

Accelerating Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Nepal

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EDITORIAL

It is an honour for us to publish the 15th issue of **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Journal** focused on the four pillars of TVET: quality and relevance, permeability, education and employment linkage and TVET governance. Requests made towards publishing a new edition of the Journal were obvious for the reason that the last issue was published in 2014.

The research and Information Division got thoroughly involved in the publication of this journal. The editorial team put up its best effort to ensure the journal is inclusive and extensive by incorporating articles from the national and international arena, elaborating relevant policies considered as major drivers for promoting the TVET sector. It shall be our reward if readers find this copy a worthwhile publication. Thoughts and ideas captured in these articles are expected to guide the future course of TVET deliberations and pave way for the people engaged in the field of technical and vocational education and training. It is our fervent belief this journal will be a *Accelerating Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Nepal*. Intellectuals, researchers, students and other stakeholders who may need TVET information on current trends, best practices and reflections may obtain in plenty from this journal.

Here we present you a succinct summary of 15 scholastic articles to get their bird's eyeview.

Rajendra Bahadur Shrestha, he takes a critical look into challenges brought about by a disconnect between skills supply and employer demand and reviews the current practices of partnership in the TVET sector citing some examples from some South Asian countries. The article calls for an enhanced need of employer's participation in the design and development efforts of TVET program and notes that such appropriate and practical balance is more likely when the government, private and non-government sector come together for skills development and making the most of it.

Tanka Nath Sharma underscores that skills and competencies do not remain the same at all times. For TVET institutions to become reliable and resourceful, they need to review and redefine their quality assurance through the development and implementation of an integrated quality assurance system. The article attempts to provide cursory information about the basic accreditation process to be undertaken to measure such quality at a TVET institution.

In their paper, Ursula Renold, Katherine Caves and Thomas Bolli subscribe some incisive and categorical suggestions for the improvement of the TVET sector, analyzing from the prism of federal exercise in Nepal. They stress that early finalization of the legal framework is essential to facilitate the ground for seven provinces to build on the overarching objectives of the Federal Government. Study of the past is equally important to draw the course for the future, including the financial flow, to reconcile TVET funding sources and expenditure.

Ramhari Lamichhane argues that developing TVET Institutes centre of excellence can be more of a reality than rhetoric even for developing countries. Since such institutes bolster the confidence of graduates through marketable hands-on skills and are characterized by their quality management system, visioning the creation of such centre is the common goal, TVET institutions, trainees, guardians and the country as such should play a key role from their end for this realization.

Anil Muni Bajracharya & Prakash Kumar Paudel write in their paper that engagement of employers is of paramount importance in the TVET education system and missing this element will have a conspicuous impact on the skills market. We need to have serious deliberations why their engagement in the curriculum development process has been less enthusiastic. The summary of interviews with scores of employers suggest that ‘the trust deficit’ needs to be corrected before it is too late and enabling conditions are created for meaningful engagement of stakeholders in curriculum development and implementation processes.

Kushmakar Bhatta writes that skill profiles are changing for many occupations for many reasons. What is important at this stage is to make a critical assessment of the key drivers influencing the world of work and do what is required to ensure quality assurance is achieved in the TVET sector. A public-private partnership could be one of the several measures to achieve this goal at the federal, provincial and local level.

Durga Prasad Baral, in his paper, uses a prose and poetic expression to establish a case that informal skills learning need not be judged any ‘inferior’ when an overwhelming 80% of the people actually acquire their skills this way in Nepal. Efforts should now go into formalizing the informal sector and add value to the intervention. Sustenance may be one of the major challenges in the informal sector but this should not mean that the national TVET system overlooks the possibilities of its incorporation.

In his article, Diwat Kumar Shrestha calls for regular follow up on TVET graduates and getting to know whether TVET graduates are getting jobs or engaged in self-employment or not. An evidence-based tracer study or monitoring and evaluation is required to identify the effectiveness of the TVET education system. Such a study allows us to identify the strengths and gaps and take corrective measures for the future.

Ishwor Rimal writes in his paper that human resource development and job satisfaction within the organization is one of the yardsticks to measure success in the TVET sector. If instructors and staff are not happy or the motivation factor is missing, it will leave a domino effect on the entire teaching and learning process. Higher job satisfaction at an individual level will yield better results at an institutional level.

Hari Pradhan and Aashish Pradhan share a common view in their paper that it is high time structural reform was envisaged to allow students to make an early and informed decision whether to opt for a general education system or TVET education and understand the scope and limitations of each system. It will also help the country in preparing the technical workforce from as early as secondary education level and offer the graduates in accessing nationally and internationally recognized certificate and securing better employment opportunities.

In their article, Seshkanta Pageni and Gehendra Karki focus the significance of exploiting information, communication and technology (ICT) integrated pedagogical practices in the TVET sector. Qualitative and quantitative data from 152 survey responses, focused group discussions and selective interviews that ICT focused education would be both innovative and promising for the TVET sector.

Binayak Krishna Thapa's paper offers a trans-disciplinary take on the very concept of skill and explores this conceptualization across multiple disciplines like economics, sociology and psychology. The possibility of understanding skill from trans-disciplinary perspective still exists even if we cannot ignore or erase the disciplinary segmentation.

Harish Singh Thapa's article underpins the responsibility of polytechnic institutions to produce skilled and competent workforce that is vibrant and breathes an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit amongst students. Operating a production unit is essential for every TVET polytechnic institution for better connectivity with the market demands and to help students develop critical thinking from an early stage.

Hari Prasad Lamsal's paper suggests adopting a two-pronged strategy to bring about reforms in Nepal's TVET: improve the existing programs and bring about structural changes in line with the changed pattern of governance.

Abdul Ghani Rajput, Muhammad Naeem Akhtar and Muhammad Nadeem Akram together take a look into the concept of green technology in Pakistan and present several examples to substantiate their point that the application of green technology is still a new concept that carries good promise for the future of TVET sector in Pakistan.

The editorial team is thankful to all the authors for their support through advice and articles and looks forward to such articles from researchers, intellectuals, and experts, covering several key sub-sectors of TVET for the next journal. For instance, the COVID-19 has become our new reality. The pandemic has not just to do with our health but employability and is changing nature of our work culture. This, as well, could be a potential issue to look into. We express our appreciation to the entire team of CTEVT and its management for continuous support and guidance during the course of the publication.

Your feedback is our strength. We look forward to receiving constructive feedback from the readers for further improvement. The ultimate responsibility of ideas and opinions expressed in these articles rests with the authors.