



RESEARCH PAPER

Parental Satisfaction and Involvement in the Provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Punjab

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ABSTRACT

Parents' satisfaction and involvement in education have shown encouraging effects on students' success and achievement. The current study was conducted to distinguish the views of parents about their satisfaction and involvement in the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Punjab and the problems, issues being faced by their children who were the age of 16 to 18 years and enrolled in Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs). Parents are the important stakeholders and they play an important role in the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training to their children. The population of the study included all the parents of the students who were enrolled in Vocational training Institutes (VTIs) of Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC) after doing matriculation. Twenty four parents were selected conveniently as a sample from four zones of Punjab. Data were collected through interviews by visiting the respective schools and after taking consent by the head of the school. An in-depth interview schedule was developed for taking responses of parents. Data were analyzed by using the thematic analysis technique. Findings of the study revealed that parents are not much satisfied and involved in the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to their children. On the other hand, the students have to face a lot of problems in VTIs including unavailability of teachers/instructors, obsolete equipment, and lack of resources. After concluding, recommendations were given to authorities of the Punjab Vocational Training Council and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authorities of Punjab.

KEYWORDS Parents, Satisfaction, Involvement, Technical Vocational Education and Training

Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) refers to "aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, and knowledge relating to occupants in various sectors of economic and social life," as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO) (ILO, 2021). In addition to technical knowledge and aptitude, "softer" skills such as communication, negotiation, and teamwork are becoming increasingly important. TVET is provided at public and private educational institutions, as well as various types of formal and informal instruction, with the goal of providing life-long learning resources to all parts of society (Amegah, 2021).

However, the primary goal of TVET is to prepare young people and adults for the labor market. The labor market has changed dramatically as a result of the technological revolution and advances in science and technology. To link the planned education with vocational demands, new obstacles must be overcome. Several countries are revamping their educational systems in this manner, with the goal of teaching youngsters to satisfy national, regional, or international market needs (Gebu, 2020).

Technical and vocational programs are currently facing several challenges. According to a research published by the Asian Development Bank (2014), TVET programs are not based on industry or labor market needs. The lack of coordination between industry and training providers is one of the most critical challenges. Training providers do not plan and implement job-oriented training, and they lack industry-experienced educators to properly instruct students (Aldossari, 2020). Curriculum and training programs are not aligned with labor market demands. Similarly, employers discover issues with graduates' academics, cooperation, attitude, honesty, and work discipline, and as a result, they do not perform well once hired. Training program curricula are rigid and rarely revised to reflect changing needs. (Lofgren, Llomak, & Toom, 2020).

Pakistan's situation is similar to that of the rest of the world. According to Shah (2013), vocational and technical programs are failing to achieve their objectives of increasing employment and reducing poverty. He also showed that vocational and technical institutes' premises, finances, transportation, and hostels are inadequate, as are the facilities for advanced reading material, internet research, advice, counseling, and supervision. Instructors lack industry experience and exposure, and graduates or pass-outs are not recognized or recognized in the field. According to Shah (2013), the curriculum and assessment system are outmoded, theory-oriented, and less focused on practical and technical skills, and there is no link between technical and vocational institutes and industry. The results of a study conducted by the National Institute of Science and Technical Education, Islamabad for UNESCO(2014), on "Technical and Vocational Education in Pakistan at Secondary Level" shows that the link between industry and secondary education in Pakistan is very weak, with the exception of Punjab. No legitimate plan for teacher development and improvement could exist. In Pakistan, the Ministry of Vocational Education and Training (VET) must create and develop an acceptable framework and basis for pre-service and in-service teacher education (Hamdan, Yunos & Lai, 2020).

Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTTC) was set up in October 1998 by the Government of Punjab, under the Punjab Vocational Training Council Act. This act was passed by the Punjab Assembly on 24th September 1998; assented to by the Governor of Punjab on 29th September 1998. It is established on the public and private relationship. There are 3,634 public and private technical and vocational organizations in Pakistan, in which Punjab Vocational Training Council is running 208 vocational institutes. The number of students, who can complete their graduation from these institutes is 40,000 for each annum. This council offers different courses associated with 51 occupations to destitute youngsters and young ladies. The Punjab Government administered Rs. 400 million for Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTTC) in spending plan 2019-2020 (Lodhi, 2019).

Literature Review

Apprentices (trades or craft learners) working in various industries and trainees / students trained in various TVET Institutions receive non-academic technical education and practical training to improve their skills and knowledge (TVET Institutes, Centres & Schools). TVET is the portion of the education system that delivers courses and training programmes relevant to employment with the goal of enabling young trainees / students to transition from secondary school to work (social goal) and supplying the labour market with competent apprentices (economic objective). TVET is a broad word that refers to all components of the educational process that include, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and allied disciplines, as well as the acquisition of awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards careers in the different sectors of financial and communal life (Wahba, 2012).

Parents have a variety of influences on their children's development. Parents, according to Lang and Diener (2021), are sociocultural elements whose degree of education

and occupation might influence a student's academic performance. Every parent is supposed to have high expectations for their children in terms of academics and careers. This might include the type of secondary school they would attend, which could range from junior vocational to pre-university. According to OECD (2020), parents' high expectations had a favorable impact on their children's school careers and learning results. Researchers such as Finnamore (2020) have stated that there is a link between students' academic achievement in secondary school and their educational level of their parents. Parents are anticipated to be significant players in school choice selections for their children, given their level of influence, particularly when it comes to their children. According to Diener (2021), middle-class parents were concerned about mediocrity in public schools, so they looked into private schools and charter schools to help their children develop their academic, athletic, and artistic abilities. Parents deciding the schools their children will attend is thought to improve efficacy and efficiency (Breiner, 2016). This means that parents do not make mistakes when making decisions on their children. Whatever a parent decides is for the child's best interests.

A parent's impact in a child's education includes not just sending them to a public or private school, but also electing to home school them (Ayub, 2017). Given that parents have a significant influence on their children's educational and career choices, it is reasonable to conclude that parents also play a significant role in determining the type of education their children will receive, whether vocational or general, private or public. Despite the critical role that vocational education plays in a nation's growth through skill acquisition in schooling, it remains unpopular with both parents and students. Parents generally have a favorable view toward vocational education, according to several studies (Breiner, 2016).

According to Ayub (2017), parents and students had positive attitudes toward vocational education, while Ceka and Murati (2016), found that while parents had a positive attitude toward vocational education, parents and students in vocational education had a more positive attitude than parents and students in academic schools. Despite the general good attitude toward vocational education, it is nevertheless despised by parents and students, as indicated by poor enrolment in engineering, banking, finance, and medicine (Easu, 2018). The proof demonstrates the way that guardians' optimistic perspective towards vocational education can influence the decision taken by a child to join in vocational education and technical training or not. The absence of interest by guardians' influences enrolment; it influences the degree of talented people in the work force and labor market. It likewise influences the self-assurance of a person. The concept of intended behavior and the family human asset the management theory makes sense of the impact of family/guardians on future results of kids (Breiner, 2016).

Global Trends Regarding Enhancement of Vocational Education

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training is experiencing major fundamental changes. According to Education International (2017), these changes have emerged from intervention of various nations and involvement of international organizations. Major developments have been made in the following aspects:

Revision of curricula

Curricula are being modified and being reformed as demand driven and employable, with special focus on skill-competitiveness and employability of the graduates.

Standards setting and development

Setting of standards is also another factor being focused to encourage the "adaptation and improvement of best practices" in the field. This is the fundamental necessity of projects which are financed by foreign donor organizations.

Social advertising of technical education

Professional guidance and social advertising have been utilized as instrument to upgrade social picture of Vocational and Technical Education, endorsing social value and lessen poverty from the people.

Services, modernization and maintenance

The changes are being made for the improvement of its services and equipment. Endeavors are being made to coordinate the training conditions with the real working environment.

Expanding access and gender development

The improvements are being made to work on the expansion of Vocational and Technical Education for both male and female participants.

Clayton and Harris, (2018) has additionally argued that in the Asia-Pacific region explicitly some significant uncertainties of governments in regards to TVET are; to increase job opportunities for TVET graduates, to beat staff deficiency, preparations for training at industry and inspiring workshops (for staff), up gradation of educational programs to address market issues and needs to improve industry- institute relationship, improvement of Technical Education infrastructure, and students counseling.

Material and Methods

The study was qualitative in nature and data were collected by conducting interviews by the parents of students who were enrolled in Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) of Punjab Vocational Training Council.

Population

The population of the study included all the parents of matriculation passed students who were enrolled in all the 208 Vocational Training Institutes established in 36 districts of the Punjab province of Pakistan.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Population and sample of the study had three levels:

Level 1: Districts

Level 2: Vocational Training Institutions, Punjab

Level 3: Parents

Selection of Districts and Institutions

At first stage, Punjab was divided into four zones (zone I, II, III,IV) by drawing one vertical and one horizontal line touching the central point of the map of the Punjab. **Zone I** includes 18 Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) located in district Dera Ghazi Khan (3), RajanPur (2), MuzafarGarh (4), Multan (6) and Layyah(3). **Zone II** contains 68 institutions located in district Gujrat (5), Sargodha (9), Jhelum (5), Chakwal (8), Khushab (6), Mianwali (6), Jhang (5), Attock (6), Rawalpindi (10),Mandi Bhauddin (3), Chiniot (2) and Bhakar(3). **Zone III** includes 35 institutions located in district Vihari (4), Bahawalpur (6), Rahim Yar Khan (7),Khanewal (7),Lodhran(6) and Bahawalnagar(5). **Zone IV** consists of 87 institutions located in district Toba Take Singh (5), Sahiwal (13), Pakpattan (4), Okara (6),

Faisalabad (10), Kasur (7), Lahore (15), Sheikhpura (8), Gujranwala (6), Sialkot (4), Nankana (4), Hafizabad (3), and Narowal (2).

Selection of parents of Students enrolled in TVET Program

Parents of students enrolled in TVET program was selected from 10% institutions from each zone (zone I= two institutes, zone II= eight institutions, zone III= four institutions, zone IV= ten institutions). One parent was selected from each institute, through convenient sampling. So the sample of the study were 24 parents. The assistance of the principals were taken in making requests to parents to come to institutions for interview.

Instrumentation

An in-depth interview schedule was developed to find out the satisfaction of parents on providing TVET to their children and their own participation in the development of their children. Interview Schedule comprised of questions to identify parental satisfaction and their involvement on the provision of TVET to their children. The interview schedule was validated by five experts from research field.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by using thematic analysis technique for the interviews taken from the parents of enrolled students in VTIs. The analysis of interviews are as follows:

Results and Discussion

Q1: Are you satisfied with the provision of TVET courses in your child's institute?

Almost 20% of the parents, have the same response that they don't have any kind of problem related to the provision of TVET and they are totally satisfied with TVET program. On the other hand, some of the parents 20% responded, that they are not satisfied with the provision of TVET because there are no proper teachers in the institutes. Most of the time, their children don't have classes because teachers are not available, they further said that their kids have the classes in only two or three days in a month. Some of the parents 30%, also complained that according to their children equipment are not latest and they suffered a lot because of obsolete equipment. Few of the parents 20%, also revealed that the number of students are relatively high in classes. This leads to ineffective and inefficient training of students while emphasis is placed on passing final examination. This inadequacy in preparation for the job market brought workplace problems to the students. Some of the respondents 10% also told that Vocational Training Institutes are very far away from their houses, it is a great difficulty for their kids to reach over there daily and on time. For girls, it becomes even more difficult.

Q2: What changes you have noted in the behavior of your children after their enrolment in TVET program?

According to 40% responded, they did not note or observe any kind of behavioral change in their kids. On the other hand, 15% notices that their kids are more disciplined, punctual and their communication in native language is better than before. 15% explained that their children are much confident, disciplined and their time management skills are much improved. Whereas the 30% described that their children are much better in practicing tolerance, positivity and their decision making ability is also improved. Conferring R8,

"My child was always reluctant in taking any decision and he was always ask me what to do and what not to do. A few months after getting enrolled in VTI, I saw some changes in his behavior like now he takes his decisions by himself. His confidence level is also boost up and his

communication skills are also improved. Now he go to the markets by himself to buy different products and he is more independent than before."

Q3: How do you attend all the parents teachers meeting that are arranged by the institute?

Almost all the respondents have given the same answer to this question that institutes do not arrange any kind of parents' teachers meeting throughout the year.

Q4: How do you take interest in the progress of your child in studies?

On taking interest in the progress of child 35% responded, replied that they checked the classwork of their kids on daily basis and asked them that what they had done today. These parents further said that we try not to give any kind of household work which wastes their time of study. 25% participants responded that they always encourage their child to read or study something or at least revise their previous work if they don't get any homework and try to make sure that the kids are provided with a peaceful atmosphere at home. They further described that they try to avoid discussing family problems when the children are studying. On the contrary, 20% explained that their children are grown up now and take care of their studies on their own, on the other hand these parents are the working parents. The rest 20% replied that, we try to maintain a contact with the teacher. From teachers we come to know about the child's activities in institutes and make sure to correct the behavior of child if something is wrong.

Q5: How do teachers get you involved in the academic and vocational activities in the institute?

All the responded are agreed on the same point that institutes do not involve the parents in any kind of academic and vocational activities.

Q6: What strategies do you adopt in making your child regular and punctual?

Almost all the respondents have the same opinion related to punctuality that they always try to make their children sleep early and they do not allow them to use mobiles or any gadgets when they are on bed. They further described that they always encourage them to pack their bags and essential accessories before going to bed so they will not be late for the next morning. As far as regularity of their kids are concerned, they responded that they do not ask them any household work during institute hours. They further described that they do not let them go anywhere except school and they only miss school when they are really sick.

Q7: What are your suggestions that you want to give for the improvement of TVET program?

Parents have given the following suggestions for the improvement of VTIs.

- There should be sufficient number of teachers for the students.
- Parents teachers' meetings should be arranged every after three or six months.
- There should be a strong connection between teachers and parents.
- Curricular and non-curricular activities should be planned for the development of students and parents should be invited or involved in all these activities.
- There should be a proper arrangement of transportation for the students who came from the far flung areas.

- Parents should be aware of their child's progress and development.
- Equipment should be latest.
- Number of students should be decreased from the classes.
- More attention should be paid towards life skills.

Discussion

On the satisfaction of parents with the provision of technical and vocational education and training, academics, and life skills to their young children, 30% parents are completely satisfied with the program while 70% parents have certain problems including shortage of teachers, inadequate teaching material, obsolete equipment, over-crowded classes, unavailability of transport (Amedorme & Fiagbe, 2013). The existing technical institutes lack facilities and materials for training students in the various vocations. TVET institute is a place to get practical knowledge and hand-on experience with expansion to the fundamental theory in the selected field of specialization. If the training materials or the equipment are lacking or insufficient then the results of these institutions will have inadequacies in their areas of specialization (Mack & White, 2019).

According to Dasmani (2011), these insufficiencies will ultimately prevent them from practicing well on their own and working successfully in the enterprises. The teachers or the instructors in these institutions are not sufficient and when they are more, majority of them have deficits in practical experience. Some of them have not worked in the enterprises to enhance their skills before going to the classroom and therefore find it extremely challenging to convey or have the necessary impact as far as attainment of practical skills are concerned. While trying to address these difficulties, Reddan and Harrison (2010) contended that TVET organizations need to rebuild their programs to be responsive to the necessities of students. To accomplish this objective, TVET program must focus on results as far as the needed skills, knowledge and behavior of students.

As far as the life skills are concerned 45% parents expressed that they do not observe any kind of change in the life skills of their children while 65% of the parents notes the change in the behavior of their children. Most of the parents described that their kids are more disciplined, confident and manages the time more easily than before. On the other hand, they also described that their children are much tolerant, positive and their ability of decision making is also improved (Murgor, 2017). According to the recent research, soft skills are connected to a comprehensive collection of social and wellbeing practices and can bring about a wider scope of positive results, including conflict and violence anticipation, dynamic and responsible citizenship, and improved wellbeing. These are significant in themselves, and can positively influence business outcomes. For instance, programs promoting soft skills connected to both decision making and occupations, like positive self-concept, self-efficacy and goal orientation, have been displayed to deliver strong positive results in young men and women (Ondieki, Kahihu & Muthoni, 2019).

As indicated by King (2010), these abilities also help young students specifically in exploring the difficult decision-making involved in balancing work and education. At the point when educational organizations" offer the chances to students to foster relationships, learn how to express their concepts and utilize their negotiation skills, it can move over into the family circle leading to positive impact on family (Murgor, 2017). Soft skills improvement requires presenting youth to new thoughts and behaviors, and learning them requires suitable levels of challenge, practice, feedback and reflection. Teachers who provide help, training and support to youth are basic as youth learn and exhibit the skills (Ondieki, Kahihu, & Muthoni, 2019).

While answering about their own involvement in the provision of TVET to their children, almost all the parents answered that they try their level best to involve in the studies of their children. 85% of the parents responded that they always care about the studies of their children. They further described that they always asked their kids to do their home assignments on time, they don't let them go anywhere in their study hours. They also try, not to disturb their children during studies and try to keep in touch with their teachers (Pontz, 2019). They always try to make their children punctual and regular, helping them in maintaining their sleeping routine so it would help them to be punctual and they also try to make them as regular as possible. The remaining 15% of parents explained that they are the working parents, so children take care of their studies on their own (Ceka & Murati, 2016).

Conclusion

On the contrary, institutes do not involve the parents in any kind of academics, life skills related activities, technical and vocational activities. On the other hand, they also don't arrange any kind of parents teachers meeting throughout the year. Parents are not aware about the progress and deficiencies of their children. If parents want to know anything, they have to contact the teachers on their own (Easu, 2018). It is a great drawback of VTIs that they don't establish parents teachers relationship because both parents and teachers play a key role in education of their child. The teacher instructs about the fundamental life and academic abilities with giving love and backing that help students in their strong development and progress. At the point when teachers accomplice their ability to deliver any idea or concept with the essential support parents deliver, students are more ready to have a positive institute experience (Ayub, 2017).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that

- The quality of TVET programs must be considered. This can be achieved through the provision of adequate facilities, equipment, consumable materials, and hand tools; provision of qualified TVET personnel; adequate provision of instructional materials; provision of in-service training for TVET personnel.
- There should be proper supervision and checking of the execution of TVET programs by government.
- The restricted number of students in one section should be kept to maintain quality of education, and facilitate TVET teachers during performing their duties.
- Transport facility should also be provided to TVET students living in far flung areas.
- Parent teacher meetings and parental guidance and counseling sessions need to be conducted on regular basis. As parents have been found to be keenly interested in the academic progress of their children.
- Curricula must be reviewed and revised intermittently to meet the needs of fast technological developments.
- Labs should properly be maintained and furnished with the required equipment and technologies.
- There is a need for Government to create national policies that will guide the development, delivery, resourcing and assessment of technical, vocational and life skills in the education system.

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