

Issues and Challenges Confronting Pakistani Women in the Technical and Vocational Education
and Training (TVET) Institutes
A Case Study of the Twin Cities



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CERTIFICATE

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Dedication

To my Grandfather, the man who would have been the happiest watching me succeed. I know you are in a better place now Nana Daddy.

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Before I take anyone else's name, I am thankful to Almighty Allah for bestowing me with strength and health to complete this project.

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**Issues and Challenges Confronting Pakistani Women in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutes:
A Case Study of the Twin Cities**

Abstract

This document is the result of the research conducted between Fall 2018 to Spring 2020. This thesis has discussed in detail the issues that are prevalent in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training sector in Pakistan. The research highlights the plight of women in TVET and tries to examine the socio-cultural norms and values influencing Pakistani women looking to pursue TVET as a career option. This research has tried to bring forth the issues and challenges women face when they join the TVET sector of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. A case study design has been employed, and cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi have been chosen for the research. I have conducted semi-structured interviews from different Units of Data Collection. This document has also analyzed all the primary data through Thematic Analysis.

The study finds that despite exuberance among the female trainees to learn new skills which are valued in the job market, the performance of the TVET sector institutes leaves a lot to be desired. It has been recommended that the presently allocated government funding should be enhanced substantially not only to increase training opportunities for women as well as to upgrade the standard of training, but also to establish governmental commitment. It has further been suggested that issues regarding the quality of instruction, infrastructure, harassment of women and job saturation for female TVET graduates be addressed.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In Pakistan, the documented percentage of female participation in the work force is strikingly low, at 24.3%, especially in comparison with other regional competitors like Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, where the female workforce participation statistics account for 50.2%, 46.1% and 51%, of the total workforce, respectively (*National "Skills for All" Strategy*, 2018). Research has highlighted that there are a number of obstacles that hinder women participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Pakistan, such as socio-cultural norms of role stratification, employers' discretionary preferences in favour of men, and absence of quality skills enhancement opportunities for women aspirants.

This research focuses on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which primarily aims at advancing technical and vocational education, training and skills (UNESCO, 2017). Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a pivotal role in creating skilled workforce leading to productive employment for youth and consequently boosting economic development of a country. It is designed to cater for the youth interested in working in various technical fields such as agriculture, industry, and small scale business enterprises. In addition, TVET also seeks to cater for a wide range of human resource needs in the services sector including tailoring, hospitality, plumbing and Information Technology (IT).

According to an estimate, a staggering number of 57 million of Pakistan's working age youth is currently in the labour market striving for employment opportunities with formal education from matric upwards (*National "Skills for All" Strategy*, 2018). This statistical data is reflective of the enormity of the challenge and calls for serious attention of the academia and intervention of the policy makers. Needless to emphasize, if this huge youth bulge is not engaged in e skill development initiatives and employment opportunities, they may end up being rudderless. Both government and private sector of this country are encumbered with the onerous responsibility of turning this youth mass into a national asset. However, years of neglect of TEVT sector in Pakistan has

rendered the quality of technical and vocational training in Pakistan grossly inadequate in responding to the contemporary skill demands induced by technological advancement in both national and international markets (Raza & Khalid, 2017).

A large number of existing TVET institutes operated by the public sector of Pakistan are overwhelmed with issues of quality teaching methodology and outdated and archaic training equipment. The situation of private sector training institutes is also far from satisfactory. Apart from the inadequacy in terms of numbers, TVET institutes in their current form are hardly equipped to prepare a quality skilled workforce for the National and International job markets. First, the low standards of skills acquired by the youth negatively affect industrial productivity which leads to lower Gross National Product. Second, with outdated training, the capacity of the youth to find employment and earn a decent livelihood remains extremely limited. A major indication of this reflection of this phenomenon is the employment of Pakistani youth in the overseas job markets merely as unskilled or semi-skilled workers, with extremely low wages. Third, low quality of TVET training seriously tarnishes the image of skill training in the country, which makes it the least attractive avenue for the youth (Raza & Khalid, 2017).

Furthermore, a number of negative perceptions are associated with technical and vocational training when seen as a career choice for youth especially women. A stereotypical view widely embraced by the youth of this country implies that technical training is meant for academically weak boys and those hailing from poorer segments of society as they are incapable of affording private education. It is also believed by many that there exist no career progression opportunities in the skill sector. Presently, around 60 per cent of Pakistan's population is below the age of 30, which constitutes about 65 million strong youth bulge (Dawn, 2018). Given the socio-economic factors, the social acceptance of TVET as a preferred educational pathway needs to be ingrained in the psyche of the youth.

Skill development in technical and vocational domains equips young women to vie for employment both in the domestic labour markets as well as in the international market. A productive use of skilled female workforce leads to economic progress of the nation and socio-economic well-being of households and communities. Other regional economies have made significant strides

towards women empowerment as women involvement in the TVET sector is considered to be a critical factor for socio-economic development of the country. Pakistan continues to grapple with tangible disparities between male and female trainees with regard to training opportunities, employability, compensation and career advancement. Resultantly, we see women being denied access to training opportunities in certain fields and trades merely on the premise that such sectors are traditionally classified being the exclusive domain of men. This deeply embedded perception leads to serious outcomes for the women as they feel discriminated against on account of their sex. Although women participation in overall workforce has recorded an upward trend in the past decade, it still leaves a lot to be desired. Women, therefore are left to countenance with gender discrimination in pay inequity, occupational segregation, harassment and denial of equal opportunities to excel in TVET.

The systemic inadequacies and social norms have historically hampered Pakistani women from actively pursuing technical and vocational training imparted across the TVET institutes. On the other hand, skilled women of the regional countries including India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have demonstrated that women can contribute significantly towards well-being of the families and economic development of their countries. Against this backdrop, efforts need to be strenuously made to not only encourage Pakistani women to come forward to join training initiatives but to provide a congenial atmosphere for them to pursue their activities. This would provide a pathway to country's women to harness their potential and contribute towards socio-economic development of the country by acquiring technical skills and establishing entrepreneurial ventures.

Skill enrichment enables the young women to seek opportunities of employment not merely in the domestic labour markets, but also in the international job market. Employment of skilled female workforce is contingent upon a vibrant, demand-driven technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system. A productive use of skilled female workforce may lead to economic progress of the nation and socio-economic well-being of individuals, households and communities. Quality training imparted to women through TVET institutes may herald a significant transformation in the society. Other countries in our region have made significant strides in terms of women empowerment through modernizing their TVET systems as women participation in the TVET sector is construed to be a critical element for socio-economic development of a country.

Despite the fact that there is a growing realization among the literate sections of the society around the globe, yet countries are grappling with persistent disparities between men and women with regard to training opportunities, employability, compensation and career progression. Women are often denied access to training programmes in some specific sectors or trades as such sectors are stereotypically classified being the exclusive domain of men. This deeply entrenched perception culminates in serious consequences for the women as they feel discriminated against on the basis of their gender. In addition, the resultant underutilization of talent and untapped potential adversely impact the national economy. Although female labour force participation rate has risen over the past decade, it still leaves a lot to be desired. Hence, women in the labour market have to cope with gender discrimination as manifested in pay inequity, occupational segregation, sexual harassment and denial of opportunities to excel in TVET.

In the circumstances mentioned above, a level playing field for women is a must so that they are able to contribute to the socio-economic growth and development. My research will be an attempt to highlight compendium of salient issues confronting womenfolk when they enter the TVET sector. In order to carry out a focused and intensive study, I have selected the TVET landscape of the twin cities, namely Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This research has followed a case study research design. I have further taken help of thematic analysis to deconstruct the interviews that I conducted.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The labour market of the country is beset with numerous issues such as inadequately trained workforce, low literacy rate, reduced productivity of the labour, and non-inclusion of women in labour force which constitute a mere 24.3% of the overall labour force. Resultantly, it is hard for Pakistan to compete with other regional countries in terms of productivity and efficiency of the workforce. The industrial sector is reeling behind other competitors in Bangladesh, China and India as the workforce in Pakistan, especially women are not adequately equipped with the technical and vocational skills. The aim of my research is to explore compendium of issues women countenance with when they seek to pursue technical and vocational training, especially in the TVET institutes of the research locale. I have strived to delve deep to dig out the socio-cultural and economic

barriers that prevent women initially from preferring skill development over formal education and enrolling in the TVET institutes. I have also endeavored to examine issues confronted by female trainees at the hands of their families and communities.

Similarly, I find myself intrigued to enquire what women trainees are treated at the hands of their colleagues and teachers and how women tackle such issues while pursuing training at TVET institutes. I have attempted to take stock of the manifold challenges likely to inhibit women in their quest to get employment in skill sector after attaining the requisite training. I would also seek to provide a framework to address the issues that are faced by this marginalized segment of our society. My research is conducted in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and I have interviewed the participants, their families, and the officials at the TVET administration to imbibe a profound understanding and appreciation of their endeavors. Based on my research, I have evolved a set of operable, evidence based recommendations for socio-economic and policy interventions to address the issues as underscored in the research.

1.2 Research Problem and its Operationalization

Given the statement of the problem, I have narrowed down my topic to “Issues and Challenges confronting Pakistani women in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutes in the twin cities” and operationalized my research problem into the following research objectives and research question.

1.3 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What issues and challenges are pervading the TVET sector of Pakistan?
2. What are the specific socio-cultural norms and values influencing Pakistani women seeking to pursue TVET as a career choice?
3. What are the issues confronting female trainees in the TVET Institutes across the research locale?
4. What course of action/actionable strategy could be adopted to resolve the issues being faced by the female students seeking skill development?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the instant study are as follows:

1. To investigate into the issues and challenges pervading the TVET sector of Pakistan.

Pakistan has been deprived of quality skilled workforce, which is why it is essential that we invest into the TVET sector. Additionally, for many people who are not able to gain education, TVET can become the career of second resort. In order to register our presence across the globe as a stable economy, we need to make sure that women are proactively engaged in the pursuit of economic development and thereby spur them to feel productive and empowered.

2. To examine the socio-cultural norms and values influencing Pakistani women seeking to pursue TVET as a career.

For Pakistani women in search of making a living for themselves, TVET emerges as a challenging domain in view of the traditional roles entrusted to women. Gender stratification inhibits the female mobility and prevent women from stepping out of their houses, that too for pursuing skill training.

3. To explore compendium of issues confronting female trainees in the TVET Institutes across the research locale.

Amongst many issues there lies the problem of a limited capacity of institutes for women. As a result, women are forced to either compromise and join institutes which have a huge male population or decide against joining TVET at all. They can encounter issues like discrimination and harassment because of the prevailing gender stratification.

4. To recommend course of action/actionable strategy to resolve the issues being faced by the female students seeking skill development.

In view of the above, I have opted to study the TVET sector of the twin cities. I conducted interviews of female trainees and their family members. I also conducted structured interviews of the TVET graduates who have already completed their trainings and were employed. This allowed me to delve into the problems and prospects relevant to the realm of skill development in Pakistan.

1.5 Explanation of Key Concepts

1.5.1 Technical and Vocational Education and Training TVET

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been defined as education that preps people and instills in them knowledge and skills relevant to industry and business (TVET Council Barbados, 2020). TVET can help in equipping non-academic youth with skills and knowledge that will help them in garnering employment. In Pakistan, young women have an extremely hard time in accessing TVET related programmes and thus be able to develop skills that will enable them in getting employment (GIZ, 2020).

1.5.2 Vocational and Technical Training Distinguished

Distinction between technical and vocational training sounds rather semantic, yet the researchers prefer to highlight the difference between the two streams of skill development. The distinction is subtle yet some experts of the TVET sector have highlighted the delicate differences between the two streams of skills. The U.S. Department of Education has elaborated that the technical training institutes generally teach the science behind the skill and occupation, whereas vocational institutes teach hands-on application of skills necessary to perform a given set of tasks. The distinction implies that the trainees aspiring to learn about the inner workings of an occupation prefer to appreciate technical education and the ones motivated to learn as to how a job actually gets performed seek to engage in in vocational stream. Hence we can say that technical education is anchored more in theory and vocational stream focuses on practical aspects of a job.

In the technical education realm, the generally quoted occupations are technology-driven trades. Information technology skills fall in the category of technical stream as a student is required to learn and practice both theory and practice for attaining command. On the other hand, in the vocational arena, a beautician and a plumber are usually required to indulge in hands-on practice in laboratory settings during the course of their training. According to the Harvard University's How-

ard Gardner, varied trades involve diverse "intelligences" in students. The technical education focuses on logical and mathematical intelligence whereas vocational education involves the physical or kinesthetic (movement-based) style (Marfo, 2017).

1.5.3 Gender Mainstreaming

Gender Mainstreaming as an approach emphasizes that policies need to be developed and evaluated in a manner that both men and women benefit from them equally, at all levels and stages (Council of Europe, 1998). This concept was first developed at the Nairobi World Conference on Women in 1985. This research delves into the complexities that arise when gender inequality suffuses the TVET sector. In order to carry out the research at hand, female trainees enrolled at different TVET institutes and the representatives of the administrative organizations were interviewed.

Table 1 Gender-wise Institutes

Province/Region	Male	Female	Co-Education
Punjab	880	517	275
Sindh	359	164	194
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	453	203	41
Baluchistan	95	41	15
Gilgit Baltistan	54	93	27
AJK	71	47	17
FATA	56	20	0
ICT	67	38	13
Total Institutes	2035	1123	582

Source: (National "Skills for All" Strategy, 2018).

1.5.4 Socio-cultural Norms

The Cambridge Dictionary defines the term socio-cultural as “relating to the habits, norms, traditions and values of various groups of people living in a society” (“Sociocultural,” n.d). It is a combination of societal and cultural factors that influence a group of people, their beliefs and their

value systems. Socio-cultural norms are such rules that seek to condition attitudes and behaviours of the people. Sociocultural theory is profoundly influenced by the work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky. He believed that the social factors of a person influence his/her development (*Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*, n.d.). Sociocultural theory stipulates as to how the surrounding cultural values and norms impact people and their thought processes. For the purpose of this study I have used this definition of sociocultural theory and I have asked my respondents if their decisions were influenced or dictated by corresponding sociocultural norms.

1.5.5 Gender Discrimination

Amnesty International recognizes discrimination as an act that causes detriment to others solely because of their belief system and their identities ("What drives discrimination and how do we stop it?", 2020). Discrimination can be practiced on the bases of class, belief, sex, gender, colour, etc. In this research I have targeted Gender Discrimination specifically. This type of discrimination is also known as sex discrimination and it occurs when someone is subjected to an action that denies them of opportunities, rewards or privileges because of his/her gender ("Gender Discriminations", n.d.). I asked respondents to highlight if they have been subjected to gender discrimination and I also discussed the issue with the officers of NAVTTC and TEVTA Punjab.

Table 2 Gender-wise Enrollment

Province/Region	Male	Female
Punjab	152,708	76,116
Sindh	67,035	19,159
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	36,938	24,917
Baluchistan	10,759	7,088
Gilgit Baltistan	4,049	9,166
AJK	6,334	4,141
FATA	4,267	4,650
ICT	3,336	2,574
Total Enrollment	285,426	147,811

Source: (National "Skills for All" Strategy, 2018).

The overwhelming preference for hardcore skills like plumbing, welding, masonry, carpentry, and heavy machinery operators on one hand and relative disregard for skills such as hospitality, office management, automation, restaurant management and childcare goes on to drastically curtail women participation. Then no effort is seen being made to overcome the existing socio-cultural challenges in order to facilitate induction of female youth into the sector.

1.5.6 Harassment

According to “The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010”, ‘Harassment’ is the usage of unwelcome or unpleasant sexual advances made towards a party or the adoption of other sexually demeaning behaviours meant to intimidate the other party and to create interference in the work. This also includes using sexual favours as an excuse to grant employment or other favours at work (*The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010*, 2010).

It is the creation of an unpleasant or intimidating environment for a person who is subjected to undesirable and uninvited verbal and/or physical overtures (“Harassment”, n.d). Additionally, it is a product of unequal power relations between the perpetrator and the victim. It can be in the form of sheer discrimination or a transgression against dignity of someone (generally woman). For this research I have investigated the participants to find out if they have ever been exposed to any act of harassment during their pursuit of skill development training. I did this to get to the bottom of any veiled complexities present because of gender discrimination.

1.5.7 Empowerment

Empowerment has been defined as a process through which people who are mostly in minority gain access to valuable resources equally as the majority, which they were previously not being given. This gives them control over the resources and in return control over their lives (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). This thesis is focused on women being the minority group and discusses the issues and hurdles that come in the way of them attaining empowerment. A woman’s empowerment is a process involving social change and leads to her gaining power and make choices that give her control over her life.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology and Methods

2.1 Research Strategy

A Research Strategy is a particular orientation that guides us as to how a social research is to be conducted. It's a course of action which helps the researcher direct his thoughts and enables him to conduct his research in a systematic way. It helps introduce the main constituents of a research project like the topic area of the research and area of focus, the research design and methods. Additionally, how you choose to answer the research questions and the methodology you adopt towards that end.

There are three main types of strategies followed by the researchers, i.e. Quantitative Research Strategy, Qualitative Research Strategy and Mixed Methods. A Quantitative Research Strategy focuses on quantification and analysis of data numerically. Testing of theories plays a pivotal role in this strategy (Bryman, 2012).

On the other hand, Qualitative Research pays more attention to words and analyzing data qualitatively. Qualitative Research adopts an inductive style of approach, in the relationship between theory and research.

A Mixed Method strategy merges both the aspects of the qualitative and quantitative research strategy. It utilizes components like interviews and focused group discussions from the qualitative research and experiments and surveys from the quantitative research strategy.

This research paper has adopted a qualitative style of research as it intends to deconstruct data that is qualitative in nature. I intended to delve deeper into underlying reasons behind the issues and challenges women face in TVET sector. Using qualitative research techniques helped me answer my questions and provided me with accurate descriptions of the causes behind certain factors. Additionally, I have decided to employ Thematic Analysis as the tool of deconstruction in my research. This is used in Qualitative Research Strategy.

2.2 Research Design

A Research Design provides a framework that allows the researcher to collect and analyze the data. A selected research design allows us to make decisions about the dimensions that we choose for our research (Bryman, 2012). Some important research design types are Descriptive Research Design, Explanatory Research Design, Exploratory Research Design, Case Study Research Design etc.

A Descriptive Research Design helps in answering the questions related to the present status of a particular phenomenon. It does not delve into the reasons behind something. An Explanatory Research Design is also known as Causal research design. It is an in-depth investigation of the cause-and-effect relationship of a given phenomenon (Brains, Willnat, Manheim & Rich, 2011). An Exploratory Research Design is preferred when there exists no study on a particular case. The main aim of the research is to learn about the research problem from scratch, as much as possible (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010).

The research design that is followed in this research is Case Study Research Design. A Case Study Research Design is a detailed study of a research issue. It is an in-depth approach adopted to investigate a particular problem area. The main reason behind choosing a case study research design is to augment our understanding of a particular process, person, group, issue or a phenomenon. It is assumed that there is something special and unique about the case that we have chosen to investigate. It is a descriptive analysis of an individual case, including a detailed examination of its characteristics and features (Rebolj, 2013).

There are many types of case studies including Descriptive, Explanatory, Exploratory, Instrumental, Intrinsic, etc. depending on the nature of research questions. Descriptive case study focuses on finding the back story information and the description of the case. An explanatory case study digs a little deeper and tackles the reasons behind a certain occurrence. It handles the “how” or “why” questions. An exploratory case study handles the “what” questions and explores mostly new dimensions and arenas (Rhee, 2004). Intrinsic Case Study is the study of a case which doesn't

follow the norm. The case because of its uniqueness itself, is of primary importance (Mills, Dupre & Wiebe, 2010). An Instrumental Case Study utilizes a particular case and study in detail. This is done to get better understanding of a specific case at hand (Stake, 1995).

The present study is aimed at investigating the issues and challenges women face in the TVET institutes located in the Islamabad and Rawalpindi districts, hence a case study research design seems to be the most appropriate. I have further organized my research under the mechanisms of an Explanatory Case Study. This allowed me to focus on the correlation between women and TVET, if the women faced any challenge in pursuing education and training in TVET, I have explained them in detail and then I came up with a set of operable recommendations to address such problems.

2.3 Units of Data Collection (UDC)

The data is collected for analysis from the elements known as the Units of Data Collection (UDC). I have incorporated six UDC's in my research which deal with the issues and challenges women encounter in TVET institutes. They are mentioned below.

UDC-1 -TVET Female Students- To get the primary data from the respondents who are currently enrolled at TVET institutes of the twin cities.

UDC-2- Family Members of TVET Female students- To find out how have the family members reacted in the wake of enrollment of the female family member in a TVET institute and how are they foreseeing the future of the trainee.

UDC-3- Employed Graduate TVET Students- To find out their views on the impact of TVET on their lives after leaving institutes and getting a job.

UDC-4- National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) Management- To figure out how they collect data and keep check on all training activities and post training employability of the trainees. Also, to discern their future plans for the improvement of TVET sector for women.

UDC-5- Management of Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (TVETA), Punjab – To learn about their plans for TVET sector, specifically for Rawalpindi.

2.4 Research Methods

2.4.1 Rapport Building

Rapport building implies that the researcher develops a relationship with the respondents and makes them comfortable enough to want to talk and share information (Bryman, 2012). This also aims to ensure that the respondent participates in the interview willingly, without getting weary of it and stays focused and honest during the interview process. The researcher also explains the overall contours of the research at hand and is ready to answer the queries of the UDC's fairly.

I had to put in extra effort to apply this technique while interacting with the UDCs on phone, as it was not possible to meet people in person because of CoVid-19 pandemic. I used this technique to approach UDC 1 through UDC 5. This was really important to extract the best response from the respondents. I introduced myself and my research to each respondent and then answered all their questions and queries about the research. I got hold of the phone numbers of students and officers of NAVTTC and TVETA-Punjab from various sources, primarily NAVTTC.

2.4.2 Interviews

Interviews are one of the widely used tools to extrapolate data in Qualitative Research and are divided into categories, depending on the degree of structuring (Fontana and Frey, 2005). There are many types of interviews with varying features, but most of them have a common objective of seeking to extract information from the respondents (UDCs) by the researcher. Additionally, the variance in the degree of formality while conducting the interview is guided by the type of interview the researcher has preferred for achieving the research objective (Bryman, 2012). Interviews can be divided under three groups: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured and Unstructured are the two most commonly preferred types employed in the Qualitative Research. I have employed semi-structured and unstructured interview types in my research.

2.4.2.1 Semi-Structured Interview

The semi-structured interview accommodates both the open-ended and close-ended questions. It also uses a blend of probes, to extract further information, wherever necessary. This allows the researcher to tweak the interview according to the requirements of the research (Newcomer, Hatry & Wholey, 2015). I used this method to interview the UDC 1, UDC 2, and UDC 3. As it was hard to sustain attention of the respondents while answering questions over the phone, I felt myself inclined to collect specific data from them without taking too much of their time. The framing of certain topics under short-ended and long-ended questions allowed me to absorb the respondents' answers and make sure that all the important topics were dealt with. Respondents were given ample time to recount all their experiences, henceforth a semi-structured interview allowed the respondents to speak in detail without any disruptions if they so wished.

2.4.2.2 Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured Interviews have undetermined question and answer sections. They are solely dependent on the interaction and the mode of inquiry preferred by the researcher (Minichiello et al., 1990). These types of interviews help in understanding the complex nature of issues without any prior assumptions (Punch, 1998). These interviews are good for open ended discussions and I conducted such interviews with my UDC 4 and UDC 5, so I could find out about their answers in detail. I wanted to give the officials to speak at length and present their side of the story in detail.

Table 3 Participants interviewed from each UDC

Units of Data Collection	Number
UDC 1- Current TVET Female Students	17
UDC 2- Family Members of the TVET students	10
UDC 3- Employed Graduates of TVET	12
UDC 4- National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) Officers	5
UDC 5- Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority Punjab Officers	1
Total	45

2.5 Sampling

Sampling is the process of choosing a small group of individuals, documents, units, etc. from a significantly large population. This helps in making the data available to the researcher more precise and manageable. Population essentially refers to the ‘universe of units’ out of which the particular sample is carefully chosen (Bryman, 2012). The term unit is used as it is not always evident that only people are being sampled.

Sampling can be carried out by two means i.e., Probability Sampling and Non-Probability Sampling. Probability Sampling is mostly relevant to the Quantitative Research and in this method, every unit of the population has the equal probability to be selected. The selected sample in the end is considered the representative of the entire population. Probability Sampling has many types and they are utilized in conformity with the research question (McCombes, 2019). On the other hand, Non-Probability Sampling is mostly used in Qualitative Sampling and in this method, not every unit of the population has the opportunity to be selected. It has four types, Quota Sampling, Snowball Sampling, Purposive Sampling and Convenience Sampling.

In Quota the selection of the sample is done in a way that it represents a certain character of the population. In Snowball one of the subjects will refer and guide the researcher to other subjects that can be used in the research. This is usually utilized when the subjects are hard to access and not easily identifiable. Convenience Sampling is also known as incidental sampling. In this method, selection of the most easily available subjects is utilized (Trochim, 2001). For the purpose of this research Purposive Sampling has been utilized.

2.5.1 Purposive Sampling

In Purposive Sampling the researcher uses his/her own personal judgement to pick subjects that are considered to be representing the population. This research has used this sampling technique as it is more contextual and allows the researcher to obtain the best and desired sample. I have

purposively sampled UDC 1, UDC 2, UDC 3, UDC 4, and UDC 5. This sampling technique allowed me to examine the averages and generalizations present in the data. Furthermore, it allowed me to produce results in real-time for each of my UDCs. I selected the UDC that suitably reconciled with my research inquiries.

2.5.2 Thematic Analysis

It becomes vital to analyze the data that has been collected in the course of research. For this, researchers and particularly those indulging in Qualitative Research adopt various approaches. The Thematic Analysis, also known as Framework Analysis or Qualitative Content Analysis is one such approach. This approach is used to highlight the various commonalities and differences in the data (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013). To analyze the data, it is divided into major thematic categories and displayed on Thematic charts. This is then further divided into sub-themes and sub-topics. I have attached the Thematic Charts in the appendix section

2.5.3 Locale

This research was conducted in the cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. I chose the two cities because Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan, and Rawalpindi is a major city of the Punjab province, being adjacent to Islamabad. Both the cities are known as twin cities because of their strong geographical, economic and social links. Together both the cities are home to more than a 100 TVET institutes.

Chapter 3

Review of Literature

Literature review helps in linking prior research findings with the instant one and assists in building a better connection and understanding of the research realm under study. There are many ways in which review of literature could be conducted. This research has opted for a narrative style of literature review. This type of literature review is utilized when the aim behind the research is to build on the existing human discourse instead of just compiling and collecting knowledge. The aim is thus to explore a wide range of research studies instead of focusing on some specific areas (Bryman, 2012).

I have divided literature under a few broad categories. These include some definitions of TVET, importance accorded to TVET, its importance in the developing world, TVET and youth significance of the sector in Pakistan and research carried out in on this sector in Pakistan, followed by discourse on perceived gender bias pervading TVET.

3.1 What TVET Represents?

TVET is relevant in a wide range of occupational arenas and is responsible for the livelihoods of countless people. One positive associated with TVET is that one can take advantage of it by enrolling in a Technical and Vocational school at any time at any age. One does not need to possess a prescribed set of academic credentials to be able to learn a skill.

TVET has been described by Garbuja and Pasa (2016) as skill learning designed specifically for careers like marketing, agriculture, business etc. Additionally, TVET is defined as a vital instrument essential for the improvement of productivity, mobility and adaptability of labour. This addresses the imbalances infecting the markets through providing trained workforce and thereby makes the country stronger economically (Mustafa, Abbas & Saeed, 2005). TVET registers a tangible impact in terms of generating employment opportunities for the skilled youth. For a country to become productive, it needs to have adequately trained labour force. In order to have a capable

and skilled workforce a country needs to ensure that it has a vibrant TVET sector (Afferro & Hassan, 2013).

The TVET sector represents skill development initiatives in a given country. According to Kumar (2015) TVET empowers people with skills and enables them to contribute to the progress of their country. It also promotes sustainable growth and socio-economic development within countries, communities and households. To some research scholars, TVET provides us with a useful tool for resolving socio-economic problems and promoting national development (Subrahmanyam, 2018). It holds its importance in today's world because of its relevance for solving economic issues by making use of the latest technology, tackling high rate of unemployment and utilizing the services of ever increasing number of female labour force (Alhasan, & Tyabo, 2013). TVET sector in many economies thrives on the very fact that its graduates are relatively better placed to find employment opportunities in the highly competitive job markets (Woyo, 2013).

Idris & Mbudai, (2016) have corroborated the fact that technical training helps the skilled labour force in getting jobs or get self-employed and hire others. Around the globe Technical and Vocational Education and Training is considered to be a weapon that can be effectively utilized by national economies to grow and prosper. Skill development initiatives are therefore launched by the countries to enable and empower to contribute towards overall welfare of the country (Alhasan, and Tyabo, 2013). According to Raza and Khalid (2017), Pakistan is lagging far behind in terms of tapping the potential of TVET sector.

3.2 TVET in the Developing Countries

Significance of TVET cannot be ruled out in this day and age. For any nation to become technologically advanced and economically developed, it needs a successful TVET sector to back it up (Okwelle & Deebom, 2017). The performance of TVET sector varies from country to country and city to city. Even the developing countries are making significant headway towards upskilling their youth. In recent years, the academia in Nigeria has underscored the need of formulating policies and allocating resources towards properly establishing and operationalizing TVET in the country so that the issue of burgeoning unemployment could be addressed. The proponents of the TVET

are quite positive that this will also help in containing crimes stemming from unemployment in youth like rape, murder and robbery, etc. and it can only be done if the government starts paying more attention and allocates more resources (Edmond, Oluniyi, Bamidele & Judith, 2014). The Nigerian TVET institutions are not working in a way that would support the labour market or the industries of the country. The needs of the labour market are not kept in view by those at the helm of affairs at TVET institutions. A number of writers have observed that the majority of the TVET graduates have to undergo the process of retraining to be considered employable by the industries. The reason behind the suboptimal performance of the TVET institutions is the poor financing received by the institutions and the absence of the requisite infrastructure and the allied technical facilities (Audu, Abdulkadir & Kagara, 2013).

Idris and Mbudai (2016) were able to conclude after their research that the curriculum is adequate and encompasses most of the requirements of TVET in Nigeria but it is not being implemented properly. This is primarily attributable to the fact that the TVET institutions are not equipped to impart practical skills rather their primary focus is on further theoretical education.

There are many reasons that determine female participation in TVET sector in the developing countries like Nigeria. They include secluding women to household chores, the perceptions of parents regarding the loss they would face if they educate their daughters, patriarchy and its practices like child marriages, the masculine image projected of TVET in the general society, double burden on the females etc. Even though government has made efforts at improving Technical Education and Vocational Trainings at some levels, they have not been able to alter this traditional mindset and hence eliminate the gender gap in the sector (Ayonmike, 2014).

Over the past decade progress has been recorded in terms of equity, quality, preservation and gender equality in the formal education sector of Kenya, however, the Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) sector is still lagging far behind as evidenced by low female enrollment. The areas that have registered the smallest number of female participation include Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), i.e. all the technical courses (Ngugi & Muthima, 2017).

Ngugi & Muthima (2017) have pointed out that the TVET institutions in Kenya are inadequate in number considering the population ratio and the number of teachers in those institutes are also on a lower side. There is a largely negative perception of TVET institutes among the general Kenyan population which negatively impacts them and restrains them from sending their women to such institutes. This is because of the outdated curriculum taught in these institutes and the gender bias that is prevalent across the TVET classrooms. Hence families discourage their females from joining these institutes. A considerable number of research analysts are cognizant of the fact that TVET institutes have a pivotal role to play if the country wants to raise productivity and income levels of people. Therefore, they emphasize the need for Kenyan governments to make policies that would tackle the concerns of the population regarding the TVET institutions (Ngugi & Muthima, 2017)

According to Afferro and Hassan (2013) TVET in Malaysia is considered to be subservient to regular school education, hence the enrollment rate is quite low. As a result, there is a lack of trained technical and vocational trainers. In addition to that, the government makes a concerted effort so that the curriculum taught in TVET schools not only stays relevant with the requirements of the job market but it also emphasizes the element of career development. Another reason that is contributing to the substandard performance of TVET is the high cost that technical training entails in Malaysia. The country already has a shortage of people interested in TVET and those who do want to join in, cannot pay. Moreover, Malaysia being an ethnically diverse country is really challenged to focus on making its TVET sector inclusive for all ethnicities (Afferro & Hassan, 2013)

The issues involving gender equality and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Myanmar has also been at the center of research. While highlighting the significance of TVET in endorsing vocational skills and their importance as a lifelong learning, Win (2019) has noted that attainment of Sustainable Development Goals by Myanmar would be contingent upon a policy framework which accords equal status to both men and women and provides a level playing field to both genders in all of the sectors. Against this backdrop, he has drawn the attention of the government towards women who continue to face discrimination at workplaces and TVET institutes across the country. Resultantly, 30 percent of the women are left without any semblance of education. This breeds gender inequality in the labour market too. The research has also highlighted the low quality of the training conducted by the TVET institutes in Myanmar.

In Zimbabwe, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions encounter multiple issues while seeking to produce competent and skilled workforce which are also worth studying. Woyo (2013) conducted a study and concluded that this sector is beset with numerous problems stemming from the fact that it is not completely autonomous. TVET institutions of Zimbabwe can only produce the desired results if they are provided with the requisite financial help, proper equipment, and qualified teachers (Shereni, 2019).

In the South Asian context, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policies are yet to be framed in such a manner as would resolve the challenges in the underdeveloped rural areas (Vollmann, 2010). Although TVET seems to have emerged as a good alternative for general secondary education in some South Asian countries, there is still a low enrollment rate of students in technical & Vocational Institutes in the region.

A study carried out in India chronicles that the graduates of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutes (TVET) have a hard time implementing their learning into their jobs (Shrestha, 2016). This is because there hardly exists any correlation between the TVET trainers and the job market. Moreover, the TVET curriculum is not revised regularly in view of the requirements of the labour market. The issue of soft skills like team work, resolving problem, group tasks and discussions, etc. are not taken seriously while designing curriculum. The researchers believe that this is vital for the trainees to learn as such skills prove vital towards enhancing productivity in the industry setting.

India has attained a massive increase in primary school and higher education enrollment but at the same time it has not been able to improve the quality of education beyond primary level. As the quality of the higher education leaves a lot to be desired the probability of employment of young graduates is not that significant (Kamble & Abhang, 2017). Resultantly, policymakers in India are shifting their focus towards technical and vocational skill development. They believe that TVET can help improve equity and enhance employability of the TVET graduates.

Kamble and Abhang (2017) while highlighting the challenges being faced by the TVET institutions have observed that the low quality of TVET programs and the perception that TVET is linked to low-status and low-paying jobs are key issues to be addressed in order to achieve the desired results in terms of skill development and youth employment. Furthermore, high course fees discourage young men and women hailing from marginalized sections from associating themselves with this sector.

In addition, the TVET sector of India is currently facing other issues such as existence of overlapping regulations, redundant course curricula and archaic policies. Finally, the engagement between the TVET providers and the industry is almost nonexistent. Resultantly, the focus of TVET is overwhelmingly supply driven and not demand driven (Kumar, 2015).

3.3 TVET and Youth

There is a strong reason why TVET is being promoted by scholars, economists, and governments, around the world. A vibrant TVET system in a country holds multiple advantages in its fold for the upward growth of the national economy. Balatti and Black (2011) have emphasized some advantages that the TVET learners will attain once they become truly skilled. For example, TVET helps its learners access new networks which provides them with social, economic and cultural capital like goods, knowledge, contacts, and services that would open new vistas for them. Becoming a part of TVET networks will help these students/learners experience new things like new norms, beliefs and values. Additionally, the newly acquired skills are bound to enhance their self-confidence, networking skills, ambitions and knowledge and will facilitate them in their outreach to new markets.

According to an analysis, TVET can also help in reducing poverty and concurrently empowering skilled workers and uplifting the status of the youth (Okwelle & Deebom, 2017). The skilled youth enjoy relatively better opportunities of garnering good jobs and breaking the shackles of poverty and other associated socio-economic issues. TVET initiatives can be helpful in decreasing poverty, disparity and social exclusion (Subrahmanyam, 2018). According to Famiwole, Oke, & Samuel, 2012, TVET has the potential of enabling the skilled workforce get jobs and excel in their chosen

occupations. Therefore, it can equip people who want to improve or develop their skills and knowledge. This is a tool that can bring about positive change and help in the creation of healthy society which thrives on skill development.

Traditionally, TVET is considered as an urban affair because of the age old traditions and customs prevalent in rural areas that are passed on to the next generations by the previous one's skills (Vollmann, 2010). This is also at the core of keeping women away from TVET centers as these old customs continue to restrict women to household chores only. Resultantly, TVET institutions are established predominantly in urban centers, and skills are attuned to suit the needs of urban youth, particularly male youth.

In addition, TVET may lead to women empowerment and that in return heralds the socio-economic growth of women. When women enroll themselves in TVET, this boosts their productivity thus leading to a sense of empowerment having positive ramifications for their social and economic wellbeing (Sandhu & Ahmed, 2018). This helps women earn livelihood and cease being economically dependent on the male members of the family (Garbuja & Pasa, 2016).

Furthermore, in the era of globalization, the highly skilled workers may consider relocating to destinations affording bright future and prospects. On the other hand, those not being able to upgrade their skills may feel insecure in their own countries as better skilled workers from other areas may replace them in this rapidly changing environment (Malcolm, 2016). It also entails positive implications towards poverty alleviation. In addition, it is also an effective medium of transferring new skills to labor exporting countries as the skilled expatriates bring back knowledge and skills when they prefer to return to their homelands. Moreover, the remittances received from abroad not only augment economic well-being of families but also reinforce foreign exchange reserves thus supplementing balance of payment at macro level. According to Ali Idris et al (2013), the technical and vocational skills play a leading role in determining the economic and social development of a nation as investment in human capital development may prove immensely beneficial in the long run in containing unemployment and crimes. Germany and Singapore are the prime examples in this regard.

3.4 TVET: Some Best Practices

The literature that I have combed while carrying out research indicates various ways in which this sector can flourish in the underdeveloped economies especially like Pakistan. The research suggests that the countries that have significantly developed their human resources in the technical and vocational realm have adequately enhanced the allocation of financial resources. This helped in updating the age old curriculum that was being taught in Technical Institutes and enabled TVET institutes to undergo technological advancements (Raza & Khalid, 2017). Additionally, a strong and mutually beneficial industry-institute correlation went a long way in upgrading the quality of Technical Education. For TVET to deliver successfully, government and private support in the form of funding should continue (Edmond, Oluniyi, Bamidele & Judith, 2014).

The attainment of high quality levels and modernism in technical vocational education and training (TVET) organizations that benefit all the apprentices is a dire need of the age (Catts, Falk & Wallace, 2011). The TVET sector closely knit to the contemporary labour market needs is order of the day. As there are rapid changes in demography, the older workers need to be upskilled as well so that they are on the same page as the new ones. Additionally, the disadvantaged or marginalized groups including women should also be taken on board so that a societal unity prevails and their participation in the labour market increases.

Another globally embraced best practice is to have TVET courses designed to be more practical and applicable. This requires for the government to provide proper and well-equipped facilities. The trainees should be educated on the importance of TVET and its role in generating employment, through the use of orientation programmes. Furthermore, the curricula of the TVET institutes must be conceived in such a manner that it equips youth with the market driven skills regardless of their gender (Ayonmike, 2014).

In order to enhance the performance of TVET sector, the legal and administrative bottlenecks which occasionally stifle the departments pursuing skill development must be addressed. In Pakistan, we see a simmering tension between the federal and provincial TVET departments in the aftermath of the 18th Amendment as NAVTTC (at federal level) and TEVTAs (at provincial level) were seen pitted in a turf war of jurisdiction over skill development portfolio. Additionally, the

low number of technical colleges and vocational training centers and the quality of the education imparted in them, should also be a big concern for the government (Ahmed, Khan, Shehnaz, Muhammad, & Ullah, 2018).

Governments, organizations and individuals must strategize to fill the labour gaps in the job market. They need to evolve plans that can hone skills amongst its labour and train them so that they are able to handle advanced technology proficiently (Mustafa, Abbas & Saeed, 2005). TVET should be supported by business education so that self-empowerment can be increased (Edmond, Oluniyi, Bamidele & Judith, 2014). As illustrated earlier, TVET institutions and the local industries should join hands and or introduce guided field trips that educate the people about the contemporary industrial practices (Okwelle & Deebom, 2017). This will also help remove the misconceptions that people have about this sector that TVET is only for those who are not properly educated.

In addition to that, it is best to evolve an inclusive and broad based approach that can effectively deal with the issues currently besetting the TVET sector and thus help in the process of planning before any strategic solution is preferred (Afferro & Hassan, 2013). The countries like Germany UK and Singapore have developed innovative systems which could be replicated here to bring change in the country. Further successful TVET models of the above mentioned countries should be examined (Subrahmanyam, 2018). This will act as a motivation to improve the economic and social outcomes locally. It will also help in deciding how incorporating those techniques and innovations into the curricula can help (Audu, Abdulkadir & Kagara, 2013).

3.5 Women and TVET Sector

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) predominantly aims at promoting technical/ vocational education and skill development (UNESCO, 2017). TVET paves the way for upskilling workforce and resultantly contributing towards economic development in the country. Some negative connotations are ascribed to TVET in Pakistani society when opted as a career choice by the youth, particularly women. A clichéd view prevails that the technical training is preferred by academically weak and economically poorer sections of society as they are unable to

afford formal education. There are others who are visibly dismayed by the lack of career progression opportunities in the skill sector.

The deeply entrenched social norms have historically constrained Pakistani women from pursuing TVET and adopting it as a lifelong career. Whereas, highly skilled female workers hailing from the other South Asian countries like India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka continue to play active role towards the economic betterment of their households and communities. Pakistani society as well as institutions have not been able to provide a congenial atmosphere to encourage women to come forward to join training initiatives.

This can be because of the absence of Gender Mainstreaming. This as a strategy aims at embracing gender differences during the various phases of development as well as in the execution of policies, programs and plans configured to facilitate equality and equity of gender (Nurhaeni, 2009). This would allow both men and women to actualize their potential equally. Although it is necessary to increase gender parity in the tertiary education sector, it is even more important to make sure that gender mainstreaming takes place in areas that are traditionally trademarked for men including the technical, scientific, mechanical and vocational education streams (Karega & Bunwaree, 2010).

Some studies have reported that women receive minimal encouragement and opportunities in TVET because teachers and administrators regard it as a subject of men for which women historically lack skills and aptitude. Resultantly, women are discouraged from pursuing skill enhancement (Daniel and Zsolt, 2015). This practice has added to the woes of womenfolk and they find themselves being marginalized on account of socio-cultural inequity as well as stereotypically driven eccentricities (UNESCO, 1992). In developing countries like Pakistan, training in male-dominated trades and skill sets are preferred and offered to males in the technical and vocational institutions to produce plumbers, electricians, heavy machine operators, carpenters etc. Whereas training for female trainees is offered in a much narrower range of activities. Even skill enrichment in social and business skills is visibly limited, especially for women (Mayoux, 2005).

There exists evidence to suggest that discrimination against women is rampant across the TVET sector including the TVET institutes. In addition, policies and practices in TVET sector are generally skewed and gender discrimination is pervasive around the globe. In order to increase women participation in skill development initiatives, a conducive environment is a must (Bhatta, 2016). It is crucial that the gender discriminatory practices and policies in vocational institutes are rectified so that women could harness the potential and become partners in economic development endeavors (Nurhaeni & Kurniawan, 2017).

Women participation in TVET boosts their productivity leading to a sense of empowerment having positive implications for their social and economic wellbeing (Sandhu & Ahmed, 2018). This helps women in their bid to earn livelihood and cease being economically dependent on the men of the family (Garbuja & Pasa, 2016). Despite the positive ramifications associated with women participation in TVET, there are multiple socio-cultural factors restricting women participation in TVET sector in the developing countries like Pakistan. We find women being secluded to household chores in the face of masculine image projected of TVET in the society. A similar situation prevails in the African countries including Nigeria and Kenya etc., where despite governmental efforts, they have not been able to change this skewed mindset (Ayonmike, 2014). According to Ngugi & Muthima (2017) a negative perception of TVET institutes among the general Kenyan population discourages them from sending their women to such institutes. The advocates of gender mainstreaming and social inclusion underscore the necessity of ensuring gender equality and social justice for women. According to them, women are secluded to domestic domain only where they end up without due credit for the efforts they put in (König, 2015). Resultantly, they are generally dispossessed of a voice in the household and community matters. Bhatta (2016) has pointed out that a significant number of women are joining the workforce, yet their potential goes untapped because of the social discrimination that pervades the society and the workplaces. Furthermore, family support plays a pivotal role towards women participation in TVET, particularly in the developing countries like Pakistan, as lack of such support obstructs women from pursuing skill development (Sandhu and Ahmed, 2018). However, such support is hardly forthcoming. Hence, women are overly burdened with unending household duties and they shy away from attending training programmes (Win, 2019).

Gender equality continues to be an idealistic goal for the developing countries including Pakistan. Rather, the situation is relatively worse in Pakistan. Resultantly, we find Pakistan perched at the 133rd position in the United Nation's Gender Inequality Index (Human Development Indices and Indicators, 2018). The skill development opportunities available to women are limited as government sponsored training programmes are catering to only 0.7% of the youth in the age bracket of 15-24 in Pakistan (Rehman, 2019). Statistics reveal that the number of employed women (13 million) in Pakistan is less than one third of men (44million) (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Additionally, gender wage differential is also strikingly high in favour of men.

If we look at the situation of female employment in Pakistan, it emerges that women labour participation rate has recorded an increase from 11.39% to 22.02% during the period from 1995 to 2015. Similarly, the participation rate of women in the age bracket 20-24 registered an accretion from 18% to about 26% in the same period (Rehman, 2019). However, women are predominantly engaged in the informal sector as reported in the Labour Force Statistics 2014-15. It was chronicled that about 73% of the women employees are serving in the informal sector and their employment has grown in recent times (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

3.6 Socio-Cultural factors affecting women in their pursuit of Skill Development

Education and training constitute the most essential determinants of the future career in the life of a person. The deeply entrenched discriminatory social values such as early marriages and exclusive seclusion of womenfolk to domestic chores deprive them of the opportunity to access these avenues. According to a survey, a significant number of women dropped out of school after they got married (UNICEF, 2018). In addition, a number of barriers stifle women in their pursuit for education and skill development, which inter alia include poverty induced preferences, narrow-minded interpretation of religion and strict adherence to stereotypical gender roles in Pakistan (Jamal, 2016). Likewise, there persists a discernable segregation of gender roles in the labor market in Pakistan. In TVET, a strict stratification exists as far as the allocation of trades to men and women are concerned.

In Pakistan mobility for girls is highly restricted. The girls have to be accompanied by family male members in order to ensure their safety. Pakistan with its “heightened concerns for safety and security of girls, has severely restricted their mobility and by implication their access to education” (UNICEF, 2018). According to another study, enrolment of girls’ drops sharply with every 500-metre increase in distance from the nearest girls’ school and this ‘distance penalty’ culminates in 60% of the gender gap in school enrolments (UNESCO, 2010).

In addition, the societal norm of son preference also contributes to gender discrimination as having sons in a typical Pakistani family is a matter of esteem and daughters are taken as an economic obligation (Abrar Ul Haq, Jali, & Islam, 2018). People tend to believe that the girls would marry and go to their husband’s home, so investment in their education and training is to be kept at minimal.

Decent work has a direct correlation with women empowerment. Scores of studies endorse that regular and formal employment is the most important trait leading to women empowerment. The informal work is marked by lower payments, inequality, seasonal variability, low social status and non-recognition. Most of the women in the under-developed world engage in informal sector such as unskilled agriculture work and minor labor. The truncated female participation in the workforce in Pakistan is because of the age-old cultural and traditional values, religious beliefs and the colonial mindset (Ashraf, Irum, Ali & Amjad, 2020). In the conservative societies like Pakistan, girls are severely restrained to go outside the house for education, training and employment. Such constraints hinder their access to health care, educational institutions and labor market. As far as TVET is concerned the stigma associated with physical labour adds to the woes of the aspirants seeking to learn technical and vocational skills. Hence her labor participation is too minimal to cast any impression on the community. Women’s access to resources is seriously limited in several ways through skewed legal and customary laws, which strengthen gender disparities.

Despite the fact that the female labour force participation rate in Pakistan has recorded an increase from 11.39% to 22.02% during two decades from 1995 to 2015, it is still far below the world average (49.6%). Considering the current average increase of female labour force participation

(0.677), it may take about 68 years for women to strike parity with men in Pakistani labour market (Rehman, 2019).

The proponents of gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in TVET sector underscore the need of ensuring gender equality and social justice not only for women but also for other socially excluded groups. Women are left to be secluded to domestic chores only and they end up without due credit for the efforts they put in (König, 2015). This is primarily attributable to the fact that because they are not ostensibly making financial contribution to the household income and as a result are not considered equally important. Resultantly, they are usually deprived of a voice in the family matters and their role in decision-making is minimal.

It is only recently that vocational training has started to be seen as a tool that can empower women. The fact that by indulging in income generating pursuits after acquiring skills they do aspire to be able to contribute to the family decision making processes. Yet the age old discrimination halts their ambition and they find it hard to have a say in the family matters. Bhatta (2016) has pointed out that a large number of women are increasingly becoming part of the workforce, yet their potential goes unnoticed because of the social discrimination that takes place in the society in general and at workplaces in particular. Consequentially, most programs that have traditional occupations have a high enrollment rate of women whereas it is other way around in non-traditional stream. The pay disparity between the male and female employees is increasingly emerging as a matter of serious concern. Even though both male and female workers are assigned the same tasks yet a discriminatory pay differential persists despite the fact that they are performing on equal footing. This means that actual social and economic empowerment is still a far cry for female skilled workers. Resultantly, despite some incremental improvement in the status of working women, gender inequality continues to persist.

Ayonmike (2014) is of the opinion that all the relevant stakeholders and actors including government, parents, school administrations and the general society are required to act in their respective domains to encourage female participation in the TVET sector so that the number of females can rise. Additionally, subjects specific to female trainees need to be incorporated in the TVET insti-

tutes' curriculum so that more and more girls could relate to them (Win, 2019). The female students deserve to be afforded equal and fair opportunities and a level playing field in the skill development sector so that the country as a whole can benefit from their contribution. The trainers are also expected to be competent enough to fully embrace gender-responsive policies while imparting education (Ngugi & Muthima, 2017). The increase in number of female educators would help construct a conducive climate for female trainees as the women would feel secure and safe in the presence of female faculty in the training facility (Ayonmike, 2014). Steps like incorporating enrolment quota for women will ensure increased female participation in TVET institutes (Ngugi & Muthima, 2017).

Furthermore, family support plays an essential role in promoting women participation in TVET, particularly in developing countries like Pakistan, as lack of such support obstructs women from attaining empowerment (Sandhu and Ahmed, 2018). This is the reason why there is a shortage of skilled female labour. Women have to bear the burden of household duties and they avoid attending educational/training programmes (Win, 2019).

In addition, public campaigning and a large-scale recruitment drive of young and bright TVET instructors, preferably women, equipped with the knowledge of the latest innovations would go a long way in encouraging women to join the upskilling programmes. This will not only motivate these teachers but also bring in youth eager to learn (Okwelle & Deebom, 2017).

3.7 International Obligations

Pakistan being a responsible member of the international community adheres to certain protocols and conventions which establish principles of equality and human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("Universal Declaration of Human Rights", n.d.) was decreed by the UN in 1948. Article 23 provides that all human beings are entitled to choose employment, and just and favorable remuneration. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979. It advises governments to take steps to curb discriminatory practices against women. Article 10 of CEDAW proclaims that the same conditions and equality should be "in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher

technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training” (“Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women”, 1979). International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention C111 calls for measures to be taken by all member states to ensure elimination of all discriminatory actions against women. The Agenda for Sustainable Development, enlists three crucial goals to ensure gender equality, including gender equality (Goal 5), decent work and economic growth (Goal 8) and reduced inequalities (Goal 10). It is worth mentioning that the Constitution of Pakistan also guarantees freedom and equality of all citizens including women. Article 18 professes the freedom of trade, business or profession and permits women to venture into any legal trade, business or profession. Similarly, Clause 2 of the Article 25 provides that there will be no scope for gender discrimination in the country whereas clause 3 authorizes the state to take special measures to ensure the safety of women.

3.8 TVET landscape of Pakistan

Equality between men and women continues to be a distant dream for the under developed world. Gender discrimination violates international conventions and commitments. Discriminatory practices are relatively more pronounced in Pakistan. In order to realize the objective of gender equality women may be equipped with skills which would enhance their ability to earn. TVET can be of immense assistance to women seeking empowerment in contemporary times. However, skill development opportunities available to women are scarce as government sponsored training programmes are catering to only 0.7% of the youth in the age bracket of 15-24 in Pakistan (Rehman, 2019). And share of female aspirants in this percentage is very small. On the other hand, private sector is hardly playing any role in TVET sector. Research suggests that discrimination against women has a telling effect not only in terms of training opportunities available to them but they are subjected to discrimination in employment too. Statistics reveal that the number of employed women (13 million) in Pakistan is less than one third of men (44million) (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Additionally, gender wage differential is also strikingly high in favour of men.

In Pakistan there is a huge gap between the types of qualifications demanded and the types of credentials supplied. There is a significant supply in the market of graduates having degrees in

Arts, Languages and Humanities whereas the market requires graduates of science, IT, telecommunications, etc. As regards the TVET sector is concerned, it has never been accorded due importance and therefore has not been able to attract adequate investment either from the public or from the private sector. However, the research analysts are of the view that a vibrant and fully functional technical and vocational stream can play a tangible role in enhancing the productivity of the labour and the economic growth of the country as a whole (Mustafa, Abbas & Saeed, 2005).

The sector continues to suffer from protracted systemic issues such as limited training capacity, obsolete workshops, obsolescent training equipment, archaic teaching methodology and outdated curricula (Strategy for All, 2019). The sector is thus critically incapacitated to address the skill development needs of both the domestic as well as international labour market. The ability of TVET institutes towards producing quality workforce is of paramount significance in the contemporary industrialized world (Mustafa, Abbas & Saeed, 2005). In Pakistan, reorganization of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) is very important for the proper functioning of TVET sector. NAVTTTC can perform better if rid of political interference. NAVTTTC and the provincial TEVTAs (Technical Education & Vocational Training Authorities) are seriously constrained in their bid to make plans, monitor execution and implementation without having to grapple with political pressure (Raza & Khalid, 2017).

The strengths of the TVET system in Pakistan lies in the proper legislation and the execution of the relevant legislations and the Rules of Business (while executing the TVET system and its trainings), of provincial TEVTAs, and all the other related technical boards and departments linked to TVET (Ahmed, Khan, Shehnaz, Muhammad, & Ullah, 2018).

Governments of developing countries need to be reminded that the TVET sector has fallen prey to failure and has not empowered the youth, and nor has it provided them with employment opportunities (Alhasan, & Tyabo, 2013). The funding of this sector needs to be improved so that the increasing population of the youth can benefit from it.

In the context of Pakistan specifically, Raza and Khalid (2017) are of the view that universities that solely focus on Technical Education should be established within the country. This will greatly

increase the opportunities of the individuals and help them in attaining higher education. There also needs to be an appropriate legislative system that can increase the involvement of industry in TVET. Regular training sessions for the students and teachers at TVET should be conducted as well. Lastly such reforms should be inculcated that promote women participation in this sector in Pakistan.

Rejuvenating the VET curriculum and hiring quality teachers to bring a change in this sector is beneficial for the sector. To change the public perception of TVET, the help of media and advertisement should be taken (Kumar, 2015). Furthermore, we are unable to optimally use provincial TVET systems as a tool to enhance the performance of this sector as it has yet to play a pivotal role in different business, agriculture, service, poultry and economic sectors of the country.

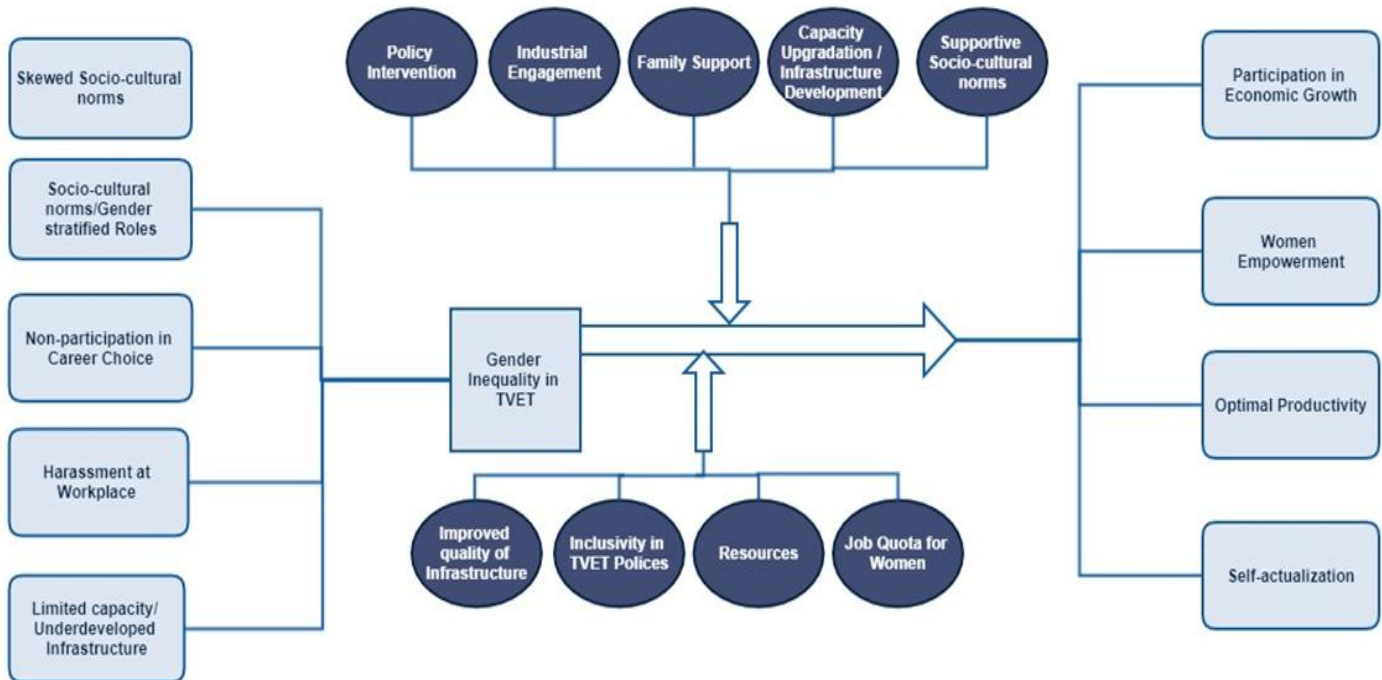
If we look at the situation of female employment in Pakistan (as previously mentioned), it emerges that women labour participation rate has recorded a significant increase from 11.39% to 22.02% during the period from 1995 to 2015. If we compare it with the global average it transpires that the female labour force participation rate in the world declined from 52.4% in 1995 to 49.6% in the same period. In the ten years' period from 2004-05 to 2014-15, the female labour force contribution grew on an average, by 0.677 points annually, if the same trend persists, it will take around 68 years to strike the current level of male labour force participation. However, it is a matter of satisfaction that participation rate of females in the age bracket 20-24 recorded an upsurge from 18% to about 26% (as previously mentioned), in the corresponding period. Almost similar is the situation for the age group LFP rate of females in age group 25-34 years has increased from 18% in 2004-05 to about 27% in 2014-15 (Rehman, 2019).

Women are primarily engaged in the informal sector as per the Labour Force Statistics 2014-15. It was chronicled that about 73% of the women employees are serving in the informal sector and their employment has grown in recent times. It is pertinent here to define what the term informal sector ordinarily implies. About three decades ago, the ILO introduced the expression the informal sector to label the compendium of activities indulged in by the working poor for earning livelihood. Those working in the informal sector do not subscribe to regular working hours and wages and are usually not taxed. A vendor selling his farm merchandise on the street is an example. It is

also described as the grey economy ("Difference between formal and informal sector in India", n.d.). It is however to be noted that relative share of women in the informal sector of the country continues to stay low accounting for only 11.15% of the total labour force (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

Women unemployment in Pakistan is around 9% which is considerably greater than the world female unemployment at 6.2 (Rehman, 2019). Similarly, unemployment gap between the two sexes in Pakistan is also on the higher side as compared with the world. According to a study unemployment ratio among women was 53% greater than men in 2014-15, vis-à-vis 13% in the world. The plight of women is worse at urban centers, where women unemployment surges to 20.4% (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

Conceptual Framework



I have incorporated various theoretical ideas in my research. The proposed conceptual framework illustrates that some salient factors including socio-cultural norms and ostensibly unfavorable environment at the institutes and workplaces lead to gender inequality in TVET. Data suggests that women are not only discriminated against in training institutes, they are meted out discriminatory treatment in employment and wage determination. According to Labour Force Survey 2014-15 the number of employed women at 13 million is less than one third of that of men (44 million) in Pakistan.

Women are not allowed to become a part of the choices that are made regarding their life, and hence are also not permitted to have a say in their career choices. This is what Kabeer (2005) calls being disempowered, i.e. the ability to not be able to make choices. This lack of power in decision-making happens to be influenced by cultural ideological norms that do not consider such inequalities unjust.

The situation therefore warrants policy intervention along with allocation of matching resources by the government. This will result in 'Agency'. Agency in relevance to empowerment means taking active part in exercising choices (Kabeer, 2005). Empowerment is ingrained in how we view ourselves, hence one's own view about themselves would determine their self-actualization. For Agency to take place matching resources are required. This can be brought about through policy intervention of the government. Once an individual is granted Agency and Resources they can achieve their potential. Achievements are dependent on the Agency that is exercised and its resultant consequences (Kabeer, 2005). This suggests that enrolling women in TVET can be considered as a good step towards the road to women empowerment in accordance with the MDGs. Here we need to be mindful of the fact that the countries having a vibrant TVET sector have adopted policies to encourage women participation in the skill sector. They have benefitted from female contribution to their national economies. In line with the international development practices it is argued that if provided a conducive environment and enhanced opportunities women in Pakistan will be able to play proactive role in the economic development of the country. They will not only harness their potential but would also realize the objective of optimal productivity in the skill ventures undertaken by them. Furthermore, their contribution towards the economic well-being of their families will lead to a sense of self-actualization and socio-economic empowerment.

To get a better understanding of the issues and challenges faced by women in the TVET sector, I will take help from some conceptual notions. Majority of the issues that are faced by women are because of the prevailing hierarchy amongst both the genders.

Feminist discourse is relevant here due to its primary focus on gender inequality and its objective of untangling the issues of the women pursuing training and career (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006). In the realm of women empowerment, the proponents of the Feminist School have been vociferously advocating for the elimination of discriminatory social structures that undermine the pursuits of women for equality and empowerment (Lindsey, 2011). The liberal feminism represents the main argument that gender has been used as a trait to oppress and disproportionately disburse resources between men and women in a patriarchal society (Samkange, 2015). According to Giddens (2001, p. 692) the liberal feminist theory is anchored in the premise that gender inequality is the byproduct of a tradition whereby women are denied access to their due share of social resources

such as education and employment. And if we examine the TVET scenario in Pakistan, we find women being under represented both in the training institutes as well as the workplaces. Fundamentally, liberal feminism advocates the promotion of equal rights for women by amending and reviewing laws and policies in order to ensure equality.

Marginalization of women in labor market has been historically informed by socially constructed norms of how we attribute roles to the opposite sexes (Lahiri-Dutt, 2011). Against this milieu the theory seeks to expose discriminatory practices with the objective of creating a gender sensitive workplaces for all especially women. In the arena of TVET, such interventions, as underscored by the Liberal Feminists are much needed in order to restore gender balance and create conducive environment for women. Spurred by the ideals of the liberal feminists regarding formulation of gender sensitive policies to secure even distribution of opportunities, the government of Pakistan has made some strides to provide for more opportunities for women in the training programmes launched by the NAVTTC in the last ten years.

The theory also highlights the phenomenon of pervasive harassment against women at workplaces. The theoretical framework further suggests that harassment against women is prevalent in Pakistan that aims to objectify women (Farooqi & Hajani, 2017). The radical feminist school castigates patriarchal psyche which fosters men in their urge to subdue women through controlling the societal resources and structures (Brownmiller, 1976; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2011). The proponents of the postcolonial feminism posit that women of underdeveloped countries are byproducts of their customs and traditions, and they continue to subscribe to those norms as 'agents' (Weedon, 2002). Hence the Postcolonial feminists believe that women are still struggling for sociocultural and economic independence (Mishra, 2013).

The functionalist perspective of gender inequality theory suggests that gender inequalities exist as a competent way that leads to the creation of division of labor. The functionalist perspective of gender roles suggest that gender roles exist to maximize social efficiency ("11.3A: The Functionalist Perspective", 2020). The functionalist perspective of gender inequality was strongly pushed in the 1940s and 1950s. This was mostly done through Talcott Parsons' model of the nuclear family.

Here it is also appropriate to briefly discuss the Gender Stratification Theory which suggests that gender inequalities constitute an efficient way to produce a division of labor. Gender is a socially constructed concept which represents an unequal division between men and women. Gender stratification is a recent notion arising out of the feminist perspective dating back to the 1970s. Gender stratification can be demonstrated through the statistics depicting unequal participation of female employees in the labor market, income disparities, and discriminatory career progression. Gender inequality can be examined on the bases of income, education, occupation, and power (Acker 1973). The theory aptly represents the skewed nature of distribution of resources and opportunities between men and women in the domain of technical and vocational training and workforce.

Another allied concept dealing with the issue of differences in roles is the Expansionist Theory. This theory helps in articulating gender, work and family (Barnett & Hyde, 2001) by using four empirically tested principles. These principles are linked with the realities of today's world. Barnett and Hyde's (2001) first principle suggests that multiple roles of both the genders are beneficial for them. Meaning that the role of a worker is valuable for a woman and the role of adding and taking part in domestic chores is good for men. When both the genders facilitate each other, this in no way stops them from staying committed to their own roles. Barnett and Hyde's (2001) second principle suggests that when roles are multiple, the results become multiple too. They believe that the family enjoys the benefits of social capital, increased income and self-complexity, opportunities of experiencing success and similarities in experiences, etc. The third principle underscores conditions under which the varied roles assigned to genders can be beneficial. Barnett and Hyde (2001) believe that it is important to note that the benefits of multiple roles will be dependent on the time required by each role. After a certain time, the multiple roles can be burdensome. Therefore, the role quality is important for health of the individual and relationship. The fourth principle of Barnett and Hyde (2001) represents the notion that the psychological differences between both the genders are not that significant. Therefore, roles defined for men and women should not be stratified as all such distinctions were evolved by keeping in view the prevalent cultural norms at a given time and they will be subject to change accordingly (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

In recent times, steps have been taken to remove gender bias from the society, patriarchy itself has not been eliminated. Patriarchy gives rise to gender inequality by encouraging men to exercise control over women. This eventually leads to women being harassed in their surroundings and it becomes a source of entertainment for men (Dhillon & Bakaya, 2014). The Organizational Theory discusses sexual harassment using issues of power and status differences that exist in organizations or workplaces (Okeke, 2011). The inequalities that pervade the organizational settings lead to increased probability of sexual harassment at workplace. The hierarchical structure of organizations reinforces the control of men (Lips, 1991). Unfortunately, in such settings men are at the helm of affairs and they project themselves as goal-oriented aggressive and more powerful, whereas women are considered to be subservient. Consequently, it can be argued that harassment is a direct result of organizational hierarchies and women are more often than not at the receiving end owing to their subordinate positions. This stops women from leaving their houses for study or for attaining any skills.

Significance of Research

The instant study will augment the existing body of knowledge on gender inequality in TVET sector. The research aims to delve deeper into issues hindering women participation in technical and vocational training stream which is a relatively neglected area of research and inquiry in Pakistan. The study also took stock of the international best practices that are used to induct women in skill enhancement initiatives thus enabling them to play their due role in economic development. Based on the research outcomes, the study has recommended policy options and operable strategic actions for the betterment of the TVET sector through facilitating proactive participation of female youth. The study will also open up new vistas of further research on the topic. The academia and the policy formulating agencies may benefit from the research to revisit the existing systems and practices to evolve inclusive training institutions and workplaces. Further the industry may also be spurred to forge a strong and mutually rewarding bond with the training institutes to effectively enhance the quality of training to produce well equipped workforce.

Chapter 4
Findings and Analysis

In this chapter I aim to present thematic discourse and analysis driven by the primary data that I obtained during my online field work. I interviewed my participants using various types of interview techniques. These include structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview types. I also probed my participants to get thorough details on my research topic.

I employed semi-structured interview techniques with the female students, their parents and female students who are employed now. With the officers of NAVTTC and TVETA-Punjab I relied on unstructured interview technique. In the following text all of the data that I have obtained while interviewing has been arranged under themes.

4.1 Themes Emerging from Data Obtained from Female Students:

4.1.1 Views of respondents on the positive impacts of TVET on their personal growth:

All of the respondent trainees were of the opinion that Technical and Vocational Education and Training has had a positive impact on their personal growth. Majority of the respondents felt that TVET had lent a boost to their sense of self-confidence. All of the students were of the view that TVET is a pathway for those women aspiring to be empowered and it could unfurl new avenues of empowerment for other Pakistani women. The women also reported that they belonged to families where their opinion was valued and given importance. This added on to their confidence and made them feel more socio-culturally empowered. Additionally, it was because of this that many of the respondents had decided on entering TVET and then seeking employment subsequently.

4.1.2 Views of respondents on the selection of trades:

The respondents were also questioned about the reasons behind their choosing the trades, they are trained in. Out of the Seventeen (17) respondents, sixteen (16) said that they had chosen the specific trade because of their genuine interest. They claimed that they did not face any issue while entering the TVET and were not hesitant or scared themselves either, as they were *interested* in learning about their chosen trade. Fourteen (14) respondents agreed that their chosen trade will

also help them in getting a good job or starting their own business. However, three (3) out of the Seventeen (17) respondents, chose their specific trade (Computer Application and Office Professional) because they felt that it was hard for them to get a job without being trained in the contemporary trades. Women seemed to be cognizant of the fact that a right choice of the trade would help them financially so they are able to support their families.

4.1.3 Views regarding prevalent Administrative issues in TVET:

A significant number of the respondents constituting a majority believed that lack of transport facilities to and from the training institutes impels many women to skip training. They believed that this provided hindrance for them when they had to start internships too.

Some women were also of the view that the number of institutes is too small to attract a large number of trainees. They believed that the government needs to reach the potential trainees in the rural areas so that more and more women could join this sector and utilize its benefits. Other students pointed out that the institutes face serious resource constraints and at times the institute administration is forced to take a week long break in the midst of the course till they manage to get the funding and consumables.

A few students pointed out that the institute made them practice in groups instead of practicing individually. This they felt hindered their learning as not everyone participated fully while being in a group and hence some students could not take advantage of the training properly. However, some students upon asking denied this and praised the management for their efforts. Nonetheless, I will emphasize in the later part of this thesis that the TVET institutes management need to make sure that all of the students get their due share of practice and have no complaints.

4.1.4 Views of respondents regarding prevalent Administrative successes of TVET:

All of the respondents agreed that their training experience was overall satisfactory and that they would definitely urge other women to join TVET training.

The female students were also cajoled to open up if they had ever been subjected to any act of harassment during their training at the institute, by their teachers or class fellows. Students were also asked to recall if they had heard any of the other students discuss some issue like that.

My immediate impression from my interaction with the students is that they were satisfied with the overall performance of the TVET institutes. They believed that the low number of complaints of TVET sector were easily outweighed by the numerous advantages of the sector.

4.2 Themes Emerging from Data Obtained from the Family Members of the Female Students’:

4.2.1 Views of respondents on the Impact of TVET on trainee:

4.2.1.1 Financial Aspect.

Female trainees were requested to connect me with their parents or husbands (if married). Upon questioning the family members were found in agreement that the financial prospects of TVET training are bright and they are hopeful that this can help their female member get a good job. All of the respondents also agreed that the training would enable the skilled women to get employment.

One respondent, who was a mother of a special child with hearing and speech impairment claimed that she was really happy with the whole experience and was quite confident that her daughter will soon start earning for herself.

4.2.1.2 Experience so far.

The respondents were also questioned about the experience they have had so far with the TVET of their female member. Majority of them agreed that it has been a good experience and their family member is learning a lot. One respondent informed me that the respondent planned on opening her own as soon as she was done with the training. The respondents believed that this added to the confidence of the women.

4.2.1.3 Changes in self-actualization

Self-actualization is an individual's desire for self-fulfillment. It's the desire to accomplish everything and also be everything that they can possibly be ("Self-actualization", n.d.). The respondents were also questioned about the changes they might have seen in their female family members undergoing training at TVET institutes. Majority of the respondents agreed that they had witnessed a boost in the confidence of their female family member. One parent quoted that their daughter also told them that she would start earning as soon as she is done with the training and she would help with the household budget as well. Some family members also talked about how their trainees have gained more confidence as a result of the training.

It was good to hear that majority of the male members that I interviewed were supportive of their women entering the TVET sector and then later on planning to carve out a career for themselves.

4.3 Themes Emerging from Data Obtained from Female Students' currently employed:

4.3.1 Views of respondents on the positive impacts on their personal growth because of TVET:

NAVTTTC provided a list of 180 female pass outs that were currently employed according to their records. After contacting them I found only 22 of them being currently employed. Out of those 12 agreed to be interviewed. The respondents were questioned on various themes. All of the respondents agreed that skill development training was a source of confidence and empowerment. When asked if they had been hesitant to choose their trade, all of them replied that they were not and were actually interested, and hence were confident and felt empowered to make their decisions. They all also agreed that their opinion was valued in their house.

4.3.2 Views of respondents on the selection of their respective trades in TVET:

The respondents were also questioned about the reasons for their selection of their respective trades. The respondents confirmed of having been interested in their selected trades but some of them were also motivated by the financial gains that would emanate from the upskilling in the chosen trade.

Many women agreed the advantages of TVET training were also financial. They believed that TVET can help Pakistani women start working from the comfort of their own house. Some respondents also agreed that their choosing to enter the TVET sector was a requirement that they had to fulfill. They believed that this prevented them from being dependent on their male family members solely.

It seemed that women were motivated to select trades not only on the basis of their interests but also on the basis of the financial advantages they could extract out of the same.

4.3.3 Views of respondents regarding prevalent Administrative issues in TVET:

One half of the respondents when questioned said they had confronted no issues in the sector. The other half pointed out different irritants. Two of the students of Fashion Designing complained of not being given the tool kit (sewing machines in this case) that were promised by the NAVTTC to them.

However other students did not mention any thing of this sort and highlighted some other salient problems pervading the TVET sector education. These included a lack of transport facilities for women which the respondents believed to be stopping women from stepping out of the house.

A number of students believed that there is a tangible shortage of institutes in the country, especially in the rural areas which hinders the women in their pursuit of quality trainings.

4.3.4 Views of respondents regarding prevalent Administrative successes of TVET:

The female graduates of TVET institutes were also asked about their training experience. They were full of appreciation for one aspect or the other. Some students claimed that they had learnt a lot and had enjoyed their stay. One of the respondents had even gotten a job in the same institute that she had gotten trained in.

Students were also asked to register their views about how a crisis should or could be resolved by TVET authorities. To this the respondents suggested that the authorities should involve the students in the process and get their opinions.

4.3.5 Views of respondents regarding their experiences after getting a job:

All of the respondents claimed that they felt no change in behaviour of their families. They said that their family members behaved the same way as they used to do before they got jobs.

The respondents agreed that they had never heard about any untoward occurrences in the TVET institutes. Some of them also pointed out that if they had heard something, they might not have joined the training programmes in the first place. Students were also asked if it was easy for them to find jobs after their training. Out of the 12 students 4 are self-employed and work from home.

Only one student complained of not have been given her diploma certificate and hence she could not get a job in her chosen trade so far. She shared her views and said that she had started teaching as a result of this.

Students were also asked if their opinions were given value at their workplace. All of them answered in the affirmative. They were further questioned if their earning requirements were met or helped because of TVET or not. Most of the students were content with their current pay scale.

Overall the students expressed their satisfaction with the job experiences and majority of them believed that it was an outcome of their quality training received at Technical Vocational Education and Training institutes.

4.4 Themes Emerging from Data Obtained from Officials of NAVTTC and TEVTA Punjab:

4.4.1 Views of respondents on the pressing issues existing currently in TVET:

Respondents were asked about the issues that according to them were the most pressing in TVET. They were also asked to highlight issues that were hindering the progress of TVET sector or hindering it in any way. One of the respondents from NAVTTC was of the view that the TVET sector of Pakistan gets no support from the industry. He believed that the industrial sector was not acting as the support system of the TVET sector, as is the case in Germany and other countries. The interviewee highlighted that the government of Pakistan itself is also not prioritizing the TVET sector and their focus is actually on the formal education system. The respondents also claimed that because the image of TVET is not being improved by the government. Youth is not interested in joining it unless it's the last resort.

Some respondents also highlighted that the issues of funding and budgeting were also not resolved by the government. This according to one respondent resulted in shortage of staff, lack of renovations of buildings, etc.

It is interesting to note here that almost all of the officials highlighted one major issue behind TVET's slow performance to be the government's disregard. The respondents believed that if the government started paying *more* attention to this sector, many things would automatically fall into their places. Apart from that, the respondents also highlighted issues like outdated machinery, perception of TVET, shortage of staff, all stemming from the root cause of neglect of the sector by the government. It is pertinent for me to clarify here that the expression government here includes both the national as well as provincial governments.

4.4.2 Views of respondents on the challenges faced while implementing policies in TVET:

Respondents were asked to share views as to the irritants stifling the growth of the sector and the non-implementation of the policies envisaged from time to time. Most of the respondents were of the view that they faced serious challenges like resource constraints while implementing policies.

They believed that paucity of resources has been the main cause culminating in the non-implementation of policies. As per the respondent's fragmentation of TVET sector also makes it challenging to implement policies. This means that the issues handled at the provincial levels are also being handled at the center, but they are not being handled jointly.

However, only one respondent was happy with everything and believed that policies were being implemented properly in the sector.

4.4.3 Views of respondents on the issues women encounter in TVET:

Respondents were asked to draw on their experience in the TVET sector and highlight the issues women have to countenance with in the training institutes. Respondents underscored various issues that bridle the women from excelling in this sector. I specifically sought help from the available literature to conceive and articulate pertinent set of questions relevant to the inquiry at hand. I also benefitted from my primary data obtained from UDC 1, UDC 2 and UDC 3 and framed questions for the respondents accordingly.

4.4.3.1 Views of respondents on any Harassment Issues women might have encountered in TVET:

Most of the respondents agreed that there was hardly any incidence of harassment against women at TVET institutes of the twin cities. They all agreed that whenever such complaints did come, they were addressed quite adroitly and in a prompt manner. One interviewee was of the opinion that the low number of cases was because the female courses were segregated.

However, one female respondent pointed out a few other things. She said that she had heard of many such cases and had also had female students provide evidence (in the form of) messages, recordings, etc. All of the respondents agreed that if such issues do come, action against them is taken strictly and timely and the victim is provided justice.

4.4.3.2 Views of respondents on Transport Issues women encounter in TVET:

Most of the respondents recognized the transport as one of the salient issues causing problems to the women undergoing training at the TVET institutes of the twin cities. They particularly mentioned the stipend which used to be disbursed under a previous project to help participants of the training programmes meet transportation expenses. Now the stipend has been discontinued adding to the woes of the women students. The small amount of around 3000 per month was there to cater for such expenditures. I think similar initiatives can be of course adopted, in the future as well.

Another respondent informed that smaller institutes are not able to afford transportation charges. However, the schools have been requested by the Organizations to try to find ways that could make it easier for the women to travel back and forth from the institute. One interviewee responded by saying that they cannot do so because the shortage of funds inhibits their policy changes.

4.4.3.3 Views of respondents on any other issues women encounter in TVET:

Respondents were also asked to identify any other reason that they might have witnessed women endure in TVET. All of the respondents were of the view that women faced issues because of the patriarchal culture which thrives on male dominance in the society and thus inhibits women from excelling in technical and vocational streams of learning and it is primarily attributable to the fact that women are confined to a set of a few trades and majority of the trades are present for men.

The interviewees also believed that family support plays a crucial role in the enrollment of women in TVET. If a woman has a strong family supporting her and aiding her throughout her training, she can surely learn a lot and then take advantage from the training later on. The respondents were of the view that family and the culture of the society were responsible for the limited number of opportunities that were available for women in TVET sector. The contemporary research suggests that families need to support the female members in their technical/vocational skill development pursuits. This is how they become economically productive as well as socially empowered.

4.4.4 Views of respondents on how the organizations solved the issues women encountered in TVET:

Respondents were asked to recall any steps that had been taken by their organizations to solve the issues faced by women trainees and skilled workers. Many of them admitted that the process was slow because of lack of funding but some strides had been made in the sector. One respondent informed that High Tech courses had been introduced so that gender barrier could be reduced. Such trades have had a good number of women turn-up.

Participants also talked about counselling the families of the women so that they would let them join the institutes. They said that this helped a few families make better decisions, that not only helped their female trainees learn, but also gained them financial assistance.

4.4.5 Views of respondents on the current policies and their effectiveness for women in TVET:

Most of the respondents believed that the policies have been formulated to tackle issues but their execution leaves a lot to be desired as non-availability of matching financial resources impacts the implementation in true letter and spirit. They believed that the current policies of TVET were existing on paper but not in reality. They also informed that the recent programme that had been launched by the government had no provision for a stipend for the trainees, something which was present before. This means that women especially cannot meet the transport expenditures, as they previously could.

Most of the employees agreed that the policies were women inclusive and it was just a matter of funds that was causing issues for women.

4.4.6 Views of respondents as to how the complaints were tackled of students about not getting their promised toolkits/diplomas in TVET:

According to the NAVTTC officials, it is not a serious issue. They informed that matters got delayed as a convoluted set of formalities are to be adhered to in order to make the transaction transparent and fair. They were of the view that many times toolkits were delayed, sometimes for as long as a year, but they were in the end always handed over to the students.

The employees pointed out that all such matters were resolved quickly and any such complaint was taken seriously by the relevant quarters.

4.4.7 Views of respondents on the perception of women after training about themselves and the guidance by Organizations for them.

All of the respondents agreed that it was essential for women to get jobs to feel empowered. According to them training could build confidence in women but they had to get a job to feel empowered. The meaningful and productive use of the training, would make it more likely for women to feel empowered in the end.

The respondents agreed that the women felt great once they embrace the skill development training. The real issue was engaging their services in the industrial sector. Interviewees also informed that the organizations had Job Placement Cells that worked to connect students with prospective employers. However, some of the officers were of the view that the wing was not so effective, as it is beset with some challenges. The officers agreed that work had to be done to increase the effectiveness of this wing.

4.4.8 Views of respondents on the future for women in TVET and how women are encouraged:

4.4.8.1 Views of respondents on future of women in TVET:

Most of the respondents were of the view that the future for women in this sector was bright. Even if a woman doesn't get a job, she can always start her own business on a small scale, or start

working from home. Things need to be improved and if they do improve, women will get more advantages of enrolling in TVET, as compared to the prevailing situation at this juncture.

A participant believed that TVET could be the swiftest route to finding employment and realizing the goal of women empowerment, hence women will benefit from the upskilling experience.

4.4.8.2 Views of respondents on how their Organizations encourage more women to join the TVET sector:

All of the respondents came up with unique answers to this query. One respondent claimed that the students were given stipends so that they would be more attracted to join TVET. Another respondent also pointed out that students were given toolkits upon the completion of their trainings.

The participants also pointed out that media can play a big role in the promotion of TVET and it can also help removing the negative image of TVET which portrays this sector as a second option.

All in all, almost all of the respondents believed that women are encouraged by TVET related organizations to join skill development initiatives. They stressed the need of engaging the services of media houses and organizing skill-based events/workshops, where parents and women themselves would feel motivated to join.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

An Overview of TVET System in Pakistan

5.1 The National Policy of TVET

The Government of Pakistan approved the first-ever national policy for the TVET to underscore the need of equipping youth with employable skills on May 22nd, 2018 ("Pakistan approves its first-ever TVET policy", 2020). The Policy illustrates five fundamental principles paving the way for upskilling the youth of the country (Rehman, 2019). The First principle envisages the development of a national integrated TVET system which would be recognized internationally. Second principle calls for greater involvement of the private sector in upgrading TVET in the country as there is hardly any tangible linkage between the Technical and vocational training paradigm in the country and the industry. The third Principle highlights the need of ensuring sustainable funding so that the objective of having a vibrant TVET sector could be realized. The Fourth Principle lays emphasis on evidence-based decision-making, performance monitoring and accountability. The Fifth and the last principle aims at forging collaborative and cooperative working relationships between national and provincial TVET entities. The mere perusal of the salient principles reveals that there is a conspicuous omission of gender equality amongst the principles as laid down in the policy document and I would in the later section recommend the same may be incorporated in the policy in order to make the document more inclusive and meaningful.

5.2 Key initiatives of the Government

Some of the key women-focused initiatives taken at national and provincial level within the TVET framework in recent times need to be discussed in order to determine our way forward. National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) was created to streamline TVET related policies and practices at federal level. The organization was also entrusted with the task of coordinating with the provinces to create synergy. A programme titled Waseela-e-Rozgar (Technical & Vocational Training) was inaugurated under the flagship of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), whereby the objective of upskilling 150,000 women was to be realized. In order to encourage potential female trainees a monthly stipend of Rs 6,000 was approved to be disbursed during the course of the said training initiative (Ministry of Finance, 2018).

In order to standardize and harmonize the technical and vocational qualifications across the country, National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF) has been launched by the NAVTTTC in

active collaboration with the four provinces and AJK. Evolution of the Pakistan National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF) aimed at facilitating vertical and horizontal progression of trainees. It also aimed at enhancing quality of training programs and swinging focus from supply-led to demand-driven and from time bound instruction to competency-based training. The initiative was carried out under the TVET Reform Support Program (TRSP). The Program is co-sponsored by the European Union, Netherlands and Germany and being executed by German agency GIZ (Pakistan National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF), 2014).

The provincial governments have constituted under their administrative control the Technical Education & Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTAs) in order to stimulate technical and vocational training. Additionally, some other key policy decisions have been taken by the four provincial governments as well as AJK including the establishment of the Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC), increase in the number of technical and vocational institutes for women from 236 in 2000-01 to 1370 institutes in 2017-18. Similarly, number of female enrolled in the institutes went up significantly from around 14,000 to around 121,000 (Rehman, 2019).

5.3 Growing Appeal of Skill Training for Women

A number of factors have been attributed by the respondents to the enhanced interest of female aspirants for Technical and vocational training in recent times. Primarily, economic compulsions are pushing women to indulge in income earning pursuits. The participants were of the view that they wanted to be productive members of their families and that prompted them to join training institutes. Secondly, some girls were propelled to learn cooking and sewing so that they are able to perform the domestic chores once they get married. Some participants sought enhanced confidence level through exposure to learning at the institutes others were vying to forge social networks. Thirdly, some respondents joined TVET training in view of the hype created about the demand of certain trades in the market like information technology. The trend was found in conformity with the findings of a study carried out in this regard. The study documented that large number of aspirants filed applications (12488) in the e-Rozgaar programme for enrolment in IT

training programmes ("e-Rozgaar", 2020). Fourthly, the fixation of 15% quota for women in government jobs by the provincial government as ordained vide the Punjab Fair Representation of Women Act 2014, has also spurred women to acquire some skills to be able to apply for jobs.

5.4 Inadequacies of the TVET Sector

The respondents have underscored some salient shortcomings and issues pervading the sector in the research locale. They were unanimous in their view that awareness of the potential of the technical and vocational training has not been created by the government. Some have also argued that there is hardly any system of career counselling for female trainees. Very few complained of not being supported by the families as TVET is considered to carry low social value. Then some skilled women were ostensibly dissatisfied with the low salaries offered to women in the private sector. Still others were unhappy with the amounts they earn at home for offering services such as tailoring, and beauticians etc. Another obstacle hindering women in the TVET is the common perception that women are not capable of performing physically tough tasks. Even the cultural norms do not permit women indulging in tasks historically allocated to men. Then there are women who despite their inclination for skill development are unable to take that path due to the fact that the institutes provide co-education.

Though Majority of the respondents dispelled the impression that harassment of women is a serious issue confronting female trainees. Yet a senior female officer at NAVTTC did corroborate that women have on many occasions raised the issue. I was also conscious of the fact that all the training institutes were closed due to pandemic after the first month of the training programmes across the country. Hence the new trainees did not spend much time in the TVET institutes and hence they hardly faced any such issue. Here it would be pertinent to point out that awareness of the issue of sexual harassment and consequences thereof for the perpetrators need to be ingrained in the systems and practices of TVET sector so that the faculty and the male trainees are deterred from indulging in any such act. The participants were of the view that media could be effectively used to sensitize the male members of our society how disdainful this act is and how does it affect the victims psychologically.

It is not out of place to mention here some of the legal provisions in the Pakistan Penal Code (1860) which may be invoked in case an offender guilty of act of harassment is to be proceeded against. Section 294 of the Code stipulates that anyone pronounced by the courts of law of indulging in obscenity at a public place is liable to be punished for imprisonment of up to three months. Section 509 of PPC provides that a person adjudged guilty of an act aiming to outrage the modesty of a woman by uttering any word, making any sound or gesturing or exhibiting any object to intrude upon their privacy is liable to punishment of imprisonment up to three years or fine up to five hundred thousand rupees. It is however to be noted here that we rarely see such matters having been brought before the courts having rightful jurisdiction, as victims of harassment usually avoid making such incidents public. This may be attributable to the prevailing perception that law enforcement apparatus in Pakistan is part of the problem and not of solution (Mustafa, 2017).

While delving into the genesis of the issue, Wilson (1991) elucidates that females are traditionally denied equal access to a public space, and harassment is a way of solidifying male domination so that they do not navigate male territory. Against this backdrop, Laniya (2005) has argued that harassment not only invades women's social freedom but also hinders her in her pursuit of economic opportunities.

Despite the fact that many participants were optimistic about the future prospects, there were others who were of the view that their financial resources and time invested by them could eventually be wasted as they are becoming mindful of the limited opportunities in the market.

To a large number of respondents of Rawalpindi, transport is a major issue for the female trainees. They had to rely on a family member for the pick and drop from the institutes. Others commute via public transport which is never hassle free. The respondents urged the need of continuing stipend which was available under the project launched by the previous government enabling them to incur the transport expenses.

Some married students of technical and vocational education and training highlighted the need for the provision of day care facilities in the campuses at both at Rawalpindi and Islamabad which

seems to be a distant reality at this time. The absence of day care centers hinders many women aspirants from pursuing the skill development.

It has already been discussed that TVET does not seem to constitute a top priority for the governments. Resultantly, we find the outdated training equipment and obsolete content being used at the TVET institutes in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Then the respondents were at times disappointed with the scarcity of consumables as they did not get the opportunity to practice. They were also of the view that industry is changing quite rapidly whereas machines in the labs are too old to equip them with the skills much demanded by the industry. It was also mentioned by the respondents that curricula need to be updated to conform to the contemporary industrial needs. The respondents from the management of the institutes were found in agreement with the students in this regard.

A few participants of the twin cities also questioned the quality of teaching in the institutes. The management of the institutes attributed this to the lack of exposure of TVET teachers to the industry. Hence the teachers are confined in their methodology to learning and teaching from books.

One of the most striking weakness of the TVET training is the absence of linkage between the institute and the industry. The respondents representing both NAVTTC and Punjab TEVTA lamented the fact that there is hardly any tangible support offered by the industry to the institutes. Some were of the opinion that the trainees are not imparted any training in soft skills as the entire focus of the training is devoted to inculcating technical skills to the students.

5.5 TVET Graduates and Job Market Intricacies

The female TVET graduates particularly drew the attention of the researcher about the prevalent discrimination against women in the job market. The employers openly prefer male job seekers over female skilled aspirants. This discrimination is deeply ingrained in the society and is also reflected in the variance of salary packages offered to both sexes. Women are invariably paid lower wages as compared to men.

Another significant problem is the reluctance on part of women trainees to explore regional/international job markets. In the last fifty years an excess of the male population from Pakistan, 10 million, to be exact has been able to find livelihood abroad but women are not educated and encouraged to explore avenues in the international market.

The environment in garments industry as well as hospitality industry is not conducive to female employees. A respondent pointed out that there is hardly any day care center nor basic amenities like separate wash rooms for women. On top of that they work under a constant impending threat of physical and psychological harassment. To some, transport continues to be a serious irritant even if they find some job. Markets bustle with men and it becomes difficult for a woman to navigate and carry on her assignments.

Conclusion

TVET provides the fastest path to productive youth involvement leading to the development of national economy. However, the sector in Pakistan is plagued with systemic disorders. The training institutes face critical issues of both quantity and quality including capacity constraints, archaic workshops/laboratories, outdated training equipment, obsolete teaching methodology and age-old curricula. The situation in the twin cities is not that different in this regard. Hence we find the local technical and vocational institutes drastically incapacitated to cater to the skill development needs of the local youth including female trainees. This state of affairs is generally attributed to the fact that neither the government nor the industry has ever accorded TVET the due priority. In addition, the socio-cultural norms thriving on role stratification also inhibit women in their bid to proactively participate in a more diversified set of trades. Yet despite the inadequacies, most of the female respondents expressed optimism that they would emerge successful and better skilled from the institutes. They were not dismayed by the abysmally low funding allocated for the sector by the government. On the other hand, the experts of the field are not at all satisfied with the existing scenario. They have been calling for tangible actions to be undertaken as the huge youth bulge needs to be engaged in a productive manner. The situation warrants immediate corrective measures to be taken as highlighted in the recommendations section.

Recommendations

In order to increase women participation in TVET, and improve the quality of technical and vocational education and training in the country, some critical actions and interventions are needed immediately.

- It is recommended that the presently allocated government funding being inadequate, should be enhanced substantially in order to increase training opportunities for women as well as to upgrade the standard of training. Needless to state, it would reinforce establish governmental commitment towards up-scaling TVET in the country.
- In order to harness the full potential of women, it is imperative that the TVET policy is both equitable and inclusive. The document may be tweaked accordingly to address the issues of women, to help them fully participate in the TVET arena.
- Capacity upgradation of the existing infrastructure is inevitable in order to meet the training needs of ever-burgeoning number of young men and women seeking opportunities. The present infrastructure is both inadequate in terms of capacity and inept in terms of quality. Hence without serious upscale of this structure, challenges of women empowerment and enhanced industrial growth will not be surmounted.
- Efforts are required to streamline to diversify trades currently available for the female trainees. They may be offered opportunities to enroll in trades demanded in market. Restricting their choice to conventional trades like tailoring, embroidery and beauticians is counter-productive.
- Mutually rewarding linkages between training institutes and the industry will do a world of good to the sector as a whole. The interaction would help advance the skill development of trainees and would eventually produce a well-qualified workforce to meet the industry needs. In Germany, Singapore, and Australia, the TVET sector is principally managed by the industrial sector as they are cognizant of the fact that adequately skilled workers are the most vital asset for realizing the objective of optimal productivity, enhanced efficiency and quality assurance. Enhancing the level of industry representation on Boards of TVET organizations at varied levels and constituting industry-steered Sector Skills Councils may catalyze the proactive engagement of industry with TVET.

- It will be a useful to engage the families of the students in the process of learning. The institutes will gain confidence of the families.
- The Punjab government has allocated a job quote of 15% exclusively for female aspirants in the public sector organizations. Other governments should also emulate the action of Punjab. In order to spur women graduates, the quota may be extended to the private sector also.
- In order to enhance the overall quality of teaching and training at the institutes, industry experts may be invited to share their knowledge and experience with the trainees.
- The TVET sector is plagued with stunted standard of training, which not only taints the image of the sector but also fails to equip the youth with the skills commensurate to discharge requirements of the job. Hence the maximum use of latest technological interventions and establishment of trade specific centers of excellence are direly needed to showcase international best practices.
- Furthermore, quality of instruction can be upgraded through use of digital media. The audio-visual techniques will keep the students interested and latest developments could be shared with students without incurring financial resources.
- Harassment being widespread needs to be deterred through enforcement of relevant laws and policies. There should be zero tolerance for harassment against women and workplaces and training institutes. Campaigns must be launched to create awareness among the female students. Policies and procedures must be put in place to provide a safe environment to female learners.
- Study visits to industrial enterprises would add to the knowledge of the trainees significantly. Such visits may be sponsored by the industry to attract talent and project its positive image among the potential employees.
- In order to better benefit from the experience of graduates, the institutes need to set up data base of its past female graduates who are now working as entrepreneurs. Their motivational talks to the female trainees would go a long way in inspiring the students.
- Female trainees may opt to work as freelancers for online platforms namely, Fivver, Upwork etc. NAVTTC and Punjab TEVTA may also explore options to launch courses in freelancing as a trade in the institutes.

- In order to create awareness among the female job seekers, job portals should be created by the responsible organizations. Vital information including the vacancy position. Requisite skills, and application forms could be made available for female TVET graduates.
- It is expected that new avenues of employment for female skilled workforce of the capital city will unfurl in IT, hospitality and paramedics, once CPEC materializes. It is therefore high time that women are equipped with requisite skills in all such CPEC related trades.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

Main Themes and their interview guides for UDC 1

While interviewing my UDC 1 on **Influence of socio-cultural norms or values.**

- Did they enter TVET on their own accord? Did they make the last decision?
- Did they face any issues from family, relatives or society?
- Were they hesitant before choosing a trade? Was it easy choosing a trade of interest?
- Have they heard any misconceptions about TVET?

While interviewing my UDC 1 on **Issues confronting female trainees in TVET institutes.**

- Did they face any issues after joining the TVET institute?
- Did they face any issues from the administration there?
- If yes, what?
- Did they face any issues from the male students there?
- If yes, what?
- Did they face any issues from the male staff there?
- If yes, what?

While interviewing my UDC 1 on **Empowerment and Agency.**

- Did they feel empowered while training?
- If yes, how?
- Did they feel confident enough to take their personal decisions?
- Is their opinion given value at home?
- Would they recommend other women to join TVET?
- Will they be working after TVET training?
- If no, then why?

While interviewing my UDC 1 on **Recommendations for suitable strategies.**

- Did they find any issues in the TVET sector of Islamabad/Rawalpindi?
- How do they foresee the future of TVET sector in Pakistan?
- Where do they think TVET can be improved in terms of supporting women?
- How do they think the problems and issues can be fixed?
- Do they think this training will have a positive impact on their training?

Main Themes and the interview guide for UDC 2

While interviewing my UDC 2 the following areas were touched.

- Did they have any issues if the trainee enrolled in TVET?
- Did they face any issues from any issues from family, relatives or society?
- If yes, what?
- Who took the last decision about the trainee entering?
- How has the experience been so far?
- Has their female member discussed some issue she has faced at TVET institute?
- Has TVET brought any positive changes like increase in self-actualization, self-confidence and empowerment in their female member?
- Would they let any other female member join TVET?
- Do they think TVET has helped them financially?

Main Themes and their interview guides for UDC 3

While interviewing my UDC 3 on **Influence of socio-cultural norms or values.**

- Did they enter TVET on their own accord? Did they make the last decision?
- Did they face any issues from family, relatives or society?
- Were they hesitant before choosing a trade? Was it easy choosing a trade of interest?
- Were they doing the household chores along with the training?
- If yes, was that burdensome?
- Have they heard any misconceptions about TVET?

While interviewing my UDC 3 on **Issues confronting female trainees in TVET institutes.**

- Did they face any issues after joining the TVET institute?
- Did they face any issues from the administration there?
- If yes, what?
- Did they face any issues from the male students there?
- If yes, what?
- Did they face any issues from the male staff there?

- If yes, what?

While interviewing my UDC 3 on **Empowerment and Agency**.

- Do they feel empowered after training?
- If yes, how?
- Did they feel confident enough to take their personal decisions?
- Is their opinion given value at home? Is it valued at their workplace?
- Would they recommend other women to join TVET?
- Has TVET helped their earning requirements?

While interviewing my UDC 3 on **Issues confronting female trainees after leaving TVET institute and getting employed**.

- Was it easy to find a job for them? Were there any hurdles?
- Has their family treated them different after getting a job?
- Are they facing any other challenges at their work place?
- Are they happy with their pay scale?

While interviewing my UDC 3 on **Recommendations for suitable strategies**.

- Did they find any issues in the TVET sector of Islamabad/Rawalpindi?
- How do they foresee the future of TVET sector in Pakistan?
- Where do they think TVET can be improved in terms of supporting women?
- How do they think the problems and issues can be fixed?
- Do they think this training will have a positive impact on their training?

Main Themes and their interview guides for UDC 4

While interviewing my UDC 4 on **Issues and Challenges in NAVTTC**.

- What are the pressing issues in the current TVET sector of Pakistan according to them?
- What are the challenges faced by them while implementing policy changes in NAVTTC?
- How does NAVTTC encourage women to enroll in TVET?

While interviewing my UDC 4 on **Issues and Challenges for women in TVET**.

- What are the issues women mostly encounter in TVET sector?
- Is the Organization able to sort them out?

- How do they deal with issues of students file complaints about not getting their stuff?
- Are the current policies effectively tackling women?

While interviewing my UDC 4 on **Issues and Challenges for women after TVET.**

- Do they think women feel empowered after training?
- How does NAVTTC facilitate women after their training for employment?
- What does the future hold for women in TVET in Pakistan?

Main Codes and Sub-codes of the Thematic Charts

Codes of currently enrolled female trainees of TVET institutes.

1. Positive impacts on Personal Growth-

- 1.1 Confidence, self-actualization/self-confidence,
- 1.2 empowered individual,
- 1.3 value of opinion,

2. Selection of trades-

- 2.1 interest,
- 2.2 need of the day,
- 2.3 helps in employment,
- 2.4 for financial assistance.

3. Administrative failures-

- 3.1 teachers training,
- 3.2 transportation issues,
- 3.3 unavailability of resources,
- 3.4 shortage of TVET centers in rural locales

4. Administrative successes-

- 4.1 maintained discipline,
- 4.2 equal chances for participation for all students,

4.3 great training experience

Codes of guardians of TVET female trainees.

1. Impact of TVET on trainee

1.1. Experience till now,

1.2. Financial aspect,

1.3. Change in self-actualization/confidence.

Codes of currently employed ex-TVET female trainees.

1. Positive impacts on Personal Growth-

1.1 Confidence, self-actualization/self-confidence,

1.2 empowered individual,

1.3 value of opinion,

2. Selection of trades-

2.1 interest,

2.2 need of the day,

2.3 helps in employment,

2.4 for financial assistance.

3. Administrative failures-

3.1 teachers training,

3.2 transportation issues,

3.3 unavailability of resources,

3.4 shortage of TVET centers in rural locales

4. Administrative successes-

4.1 maintained discipline,

4.2 equal chances for participation for all students,

4.3 great training experience,

4.4 recommendations.

5. Experience at workplace-

- 5.1 treatment of family,
- 5.2 misconceptions about TVET,
- 5.3 finding a job,
- 5.4 value of opinion at workplace,
- 5.5 earning requirements helped by TVET.

Codes of employees of NAVTTC and TEVTA

1. Pressing issues in the current TVET sector of Pakistan

2. Challenges faced while implementing policy changes

3. Issues women encounter in TVET-

- 3.1 Harassment issues,
- 3.2 Transportation issues,
- 3.3 Others.

4. Are the Organizations able to sort them out?

5. Effectiveness of current policies in terms of women.

6. Students file complaints about not getting their toolkits/certificates

7. After training-

- 7.1 Women feel empowered,
- 7.2 NAVTTC facilitates women.

8. Future for women in TVET and how they are encouraged to join TVET.

- 8.1 Future for women in Pakistan
- 8.2 NAVTTC encourages women

Thematic Charts of currently enrolled students of TVET
Code 1- Positive Impacts on Personal Growth

Sub-codes	1.1 Confidence/Self-actualization/self-confidence	1.2 Empowered individual	1.3 Value of opinion
Interviewee			
1	<p>I am confident enough to be able to go out and do things on my own.</p> <p>&</p> <p>Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs.</p>	<p>Yes, I do. I always take and make my own decisions.</p>	<p>It depends on the situation, they sometimes take my opinion if its required, other times they don't.</p>
2		<p>Yes, I do, but I always take my husband's opinion before taking any personal decisions.</p> <p>&</p> <p>If women really start becoming part of this sector, then this will surely help them financially. This will also boost their confidence and make them feel empowered.</p>	<p>Yes, my husband values my opinion and asks me before making any major decisions. He has given me enough confidence to share my opinions.</p>

3	Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs. I am certified because of TVET, so this will surely help me.	It depends on the situation. Sometimes my parents decide for me, and other times I decide. & If women take real advantage of TVET then they can use this platform to grow and this will also boost their confidence and make them feel empowered.	Yes, they do. My parents value the opinions of all of us, when we decide for ourselves.
4	They can stand up for themselves and will not be dependent on anyone. & Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs, as I can use all the knowledge that I learnt in my training and make myself a better employee, if I wanted to get a job.	Yes, I decided what discipline I wanted to pursue in my studies and I also chose the trade for TVET, for example. I have always taken all the major decisions. & If women start becoming part of TVET, then will become financially stronger. They can stand up for themselves and will not be dependent on anyone.	Yes, my family makes sure to involve everyone before making major decisions.
5	Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs. And if not that, then it will	Yes, I do. My parents raised me as an empowered individual and my husband also	Yes, we are only two people, so my husband asks

	guide me into setting my own business.	gives me confidence and support, so I don't hesitate to decide for myself. & If women really start enrolling themselves, they can take advantage of all the different types of trades that are offered. They can undoubtedly enhance their skills and empower themselves both economically and socially.	me before taking any decision and I always ask him too. This is one way of making the right decisions, because once you involve your loved ones in your personal matters, they guide you rightly.
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Code 2- Selection of Trades

Sub-codes	2.1 Interest	2.2 Need of the day	2.3 Helps in employment	2.4 For financial assistance
Interviewee				
1	No I did not face any issues. This is what I was interested in and my husband supported me. Plus, we also need financial help now, as the kids are coming of age, so I decided to enroll.		Yes, I definitely want to get a job in this field. Maybe teach in the Vocational Schools themselves if I get the opportunity. Maybe I'll get a job in a private school.	No I did not face any issues. This is what I was interested in and my husband supported me. Plus, we also need financial help now, as the kids are

			If not there, then I'd either continue my studies or work from home on something.	coming of age, so I decided to enroll. & If women really start becoming part of this sector then this will surely help them financially.
2	Yes, because this is what I was interested in.		Yes, I definitely want to start my business.	
3	Yes, because this is what I was interested in. You can't expect to get a job in this day and age without knowing computer basics.	Yes, because this is what I was interested in. You can't expect to get a job in this day and age without knowing computer basics.	Yes, because this is what I was interested in. You can't expect to get a job in this day and age without knowing computer basics. & Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs. I am certified because of TVET, so this will surely help me.	
4	Yes, because this is what I was interested in. I like to do makeup and apply skin relevant		Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs, as I can use all the knowledge that I	

	products. It was a good learning curve.		learnt in my training and make myself a better employee, if I wanted to get a job.	
5	Yes, because this is what I wanted to get in. I like to design clothes and come up with creative ideas to make them look better, so naturally this trade was a good option.		Yes, definitely. I'm thinking of opening up a boutique. & Yes, it will definitely help me in getting better jobs. And if not that, then it will guide me into setting my own business.	

Thematic Charts of guardians of TVET female trainees.
Code 1- Impact of TVET on female trainee.

Sub-codes	1.1 Experience till now	1.2 Financial aspect	1.3 Change in self-actualization/confidence
Interviewee			
1	It's been only two months. I didn't see any positive changes yet. She still has a lot to	I am hopeful that it will. She can start her own business from home, after her	No, I've not seen any yet. Maybe in the future we'll see something positive.

	learn. Maybe as she progresses she will. I am hopeful.	training and start earning for herself.	
2	It's been only two months. The experience has been okay so far.	Yes, it definitely seems like it. It will help her in getting a good job. She will become independent and that's something I am hopeful for.	Yes, she's definitely become more self-confident. Now she's always telling me how she will start earning after her training and help me in discharging the family obligations. Her confidence makes me feel better too.
3	It's been okay.	It will help the person getting trained individually. It will be their money, not ours to spend. And I have no interest in spending my children's money. TVET will make them financially independent, or so I hope.	No, I've not seen any changes yet. It's only been some time as she started her training, we will see something positive soon, in the future.
4	It's been a good experience. As soon as she joined all the other girls got impressed that she is so talented and the fact that she picks up so fast. My daughter feels confident as a result.	Yes, of course. People do not hire Special children, but after this training my daughter plans on opening a salon with her Aunt. This will keep her busy and bring in some money.	She's always been very confident. On the contrary, I have to tell her to ignore people if they misbehave, because otherwise she would start fighting.
5	It's been great.	Yes, definitely it will. I am sure of that. She will be	Yes, she's definitely gotten more independent and confident. I can see her making her

		able to earn soon. In today's day and age people only want to know if you know about Computers, so this certification will help her in securing a job.	decisions. She consults me of course but makes her own decisions too. I like to see my wife brave enough to do that.
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**Thematic Charts of currently employed ex-TVET female trainees.
Code 1- Positive impacts on personal growth.**

Sub-codes	1.1 Confidence/Self-actualization/self-confidence	1.2 Empowered individual	1.3 Value of opinion
Interviewee			
1	No, not at all. I am confident. Plus I had chosen my favourite course.	Definitely, my family is not strict like that. Plus, my husband is extremely supportive, so I tend to naturally take all my decisions and ask for his suggestions whenever and wherever needed.	My in-laws are really sweet thankfully, so they have always taken my opinion in every issue, even before I had started working. It has nothing to do with the fact that I earn or not, because what I earn stays in my hands
2	No, I was not hesitant at all. I was excited to start my training. &	I have never made my decisions alone. I have always consulted my husband and I still do.	Yes, it does, and it did before too. Nothing's changed.

	Yes, it did. It gave me confidence in my skill and now I am certified. I can earn easily from home.	But yes if I had to make some personal decision alone, I can.	
3	No, I wasn't hesitant. This is what I was interested in. & Yes, I am definitely learning. I learnt a lot while being trained and now I get the opportunity to learn even more with my job.	Yes, I do. I earn so it's easy to make the decisions.	Yes, it does. We make decisions together.
4	No, why would I be hesitant. My parents were supporting me and I liked this trade. & Oh yes, the training has helped me a lot in my job. And then I practiced further myself, so it was good.	Yes, I do, as I decided I will get a job in a parlour. And my mother encouraged me as well.	Our parents ask us before taking any tough decisions. Especially if it involves me.
5	No, I wanted to enroll myself so that I could learn.	Yes, I do. I decided to get a job. So I planned this for myself.	Yes, it does. My husband and mother-in-law ask me, before making decisions.

Code 2- Selection of trades.

Sub-codes	2.1 Interest	2.2 Need of the day	2.3 Helps in employment	2.4 For financial assistance

Interviewee				
1	Yes, because this what I was interested in.		I am employed from the comfort of my own home. So yes it has helped me start up my own business.	I see it going up. Women can easily support their families through this. Plus, women who belong to the rural areas already are skilled in this trade, if they get certified, they can truly help their families and support them financially.
2	Yes, like I mentioned before, I enjoy designing clothes according to the latest trends, so it was easy to decide what trade I wanted to choose.			I can hope that TVET has a better future for women and that more women take advantage of this training. This is a great opportunity for women who do not want to get a job, as TVET will help them in starting their own businesses as well, from

				the comforts of their own houses.
3	<p>No, I wasn't. This is what I was interested in.</p> <p>&</p> <p>Yes, it was. I like cooking so it wasn't hard to make a decision.</p>			<p>TVET can help the Pakistani women. Many of the skilled women who are confined to their homes, can start working from their home if they are interested. They do not have to leave their homes. I even made one of my cousins take the training. Many of my class fellows are working from home and earning, by baking. They take orders and earn for themselves. This is really helpful for them.</p>
4	<p>Yes, it was. This is what I enjoy and do happily.</p>			<p>TVET can help the Pakistani women, but only if they want too. They can start working from home or get a job</p>

				like I do. In either case they'll be earning.
5	I was interested in stitching and sewing so it was easy to choose. But as my experience wasn't so great so I lost interest in it later on.	If women take interest and the situation in this sector improves, then only things can have a positive effect.		

**Thematic Charts of employees of NAVTTC and TEVTA-Punjab.
Code 1- Pressing issues in the current TVET sector of Pakistan.**

Participant	Pressing issues in the current TVET sector of Pakistan
1.	I think there are many issues which are of course stifling the TVET sector of Pakistan and amongst the salient of them is that there is no support from the industry. The industrial sector is not supporting the TVET sector, as is the case in Germany and some other countries where strong TVET-industry partnership is playing a very vital role in the development of TVET sector. That is not the case here in Pakistan. Then there is a matter of priority, even if you hear the current Minister of Education who's also looking after TVET sector. He has been saying that he has 4 priorities, and amongst his priorities TVET sector is at the bottom. The rest of the priorities pertain to formal education. So likewise, resources are not allocated by the government and support is not provided by the industry. And there is a kind of stigma attached to the skilled worker in this country, so people want to have degrees in formal education. They want to go for graduation and higher education and they think that the TVET sector education is not prestigious enough to attract the educated youth. So there are issues from the government side, there are issues from the industry side and then there are issues with the perception of people

	<p>about the TVET sector. Just look around you, people enroll their kids in the TVET sector as an option of last resort.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>First of all, in Pakistan we need to check the labour market information system. In this we check the data and check the requirement of the TVET skills required in the market. For example, in which trade we need most of the labour and most of the workers so do analysis and research and then we come to the conclusion that these are the trades and these are the technical skills which are required most for our employers like factory owners, etc.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>The issues that have been prevalent in the sector since 1960, are still not addressed, in my opinion. For example, the biggest issue is the image building of TVET in the society. It's considered the second or third option by parents. This means that if a child doesn't perform well or if parents are not financially stable to afford academic education, they will put their children in TVET. This should be considered the most important education by everyone because TVET graduates are those kids that can be accommodated into the market as soon as their trading is done. In comparison the students of the conventional education systems have to gain experience in the field first. If we look at this scenario, we can clearly see that a TVET graduate can be much more helpful for the whole economy. We need to focus on the image building. Second, no doubt this is an expensive education for the schools to provide, but the infrastructure is not up to the mark. Pakistan has 4500 TVET schools and 55 % of that are private. The public schools and their infrastructure is good but not of the private. The private schools have outdated machinery; hence they do not have any links with the industry. This gap is not being addressed by the government and also not by the policymakers of TVET. If the market starts accepting these kids, so will the society but because of the outdated machinery, market forces have no interest in them. Third is the HR issue of the instructors or trainers. They are stuck on specific grades since the last 20 years, they get employed in those grades and they retire from the same ones too. There is no professional growth</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>The institutions are old and the machinery is outdated that is the most pressing issue we face. Course are demand-driven according to the market, but the machinery is outdated that is used to teach the students. Furthermore, lower staff was less in number so work was slowed down.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>We face multiple issues because this sector is not a priority sector for the government. It needs to be presented in a way so that people consider it a respectable field to join. Then we also face issues of funding and budgeting which need to be resolved by the government. We have around 400 institutes in our public sector so issues of old machinery, shortage of staff, renovations of buildings, all need to be looked after. If the government pays attention to it and the people start taking interest in it, only then will things change.”</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>The youth bulge in Pakistan is enormous. More than 120 million of our population is below 35 years of age. When you have such a huge number, the TVET sector gets a large number and government needs to invest in the sector heavily. For various reasons government is not catering to the needs. If we look at the budget of last years, one year it got 1 billion from the government, another year it got one and a half billion, etc. So the priority of the government keeps on changing. That’s one issue. Second the industrial sector is not playing its role in TVET, even though the end product of TVET will be absorbed in industry. If you look at the TVET sector, successful models of other countries like Germany or UK, you will find that the management of the TVET sector is in the hands of the industry there. And they even design courses, and carry out assessment and certification functions according to their needs. We have a big gap between the industry and the TVET sector. Because of this the students that graduate from the TVET sector face difficulties in getting jobs. Both of these issues combine to form issues for the sector. This has also decreased the standards of the sector and as a result ends up being the last priority of the youth. So a student will only opt for TVET when he/she cannot get into Medicine, Engineering, Humanities, etc. TVET is the choice of the last resort. So the image of TVET is that we believe anyone who graduates from TVET will be graduating as a Craftsman (Mistri).”</p>

Code 2- Challenges faced while implementing policy changes.

Partici- pant	Challenges faced while implementing policy changes
1.	<p>The most important is that the resources are not allocated according to the policy which are formulated. When this government came into power, they constituted a task force to deliberate various TVET sector issues and after a thorough examination a policy was formulated. After a year, some resources were allocated, but subsequently because of this Corona pandemic, those resources were diverted to some other sectors. So we need to be cognizant of the fact that resource allocation remains pivotal in pushing a particular project through. TVET sector is not that fortunate. It has never been accorded priority by the government. So resource allocation must be at the top. And of course as I've highlighted the local industry should be sponsoring the initiatives of the TVET. But that kind of support is always missing.”</p>
2	<p>The biggest issue is that people are on a status quo. Whenever you try to do some supportive work, instead of being supportive, they start resistance. For example, there's a principal of a school for the last 20 years. If you try to improve his school by adding something to increase the capacity building, then he would resist. Second, even if you increase the capacity building, things don't trickle down. For example, if you train some teacher from abroad, then the purpose is that he would come and teach the kids, but that doesn't happen. So the biggest challenge we face is tackling the existing people and new and young people don't join the sector. So we face issues because of that.</p>
3	<p>TVET sector is fragmented and undergoes double efforts. This means that issues that are being handled at provincial levels are also being handled at the center, but they are not handled jointly. There is no consolidated effort. Things should be centralized, but they are not. If that had been the case, things would trickle down smoothly. Things lose their capacity once they are disintegrated.</p>

4	<p>Policy is made by the head office, but sometimes there are issues like shortage of funds in some institutes, shortage of machinery, staff, etc. All these issues are faced by the institutes/organizations then regardless of how old or new they are.</p>
5	<p>We have good staff and good officers, so policies do get implemented. Even our current chairman is working on all these issues. TVET is being promoted a lot now, as compared to before on social media. So when you have good leadership, policies can be implemented in those sectors.”</p>
6	<p>The first important question is if there’s an existing policy. The National TVET Policy of Pakistan came four to five years ago. Before that there was no policy, no roadmap, nothing. But when a policy has been formed, issues are present in its implementation. The capacity of the sector currently is 4 lac youth, which is being produced. Industry demand is 2 million youth annually. If the policy is demanding for an increase in the capacity of TVET sector, we do not have the funds for it. We don’t even get enough funding to utilize the existing capacity. To improve quality, we need equipment to be improved in the laboratory. The equipment we have in our laboratories is of 1970’s and 1980’s. for example if we are training someone on Auto mechanics, then that person is getting training in an engine which is from 1970 or 80. We have had so many innovations in technology since then, like Hybrid. And when you talk about quality, you need to train teachers and modernize the curriculum so that quality graduates can be produced. You need funds for this and government priorities too.</p>