

Attitudinal Change Towards Technical And Vocational Education And Training (TVET) In Ashanti Region Of Ghana

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Abstract: Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in developing countries such as Ghana is confronted with a number of challenges; principally among them is the stigma that TVET is a preserve of the intellectually weak. This stigma has led to the negative attitudes towards TVET among stakeholders such as students at the second cycle institutions. Efforts have over the years been put in place to change the negative attitudes towards TVET in Ghana. This research is aimed at analyzing the attitudinal change among second cycle students towards TVET. Ashanti region of Ghana was chosen for this study because of its richness in a considerable amount of second cycle institutions. A sample size of 3,070 students was used over a period of 7 years (2007-2013). A structured questionnaire was administered in some selected second cycle institutions in the various districts of the Ashanti Region. The research revealed that preference for pursuing TVET in tertiary institutions has increased over the period under study among the second cycle students, however a lot more effort needs to be done to drastically change the misconception and the adverse stigma associated with TVET in Ghana.

Keywords: Attitudinal change, Second cycle institutions, TVET, stigma, students

I. INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training is involved in activities which emphasize the application of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for employment in a particular occupation or cluster of related occupations in any field of social and economic endeavor. According to Afeti, G. (2009) Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has emerged as one of the most effective human resource development strategies that African countries need to embrace in order to train and modernize their technical workforce for rapid industrialization and national development.

TVET systems in Africa differ from country to country and are delivered at different levels in different types of institutions, including technical and vocational schools (both public and private), polytechnics, institutes, enterprises, and apprenticeship training centres.

TVET in developing countries such as Ghana is confronted with a number of challenges; principally among them is the stigma that TVET is a preserve of the intellectually

weak. Sherry and Yesueneagbe (2013) cited the negative public attitudes and perceptions towards technical and vocational education and training in Ghana as a resinous challenge faced by TVET in Ghana.

Atchloarena and Delluc (2001) noted among others, the negative public attitudes and perceptions regarding technical and vocational education and training as a challenge to technical and vocational education training (TVET).

In his article entitled "Enhancing Perceptions of Vocational Education and Training in Ghana, Chris Gale, noted that Vocational education and training (VET) in Ghana suffers from a low level of self-esteem. It is notably seen as an inferior option in comparison with higher education, more suited for people unable to achieve in academia.

In response to public criticism of the reform programme, the government set up the Education Reform Review Committee of 1993/94. The work of the Committee culminated in the National Education Forum of 1994 with a focus on basic education to the year 2000. The forum, attended by 150 representatives of various stakeholder groups, received critical comments from participants. Problems

identified included persistent poor attitude of the Ghanaian public towards technical and vocational education.

Efforts have over the years; locally and internationally, been put in place to change the negative attitudes towards TVET in Ghana. One of such International commitments to strengthen TVET programming was shown at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, where the international community made a commitment to "ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs."

Major donors/development partners active in the education sector are involved in TVET programming to some extent. Germany, Canada and Japan focus a significant proportion of their education sector support on TVET, providing advisory services and technical assistance components to help developing countries build efficient and effective TVET systems, particularly at the post-secondary level. The United States provides funding for both formal and non-formal vocational programs through stand-alone projects. Norway and Denmark have a strong focus on non-formal programs. The United Kingdom is increasingly emphasizing the use of PBAs in its support of the education sector, but has also established a program called Development Partnerships in Higher Education (DeLPHE). In 2006, DeLPHE funded 42 projects to develop cross-country, cross-regional or international partnerships between post-secondary academic and TVET institutions.

International financial institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank support a wide range of programs and projects in TVET. Programs to provide micro credit and to build financing and contacts for informal sector apprentices have been made in Latin America. Other interventions include extending support to master craftsmen in procuring adequate training materials and tools, providing training to the master craftsmen themselves in new tools and new technologies, and offering complementary training for apprentices in practical aspects of trade, management skills, and occupational health and safety.

In the year 2006, the government of Ghana through an Act of Parliament, established a Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) to have overall responsibility for skills development in the country, coordinate and oversee all aspects of technical and vocational education and training in the country.

The aim of this research is to study the level of attitudinal change among second cycle students towards TVET.

II. METHODS

METHODOLOGY

The Ashanti Region of Ghana was chosen for this study because of its strategic position; it lies between northern and southern Ghana. The region shares borders with the Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Western and Central Region. It has a total number of 30 districts and municipals. The region can boast of about 174 number of second cycle institutions (public and

private) spread across the length and breadth of the region. Students from the region come from different parts of the country and neighboring Burkina Faso, Togo and Ivory Coast. The research targeted students at the second cycle institutions; Senior High, Commercial, Vocational and Technical schools.

SAMPLE TECHNIQUE

Structured questionnaire were designed to sample and ascertain the level of attitudinal change among second cycle students towards TVET at the tertiary level within the period of study (2007-2013). The focus areas included:

- ✓ Willingness to pursue a TVET at the tertiary level after secondary education,
- ✓ Reasons for the choice.

Same questionnaire were administered to students in all the districts. The period of administering the questionnaire ranged from the 1st to the 3rd term of each research year throughout the districts in no particular order.

In order to capture the fullness associated with qualitative and quantitative data, the mass data collected was disaggregated into meaningful and related categories to enhance a systematic re-arrangement and vigorous analysis of data. The collected data have therefore been tabulated, graphically analyzed and interpreted with the help of descriptive statistics.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

SEX OF RESPONDENT

The respondents for this research were made up of males and females. As indicated in Table 1 below, in 2007, out of a total of 187 students interviewed, 78 (41.7%) were females whereas 109, representing 58.3% were males. In 2008 and 2009 the number of females were 82 (42.1%) and 78 (41.3%) respectively while the males were 113 (57.9%) and 111 (58.7%). Then in 2010 and 2011 the females were 89 (48.1%) and 92 (48.4%) respectively while the males were 96 (51.9%) and 93 (51.6%). Also in 2012 and 2013, 89(46.1%) females and 80(41.9%) males, 111 (58.1%) respectively were recorded. It is therefore obvious from Table 1 below that throughout the study period, the total number of males for each year exceed that of the females.

Sex	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%
Female	78	41.7	82	42.1	78	41.3	89	48.1	92	48.4	89	46.1	80	41.9
Male	109	58.3	113	57.9	111	58.7	96	51.9	93	51.6	104	53.9	111	58.1
Total	187	100	195	100	189	100	185	100	185	100	193	100	191	100

Table 1: Sex Of Respondent

From Table 2 below, the age range of the respondents were; 13-16, 17-20, 21-24, 25-above. The number of students whose ages fell within the range of 13-16 were 32.1% in 2007, 25.1% in 2008, 26.5% in 2009, 20.5% in 2010, 34.2% in 2011, 35.2% in 2012 and 36.6 in 2013. Those in the 17-20 range

were 32.1% in 2007, 25.1 % in 2008, 26.5% in 2009, 20.5% in 2010, 34.2% 2011, 35.2% in 2012 and 36.6% in 2013. Age range 21-24 recorded 24.1% in 2007, 35.9% in 2008, 27% in 2009, 22.7% 2010, 27.9% in 2011, 13.5% in 2012 and 30.5% in 2014. The students whose ages fell within the 25 and above range were 10.1% in 2007, 10.8% in 2008, 7.9% in 2009, 10.9% in 2010, 10% in 2011, 7.3% in 2012 and 5.2 in 2013, recording a lower percentage of students.

Age	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
13-16	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
17-20	60	32.1	49	25.1	50	26.5	38	20.5	65	34.2	68	35.2	70	36.6
21-24	63	33.7	55	28.2	73	38.6	85	45.9	53	27.9	85	44.	53	27.7
25 and Above	45	24.1	70	35.9	51	27	42	22.7	53	27.9	26	13.5	58	30.5
Total	187	100	195	100	189	100	185	100	190	100	193	100	191	100

Table 2: Age Of Respondents

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Edu. Level	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
Vocational	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
SHS	37	19.8	65	33.3	55	29.1	48	25.9	46	24.2	52	26.9	62	32.5
Technical	53	28.3	52	26.7	47	25	54	29.2	38	20	39	20.2	40	20.9
Commercial	66	35.3	51	26.2	58	30.7	62	33.5	69	36.3	53	27.5	67	35.1
Total	41	21.9	27	13.8	27	14.3	21	11.4	37	19.5	49	25.4	22	11.5
Total	187	100	195	100	189	100	185	100	190	100	193	100	191	100

Table 3: Educational Background Of Respondent

The educational level of the students generally was second cycle with the following above, the percentages of students in the vocational schools were 19.8% in 2007, 33.3% in 2008, 29.1% in 2009, 25.9% in 2010, 24.2% in 2011, 26.9% in 2012 and 32.5% in 2013. The senior high students recorded the following percentages; 28.3% in 2007, 26.7% in 2008, 25% in 2009, 29.2% in 2010, 20% in 2011, 20.2% in 2012 and 20.9% in 2013. The technical students recorded 35.3% in 2007, 26.2% in 2008, 30.7% in 2009, 33.5% in 2010, 36.3% in 2011, 27.5% in 2012 and 35.1% in 2013. Commercial students also recorded 21.9% in 2007, 13.8% in 2008, 14.3% 2009, 11.4% in 2010, 19.5% in 2011, 25.4% in 2012 and 11.4% in 2013.

VOCATIONAL STUDENTS

$$\text{Average percentage of vocational students} = \frac{\text{Total of yearly percentage} \times 100}{7000}$$

$$= \frac{19.8 + 33.3 + 29.1 + 25.9 + 24.2 + 26.9 + 32.5}{700} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{159.2}{700} \times 100$$

$$= 22.74\%$$

Senior High students

$$\text{Average percentage of senior students} = \frac{\text{Total of yearly percentage} \times 100}{7000}$$

$$= \frac{28.3 + 26.7 + 25 + 29.2 + 20 + 20.2 + 20.9}{700} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{170.2}{700} \times 100$$

$$= 24.3\%$$

Technical Students

$$\text{Average percentage of technical students} = \frac{\text{Total of yearly percentage} \times 100}{7000}$$

$$= \frac{35.3 + 26.2 + 30.7 + 33.5 + 36.3 + 27.5 + 35.1}{700} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{224.6}{700} \times 100$$

$$= 32.1\%$$

Commercial Students

$$\text{Average percentage of commercial students} = \frac{\text{Total of yearly percentage} \times 100}{7000}$$

$$= \frac{21.9 + 13.8 + 14.3 + 11.4 + 19.5 + 25.4 + 11.5}{700} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{117.8}{700} \times 100$$

$$= 16.8\%$$

From the above calculations, the highest populations of students involved in this research were technical students, represented by 32.1%, followed by 27.4 of vocational students. The average percentage of senior high students was 24.3%, with a lower population of 16.8% from the commercial schools.

PREFERENCE FOR TVET

	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
Yes	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	29	15.5	37	19	50	26.5	59	31.9	64	33.7	69	35.7	71	37.1
Undecided	14	7.8	11	6.3	12	6.6	10	5.8	11	5.8	10	5.3	10	5.2
Total	11	5.9	11	5.8	13	6.7	18	9.7	15	7.9	21	10.9	20	10.5
Total	187	100	195	100	189	100	185	100	190	100	193	100	191	100

Table 4: Choice For Or Against Tvet

From Table 4 above, the preference for TVET started from 15.5% in 2007 and gradually rose to 37.1% by 2013. Non preference for TVET also started from 78.6% and steadily went down to 52.4% by the year 2013. The

percentage of students who were undecided with their choice started from 5.9% up to the highest of 10.5%.

The level of attitudinal change towards TVET over the years under review is indicated from Figure 1 below. As the preference to TVET grew from 15.5%, in 2007, 19% in 2008, 26.5% in 2009, 31.9% in 2010, 33.7% in 2011, 35.7% in 2012 up to 37.1% in 2013 non-preference for TVET also declined from 78.6% in 2007, 72.3% in 2008, 66.8% in 2009, 58.4% in 2010, 58.4% 2011, 53.4% in 2012 to 52.4% in 2013.

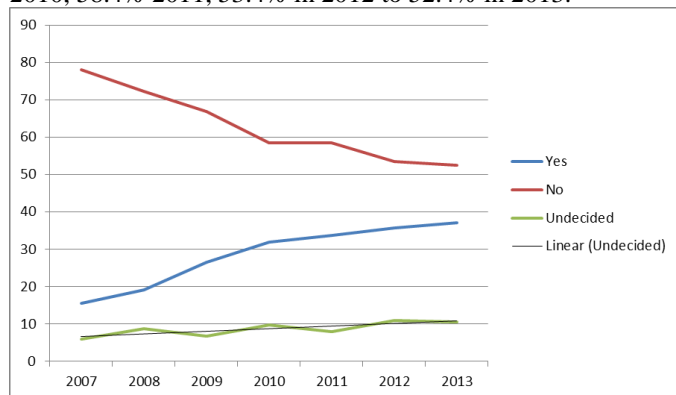


Figure 1: Choice For Tvet

REASONS FOR CHOICES

From Table 5 below, the reasons cited for non preference for TVET is categorized into three: choice one, being preferred course not at TVET institutions recorded 15.6% in 2007, 22% in 2008, 7.1% in 2009, 13.9% in 2010, 15.3% in 2011, 8.7% in 2012 and 19% in 2013. The second reason, inadequate information about prospects at TVET, recorded 9.5% in 2007, 14.2% in 2008, 4% in 2009, 8.3% in 2010, 10.8% in 2011, 14.6% in 2012 and 24% in 2013. These first two choices recorded marginal percentages while the third choice recorded the highest percentages as follows: 75.2% in 2007, 63.8% in 2008, 88.9% in 2009, 77.8% in 2010, 73.9% in 2011, 76.7% in 2012 and 57% in 2013.

The third, that they had better grades to pursue academic base course also recorded 75.2%, in 2007, 63.8% in 2008, 88.9% in 2009, 77.8% in 2010, 73.9% in 2011, 76.7% in 2012 57% in 2013. The third group's recording a huge percentage as compared to the first two, indicating the mind set of the students towards TVET.

	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%
Preferred course not at TVET institution	23	15.6	31	22	9	7.1	15	13.9	17	15.3	9	8.7	19	19
Inadequate information about prospect at TVET	14	9.5	20	14.2	5	4	9	8.3	12	10.8	15	14.6	24	24
Better grades to pursue academic based course	110	75.2	90	63.8	112	88.9	84	77.8	82	73.9	79	76.7	57	57
Total	147	100	141	100	126	100	108	100	111	100	103	100	100	100

Table 5: Reasons For Not Choosing Tvet

	Year													
	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%	Fr eq.	%
Only place to find preferred course	9	31	13	35.1	21	42	24	40.7	19	29.7	21	30.4	11	15.5
Possibility to secure a profession/job after school	11	37.9	16	43.2	16	32	27	45.8	36	56.3	38	55.1	49	69
Inability to secure academic based course	9	31.1	6	21.7	13	26	8	13.5	9	14	10	14.5	11	15.5
Total	29	100	37	100	50	100	59	100	64	100	69	100	71	100

Table 6: Reasons For Choosing Tvet

From Table 6 above, the reasons cited for non preference for TVET is categorized into three; Only place to find preferred course, Possibility to secure a profession/job after school and Inability to secure academic based course. The first group recorded 31% in 2007, 35.1% in 2008, 42% in 2009, 40.7% in 2010, 29.7% in 2011, 30.4% in 2012 and 15.5% in 2013. The second group 37.9% in 2007, 43.2% in 2008, 32% in 2009, 45.8% in 2010, 56.3% in 2011, 55.1% in 2012 and 69% in 2013. The third group recorded 31.1% in 2007, 21.7% in 2008, 26% in 2009, 13.5% in 2010, 14% in 2011, 14.5% and 15.5% in 2013.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The research sought to find the level of attitudinal change towards TVET among students of second cycle institutions. At the onset of the research, the level of interest was 15.5% in 2007 but improved up to 37.1% in 2013. It was therefore evident that the level of attitudinal change in TVET had improved over the period, although much work needs to be done to improve the situation drastically.

Among the reasons cited for or against the choice of TVET indicated that more efforts need to be done to improve the image of TVET in the minds of people to go a long way to change their attitudes towards it.

The researchers recommend the following as means to help improve upon the low level of attitudinal change towards TVET.

- ✓ Institutions offering TVET should attach to their entry requirement booklets the various job opportunities/ professions that may be available for prospective students in each course advertised.
- ✓ The TVET institutions should also try to widen their course areas and component to capture essential aspects of manpower needs of today.
- ✓ Sensitization programmes in the form of document can also be mount for second cycle institutions and the general public as well on television, radio, internet etc.

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