

STUDY ON AWARENESS OF GENERAL PUBLIC TOWARDS NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND TVET IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is mostly used both developed and developing countries which provide good opportunities to prepare skillful labour with competencies (Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes) to the labour market. Great effort has been made to strengthen technical and vocational education throughout the county by using various awareness programme by Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training and Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC). Moreover Sri Lankan Government has recognized as equivalent qualification for the respective field NVQ Level 3 and NVQ Level 4, to the G.C.E. Ordinary Level and G.C.E. Advance Level Respectively which provide links with TVET system and general education. Nevertheless current situation is that no proper assessment process is being deployed to evaluate level of awareness of General public on TVET. Hence this study has made an attempt to find out the degree of awareness on TVET of General public. This study has been revealed that awareness among general public is prominent on some Vocational education courses such as ICT, beauty culture, hairdresser..etc. Nevertheless awareness on some courses such as Agriculture oriented courses, Animal Husbandry, Automobile,..etc which provides more employment opportunities both locally as well as globally are not up to the satisfactory level. Although Ministry of Education has invested a fair amount of sum on this programme in order to improve general education, not considerable effort has been made to encourage schoolleavers to enroll TVET system after their school education. One of the major fact is that the students and parents are not aware of the TVET and their attitudes towards the TVET is counterbalance due to the minimal awareness of the system. Thereby it is timely need that due attention should be made by the government and relevant authorities to improve general public awareness on TVET courses which can be benefited the entire market.

Keywords: Awareness, Employability, NVQ, TVEC, TVET sector

INTRODUCTION

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is believed to be integral to education and lifelong learning and to refer to all forms of learning of knowledge, skills and attitudes relating to the world of work. TVET comprises education, training and skills development activities relating to occupational fields, production and livelihoods. Transversal skills, citizenship skills and skills that enable lifelong learning are integral components of TVET. It involves a wide variety of learning and skills development opportunities and takes place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels. Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training and Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) have taken significant effort to enhance technical and vocational

education throughout the country. According to the TVE act 1990 and amended act 1999 of TVEC (TVEC, (2019) all Training Centers which are provided Technical and Vocational Education in the country should be registered with TVEC and by February 2019 only 1212 Training Centers registered, 575 training Centers are Private sector and 637 Training Centers are Public sector. Significant fact is, total of 2291 Training courses have been accredited and they are provided NVQ Training for General Public. Among those, only 370 Courses have been accredited in private Training Centers. (TVEC, (2019).

Ministry and TVEC have taken necessary steps to equal NVQ Level 3 to Ordinary Level and NVQ level 4 to Advance Level. Under the guidance of Ministry and TVEC both government and private VT Providers have started various TVET programmes and then many of awareness programmers conducted for recruit the Students to the TVET Sector. Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) has introduced a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Framework to enhance the quality of Vocational Training in Sri Lanka. NVQ certificates are awarded by TVEC through both Private and Government VT centers. Around 351 829 NVQ Certificates had been awarded by TVEC since year 2004 up to year 2019 under the various occupation categories. (TVEC, (2019). Thus, Tertiary and vocational education opportunities are also being available for early dropout students from general education system in Sri Lanka.

Every year, approximately 300 000 students start general education in the country. Among them, around 98% students complete primary education and 52% complete Ordinary level. For instance, in 2017 a total of 296,812 students faced GCE Ordinary Level Examination and 206,630 Students faced Advanced level exam and around 30,500 students entered to state universities for higher education. It can be observed that every year, more than 250 000 students are dropped out from general education stream without further education and without a proper path for a job (TVEC, 2018). Therefore, this study focuses on the matter to what extend General public are aware on vocational education and the courses available with TVET sector.

The objectives of this study were, to identify the degree of awareness among general public towards vocational education and NVQ system, Level of Awareness on each VT Programmes, to determine the reflection of attitude of early drop out student and to make proper recommendations and future reforms for TVET sector.

METHODOLOGY

The primary data was collected by means of a field survey using structured questionnaire. Face to face interviews were carried out to collect primary data from 200 samples selected representing Rural (100) and Urban (100) sector as well as representing Male (100) and Female (100). The primary data was collected using convenient sampling method. Secondary data was collected mainly from the official publications of government departments and Institutions. Collected data was analyzed using descriptive

and inferential statistical method such as correlation test, percentages, tables, graphs and measures of central tendency and T Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Taking a deeper look, overall awareness among the selected sample composition is 74% and Table 1- shows that awareness on the courses of TVET sector among grade 11 to A/L pass out are significantly high when compared with other segments. Based on the result more than 80% of general public are aware of courses of ICT and beauty culture conducted by TVET sector. Recently new courses have been introduced to address occupational changes in the ICT job market. It also provides specific skills training for those who are already in the labour market and which will be helped to upgrade or develop new competencies to enhance chances for employment and/or improve productivity. The study further reveals that although Sri Lanka is amply blessed with natural resources in the country, degree of awareness on Agricultural and Animal Husbandry courses are comparatively low to capitalize the opportunities and resources. This confirms that the fact based on the discussion had even with people is also inadequate utilization of appropriate knowledge, resources and technologies for Agricultural and Crop production.

Table 1: Degree of Awareness on each TVET Courses by Education Levels as Percentage

Level of Education	Degree of Awareness on each Courses									Overall Awareness by Education level
	Electric al and Automobile	Hotel mana gement	Welding	Equi pme nt repairing	Constr uction related Courses	ICT	Beauty culture	Agricult ural & Animal husban dry	Ot her	
No schooling	4.8	4.1	5.1	3.8	2.7	3.1	2.5	1.5	4.0	3.5
Grade up to 5	11.4	10.8	10.6	9.5	8.3	7.4	8.5	4.1	9.1	8.9
Grade up to 11	18.6	19.9	19.7	19.6	20.1	20.8	20.7	13.2	19.1	19.1
O/L Pass	21.1	19.4	20.5	20.4	19.9	19.8	21.5	14.6	19.8	19.8
Up to A/L	21.0	20.9	19.9	20.4	20.3	19.9	20.0	18.5	20.2	20.2
A/L Pass	10.3	10.2	10.7	10.8	10.6	10.2	9.8	17.3	11.1	11.1
Graduate	7.5	9.1	8.9	8.9	9.5	9.2	8.2	18.1	9.7	9.7
Professional	5.2	5.6	4.6	6.7	8.6	9.6	8.8	12.7	7.8	7.8
Overall Awareness by Courses- as %	70.8	73.3	74.7	75.1	76.7	82.4	83.6	61.3	73.2	74.6

The Indicates that the association between degree of awareness on Vocational education and awareness on each courses of NVQ are statistically significant and after certain level of education it starts to negatively correlated. Based on the findings in the variability of degree of awareness on Vocational education 74% is explained by awareness on each courses of NVQ.

Table 2 shows that awareness on Vocational Education is statistically significant with awareness of each courses of NVQ

Table 2: Overall Significance of the Model

		ANOVA ^b				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.693	9	9.966	26.409	.000 ^a
	Residual	71.702	190	.377		
	Total	161.395	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Degree of awareness on Other, Degree of awareness on Construction related Courses, Degree of awareness on Beauty culture, Degree of awareness on Agricultural and animal husbandry, Degree of awareness on ICT, Degree of awareness on Hotel management, Degree of awareness on Welding, Degree of awareness on Equipment repairing

b. Dependent Variable: Degree of Awareness on Vocational education

Table 3 shows that awareness on Vocational Education is not statistically significant with awareness of Hotel management, Agricultural and Animal Husbandry courses of NVQ. It was observed that the awareness among people regarding Vocational Education through awareness works programs and solicits greater participation.

Table 3: Model Significance by Variables

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.578	.350		7.375	.000
	Hotel management	-.135	.088	-.188	-1.533	.127
	Welding	-.995	.229	-1.416	-4.344	.000
	Equipment repairing	1.362	.280	1.897	4.861	.000
	Construction related Courses	-.234	.121	-.314	-1.934	.055
	ICT	.040	.064	.048	.624	.033
	Beauty culture	.474	.041	.610	11.601	.000
	Agricultural and animal husbandry	.052	.040	.066	1.316	.190
	Electrical and Automobile	.034	.103	.045	.326	.045
	Other	.011	.106	.015	.103	.918

a. Dependent Variable: Degree of Awareness on Vocational education

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study has extended deeper understanding on the extent of awareness of general public is considerably above 60 % on Vocational education courses conducted by both public and private Training center such as ICT, beauty culture, hairdresser..etc. but, has to be improved of awareness of courses like Agriculture oriented courses, Animal Husbandry, Automobile,etc., which are provided more job opportunities both local and global level. This study can be made several suggested factors which will contribute for future improvements to poor TVET outcomes were identified like, the relevant authorities should take necessary steps to increase awareness of TVET programmes among early school dropouts by using various modern channels like WhatsApp, Facebook, Mass media and using various government officials who work with people in village level, TVET programmes are not well received/perceived which results in low student demand for the courses such as Agricultural and animal husbandry whereas huge opportunities and resources are available. Due to lack of awareness they can't make use of those opportunities and resources which create lingering unemployment particularly in rural sector. New avenues should be explored and government should be directly focused on the target market and to increase the awareness through relevant channels such as skills Development officers in all AG office & other government official who work in villages (Gramaniladari, Samurdhi and Economics development officers..etc.) and also increase the awareness and to be provided horizontal linkage between TVET and general education are important, however developing links between general education and TVET at different stages at the schools will provide more opportunities for the students to make aware the TVET path and alternative path available during each stage and most important is to change the mind set towards the TVET.

The Local Labour market information like labour demand and supply should incorporate with TVET sector, Need to find avenues to introduce additional horizontal learning pathways in the education system for TVET students which has a direct correlation with awareness of TVET sector, There are no regular mechanisms or studies that track employability, and it is not possible to evaluate the outcomes of TVET programmes directly and Awareness of TVET programs should often be aligned with national development priorities,

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