: A Review of Some Practices**' takes stock the common practices of Nepali labor market information system and the problems faced by TVET system. It addresses information gap by diving deep into the clear understanding of labor market, practices of labor market information processes in some South Asian countries, including Nepal and challenges facing the Nepali labor market information process. He concludes ensuring meaningful engagement of employers is essential.

Dr. Durga Prasad Baral highlights one of the worrying concerns of present time declining enrollment in educational institutions of Nepal in his article, '**Declining Enrollment in Long-Term Engineering Programs: Stakeholders' Perspectives**'. He focuses on the declining enrollment in long-term engineering programs under the CTEVT in Nepal. Analyzing enrollment data and trend over the past 4 to 5 years, author Baral identifies underlying causes of low enrollment, and proposes recommendations. Focus on curriculum revision, strengthening industry linkages and enhancing overall perception and quality of TVET programs are suggested by him.

Three African writers – Mr. Cosme Zinsou Odjo, Ms. Cordula Kaoti and Ms. Alaba Oluwatoyin Oyewusi jointly penned the article, '**Quality Assurance in West African TVET Institutions: A Brief**

Literature Review' for this journal where they suggest leadership, governance, management, physical environment, human resources, curriculum, student participation, access, equity, career guidance, financial management, program evaluation, research, innovation and development as essential elements to whet overall quality and effectiveness of TVET programs and institutions.

Moreover, Mr. Ajay Poudel urges policymakers to integrate systematic recognition processes to foster a culture that values and empowers informal sectors' workers in his research article, '**Skill Test of Workers from Informal Sectors for their Recognition and Employability: A Thematic Study**'. In it, author Poudel explores significance of skill tests and recognition for the informal sector workers by employing a systematic approach to unveil recurring themes: validation of skills, employability enhancement, recognition and accreditation.

Ms. Divya Singh and Mr. Anup Bhurtel explore the experiences of participants of private organizations of Nepal during soft skills training (reaction level), and their experiences while applying the knowledge and skills back to their workplaces in their article, '**Experiences of Private Sector Employees on Transfer of Soft Skills Trainings**'. Based on participants' experience, the authors emphasize that for the training transfer to occur, their own willingness to transfer guided by training content's job relevance, micro-sessions based training designs, and importantly,

the post training interventions and support from employers or HR/line managers are necessary.

The review article, '**Enhancing Performance of Health Assistants through TVET for Better Healthcare Access**' written jointly by Ms. Rojina Basnet and Mr. Chetan Karki Pyakurel explains both challenges and opportunities before health assistants in Nepal. The authors duo stressed that healthcare access could be made better by focusing on teaching and improving health assistants' capacity. However, challenges, such as funding limitations and rural-urban divides persist to this end, they added.

Similarly, in the article, '**Development of Employability Skills through Work-Based Learning**', Mr. Harish Singh Thapa underscores the Work-Based Learning (WBL) in the school production unit of TVET institute. He found WBL a positive indicator of employability and he argues that it develops valuable competencies and employability skills. In the article, he asserts students can enhance, through work-based learning, subject-specific technical skills, generic skills, or soft skills like communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, leadership skills, entrepreneurial skills and management skills.

The '**Vocational Training Instructors' Perceptions towards Transfer of Training: A Case Study**' written by Ms. Shiba Bagale brings forth the perception of participants towards short-term training in the real context. The participants observed that training is a

booster of their professionalism. However, shift from focus on the instructional skills and knowledge is warranted by this article.

In the article, '**Challenges Faced by Apprentices in Completing Dual TVET Course: A Case of Butwal Technical Institute**', Er. Raj Kumar Thapa and Er. Navin Kishor Gaihre found that the family support was a moderate challenge for the apprentices to complete their dual TVET apprenticeship at Butwal Technical Institute (BTI). For the research, they collected data from 204 apprentices out of 314 in the study. Another challenge was the environment of industry for the apprentices to complete the dual TVET apprenticeship training at BTI, while institutional technical efficiency was considered a moderate challenge to this regard.

The Research and Information Division at CTEVT orchestrated the production of this publication. It was accomplished through collaboration with scholars, researchers, and experts. The division expresses profound gratitude to all the peer reviewers and copy editors who generously dedicated their valuable time to meticulously review the manuscripts. Their feedback and suggestions proved to be instrumental in enhancing the quality of the publication.

Finally, the entire editorial team extends gratitude to the CTEVT management, staffs and authors for the support and collaboration. It expects such cooperation in the days ahead from the authors. The editorial team also welcomes the feedback to this publication, which it believes, would contribute to enhance its quality further.