Factors Affecting Technical and Vocational Education and Training Responsiveness to Youth Employability in Arsi Zone

Endalew Fufa[1] and Kassim Kimo[2]

Received: 14 June 2018; Accepted: 10 April 2019

Abstract: This research investigated factors affecting the responsiveness of TVET to youth job-creation in Arsi Zone. Descriptive survey design was used in the research. Data were collected from randomly selected 120 TVET trainees in four TVET colleges, four deans of the respective colleges and from three purposively selected instructors from each college (n=12). A combination mode of questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The findings indicated that there were no entry assessments held to verify the fitness of candidates for the lesson process. Moreover, formative conditions did not strongly relate with exit assessments. Competency-based assessments were also held with the motto of pass-fail decision-making rather than filling gaps in skill. Even for those passing the competency examination, there were no pre-identified employment opportunities since colleges strongly depended on educating the youth without looking for available job options. Overall, lack of entry assessment, shortage in formative enrichment of practices, lack of alignment between entry-formative-exit-outcome assessment (CoC), and lack of focus on pre-identification of employment opportunities were factors identified to be major bottlenecks to success in youth employment after graduation.

***Keywords**:* factors, TVET responsiveness, youth employability

[1] Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum Studies and Teachers' Professional Development, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Arsi University. E-mail: endalewkufi@yahoo.com/endkufi@gmail.com

[2] Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Arsi University. E-mail:karayu2008@gmail.com

Background

Technical and vocational education and training is aimed at providing students with knowledge, skills and competencies that will allow them to lead productive and fulfilled lives (UNESCO, 2016). The role of TVET is to develop productive knowledge, skills and competencies which prepare the youth for work-life. In that, work-based learning plays a crucial role to ensure that, skill-acquisition is in line with skill-requirements at work-place (Mejia, 2012). Employability of youths guarantees stability in ideology and economic base of the generation (Uddin, 2013). For employability of youth citizens, there must be an endeavor to promote circumstances that would enable citizens to secure an adequate means of livelihood, the right to work, vocational guidance and training, and just and favorable conditions (Biashavi, 2013).

The relevance of TVET policies and programs is often measured in terms of their success in providing graduates with a smooth transition from school to the world of work (UNESCO, 2016). In that, technical and vocational education and training is carried out on the basis of competency-based curriculum which embarks upon the development of hands-on skills and production capacity from which the trainees could directly benefit from being employed in different production and service units. Here, two concepts need attention. On the one hand, TVET holds some grains of education: curricula, teacher preparation, institutionalization of learning, arrangement of learning units as theoretical and practical, and existence in due accord of means of assessing learning. It also embarks upon technical aspects which embrace both theoretical knowhow and skill-based practices (Shaorshadze and Krishnan, 2012).

By and large, each string of engagement in TVET should be pertinent with the vocational need out in the field (UNEVAC, 2016). To be pertinent to the vocational need, there needs to be alignment of the instructional provision system with the practical reality in the field. By

far, every aspect of education and training in the institution must be tied up with what the vocation demands (Eden, 2012).

To earn what the vocation demands, building a competency-based chain of engagement remains to be the most viable means. Such a chain of engagement should be framed along with a bimodal exchange between employing chains and institutional provisions. This could be realized by creating closeness and concern formed between the industry and the training centers or institutions.

While varying degrees of education and training are provided in the realm of TVET today, the responsiveness of collegiate provisions for youth employability remains to be an issue seeking attention. *Youth employability* here marks the extent to which graduates find job opportunities for earning a living either being employed in the industries seeking educated taskforce or creating their own jobs. Colleges dispatch thousands of graduates every year, but the extent to which the graduates get opportunities for employment remains to be a pressing question to the generation.

Smooth transition from school to work place is marked by consonance between skill-standards and market-need which can ensure employability. Employability of educated taskforce in different sectors is an issue seeking utter most attention across nations and the globe. Research evidences make it plain that, poor training at earlier levels, incompetent teacher support, less emphasis on general knowledge and lack of career guidance are conditions which limit success in meeting market-demand (Mumishi, 2016).

In Ethiopia, TVET has a long history with notable achievements marked through the limited provisions in the past. TVET colleges have come to earn considerable tributes as means of minimizing youth unemployment and enlivening the practical value of practical education across vocations (Desalegn, 2014). The provision has come to assume more profitable aspects with the creation of access and equity in

educational provision in the country with the advent of the Education and Training Policy and subsequent changes (Krishnan and Shaorshadze, 2012). With the increase in extension of services, there is necessity to increase efficiency and equity of the centrally-driven allocation mechanism, and evaluate TVET program in terms of the value-added to the final labor-market outcomes for its beneficiaries.

The policy implementation process has also come to bear workable fruits with opening of colleges and diverse training institutions in the remote corners of the country across regions. In spite of all these attempts, youth employability in different industries-be it production, extension or service aspects- is always with questions. Martha (2012) traces that, employment challenges of TVET graduates are triggered by high and increasing unemployment rate, weak labor-market institutions, and irregular unemployment regulatory policies which serve the formal and wage-employment sector.

Cases of employability could be traced from both national and international perspectives. From the broad international perspective, challenges of institutions to prepare the youth for employability could be traced in terms of entry identification of basic knowledge and understanding, formative follow-up of due skill mastery, proper assessment, remediation and complementation of learners' knowhow and skills, and alignment of training and education with the field practices and demands in industries. From national perspective, the purpose for which trainings are given, conviction on the part of the graduates to learn for change, and unity among vested institutions to work for the betterment of skills to ensure employability are conditions which challenge the success TVET can attain in being responsive to youth employability.

Different researches have been conducted so far regarding the place of TVET in reducing unemployment. Yet, no attention has been given the extent to which it works with industries the way through to be responsive to employability. Hence, research becomes inevitable to

investigate how far TVET programs operate towards ensuring youth capacity to be employable from the stage of entry-behavior to the output measure, and then job-entry competency measure. Without research, it could be futile to discuss the nexus between TVETC as a school and industries as workplaces, which have their own businesses to run even without having any responsibility in common regarding job joining workforce.

Hence, this study looked into factors affecting TVET responsiveness to youth employability in Arsi Zone, Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia, with the justification that identifying such factors would enable spearheads to work on paths which lead to improvement of workable ties which can enliven exchanges between school and workplace such that, there could be possible means of developing real and workable youth competency after graduating from colleges which, in turn , helps to improve conditions for employability.

Statement of the Problem

When students complete a certain high stage of learning, they are expected to join further learning stage or vocations from which they can earn a living. Earning a living does not just happen, since there should be preparation for job-life. Such a preparation demands the youth to undergo training and educational practices which qualify them for jobs. Technical and Vocational Education and Training is provided at different levels across nations to ensure youth preparation for jobs. It is for that very purpose that, different institutions and colleges are set up to act on youth education after due completion of general secondary or preparatory education, the requirement to be trained for work-life being the prime concern, conditions in and out the training situation can have pressing effects and impacts on the success of the graduates.

TVET candidates undergo training in already set up institutions whereas job-life demands skills to be workable in the field (Mumishi, 2016). Unless there is consonance between training provision scheme

and market-demand on the job sphere, there could be observed gaps which remain open thereby blocking the youth from joining some jobs (UNESCO, 2016). In that, colleges providing technical and vocational education and training must bear the reality that, they work on the pertinence of youth skill-standards to expected marketability standards right from the entry to graduation.

Such a reality bearing should be aligned with consonance of curricula and implementation strategies in colleges with practices in the workplace (Seangmean, Sokheng and Somonich, 2015). That consonance, in turn, must be aligned with not only what the market demands but also how the youth can prepare themselves the way through to employment (Tripney and Hombrados, 2013), thereby getting cognitive, physical and psychological preparation for job-life. Global experiences reflect reactive interventions such as combating unemployment through technical and vocational education, which, in itself, cannot be any good remedy without being supported by the joint operation of the school and the workplace (Mejia, 2012). So, on conditions where school and workplace move under the watershed of reactive intervention, ensuring employment would be very distant since conditions are made plain in the aftermath (Akoojee, 2016).

In Ethiopia, too, the youth join TVET after the completion of general secondary education (Grade 10). There are also some who do so after completing preparatory education with an average achievement below the threshold for university entry. Three conditions seem to challenge such an entry. On the one hand, students completing general secondary or preparatory education do not seem to prepare themselves pre-hand to join TVET as an educational option. By and large, almost all secondary school leavers opt to join preparatory school and all preparatory level leavers a university. So, there seems to be a narrow space between school and TVET prepare the students to join TVET. On the other hand, TVET colleges do not have any workable scheme and pre-knowledge of the type of candidates they should enroll. Moreover, colleges and industries do not seem to be

aligned in working out curricula and subsequent practices for the best preparation of graduates for job-life. So, TVET provision is surrounded by trios of individual and institutional challenges on youth-employability which stands as the lifeblood of the very scheme.

This research looks into factors affecting TVET responsiveness for youth employability in Arsi Zone of Oromia Regional State. The variables of concern are youth preparation index and relationship with industries in working with TVET colleges to ensure youth employability. College youth-preparation index is seen in this study in relation to entry identification of capacity, process-based enrichment of skills, and assessment of attainments in line with the expected competency-standards. Likewise, relationship index is looked into in terms of the interplay between TVET colleges and industries in adjusting conditions for correspondence between curricular strategies and job-entry tests.

Hence, this research addresses the following issue: the institutional and individual factors affecting TVET responsiveness to youth employability. More specifically, the research is concerned with how far TVET curricula is aligned with workplace needs; how candidates' entry knowledge and skills are pretested for pertinence to the TVET standards; how far formative measures represent expected learning competencies; and how far output measures pertain to job-entry competency tests.

Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are to:

- clarify alignment of TVET curricula with workplace needs;
- identify verifiability of candidates' entry conditions for the fields they are esteemed to attend;
- make out pertinence of formative follow-up to the expected competencies;
- state pertinence of output measures to job-entry tests.

Significance of the Study

This research studied factors affecting TVET responsiveness to youth employability taking institutional and individual aspects into consideration. In line with the attainments of the objectives, the research would indicate the relevance of:

- clarifying alignment of TVET curricular preparations to workplace needs would have relevance for the colleges to go in line with the market-demand;
- verifying candidates' capacity would have relevance for programmatic arrangements and curricular enrichment for valid provisions to be realized; and
- making out pertinence of formative measures would have significance for the holding of follow-up in due form as to steer learning progresses against the requirements of the vested competencies.

Delimitation of the Study

For the purpose of focus and manageability, this research was delimited to four model TVET institutions which were selected as cluster centers across Arsi zone. Cases in view were also delimited to nexus the TVET colleges had with nearby industries and individuals' experiential reflections. Data related to employability rate across industries was not considered after it became clear that employees were entertained all across; not on the basis of proximity.

Operational Definition of Terms

Factors: institutional factors such as linkage with industries, programmatic arrangements for checking students' entry, process and exit conditions;

Affecting: existing practices which stood as bottleneck conditions on TVET graduates' success in job-creation or getting employed in different enterprises.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training: practices in Arsi Zone, more specifically, in the cluster centers. It does not, hence, represent all others.

*Responsiveness***:** Refers to follow-up and developmental enrichment made on training.

Youth: those attending TVET in the colleges under the aforementioned cluster.

Employability: getting or creating job-opportunity on the basis of education and training provided for them through TVETC.

Review of Related Literature

Technical and vocational education and training is a kind of provision aimed at developing technical hands-on skills on experiences that prepare the youth for the world of work. It is framed in a manner that it enables different groups who need technical and vocational skills. It aims to capacitate secondary school graduates to be technically armed to work in medium and small-scale industries or create their own jobs (Filmer, et al, 2017). The point is in serving educational customers with valid and desirable know-how skill and attitudes that are market-driven.

Purposes and Issues of Technical and Vocational Education

Like any other educational institution, TVET works to develop human potential for the highly demanding market and enliven workmanship for self employment (Teshome, 2007). The grand purpose is to prepare educated taskforce for the world of work on the basis of job-oriented need assessment (Wheeler, 2017). The other purpose is to create

conditions for employable skills which the current generation needs to succeed in the contemporary society of science and technology (Hollander and Mar, 2012). By and large, TVET helps learners to have strong technical and vocational breakthrough for their better life and for the advancement of the society directly or indirectly (Anand, 2007).

Directly they provide for youth skill-development thereby ensuring the provision for employable skills which will be viable both in production and service realms (Filmer, et al, 2017). Indirectly, they provide for model duty of the educated human resource, which others to take the footsteps of those who have succeeded and work for better life and living (Teshome, 2007).

Coming to the issues, Thanker and Thanker (2004) underline TVE to respond to issues of massive unemployment, rapid technological changes, structural reforms in the economy, and responsiveness to market-demand which, in turn, feeds the economy. Similarly, specific issues pertaining to TVE are stated as transition to knowledge-based economies which substitute product-based economies, deep-orientation and practices of self-employment and entrepreneurial skills, closer links with industry for policy formulation, program implementation, curriculum development, and sharing resources. Above all, the development of transferable skills with regard to transition from school to work remains to be a thought-provoking matter (Wheeler, 2017; Anand, 2007).

Principles of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

According to Stephen, Carl and Stephen (2010), a modern and responsive TVET system needs to take into account current and expected socioeconomic conditions including labor-market demand, the needs of both the formal and informal sector in relation to employment, and the professional capacity of TVET teachers and instructors. Further, TVET must attend to the specific employment needs of both rural and urban situations and take account of belief and

value systems, religions and customs, and different (particularly in relation to gender and social dimensions in training and employment) regional and indeed climatic variations between regions within a country. Here, relevance to the labor market (one that meets employers' needs and expectations); access for trainees; quality of delivery; standardization; inclusion of soft skills; and secure and uninterrupted funding are underlined to be essential issues.

According to the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) strategy (Ministry of education, 2008), the guiding principles of the National TVET System include:

a. *Demand Orientation*: Under this, the document forwards two essential components such as competence needs and qualification requirements. Competence needs in all economic sectors are underlined to be essential for the improvement of people's employability in the labor-market, more specifically in the self-employment realm.
b. *Quality and Relevance:* Effective means of quality management is said to cater for relevance of TVET programs thereby providing support and guidance to TVET institutions to achieve definite quality standards, as the policy depicts. Occupational standards, assessment and certification are underlined to be means of realizing the quality and relevance of provision. The question is how far it takes the expected service to real ends.
c. *Contributing to the fight against HIV/AIDS* which underscores awareness-raising and training about preventive measures by developing policies to ensure that it can stop discrimination according to health status with regard to HIV/AIDS.
d. *Contributing to Environmental Protection* through environmental awareness about sustainable uses of scarce natural resources.

The guiding principles above trace four essential pivots which pertain to workplace needs and requirements, effective means of quality management, humanistic needs in training provision and environmental needs.

Factors Affecting Employability Skills

The ultimate goal of Technical and Vocational Education and Training is to produce taskforce for workplace needs or demands. The destined task-force must have knowledge, skills and attitude which qualify them for the work life. For the acquisition of workable knowledge and skills, there must be mechanisms whereby the pursuant develop such skills. With respect to factors affecting employable skills, Dania, Bakar and Mohamed (2014), after having studied factors influencing the acquisition of employability skills in Malaysia, came up with the finding that self-concept, participation in career development activities, and industrial training were the top three factors which highly influenced technical secondary school students' employability skills. Ismail and Mohammed (2015) held a study on employability of TVET curriculum and came up with the findings that dominance of theory over practice, shortage of skills in problem-solving and decision-making, and non-existence of consideration for lifelong learning and development of innovative competences were among the striking conditions on youth employability. These latter researchers largely stressed institutional factors while the initial ones focused on the individual factor, self-concept, to have a pressing effect.

Likewise, Raihan (2014), after studying institution-industry collaboration in Bangladesh with its effects on employability of skills came up with the findings that nature and extent of pre-employment skills development, research and innovation, sustainability of the collaboration initiatives, better understanding of multiple collaboration, and existence of right environment and supportive structure were a few of the factors affecting employability of skills. Bakar, Mohammed and Hamza (2013) also traced having deep pre-orientation could awaken

the youth to skill-employability. Isengard (2010) studied risk factors on skill employability and identified individual level of education, the country-specific organization of educational systems and labor-market institutions, and existence of active labor-market programs to have pressing effects.

Research Methodology

This study dealt with identification and analysis of factors affecting TVET responsiveness for youth employability. Variables of concern were job-entry conditions and training processes as seen against market-demand for employability. Training processes included means of identifying entry behavior of trainees, means of ensuring trainees' formative achievement standards both in theory and practice, and mechanisms to ensure summative outputs of learning. Job-entry competencies included the interplay between the training outputs and overall competency. Conditions related to the role of stakeholders were also presented in terms of the nature of provision. Overall, the research followed the pragmatic theoretical paradigm contending that practical experiences could reflect the reality of undertakings (Morgan, 2013; Shannon-Baker, 2015).

Research Design

In carrying out this study, descriptive survey research design was employed for its viability to explore factors with their nature (Dawson, 2007; Williams, 2003). Descriptive survey design was also preferred for its quality to describe a situation /process more accurately and systematically (Dulock, 1993).

Data Types and Sources

In this research, data which were primary in nature, pertaining to direct experiences and practices, were taken into consideration. Data related to learning experiences were collected from 120 students in three

model TVET colleges: *Bokoji, Robe, Arba-Gugu* and *Eteya***.** With respect to institutional organization and implementation of arranged practices, pertinent data were collected from TVET deans and instructors. Selected documentary sources referring to preliminary need assessment, curriculum development, identification of preinstructional preparation, the teaching-learning process, and assessment and evaluation. These data types were taken into consideration to *triangulate* the data that would be able to give a complete figure in coverage.

Sample Population and Sampling Techniques

Samples among 1189 students in the graduating level of learning (n=120) were selected through *stratified random sampling,* the point of stratification being distribution across the selected colleges (Singh, 2007). Emphasis was given to those in the third level because they were believed to have undergone the entry, formative and a part of the site induction process. Deans (n=4) and teachers (n=12) were purposively selected on the basis of their experiences and roles in the respective colleges. Reference was also made to working documents of each college on curricular planning, implementation and assessment in line with the competence-based approach.

Table 1: Sample Distribution across the Target Colleges

No.	College	Students		Teachers		Deans	
		Total	**Sample**	**Total**	**Sample**	**Total**	**Sample**
1.	A/Gugu	372	37	14	3	2	1
2.	Eteya	249	25	17	2	2	1
3.	Robe	341	34	15	3	2	1
4.	Bokoji	236	24	18	4	2	1
	Total	**1198**	**120**	**64**	**12**	**8**	**4**

Instrumentation and Validation

Questionnaire, semi-structured interview and documentary checklist were instruments of data collection. Questionnaires were prepared, proofread and validated through peer review; and then, presented to students. Reliability coefficient was not made out provided that most of the items were open-ended. In the process, assistant data collectors were trained/ oriented on how to collect questionnaire data and organize in due accord. Likewise, interview guides were prepared and checked for pertinence through a similar review, and arranged for data collection with officers. Documentary checklists were also prepared and checked for pertinence to collect data related to performance reflections from record-centers of each college.

Procedures of Data Organization and Analysis

The questionnaire data were systematically organized and analyzed statistically with the help of percentage values. Interview and documentary data were also transcribed, coded and thematically interpreted. Then, major findings were summarized in line with the research questions. On the basis of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and implications for further study were given.

Results and Discussion

The students' questionnaire responses were based on students' entry awareness, formative lesson-processing, terminal school to work situation. The students' entry awareness issues were seen to form the standpoint of information they got about field employability, and conviction they had about the compliance of courses to the possible employability situation.

Field-Orientation and Placement

Table 2: Access to Field Orientation and Proper Placement

Q1. How do you consider access to information on placement and screening?	**Existent**	**Non-existent**	**Uncertain**
	23 (19%)	44 (37%)	53 (44%)

From the very idea of communicating field-oriented information, existence of timely information dissemination about fields of study, this study forwarded the point as a preliminary issue. Data provided by students to the questionnaire indicated information on fields of study and would be placement was existent (23, 19 %) as some respondents denoted. Non-existence of field-orientation was also marked by a considerable rate of responses 44 (37%). The highest rate of response 53(44%) denoted students' uncertainty about pre-orientation and pre-identification of capacity for placement purpose. So, the response rate went more to uncertainty about would-be placement and field-orientation.

Parallel to the questionnaire data, interview responses from college deans indicated that, the colleges had course-based which basically dealt with role-orientation but not field-orientation. The following is a sample response:

> Students come to register at the college based on notices every opening year. When students register for a course, we screen them based on their results at secondary school level. Then, we register them to the proper level that the prior result allows. After registration, they are given orientation on how they work on their fields. That is how we handle the teaching-learning process (Part.1, Eteya, Nov., 2017).

The above interview account bears categories of data that displayed students' entry decision to have been based on dead file which was ascertained only on the basis of secondary school results. At the orientation session, students were given information on how to deal with instructions but not what the industry provision or practical work-related decisions were like. So, things were more to the instructional aspect than to the college-market orientation. In that sense, students had very limited entry information to prepare themselves for learning and taking heed on employability from the very outset.

Another participant dean stated the following:

> The college prepares curricula and orients students when they come up with deserving results. On that basis, as per the need held by the regional TVET agency, students are assigned to certain fields. At entry level, they are given course orientation and what they should do with their teachers. That is how we provide orientation. We also try the best we can in order to encourage them to tilt to technical and vocational training since they greatly undermine the stream of TVET. At times, they are wrongly oriented since they prefer a field without checking its future marketability. That pressure comes from elders or parents (P.2, Bokoji, 2017).

In this category of data, five themes could be sorted out. In the first place, curricula were prepared on the basis of institutional need as per the urge from top agency office. In that accord, they were more subject to contextual alienation. In the second, course orientation was given without field orientation. In that sense, students were given course award without understanding what would await them. In the third, every form of induction was expected from TVET administration since different forms of encouragement were sought essential. In that case, students were not expectant and were not ready with TVET courses and skills. The fourth point goes to basing heed for training initiatives to

have been based on external pressure from elders and parents. A certain participant witnessed a parent saying: “Unless you learn computer maintenance, don’t expect any coins for your support.”

Finally, the fate of TVET entrants was hung between three agents: Industry, Colleges and Parents - which had different whims. This implies that the provision of information about fields of study in TVET to students is incongruent with the college-provision or parental expectation. Likewise, students were not well-oriented about placement. Regarding the field-orientation issue, available findings underline the need to embrace approaches aimed *at value re-orientation* of TVET in the process of training provision (Okwelle and Aynomike, 2014).

Diversity in Fields of Training

Table 3: Reflection on Field-Diversity

Q2. How do you see diversity in the field of study?	**Very much diverse**	**Diverse to some extent**	**Uncertain**
	28 (23%)	26(22%)	66(55%)

In the process of learning, students should know and be aware of the important fields among which they can select the most appropriate one, as per their capacity and inclination (Wilson and Peterson, 2006). So, in this research, the other point of concern was students’ awareness about diversity in field of lesson provision. Most of the TVET candidates indicated their uncertainty about existence of diverse fields in their respective training provisions 66(55%). Existence in diverse forms of fields of concern was witnessed by some respondents 28 (23%) whereas existence of diversity to some extent was marked by the least rate of responses 26(22%). This implies that, students had diverse status of

awareness about existence of diverse options among which to select the most appropriate ones.

Data obtained through interview also indicated a similar reflection:

> We mostly tell them the fields we have and the students get registered. The zone TVET coordination office works on coordinating things after students get graduated. There are also conditions for arranging placement matters. Otherwise, we don't have a special means of disseminating information about the diverse fields and why they are so important (P1, Eteya, 2017).

From the officer's reflection, it could be inferred, in the first place, that students get registered to fields without any due consideration of the existing fields and why they are destined to learn.

Another officer stated the following:

> We have diverse fields. Our enrollment mechanism is based on merit. So, field diversity being in place, we don't labor with explaining to students why fields are so important. They simply get registered to fields as per their results. Even when they refuse to join some fields, the hard skill area, the college tends to force them. Otherwise, some streams get bulky and others collapse (P_2, Bekoji, 2017).

So, instead of briefing the different fields, even taking it as something trivial, colleges tilt to registering students to fields as per their general secondary school grade standards. Information obtained from documentary survey and official reflection also denoted the fact that the entire curricula were prepared by the regional commission for TVET and there could be no option and reason to doodle on

discussing field diversity. While field diversity can be seen from the possibility to design and implement comprehensive and lifelike curricula, the shortage of budget highly delimits the scope, as reflected on *documents* (Information obtained from Documents and Reflection across the four Colleges, September, 2017).

Practicality of Fields Attended in TVET

Table 4: Practicality in the Fields of Study

Q3. How do you consider practicality of lessons?	**Very high**	**Average**	**Low**
	36 (30%)	58 (48%)	26 (22%)

Training provision in TVET must be practical to the most extent so that students could gain skills they can exploit in their future job. That way, they can also get swift gate of employability (Haolder and Paul, 2012; Morris and Powell, 2013). In this regard, students were asked if fields they attended were practical. It became evident from the data provided that fields attended in TVET were of *average (48%)* practicality to the most of them. *Very high practicality* was evidenced by some 36 (30%) whereas non-practicality was marked by the least rate of responses 26 (22%).

A related interview data indicated that colleges had ties with some enterprises with which they worked under the auspices of Zone TVET Coordination Office.

> We have practical induction in the form of internship. Our candidates are assigned to near and far industries and enterprises when they complete courses. Perhaps, we support them in whatever we can. But, the external relation with industries is not strong. At times, the attendants at industries either overlook the follow-up as

> an extra-labor or use the candidates' labor as cheap. So, they simply fill forms and send them back (P1, Eteya, 2017).

The interview account indicated that practical parts of training were mostly pushed to the end of lessons. That would imply tracking remedial to be by-passed. The other point was that students were not properly followed up by people at the internship centers. So, the internship meant for practical engagement was spent on unexpected labor. The implication is that the extent to which fields saw practicality was average. Perhaps, lower rate of practicality was witnessed by some respondents (30%) and low-practicality by the least rate 26 (22%). There is also a matching reflection on existing documents and practices that, though emphasis is given to sustaining the practical aspect, shortage in running workshops pulls the endeavor back. Resource shortage is also traced as the major bottle-neck. From the practical learning perspective, the TVET provision looked into has the reflection that, provision of adequate facilities, equipment, consumable materials, and hand tools is very imperative for TVET to be adequately repositioned (Ogbunaya and Udoudo, 2015).

Facility Issues in TVET Provisions

Table 5: Condition of Training Facilities

Q4. How do you consider the availability of training resources?	**Totally available**	**Somewhat Available**	**Not at all**
	26 (22%)	24 (20%)	70 (58%)

It is shown above that most of the respondents indicated that training facilities in TVET were not at all available 70 (58%) to most of the respondents, and that they were used only to some extent as witnessed by some rate 24 (20%). Perhaps, some responses 26 (22%) denoted total availability of training resources. So, condition of training

facility was not consistent for trainees in terms of availability. To vitalize the students' responses, more inlet was created through documentary survey where nature of supplies, utilization, relevance to lesson provision, and accessibility were taken as core issues. Across the four models TVET colleges the following points were set as indicatives of the use of learning-teaching facilities.

From the reflection made on documentary evidences, it could be inferred that, material supply and use had diverse features across the model TVET colleges. Lack of proper use of facilities was also indicative of the reality that the existing resources were not used for the right purpose in view. Resource shortage situation might delimit trainees' practical skill thereby forecasting their not being eligible for employability standards. The highest rate of responses rested in the option that the existing resources were not even used well.

This relates to the research evidence in Ghana which brought to light insufficiency of resource to be the grandest bottle-neck to TVET effectiveness in meeting the demands of competency-based curriculum (Dasman, 2012). Lemma (2014) also denotes that insufficiency in resources and inadequate use of existing resources stand as challenges to competency-based curriculum handling. So, the insight about training resource use in this study could show that in-depth attention was not given to how well resources were used.

Concordance between TVET and Competence-Based Assessment

Table 6: Reflection on Concordance between Lesson Assessment and Competence Assessment

Q5. How do you consider relatedness of lesson-based assessment with competence-test?	**Well integrated**	**Somewhat integrated**	**Non-integrated**
	18 (15%)	70 (58%)	32 (27%)

Responses on the integration in the mode of assessment between lesson-oriented and competency test denoted that the nature was somewhat integrated (58%) to the most. Considerable rates of responses also denoted strong integration and non-integration. Documentary evidence from TVET offices also reflected that while the competence assessment required practical testing from the institutional aspect, the only possibility was to use paper-pencil tests owing to resource shortage. The implication is that, though there is a slight rate of integration, there is shortage in interconnecting post-training competency test with the assessment in the lesson-delivery process.

In the practical sense of the trade, what is taught at formative stages must be a pathfinder for what students are going to face in the long process even after exit. Hence, shallow integration in the mode of assessment could denote shallowness in the rate and nature of readiness expected. From the standpoint of the occupational standards delineating the competence of a worker according to the requirements in the labor-market, and where competence refers to the general range of knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to perform a specific job (National TVET Strategy, MoE, 2008:26), lack or minimal integration between institutional and competence test would imply mismatch between learning and market-need.

Teachers' reactions to interview also denoted that there was a big gap between college assessment and exit assessment as denoted below:

> We prepare examinations and tests as per our courses. We also give projects in line with the course requirement. But there are no guides as to relate college assessment with exit test since each college uses its own way of testing which is deeply diverse across subjects. Even. It is hard for us to know if or not what we have taught appeared on exit assessment examinations (TP_1, Bokoji, 2017).

From the quoted response, it could be evidenced that college teachers acted on their courses without much attention to relatedness of classroom tests to exit assessment. Moreover, there were guides to interrelate the two forms of tests.

Students' Reflections on Sufficiency of Industries

Table 7: Sufficiency of Industries

Q6. How do you see sufficiency of industries to accommodate trained youth power?	**Sufficient**	**Insufficient**	**Uncertain**
	48 (40%)	72 (60%)	-

In line with TVET provision for skilled manpower development, there is need to have sufficient industries which could exploit the skill. The existence of industries can help for two major purposes. One is in providing placement support, and the other is employment opportunity, *which can be a two-way benefit* (Terje and Esther, 2016). With this in view, in their reactions on college-industry linkage most (60%) of the respondents stressed insufficiency of industries for TVET graduates.

In line with this, the researcher checked the types of industries set up in Asella area to verify the response and found out that flour factories were abundantly found whereas *touris*t, *transport* and *hotel* industries were very scarce. By and large, the urban industries were *not in close ties with the zone TVET cluster*. They were rather staged in the urban boundary while majority of the TVET were in the rural towns and vicinities. This is indicative of the mismatch between the training need area and the training provision sphere.

The other reference in this research was innovative use of TVET which would pertain to looking for ample floors of investment through education such transport management, tourism, hotel management and greenery. Though there are offices for culture and tourism, the provision of training for that industry is very much minimal to the level

of being even *none.* Researches indicate that for TVET programs to meet their goals effectively there should be deep intimacy with industries (Essel, 2013; Dasman, 2011). In line with this, insufficiency of industries would mark limitation in the opportunity for practical attachment and employment opportunity.

Regarding Employment Opportunity

Table 8: Reflection on Existence of employment opportunities

Q7. How do you consider sufficiency of employment opportunities for TVET Graduates?	**Sufficient**	**Somewhat Sufficient**	**Insufficient**
	12 (10%)	50 (42%)	58 (48%)

It could be ascertained from data in Table 8 that, employment opportunities were non-existent as indicated by the highest rate of responses so far provided (58, 48%). A related rate of responses also denoted employment opportunities to exist to some degree (42%). Perhaps, a limited rate of responses was due sufficiency in employment opportunity (10%). Where employment opportunity could refer to either self-employment or being employed in industries owned by government or private proprietors, the highest rate of insufficiency in the data implies that TVET graduates in the target research areas did not have reliable employment-base right from the provision of training. This could have a remarkable pressure on youth employability since it blurs conditions for job-related decisions (Dietrich, 2012).

Discussion

With respect to field-orientation and placement, course-orientation preceded the general orientation, which was a bit untimely. There were also ambitiously negative orientations from parents and elders. Students themselves did not get positive remarks at joining technical and vocational education and training by far. So, disorientation was

one of the factors entangling TVET responsiveness to youth employability.

Regarding field diversity in TVET, candidates had different views and experiences. Some of them asserted the diversity in fields of study to be dependable whereas others considered it to be minimal, and still others denoted their being uncertain about. That would imply lack of deep awareness about available streams among which to choose the most appropriate from the very outset.

With respect to practical induction, internship was held at the end of most academic undertakings which was highly detached from individual course-based practices. For one thing, the existence of practice-based ties with industries and enterprises was a kind of blessing for the success candidates could get as they were in the training pipeline. Most of the cooperative trainings were arranged with small scale enterprises which were handy. Such small-scale enterprises seldom had accommodating space and skill manpower.

Regarding concordance between college-based and competence-based assessment, students' reaction was partly positive but not completely so. That diversity was also manifest on the part of teachers. Candidates were not sure at large about opportunities for employment.

Summary of Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of Major Findings

In the current state of youth employability problem, the role of technical and vocational education and training is indispensable in creating curricular and school-to-work grounds for youth employability. Issues of youth employability could be related to initial identification of entry capacity, and formative follow-up of targeted success in skill and pertinence of exit competency to job-entry assessment (Majumdar, 2009). This research looked into factors affecting TVET

Responsiveness for youth Employability in Arsi Zone of Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia. On the basis of the results and discussion held on the data the following major findings were identified:

Regarding entry-identification and placement of TVET candidates

As far as pre-identification and placement of TVET candidacy is concerned, the research showed that, practices were more to shortage and uncertainty than clarity in practices. The fact delineates, however, that in the state of competence-based learning and teaching, such as in TVET, in-depth orientation and pre-identification of the students' capacity stand as essential and impassable steps since they mark the positive leap an institution should take if it plans to be successful at the formative or process-based undertakings. It is also at this stage that institutions co-plan and act with employers and other supportive agents in the market in screening capacity for training, making arrangements for initially deficient capacity angles to be built, and direct the path for successful learning as students enter the major task-index.

Regarding Alignment of TVET Curricula with Workplace Standards

In line with this and the discussion on students' questionnaire data, it was plain that practical learning and assessment were not given much attention other than testing the taught curricular concept. So, where practical and hands-on experiences were thought essential, most of the lessons focused on in-class instructions and short-range inductions. The overall expectation behind TVET provision is, however, to prepare the youth for employment. It could be considered also that the mismatch between TVET provision and workplace need could be related to non-existence of outcome-based practices in the form of out-to-work induction. That induction deficit could, in turn, be related to scarcity of training facilities, shortage in fully utilizing available resources, shortage of industries and subsequent shortage in practice in the way it could help students meet the required standards.

Alignment of Formative and Output Measures with Expected Learning Competencies

With respect to concordance between formative learning assessment and expected competencies, conditions were that there were some sorts of mismatch in aligning the two. It was evident so far that most of the assessment modes were theoretical and that practical attachments were very much limited owing to infrastructural shortages. The shortage in infrastructure, in turn, was backed up by shortage of budget, which was itself intricate in role-assumption. So, shortage in aligning and making the institutional assessment preparatory for competence-assessment had a sort of vicious circle of role assumption.

Conclusion

So, on the bases of the above summary, it could be concluded that TVET provisions in model TVET colleges of Arsi Zone, in their current status of handling, fall short of meeting the school-to-work standards set by global and national scholarly grounds since they bear gaps in entry skill-identification, formative capacity and concordance between instructional and competency ensuring techniques.

Institutional Factors

These included lack of strong means to identify students' entry competence, shortage in providing informative orientations about market-need and employability; shortage in aligning institutional provision and assessment modes with the pre-assessed market need; lack of strong base for attachment with industries; failure to test students' learning output and remedy before they sit for exit assessment ; deep reliance on theoretical assessment; lack of environmental scanning for the viability of more employable enterprises (transport industry, tourism, agro-industry, hotel services, etc).

Individual Factors

These included students' inclination more to soft rather than hard skills; parents' low recognition for TVET skills employability; teachers' skill shortage; specifically, in pedagogic realms; assessor's lack of skills and commitment; students' skill capacity shortage even after completing the broad training; failure to show in practice.

Recommendations

Cognizant of the research findings and conclusions reached, the following essential recommendations are forwarded:

TVET institutions and managing offices need to work on the alignment of TVET curricula with workplace needs through collegiate discussion, collaboration, co-planning and co-action on issues and points requiring common goals. To gain workable access, they need to form scheme through which they form networks with diverse stakeholders. In Arsi area, especially Asella Town and the surrounding areas, practices of hotel and tourism industry are very rare. The existing conditions of training provision do not allow graduates to have employment opportunities in the proximate environment, as witnessed by the researcher's very observation. So, besides making need assessment on existing industry in-take standards, TVET institutes need to frame likely opportunities for more industries to be formed and taken to curricula scheme inclusively. For instance, the transport industry could be one area of focus for which transport management curricula could be developed in TVET.

TVET colleges need to hold entry assessment. In that, pre-testing candidates' entry knowledge and skills against the TVET standards must be common and well-built practice in TVET right from the enrolling session to the end of the training programs since individual trainees' expectations must be coordinated with realistic capacity-standards they have and build through training. Otherwise, the quality

and workability of skills gained through TVET could be demurred by whimsical entry and exit. Hence, three things must be in place.

First, TVET institutes need to make survey across industries in the area, as to which sector needs the would-be task-force. This helps for two main purposes; to adjust conditions for placement and pave ways for employment. Second, TVET institutes must have means of selecting competent candidates for marketable skills ensured to be developed through education and training. For this purpose, they need to form ties with experts from industries nearby and far off as much viably as they can find. Third, institutes for TVET must have means of capacitating those who fall short of entry even if they have some limitations. This trend is much better than driving untested skill into the training scheme. TVET institutes also need to make Concordance of formative measures with expected learning competencies a reality since outcome measures of competency are essential for success on the job.

Implication

This research focused on factors affecting TVET responsiveness to youth employability in Arsi Zone, Oromia Regional State with respect to identification of students' entry behavior, nexus between formative provision and identified competences and concordance between formative assessment and outcome-based assessment of competences. The findings and recommendations given here could be workable in the target colleges of the zone but need further replications for use in other colleges and zones. Even, in-depth research could be worked out on issues of TVET skill development across youth inclinations, development of employable skills curricula, and analysis of societal considerations about TVET provisions right from family altar. The question of aligning industries and TVET curricula is also an issue of big concern since areas of attention are far out of sight with regard to using near resources and sources for youth employability.

References

Akoojee, Salim. (2010). Development TVET Rhetoric In-Action: The While Paper for Post-School Education and Training in South Africa. Retrieved from: https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream.

Bakar, A.R., Mohamed, Sh. and Hamzah, R. (2013). *An Assessment of Workplace Skills Acquired by Students of Vocational and Technical Education Institution*. **International Education Studies***.* Retrieved from: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext.

Dasman, Adam. (2011). *Challenges Facing Technical Institutes Graduates In Practical Skills Acquisition in the Upper East Region of Ghana.* **Asia Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education**, 12 (2), 67-77.

Dania, J., Bakar, A.R. and Mohammed, Sh. (2014). Factors Influencing the Acquisition of Employability Skills by Students of Selected Technical Secondary Schools of in Malaysia. Retrieved from http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ies/article/view/32199.

Dawson, C. (2007). **A Practical Guide to Research Methods: A User-Friendly Manual for Mastering Research Techniques and Projects.** Oxford: How to Content.

Desalegn Endeshaw. (2014). Practices and Challenges of Cooperative Training TVET Institutes and Companies in Guraghe Zone. Addis Ababa University.

Dietrich, Hans. (2012). Youth Unemployment in Europe: Theoretical and Empirical Findings. Retrieved from http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents.

Dulock, Helen. (1993). Research Design: Descriptive Research. Retrieved from: www.journals. sagepub. com.

Eden Teklay. (2012). **Analyzing the labor-outcome of TVET in Ethiopia: Implications of Challenges and Opportunities in Productive Self-Employment of TVET Graduates.** The Hague: Kortenarkede.

Essel, Charles Hackman. O. Sustainability of TVET: Analyzing the Critical Choice Factors. CAPA Scientific Journal. Vol.1, No.1. Retrieved from www.capa-sec.org.

Haolder, F.A. and Paul, D.K. (2013). The Present Status of Polytechnic Curriculum and Student Assessment Approach in Bangladesh. Retrieved from: www.researchgate.net.

Ismail, S. and Mohammed, D.S. (2014). Employability Skills in TVET Curriculum in Nigeria Federal University of Technology. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/.

Isengard, Bettina. (2010). *Youth Unemployment: Individual Risk Factors and Institutional Determinants. A Case of Germany and the United Kingdom.* **Journal of Youth Studies**, Vol.6, Issue 4, pp.357-376.

Martha Kibru. (2012). **Employment Challenges in Ethiopia.** Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.

Morgan, David L. (2013). Pragmatism as a Paradigm for Social Research. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/8197592/Pragmatism_as_a_Paradigm_for_Social_Research.

Morris, H.A. and Powell, C.M. (2013). Delivering TVET at the Secondary Level: A Practical Approach. Retrieved from www.uwispace.sta.uwi.edu.

Mumishi, Emanuel J. (2016). *Factors Contributing to Lack of Employable Skills among TVET Graduates in Tanzania*. **Business Education Journal,** vol. I, Issue No.2.

Ogbunaya, T.C. and Udoudo, E. (2015). *Repositioning TVET for Youth Employment and National Security in Nigeria*. **Journal of Education and Practice**, Vol.6, No. 32.

Okwelle, P.Ch. and Ayonmike, Ch.Sh. (2014). Towards Value-Orientation of Youths on the Role of TVET for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from https://researchgate.net.

Seangmean, Th., Sokheng, S. and Somonich, P. (2015). Youth employment in Cambodia: Trends, challenges and policy responses. Retrieved from www.mometwork.org .

Shannon-Baker, Peggy. (2015). *Making Paradigms Meaningful in Mixed Methods Research.* **Journal of Mixed Research***.* Retrieved from http://didier-jourdan.com/wp-content/uploads/ 2017/04/ Paradigms-MM.pdf.

Shaorshadze, I. and Krishnan, P. (2012). Technical and Vocational Education in Ethiopia. International Growth Center. Retrieved from http://www.educationinnovations.org.

Singh, Kultar. (2007). **Quantitative Social Research Methods.** Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Terje, V. and Esther, I. (2016). University-Industry Linkages in Developing Countries: Perceived Effects on Innovation. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.org.

Tripney, J.S. and Hombrados, J.G. (2013). TVET for young people in low and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Retrieved from http://ervet-journal.springeropen.com.

Uddin, O. (2013). *Causes, Effects and Solutions to youth unemployment problems in Nigeria.* **Journal of Emerging Trends in Economies and Management Sciences***.* 4/4: 397-402.

Wilson, S.M. and Peterson, P.L. (2006). Theories of Leaning and Teaching: What they mean for education. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov.

Wilson, S.M. and Peterson, P.L. (2016). Greening Technical Vocational Education Curriculum and Training (TVET): Institutional Approaches for Climate Change Action. UNEVAC, International Center for TVET. [Retrieved on 23rd March, 2017. In: www.unevoc.unesco.org].

Wilson, S.M. and Peterson, P.L. Wilson, S.M. and Peterson, P.L. (2016). Enhancing relevance in TVET: Review of Progress in the Asia since 2012, UNESCO. Retrieved from www.unesdoc.unesco.org.