

Attitude of TTI Rangjung trainees towards TVET in Bhutan

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Abstract

Anchored on qualitative research paradigm using online interview method involving 15 sampled trainees via emails, this study attempted to find out what beliefs and feelings respondents had for TVET before joining TTI-Rangjung, how do they feel now as their training goes on and what do they aspire to be after graduating from here. TVET is not considered as mainstream career choice by young people, job seekers and society at large. Despite the stigma and belief that TVET leads to second class profession, this study found that both children and parents' attitude towards TVET has changed from negative to positive. This study also found that TVET indeed provides skills and enhances their employability. Trainees are happy in the institute and they have gained confidence for self-employment and developed great aspiration to go abroad for work. This should only contribute lifting the image of TVET. "TVET is poor man's college"! This is an interesting finding. I define it as, "let rich go to other universities, poor are not deprived of a college". There is TVET (TTIs) as their university which is equally important. Equipping the institute with enough latest tools and equipment should be an immediate important task for both the institute and the MoLHR. Capacity building of trainers is another finding that calls for consistent support. Conducting more advocacy programs will make society better aware of the importance of TVET. Introducing higher level courses will also improve quality, speed and relevance of TVET. The minimum entry qualification should also be raised to class XII from class X

Key words: career, job seeker, TVET, trainee.

Introduction – Statement of the Problem

In 2014, MoLHR, Bhutan published "Unemployed-youth-perception-survey, MoLHR, 2014". The report says, "One challenge that has come to the fore is that of youth unemployment."

Wangdi, K. in TVET Blue Print, 2016 puts his regret that "TVET is not considered as mainstream career choice by young people, job seekers and society at large. On the other hand, requirement of skilled workers is growing due to economic growth and rising youth unemployment".

Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan Document Volume II too confirms that "While requirement of skilled workers in the country is growing, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is still not considered as a mainstream career choice by youth and society at large, thereby leading to an inadequate skilled workforce". (pp.212).

However, as per the capacity of the respective Technical Training Institutes (TTIs), there are already enough youth enrolled. We do not know if they joined TTIs as their first priority or as the last option. What feelings and beliefs they had about TVET before joining TTIs and how do they feel being here and how do they see their future.

Being a manager of one of the Technical Training Institutes (TTIs), this concern has become so pressing for me that I decided to venture into finding the attitude of our youth, but due to the COVID-19 situation during this study, it had to be conducted only in TTI Rangjung involving 25 first year trainees from Automobile and Computer Hardware & Networking trades.

This study's key topic is Attitude of TTI Rangjung Trainees towards TVET in Bhutan.

Literature Review

In the MoLHR, published book *Unemployed-youth-perception-survey, MoLHR, (2014)*, surveyed 1128 unemployed youth and found out 7.7% have taken up TTI/VTI/RTI. This translates to 87 graduates jobless despite having been trained in TTIs. This indicates that employment is not guaranteed through TVET. The report also says, “One challenge that has come to the fore is that of youth unemployment.”

Globally, TVET is considered important for human resource development to contribute towards country's sustainable economic prosperity, but TVET receives less love from general public in most countries. In the South Asia Region, Bhutan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Pakistan to mention a few, are facing challenges in enrolling youth into TVET as mainstream career choice.

The government of Nepal feels that “Greater understanding and visibility of TVET will help the sector to fulfill its potential as a viable career option for young people and a critical element of Nepal's future”. In Utopia, Tamrat claims that “In spite of its potential to address the challenges of skill gaps and reduce unemployment, students, parents and the larger community appear to show little interest towards TVET as compared to university degrees.”

In the words of Wangdi, K. (2016), “Globally, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is considered as one of the important tools to create jobs, improve livelihood, alleviate poverty and enhance economic productivity.” He regrets that “TVET is not considered as mainstream career choice by young people, job seekers and society at large. On the other hand, requirement of skilled workers is growing due to economic growth and rising youth unemployment”.

University degree is perceived to have a higher social status than vocational education since higher academic qualifications generate opportunities for white collar jobs with higher wages, creating a classification that those working in the technical field are second-class workers.

Bhutan's National TVET Advocacy and Communications Concept paper, 2018 also laments that “Despite offering quality TVET relevant to the market, youth prefer general education. TVET is just the second choice”.

Brennan (2014) says, “Many believe that wearing cross check collar and sitting in the air conditioning rooms with ergonomics seating was a promising future with thousand dollars lay easily at hands. Those beliefs were inherited genes by genes, decade by decade and people always see that Technical Vocational and Education Training was a zero hope.”

If TVET gave zero hope for future, a serious analysis of attitude and factors, and its purpose of existence merits immediate attention. I am made aware from the literature review that the attitude of our youth towards TVET is not good.

Purpose of the study

Understanding the trainees' attitude and knowing what factors influenced their attitude towards TVET will give us some directions for timely and possible interventions to make TVET inviting and more relevant for future takers.

Therefore, this study seeks:

- a. To establish the attitude of current trainees of TTI Rangjung towards TVET.
- b. To identify the factors responsible for influencing their attitude towards TVET.

This study will help the Head of the institute concerned to adopt different strategies to encourage youth to take up TVET.

This study will also be of some benefits to other groups of people:

- (i) It will help TVET trainers of TTIs/IZCs to push for institute transformation in their efforts to promote and transform TVET.
- (ii) The result is also expected to indicate the policy makers to elevate TVET.

(iii) Readers will understand the importance of TVET in today's world of work and will encourage society to have positive attitude towards TVET.

Key research questions

The main research topic is: Attitude of TTI Rangjung Trainees towards TVET in Bhutan.

Based on the above main research topic, the following are the general questions:

1. How do trainees rate their enthusiasm to be enrolled into TVET?
2. How do trainees view TVET for their future?
3. Do trainees consider TVET as higher studies?
4. What are the trainees' views on TVET being menial and difficult?
5. What do the trainees say about opinions of their Principals and teachers towards TVET while in school?
6. How do trainees perceive the status, opportunities and recognition of the TVET graduates in the society?
7. What views do the trainees have to share on what their parents and family members say about the importance of TVET?
8. What do the trainees opine that our agencies concerned like TTIs/IZCs/MoLHR should do about TVET?
9. What are the opinions trainees have about the immediate employment opportunities after the training?
10. Is the attitude influenced by socio economic factor of the trainees and the conditions of the TTI?

These above questions are grouped into Section A and each of them has pre-determined statements. Section B has open ended interview questionnaire. These are discussed in chapter/section four.

Methodology

This study followed the Qualitative paradigm because it uses empathy, the ability to place oneself in other's shoes or situation for understanding the emotions, feelings or attitude better and generate new insights for the identified problem.

We conduct qualitative research because a problem or issue needs to be understood for possible interventions. The problem or issue is why Bhutanese youth do not take up TVET and join skilled workforce for both employment and to contribute towards nation building. To understand this issues, this study has been narrowed down to find the attitude of Rangjung TTI trainees towards TVET. Hence, this method was deemed most appropriate.

Online Interview

The tool used for this study was online interview. The use of online interview is growing as communication technologies have greatly advanced. Using smart phone or computer-mediated communication (CMC), such as instant messaging, email, or video, online interview is made much easier and faster.

Here, researcher employed email method to send the questions and receive responses. It is similar to face to face interview, but not onsite. It saved me from following lengthy process of knowing the participants individually and building rapport. Because the participant cannot see the researcher, participants got the courage to provide honest responses. It gave my participants conveniences to respond to my questions irrespective of their location. This tool was found appropriate given the current situation.

Researcher met all the participants physically only once and briefed them on research ethics, purpose of this research, their rights to withdraw from participation, timeline to

respond to the questions and the flexibility to clarify if questions are not clear to them.

Sampling

Purposive sampling was used. 15 first year trainees from Computer Hardware and Networking (CHN) and Automobile trades were involved. The detail of participant sampling is presented in the table below:

Participants	Trainees						Grand Total
	CHN		Automobile		Total		
Institute	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Rangjung	7	6	7	5	14	11	25

Researcher felt that the number of the participants at 25 is quite reasonable to handle. It is also believed in what *Patten (cited in Anderson, 1998)* states “there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done with available time and resources” (p.94). However, only 15 of the 25 sampling responded.

Reliability and validity

Validity and reliability is how accurate and useful the findings of the study are. It is crucial that the knowledge claims are authentic and useful in bringing about changes and improvements in the system or the problem identified.

Researcher have worked hard to prove this study reliable and valid. He have constantly received proper guidance from my research supervisor from the beginning of this study till the completion. The research proposal was presented to the DTE’s Provisional Proposal Reviewer. Only upon his approval, this study was conducted. This full report was refined based on his comments and feedbacks till he was convinced that it is worth accepting.

Limitation

The study is limited to only 15 respondents of TTI-Rangjung. This may limit the possibility of generalization since there are eight government funded TTIs/IZCs and nearly 200 registered private TVET providers in the country located in different parts of the country with varying facilities. To increase the possibility of generalization a nationwide research on such similar topics may be conducted in future.

Data Analysis, Discussion and Interpretation

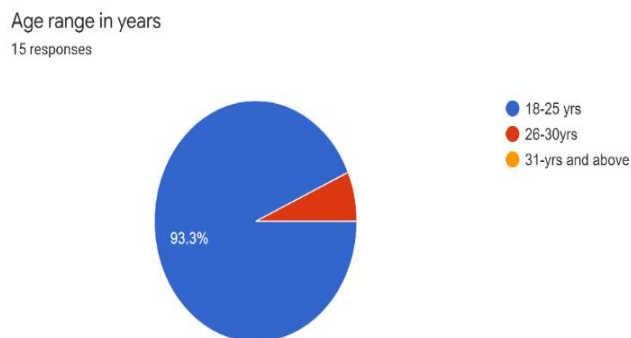
This section presents the data analysis, discussions and interpretation. Data was collected through online interview using emails. This chapter has two sections. Part A and Part B

Part A

Biographical data of the informants

The questionnaires items in this section sought to establish the gender, age ranges, academic and professional qualifications of the participants.

Table 1.1 Respondents’ age groups

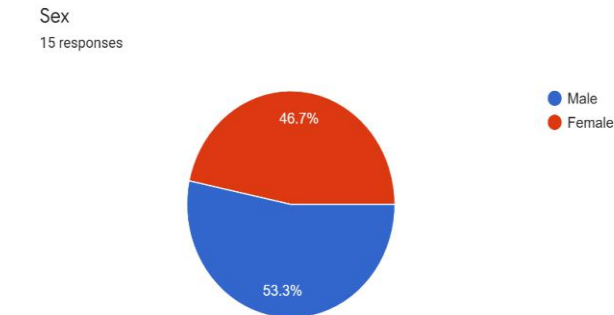


Age range	Number of Trainees	%
18-25	14	93.34%
26-30	1	6.66%
Total	15	100

Table 1.1 shows that 14 (93.34%) respondents are aged ranged 18 -25. Only 1 (6.66%) is age range from 26-30. Bruce (2008), argues that age and education levels are relevant in

considering how people change over time, meet their society’s needs, and reflect the attitude of their communities.

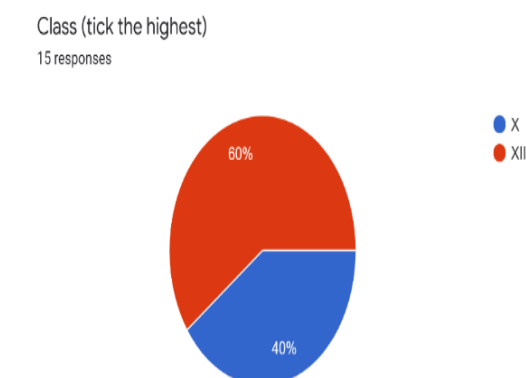
Table 1.2 Informants’ gender



Gender	Numbers of Trainees	%
Male	8	53.33%
Female	7	46.67%
Total	15	100%

Table 1.2 shows the number of male and female respondents involved in this study. Male numbers to 8 (53.33%) and female 7 (46.67%) respectively. It suggests that male students have slightly more access to TVET than their female counterpart. This is so, because for a long time in Bhutan, TVET was mainly a preserve of men. Society’s attitude is just beginning to change.

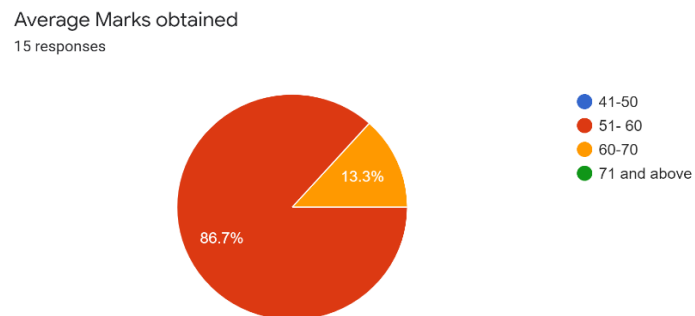
Table 1.3 Highest academic qualification of the respondents



Academic level	Number of Trainees	Percentage
Class XV	nil	nil
Class XII	9	60%
Class X	6	40%
Total	15	100%

Table 1.3 shows the academic level of the participants. 9 (60%) are class XII passed while 6(40%) are class X. It reveals that there has been increase of class XII graduates joining TTI-Rangjung while the minimum required qualification is only class X passed. This suggests that the minimum entry level be raised to class XII. This also makes sense because class X passed students can now study in XI under government scholarship. There will be few or no class X graduates opting for TVET here after.

1.4 Average Marks obtained in class X:

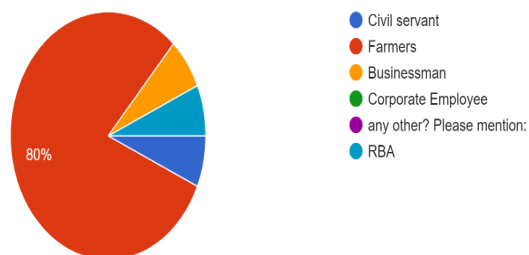


Marks obtained	Numbers of Trainees	%
51-60	13	86.6%
61-70	2	13.4%
71+	00	00
Total	15	100

Table 1.4 shows the average mark obtained by class X students. Since the minimum qualification required for entry into TTIs/IZCs is class X passed, respondents were asked to provide only class X result. Of the 15 respondents, 13 (86.6%) of them have obtained between 51-60 percent in their class X result. Only 2 (13.4%) of them got above 61 percent. This reveals that those who scored low are taking up TVET.

1.5 Occupation of the parents/Guardians:

Occupation of the parents/Guardians
15 responses



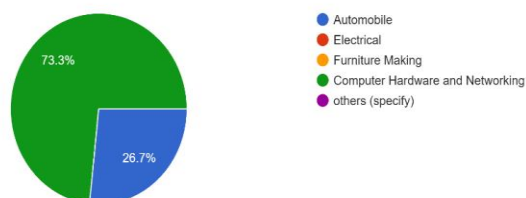
Occupation of parents/ guardians	Numbers of Trainees	%
Civil servants	1	6.66%
Farmers	12	80%
Business	1	6.66%
Any other	1	6.66%
Total	15	100

Table 1.5 shows the parental occupation. Maximum of 12 (80%) respondents' parents are farmers. Farmers are considered economically disadvantaged, but it does not mean they cannot afford to send their children to college. Rich people do not enroll their children into TVET, but this does not mean they hate TVET. It may be just that they can afford to send their children to other colleges for higher studies. TTIs are open for all, be it an option or first priority.

1.7 What trade are you taking: a) Automobile=4 boys

b) Computer Hardware and Networking= 11 (4b+7g)

What trade are you taking
15 responses



Trades	Numbers of Trainees	%
CHN	11	73.3%
Automobile	4	26.7%

Total	15	100
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Table 1.7 shows the trade taken by respondent. Out of 15 respondents, 11(73.3%) are from CHN and only 4(26.7%) from Automobile trade. This suggests that either there are less trainees in automobile trade or they thought it is unnecessary to participate given the flexibility.

Data analysis and interpretations

Participants were asked questions based on the following 10 themes. Analysis and interpretations are presented as follows.

1. Trainees' enthusiasm to be enrolled into TVET?

They have not joined this institute because they received awareness education on TVET while in school from teachers and Principals. They have joined on their own interest and they were not forced by their friends either. They joined TVET because they like to be technicians, get good job and income after they graduate from here. They believe that our society has good attitude and respect for TVET graduates. They think society will be happy seeing them repair a car as technicians. All these thoughts have ignited their enthusiasm to join this institute.

11 of them have joined this institute because they could not qualify for higher studies and did not have financial support. They do not express any hatred for TVET. In fact, TVET became their choice and rescued them from loitering and wasting their time without any skill.

2. Trainees' views on TVET for their future

Trainees agree they want to be technicians in future or engage in self-employment. Respondents are confident about their future. They are sure of good job and income after they graduate from here. They also aspire to go abroad for work. Therefore, MoLHR or relevant agencies need to continue providing necessary post training supports to fulfill such aspiration.

3. Importance of TVET for higher studies

TVET is another form of higher studies for those completing class X, not the end. It should not be considered as the last

resort, rather a choice. In no way TVET is meant for only those who could not qualify for higher level of studies. TVET is an important form of higher studies for skills and technologies.

Minimum entry qualification into TTIs is class X passed. 9 respondents in this study are class XII passed students. If they had taken up TVET right after class X, they would have completed their training and would have been gainfully employed by this time, instead of wasting two years studying in XI and XII. But have they really wasted those two years? When responsibilities of Chief Councilors, Mess Coordinators, Class Representatives, and Prayer Coordinators, etc. are given to those with class XII qualification, they do better and perform better in training too. Maintaining discipline in the institute is also better. Therefore, they have matured well instead of wasting their time studying till class XII.

The rest of the respondents have joined TTI-R after class X and for them it is a higher study leading to National Level Certificate II (NCII).

Respondents believe that they will get opportunities to continue their studies to pursue degree in technical field from other colleges after graduating from TTI-R. To meet this expectation, MoLHR or relevant agencies should introduce higher level of courses beyond National Level Certificate II and III and liaise with Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) or other relevant colleges for scholarships.

Participants do not believe that TVET is only for those who are not good in studies. They say they will encourage others to join TVET.

4. Difficulties in TVET.

Difficulties in TVET here refers to difficulties faced by trainees who are currently enrolled for training. It is also to collect opinions they have developed after joining TTI-Rangjung.

11 of them like to be technicians and that is why they have joined TVET. They find TVET easy and doable, not difficult. Majority of them believe that they are going to get good job and earn income after they graduate from here. They do not agree that TVET is only for those weak in studies. And they

do not regret for having joined TVET. They also find practical easy and do not mind getting dirty.

However, few of them (6) say that it is menial and difficult job. Yet, they still agree that it is better to be a technician than choosing other profession. This is a clear indication that they like what they are doing now. While it is possible that all who graduate from here may not work in the same field, most respondents of this study agree they will work in the same occupation. They have gained enough confidence to get good earning from the skills they have acquired.

9 respondents say that working in the office as officer with low salary is better than working in the workshop or construction sites as technicians. They may be right considering the conditions of workplaces that have direct relation to poor Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards. Therefore, this calls for stringent implementation of OHS rules and regulation and monitoring. We also need to educate them that while it is not wrong to love working as officer, it is also important to contribute to nation building by joining the skilled workforce.

5. Opinions of school Principals and teachers towards TVET while in school?

School teachers and Principals appear not much aware of TVET and therefore, lacks advocacy on TVET in schools. However, they have encouraged students that there are opportunities for self-employment and scope to go abroad for work if they joined TTIs/IZCs. They were also told that being a technician is better and that our society will be happy to see our youth taking up such roles.

Schools play pivotal role in advocating that skills and technologies contribute substantially to the economic growth of a nation. In the fast-changing economy with few skilled workers in technical and vocational trades, the demand for the few who have the skills is very high. They are indeed "The hands of God" that can do miracles for sustainable development.

6. Status, opportunities and recognition of the TVET graduates in the society.

Status, opportunities and recognition of the TVET graduates in our society is good. There is opportunity for self-

One frequently asked question by youth while encouraging them to take up TVET is, “Is employment guaranteed after the training?” An honest answer is “No”. The only one big assurance a training provider can give is “After the training, chances of getting a job is higher compared to those without any skills”.

Skilling through TVET is one strategy to enhance employability of the youth. Many agree that they joined TVET because they like to be technicians. That is very encouraging. Technological advancement is very rapid around the world and technology has indeed become a tool to rule the world of work. Therefore, Bhutanese youth too need to be prepared towards this direction, both for employment and learning.

Participants opine that they can earn income once they graduate from TTI- Rangjung. They are also confident of self-employment. They really aspire to continue pursuing higher education through TVET and obtain a degree. They also want to go abroad for work after graduating from here. As per the Bhutan Vocational Qualification Framework (BVQF), a TVET graduate has the opportunity to pursue higher education in technical fields.

Participants agree that upon graduation they will work in the same occupation they are trained in. The overall opinion of participants one can derive from the data is that they have good opportunities once they are skilled.

10. Other factors influencing the attitude of the trainees

There is a general perception that the image of TVET in Bhutan is low and it is attributed for shaping negative attitude towards TVET even before children are introduced to TVET. After joining this institute, participants have found the environment of the institute conducive to learning. The location is appropriate. Teachers and management talk good about TVET. 11 participants have no regret for joining TTI-Rangjung. These are some place factors responsible to shape participants' positive attitude towards TVET. Therefore, place transformation is very important to shape positive attitude.

The nature of the training is more of practical than theory (80% practical and 20% theory). Trainees are not satisfied with tools and equipment available in the institute.

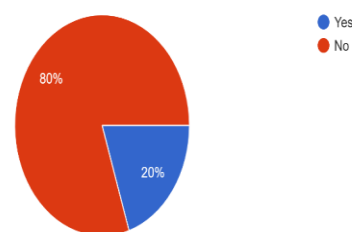
The present stipend is also not enough. Currently each trainee gets Nu. 1500 per month. The issue is already with the MoLHR.

Part B:

This part is intended to supplement section A. This part required the participants to respond ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and then honestly mention reasons why. There are 6 questions. At the end of each of them, a summary is provided. ‘b’ refers to male respondents and ‘g’ for female respondents.

Fig1. Tools and equipment in the institution.

1. We have adequate tools and equipment in our workshops in this institution.
15 responses

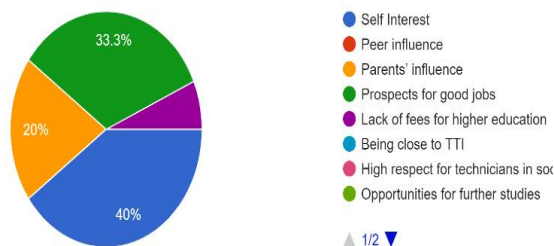


Yes=3b No= 12 (5b+7g)

Fig 1. shows the availability of tools in the institute. 12(80%) participants say there are not enough tools and equipment in the institute. It is true that institute does not have enough tools and equipment. Most equipment are old and obsolete. If we are to provide skills that are relevant to latest need of the market, we must make concerted effort to invest in equipping the institute with relevant and latest tools and equipment.

Fig 2. What influenced to choose TVET

2. Which of the following have influenced you to choose TVET? (Tick as many as they apply)
15 responses



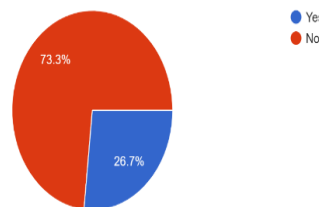
Self Interest	6 (5b+1g)
Peer influence	
Parents' influence	3(1b+2g)
Prospects for good jobs	5(2b+3g)
Lack of fees for higher education	1g
Being close to TTI	
High respect for technicians in society	
Opportunities for further studies	
Conducive learning environment in TTI	
Easy admission	
Opportunities to go and work abroad	

Fig 2 shows what influences the participants to join the institute. When asked who influenced them to join TVET, 6 of them joined out of self-interest while 9 of them joined because of prospects for good job, parents' influence and lack of fees for higher education.

No other statements mentioned above have influenced them to take up TVET. It is clear that their intentions of joining TVET is for seeking employment and due to parents' pressure. Therefore, it is important to offer skills that will make them more employable and competent.

Fig 3. Government support

3. Do you think government is doing enough for technical education?
15 responses



Yes=4(2+2) No = 11(6b+5g)

Fig 3 shows the opinion of sample on government support for technical education. 11(73.3%) respondents say government is not doing enough for technical education. Their reasons can be grouped into: Resources and Post training support.

Resources: (Human/ Materials and Financial)

Lack of enough training tools and equipment in the institute indicate less support from the government. Many of them are obsolete. Some are not useable.

Trainees are given only one set of uniform (Pant/Shirt/Safety boots/Gho/Kira) for the entire duration of training. Duration for Automobile is 12 months and CHN is 14 months.

Stipend is low at Nu.1500 per trainee per month.

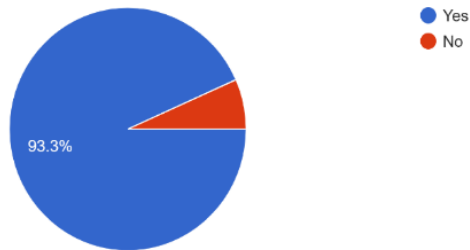
There is a need of more experienced trainers.

Post training support:

Respondents say there is no support from government after they graduate from here. They cannot get job opportunities in government agencies. They have to look for jobs in private sectors with low salary and that too without job security. This indicates that they expect government to intervene. They are of the opinion that government is focusing more on general education and not TVET

Fig 4. Recommend to join technical education

4. Will you recommend others to join technical education?
15 responses



Yes =14(8b+6g) No =1g

Fig 4 shows the recommendation of the responder to join technical education, 14(93.3%) respondents agree that they will recommend others to join TVET. The reasons being training is provided free of cost. Once skilled, job opportunities are more. One can also become an entrepreneur and earn through self-employment.

Why do you think Bhutanese have negative attitude towards TVET?

There is no strong justification to prove that our society has negative attitude towards TVET. All are on presumptions and beliefs. Society dislikes TVET on the assumptions that TVET only leads to a blue collar job and a low paid profession with harsh working conditions. TVET has no future career scope. There is no government job and not considered as higher studies.

Respondents think that society considers TVET institutes as less dignified places. They claim that rich people are not enrolling their children into TTIs/IZCs. But, rich parents sending their children to other colleges does not qualify that they have negative attitude towards TVET.

Suggest some ways to change such attitude.

This study does not truly claim that Bhutanese have negative attitude towards TVET. To dispel some overarching beliefs and assumptions that TVET is not meant for high achievers, rich people, and so on, some suggestions the respondents have provided are:

1. Carry out advocacy/Awareness programs
2. Provide post training support to the graduates
3. Equip institute with enough facilities
4. Require government’s intervention for employment in government agencies
5. Provide moral support to the trainees,
6. Increase stipend

What is your overall impression on TVET in Bhutan?

Respondents were instructed to express their impression on TVET in few lines. There are mixed of both positive and negative impressions.

Negative impressions are:	Positive Impressions are:
People look down on TVET	Opportunity for gaining skills
Lack of interest from youth	Good job opportunities
Parents discourage children to take up TVET	Become a skilled person
Lack of opportunity for higher studies and career progress	More scope for self-employment opportunity
Less support from government	Gain new knowledge skills and experiences
People have bad impression	Contribute to nation building
TVET is only for poor people	Can start business
TVET is for those who are not good in studies	
No diploma and degree in TVET	

Major Findings and Recommendations

This section concludes the study on Attitude of TTI Rangjung trainees towards TVET and brings together the findings and recommendations spelled out in bits and pieces in the above discussions to yield a better conclusion.

Trainees have joined this institute out of self-interest, believing in the prospects for good job, higher studies and working abroad. They love this skilling program and they will recommend others to follow them. The respondents are yet to complete their training to face these realities. It is expected that their expectations and aspirations are fulfilled.

Despite literature review containing disgruntlements and beliefs that society has negative attitude towards TVET all around, this study did not find any strong justification to

prove that our society has negative attitude towards TVET. All sounds presumptions and beliefs.

There is no enough tools and equipment in the institute. Government has not done enough for technical education in terms of tools and equipment, post training support, stipend, PPEs and capacity building of trainers. There is a lack of strong intervention to raise the salary, ensure job security in private agencies and provide jobs in government agencies. However, this has not affected their attitude towards TVET.

This study does not truly claim that Bhutanese have negative attitude towards TVET. However, there are few recommendation to note.

1. Carry out advocacy and Awareness programs.
2. Provide various post training support to the graduates.
3. Equip institute with enough facilities and latest and most relevant tools and equipment.
4. Require government's intervention for employment in government agencies.
5. Revise stipend from Nu. 1500 to more.
6. Provide trainers' capacity development programs.
7. Raise entry qualification to XII from X.
8. Raise pay and improve working conditions in private industries.
9. Revise national competency standards.
10. Augment TTIs/IZCs to colleges with higher level courses.
11. Support Overseas Employment for TTI graduates.
12. Facilitate and support self-employment activities.
13. Build a policy requiring all youth to take up one TVET program.

Conclusion

This study was conducted at TTI Rangjung to establish the attitude of TTI Rangjung trainees towards TVET in Bhutan. It was sampled for 25 respondents, but only 15 participated. Considering the three phases (before joining TTI Rangjung, during the training and after the training) of the respondents, it found that trainees joined this institute on their own will in the first phase (before joining TTI Rangjung). Poor academic results and lack of financial support for further studies, have

forced them to join TVET. These are not in the control of institute or policy and may not be accepted as trainees having negative attitude towards TVET, but we must accept that most takers of TVET are from poor families.

While rich people send their children to other colleges, children of poor are not deprived. TTIs/IZCs are there for them. **"TVET is a poor man's college"** as much other colleges may be Rich Man's College. TVET institutes play critical role in skilling and building technical workforce for sustainable economic development. If TVET system never existed, country's vision of having technical workforce would be never achieved.

In the second phase (during their training period), they face lot of challenges like low stipend, lack of enough tools and materials, old equipment, lengthy training duration, low competencies of some trainers, not receiving enough facilities such as Pant/Shirt/Safety boots/Gho/Kira, skills and standards and curricula not being market relevant.

In the third phase, after their training, which is yet to happen, going abroad for work, continuing higher studies in the same field, getting a decent job, earning well, and working in government offices are the priorities.

Although this study found that trainees have positive attitude towards TVET in Bhutan, there is still a high percentage within the sample involved in this study who do not agree that TVET is stigma free and post training support is easy and enough.

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