

ISSN: 2392-4578 (Online)
SSN: 2392-456X(Print)

2018 Volume 2

Journal of Training and Development



TITI

Publication of:

Council for Technical Education & Vocational Training (CTEVT)

Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI)

Madhyapur Thimi-17, Saranlimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal



TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15430>

Journal of
Training and Development
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Editorial

A Mixed Method Study on Trainees Satisfaction Towards Training Services

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Abstract

Training is a means to an end. It is not an end itself. Training is teaching or developing once knowledge, skills, capabilities and performance. In today's world it is believe that training plays a vital role in developing human capabilities. So every training institute or training organization needs to understand their internal strengths, weakness and external opportunities and threats. Training institute for technical instruction (TITI) a pioneer institute in Nepal especially for providing skill based training in technical education and vocational training (TEVT) sector also need to identify its internal strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. During its 25 years of excellence in training throughout Nepal and abroad its necessary to know TITI trainees satisfaction towards training services.

In this context, we pursued to gain an in-depth understanding on satisfaction of trainees towards training services of TITI in respect towards teaching methodology. Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur districts of Kathmandu Valley, Nepal were selected for the study. Eight key participants voluntarily participated in this study where as 343 respondents were surveyed using five points likert scale. A parallel mixed method approach was employed to gain insight into TITI trainee's satisfaction towards TITI training services in respect to teaching methodology.

Key words: Training, Trainees satisfaction, Training Institute for Technical Instruction.

Setting the Scene

Human resource management practices are considered as a key business advantage in the face of an increasingly global and competitive environment. Among the human resource management strategies, training plays an important

role in equipping employees to acquire and update needed competencies in today's organizations. Therefore, both private and public sector organizations spend considerable amounts of money on employee training and the employees acquire new competencies through training (Kontoghiorghes, 2002).

In this world of competition, like other business or industrial organization, training institute or organizations also needs some competitive advantage to sustain. For training institute or training provider organizations trainees' satisfaction could be considered as an important tool to maintain a competitive advantage. A training institute should give a special attention to its service quality which can help its institute or training organization to differentiate itself from other institute or training organization, and results to long term competitive advantage (Moore, 1987).

Even though satisfying the wants and needs of trainees is not a new organizational concept for training institutions, trainees orientation has been underemphasized in public training institute compare to profit-oriented organizations. Trainees are the "customers" of a training institute (Huang, 2009). As per Seymour (1993), developing satisfied trainees should be a primary goal of training institute. Developing trainee's satisfaction at training institute or training organization level is crucial. If this is achieved, it will facilitate the strategic objectives of the training institute or training organization more effectively.

The measurement of training satisfaction can be useful to training institute or training organization, to help them to pinpoint their strengths and identify areas for improvement. Satisfaction ratings go beyond teaching assessments, which have a narrow focus, to include broader aspects of the trainees learning experience. To grasp the complexity of that learning experience, it is not enough to know the degree to which trainees are satisfied, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to trainee's satisfaction. So the purpose of this study is to identify aspects of the educational experience that are associated with TITI trainees for overall expression of satisfaction. Understanding how was TITI training perceived by the trainees in TEVT sectors? What were the levels of satisfaction among trainees in TITI and are there any differences in trainees satisfaction based on demographic characteristics.

Research Questions

- How was TITI training perceived by the trainees in TEVT sectors?
- What were the levels of satisfaction among trainees in TITI in respect to teaching methodology?

Research Design

This study was field based. It attempts to explore trainee's satisfaction in respect to TITI training. It is therefore explorative in nature. Moreover, it is descriptive and analytical since this study tries to describe and explore the phenomenon under study from several dimensions. To explore the underlying truth in trainees satisfaction, we used "mixed method" (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) design which is a procedure for collecting, analysis and mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2009).

Understanding TITI Training from Trainees Perception

Ram (Pseudonym) was happy from the training and trainers of the (ToT) training programme of TITI. He was also happy from the trainers for the time given by trainers for any academic or training consultations. He says:

I enjoyed the training a lot. Teaching methodology was appropriate for us. I was a bit introvert but by the training now I am extrovert. It's all by the trainings. I have to give presentations with trainees like me in the class and the timing was also suitable for me.

From the above narration of Ram we made meaning was that the teaching methodology delivered by the trainer of TITI were satisfactory. Also, from the above narration it can be said that the presentation that the trainees had to deliver helped them become more open or extrovert and the participants of TITI were satisfied from this.

Hari (Pseudonym) remembers his training and says he enjoyed a lot. He says:

I liked the way they teach in an interactive way. Trainers respect trainees and trainee's confidentiality. Trainers were always ready to give constructive and developmental feedback when needed. Trainers created a comfortable learning environment for us so that I could learn different instruction skill and now I am applying it with my trainees.

From the above narrative of Hari we made meaning that the teaching methodology and content delivery technique of TITI trainers were in an interactive way and the trainers respected the trainees and trainees' confidentiality. From the above statement it can be stated that the participants were happy and satisfied from the trainers of TITI. TITI trainers also provided constructive and developmental feedback. By this it is clear that the participants were satisfied with the trainers like the comfortable learning environment.

Gita (Pseudonym) is also happy and excited to take more trainings from TITI. She says:

Trainers were always ready to do the task. I liked their unique feature, when they promised not only to one trainees but also all the trainees they kept it. When I had any problem in any matter during the training, trainers were always ready to solve it. I also like the training book and other material that they provided during the training. That training materials are still helping me to sharpen my training programme.

From the above narration of Gita we made meaning was that she was very happy and satisfied with the trainers of TITI and liked the trainers unique feature i.e. they were always ready to do the task and if the trainers promised to do something and they do it. She was also satisfied with the trainers in the overall training programme and the training manual provided by TITI.

Madhu (Pseudonym) says that the course provided by TITI was relevant for her. She furthermore added:

Trainers had so many knowledge and are highly

intellectual. They had lots of information within the context and also from outside. Most importantly despite of having so much knowledge and despite being highly intellectual, the trainers were always humble to us.

From the above narration of Madhu, we made meaning was that she was satisfied with the TITI trainers knowledge level and intellectual potentiality. She was satisfied with the information provided by the trainers and by their humble behaviors.

Govinda (Pseudonym) likes the trainers' demonstration and presentation skills. He furthermore added:

They speak clearly and were able to make us understand. Every point or topic were explained using visuals like power point slides or flipcharts. They provided feedback about my presentation skill which I really liked. Also, I liked TITI training classroom which helped me to participate actively during group work activities

From the above statement of one of our participant Mr. Govinda, we made meaning was that participants were satisfied with the platform skill of the trainers and their constructive feedback. Similarly from the above narration it can be said that the participants were satisfied with the physical environment of TITI i.e. the classrooms and the surrounding environment which helped trainees to participate actively in group work.

Raju (Pseudonym) says that he enjoyed the group work activities during the training which helped him to be clearer about different content during the training. He furthermore added:

TITI runs excellent quality of training. I enjoyed the training. It was an excellent combination of theory and skill performance.

From the above narrative inquiry of one of our participants Mr Raju, we made meaning was that participants were satisfied with the excellent quality

of trainings provided by TITI. Participants enjoyed the training programme and were also satisfied with the excellent combination of theory and skill performance.

Mukesh (Pseudonym) was happy with TITI training and says TITI training is excellent and reputable. He says:

I feel happy when others look at my TITI training certificate and ask how they can get a training from TITI. TITI have a big image in vocational training. I also like TITI staff because of their cooperation which made me able to take the training.

From the above narrative inquiry of one of our participants Mr. Mukesh, we made meaning was that the participants were happy and satisfied with TITI image in the sector of vocational training. Participants were also satisfied with TITI staffs and their cooperation.

Radha (Pseudonym) is also happy with TITI training and she says:

I liked TITI trainings. I got an opportunity meet many individuals from different field and increase both my professional and social network. I only had friends in the nursing field, but after the training from TITI I now have friends from different discipline like engineering, agriculture etc. I am satisfied with TITI trainings and like how equal access is given to all groups and gender. Honestly in my trainings I felt that there was gender access and equity.

From the above narrative inquire with one of our participants Ms. Radha, we made meaning was that participants were satisfied with TITI trainings. TITI trainings helps participants to build good rapport with people from different discipline and participants were satisfied by how TITI gives equal access to all groups and gender.

Appropriateness of teaching methodology

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Neutral	24	7.0
Satisfied	149	43.4
Strongly satisfied	170	49.6
Total	343	100

The above table states that out of the total respondents i.e. 343 majorities of the respondents i.e. 49.6 % were strongly satisfied from the teaching methodology of TITI. Similarly 43.4% were satisfied

and remaining 7% were neutral about teaching methodology of TITI. From this data it can be stated that TITI teaching methodology is appropriate.

Teaching methodology in respect to gender was appropriate

Gender	Neutral	Satisfied	Strongly Satisfied	Total
Male	19	59	94	172
Female	5	90	76	171
Total	24	149	170	343

The above table states that out of the male total respondents i.e. 172, 94 male were strongly satisfied, 59 male were satisfied and remaining 19 male reported to be neutral. Similarly out of total female respondents i.e. 171, 76 were strongly satisfied, 90

satisfied and remaining 5 reported to be neutral. From the above data it can be stated that majority of the respondents according to gender both male and female were strongly satisfied and satisfied on appropriate teaching methodology of TITI.

Teaching methodology in respect to ethnicity was appropriate

Ethnicity	Neutral	Satisfied	Strongly satisfied	Total
Bramhin	5	58	66	129
Chettrai	8	9	34	51
Terai	3	7	3	13
Janajati	8	75	67	150
Total	24	149	170	343

From the above table it states that out of total Bramhin respondents i.e. 129, 66 respondents were strongly satisfied, 58 satisfied and remaining 5 reported to be neutral. Likewise out of Chettrai respondents i.e. 51, 34 reported strongly satisfied, 9 satisfied and remaining 8 reported to be neutral. Similarly out of Terai respondents i.e. 13, 3 reported strongly satisfied, 7 satisfied and remaining 3 reported to be neutral.

Likewise out of Janajati respondents i.e. 150, 67 reported strongly satisfied, 75 satisfied and remaining 8 reported to be neutral. From the above data it can be stated that majority of the respondents according to ethnicity (Bramhin, Chettrai, Terai and Janajati) were strongly satisfied and satisfied on the appropriate teaching methodology of TITI.

Teaching methodology in respect to ethnicity was appropriate

Age Group	Neutral	Satisfied	Strongly Satisfied	Total
20-29 Years	3	62	62	127
30-39 Years	11	56	62	129
40-49 Years	10	22	29	61
50-59 Years	0	9	14	23
60 and above Years	0	0	3	3
Total	24	149	170	343

The above table states that out of the total respondents of age group 20-29 years i.e. 127, 67 were strongly satisfied, 62 satisfied and remaining 3 reported to be neutral. Similarly out of the total age group of age 30-39 years i.e. 129, 62 reported to be strongly satisfied, 56 satisfied and remaining 11 reported to be neutral. Likewise out of the total age group of 40-49 years i.e. 61, 29 respondents reported to be strongly satisfied, 22 satisfied and remaining 10 reported to be neutral. Similarly out of the total age group of 50-59 i.e. 23, 14 respondents reported to be strongly satisfied and remaining 9 respondents reported to be satisfied. Likewise out of the total respondents of age group 60 and above years i.e. 3, all the respondents reported to be strongly satisfied. From the above data it can be stated that majority of the respondents according to age groups (20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, 50-59 years and 60 and above years) were strongly satisfied and satisfied with the teaching methodology of TITI.

Concluding Summary

From the above narrative inquiry we understood that the training programs of TITI are satisfactory. The common understanding of our participants was that all the participants were satisfied from the training programme conducted by TITI. Our participants were also satisfied from the teaching methodology and also the timing of TITI i.e. from 9:30 AM to 4:45 PM. The common understanding of our participants was that TITI trainers conducts training in an interactive way respecting the dignity of the participants. Similarly our participants also enjoyed the training sessions and the training environment. They were satisfied with the class size of each training, physical infrastructure of TITI and the training resources and materials provided to them. Our participants were also happy with the constructive and developmental feedback provided to them by the trainers during training session.

From the above narrative inquiry our participants were also satisfied from the enthusiasm and knowledge level of TITI trainers. The common

understanding of our participants was TITI trainers were always ready to respond to any queries of the participants. Similarly our participants enjoyed the group work activities and also said TITI have excellent training quality with gender access and equity. From the above narrative inquiry it can be stated that TITI training is excellent and trainees were satisfied too. On the basis of Kirkpatrick four level of training evaluation TITI trainee's posse's level one, two and three. Buckley & Caple (2009) also argued on the basis of Kirkpatrick four level of training evaluation level, one falls under reaction level in which TITI trainees liked and enjoyed the training and they also consider that the training was relevant to them. They like the venue, the style, timing, and domestics. They also felt at ease and were comfortable with the training experience gained at TITI and also perceived practicability and potential for applying the learning (Buckley & Caple, 2009).

Similarly on level two of training evaluation in respect to Kirkpatrick training evaluation as cited by Buckley & Caple (2009), trainees of TITI also stated that they learnt what was intended to be taught, trainee experience what was intended for them to experience and there were change in the trainees after the training, in the direction or area that was intended. Likewise on level three or behavioral level TITI trainees also put their learning into effect after going back on their job and the skills and the knowledge that were also relevant which is again stated by Krickpatric behavior level of evaluation (Buckley & Caple, 2009).

From the above quantitative data we can say the teaching methodology of TITI was satisfactory because majority of our respondents were highly satisfied and satisfied. Out of the total respondents i.e. 343 majorities of the respondents i.e. 49.6 % were strongly satisfied from the teaching methodology of TITI. Similarly 43.4% were satisfied and remaining 7% were neutral about teaching methodology of TITI. Similarly teaching methodology in respect to gender majority of our respondents were highly satisfied and satisfied. Out

of the male total respondents i.e. 172, 94 male were strongly satisfied, 59 male were satisfied and remaining 19 male reported to be neutral. Similarly out of total female respondents i.e. 171, 76 were strongly satisfied, 90 satisfied and remaining 5 reported to be neutral.

Like wise out of total Bramhin respondents i.e. 129, 66 respondents were strongly satisfied, 58 satisfied and remaining 5 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Likewise out of Chettrai respondents i.e. 51, 34 reported strongly satisfied, 9 satisfied and remaining 8 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Similarly out of Terai respondents i.e. 13, 3 reported strongly satisfied, 7 satisfied and remaining 3 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Likewise out of Janajati respondents i.e. 150, 67 reported strongly satisfied, 75 satisfied and remaining 8 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. From the above data it can be stated that majority of the respondents according to ethnicity (Bramhin, Chettrai, Terai and Janajati) were strongly satisfied and satisfied on the appropriate teaching methodology of TITI.

Similarly out of the total respondents of age group 20-29 years i.e. 127, 67 were strongly satisfied, 62 satisfied and remaining 3 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Similarly out of the total age group of age 30-39 years i.e. 129, 62 reported to be strongly satisfied, 56 satisfied and remaining 11 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Likewise out of the total age group of 40-49 years i.e. 61, 29 respondents reported to be strongly satisfied, 22 satisfied and remaining 10 reported to be neutral in respect to teaching methodology. Similarly out of the total age group of 50-59 i.e. 23, 14 respondents reported to be strongly satisfied and remaining 9 respondents reported to be satisfied in respect to teaching methodology. Likewise out of the total respondents of age group 60 and above years i.e. 3, all the respondents reported to be strongly satisfied in respect to teaching methodology. From the above data it can be stated that majority of the respondents according

to age groups (20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, 50-59 years and 60 and above years) were strongly satisfied and satisfied with the teaching methodology of TITI. So looking both qualitative and quantitative data we made meaning was that trainees were satisfied with TITI training and being more specific they were also satisfied with the teaching methodology of TITI during its training period.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15431>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Challenges of Sustainable Development of TVET Programs and Projects

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Abstract

Education is a key to open the door of human development and TVET is master key to open the door of economic development of the world. Therefore, all most all countries have given high priority for TVET to empower their human capital and economic development. Despite their initiatives, majority of them could not achieve sustainable development of TVET. There are different challenges and issues that are hindering on it. This paper describes on brief introduction on sustainable development and sustainable TVET or green TVET. It also highlights the major challenges of sustainable development of TVET.

Keywords: Technical education, vocational training and sustainable development

What is Sustainable Development (SD)?

According to International Institute for Sustainable Development (2015), "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

Considering the above definition, we have to

categorize the needs at different level because it differs from people to people, group to group, society to society, country to country. Therefore, needs are based on economic and social context. For example, if you listed clean air to breathe, but also listed a car for transportation, your needs might conflict. What happens when a company's need for cheap labor conflicts with workers' needs for livable wages? Or when individual families' needs for firewood conflict with the need to prevent erosion and conserve topsoil? Or when one country's need for electricity results in acid rain that damages another country's lakes and rivers?

Therefore, identification of needs and prioritize them to fulfill the needs of majority of people without

damaging economic, social, cultural and environment aspects is considered as sustainable development (World Bank, 2001).

What is Sustainable TVET or Green TVET? Green skills are also known as sustainable development skills. It refers to skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed by labor to support and promote sustainable social and economic development and to improve environment friendly in business and communities. 'Green skills' is generic skills, which include minimizing the use of resources, reducing of greenhouse gas emissions, recycling, using environment friendly products, protection of natural environment, and so on (UNEVOC, 2005). "Green jobs" are defined as jobs that reduce the environmental impact of enterprises and economic sectors, ultimately to levels that are sustainable. This definition covers work in agriculture, industry, services and administration that contributes to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment while also meeting the criteria for decent work – adequate wages, safe conditions, workers' rights, social dialogue and social protection (ILO, 2011).

Schumacher (1974) defined them as: 'technologies with a human face' aimed to enable people to earn a sustainable living. He proposed eight criteria to assess technology:

1. Appropriate technology best suits the needs and lifestyle of the people using it.
2. Appropriate technology should not damage the environment and ecosystem, and should be sustainable.
3. Appropriate technology should keep costs within the economic means of a community.
4. Appropriate technology should use locally available resources as far as possible.
5. Appropriate technology should enable local workers to earn a living.
6. Appropriate technology should increase self reliance.
7. Appropriate technology should use renewable sources of energy wherever possible, and should be economical in its use of non-renewable

resources.

8. Appropriate technology should fit with its social and cultural environment.

Therefore, sustainable TVET program is that which imparts knowledge, skills and attitude for gainful economic value without damaging social, cultural and environmental elements.

Therefore, TVET Programs which contribute to impart knowledge, skills, and attitude for green jobs and develops workforce for sustainable and environment friendly economic development is called sustainable development of TVET programs.

Challenges of Sustainable Development of TVET Programs and Projects

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policies and programs are developed and implementing in different countries. As a global agendas or goals such as EFA, MDGs and SDGs set in different periods. Despite the global and countries efforts, many countries could not achieve its sustainable TVET programs. However, some of the countries such as Germany, Switzerland, Australia, South Korea, Singapore and other developed countries able to develop sustainable TVET programs and contributed for sustainable development (UNEVOC, 2005). Considering the context of developing countries, there are many challenges of sustainable development of TVET programs. Following are the major challenges.

1. Awareness on Sustainable Development Approaches or Models

There are huge gaps in education system to learn on sustainable development. School education, TVET and higher education curricula are not relevant with sustainable development approaches. Therefore, we have to do campaign to bring awareness on SD and develop educational system to contribute SD. Wilson (2011) also states that in developing and least development countries there are huge gap in education system

and the awareness in respect to sustainable development is vital to remove this gap.

2. Development of TVET programs and projects for quality of life rather than immediate poverty reduction

In economically deprived situation, people are worried with their day to day livelihood problems. Therefore, TVET programs are implementing to fulfill their immediate needs rather than long term quality of life. As a result people are struggling to survive in the poverty situation. Li (2014) also reveals that TVET programs provide practical skill and life skills which further helps them to fulfill their long term needs and aspirations.

3. Match between demand and supply of TVET Programs

In developing countries, there is still huge gap between skills required by the employers and skills provided by TVET institutions. It is happening due to the lack of professional corporate culture, coordination between both demand and supply sides and lack of resources to do market research. As a result, graduates of TVET are either unemployed or do not get gainful employment. Seen in this light, TVET is more closely aligned with productive activities –sometimes survival strategies- or with those which are doable and result from the nature of their contexts, than to the need to train in order to satisfy the demand of a formal market or respond to the exigencies of technological development as dictated by modernity (Pieck, 2015).

4. High Quality TVET for Sustainable Development

Due to the lack of resources and low priority for TVET sector, our programs are in very low level of quality such as lack of qualified instructors, equipped labs and workshops, and adequate training materials. Similarly, students are not learning well due to the lack of proper working

environment such as poor occupational health and safety measures, standards of working procedures and less opportunity for appropriate practical skills. As a cultural barrier, majority of students are from poor economic background. However, examples in many countries abound of programs that have developed successful strategies for enabling low-income populations to gain entry to the world of work; strategies that have reinforced the local economy, and have generated new forms of participation. Such lessons are concerned with the need to have a social focus when addressing TVET programs in developing countries, a focus which is very much at odds with the prevailing tendency.

5. To break traditional approaches of TVET

Our TVET programs are still incorporate only hard skills not soft skills such as problem solving, communication, negotiation, social values, environment protections, entrepreneurial skills and other skills which contribute for social and economic development in a sustainable way. Similarly, our teaching and learning methodologies are teacher centered not learner centered. Therefore, students are lacking employability skills. Kumar (2013) also argue that TEVT programme should incorporate both hard skill and soft skill for its sustainability.

6. Adoption of innovation, technology and global competitiveness in TVET

Innovation, apply appropriate technology and make globally competitiveness in TVET are the key aspects for sustainable TVET (Wilson, 2011). We are lacking behind on these aspects due to the poor management, lack of resources and commitment. Therefore, most of our graduates are not getting and creating jobs.

Conclusions

Sustainable Development is backbone of present and future economic development of the country. It can be possible with the human capital having TVET with green or sustainable skills. For These skills

contribute to create green jobs, green environment and green society. Ultimately, it contributes for global sustainable development. There are many challenges of sustainable development of TVET but, we can overcome such challenges. Challenges can be converted into opportunities if we addressed sustainable development of TVET components in all stage of TVET cycle such as pre training, on training and post training stages. It means training program should be developed based on market demand, involvement of employers in all stages, course should have greening skills, teaching and learning methodology must be low teacher centered and high self learning environment i.e, practical exposure, group works, industry exposure, cognitive and problem solving skills, exposure to green jobs and green industry, entrepreneurship skills, and appropriate technology which reduces the energy and resources. Similarly, there should be strong linkages with employers and financial institutions for self employment generation for post TVET stages. It gives exposure to graduates on greening jobs and creates green jobs and environment.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15432>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Building Back Better: What Does it Imply for Jiri Technical School, Dolakha, Nepal ?

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Abstract

A powerful earthquake of 7.8 magnitude struck on April 25, 2015 in Nepal. The impact was most severe where 8,790 casualties and 23,300 injured (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2015). Due to earthquake there was huge loss in education sector. In TVET sector Jiri Technical School, Dolakha, Nepal faced huge loss where almost all classroom including workshops, labs, hostel and cafeteria were damage. So, this study tries to portray the understanding perception of Jiri Technical School students on impact of earthquake on education and also educational resilience by using case study research design.

Keywords: Technical education, earthquake and educational resilience

Setting the scene

On Saturday, 25 April 2015 at 11:56 local time, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake as recorded by Nepal's National Seismological Centre (NSC), struck Barpak, district of Gorkha, about 76 km northwest of Kathmandu. Nepal had not faced a terrible natural shock of comparable magnitude for over 80 years.

The tragic earthquake was followed by more than 300 aftershocks greater than magnitude 4.0 (as of 7 June 2015). Four aftershocks were greater than magnitude 6.0, including one measuring 6.8 which struck 17 days after the first big one with the epicenter Sunkhani near Mount Everest (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, 2015). To date, there are over 8,790 casualties and

22,300 injuries. It is estimated that the lives of eight million people, almost one-third of the population of Nepal, have been impacted by these earthquakes. Thirty one districts have been affected, out of which 14 were declared 'crisis-hit' and another 17 neighboring districts were partially affected (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2015).

The destruction was widespread covering large number of residential and government buildings, heritage sites, schools and health posts, rural roads, bridges, water supply systems, and agricultural land (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UNOCHA], 2015). Rural areas in the central and western regions were particularly devastated and further isolated due to

road damage and obstructions. In the worst hit areas, entire settlements, including popular tourist destinations like Langtang, were swept away by landslides and avalanches triggered by the earthquakes (NPC, 2015). Hundreds of historical and cultural monuments at least a century old were either destroyed or extensively damaged. Over half a million houses were destroyed. Poorer rural areas have been more adversely affected than towns and cities due to their inferior quality of houses. More women and girls died than men and boys, partly because of gendered roles that disproportionately assign indoor chores to women (NPC, 2015).

According to NPC (2015) the net value of the total damages and losses to the education sector is estimated at NPR 31,317.9 million (US\$313.2 million) at pre-disaster prices. Of this, the damage to infrastructure and physical assets is estimated at NPR 28,063.8million (US\$ 280.6 million).

Likewise, in the TVET sector, the majority of the reported damage was faced by the Jiri Technical School in Dolakha (completely damaged). A total of 356 TVET classrooms were fully destroyed and another 184 were partially damaged, together with significant damage to equipment and other assets (NPC, 2015). During my field visit to Jiri Technical School (JTS) I found that the school was completely damaged and the classes were running in temporary building. Student's hostels were also temporary build including cafeteria. After observing JTS, number of questions rose in my brain. How JTS students perceive impact of earthquake on education? What educational resilience or building back better means to them? So this paper tries to understand the perception of JTS students on impact of earthquake on education and also educational resilience or building back better to them.

Case Study Design Rationale

The case study as Yin (2003) and Flyvbjerg (2006) believe falls under constructivist paradigm. Researching on the understanding the perception of the effects of earthquake in public technical school

fits here as it focuses to answer process questions (Yin, 2003). A case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to study a more general principle and practices (Flyvbjerg, 2006); it is also known as the study of an instance in action (Yin, 2003). Case study in true essence explores and as a research method investigates contemporary real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships (Zainal, 2007). Case studies are considered useful in research as they enable researchers to examine data at micro level. As an alternative to quantitative or qualitative research, case study can be a practical solution when a big sample population is difficult to obtain (Zainal, 2007).

The qualitative case study facilitates to explore the phenomenon within the context using variety of resources. It helps to see the issues through variety of lenses which allows multiple facts of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). So, here researchers try to explore the phenomena within the context using the variety of resources. As the researchers we have chosen social constructivist worldview and compose observation and open ended interview (Creswell, 2009).

Sources of Evidences, Tool and Respondents

A pre-study by the researchers to the study unit helped to define the informant for the researcher. The three sources of evidences (Yin, 2003) were predetermined in the first visit; interview, observation and documents of Jiri Technical School (JTS) were the major information sources to get to the research question. The participants were JTS students who were interviewed guided by the themes. The field notes during the visit stood as the second information and the details (in document) provided were also used in the study.

Proximity: Basis of my study sites and samples

The idea of qualitative research is to select research

participants, documents or visual materials purposefully that will best answer the research questions (Patton, 2002). Thus, in qualitative research, qualitative inquiry focuses on small samples that are selected purposefully. In consultation with my professors and technical education and vocational training expert, I have purposefully selected Jiri Technical School (JTS) at Jiri, Dolakha, Nepal. JTS enjoys the rural life style and school had been destroyed due to the earthquake that hit in April 2015 so I have selected JTS site and participant purposefully for my study because Creswell (2011) says that in qualitative research, researcher select or identify the sites or participants purposefully which help researcher to understand research problem in a best way.

Purposive selection of diverse research participants

For my study, I have selected six key participants for interviews, three students from JTS, two teachers from JTS and one administration staff of JTS. I was present there (JTS) for my follow up study of instructional skill training. I participated in their teaching learning class room, their workshop practical classroom and their field visit in Jiri, Dolakha, Nepal and I had observed my participants daily life activities and social interaction in community as well as response of society to them.

Understanding Immediate Impact of the earthquake in JTS

I was present in JTS in the month of May, 2016 for my follow up study of instructional skill (IS1) training. It was approximately 5 PM evening that I reached Jiri. As I move towards JTS from the local bus stop I observed the main gate of JTS was broken. When I went inside to school building from the broken main gate I observed a different school environment. Debris everywhere and some debris still left to manage. Old infrastructure almost damage and those left infrastructure where cracked. I saw temporary classroom and administration building. In 2012 I had made my visit to JTS and I was inspired by its learning environment but now (May, 2016)

due to devastating earthquake I found almost all infrastructure damage. I observed students studying in temporary classroom and residing in temporary hostel. Looking all this cosmology I want to understand how they perceive their education in aftermath of earthquake. One of my participants Mukesh (Pseudonym, student, 20 years, male, construction trade) said:

I fainted as my school hostel collapsed. When I woke up I found myself outside of the school hostel. Even now earthquake tremors remind me of that terrible day.

The earthquake had particular impact on JTS students. Still they fear from that terrible earthquake. When digging more questions my participant said me when somebody moves him or pushes his desk unknowingly than he feels that again earthquake struck JTS. From this narrative inquiry of Mukesh I made meaning was that still earthquake has created negative psychological effect on JTS students.

Effects on teaching and learning

The effects of the earthquake on infrastructure and physical assets are relatively easy to observe and it is more difficult to estimate effect of the earthquake on teaching and learning activity. The earthquake and its aftershocks led to the complete closure of schools for more than a month (26 April–30 May) in JTS. The standard school opening days per year is 220, with 190 days for teaching learning and the rest for examinations, extracurricular activities, and other non-teaching functions (NPC, 2015). In the consultations with the administration staff I found that the number of days lost would eventually be covered through cuts in winter vacation and annual festivals. One of my participant Ruja (Pseudonym, student, 19 years, female, health trade) states that

..... due to earthquake I lost my learning habit and I am not confident as I was before. When I have to carry my practical work I feel less motivated and its because of earthquake. Our practical room and community room was

all destroyed and we have to do in playground.

From the narrative inquiry of Ruja I made meaning was that due to terrible earthquake that struck at JTS effects on teaching and learning environment. Teaching and learning environment plays a vital role in all round development of student (Koirala & Chaudhary, 2015). From the devastating earthquake I made meaning was that students lost their motivation and confidence in their study. Their learning habits have been disrupted. Raju furthermore says:

I am fear that I may have forgotten what I have learned and may have difficulty in passing my board exam.

From the narrative inquiry of my participant it made me clear that due to earthquake students of JTS had lost their motivation in respect to their studies and this lost motivation can create negative effect towards their study. Sharma (2012) also states that motivation towards learning is vital thing for learner to enhance learning activity.

Effects on teachers and education personnel

The total casualty to teachers is reported at 49 (including two in higher education) in Nepal (NPC, 2015). While there is no reported casualty to the teaching personnel in JTS. Teachers from the JTS have lost their homes and family members, and household burdens to female teachers have increased. In my field visits, teachers stated that they would be able to resume teaching learning activities as it was before the earthquake. However, they raised concerns regarding availability of housing, need for advance payment, and additional training to facilitate students and psycho-social counseling. One of my participants Ram (Pseudonym, Teacher, 36 years, male, health trade) states that:

I am living in a single room which is temporarily build with my family and my condition is miserable. It is very difficult to perform effective teaching and learning in this situation but also I am managing somehow. School should take necessary initiation for teacher because here

teacher had also lost their home and family members.

From the narrative inquiry of my participant I made meaning was that not only students but also teachers were affected from earthquake and are in miserable condition. Teachers are the role model for students and they learn different skill from teacher (Sharma, 2012). So, school and concern stakeholders should take significant steps to uplift these teachers who were victimized due to terrible earthquake.

Effects on service delivery and governance mechanisms

During consultations with principle of JTS he said: there has been major damage to the administrative building, classrooms and workshop affecting their day-to-day operations. There have been delays in conducting the examinations by JTS, and they have already postponed or rescheduled their examinations. This is unlikely to affect the schedules planned for next year. One of my participants Manoj (Pseudonym, teacher, 30 years, male, construction trade) states that:

In JTS due to earthquake nothing are in order and sometimes it takes even more than a day to find an instrument. Examinations are approaching near and we have pressure to complete our course on time. Teaching in temporary classroom is also not effective. It produce echo and create disturbance to next classroom.

From the narrative inquiry of my participant I made meaning was that due to earthquake it is difficult in teaching learning activity. I also observed that due to earthquake everything was out of order including labs, workshops and classrooms. Sharma (2012) also states that to achieve all round development of students, teachers, students, school and parents should take directly and indirectly involvement in teaching learning process but here JTS I found less involvement as stated by Sharma (2012).

Building back better: what does it imply ?

In education building back better notion should encompass not only physical infrastructure improvement which could be made, but also the addressing of others pre-existing access and quality gaps (Kirk, 2008). Even from a physical reconstruction perspective, building back better has to imply more than just rebuilding the school in the same place, same design and with same facilities. It should imply a careful chosen school site, earthquake resistance design and students friendly with adequate classroom, labs, workshops, recreational space, latrine, water and be a space for teacher to gather and share their experience and resources and also made to feel part of a professional community (Bird, 2009). In remote areas where communities rely on teachers from outside, a better built school should include simple teacher accommodation.

At the same time during my field visit in JTS and interviewing my participants I made meaning was that building back better has many more meaning and implication including improvement in access to education, and especially for girls. One of my female participants Ruja said:

Girls should be provided more facility than boys because in this crucial period of earthquake boys are safer and they can adjust easily everywhere but in case of girls it is difficult to adjust at any place.

During my field visit in JTS I observe that girls facing difficulty in common toilet system. Likewise quality improvement such as better teaching and learning materials, teacher with better pedagogical skills supported by principal or head teacher is necessary. Better monitoring, feedback and accountability system are also required to promote quality teaching and administration. Holistically building back better also implies enhanced community engagement in education and real consultation and participation from students, parents and community member in educational decision making.

Conclusion

Building back better in JTS is strong and significant for qualitative change. Enhancing disaster resilience is not only about building back better from a structural perspective. It requires interventions in non-structural aspects of the education system such as the curriculum and textbooks to ensure that teachers and students internalize safety issues and can act in times of need. This also requires strengthened disaster preparedness and response at the school and community level through school-based disaster risk management and community based disaster risk management, training and planning.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15433>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Understanding Gender Neutral language at workplace: Study of TEVT schools of Nepal

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Abstract

This study tries to understand how female instructors perceive use of gender neutral language in the workplace. Traditionally there had been stratification in male and female on the basis of work and also on the basis of language; but lately, a number of efforts have been made to remove stratification on the basis of gender. Still many reports argue that there is bias on the basis of gender language in the workplaces. The traditionally built stereotype on job roles of males and females given by the society people may not support and go in line with the practice of using gender neutral language. Therefore, this paper had aimed to explore the use of gender neutral language in technical schools of Nepal. To begin the study, eight female instructors from different technical schools of Nepal with different occupations were purposively selected. A case study research design was implied to understand the perception of female instruction with regards to gender neutral language in their work place.

Key words: : Gender neutral language, discrimination, instructors and communication

Introduction

In this modern world, communication plays a vital role in workplace. None of us cannot live without communication; therefore, one can express their ideas and feelings orally or in writing (Drynan, 2011). The same logic can apply everywhere in workplace and organization. The ability to communicate creates healthy work culture and build up the instructors' professionalism. No matter how we speak or what

language we use in teaching profession, the profession demands good communication skill for both male and female instructors. Therefore instructors who are involved in teaching profession need to be highly skilled in these areas to excel in their profession.

But in reality, male and female have had trouble communicating effectively since the beginning of time, and it is not just in the workplace (Litosseliti,

2013). Most of the difficulties in communication are the gender related words due to different statuses of men and women in the society. In fact, such differences have been the topic of debate at home and in organization as well. The gender differences in the language have been caused due to differences in social construct with respect to the gender and age factors (Dong, 2012). Gender differences in communication may cause much frustration and anger between male and female, and this difference is as a result of the socialization and traditional gender roles and social culture of the society (Drynan, 2011). It is thus significant to learn the skills needed to work together in harmony, and practice effective communication where both gender are respected.

With the global change, the society changes; so does the language we use to communicate. The study of language and gender has been an area of interest for over the years. The language we use for addressing each other; the ways in which the both sexes communicate with each other; and the language used to represent gender in society are found to be an interesting area of study with regards to how gender neutral language has been in use in the workplace (OCR, 2015). Therefore, this study mainly focuses on how female instructors perceive the use of gender neutral language in the technical schools of Nepal.

Why Gender Neutral Language ?

In the past, no matter how much were the women educated, the perception of societies towards female was narrow and the society treated the male as blessed in every aspects of life. Now with the change of time and education provided to females, the working women in our society have been tremendously increasing. So, women are found to have participation everywhere in the society and in the workplace (Wright, 2010).

As we know that language is the one of the tools for the communication but gender bias in communications still exists in the workplace that hinders in the acceptance to women as equal participants. The loss of the focus pronoun and

words, and stereotyping words that exclude women in society is still found in workplace communications. Such language discrimination decreases their work performance which also further bars the capability and performance of women. Some language lacks the respect for women that serves to trivialize or demean their accomplishments. Many policy and programme developers bring their own biases to their work, according to their gender, cultures, education and economic status. Knowledge and good intentions can reduce biases, but cannot eliminate them. In language, this equality takes the form of parallel word choices for both men and women, and the elimination of terms that exclude stereotype or demean women.

So to create the healthy working environment, the concept of gender neutral language has been introduced that includes gender neutral language and can bring improvement in verbal and written communication in the workplace. The government also endorses a gender neutral language policy to remove this barrier and supports its commitment to employment equity.

The gender neutral language is neither masculine nor feminine and avoids using gender specific pronunciation such as 'he or she' (Adams, 2015). The purpose of using gender neutral language in speaking and writing is to minimize assumptions about the gender and sex of people (Dong, 2014). Gender-neutral or gender included language or non-sexed language treats both sexes equally and does not indicate one's gender allowing to address people without making gender assumptions (Stevenson, 2014). Using such language in work place assists in creating a safer, more inclusive learning environment. With the increased participation of women in the workplace, one might assume that the barriers to their full participation in getting jobs and winning promotions have been removed. Gender-neutral language can be also used in writing where the gender of a person is considered unimportant but language is considered as important.

Gender and Language

The social status and mental state of male and female are different. Due to the traditional role in society, the participation male and female in social activities and their contribution have a great difference which results in the variations of their language. This causes the diversity of the language in male and female (Dong, 2014). The most significant approach on social differences between males and females are dominance, difference and defect.

The dominance approach is a traditional patriarchal approach and believes that men and women inhabit a cultural and linguistic world where power and status are not equally distributed which provides a negative impact of women's language (Nemati & Bayer, 2007). Due to traditional social status of women, they are responsible for indoor household activities. As they are not exposed to outer world and are dominated by male, manner of speaking is different to men that reflect their subordinate status in society (Litosseliti, 2013). Thus, women's language is marked as powerlessness, shyness, weakness, passive speaking, and expressed through the use of unnecessary qualifiers, which disqualifies women from positions of power and authority. Men dominate and control women both with interactions and with the language system itself (Merchant, 2012).

According to difference in approach, as men and women belong to different sociolinguistic subculture, they live in different beliefs they have developed different linguistic behaviors (Abbas, 2010). This results in the varying communicative styles of male and female. Although male and female live in the same society, they have different life experienced since their childhoods. The reason is that they have learnt different linguistic behavior and style based on the sex when they interact with peers or elders (Hamdan & Hamdan, 2013).

In Deficit approach, women's way of speaking is deficit in comparison to that of men whether by nature or nurture (Cameron, 1998). Women use language in a way which reflects their subordinate

position in society, and men do in a way which reflects their power. In deficit approach, women face hindrances as language users. Women have limited vocabulary that reflects that women's language style which is deficient, lacking in authority and assertiveness (Simpson, 2011). Females' language has a subservient status considering it as deficient, unconventional and even incomplete by comparison to males' normative language. From the childhood girls are taught how to use female language so that they are socialized to use lady like language (Hamdan & Hamdan, 2013).

These psychological gender differences in communication styles influences strategies to create stereotypical role for men and women in the workplace (Merchant, 2012). Therefore, gender differences in communication styles in workplace cause a gap and conflict between men and women. Some of these stereotypes have negative effects on women's behaviors and perceptions of females in the workplace. These have effect on them both in society and their workplace. Hence, in this respect, use of gender neutral language has come into light especially in workplace and has started to be used by both male and female. In this line, I have put forward the research question stated below.

Research question

- How do female instructors perceive about gender neutral language?

Case study research design

The case study as Yin (2003) believes fall under constructivist paradigm. Researching on the use of gender neutral language in TEVT schools of Nepal fits here as it focuses to answer process questions (Yin, 2003). A case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to study more general principles and practices, and is the study of an instance in action (Creswell, 2008). The single instance is of a bounded system; for example: a teacher, a class, a school or a community. It provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly

than simply by presenting them with abstract theories.

The strength of qualitative case studies lies on researcher as key instrument and multiple sources of information along with several others characteristics. Qualitative researches especially the case study research design may shift tool and even focus to the problem as study undergoes to the issue. “The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent” (Creswell, 2008). The issue of seeking use of gender neutral language practice and replication possibilities can be best explored with more flexible research methods. This builds a ground for selection of case study approach for the study. As no logical subunits can be defined in this study, TEVT teachers under council for technical education and vocational training (CTEVT), remains the single unit of study. “The holistic design is advantageous when no logical subunits can be identified or when relevant theory underlying the case study is itself of a holistic in nature” (Yin, 2003).

The eight female instructors were selected randomly from the seven different technical schools of Nepal. The instructors were interviewed individually and their interviews were recorded for the data transcription. The findings of the study are based on the response and experience of female instructors within their schools.

Female instructor perception towards the use of gender neutral language

The female instructors were unknown and unaware about the gender neutral language. One instructor had few knowledge of the gender neutral language but had not tried to implement neutral language in the workplace. Some of them had heard the word neutral language but did not know the concept of gender neutral language in the workplace. Some of them were found to be using the neutral words such as students; teachers; persons in the school, without unknowing the concept of gender neutral language.

The study shows that the masculine and feminine words are popular and familiar in the technical

schools. The lexical words ‘madam’ and ‘miss’ were found to be used for female instructors to convey the information. In the same way, the lexical word ‘sir’ was being used for the male instructors to convey the information in formal working environment. Similarly, the gender inclusive language like ‘brother’, ‘sister’, ‘uncle’ have been used to flow the communication in the school as stated by Horvath et al (2016). They think that these words are the formal and official language to address the staff of the organization.

Though, ‘Madam’ and ‘Miss’ were commonly words for females, the perception of female instructors is that is the word ‘Madam’ was superior and humble words for the female. So, most of the female instructors preferred to be addressed by ‘Madam’. The word ‘Miss’ was found to be used for the juniors and inexperienced instructors. So it was found that they did not like to be called by ‘Miss’ due to the feeling of being dominated. While doing the discussion, they also said that in some cases, female tried to dominate female because of jealousy. So, female tried to grab the opportunity from female and they did not want to acknowledge others’ performance. So they tried to express the jealousy through verbal discrimination and biased language to dominate the female colleagues.

Gender discrimination: female instructor voice

When discussed about the gender discrimination word or pronoun, they expressed that formally there were no such discrimination word has been observed in the school but informally behavior of the male and the type of biased language and the dominating behavior has been observed and noticed in meetings and other official task. The female instructors felt less included, evaluated the work environment less positively and less job based competence than did men, regardless of the type of language that was used in the job description.

In meetings, no such bias was observed and seems that everyone treated equally. But in discussion and

in communication, masculine words and pronouns were used frequently. In decision making, the voice of the female seemed to disagree which can clearly be observed by the body language and gesture of the male instructors and other female staff of the school. The body language of male was found to be indicating negative feelings towards female's voice and opinions. They assured that this is reality occurring in the school and not a misinterpretation. This may become an issue in workplace where the female instructors feeling and opinion are neglected (Merchant 2012). That would lead to the demotivation, frustration and work proficiency slowdown in the workplace. This clearly shows that women's opinions were not being valued. Instructors said that most of their input was neither viewed with positive remarks, nor were acknowledged during the meetings. Others shared that their views and opinions were not being taken seriously and were given stereotypically inclined tasks despite their qualifications. Disrespectful language and mis-gendering can make it difficult for female instructors to participate fully in meetings. Usually male instructors use words without noticing and do not realize how others feel and may get upset.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study shows that female instructors who work in traditionally male dominated occupations faced more gender discrimination in verbal language than females who work in occupations traditionally assigned for females (Martin & Barnald, 2013). An organization's success depends upon its ability to embrace diversity and realize the benefits. Therefore, organization itself should actively assess the handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement plans, and accept the innovative changes that focus towards the organizational and staff development. Languages vary in the number of linguistic elements that need to be changed for creating neutral language and the nature of the changes effects of ease of implementation of gender neutral language. But in reality, traditional, social and gender roles are hard to accept the change in gender and language in society and workplace. Once the organization acts

as catalyst to bring changes to demonstrate the neutral language, we can bring changes in our workplace, and changes to women's social status in the society. Organizations need to introduce formal policies to create an environment for women entering and remaining in male-dominated occupations that hinder the biased language. Many schools and organizations have official policies and rules that support the use of gender-neutral language in the workplace. In some cases, laws exist to enforce the use of gender-neutral language in certain situations, such as job advertisements (Stout, 2009). Different authorities have presented guidelines on when and how to use gender-neutral language. The staff of the organization makes a habit of using gender inclusive language that does not discriminate the all staff on the basis of gender identity and male dominated occupations.

The development of policies and awareness programs is deemed necessary to increase of social communication activities within schools; decrease gender biased language; and increase the language similarities between males and females. It will help to understand the similarities and differences of language use between males and females as stated by Dong (2014). It also contributes to neutral communication and makes people use it exactly in social life. At the same time, it will benefit the social culture studies and promote to predict the development trend of language and make policies. Besides, it has positive effect on the social spiritual civilization development of society.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15436>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Women Empowerment: A Case from Bima VDC of Myagdi District, Nepal

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Abstract

This study analyzed role of technical & vocational education and training in women empowerment process specifically in local level. In fact, technical & vocational education and training programs not only provide self-employment opportunity to the women but also trigger capability to exercise control over their personal and family life, make choices to improve well beings and take active role in decision making. For justifying central argument; what are the changing role of technical & vocational education and training that has been fostering women empowerment as well as social and economic development process in this VDC (Village Development Committee), the researchers employed quantitative case study research design and applied key informant interview, observation and household survey as data collection techniques. Researchers purposively selected 63 sample populations (10 respondents who completed technical & vocational education and 53 respondents who participated in vocational skill development trainings). The study found significant role of technical & vocational education and training that have been transforming women empowerment and social and economic development process in local level. More so, for promoting social and economic development process, capable and skilled women are equally playing; decision making, leadership, educational and change agent role in the VDC. The study concluded that technical & vocational education and training program conducting in local level help to nourish knowledge, ability and develop vocational skills of women and empowering them. Similarly, empowered women are also playing transformative role in social and economic development process of the VDC. Finally the ideas in which vocational education and training found to be means and ends for women empowerment in this VDC can be replicate in other similar settings.

Key words: : Technical education, vocational vraining, women empowerment, social development and economic development.

Introduction

Technical and vocational education is defined as practically illustrated career skill instruction especially in agriculture, business, family and consumer sciences, health occupation, marketing, technology and trade industrial sectors (Asian Development Bank [ADB], 2004). Whereas vocational skill development training is designed to enable participants from disadvantage group like rural poor and women for developing practical skills so that they can involve in income generate activities (council for technical education and vocational training [CTEVT], 2011). In Nepal, CTEVT was established in 1989 assigning the roles of skilled development (Sharma, 2012). CTEVT coordinates programs, develops and expands technical & vocational education and training (TVET) and ensures the quality of the trainings. CTEVT has been producing basic and middle level skilled manpower through short term, long term, mobile and different apprenticeship training in different parts of the country.

The technical and vocational skill development training conducted throughout the country not only help participants to improve their quality of life through the gainful employment, but also supports to the social and economic development process of the country (CTEVT, 2012). And such types of skills affect economic development process of the country because it enhances earning, potential career progression and employability of the individuals (Bajracharya, 2010). Therefore, it can be said that effective implementation of technical & vocational education and training especially in remote rural areas definitely help to uplift life skill knowledge and vocational skills of the women groups. These opportunities ultimately changes their daily life activities from household chores to social, economic and leadership role in the society and enhanced women empowerment.

Right from the beginnings, women empowerment process in Nepal has been surpassed through contradictory religious ideas. In one hand, Hindu

culture highlighted mother is the power of love and considered the first teacher of the children. In another hand, Manusmriti prescribed woman's main duties in obeying and serving their fathers, brothers and others male members of the family before married and they should serve their husbands, fathers-in-law, mothers-in-law and others senior male and female members of the family in married life (Prabhu, 2004 as cited in Bhandari, 2008). Because of such types of dual cosmologies status of women empowerment process is still vulnerable and suffering from anti socio-cultural and economic structures. Women empowerment means transforming existing power relations in favors of women, disadvantaged groups who faced severe limitations in exercising power and making voluntary choices. Empowerment concerns the transformative use of power, in which a dominant agent also exercises his power in such a way that the sub-ordinate agent learns certain skills that undercut the power differential between him or her and the dominant agent (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2004). Women empowerment is the process of capacity building of women to exercise control over one's own life. It is generating understand to mean the ability of women to make choices to improve their well beings that of their families and communities. Empowered women take more active roles in the house and community. When women take active roles in the household and community decision-making, their families will be better equipped to confront the challenges of poverty, improve family health and well-being and increase household income (UNDP, 2004).

But in practice, according to the "State of the world population, 2003 Report" it is said that women have not become empower to participate in the social and economic development in a full-fledged manner as they are excluded from the development process. However, women empowerment in Nepal is slightly increasing due to leading role of policy provision and providing various vocational skill and capacity development trainings and their engagement in income generate activities. At a time, the state mechanism has been motivating women to play

social, economic as well as leadership role through their empowerment. As a result, rural women are also providing transformative role and involving in social and economic development process in local level. Here is why, this study highlighted changing role of technical & vocational education and training that has been fostering women empowerment and socio-economic development process in local level.

Theoretical Framework

We became aware on considerable volumes of theoretical framework for understanding social and economic actions and interactions of the participants on researching issues (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). In this attempt, we reviewed structure and agency theory that has recently been promoted by social constructionist researcher who enters the life worlds of the other social actors' interest, cultural interpretation, knowledge and power (Kontinen, 2004). Agency role focuses upon the making and remaking of society or social structures through the ongoing self-transforming actions and perceptions of the social actors. We understood, the social actors or agency like empowered women groups are capable and knowledgeable and their knowledge is manifested in their actions or in day to day activities (Kaspersen, 2000). In order to raise actor practices, Giddens identified number of characteristics that enable them to take action: their transformative power to act upon structures, their knowledge ability to undertake action, their capability for assessing their situation and their transformative capacity to monitor one another's actions (Lacroix, 2012, p.13).

Methodology

The study begin with sole research question: What are the changing role of technical & vocational education and training that has been fostering women empowerment and socio-economic development process of Bima VDC? Here are two reasons for selecting Bima VDC as a field of study. Firstly, Kisani Higher Secondary School of this VDC has been running agriculture junior technician assistant (JTA) program since 2011 and also running ISC agriculture program since last year. Up to this stage,

eight female students completed JTA program from own village and two completed health related program from city centers and three students are currently studying JTA and ISC agriculture program. Secondly, local women have been also participating in vocational skill development trainings and involving in income generates activities and also playing socio-economic and leadership role in the society.

Ultimately, we became quite motivating with role of technical & vocational education and training in the empowerment of women groups in this VDC and applied deductive logics for analyze objective information related to impact of women empowerment through descriptive and explanatory methods (Creswell, 2012). Under post-positivist epistemology we chose quantitative case study research design that helped to understand specific socio-cultural and economic settings of the research participants in a bounded system (Yin, 2003). In fact, case study investigates contemporary real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of limited numbers of events or conditions and their relationships (Zainal, 2007 as cited in Koirala & Dhungana, 2015). For making our study reliable, out of total 75 sample population (10 completed technical & vocational education and 65 participated in vocational skill development trainings till 2015[VDC Profile, 2015]) we selected 63 female household (10 who completed technical & vocational education and 53 who participated in vocational skill development trainings) sample numbers for study which is generated with 95percent confidence level and 5percent marginal error by using sample size determination formula (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The study employed structured interview, observation and household surveys as major techniques of data collection (Creswell, 2012). Collected data analyzed through description, analysis and interpretation. Description of data helped to gain a clear picture of the situation and understand the meaning of the data. Analysis of data helped to identify essential features and understand underlying meanings of data to make systematic interrelationships between them. And

interpretation of data helped to understand processes and meanings in the researching context (Yin, 2003).

A Case Study: Bima VDC

Bima, a recently grown hinterland of the VDC is situated above 1200 meter from the sea level. It lies within 43. 04° to 93. 53° easting and 29.20° to 29.47° northing with 1,607 hector total area (VDC Profile, 2015). There are 419 households with 1,856 total population where male population is 842 and female 1,014 (CBS, 2012). It has cold wet climate and alluvial soil. The river side is full of sand and other land is covered by slope area and stone hills. The hinterland is stretched from north to south along with 9 kilometer Darbang road under administrative unit ward no. 2 and 3 and it has a direct road linkage with national highway (Garbuja, .

Agriculture and remittance is a primary occupation of the majorities of the rural people. Purchasing capacity and economic well beings of the local people is increasing because of commercial farming activities supported by inter/national government projects. Agriculture sector in fact has been contributing a third of the total national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and thus it is regarded as one of prioritized sectors for the economic development of the country (agriculture development strategy [ADS], 2012). Local people are supplying their agro based production i.e. food, meat, fruits, dairy products and herbal medicines in service centers especially in Darbang, Beni, Baglung and Pokhara.

The process of women empowerment in this VDC has been playing key role in agro-based and herbal production and distribution. More specifically, those women who completed their technical & vocational education program in agriculture and health sectors and those women who participated in vocational skill development trainings became role model to the other women throughout the VDC and neighboring VDCs. With regard to agriculture sector, some of graduates got job opportunities in agricultural projects, some of them are pursuing agro based farming activities in local level and some of them

are still struggling for government job opportunity. Likewise, with regard to health sector, one graduate got government job in neighboring district and one graduate run private dental clinic in Kathmandu. Along with their occupational role they are still sharing their technical knowledge and skills among rural women and advocating them for their empowerment through engaging in income generate activities and involving in local leadership.

Local women are also participated in vocational skill development trainings like; tailoring, embroidery, tunnel farming, vegetable farming, dry vegetable processing, crop and seed management and mushroom cultivation conducted in local level. At a time they are applying their skill in income generate activities and also working together for women empowerment process and becoming motivating sources to neighboring VDCs. Local women are following traditional norms, values, ritual and rights but following modern farming system to the end they prefer to visit demonstration field (25 ropani agriculture land) of technical school in a group where JTA students have been practically applying their technical and theoretical knowledge. They learn about tunnel farming, mushroom cultivation, insecticide and pesticide and agro farm management during mutual interactions with students and teachers. Reasoning that majorities of the households are rearing animal husbandry especially cow for milk and goat for meat and producing seasonal and off seasonal vegetable, dry vegetables, mushroom and herbal medicines. Modernization of culture, dress, norms and values still could not affect them though nuclear family system, secularism and acculturation have been mounting in the country.

Discussions of Findings

The study dealt with quantitative case study hence numeric data has been analyzed. The unit of analysis is women empowerment and their changing role that has been affecting social and economic development process within a bounded system Bima VDC. For analyzing raising level of women empowerment, the objective data interpretation of selected participants

has been presented under their changing role such as; social, economic, decision making, leadership, educational and change agent role of women in different sub headings. However, in Nepalese context, the term women's empowerment has been viewed through the three basic components of empowerment such as; social empowerment, economic empowerment and political empowerment (Bhattarai, 2009).

Social role of women

Social role of women is one of the determinant factors for social development and outcome of technical & vocational education and training and women empowerment. After becoming skillful, knowledgeable and capable local women groups of this VDC has been playing social role significantly. More than 92 percent sample respondents are working for social development activities like; working for community development, building mutual relationship between community members. Literature says that Coleman also focused on bonding (mutual relationships with same ethnic groups), bridging (mutual relationship with other ethnic groups) and linking (relationship with those who have power) social capital that can foster community development process (Author & winter, 2000) Similarly, more than 71percent sample respondents are advocating for Dalit women empowerment by motivating them to participate in awareness raising and skill development training so that they could change their socio-economic situation. The data indicate that empowered woman are successfully playing social role in the society though, Hindu cultural structure has given little intelligence to woman. It is the reason behind why social role of women in local level has been implementing as an inevitable fact in policy level since many decades. In the reference of structure and agency theory empowered women groups of this VDC have willingness to change miserable life styles of Dalit women and they are also motivating and supporting to change poor socio-economic structures of Dalit community. And it can be said that they are applying their knowledge and capacity to change the structures through their self-

transforming actions and perceptions in day to day activities (Kaspersen, 2000).

Economic role of women

Economic role of women is another determinant factor for generating local economic development and outcome of technical & vocational education and training and women empowerment. After participating in vocational skill development trainings and completing technical & vocational education program all of the sample respondents are involving in economic activities like; commercial farming, public and private job and supporting their livelihood. Even some of the role model women entrepreneurs are also creating employment opportunities to local people. Precisely, 57 percent respondents are involving in commercial farming, 25 percent respondents in local business, 11 percent respondents in government/private job and remaining 7 percent respondents are involving in local entrepreneurship development. During key informant interview respondents shared that they are also getting sustainable livelihood and commercial farming knowledge from JTA students and teachers while they conducted participatory rural appraisal field trip in the village. And according to visitors record annually more than sixty women visited agriculture demonstration field of technical school of Bima. The interesting thing is that all the respondents are supporting livelihood and involving in economic activities due to their technical knowledge and skills. Data shows that average monthly income of the respondents is 18,000 NRs and expenditure 11,000 NRs. Further it is found that majorities of the women are keeping daily income and expenditure records, and allocating surplus amount in their occupation. At the same time most of them are also getting credit amount from local cooperative and agriculture development bank and investing in productive sectors. Data indicate that because of economic role of the women majorities of the household able to maintain economic wellbeing and family sufficiency and they are allocating financial capital for commercial purpose. There is a trust and economic cooperation among women groups as well as entire social

members of the VDC. In the reference of structure and agency theory women group are creating productive economic structures in the VDC level and mobilizing their financial capital by themselves and applying transformative power for constructing productive economic structures through their economic role (Lacroix, 2012, p.13).

Decision making role of women

Decision making role of women is directly and indirectly affecting social and economic development process of the VDC. However in practice still most of the rural women in another remote village are trapping in household chores and uneconomic activities. In this village women are not only involving in social and economic activities but also playing decision making role in household level and beyond. It is in fact positive symptom of women empowerment. Data shows that more than 85 percent respondents are playing decision making role in household level for managing cropping and harvesting food grains, commercial vegetable farming, buying daily necessities things and selling own production and investing in child education. Still remaining 15 percent respondents are bypassing by their family members during household decision making process. Literature also claimed that biased gender relations are the result of socially constructed unequal power relations and neglecting active role of women in decision making process. Similarly, 67 percent respondents are also involving in decision making role even in social and VDC level meeting and programs. In doing so they are changing their power relationships with others that can be regarded as a major impact of women empowerment process. According to conceptual meaning of empowerment the situation signifies that these women are arranging their activities from individual self-assertion to collective resistance where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power relationships. The data indicate that meaningful participating of women in decision making process advocates about the provision of rights to women. Further, the situation implies that women are fulfilling their social responsibilities through decision making

role that has sustaining social and economic development of the VDC. Literature says that when women take active roles in decision making, their families will be better equipped to confront the challenges of poverty, improve family health and well-being and increase household income (UNDP, 2004).

Leadership role of women

Leadership role playing by selected women is in fact, outcome of social, economic and political empowerment. That could not be possible without providing technical & vocational education and skill development trainings to them in local level. During our observation and structured interview with key respondents we found, by playing social, economic and decision making role their level of confident has been increased and they are motivating (intrinsically & extrinsically) to involve in local leadership. Data shows that more than 51 percent respondents are playing leadership role in local level institutions such as; political organization, local non-government organizations, cooperatives, ward and VDC committee, mother group and community forestry whereas remaining 49 percent respondents are planning to play leadership role in near future. The data indicate that women are becoming politically empowered because most of them are realizing importance of their advocacy and leadership role for reforming socio-cultural structures where still women are considering as passive agent of the society. Literature also argues that political empowerment implies unified meaning of negative freedom from arbitrary arrest, exclusion and positive freedom to vote, participate in political life or actual exercise of political freedom to the women. Most of the respondents argue that involvement of women in politics is necessary for local development because local people are experiencing direct outcomes (economic transparency and working efficiency) from ethical, moral and leadership role of the women in the VDC. Thus, the impact of vocational training program in this VDC is found remarkably high. We observed some kind of social transformation in village due to transformative role of the women.

More specifically, the voice and choice of women groups are enlarging and demanding technical supports related to community home stay management in their imitation. In the reference of structure and agency theory women who are playing leadership role have knowledge about cultural tourism that enable them to start proposed tourism activities in village so that they can generate economic and employment opportunities to the local people (Lacroix, 2012, p.13).

Educational role of women

Education is an element of human development indicator and the lime light of life. It is in fact, means and ends of personal and local development. The basic concept of education is process of learning socio-cultural, economic and environmental knowledge that must apply into experience. In this VDC women are learning such knowledge from informal, non-formal and formal education system. However, most of the women in the VDC are playing educational role in household and social level. They are interlinking their knowledge and skills with their empowerment and livelihood activities and also motivating their children and other social member for doing accordingly. Data shows that more than 84 percent respondents are playing good parenting role because they are experiencing multiple benefits of education i.e. benefit to individual, social and national level. Likewise 44 percent respondents are enrolling their children in institutional school and investing in higher education. Most of the women are encouraging their daughters to enroll in technical & vocational education and training program so that they can get job opportunities in national and international labor market. Similarly, 51 percent respondents who are playing leadership role in the society are encouraging Dalit children for involving in formal and non-formal learning process. They are also advocating for providing scholarship opportunities to Dalit students from targeted budget program implemented in local level since couples of years. In the reference of structure and agency theory we got opportunities to review educational role of the women in VDC level who are worrying

with illiterate and unskilled male and female youths, who are interpreting worth value vocational education and training themselves and applying their knowledge and power for reforming educational structures in local level (Kontinen, 2004).

Change agent role and empowerment

Playing change agent role can be considered as one of the vibrant factors of women empowerment. Most of the women in the village are sharing their lived experience about their transforming life with their children and other family members and neighbors. Some of the women leaders are mobilizing both male and female groups, motivating them to involve in self-employment and create employment opportunities to villagers. More so they are guiding other women for maintaining health, hygiene and sanitation, playing social and economic role along with household chores. According to data fact more than 65 percent respondents claimed that they are highly satisfied with their changing roles because they are achieving higher social status in the society. It does not mean that other respondents are losing their social status as they are working for social and cultural change. Similarly, majorities (77%) respondents shared that they are still worrying with poor status of Dalit women empowerment in the society and they are motivating them and also advocating in local level for their empowerment. During key informant interview with VDC representative, local intellectuals and social worker we found women groups are playing change agent role in the society and their changing roles have been positively contributing for women empowerment and local development process. Further, they added women groups are becoming one of the stakeholders of participatory development. Literature says that participatory development seeks to build and foster cooperation and collaboration among development stakeholders (individuals, households, community, government and non-government organizations) for rural problem appraisal, agenda setting and project implementation (Rowlands, 1998).

Conclusion

Women are practicing socio-economic role due to the outcome of technical & vocational education and training programs conducted in local level. Women are feeling them valuable and worthy development stakeholder and are playing active agency role for changing the socio-cultural and economic structures. They are becoming socially, economically and politically empowered due to their regular involvement in transforming social and economic structures. Their meaningful participation in during rural problem appraisal, agenda setting and their working efficiency has been contributing to local development activities (Rowlands, 1998). Based on field observation, structured interview and house hold survey, this study found significant role of technical & vocational education and training that has been positively affecting women empowerment and local development process. At the same time status of women empowerment in this VDC also helps them to engage in vocational farming activities and entrepreneurship development. Reasoning that socio-economic situation of women in the VDC seems satisfactory who are also supporting livelihood. Their socio-economic role has been transforming daily life styles of the family members. Women are also playing very good parenting role and also investing in child education. Because of that women are now able to create demand with VDC authorities and local institutions, working and advocating for women empowerment. No doubt, the raising level of women empowerment and achieving higher social status has been motivating women for playing social, economic, decision making; local leadership, educational and change agent role in the VDC. However, for the sustainability of these transformative role, local stakeholders must appreciate role model women, provide them more advanced level of vocational skill development training like hospitality and home stay management and also provide them economic incentives and technical support for production and distribution of local products.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15437>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Understanding The Challenges Of Women In Non-traditional Occupations

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Abstract

This qualitative case study research was conducted to understand the perception of women in non-traditional occupations in Nepalese context. Seven participants from four nontraditional occupations, namely electrical, motorcycle mechanics (automobile), light vehicle driving and mechanical lathe operator were selected from Kathmandu valley. The data were collected using interview and focus group discussion.

The findings revealed that involvement of Nepalese women in non-traditional occupations are very nominal. It is due to the conventional thinking towards women that they should do only the household chores. Non-traditional occupations for Nepalese women have not been women-friendly, however, they may if they do not feel inferior to male and avoid hesitation to work in these professions. The biggest challenge for women in these professions is the societal disbelief on the women's work. They are behaved with suspicion by people and the society. Leg pulling and backbiting nature of people towards women in this profession are also the serious problems for them. Nevertheless, the female participants have got support from their family and organizations. Moreover, they have played significant roles from beginning to date to inspire them to continue their work.

Key words: Women, vocational training, nontraditional occupation and challenges

Introduction

Women have increasingly become more involved in the workforce following world war second. Paid employment of women has shifted from primarily traditional female- oriented jobs to more non-traditional, and previously male-oriented careers (Jones & Domenico, 2006). Ever since the rise of

the women's movement in the 1960s, the traditional activity of men and women has been significantly restructured and men's economic activity has also been affected by the wave of social change (Jones & Domenico, 2006). Definitely, from the gender perspective, Nepalese women are also gradually seeking for their right of getting employment to

uplift the economic status in their traditional occupation and non-traditional occupation as well. This study definitely focuses on the women's interest in highly paid job on non-traditional occupation for changing their lifestyle, society and culture. The state policy with respect to women empowerment on non-traditional trade is additionally relevant for gender equality against the male dominated society or working in favor of female empowerment (Ibrahim, 2014). So, this study will help the society to encourage women participation in male dominated occupation as well as reduce the gender misbalance.

In the Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) sector of Nepal, several programs from government and non-government level have been launched for youth to uplift their economic status and reduce poverty. One of such programmes is vocational training through which they can sustain either with employment or self-employment (Khanal, 2013). In the beginning, these vocational trainings such as electrical, motor cycle mechanics, carpentry, village animal health worker, mason, welding, automobile, mechanical lathe operator, JCB operator, etc. were focused only for men. So we called these trainings as the non-traditional trade for women (Paudel, 2014). Women's participation in the skills is not traditional. So far, women's enrollment in TEVT sector is also very low. There are multiple causes of low participation of women in TEVT such as lack of access to technical schools, lower level of education in women, their involvement only in daily household work, domination of males in the society, lack of access of information and high level of poverty, etc. Research shows that only 27% women are involved in TEVT sectors overall in Nepal (Lamichhane, 2006, as cited in Paudel, 2014). From this data, it can be assumed that involvement of Nepalese women in non-traditional occupations is very nominal. This is due to the conventional thinking towards women "that women are confined only in the domestic works".

Almost all non-traditional occupations followed by

Nepalese women lie under Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) sectors. So, the researcher searched and screened all the TEVT policies formulated by Council for Technical and Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) because CTEVT is an autonomous and apex body of the TEVT sectors of Nepal. Regarding women's issues, the TEVT Skill Development Policy of Nepal 2064 has focused to expand the training programs to ensure the access and inclusion of women.

Nepal is a male-dominated and patriarchal society where women are considered subordinates to men virtually in every aspect of life. The economic contribution of women is significant, but largely unnoticed because their traditional role like taking care of most household chores is taken for granted. When employed, their wages are normally less than those paid to men. There have been efforts to increase the skill/wages employment to provide women with the opportunity for self-sufficiency; for example, women are trained from technical training providers in different skill training especially in the TEVT sectors which are male dominated and certified by "National Skill Testing Board" (NSTB) of Nepal by taking their skill tests. Women pre-dominantly are employed as clerical workers, child care providers, sales clerks, and other low skill/low wages employment, which do not lead to self-sufficiency. There are, definitely, some challenges for women to perceive non-traditional occupations positively. Challenges include sex role socialization, discrimination and harassment, transportation and child care issues, and the hazardous workplace and potential job related injuries (Zula, 2014).

While skilled trades can offer many positive benefits for women, a strong deterrent is the underlying feeling that "it's still a man's world." Women are discouraged or excluded from the skilled trades because the experiences of women in non-traditional occupations are diverse and complex. In some cases, occupations have already been labelled as male or female-oriented, and strong forces act to keep those gender assignments. These labels can act as a

mechanism for members/groups to steer women to avoid jobs that are typed as male without providing the right sort of information or communication about careers (Scullen, 2008).

In Nepalese context, the participation of women in the technical skills and enterprising skills is not the tradition. It requires innovative ways and means to enable and stimulate women's participation in such types of skills and link them to jobs, help them retain and grow in their jobs as well as support their enterprise and ensure their sustainability (Paudel, 2014). There are many myths around working in non-traditional trade areas which are treated as fact and provide reasons for people to continue maintaining the status quo which prevents women entering these trades. (Shewring, 2008). It is therefore, prompt questions are raised, "why do such beliefs exist in society?" and "why do people not want to see the involvement of women in such occupations?" There are some reasons behind these problems. Among them, Nepalese society, culture, caste system, religion and social exclusion are the possible major factors. Traditionally, Nepalese society has divided the duties and tasks of men and women which they ought to do or ought not to do. Due to this reason, women hesitate to involve in the "men's" work. It is mostly influenced by the orthodox views. Likewise, the most unique problem with Nepal is the caste system and its system of work division. This is also a reason that people are reluctant to involve in works other than that of their own castes. However, thinking of people is changing about it gradually and they are showing interest to do each and every job regardless of what jobs have been assigned traditionally. Still today some people do not allow female members of their family to work outside their houses. They do not want to see the involvement of women in outside world of work especially in the non-traditional occupations. Indeed, this is due to the problem of our family and social system that perceives women as a weaker sex to do all work and consequently make them really weaker.

There are numerous researches conducted globally.

However, in Nepalese context, there seems a dearth of relevant study. When the researcher reviewed the existing literature about nontraditional occupations for women in the international context, it was found that most of the researchers have focused on how the non-traditional occupations have been difficult for women from the point of view of gender and sexuality in transport and construction work. Similarly, some research have also focused on that women love the non-tradition job but why they do not want to do continue for long time and what are the reasons behind this. Likewise, some researches are also related to what factors play an important role to make the women hesitated to be involved in male dominated occupations. However, the challenges for women involved in non-traditional occupations have not been explored in Nepalese context. So, there is some certain gap between existing researches and this research. This study has focused on challenges for Nepalese women involved in the male dominated occupation and the perceptions of women on such occupations.

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges of women who are involved in non-traditional occupations?

Case Study as My Research Method

Case study research method is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 2003). This method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subject of study. Case studies, in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships (Zainal, 2007). Case studies are considered useful in research as they enable researchers to examine data at the micro level. Case studies can be a practical solution when

a big sample population is difficult to obtain (Zainal, 2007). So the researcher investigated the contemporary real life phenomenon of women in nontraditional occupations through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of participants, and their relationships.

The qualitative case study facilitates to explore the phenomena within the context using variety of resources. It helps to see the issues through variety of lenses which allow for multiple facets of the phenomena to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). So, the researcher explored the phenomena within the context using the variety of resources. Study on the understanding of the challenges of non-traditional occupations for women in Nepal fits here as it focuses to answer the process question (Yin, 2003). So the researcher has chosen the social constructivist worldview and will comprise observation, focused group discussion, open-ended questions. Social constructivism develops the subjective meaning of participants' experiences towards certain objects or things which are varied and multiple (Creswell, 2008). In this research, there were five cases of each participants. They were electrical, motorcycle mechanics, light vehicle driving and mechanical lathe operator. Two participants were from same occupation that is motorcycle mechanics (automobile).

Challenges and Opportunities of Women in Non-traditional Trades

In some trades like non-traditional occupations and others maintaining a balance between work and family can be a difficult task if they are a single parent. This is especially true in such occupations like industrial construction where job sites are so remote that employees have to temporarily live in or near the site (Government of Alberta 2013, 2009). Women simply by competently performing their work in these male dominated environments, were enabling fissures in the stereotypes that circulate about women's bodily strength, feminine movement and shape (Annette, B., 2006, p. 13).

Regarding the challenges and opportunities for women in nontraditional occupations, stakeholders observed the challenges for them like: unfavorable working time, difficulty in going outside for official work, difficulty in taking extra-work besides office hour, difficulty in taking heavy work due to the abdominal problem etc. Wright (2011) found her research that some difficulty to greater participation of women in such jobs due to the structural barriers like long working hours, shift patterns and system of workplace training that affect women's participation. Despite these problems, Mr. Chitra Sharma said that there are so many opportunities for women in this profession. Women can get career opportunities in their professional life. They can be self-employed to maintain a standard life. Likewise, there are also opportunities to travel abroad as exposure visits from the organization for the employees. As per the stakeholder's evaluation, some participants have got excellent performance and some are very good performers. On the whole all are good. The major evaluation criteria are teaching pedagogy, punctuality, student's feedback, pass percentage of students in skill test, obedience, etc.

As researcher, I think women can perform this job despite the facing the problems. They know that no one's work in the world of work. I think, women should face every kind of challenges and must be competent in their work which enhances the credibility to others. In this situation, they can receive enough support from others through which they can get greater responsibility. Moreover, fair evaluation in their work place is also the critical factor to give them encouragement in such profession for further continuation. So, if the organization evaluates fairly, women can perform their job in well manner way.

Social Challenges and Opportunities of Women

In their professional career all the women participants have found various social obstacles and opportunities in this profession. According to them, the biggest problem they have faced is lack of belief on women's work. Society underestimates women's work

perceiving that they cannot do work easily and thinks negatively. So, they believe that it takes time to make women's work in this profession socially acceptable. During the focus group discussion also, participants said that there is leg pulling culture in the society. They say nothing in front of them and backbite that these women who have come in this professions are illiterate and characterless. In the FGD, one more participant took part in discussion. She was a JCB operator. She share that when she went to the outside the valley as JCB operator after completion of her JCE training, a large number of people came to see her as they were surprised that a woman was operating JCB. Mina Ahdhikari shares that when she goes to the highway by taking her vehicle, she has to tackle problems from male drivers, such as blowing horn unnecessarily, not letting them go easily, etc. Another challenge for them was the difficulty in changing the dress while working in construction site or worksite. Likewise, they have sometimes suffered from irritation and harassment from people with questions like why they chose this profession while it is the male's work. Regarding the opportunities, they have a single voice that government, semi-government and private organizations give high priority to women candidates as compared to male in the case of non-traditional occupations. Among the five participants, Rita Thapa has started her own business (workshop).

Challenges include sex-role socialization, discrimination and harassment, transportation and childcare issues. The nontraditional workplace may be hazardous which requires special safety clothing and equipment to extreme weather conditions and job related injuries. Beyond work site issues, there are social challenges to be considered: being the sole female employed and non-supportive family and friends and so on. These challenges need not be a hindrance for females interested in non-traditional employment; there are numerous support services, support groups, and social agencies which are willing to help women overcome any of these barriers (WOW, 2013, as cited in Zula, 2014). Many occupations do not require a 4-year college degree,

including many service sector jobs and skilled trades. Non-college women tend to hold lower-paying jobs with fewer opportunities for advancement compared to college men. Many employment and training programs for women focus on increasing their numbers in jobs where men dominate, which tend to be higher paying and provide more opportunities for advancement (Mastracci, 2003, as cited in Zula, 2014).

As researcher, I think creation of unbelievable situation for women in non-traditional occupations is due to the structure of the society. Despite facing several social problems, women have got several opportunities by getting job. Self-employment makes them more courageous, self-respectful, sustainable, etc.

Family Related Challenges and Opportunities

As the professional carrier is concerned, the participants have not faced any kind of challenges and problems from their family members. Instead, they have encouraged them continue and helped by creating a favorable working environment. Definitely, as women, they need family support to continue their profession. According to Samita Ghimire, without family support, she could not imagine herself at all to be in this profession. Besides, they have increased income sources by involving in this profession.

The parental expectations may influence the occupations and roles children select for themselves (Rosenwasser, 1982, as cited in McNulty, 2013). Greenfield, Holloway and Remus (1982) found that men are motivated towards professions that deal with inanimate objects, e.g. engineering while women are motivated towards professions that involve interaction with people like teaching and nursing. Family system theory posits that while in an ideal situation relationships between family members exist in a state of balance or equilibrium (each reciprocally affecting the psychological state of the other, including possible physiological effects), maintaining such equilibrium during expatriation is often a

challenge. This can be due to internal and external factors that exert pressure on a family's equilibrium as they attempt to adjust to their new environment (Brown, 2008, as cited in McNulty, 2013).

Women can enter into this profession if they can get support from family members so that they do not face any kinds of family problems in their professional career after getting involved in such profession. With full support, they can increase income sources from these professions.

Personal/Professional Challenges and Opportunities

Definitely the participants have personal/professional challenges and opportunities in their professional career. As challenges, they have to compete with men and need to show their competency and confidence to make others believe in women's work. Likewise, another personal challenge for women is to work physically in construction sites. In some professions they even have to break concrete wall and bricks. At such conditions, they have felt some discomfort in this profession. Most of the time, they have to work and compete with men continuously as per the nature of work. However, if they work competently and persuade people of their abilities, they can get support from male and increase the possibility of getting additional responsibility from employer which gives them further opportunities. As a researcher, I found that they were all competent and confident in their profession. For this, it is a must for women to gain belief in their work for others in this profession.

Findings

Based on the interviews and focus group discussion with the participants, and subsequent interpretation of their data, following findings have been explored: Regarding the understanding of women in non-traditional occupations, it is found that all the participants have been involved in non-traditional occupations with the inspiration from their family members. They were getting continued motivation and support from them till the date ever since their

involvement in the profession. All the participants believed that non-traditional occupations for Nepalese women might not be women friendly for the time being in Nepal, but they also agreed that it is definitely possible in the future if the women do not feel weaker than men and avoid hesitation to work in this profession. All the participants said that the society did not believe women's work initially and even if they believed, they would not take it positively. Due to the low involvement of women in this profession in Nepal, most of the time they were obliged to be involved with males while working in their work places. At such circumstances, they are even eyed with suspect for having unethical relationships with their male co-workers. On the contrary, the findings showed that there were people who encouraged them as positive thinkers to continue with their respective professions. With respect to organization and family members, they were found to have felt proud of them. They had got full support from them. It was because, they had played significant role to continue their work efficiently and effectively.

Regarding women in non-traditional occupations, the researcher explored that stakeholders (employer and parents) were satisfied with the performance of participants. Due to the minimal number of women involved in non-traditional occupations, they had believed that women who were involved in such professions became role model for other women. Stakeholders also disclosed that participants performed their job well and were equally competent as men. Stakeholders had seen changes in participants' living standards, behavior, communication skills, confidence level, and trend towards fashion. However, they had also observed challenges for women in this profession, such as unfavorable working time, difficulty in going outside for official work, difficulty in taking extra-work besides office hour, difficulty in taking heavy work due to the abdominal and other feminine problem etc. They also perceived that women can get opportunities for employment in government, semi-government and private organization as well as in being self-employed. An employer revealed that

upon carrying out fair evaluation, some were excellent performers while the rest were good performers. The evaluation criteria for them were punctuality, obedience, teaching pedagogy etc.

While exploring challenges and opportunities for women in non-traditional trades, all the participants shared that they had to face some serious social problems. According to them, the biggest problem was that the society does not believe in women's work. In the opinion of participants, leg pulling and backbiting nature of people towards women in this profession are also the serious problems for them. It is found that light vehicle female drivers faced harassment, such as male drivers blowing horns on them intentionally; not letting their vehicles go and so on. This is due to the male domination in driving profession. Changing dress in workplace is found to be another problem for women. They explained that most of the works in such professions are skill based and they have to work either in the workshop or construction sites. In such situation, they are unable to get changing rooms or appropriate places to change the dress according to the needs. Beside these challenges, they also faced harassment from the people who often ask them the reason for choosing such profession and discourage saying that they cannot perform the job like male can. The social challenges seem bigger for them as compared to family challenges and challenges from employers. However, one of the common challenges they had to face in their workplaces was lack of support from their colleagues. Sustaining themselves and competing with male entrepreneurs posed another big challenge for women running their own enterprises. An explicit finding in the paper is the challenge for women related to physical strength. The participants working in construction field have to face a lot of difficulties such as breaking concrete wall and bricks and thus make the customer be skeptic about their competencies.

All the participants were involved in non-traditional occupations through the family inspirations, self-awareness and self-confidence. In Nepalese context,

the drift of women shifting to non-traditional occupations is in the initial phase. In fact, involvement of women in non-traditional occupations is very nominal. Furthermore, most of the women are still unknown about such professions. They are facing challenges from the society which does not want them to see in such non-traditional works and does not believe in their competencies. Similarly they face problems from the male counterparts in the same profession who do not step back in harassing; from colleagues who would not always help them with complex tasks; and from customers in the construction field who are less convinced of their physical strengths. Despite the challenges participants got support from family and employers and were also satisfied with their respective jobs. These participants were found to have been performing well in their work places.

Conclusion

Women have involved in non-traditional occupation generally from the great inspiration of their family members. In fact, family members have become the crucial factors for the participants in continuing this profession. Joining non-traditional occupations in Nepal is the new practice for women. Society still does not believe women's work and doesn't look positively to women. Majority of women are still unknown such professions. The nature of the occupation has made it male dominated and unfriendly for women. This has led women believe that since this is a wrong profession, they cannot compete with men. Due to this reason, limited number of women has involved in this occupation. Women who are engaged in such profession face unexpected problems such as unfavorable working time, difficulty in taking extra work beside office hour, difficulty in taking heavy work which is not preferred by employers, etc. Some social problems include lack of trust in their competency and ability, leg pulling, backbiting and discouragement, etc. Women also face harassment from their male counterparts causing insecurity to their dignity. Awkwardness to use common changing room, difficulty to work while having feminine problems; and performing heavy

tasks are also common problems for them.

However, the face of this perception is changing. Their family and employers are positive towards the emergence of women in non-traditional occupations. Employers have encouraged the participation of women due their sincerity, obedience and punctuality. Employers are being convinced that they are capable of performing their job well and are equally competent as men, be it in a workshop or a construction site. To compete well, women face more challenges than men. In spite of the challenges, they have taken this profession as women-friendly as they have empowered themselves instead of feeling weaker than male and avoided their existing hesitation. Similarly, women involved in non-traditional occupation, have shown competencies and confidence in the work that they are equally capable as men to sustain and grow professionally. As professional career is concerned, they have not faced remarkable problems so far.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15438>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Reflecting Rapid Market Appraisal: A Practical Tool for Training Needs Analysis

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Abstract

In my understanding, Rapid Market Appraisal (RMA) is a comprehensive study of an employment status in the specific occupational area at the particular local level. At the cross road of my job career, I came to know that the development of this process grew out of a frustration with lengthy, costly and intensive formal market survey. I argue that this process provides a quick, flexible and effective way of collecting, processing, and analyzing information and data about labour markets. It explores information about the vocational-technical training institutions working effectively in the respective field. It also supplies detailed information like occupational opportunities, training needs, individual needs, and future prospective in the work of world at local level. Based on my practical experiences, I claim it as one of the effective tools for assessing the training needs for training design for the under-developing countries.

Key words: : Job market, training need analysis, curriculum development, training design, and technical training providers

Introduction

Assessing the real needs of business, industry, or community is one of the most important tasks for any technical training organizations. The trainings are only successful if the needs assessors have managed to identify the real demand on the job market. The training programmes, which focus on the needs of users, will be more successful (International Labor Organization [ILO], 1999).

Thus, conducting some form of a needs assessment is usually the first step when designing a training course. The success of the training depends on the success of training needs assessment. Timely revised curriculum according to the demand of the job market attracts both trainees and employers towards vocational training programmes (ILO, 1999). According to Brooke Broadbent and Lise Froidevaux (2008), training needs analysis is a process of

gathering and interpreting data for identifying performance problems and suggesting solutions.

Objective

The objective of this study is to share the practical experiences in conducting training needs analysis and to answer the following questions:

- How does the training institution conduct the training needs analysis?
- What are the problems the training needs analyst encounters while conducting the training needs analysis?

Methodology

This article is primarily based on the practical experiences and knowledge I gained throughout my professional career. However, to verify with my practical experiences with the literatures, some literatures and theoretical perspectives have been reviewed and linked. More importantly, as a TVET practitioner, I have also reflected my own practical experiences, challenges and lessons learnt while conducting rapid market appraisal in writing this article.

My Reflection on RMA

In 2002, when I was involving as a Master Trainer in Technical Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI), I was assigned to conduct Training Needs Assessment in Acham and Dhading district of Nepal for the Skill for Employment Project funded by Asian Development Bank. I stayed there for more than a month with my colleague. During my stay, I conducted field survey to identify the need of the communities and businesses/industries. Based on my survey, I developed a brief report including major findings and recommendations for the project. In the report, I explained about the occupations that are essential in these two districts for human resource development. But I practically found it very difficult to construct concise suggestions on which occupations or trades, the training centres need to sketch out the training programme to organize so as to fulfil the requirements of the local communities and employers.

Due to various reasons like rapid change in economic activities, social considerations, public movements and the preference of the target group, I found the requirements of the user agencies and the graduates of the training do not match with each other. In addition, I have been told by the TVET providers, donors and number of technical training providers that they also have been facing similar problems and challenges.

In 2005, F-SKILL, a service provider in technical vocational education and training (TVET) in Nepal, contracted me to develop a training programme on training needs assessment for their technical training providers and asked me to address the above mentioned problems. Because of my long term involvement in training needs assessment and curriculum design in the sector of technical education and vocational training, I knew that when it came to training needs assessment, there should not be a long way to conduct the survey. I knew then that I had to virtually reinvent the training needs assessment process and devise a newer, more direct method of collecting data about the needs of the communities and the user agencies. And I needed to adapt the process quickly if I was going to use it in this new business and industry environment. I needed a leaner, swifter, more straightforward methodology that would give me enough information to start building worthwhile identification of the needs of the user agencies. I needed some way to perform the analysis that was relatively of less hassle, quick, flexible, and simple, that added something significant to the educational planning process. After a month of the reviewing the books, articles, journals and surfing relevant websites, I sketched the outlines of the training programme on needs analysis and submitted to F-SKILL. F-SKILL reviewed these outlines for the training programme on Training Needs Assessment and named it as “Rapid Market Appraisal”.

Understanding Rapid Market Appraisal
In my understanding, Rapid Market Appraisal (RMA) is one of the tools in determining the needs or demand

of human resources for the business and industry. Basically it is used to undertake a comprehensive study of an employment status in the specific occupational area particularly at a local level. RMA, as opposed to a formal sub-sector analysis, provides a quick, flexible, and effective way of collecting, processing, and analyzing information and data about labour markets (HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Nepal, 2015).

Practices of RMA - Theoretical Perspectives
During the preparation of the RMA training design, I reviewed a large numbers of books, articles and journals and found that RMA process was the outcome of a Micro and Small Enterprise development effort in Africa in 1960 (Rapid Market Appraisal-Captiva, Africa LLC, Nairobi, Kenya).

In addition, I also got information that this concept was applied as a movement to meet the growing demand of labour in under-developing countries of Africa especially in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Later on, this process was introduced in agricultural development programmes in Vietnam and Laos in determining the agricultural products (Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, 2002).

I completed my assignment of designing RMA training for F-SKILL in July 2005. I was assigned to conduct the RMA training with 17 participants from technical training providers of F-SKILL. Thus, in Nepal, F-SKILL introduced RMA process in 2005 for assessing the needs of skilled human resources within the country.

With the success stories of the F-SKILL's Modality of assessing needs of the technical human resources, the Employment Fund Secretariat/ Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Nepal (EF) replicated this process in 2008 in assessing needs of the technical human resources for training. EF assigned me to design and develop "A Handbook on Rapid Market Appraisal for Practitioners" in 2010. A separate topic on Area Potential Survey (APS) was conducted by my colleague Mr. Chandra Kanta Adhikari, then

employee of Helvetas and was incorporated in the Handbook.

At present, this process has been applying by a number of technical and vocational training providers in Nepal while assessing the needs of the training programmes.

What do I get from RMA?

The development of this process grew out of a frustration with lengthy, costly and intensive formal market survey that I experienced in recent years. I have learned to view the process as collecting information to provide assurance that technical training institutions deliver most appropriate, high-quality and employment oriented training for the jobs. RMA provides the following major information:

- Number of skilled workers available at present in specific occupation in predetermined area
- Number of skilled workers needed in specific occupation in predetermined area
- Additional skills of the workers as preferred by employers
- Present occupational interests of local youths
- Existing technical training providers available in the local area

Where do I get information from?

Much of such data derives from the target population of the study area. However, there are other reliable sources of data that should not be overlooked. The data collector should make sure to interview some of the data sources on the lists below. In this connection, I want to borrow the definition of data sources mentioned in TITI Skill Card, 2005: "Determine Needs Assessment Purpose" which is also valid for RMA that states- "Persons including those in the target population, who may have valuable opinions, facts, or feelings regarding the study, or who may influence any outcome of the study".

Firsthand information

With my experiences, in business and industry setting, the target population may be employers, employees, district chambers of commerce, employers'

associations, employees' associations, professional associations, etc (Sharma, 2005, pp. 1-13). Access to job in accordance with knowledge and skills will be facilitated through creation and expansion of information centres, and analysis of the enlisted human resources will be carried out to strengthen effective employment exchange system (National Planning Commission, 2010, pp.65-66).

Clients - Employers

Employers are probably the most accurate sources of information in determining the needs or demand of business and industry (Finch & Crunkilton, 1993). Since RMA is a kind of employer survey, I remember Robert Chambers's famous view "Farmer First" and here, "Client First" considers employers as the major source of information for the study.

During the survey, I allow potential employers to tell me the following information about their workers. I use semi-structured interview guide to obtain these information.

- Existing numbers of workers working at present
- Required numbers of workers needed at present
- Required numbers of workers needed for coming years
- Major competencies needed for the organization
- Present salary of the workers
- Types of workers (gender, caste, age and ethnic groups)

Employer Associations - Clients

Employer associations can provide the most current status of supply and demand situation of the workers of the selected study areas. They can help you to identify the employers and employees for the interviews. The following information could be obtained from them:

- Overall numbers of workers working at present in the industry at local level
- Tentative required numbers of workers in the industry at local level
- Most appropriate group in terms of age, sex, ethnic group for the particular occupation
- Preference of the local youth

Employee Associations – The job seekers

I found that employee associations are a good point to start the RMA study. They can also provide current information about the supply-demand situation of the workers in the particular area. They especially help for the acceptance and recruiting the trained people. You get the following information from them:

- Overall numbers of workers working at present in the industry at local level
- Most appropriate group in terms of age, sex, ethnic group for the particular occupation
- Preference of the workers
- Sources of workers

Technical Training Providers – The suppliers
There might be the numbers of technical training providers already existing in the areas which are providing similar training programmes. They are reliable sources to obtain information about training contents, training demand and other related information.

- Numbers of existing technical training providers
- Trend of training demand
- Interest/attitude of youths by caste, gender and age
- Place the youth prefer to work
- Wage/Salary/Piece work/Job order basis
- Types of work (self/wage) youth prefers to work

Local Youths – The job seekers

Another important source of data can be local youths who play a major role in making the training programme successful. Taking the interest and preference of the youth into account can help engage the youth in the training course and increase their labour market information.

What other documents do I need to review the before planning the RMA?

Apart from the reports and documents related to the requirement of skilled human resources at local level, I also review the following sources for planning my RMA study.

Occupational Dictionaries

Occupational dictionaries are a good source for identifying the tentative list of duties for an occupation. They help in determining the outlook of the occupation and identifying possible job titles. Some of the more common occupational dictionaries I use when I conduct RMA are:

- Australian Standard of Classification of Occupations (ASCO) (Produced by Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra 1996): Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) is a skill-based classification of occupations developed as the national standard for organising occupation-related information for purposes such as policy development and review, human resource management, and labour market and social research. The classification includes all jobs in the Australian workforce.
- International Standards of Classification of Occupations (ISCO) (Published by ILO): ISCO is a four-level classification of occupation groups managed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Its structure follows a grouping by education level. The two latest versions of ISCO are ISCO-88 (dating from 1988) and ISCO-08 (dating from 2008).
- V-TECS Career Cluster Frameworks (*July, 2000, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational Technical Education, Career Cluster Brochure*).
- Nepalese Standard Occupations Classification (NSOC) (*Published by Central Bureau of Statistical Department: Thapathali: Government of Nepal, 2000*)

Internet Resources

The internet has made it possible to access a vast amount of information in an amazingly short period of time. Identifying the right sites on the internet may not be as easy as it looks. Recent job analyses from the occupation(s) under study are a great help in providing a clearer picture of that occupation. There are various sites on the internet where we can find job analyses or profiles. One of the good sites is: O*NET.

What tools do I need to use for data collection?

Since RMA is a small scale study, I always go for using simple and easy tools for collecting quantitative as well as qualitative market information. I therefore use the following tools in collecting data in RMA process.

Semi- structured interview guide to collect market data

RMA interview does not use a formal questionnaire for information but use a checklist of questions as a flexible guide. RMA interview guide should be carefully designed to identify problems, causes, and solutions. In my experience, the semi-structured interview allows the data collector to ask follow-up questions to probe more deeply into problems, causes and solutions.

Direct Observation for context analysis

Observation involves watching carefully that takes place and making brief notes in the RMA process. Direct observation is a good way to cross-check respondents' answers. With an RMA observation form, I advise the RMA assessor to examine general items to be observed as: work environment, tools and equipment used, communication process in the workplace, workers' traits, process of performing the skills, manual and so on.

Focus Group Discussion for verification and collection of qualitative data

Another important tool I use for collecting data in rapid market appraisal is from focus group discussion. It is useful for exploring ideas and obtaining in-depth information about how people think about an issue. I normally conduct focus group discussion to obtain qualitative data such as opinions, experiences, views, feelings and ideas from a small targeted group of people.

How do I plan RMA?

I recently read a quotation by Einstein who said that if a man was given 60 minutes to solve a problem, he would spend 55 minutes making clear about the problem, and five minutes in solving the problem

((TITI Skill Card, 2005: Determine Needs Assessment Purpose). Thus, firstly is it necessary to be clear about what is to be accomplished. Before conducting RMA study, it is essential to prepare a plan which answers the following questions:

- What do we need to do?
- What do we expect to achieve?
- Where do we collect information from?
- Whom do we need to meet?
- When do we need to complete your study?

However, I suggest the RMA assessors to follow the following procedures:

i. Define the problem:

Here, I quote the Chinese proverb “If there is no problem, there is no need to do the things” The problem triggers the need to conduct RMA. Thus, the problem should be defined in specific terms presenting facts of existing situation of the problem with desired situation of the problem in realistic terms in the plan. Normally, I find the following common pitfalls which should be avoided:

- The RMA statement should not address more than one problem.
- The RMA statement should not assign a cause.
- The RMA statement should not make accusations to any organization.
- The RMA statement should not offer a solution.

ii. Identify location

The next procedure I follow in the planning of RMA is to define the location. The location will give the assessors to indicate the size or extensiveness of the study. The market location may be small as the need of one specific occupation or one industry or one community or a town to the needs of entire nation.

iii. Describe the size

After identifying the location of the study, then I go for describing the size of the problem in measurable terms. The size of the problem should

illustrate the rationale or important of the problem. It tells how the problem is important to solve.

iv. Define the duration

Duration provides the timeframe of the RMA study. This timeframe should include the time for initial planning, actual field survey, write-up to delivering the final report and making any required presentations. This will give you when should the study be completed?

RMA needs coaching process

In my experiences, the RMA needs a coaching process for the certain period of time. Single inputs during training/workshop may not be sufficient for the effective implementation of RMA process in real settings. Repeated inputs from experienced RMA practitioners or consultants are required in order to make assessors more confident in the process. Practical training and formal coaching are both essential in the RMA process.

Conclusion

Job markets are constantly evolving and changing, and therefore market appraisal need to be conducted on a fairly regular basis. An RMA provides a quick and an effective way of obtaining relevant information about the job market system for specific occupational sectors whilst at the same time, minimizing cost, delays and working time. It allows to quickly measuring the demand and opportunities for a specific occupation in business and industry as well as geographical locations or for new settings. Finally RMA ensures that the new job seekers receive appropriate, marketable, high-quality training for the job.

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Note: The author is a practitioner in TVET training design and development.



TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15439>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Curriculum Issues In Nepal: A Study On Graduates' Perception

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Abstract

The study was carried to explore the perception of graduates of mechanical engineering of Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) level perceive about their curriculum after they have entered the job market. The paper is a case study of Balaju School of Science and Technology (BSET) under the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) - Nepal in which semi-structured interviews of five graduates were conducted. The empirical research has been confined to exploring the perceptions of TSLC: pre-SLC intake graduates of mechanical trade and working inside Nepal. The study has brought forth that the graduates perceive their curriculum positively as the contents were relevant to the job market and the image of their institute was strong; and but they perceive the curriculum negatively since quite a few modules having high demand in the labour market lacked adequate practice, and a few contents were not updated. Besides, poorly managed infrastructure which was not up-to-date and the lack of professional attitude in the instructors impelled them to perceive their curriculum as less effective. On the other hand, the paper also showed the labour market exploiting the graduates despite the curriculum being market focused and graduates being skilful. The paper provides a thorough perspective of such graduates that may serve as a guideline for curriculum developers to address the identified issues. It also opens up the doors for further research to explore the issues in other technical subjects as well as vocational training programmes.

Keywords: Technical education, graduates, curriculum and labour market.

Introduction

The essence of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is to produce skilled graduates who are able to enter the world of work with skills and knowledge that the job market demands. TVET is termed as education and training which prepares

individual for employment in the job market through acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude (Ekpo & Onweh, 2012). It is a means that contributes to human, economic and social aspects of development. UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNESCO-

UNEVOC) has regarded the TVET as a very diverse wing of education and training which enhances skills for employment and further learning (UNESCO UNEVOC, 2013). Technical education and vocational trainings in underdeveloped and emerging economies hold similar significance as general education because of the remarkably low results of general education (Adams, 2007). TVET primarily stresses on fostering employment for which the graduates are required to possess specific job related skills to address the need of the industry. The quality of TVET thus largely depends upon curriculum apart from infrastructure and other resources. Schnarr, Yang and Gleibner (2008) have related the strength of TVET system with its ability to offer and design wide variety of courses as per the demand of labour market.

In Nepal, the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) operates as the biggest umbrella organization in the TVET sector and holds the prime responsibility of producing skilled labour workforce through TVET programmes and has its own act to formulate and revise policies on TVET. As the state-owned apex body, it produces the majority of TVET graduates for the nation. The CTEVT offers programmes both in technical education and short-term vocational training to address the market needs of Nepal. It enrolls the students in Diploma or Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) programmes and Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) programmes that include both its constituent and affiliated schools (Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training [CTEVT], 2014). Under technical education, the diploma/PCL curricula are being used in the subjects such as agriculture – (plant and animal science), engineering, health/nursing, forestry, tourism, humanities; and there are several other curricula in technical subjects. Among the courses offered in engineering is Diploma in Mechanical Engineering and TSLC level in Mechanical Engineering as well. Even in this, the programmes have been categorized to TSLC in mechanical engineering-Pre SLC level which was revised in 2014 and TSLC in mechanical engineering-Post SLC level which was formulated

in 2005 and not yet revised (CTEVT, 2014).

The graduates are produced to unlock the gate of job market though the acquisition of necessary skills and knowledge the industry demands. However, the demands of industry change with the change in needs of the market. It is the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of curriculum that may provide the graduates the opportunities; or compel them to face challenges in finding jobs or sustaining in the job. The true effectiveness of the curriculum can therefore be depicted by those graduates who actually have faced the circumstances in the real world of work. In this context, this paper has made an attempt to understand how the graduates of TSLC: Pre-SLC Intake in mechanical engineering from Balaju School of Science and Technology (BSET) under CTEVT (further known as graduates in this paper), who are actually working in the labour market, perceive about their curriculum with respect to the labour market in Nepal. The empirical research also tries to unearth the issues they have faced after stepping out for employment and starting to work, and to explore their perceptions.

Curriculum Issues in Nepal

One of the significances of competence of individual is reflected in driving socio-economic changes (Merki, 2008). Buchman and Huisinga (2008) have presented the concept of competency as the capability and as the sphere of responsibility or the field of authority. Skills are the essential factors to build up competency. The industry demands graduates who gain proficiency in skills and display competency in quality work. It is the curriculum based on which competency is gained in TVET. Sharma (2010) adds that the success of TVET curriculum is measured by the achievement results of the performance that the graduates demonstrate in the real world rather than their educational achievement. However, the needs of industries constantly change with the change in the technology and the market needs. They not only demand for skilled workforce, but also for updated technical knowhow in them. The changes in curriculum with the changes in industry needs

thus can be the strategy to retain its quality for the CTEVT. Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education (2010) has put forward the out-dated curricula and its lack of relevancy with the revolutionizing trends in industries as the issue with the quality of TVET in developing nations. As Dahal (2010) reveals curriculum as the third most important factor out of 23 relevant ones for quality trainings, the efficiency of TEVT thus depends upon its ability to supply skilled graduates to the labour market by exploring their needs which is also the case in Nepalese job market.

The issue regarding the delay in timely updating or no updating of the TEVT curricula in line with the changing needs of job market still prevails in Nepal. Shrestha (2011) reveals that some of curricula have been unchanged for years and instructors are not given 'Refresher Trainings to update them with the changed curricula. A few programmes of the CTEVT's vocational trainings date back to as early as 1995. In PCL/Diploma courses, quite a few courses offered have not been revised for a decade (CTEVT, 2014). Lamichhane (2013) adds up that some curricula and teaching equipment are as old as 15 and 30 years respectively. Jha (2014) has identified that in the programmes at Proficiency Certificate Level, some contents and topics are of less use in the current context and need to be removed; and hours and contents of some of the subjects need to be expanded and revised. The author has stressed on the need of restructuring the curriculum to attract not only the students, but also the employers. In the Nepalese context, the industry needs are not found to be thoroughly studied while developing a curriculum; and the training for faculty members in emerging fields as stipulated in the curricula are not provided. Thus, the quality of the TVET declines and the graduates suffer due to the discrepancy between demand and supply of skills. Researchers have identified pertinent reasons for 'relevancy issues' of curriculum in the Nepalese context. Badal (2010) has specified that the absence of a solitary system to make a standardized format applicable for the whole nation is one of the existing issues in

Nepal and reasons having a difficulty in satisfying labour market needs. He adds that private or public organizations are functioning with their own curricula and not all of them may have been revised. Due to this, inconsistency prevails in curricula on the same trade. Jha (2013) and Khanal (2013) present the cause of the inconsistency and incapability to respond to industry needs as the absence of functioning labour market information system. Besides, the failure in timely revision of the courses and content inclusion has also been addressed by the TVET researchers. Sharma (2010) addresses the absence of soft skills in TVET curricula as another issue.

Amidst the density of adverse deterrent curriculum issues, some researchers review TVET curricula positively. Basnet and Basnet (2014) advocate that the objectives and course/programme contents of the curricula in TVET are rooted from the consideration of occupational standards and investigation of the jobs/tasks done in the workplace. Lamichhane (2013) highlighting the transfer of TVET plan to implement demand-driven curricula from supply-driven ones in Nepal, assures the capability of present TVET curricula to address the need of domestic market. The author discloses one of the achievements and model practices as the uniform and synchronized curricula development system that uses DACUM (Develop a Curriculum) process in Competency Based Model applied in the nation. One strength of public-private partnership lies in curriculum development based on which practical classes are taken and On-The-Job (OJT) trainings are provided. Kafle (2014) also explains that Technical Education Curriculum Assessment (TECA) of CTEVT has aimed at enhancing competencies in the industry, technical precisions, and profound knowledge on pedagogy to produce competent technicians. TVET curriculum provides equal information on the subjects taught or trained and produces graduates of comprehensive nature with overall knowledge of the curriculum (Jha, 2014). Though this indicates the need for specialization, this also allows them to pursue higher level of courses with specialization of their choice after having overall

understanding of the scopes of each programme. As presented by Ghimire (2013), one of the strengths of the CTEVT is its expertise in developing competency-based curriculum and conducting assessment based on the student performance as well. Hence, literature and documents show that the TVET curricula in the Nepalese contexts have addressed the market situation.

It is the perception of those graduates, who are facing the challenges to get opportunities to enter the industry or are working there, that helps analyse whether curriculum were market oriented or not. Hence, understanding the crux of issues related to the TVET curriculum by exploring the graduates' perceptions has been felt necessary. The study has thus made an attempt to explore how the graduates perceive about their curriculum. It also aims to explore the other pertinent issues that the graduates have faced in the industry related to the TVET curriculum.

Research methodology

I conducted this research under interpretive paradigm. The paper follows qualitative approach in which rich source of information has been gathered from a few participants. Qualitative approach is concerned with gathering qualitative data such as perceptions, beliefs and understandings of a few people and mapping the meanings, processes and contexts (Ritchie, 2003). Adopting the case study method of interpretive paradigm, I purposefully selected and interviewed five graduates from BSET. In case study, the researchers explore an activity or process of single individuals, communities or organizations in depth, to understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2003; Ticehurst & Veal, 2000). As explained by Ritchie (2003), case study can be summarized as the study of an array of perspectives rooted in an explicit context and this goes in line with the research objective of this paper.

Qualitative methods allow the researcher to collect data in relatively less formal environment. On top, interviewing as a common technique of conducting

qualitative research allows the participants to respond in a more elaborative way (Creswell, 2003). Thus, this allowed me to gather data in detail, analyze the finding from multiple perspectives to justify the research methodology itself. It has also allowed me to respond immediately to what answers participants share by tailoring subsequent questions to information the participant has provided. Among the available interviewing technique, semi-structured interview offers flexibility to modify interview guidelines as per responses and situation to collect rich and explanatory answers (Chrzanowska, 2003). Thus, using semi-structured interview, I garnered initial responses from the participants by using probing technique. The probing technique also helped the participants to respond in their own words, provide broad range of responses rather than obligation to select one from a fixed range of responses.

Interviews should be conducted by building a working relationship with the participants and making them comfortable (Ritchie, 2003; Chrzanowska, 2003). Hence, I started the interviews by building a good rapport and assuring them of data confidentiality. I commenced both the interviews by informing them that the identity of the interviewee would be kept anonymous. I have used pseudonyms in my paper accordingly. In required instances, I reassured them about the research ethics, after which the participants provided unanticipated answers, which were quite fruitful to my paper.

I analyzed the data obtained from interviews through the 'framework method' of thematic analysis as stated by Ritchie & Lewis (2003); and brought forward the discussion by substantiating with relevant researches and theories. I implemented purposive sampling as the research nature required participants to be based on preselected criteria. In this regard, I purposefully selected five graduates who were actually working in the Nepalese job market in the mechanical sector only rather than those who were searching for job or applying for foreign employment. As suggested by Ritchie & Lewis, I took the sample size of five participants considering the time resource,

theoretical saturation implying the phase where new responses from them no longer would bring new insights to the research question.

Analysis and discussion

Graduates' experiences in the labour market

I initially made an attempt to explore the ease or difficulty the participants experienced to find the job or to sustain in the labour market as the fresh graduates. To this query, a few responded that they used personal connection either through personal link or during the On-the-Job training (OJT). They openly shared that if it was not for their prior linkage with the employers, they would have remained unemployed till date. To this standpoint, Ajay (pseudonym) shared: *"In my case, it was not difficult to find this job as I had connection. However, I had hardship while looking for jobs at other places. How can a fresh graduate show years of experience to be saleable?"* It clearly states that the personal linkage with the industry was as important as being skilful. It depicts the practice of 'vertical dyad linkage'. The theory of vertical dyad linkage maintains that among the two groups viz. 'in-group' and 'out-group' formed through a dyadic relationship between the leader and the subordinates, the in-group members have access to more resources, have a say in decision making process and receive privileges at work (Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975). It shows that this theory persists in the Nepalese labour market; and this is revealed through the experiences of these graduates with the vertical dyad linkage (in-group membership).

The participants disclosed during the interview that the image of the institute (BSET) was good in the labour market and this also helped them find the job. The image of the CTVET and precisely the BSET was found to have been taken positively and had a positive image. As stated by Puusa and Tolvanen (2006), organizational identity usually is portrayed as that which is core, distinctive, and enduring about the character of an organization; the identity of an organization helps spread an image in the industry; and the image builds trust in the industry. Thus, it

shows that the strong identity of the institute may help the graduates be saleable in the market.

Graduates' perception on 'what the labour markets demand'

While exploring demands of the employers based on the participants' individual experiences, most of them revealed that the job experience was the key factor. They all shared a common story of the inevitable struggles they all went through being fresh graduates. Besides, they shared that the demands of employers were based on what they produce for the consumer market; and they demand overall competencies to perform in the workstation. The employers seek proficiency in the graduates. They not only seek psycho-motor skills, but also soft skills, overall attitude and having a preferred team player spirit rather than just a skill performer. Albeit they seek such qualities, they commonly exhibit an exploitative attitude and demand more inputs/contributions with less pay. In his voice/tone filled with sorrow, Chandra (Pseudonym) disclosed:

"...Truth be told, the work is hard and there is no specific time table. The work starts from seven or eight in the morning till five in the evening but they do not provide breakfast or lunch. Here, the salary isn't good to tell you frankly. That makes it difficult to work as they are reluctant to offer facilities but push us to do hard labour."

It clearly indicates that the graduates experienced direct or indirect exploitation by the employers as it was inherent for them to demand more labour on less pay and facilities. It indicates that the exploitative attribute amongst employers is common in the nation. The Marxian theory of exploitation of profit as described by Mohun (2003) asserts that employers, mostly private, allow the handful of privileged to reap the benefits of the labours of others without needing to contribute. The capitalists use labour power to create more value by compensating the labourer well to reproduce the commodity. This in turn, produces added and surplus value for the owner. However, the workers are exploited upon failing to keep or control the value created by their own labour

power (Kliman, 2001). The perspective of the participants shows that this theory is pertinent as the practice is found to be widely in existence. Hence, they are suffering in the job market.

While digging up and discussing about the experiences, another striking fact came into light which falls under 'work culture' dimensions. As one participant, feeling comfortable, shared:

"To tell you bhitri kura¹, what I saw was that the employers and seniors at work often seek respect and are cautious about prestige. More than work proficiency, they wanted to show power distance, wanted to be treated with superiority. Yes, they also look up for skills, but far more than this, what I observed was they want to show that they are seniors to ensure their dominance."
(Dil: Pseudonym)

Based on this disclosure, I inferred that power distance prevails in Nepalese labour market. Hofstede's construct of power distance was explained by Brockner et al. (2001) as the extent to which inequality in existence and practice among individuals working in different positions of formal power is viewed as a natural and even preferable facet of the social order. The proposal of Hofstede that was broadly based cultural values spill into the world of work also was confirmed later (Bochner & Hesketh (1994). Thus, keeping the superiority complex of employers in consideration, the construct of power distance is found to be high in the Nepalese labour market.

Perception on the curriculum with respect to the labour market

Following the above experiences and perceptions, I proceeded towards exploring on how they perceived about curriculum with respect to the labour market and that gave me a notion of multiple realities through a wide range of responses. A few found their curriculum practical and their work in the industry was similar. The respondents were found to be using the skills and knowledge they acquired during their

course and were doing more or less similar jobs. They perceived the curriculum stronger due to the renowned image of their institute. They found contents/practice in workshops quite relevant, and were able to demonstrate their skills effectively in their world of work. The participants mainly perceived their curriculum as useful and relevant considering the modules they studied. The contents such as welding, fabrication, tasks on lathe machines were expressed their as strengths considering the demands and relevance in the job market. Showing their consent on relevance of curriculum to cater to the needs of general mechanical sector in the industry, Kumar (Pseudonym) further shared:

"In my opinion, having contents like Milling, fabrication and welding: Tungsten Insert Gas (TIG) welding and Metal Insert Gas (MIG) welding which are rare in the market is strong point of our curriculum..."

This shows that curriculum has been developed and revised keeping consideration the nature of works carried out in the mechanical sectors in different industries of Nepal. Having On-The-Job training (OJT) in the curriculum was also taken as strength of the curriculum. In addition, I found that they also perceived their curriculum as effective also due to the competent instructional skills of the instructors. Hence, it shows that the teachers' ability to demonstrate the skills clearly and carefully and deliver the sessions competently was taken positively by them.

Furthermore, in contrast to such positive perspectives, the participants also expressed that their curriculum was less effective because of it not having a few essential contents such as repairing, maintenance and bearing. Besides, some important modules, though highly in demand, were taught for short time and it was not sufficient to perform those skills competently and confidently. It vividly shows the incomprehensiveness of the content and inadequacy

¹ bhitri kura is a Nepali term that refers to inside story or the fact that is not usually disclosed/exposed to others outside

of the practice time as the key curriculum issues; and I have therefore interpreted in this paper that the identified curriculum issues are inclusive of the inability to update with the changing demand of industries. The findings of Sabharwal (2013) also align with my inferential standpoint that in the employment ecosystem of TVET (comprises of assessment, curriculum, certification and jobs) and the poor alignment between skills training and employment ecosystem still prevails. The author adds that the employability mismatch tends to continue until the training providers seriously commit to understand market demands and trends for skills including soft skills such as employability skills and include these in their curriculum and certify with certain skill sets.

An interesting sphere of curriculum, that makes a difference to its effectiveness that I explored, was the part of the management that plays a role in running a course. The participants shared with me that the poor management of the institute has made an unpleasant impression in their minds. In a saddening tone, Chandra shared: "So far I can remember, there being five or six lathe machines in BSET's workshop but the one that did work properly were barely one or two." Bikram (Pseudonym) also opined with similar tone with regard to the workshop management. He added:

"In our curriculum, I perceived a few modules such as TIG and MIG welding as its strength and I have heard that this content is not available in other places. But honestly speaking, it is not good as it used to be. Sometimes they say they do not have certain required tools/materials and the whole session gets halted. If some parts break down in the workshop, they take ages to make it work. How much could we learn in such circumstances? Considering this, there is no valid point of including this module in the curriculum. Isn't it?"

It reveals that the poor management of the infrastructure poses an undeniable threat to the

effectiveness of curriculum. A curriculum cannot be effective if the management is not effective. As traced by Lamichanne (2013), decades old equipment has deterred the quality of curricula and TVET. I therefore came to the standpoint that not only contents, but also active and functioning administrative unit should be there for smooth and regular classes' management; and this should be ensured by the school management committee.

Graduates' perspective on an ideal curriculum

Upon digging on the perceptions of the graduates about what would be an ideal curriculum, I explored their perspectives based on their own individual experiences. They stressed that the time to teach entrepreneurship skills development should be extended to at least a month to promote the graduate with capital and/or interest in investment to be self-employed. They opined that including team building skills, communicating skills at work would be fruitful and expanding these modules up to even one whole year would not be a bad idea. It can be thus inferred that the curriculum would only be ideal if soft skills along with the hard skills, were included and taught in depth so that they could apply those skills in their job. The graduates are found to be facing the problem related to gap between supply and industry need, one of which is related to the soft skills. Sharma (2010) states that there is a lack of contents that teach various soft skills such as communication skills; decision making; problem solving skills and such in the TVET curricula. The curricula are also not found to have adequate contents and time duration on entrepreneurship skills. Thus, consistent with my interpretive standpoint, Sabharwal (2013) also stresses on entrepreneurship skills to address unemployment issues. Market-based curricula with the inclusion of soft skills have also been outlined to solve the problem of unemployment (Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education, 2010).

They expressed their opinion that the curriculum of the exiting duration would be relevant if practical classes of the modules more in demand in the industry

were adequately included.. Besides that, the common opinions expressed by the respondents were changes in the modules or contents focusing on in-depth teaching of skills demanded by the labour market; and making sessions practice-oriented with abundant guided and independent practice. This discloses that in order for such curriculum in technical education to be strong, it should address changing demands of job market, and should be revised based on market and technological changes. To enhance TVET quality, Jagannathan (2012) has brought forward several issues to consider, one of which is adaptable approach to curriculum maintenance keeping in line with the rapidly changing technology in the market. Valles (2012) on the other hand, stresses that programme curricula should be designed in collaboration with the professional community and those responsible for technical and vocational education. A paper on NICHE strategy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) stresses on the significance of industry-driven curricula with technological updates and market focus to solve the problem of unemployment (Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education, 2010). As opposed to underdeveloped nations such as Nepal and Bangladesh, in emerging economies like Malaysia and Thailand, TVET policy makers have prioritized the improvement plan of TVET by carrying out certain plan of actions, one of which is aligning TVET curriculum with the demand of labour market (Martinez-Fernandez & Choi, 2013). Thus, as suggested by Chenoy (2013), to strengthen TVET, the system should shift its base to competency based training and develop or revise demand-driven curricula that address the needs of labour market. With regard to curriculum development, Wang, Khan and Zhang (2013) have disclosed that the curriculum developers having the centralized control mechanism and being backed up by the state lack in identifying the circumstances of the rural areas or places away from the urban. In Nepal's TVET scenario, it is the CTEVT as a state owned council that holds the responsibility of developing and revising curricula of technical education and vocational training by forming a curriculum development committee.

Hence, it can be interpreted that the gap between the supply and demand of labour market can be substantially reduced by heavily involving the graduates of respective courses as well in the curriculum development committee.

The respondents also revealed that strength in curriculum could be ascertained in the market if the machines in the workshop were in working conditions, and similar to those in the market. Pinpointing the decades old and partly functioning Swiss lathe machines in the workshop of BSET, they disclosed that more than change in curriculum, the machines in the workshop should be changed keeping the industry needs in mind. They also impelled on addition of automatic or Computerised Numerical Control (CNC) machines for the graduates who have to handle such machines in some industries in Nepal and in foreign employment. Ajay thus summed up his opinion as: *"...I think even if the curriculum is strong itself, for me, this curriculum would be ideal if the course providers offer up-to-date machines used in the market."* Here, I inferred that curriculum would be ideal if it is market based; and if the infrastructures for teaching respective curriculum are also market-oriented and up to date. As stated by Maclean, Jagannathan, and Sarvi (2013), the investment done in TVET is often paralleled with certain critics. It is because the development of curriculum entails heavy expenses as it requires expertise and resources; and provides the guideline for necessary infrastructure such as training materials and equipment, classroom facilities and such. Even though the curriculum of TSLC in Mechanical engineering: pre-SLC intake was revised in 2014, the issues raised at that time were that the demands were not seriously addressed and the market study was inadequate before the revision.

In reference to the existing labour market, the participants opined that the job placement unit should spend more time and effort to identify potential job markets that do keep the welfare of the graduates in shadow. The unit should intensely lobby with them and maintain healthy relationships. They added that

the curriculum should include substantial number of orientation sessions about the real world of work to mentally prepare them as they would be facing uncertain and unprecedented circumstances in the labour market. This illuminates that the active involvement of the job placement unit as well as the entire school management realizing their key mandatory roles are considered as an impetus to fortify the perspectives of curriculum.

One of the key points I explored was that the commitment and overall attitude of the instructors also are necessary to improve the curriculum standard. One participant shared:

“...What happens is they do not tend to teach or share the knowledge and skills they possess. Curriculum in itself is not that bad. No matter how relevant and useful contents you include, no matter how advanced contents you include, if the instructors who teach this curriculum do not do their job sincerely, it would make no sense. (Pauses feeling little awkward; and continues upon reassurance of researcher’s ethical consideration). We had frequently seen that some instructors go to the canteen to have a cup of tea assigning us practical work in workshop. This is so wrong. (In a depressing tone) I am telling you honestly sir. To bring forward the curriculum as competent, these things must be addressed first.” (Kumar)

This striking fact helped me come to a standpoint that the instructors have a major stake in how the graduates perceive about their curriculum. It clearly reveals that a curriculum cannot be deduced as effective just because it is market-oriented and is equipped with infrastructure. The instructors must be professional with strongly positive attitude. Here I also analyzed that more than the management unit, it is the instructor/teacher who holds key responsibility to ensure ahead that the workshop has everything arranged to conduct the classes without halt, and pressurize the management upon delay in addressing the issues. Albeit the instructors have

knowledge and skills, it cannot assure effective and smooth classes if the attitude is poor. In line with this, Kerre (2009) adds that while developing and revising market oriented curricula, the issues regarding development of the knowledge, skills and attitude in the instructors or teachers are often ignored. The author hence illuminates the role of the instructors as a determinant of the quality of the curriculum; and thereby stresses on the necessity of development of positive attitude along with knowledge and skills in them. Maclean & Lai (2011) also infer that polishing the competence of teachers up to the proficiency level transforming from imparting knowledge to facilitating learning will ultimately enhance the image of the curricula.

Practical and research and implications:

The discussion manifests interesting avenues for practical implications for curricula developers so as to address industry needs and the other identified issues. As the paper was limited to exploring the perceptions of graduates of the TSLC mechanical engineering stream, further research of the graduates from other streams and levels; as well as of the employers can be done to depict the true pictures/scenarios of the labour market and also to explore wide range of perceptions on how the TVET curricula stand in the labour market.

Conclusion:

This research has delineated the perceptions of graduates working in the job market on their curriculum with respect to the labour market where they are currently employed. Curriculum stands as one of the explicit determinants of TVET’s effectiveness and the existing curriculum is perceived positively as it provides the knowledge and skills the employers basically look for. But the graduates find it hard due to lack of personal references and employers’ innate tendency of exploiting the labours which is a little beyond the scope of the curriculum effectiveness. They perceive their curriculum less effective in the context that a few in-demand contents need to be updated or revised with more practical classes and also addressing pertinent technological

changes in both national and international job market. Moreover, the perception of the curriculum in a comprehensive sphere has been affected by the instructors' lack of competitiveness and professional attitude. Strong TVET increases productivity and helps in creating employment opportunities; and to achieve this, it is imperative that the curricula developers address the issues of changing market needs, technology as well as produce competent human resources with sincere attitude. Only after this, the effectiveness of strong curricula can be justified and the TVET can produce competent graduates needed by the industries to lead nation towards development and prosperity.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mr. Amit Koirala, Research Department, Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI), for his scholarly guidance and Mr. Mohan Prasad Bhurtel, Training and Curriculum specialist, World Education Inc., Kathmandu, Nepal for his technical assistance while shaping up this research work. A sincere gratitude goes to Mr. Pushpa Raj Paudel, Curriculum Division, TITI, for his valuable insight in the subject matter. I am also indebted to Ms. Monika Sapkota, Scholar at University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom for her continuous scholarly support in writing this research paper.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15440>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Educational Aspiration, Dropout and TEVT

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Abstract

This paper explores and discusses the root causes of dropout in an ethnic community in Nepal and then suggests of mandating technical and vocational education in secondary level education as one of the solutions that increases both efficiency and output of education system. In doing so, I carried out an ethnographic research as the part of my Ph.D, in ethnic community of Tamang people in one rural areas of Kathmandu district. I applied prolong field observation and in depth interview to explore their perception regarding school education. I came with the understanding that people had very low level of aspiration from existing school education. People were experienced only two roles of education in their life. First, many community people perceived role of education for them was nothing more than getting literacy skills: read and calculate. Second, some other people thought that school education was useful to increase the little hope of getting the low level of job. However having simply the school level certificate had no guarantee of getting a job. It needed to have a good network or to bribe the people who were in power. In order to materialize these two aspirations, grade 8 was enough so they were not bothered for completing school level education. However a very few community people considered school education as a foundation for higher education to lead to gain power, prestige and property. In this regard, I argue that mandating technical and vocational education in secondary level education that helps not only to fulfill the basic aim of education of developing employability among school graduates but also enhance the efficiency and outcome of school education system.

Keywords: Tamang people, school dropout and TEVT

Background

Education is understood not only as a means of development but also the ends of development. Education enables and empowers individuals by

enhancing their productivity leading to achieve a better employment and income and ultimately to enjoy a quality of life. Education can be seen as instrumental in individual's freedom as it enhance

their personal role, social role, processing role, empowerment and distributive role (Sen and Dreze, 1999). Thus, education has been globally accepted as a basic human right in the modern world for last several decades. Nepal's political processes, as well as development initiations, have been also guided by this basic philosophy of education. Each successive constitutions of Nepal have emphasized the greater role of state for peoples' education. The present constitution of Nepal states "Every citizen shall have the right to free education from the State up to the secondary level as provided for in the law" (Government of Nepal [GoN], 2015). Likewise, starting from the concept of free primary education in the first plan (National Planning Commission [NPC], 1956) to present periodic plan (NPC, 2013) the state envisions to give education to its citizen. The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP), current main education plan of the country, views to ensure equitable quality basic education for all children (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2009) whereas the new education plan, the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP, 2016-2023) also envisions free and compulsory basic education (MoE, 2016) in the country.

The state has not only highlighted the state's high priority in education in its policy documents, it has been also materializing this policy by allocating more and more budget on it. For last two decades, the state is spending the largest share of public expenditure in the education sector where almost three fourth of education budget goes for school education (MoE, 2015). A huge amount of money is spent for free tuition fee and free textbooks to all, and scholarship, free uniform and day meal to socio economic and geographically disadvantaged children (MoE, 2013).

Despite various program and policy intervention in education targeting the disadvantaged group, still, 42.6 percent of women are illiterate in the country (MoE, 2015). Among 6 years and over, 34 percent of the population is found never stepped in school (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2011). National

Census carried on 2011 revealed that out of total 8 million children of aged 5-16, 1.2 million (15 %) children were not attending schools where in some Terai districts this percentage was more than 25 percent. Likewise, the national statistics showed that out of one hundred children enrolled in grade one, 6.5 children drop out from the same class and the rate of drop out in each grades ranged from 3 to 6 percent (MoE, 2015). The average SLC (national exam taken after grade 10) pass rate in the country has remained less than 50 percent for the last couple of years. It means, only one third of children can complete school level education. On the top of this, due to lack of job in the national market, thousands of young Nepali goes to India, Malaysia and Gulf country as an unskilled labor force. The total number of workers gone for foreign employment since mid-1990s has reached almost three million (Ministry of Finance [MoF], 2013) who are mostly engaged in 3 D (difficult, danger, dirty) work due to lack of technical skill.

The above statistics show that many children in Nepal could not complete school level education but only some of them completed school level education. Those who completed school could not get employment opportunity in the country and compelled to go abroad for a hard and difficult labor work. Thus, the huge investment made in education sector is not giving the expected return to both individual and state. The people have been getting less benefit of education are from poor strata of economy, remote area, and low caste families or of disadvantaged ethnicities, as well as children with disabilities (DoE, 2014).

The main objective of this field based study was to explore perception of dropout children and their parents, despite the state's high effort. The various research studies conducted on school dropout showed a long list of factors related to school and household to culture of the people to peoples' perception of education responsible for the school dropout (JICA/CASP, 2004; IREWOC, 2007; Kushiyat, 2009; DOE, 2012). One of the noticeable findings of

literature review revealed that the reason for dropout identified by various research studies have not been altered since the last couple of decades. There was not much difference between the studies conducted during the early 1990s or in recent years (IEES, 1993; JICA/CASP, 2004; DoE, 2012). Despite presenting multiple reasons of OOSC, some were found highlighting school related factors (Acharya & Giri, 2009; Wagle, 2012) and socio economic condition of the society and family (Kushiyait, 2009; DOE, WE & UNICEF, 2011; DOE, 2012). The dropout problem seemed to be more closely related to socio-economic and family factors than the factors within the educational system (DOE, 2012). But the reasons were different for different group of peoples such as girls, dalits, ethnic people where the prevalence was comparatively high among these groups of people. (JICA/CASP, 2004). On the top of this, an ethnographic study conducted in a small ethnic community of Tamang people revealed that the relevancy of school level education realized by the poor and disadvantage section of population to their life of was the main reason behind the drop out. If they had found the education as relevant ensuring employment and earning, they could manage other obstacles.

Research Site and Methodology

I carried out an ethnographic field work in a Tamang community near Kathmandu. The community was located in hilly rural area, and it took nearly two hours walk climbing up the hill to reach in the community from the bus station crossing the dense forest. Agriculture was the main occupation of majority of the community and the subsistence level of agriculture was not enough to run their livelihood for most of the families. As a result, many families were engaged in making alcohol at their home and selling in the nearest market as second occupation which was a regular source of income for them. Very few were also engaged in small business and Nepal army as well.

There was one primary and one lower secondary school in this area. The children needed to step down

two hours to low land for the secondary level education. The people with 50 plus age group were hardly found literate who had never been to school. But at present every child was found to be admitted in school at some point, many of them were out of school after few years of schooling.

I did the cohort study in the beginning of the research and found a very low efficiency of the education system. Out of total 22 children enrolled in grade 1 in 2004, after 10 years only 2 were found able to reach grade 10 in 2013 where 4 of them were in grade 9. The rest of the students had left school at different grades. Despite some improvement found in other successive years, the cohort study done for other years revealed a very high dropout rate in the area.

Generally, there was a tendency of going school at the late age. Consequently, many children studding in grade 7 or 8 were found of age 15 or 16 or even older. Once they reached to this age there was a tendency to leave school either to engage in household occupation or in search of work. The youth had a great attraction to government service especially in Nepal army. Majority of the boys after completion of grade 8 were found trying to enter into army service. If they could not enter into army then they would try to go abroad for labor work. In case of girl, early marriage was a common practice. Becoming a mother of baby at the age of 16 or 17 was not surprising. School after marriage was almost impossible for girls.

In this regard, in addition to prolong observation of the community, I interviewed some community people and conducted a couple of focus group discussion with teacher and student to understand their experience and general perception on education. Likewise, I selected six dropout children and their parents for several rounds of in depth interview to explore their lived experience on the roles of school education in their life and perception constructed on their mind.

People's aspiration from education

In ancient and medieval times, schooling in Nepal was considered as a family affair rather than the state's responsibility (Sharma, 1986). But after the establishment Darbar School in 1954, people gradually exposed to the role of education. As all the school graduates of that period were employed in some administrative work in government (Bista, 1991), despite the policy of controlled expansion of access to education adopted by Ranas, general people had opened some schools on their own in late 1940s (Onta, 2000). Likewise, after the planned development initiation in late 1950s and 1960s, as white and blue color job were rapidly created (Bista, 1991), the entire educated person got job in government as they were scarce. People were interested in government job as it was basically table work, easier than the agriculture work and also the symbol of power and prestige (Bista, 1991). Historical event was the exposure to people to construct educational aspiration. The general people of Nepal have been guided mainly by three educational aspirations. First, the common people are not happy with their traditional occupation such as agriculture and animal husbandry which needed hardship of labor. It is labor intensive work, subsistence in nature. Thus, historically schooling meant occupational mobility from their traditional type of manual and hard physical work to non-manual and easy table work in civil service (Shrestha, 1998).

Second, the people from rural and remote area are historically seemed to be interested to shift to more comfortable ways of living from hardships of rural areas. In this regard, education became a means to give employment and income that gives basis for survival to adjust in new migrated areas. One can find that the educated people of the country have been permanently migrating from villages to urban areas and capital cities for last couple of decades. Third, people, naturally, are fond of acquiring power, prestige and property for an upgraded social status. Historically, the education was the priority of elite people as it would help them to enter into the

government job and enjoy power and prestige with white color job (Bista, 1991). These motives are still valid for common people to gain power, prestige and property by entering into government service. Historically, poor and disadvantaged people of Nepal had less concern with education. Neither the education was accessible to them nor was the government jobs approachable to them. Thus, education was not thought by them as their business which resulted a significant numbers of marginalized populations out of school for a long period. As a poor and disadvantage group of people, this national scenario was true for those Tamang people of my research site as well. There was no school at all in this area till 1970s and the people above 50 years old were rarely found literate. They were engaged in totally in agriculture and animal husbandry occupation. In addition, cutting tree from forest and selling it at near market and working as agriculture labor at the adjoining villages were the additional work for income. These people never thought the role of education to their life.

With the availability of school in their area, state's various efforts to bring them in school and their gradual exposure to the outer world, these Tamang people were also found gradually following the trend general people of the country. They were also found having a wish to shift their traditional occupation which they disliked in many ways. The agriculture was neither giving them enough food nor was it the source of regular income. Moreover, it was demanding their labor for the whole year, including the engagement of their children. This compulsion made the children's engagement in agriculture from early age as both practice and tradition. This was more applicable in case of rural population, economically poor people and girl population (DoE, 2014; IREWOC, 2007; UNICEF, 2014). In such circumstances, sending their children to school was a great sacrifice to parents rather than sending them to work. Even in such condition they had sent their children school with some ideal role of education. On the other hand, even the GON claimed free and compulsory education it was not free in real sense.

People had to pay both direct and indirect cost while sending their children to school. It was difficult to afford education with their low income and poor economic condition. Nevertheless, the education would not necessarily give them job, as it was essential to have linkage (afnomanchhe) with power (Bista, 1991) or need to bribe the people who were in power. In such condition the opportunity cost was higher for them who could send their children to work rather than to school for study. For them investing in education was simply the loss of time and resource including the opportunity cost. The community people had any examples of school or college graduates getting back to their traditional occupation. There was a dilemma between "a bird in hand or many birds in bush" - the immediate and confirmed benefit from labor work or invest more in education hoping better future.

Based on their personal experience, exposure and family's economic condition, the subjective judgments on objective reality of the situation, these ethnic people were found with three levels of aspiration from education.

Lowest level: Education for literacy

Dukhi Tamang, who went to school but could not completed grade 1, never thought to send his children above grade 8. His son left school when he was in 8 grade last year and then, he planned to go abroad after he failed to get a job in Nepal Army. This was the only option, they found, to pay back their loan which was taken in different incidents. Dukhi decided to drop her elder daughter from schooling from this year as his wife died last her and daughter needed to replace her in household chores including agriculture work. He had a further plan not to send his younger daughter to school after grade 8 who was now studding at grade 5.

Dukhi sent all his children to school because education is an 'eye opener' and it makes people literate. He said that the role of daughter was to run the family life after marriage and this level of education was enough to perform that role. He was

not regretting even at his son's dropout. He believed that even after education one needed to have afno manchhe (network) or bribe people to get job. This was his own experience during his son's effort to enter into Nepal army. He was happy with his son that his son will come back after two years with some money.

The lowest level of aspiration from education in the community was just to be literate in letter and numeracy. Many parents were found in the community with this lowest level of aspiration. The literacy was considered in the community as an essential component for the life of every people. This aspiration was built as the learning of their life experience where many parents had faced several difficulties due to their illiteracy. One mother of older age with two children shared her life experience, "People usually come to me to put my signature on some paper. I cannot read and always feel fear of risk of putting my signature on it. Moreover, I feel shame while putting my thumb signature on it as I cannot make a print signature. So I put my best effort to make my children literate" In addition the functional value of literacy in their daily life, the literacy of people was understood as the symbol of civilization as well. This group of people believed that education was no more helpful to get job as other network and relation was ore important. It was less benefitting to put more investment in educating their children because of lacking of such social and political capital. Thus, the best decision was to send their children up to that level where benefit of literacy was guaranteed. This was also guided by the cultural aspect of the people. The role of females was socially assigned and practiced as well limited to household chores and agriculture occupation. So, the aspiration of becoming literate from school level education was more associated with girls. The interaction with dropout girls and their parents showed that they were no more regretful of leaving school at lower grads as they had seen that some of their seniors who had completed higher level of education were also performing nothing more than what these dropouts were performing.

Intermediate level: Education for employment

Shahasi Tamang was proud of her both children. Shahasi's daughter was 17 years old who had left school two years ago at grade 7 and got married. Now, she had become a mother a baby as well. Shahasi was satisfied with her daughter's education even she was left at grade 7. Her daughter was able to read, write and calculate with basic numeracy skill which she was lacking. This was what, she thought, a housewife needed to run her family comfortably.

Actually her son was about to leave school after grade 7 but she gave pressure him to complete grade 8. After grade 8, she sent her son to a house of senior army officer to work as a house labor. He worked there for three years, served the army officer and could make him happy. As a result, he was able to become a 'sipahi' (the lowest position in military service) with the officer's power. Shahasi was happy that education gave her son a permanent job and regular source of income even on his retirement. Moreover, other community people treat her with respect and take her as a successful example.

The intermediate level of aspiration from education was to open a faint opportunity to employment. This category of parents considered literacy as necessary but not sufficient condition to run a family life. Only the area of government employment exposed to the community people Nepal army and completion of school education of grade 8 was the prerequisite to enter in the service. This aspiration was more associated with boys whose role was considered different from the girls - to look up also the financial aspect of family. For this, they should have some regular earning. These were the parents who were interested but not able to become army in their life. At the same time they had seen different life style of the army living in their village. Thus, a regular source of income and permanent employment was major expectation from education. The entry in Nepal army was also guided by some other motives as well. First, it a kind of occupational shift from the hard

life of agriculture to a more comfortable filed of government service. Second, this occupation would give them regular income even after their retirement. On the other hand, the agriculture was giving them return only at the harvesting time. Third, becoming an army was also the symbol of prestige which had different position in the society from those of agriculture labor or some wage earner. Once a person entered into the army service (sipahi), it was possible to make some networking with the power which was opening the opportunity of employment for other family members as well. So most of the children of the community were found eagerly trying for army first and if it became impossible, then they were found looking to other field.

At the same time the children were experienced and exposed with their seniors who been back to same traditional occupation or looking for work even after having higher education. In this critical situation, the children had two options. First, make further investment in terms of resource, effort and time for further education which had not guarantee of giving them employment in future. Second, drop out school and start some work for earning. In such confusion, many people were found choosing the second option – preferring one bird in hand to many birds in bush. This was rational decision for them from cost benefit analysis aspect s well.

For these both educational aspirations, a completion of secondary level education was not felt essential. Further, to attend the grade 9 and 10, they needed to go down with two house walk to plain land. In addition, they needed to put more effort, time and resource for this level of education. Despite comparatively higher cost, nothing was guaranteed from completing school level education. So, on the given socio economic background of the community and the larger context of the society, the decision of dropout before completing school level education was rational decision for many parents. Thus, due to these low levels of aspiration for majority of people, there was high dropout rate in the community.

Highest level: Education for power, prestige and property

Father of Firta Lama, a retired 'Sipahi' from Nepal army, thought that one should complete at least grade 12. He was committed to his perception so that he made his best effort to educate Firta till grade 12. He sent his son to a rented a room to the city area for his higher secondary level of education, and fulfilled his desire. He had seen the life of senior army officer with power, prestige and property. In order to get that position, grade 12 was prerequisite. However, even after completing grade 12, Firta was unable to become an army officer. So he came back to the village and engaged in the same traditional occupation of agriculture and making local alcohol.

But, there were few parents who were who had higher level of aspiration from education than just making literate or just opening a little opportunity of employment. Those people expressed that grade 8 was not enough for a meaningful change in their life. If one was to release their children from their traditional lifestyle and occupation and enjoy a meaningful lifestyle, they should have a higher educational degree. Generally, this aspiration was associated with two categories of parents. First, the parents who joined army but in lower rank had exposed with the power, prestige and property of senior army officers. They had realized that it was possible for them as well but the prerequisite was to have at least certificate of the grade 12. Second, the people who had been to abroad for labor work were experienced if they had better educational degree, they could get a more comfortable work and better income. Even people had this aspiration, many parents were not able to invest for higher education or they were not fully confident that higher education certainly gives them better return. This was so because, many youth with higher education had got back to community and engaged in the traditional occupation.

Need of TEVT in school level education

The role of education is considered important on the assumption that it helps people to enjoy a quality of

life for which income and employment are the prerequisites. So the education should be viewed from the perspective of it's outcome in terms of creating employability in individual. Rather than making the individual simply literate and building foundation for higher level education to some extent, the existing school level education does not give any specific employability skill to start any work. In this regard, technical education and vocational training (TEVT) could be helpful in capacitating individual by giving employable skill for the world of work. The high dropout rate in school level education especially among the poor and marginalized population was due to their low educational aspiration whereas the reason of low aspiration was due to the low relevancy of education experienced by them in their life. The educational aspiration of poor and marginalized population was limited to becoming literate and opening a faint hope of employment. This was the result of their low economic condition whereas the secondary education was not able to give any employment skill to them. As a result many children from such family were not motivated to complete school level education. In this line, TEVT can be one of the solutions.

Analyzing this issue from theoretical lenses, the root of present school system is the continuation of concept of mass schooling and considered to be rested on the foot of capitalization. This perspective argues that the role of education is to enhance the productivity of individual whereas the system payback according to their contribution. Thus, education helps resolve the strains of differentiations, with emphasis on the lateral dimension (Boli, Ramirez & Mayer, 1985). But the school education was, except making literate the people, neither had created the employability on school completers nor had the educational credential of school graduates played important role in the status attainment (Stash & Hannum, 2009). In this regard, the introduction of TEVT in school level education will help to materialize the capitalist view of school education. The left perspective blames that the mass schooling benefits. As it is for general people so by its basic

nature, its basic character is institutionally universal, homogenous, standardized and rationalized, mass education in general, is not the practical device to deal with particular local problems or to address the needs of any specific group (Boli, Ramirej & Mayer, 1985). Thus the marginalized section of population does not get benefits from education. The present school system fits only for the high class people who can see the future perspective of education (Parajuli, 2002) and also can afford it. In this connection introduction of TEVT in school education will be helpful to correct the weakness school education as identified blames of left on.

But as just opposite to lefts blaming to present education system, the state was found provisioning several facilities to increase the access of poor and marginalized in school system. Since the human right convention of 1948, all education forums have recommended the objective of reaching to more and more people and Nepal is accepting those agendas in favor of poor and marginalized. States implementation of Karachi convention of 1960s to present time EFA and MDGs ideas are its example. The state's plan and policies are providing one after another more privilege to the weaker section of population such as such as free school education, free test book and scholarship to bring the poor and disadvantaged population to school. But these provisions had been able to bring the poor and marginalized population just to the door of school but not able to give good return to them. In this endeavor, TEVT will strengthen the state's program and policy in ensuring the benefits to the poor and marginalized.

The field study showed that in case of poor and disadvantaged section of population living in a rural area and engaging in agriculture occupation, it was very difficult to continue their education after school level. Even to complete the secondary level of education, they had to sacrifice a high opportunity cost. On the other hand, they were experienced that the school level education was not able to give any employability skill. In such condition, it was natural

to leave the school and look for any job that gives them income. As a result, there was found higher rate of school dropout in rural area and specially that poor and marginalized section of population.

Conclusion

In the highly stratified society in terms of social, cultural and economic aspects with different capacities and capabilities, the education policy of providing piecemeal facilities such as free text book, uniform and small amount of scholarship might bring the marginalized family up to the school's door temporarily but it is not sufficient to retain them in school and to make learning outcome significant and relevant to their life. I see the mismatch between the poor and disadvantaged people's socio economic condition and the goal of school education system as the major problem. The school system views the students as a full time student whereas the parents are compelled to treat them as a full time worker. The school level education provides them simply the skill of literacy whereas only this skill is not enough to get employment in job market. The school level education is said free but the parents have to pay direct, indirect and opportunity cost for the education. As a result the parents find high investment in school education for nothing guaranteed benefits. All these anomalies lead to the parents and children to have a low level of aspiration from education which was the major reason for high rate of dropout.

Thus, incorporation of TEVT in secondary level education could be one of the solutions for various problems at the same time. First, the immediate effect would be the reduction of school dropout rate. The TEVT, a way of develop employability, would motivate both the parents and children to continue the school education so they there was high chance of getting employment in future. Second, as students get employment, it seems possible to bring both work and education together for further education ahead secondary level. TEVT not only increases employability of individual by giving them working skills but also enhances the entrepreneurship skill. Even in case of unavailability of market job, the

school graduates could create job on their own. The TEVT is more relevant to that poor and marginalized section of population who cannot continue a longer time in education. For them, TEVT is a good means to gain working skill in a short span of time and starts to earn. More than this, now many Nepali youth are working in Malaysia and Gulf countries as an unskilled labor at very low wage rate. If the TEVT in school education could make them semi-skilled or skilled, there would be significant increase in remittance.

Thus, once the probability of getting job and their productivity after school education increases, it motivates the students to complete school level education which lead to increase in peoples' aspiration from education and decline in school dropout. However, the challenging administrative part and expensive financial part of TEVT introduction in school level education should not be undermined.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15441>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Need of Soft Skills for Undergraduate Urban Youth for Career Development

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Abstract

The paper aims to show the importance of soft skills of the undergraduate urban youth who are preparing their career within Nepal or abroad. Youth in city pursue formal education from colleges and university in Nepal. After the completion of undergraduates, they prepare themselves for the job market. In this line, I argue that those youth who have not developed their soft skills struggle much to find out a job. It also increases the urban poverty and unemployment. I employed ethnographic research approach to explore everyday life activities of urban youth showing their preparedness of career. In doing so, I am telling credible, rigorous, and authentic stories of those undergraduate urban youth who are preparing their career in Kathmandu. The research is carried out in Kathmandu with four young research participants who are going to appear their final semester examination of undergraduate level in Management stream from a private college of Kathmandu. Two of them have just started working in companies and two of them are searching jobs. Applying the soft skill perspective the paper explores the situation of undergraduate youth in Kathmandu who theoretically learned about some soft skills in colleges and university during their academic hours but they hardly practiced in working environment. The research explores that it is not enough to deliver theories of soft skills in the classroom rather practice for youth who are going to start their career in the city.

Keywords: Urban youth, soft skill and career development.

Orientation: Urban Youth and Their Interest

In my one and half decade long teaching in urban school and colleges, I experienced various the challenges to lecturing modern urban youth about various subjects such as 'sociology' 'communication' and 'research method'. All most all colleagues complained about the nature of students who did not

seem to be interested in any subjects. The majority of the students engaged in talking to each other, using the cell phone, sleeping on the desk, feeling lousy, listening silently in the classroom. It was not only whose lecturer was boring. I attempted to make every lecturer interesting, but I could not be able to grasp the attention on of urban youth. I learned from

my experience that youths are not much interested in the course work so that they hardly learnt to compete in the job market. Therefore, the unemployment rate of youth has been increasing. Despite educational qualification urban unemployment has been increasing with poverty and deprivation too.

I have experienced the major problems of such situation that most of the BBA graduates like to pass the university examination. They mostly expect to complete their education and became eligible for the Middle Level Manager but they hardly get the job of assistant in Bank and financial organization.

Such circumstances shows that undergraduates in Kathmandu hardly prepared a question to the work readiness during their course in colleges and university Conley (2008) states that it is important to develop a core set of skills and knowledge that will prepare them for postsecondary education and/or for work. However, youth in Kathmandu hardly seemed to be ready for the job market in the urban center. Possibly, academic institutions may prioritize more cognitive domain of students rather than be developing skills (soft and hard). Likewise, they might not be oriented to be prepared for the job market.

Urban youth showed their less interest to the formal teaching learning activities in the classroom nor did they seem to be reluctant to develop their soft skills for preparing their career in future. Urban youth mostly experience unemployment is a problem generally in Nepal because of lack of soft skills. Throughout the world, youth are often forced to take on temporary, part-time, casual and insecure jobs with poor and hazardous working conditions (Loughlin, & Barling, 2001). Young people who enter the labour market with underdeveloped skills they could not be prepared themselves in their future career as Mitchell, Skinner, & White, (2010) argues that hard skills are not only enough to get job for the youth in contemporary job market. In this line Schulz (2008) argues that soft skills are important to learn in college to the students which

complemented to the hard skills for better job opportunities.

During my teaching career, I experienced that majority of the urban undergraduate youth seemed to be more interested in going abroad to continue their higher education. They hardly seemed to be interested in developing certain soft skills such as communication, problem solving, critical and creative thinking and negotiation skills during their undergraduate study in Kathmandu. Some of them prepared to compete for the job within Nepal but they hardly valued the usefulness of soft skills. Soft skills are set of skills, competencies, behaviors, attitudes, and personal qualities uplift an individual to work effectively uplifting their performance for attaining the organizational goals (Parker, 2008). These skills are broadly applicable and complement other skills such as technical, vocational, and academic skills. (Lippman, Ryberg, Carney, Moore & Trends, 2015, p. 4). Exploring their preparedness of college graduate and their soft skills I employed ethnographic study.

Ethnographic Research Approach

This paper is developed from the field work of my Ph. D research "Urban youth and their everyday life in Kathmandu". The paper has been developed incorporating the data of four participants in an undergraduate college affiliated Pokhara University where I have been teaching for a couple of years. I have selected four participants who were undergraduates. They were going to appear their final examination of Bachelors in Business Administration (BBA). I employed ethnographic research approach representing and describe youth preparedness for their professional life in a natural setting by interpreting and analyzing a shared pattern of belief and behaviour (Creswell, 2009). The ethnographic approach helps me mixing the art and science of cultural representation thereby exploring views of different participants regarding the issue of their readiness in a job market after their graduation. Thus, the main source of this paper was the information of the field from the data.

I selected four participants: Shyam, Leela, Hari and Jeevan who are final semester students of the private college and two of them (Leela and Hari) were working in private companies. It has been a month of their work. I taught them in a college in different semesters and I experienced much time to explore their preparation for career during their academic journey. I also observed their soft skills in the college which helped me to reflect better on the need of soft skills for preparing. Along with observation, I collected information from the field notes and informal discussion with them. After collecting field notes, writing memos and reflection I was able to generate meaning about the need of soft skills for undergraduate students. I was much aware of the quality standards of ethnography trustworthiness and credibility while I was portraying their belief and perception about the readiness of career.

Soft Skills for College Graduates

It was any day in October 2015. As soon as I reached in the college, I met Mr. Hari who was sitting under the shed of motorbike parking. I felt that he seemed gloomy. He might have gone with under pressure. I thought he was worried about his forthcoming examination. After formal greeting with him, I asked him, what happened, Mr. Hari? Why are you looking sad? Is there anything important tasks you missed in your life? I asked him. He shared, "I was going to complete my BBA soon and not much serious to the job. I was thinking about ways of getting a job in Kathmandu". After listening to Hari I reflected the current job market in Kathmandu. The job market of Kathmandu was shrunken with some commercial bank and private companies for BBA graduates. It would be difficult to get a job in a small market on the one hand and they have not prepared themselves for a career prospect on the other. They were going to complete the course work with certain hardcore cognitive knowledge but they lacked soft skills to adjust themselves in the workforce. I come up with several questions such as: Do colleges prepare themselves as a job seeker? How often undergraduate colleges provide information about job market to their students? How

far they provide general guidance for job seekers in colleges?

Hari came to Kathmandu to pursue higher education and enrolled in a private college from Tanahu (One of the districts of Western Development Region) seemed to be much worried about his life and career. He was going to complete his BBA this year but he did not have any plan ahead to get the job. He could not continue further study because it was competitive and expensive to get admission in MBA in Nepal "I will search a job in the bank and other private companies. It will take a long time to get jobs in public offices in Nepal because I have to prepare a lot. it is difficult to get job in the market because I do not have any personal relation to the people who could offer me job. I don't have any specific technical skills to prepare for the job,"

It is not only Hari but Shyam, Jeevan and Leela all undergraduates got confused to find out the relevant jobs. Exploring the cause of such situation, they shared that they hardly got opportunities to develop their soft skills in their colleges which prepared them for the career. In this line Shyam shared:

Actually we do have some soft skills related tasks during the course such as classroom presentation session. We take such sessions as an assignment in the most of the subjects, but teachers and students do not seem to be ready for organizing presentations. I ignored the presentation and other communicative skills. I was much focused on the grades rather than developing soft skills. Now I realized that these grades do not secure job.

Shyam and his friends believed that college environment hardly engaged their students for developing soft skills. Faculties oriented their students for academic achievement in the college rather than preparing for business industry. It was not possible to develop soft skills in the college practically though some course work covered theories of developing soft skills in undergraduate level, which was supposed to be only the part of the business industry in Nepal.

Thus, the academic institution almost ignored developing soft skills in the formal educational setting in Nepal. Though, it is believed that soft skills are the part of the both business and educational settings (Evenson, 1999). The college has less prepared to orient students for developing soft skills of the students. In this line, Leela shared:

I did business communication in my third semester, theoretically, I know writing several kinds of letters of the business environment. I could write letters as prescribed by the text book. I only practiced such kinds of letters which were frequently asked in past examination. I hardly anticipate working culture to write letters and do develop communication skills.

I facilitated business communication in 2011 as a teacher to Leela and her friends in their third semester. I realized that I failed to address the need of contemporary business organization. I was more oriented how could my students get better grades in examination rather how could my students develop skills to fit themselves in the job market. I was not only blaming students but I critically reflected the ways of teaching for preparing youth in the job market. It was not only the situation of Leela but Jeevan and Shyam had similar kind of experience. Jeevan shared that once he was in the bank to deposit college fee. It was his first time to deposit money in the bank. First of all he did not know any procedure to deposit money in the bank. He asked security guard about the process. Security Guard suggested him to fill up vouchers. He filled up the vouchers and went to the bank counter. The cashier in the counter refused to take the voucher because it was check deposit voucher. He was ashamed and again filled up the cash deposit voucher and waited in a queue.

The anecdote of Jeevan made me think about the education 'we' are imparting to undergraduate students. How does bookish or theoretical education prepare themselves as the career oriented? It is all about to blame the students but the question lies on academic institutions and teaching learning pedagogy

as what kind of human resource that 'we' have been preparing. It is all because the college had hardly focused on the soft skills which are essentials for the job market. Has ever college realized the need of soft skills those enhances students ability to work and career prospects? I am also convinced that person's interactions, job performance, and career prospects (Parsons, 2008) are expected to develop during their undergraduate level. The college where I was working as a teacher less prioritized soft skills during the time of four years assimilating in their everyday life teaching learning activities to prepare themselves for their profession. Students in undergraduate level learned some both hard skills and soft skills to get a job which were not enough to compete.

Readiness for the Job

Hari joined a call center in the Month of March 2016. It was a bit easier to get a job in call centers for Hari in Kathmandu because he mostly worked in odd hours from 6 PM to 4 AM. During the first week, he enjoyed the job. He went to the office on time. He met new friends. He had dinner around 10: 00 pm with friends. After a work, he had coffee and cigarette with friends. He found that his manager was motivating him to make sales in the office. But gradually, he found his job more challenging because he was responsible for handling the large scale of information via telephone. Moreover, if he was able to promote sales he could get incentive which was more than his basic salary. He had gone under pressure to work and communicate. He worked in odd hours and very difficult to continue his college. The first time he became familiar with the professional working culture in a call center at Kathmandu. He was reflecting the ideas those he learned in college course books such as team work, communication skills, problem solving were practically useful for his work culture. It was a wonderful experience to maintain dress code and behave with his colleagues appropriately in a professional setting. Hari was actually practicing whatever he learned theoretically in the course book that indicated that his work experiences helped him

take responsibility, develop time-management skills, and overcome shyness with adults.

Reflecting back to my college life I question to the theories that I have learnt about different subjects I studied. I judged my communication skills, negotiation capacity, my dress code and my business etiquettes that I have never learned in my college.

Hari and his colleagues in the call center have appeared their Bachelors examination and few of them completed Bachelor's level. Hari said that he knew about various skills such as problem solving, decision making, and communicative skills more in 15 days than studying in 4 years Bachelor's in about the job preparedness. I am thinking as a faculty how do we encourage students to play an active and persistent roles to prepare themselves in a workplace? How often do I provide feedback to my students? Have I ever promoted a strengths-based learning process while I was teaching them? This indicates to develop soft skills to prepare youth in job market. No doubt, the academic institution focused more on academic rigour but hardly pay attentions in the soft skills. Leela shared her feelings:

I was totally unknown about the working culture before I joined in an online shopping company. I was confident to get grades in college but I was hesitated to communicate with seniors staff of the organization. Though the organization was not big I leared various skills to take decision on time. During the online job, I needed to take decision promptly if the customers are asking any support and discount. Usually, I went to the managers and asked the solution but the manager remained quite busy. Possibly, he did not like my frequent presence in his chamber. Then, he suggested to solve the problem myself. While I was confused in the college I usually asked my teachers instead of trying to solve them.

Leela started working for an online company in March 2016. She was computer literate. She knew

a bit about the internet and email. She had all hard skills that are needed to work in the online jobs but she was not confident to achieve the target in the first month. She herself found that she did not have few critical and analytical skills so that I could not solve the problem. All participants are aware of developing technological influences and global work culture and diversity but they were restricted to the textbooks but they really gained experienced during the very short span of time in their work culture. They experienced that soft skills are also equally important as hard skills in preparing themselves in the job market from a short span of time.

These college graduates were struggling to be ready to adjust in the job market in Kathmandu that has been expanded from the physical working atmosphere to virtual work. Two of the participants work online and gained experience of the global workforce. They believed that it was not sufficient just to know about the technological advancement but it was equally important to know of dealing with the global work culture (Kalleberg, 2009). In doing so, they experienced the need of perseverance, responsibility, and self-discipline. They believe that such skills are useful for them in their future career perspective for a successful tenure.

Job Market for Youth

Youth employment is supposed to be one of the challenges for graduate youth in Kathmandu. Though there are not specific job orientation to these graduates in college and university. Mostly, these youth search jobs in private sectors such as banks, financial company and multinational companies because the private sector dominance in job market has been expanding. However, the current education system neither pay attention to produce human resource that fits in private sector. The expectation of youth in job market has been more competitive. All research participants shared that they hardly learnt about the soft skills during their course work of four years undergraduate study. Though, the curriculum of BBA envisions to prepare middle level managers but it is difficult to get job of assistants in Kathmandu.

In this line Shyam opined

It is very difficult to get job in Kathmandu. I am planning to you to my village where I could find a job but I am not sure whether I would get job in the banks and financial institution. My educational background is management and I am not able to develop career as a teacher. I am preparing myself as a middle level manager but I hardly get opportunities in Kathmandu.

Shyam seemed to be worried about the job after his graduation. His academic performances were very good but he scared to get job. Exploring further he shared that it was not because of degrees they have but because of soft skills. All graduates applied for the post but those will be selected who demonstrated their critical and analytical skills. Similarly, communication skills are also useful to get job. Most of us in our college do not know how to communicate in formal and official way. Urban youth spent time in the college joking, kidding, playing and talking without any consideration of importance of communication.

It is not only the opinion of Shyam but rest of the participants also hesitated to practice any creative, analytical and communication skills in their course work of BBA and lagged behind the job market. Students often said that they were taught to develop such skills to get jobs by the college administration and teachers but they hardly got chance to practice such skills. Theoretically they were familiar to develop set of skills and competencies but they were not able to differentiate particular soft skills which would help them, to establish themselves in job market.

All my participants observed and targeted Bank and finance companies as a prospectus job market but they hardly analyzed particular skills needed for navigating their environment, working with others and performing well. They mostly focused on the academic skills in their college which hardly prepared themselves to adjust in the job market. Urban youth

neither showed their interest to the formal teaching learning activities in classroom nor did they seem to be reluctant to develop their soft skills for preparing their career. Urban youth mostly experience unemployment is a problem generally in Nepal because of lack of soft skills. Throughout the world, youth are often forced to take on temporary, part-time, casual and insecure jobs with poor and hazardous working conditions.

The challenges and opportunities that young people are facing in the urban centers of Nepal, The mobility of youths is higher and creating many hazards in the urban centers such as unemployment, poverty and hunger at same time young students see more opportunities in the urban hubs to develop their education, career and future. Clear mismatch can be observed between demand and supply of skilled workforce especially in domestic and foreign employment sectors in the global work environment. Academic performance of the students do not capture the soft skills that are valued for the job market (Heckman, & Kautz,2012). It was difficult to observe their preparedness for their career in the college. Most of the time they were guided for examination. We teacher motivated them to achieve academic excellences rather than developing soft skills. Despite of some formal presentation, internship and a research, the college hardly focused to develop their creative and critical thinking, problem solving skills, negotiation skills. I also personally experienced that colleges are more oriented to increase their academic proficiency rather than preparing them for future market. It created unemployment and reduced the urban poverty.

Job market for the youth has been changing with the changing speed of urbanization in Kathmandu. Likewise, it became more competitive to get job for undergraduates. Similarly, increasing unemployment situation has also created urban poverty (World Bank, 2013) . Gradual change on the urbanization has made it difficult to reduce urban poverty because urban space has been translating into the economic product and political relation more than the concrete

development. In this line, the college hardly prepares their students for grabbing the opportunities of the job market contributing for producing human resource. Urban plans and policies more oriented to enhance the economic mobility of the city. How is it possible without proper human resources who hardly prepared for the job market in urban centers?

In the similar line it is expected from the academic institutions to produce human resources who could understand urban centers that are much affected by the industrial and commercial mobility, otherwise, it may increase urban poverty.

Acharya (2010) includes that education is the part of the human infrastructure development. However, he focuses more on the mainstream of the education (formal and non-formal) that may reduce the urban poverty in the one hand. On the other hand there is no any specific provision to reduce the urban poverty for the sustainable cities. In this line, I argue developing human resources with soft skills may reduce the problem of unemployment and reduce the urban poverty to some extent. The urban poverty in Kathmandu has been increasing but Dahal (2006) believes that urban poor but are assets of urban economy and are mostly involved in informal sector of urban economy as they have diversified and unstructured sources of income due to their irregular and seasonality of employment/works” (p. 42).

Globalizing Youth and Job Market

Undergraduates are facing various challenges developing their career in Kathmandu which increase uncertainty about economic and social developments in globalizing the world (Mills & Blossfeld, 2005). Globalization has created a lot of uncertainty to find out the jobs for the youth in the urban center but if they develop certain soft skills to fit in the global job market. Globalization is not a single process, happening everywhere differently. Globalization is made up of a series of processes, some of which are working in opposite directions and with opposite ends (Waters, 2001, p.5). In such situation, urban undergraduates youth face more challenges to get the job in the market. Jeevan and Shyam believed

that certificate of undergraduate may not be sufficient to understand the interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology (Boudreaux, 2008, p. 1). Undergraduates in Kathmandu hardly perceive the role of such changing dynamics of global working culture while they were studying in colleges. Moreover, they lived in likelihood global culture. In this line, Jeevan opined

I use the internet, email, fax machine, satellite and cable T.V, iphone. I am connected to the global culture but I spent most of the time in social media chatting with friends. I hardly use these skills to find out the proper jobs in the global market. I am learning to be global in my everyday life but I am not prepared to fit myself in the global working force.

Jeevan was gradually adapting global ways of living but he hardly connected to the global ways of earning. His thought of being global was to examine the day to day life of urban people, putting cultural aspects in mind. How people’s day to day life has been impacted by the waves of globalization. The changes in day to day life like eating, listening music and playing games, reading books etc have been explained with the perspective of globalization.

Though, globalization is not merely an economic phenomenon; rather it covers all the aspects of modern life: the economic, the cultural, the political, the humanitarian, the social, and the ecological (Dasgupta, 2004, p. 15). It also influences the socialization of the youths and thus helped to frame their future career and job. Globalization brings together the people from different races, cultures, ethnic groups and socioeconomic classes into closer contact with each other. How far urban undergraduates learn the soft skills of respecting urban diversity? How far they practice to address the economic and cultural divide. As Dasgupta (2004) states, the fear and the injuries that globalization can inflict in each and every facet of our economic,

cultural, political, and social lives but most of the time youth became more vulnerable to get the job.

In relation to my epistemic understanding that cities are always questioned in the age of globalisation for justice and have asked how people relate to cities in the face of current processes of disjunction and interconnectedness (Donner & De Neve, 2006, p.4). Globalization creates job opportunities in the job market but it often seeks employability skills to get job with soft skills such as personality, attitude and behaviour that help in non-technical and non-domain skills. These are collection of several skills such as team building, leadership, motivation, time management, presentation skills (Rao, 2010, p. 3). However, the undergraduates like Jeevan and Leela in the colleges hardly practice to work in the global work force. They did not conducive environment in the college to develop their soft skills such as addressing the need of globalization. "Most job candidates declare to have highly-developed soft skills, however, these capabilities cannot be confirmed by any of formal certification, as this situation happens with most other competence." (Slawinska, & Villani, 2014, p. 56).

Reorientation: Need of Soft Skills

Carrying out an ethnography in a private college where BBA programme has been running, I explore the preparedness of undergraduates' preparedness for the career. It is observed that most of the undergraduates are struggling to get jobs in the job market but it difficult to prove themselves competent because they lack soft skills such as responsibility, integrity, communication, courtesy, social skills, flexibility, professionalism, teamwork and positive attitude (Robles, 2012). They realized that soft skills are important to enter into the labour market despite of their academic qualification. During the four years of their academic performance in the BBA programme they theoretically learnt about some soft skills such as communication skills, negation skills, and problem solving but they hardly practice such skills in the real working environment. Academic institutions mostly focused on the academic excellent rather than developing soft skills therefore students

struggle more to find appropriate job placement in the job market.

Likewise, job market in Kathmandu has been changing rapidly in Kathmandu for a decade when the access of communication has been developed in Nepal. However, the youth used changed communication for the entertainment rather than connecting themselves for the labour market. In doing so, they hardly adopted soft skills to suit in the globalized job market. They are not prepared to address the changing working culture in the globalization. It is realized that it is enough to prepare undergraduates students academically sound in the colleges and university but it is important to prepare for the job market. In so doing, academic institution are expected to prioritize soft skills in a practical way, otherwise, it increases urban unemployment and poverty. Thus, it is the need of the academic institution to prepare their students for the job market by offering relevant soft skills during their formal undergraduate course in management.

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TITI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jtd.v2i0.15442>

**Journal of
Training and Development**
2016, Volume 2
ISSN: 2392-456X(Print)
ISSN: 2392-4578(Online)

Migration, HIV and Technical Education in Nepal

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Abstract

HIV and AIDS are crucial issues throughout the world. The first case in Nepal was diagnosed in 1988. Due to poverty, most of the people from the rural region of Nepal i.e. from the mid and far western region migrate to the neighboring country India to find work. During their stay in India, due to unsafe sex these migrants get infected with HIV and AIDS. After returning home these migrants transmit the diseases to their spouses. The children born from infected parents also get infected as well. The lack of technical education and vocational training compel these people to migrate in India to search for job without having any basic skill. The lack of knowledge on sexually transmitted diseases also increases the probability of getting infected. Therefore, it is necessary to make the people from the rural parts of Nepal aware of the sexually transmitted diseases, its causes and precautions. In addition, providing technical education and vocational training to rural people will enable them to secure more reliable job both outside and within the country.

Keywords: HIV, migration and technical education.

People move from one place to another in search for job or better opportunities to maintain their livelihood. There are mainly two factors i.e. pull factor and push factor, which makes people migrate to new destinations. Nepalese are influenced by both these factors mainly due to economic instability and also for better opportunities. As discussed about the factors of Migration, both voluntary and forced migration are increasing trend in the world today. As some countries are facing internal conflicts and political instability, the people from these countries are forced to migrate from their native destination.

Also, due to lack of opportunities, poverty and hardship is compelling people to migrate. Both these situations holds true in case of Nepal. The insurgency, political instability, lack of proper job and other factors are forcing the people from the Nepal to migrate.

It is widely believed that alarming number of migrant workers from Nepal are unskilled (69.1 percent) while corresponding figures of semiskilled, skilled, and highly skilled are only 27.1%, 3.4% and 0.4% respectively (Gurung, 2007, as cited in Council for

Technical Education and Vocational Training [CTEVT], 2014, p. 1). However, people do not have the skill to get the good job as well as earn more amount because people do not have the technical education and vocational training to upgrade their skills and knowledge therefore people are compel to work in low wages and also not get the reliable job due to less skilled.

Migration is happening at a time when many countries are ill-prepared to deal with the changing demography and when policies and attitudes towards population movement and immigration are hardening. The health implications caused due to migration are many, and, in some cases, illness and death rates associated are exacerbated. This is mainly due to lack of policies needed to make migration a healthy and socially productive process. From a public health point of view, this is having—and will continue to have—serious ramifications for the people that move, the family they leave behind, and the communities that host the newcomers (Carballo & Nerukar, 2001, p. 556).

Migration is not a new phenomenon because, if we see the history of human society evolution from primitive society to industrial society, it was constantly migrating the people from one place to another in search for food or better life option. The possibility of migration is depended on how people perceive the world and their lives. Poverty is the main reason for people to move in search for better opportunities. In addition, conflict situation in one's country is also another contributing factor for migration. However, there are also challenges on public health because they may not get proper balance diet or they may be involved in unsafe behaviors (Carballo & Nerukar, 2001). Migrants are mostly poor people moving from poor economic environments, they carry with them the health profiles that result from poverty. Their understanding of health comes from having to adapt to poor ecological conditions along with limited possibilities for change and control over their own life (Carballo & Nerukar, 2001, p. 55).

People's movement across the borders for employment is increasing. This has a direct impact on the national economy. The remittance sent by the migrants back home also contributes in their countries' gross domestic product. UNAIDS (2008) estimates approximately 86 million people are international labor migrants. Both origin and destination countries benefit from the migrants, as the origin countries get the remittances and the destination countries gets employees and workers at a lower cost. However, it is necessary to focus on the HIV related issues among migrants especially labor migrants who are from poor economic condition. It is these migrants who are in risk due to lack of information and education. This risk from HIV and need of awareness, which must be addressed in striving towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support services by 2010 (UNAIDS, 2008). This article mainly focuses on labor migrant to India and situation of HIV among the labor migrants and how technical education can help to sustain their livelihood.

Migration and HIV Risk

There is risk of HIV infection among labor migrants in origin and destination countries due to social and economic factors. When people are migrated from origin destination, they leave their family members and spouse, besides this, they may have addiction to alcohol or other drugs. Due to the changing social context, when they may face languages barriers, socio-cultural influences and change in living conditions. The feeling of loneliness, stress and isolation may lead the migrant workers to engage in behaviors such as excessive drinking, unsafe casual or commercial sex, which increases the risk of HIV. This risk is further made worse by inadequate access to HIV services as well as fear of being stigmatized for seeking HIV-related information or support (UNAIDS, 2008).

Labor Migration and People Living with HIV Migrant labor who acquire HIV in foreign countries, or who are already living with HIV, often do not have access to HIV services. This is mainly due to the community that does not accept the HIV infected

people as other people and stigmatize them. For this reason, the HIV infected person does not want to disclose their status. This contributes to make poor health condition for HIV infected people (UNAIDS, 2008).

Nepal is one of the major sources for migrant laborers, helping to fulfill the demands of the rapidly industrializing countries in Asia and abroad. Foreign employment provides an alternative livelihood for many young Nepalese (CARAM Asia, 2007; Asian Development Bank [ADB], 2009). India is the main destination to get a job for livelihood but migrant populations have a greater risk for poor health in general and HIV infection in particular. This situation has arisen due to the impact of socio-cultural patterns of the migrant's situation on health, their economic transitions, reduced availability and accessibility of health services (National Institute of Development Studies [IIDS], 2006).

A large number of Male Labour Migrants (MLM) from Western, Mid and Far-Western regions migrates to HIV burden areas of India. Due to their mobility and frequent return back home to their families, spouses are also at a higher risk of HIV transmission. The size of these returnee male labour migrants were estimated to be around 505,728 in 2011 (CBS, 2011 and NDHS, 2011 as cited in National Centre for AIDS and STD Control [NCASC], 2015b). According to department of foreign employment (2014), the data shows the trend of migration (both male and female) abroad which is mentioned in figure 1. The figure 1 shows that there is increasing trend in migration for both male and female. But, mostly people do not train on specialized course because the technical education and vocational (TEVT) program is available in certain geographical region in Nepal which cannot afford by all people who are migrated. Due to unskilled, people compel to involve in low level works that unable to earn the amount as they needed and cannot fulfill their basic needs.

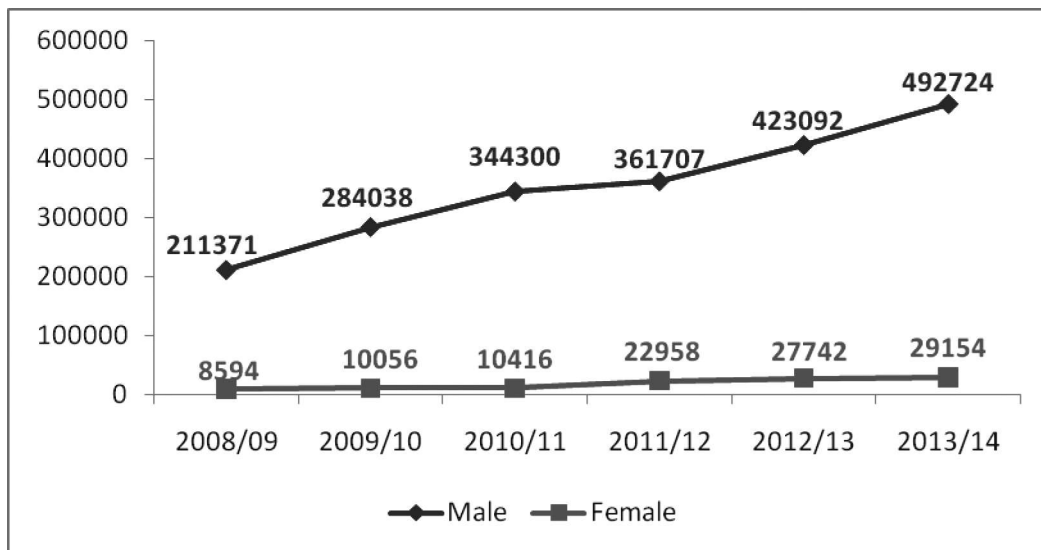


Figure 1. Migration Trend of Nepalese People

Cross Border Migration & Risk of HIV Nepal shares an open border with India. This means that there is no need for visa and other official documents to cross over and thus there are no exact records of migration flows to India. The estimated

number of population that migrated to India is 722,255 (MoFE, 2014). According to IBBS 2015, a large proportion of the respondents (47.4%) has stayed in India for more than 36 months (NCASC, 2015b). If we analyze them from TEVT, they did

not receive the any skillful training and education because mostly people are migrated in adolescent age as well as there do not have access on TEVT due to geographical regions as well as their economic condition.

More than 11 percent of the respondents confessed having sex with FSWs in India. UNAIDS study in 2014 found that only 10% of Nepalese migrants in India were aware of the availability of treatment for HIV. These low rates of antiretroviral therapy knowledge were found across the region NCASC, 2015b; UNAIDS, 2008)

Nepal is categorized as a country facing concentrated HIV epidemic (NCASC, 2014). Government of Nepal shows that the estimated number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) is 39,249. Out of the total PLHIV, children (0-14 years) are 1,968, adults (15-49 years) are 28,869, and adults (50+ years) are 8,412. The adult HIV prevalence (15-49 years): 0.2%. The figure 2 shows the HIV prevalence among the targeted population and the figure 1 shows the male including male labor migrants have high prevalence of HIV which consists 40% and the spouse of migrants and low risk female found second highest HIV prevalence group which consist 34% (NCASC, 2014).

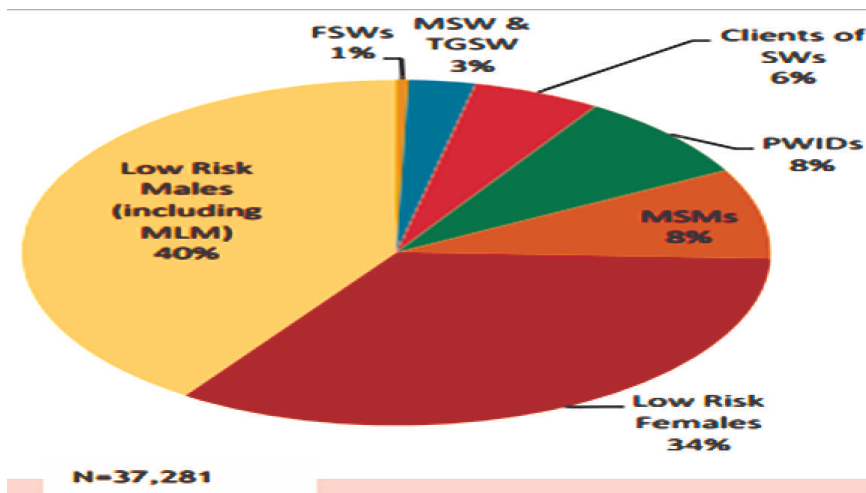


Figure 2. HIV Prevalence among Adults

The behavioral surveillance survey was conducted in every two years. In 2015, the surveillance survey was conducted among 720 respondents from western, mid-western and far western districts of Nepal. The HIV prevalence among male labor migrants in the mid and Far-West regions varies over time, being 1.4% in 2012, 0.8% in 2010, 1.8% in 2008, and 2.8% in 2006. In contrast, HIV prevalence among male labor migrants in Western Hilly has remained within 1.5% since 2006 to 2012 (IBBS 2012, 2010, 2008 & 2006). HIV prevalence among male labor migrants in both regions is within 2% though is factually correct. But at the same time it may not be telling enough to convey an important message that

even a small prevalence of HIV in the large population of male labor migrants (of 505,728) obviously translate into a large number of people living with HIV (NCASC, 2015a).

Regarding the destination, India, Major destinations for the migration among the respondents of Western Region were Delhi (30.6%), Himanchal Pradesh (16.9%), Uttar Pradesh (11.95), Haryana (10.6%), Maharashtra (13.1%) and Punjab (10%). However, major destination for migration among the migrants of the Mid to Far Western Region was Maharashtra (81.9%), Delhi (43.1%),Gujarat (23.3%), Uttarakhand (15%), Himanchal Pradesh (13.1%),

Uttar Pradesh (11.9%) and Rajasthan (10.8%) (NCASC, 2015b).

Regarding the duration of stay in India, A large proportion of the respondents (47.4%) stayed in India for more than 36 months. Slightly higher percentage of the respondents who belonged to the Mid to Far Western Region (i.e. 49.4% of the migrants) had 37 and more months stay in India, which when compared with the respondents of Western Region (45.3%) (NCASC, 2015b).

Sexual Behavior of Male Labor Migrants
More than nine out of every ten male labor migrants (91.1%) had ever had sex with female. The respondents of Mid to Far Western Region was higher (93.9%) than Western Region (88.3%). More than half (54.3%) of the respondents had first had sexual contact before the age of 20 years, whereas 3.4 percent of the respondents were less than 15 years old when they first had sex.. More than one-third of the respondents (34%) had the first sexual contact between the age of 20-24 years and another 10.8 percent had experience of first sexual contact at the age of 25-29 years. A total of 17.5 percent of the respondents had ever had sex with female sex workers and this proportion was found slightly more among the respondents of Mid to Far Western Region (19.5%) than those respondents of the Western Region (15.4%) (NCASC, 2015b).
Sexual Practice of Male Labor Migrants in Nepal
Almost 8 percent of the respondents had ever had sex with Female Sex Workers (FSWs) in Nepal and this proportion was found slightly more among the respondents of Mid to Far Western Region (8.6%) as against the 6.9 percent of the respondents of the Western Region. Almost 36 percent of the respondents who had ever had sexual contact with FSWs in Nepal had this relationship with more than five FSWs. More than one-third (33.9%) of the respondents had sexual relation with 2-3 FSWs and almost one-fifth (19.6%) of them had sex with one FSW (NCASC, 2015b).

Sexual Contact with FSWs and Condom Use in India

The research shows that 5.8 percent of the respondents had sex with FSWs in the past one year and this involvement was almost similar among the respondents of Western Region (6.1%) and Mid to Far Western Region (5.6%). It is also shown that 45.2% of the male labor migrants had used condom during sex with FSWs in India, while 75.1 percent of the respondents had never had sex with FSWs in India. These behaviors also put them in high risk of HIV transmission because the main mode of HIV transmission is unsafe sex therefore mostly the male labor migrants who return from India have HIV infection (NCASC, 2015b)

Prevalence of HIV among Male Labor Migrants
Due to the unsafe behavior of migrants, the trends are increasing in the prevalence of HIV infection among male labor migrants. There was increase in the prevalence of HIV among MLMs from 1.1 percent in 2006 to the 1.4 percent in 2008 in Western Region. Similarly, HIV prevalence among MLMs of the Mid to Far Western Region was 2.7 percent in 2006; which was reduced drastically to 0.8 percent in 2008 but its prevalence increased to 1.5 percent in 2010. Out of 720 Male Labor Migrants (MLM) who participated in this survey, 3(0.4%) were identified as HIV positive (NCASC, 2015).
Technical Education to Migrant Workers
Rapid change can be observed in the skill composition of Nepalese migrant workers in recent years. The proportion of unskilled workers is decreased by 18 percentage point between 2004 to 2014, whereas corresponding figures of skilled and professional workers increased by 17 and 1 percentage point with in the same period of time. Nepalese foreign employment professionals have received increasing demand of skilled workers in recent years. This is also creating pressure to increase the supply of workers accordingly, however the capacity of training institutes in Nepal are not in the position to satisfy the received demand (CTEVT, 2014, p. 28). Currently, government has started to provide technical education and vocational training to migrant labor going abroad but this type of training and education are still lacking for those labor migrants who are

currently working in India. If the labor migrants receive such technical education and vocational training, they will be able to sustain and maintain their livelihood without migrating to India. Even if they do migrate, they will get better opportunities and benefits due to the skill they possess. Being in a better position, migrants can be able to take their spouse along with them. This will certainly help reduce their sexual relation with FSW, which in turn will reduce the transmission of HIV. Proper orientation and education will help the migrants to take precaution and preventions from STD as well. Therefore, it is necessary to provide better orientations, skill related trainings, proper sex educations, knowledge on how to take precaution against STDs and other information to all labor migrants. The work standard, minimum wage, benefits, international labor norms, living conditions, and labor rights should be understood by all labor migrants as well.

Conclusion

Data shows that HIV prevalence is high among labor migrants. Also, the spouse of these migrants also suffers from the disease. Poverty along with HIV has made it hell for these migrants, who after being infected cannot continue to work. The cost for treatment is an additional burden to those already living poverty. Due to HIV infection among parent, children also contract HIV from birth, increasing the number of people living with HIV. The hope for these children is very little. Early death due to HIV has made many children orphan depriving them from the basic right to education and childhood. The technical and vocational training can play an important role to reduce such situations. By providing vocational education and technical training to the people in rural areas of Nepal, who are deprived from general education can help maintain their livelihood. Providing skill trainings and vocational education can help the people to open their own business and help them be self-employed within their country. Even if they do migrate to other countries, they can have better opportunities if they are equipped with certain skill.

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