



TVET in the City:

A Synthesis of Program Development Processes from India and the Philippines

TUL 555

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Introduction

The processes involved in the formation of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centers are extremely varied and differ from those of more structured and widely accepted formal educational institutions. Although governments are increasingly recognizing the need for formal vocational training integrated into public education, the institutions our group members studied this semester were all run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This paper seeks to explore the strategies and processes of NGOs in India and the Philippines as they aim to train up a new generation of skilled workers from among the urban poor.

In order to synthesize our observations, we created case studies of our respective organizations. Along with these studies, we conducted a brief review of local literature on TVET and extracted six core components of the formation process: initiation, legalization, recruitment, development, financing and evaluating/expanding.

These components are not necessarily chronological steps. In fact, as is evident in the double-edged nature of the latter component (evaluating/expanding), we found that non-governmental TVET programs respond

relatively fluidly to the needs of their environments. These responses to community needs or dreams generally come from a small team or individual who shapes that response to the point that it can take legal form. Some programs are designed specifically for one social group, while others are open to a broader spectrum of students. Although these programs are adaptive according to the characteristics of the community, felt needs, cultural nuances and market trends, they require clear strategies to ensure their relevance and sustainability.



Figure 1. Core components for TVET formation.



Initiate

Organizing/Recognizing Need & Response

There is always an inspiration, an impetus, a need to begin a Technical Vocational Education and Training (VET) program. This inspiration may come from observing local need, or from understanding large-scale development goals and seeking a solution at home. Oftentimes, the beginnings are humble and small. Whether using a small room for free for four year as in the case of Ankur Kala in Kolkata, or training Tibetan women in one's own living room, like JOYN, vocational training, especially among the poor, can have humble beginnings.

Across India and the Philippines, reasons for training include decreasing a high unemployment rate, connecting workers to markets, and a way to combat the ostracism and violence that results from pov-

erty. According to the World Bank, the Philippines can combat its high levels of unemployment by developing employable skills through VET. (World Bank 2010, p. 117) In Manila, a 2012 community survey in Banaba indicated high student drop-out rates from standard education. This trend informed Banaba House Ministries' decision to implement an Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the community.

In the case of JOYN, the Murray family saw the need for employment opportunities in Rajpur, a vision that has since expanded to Delhi. Since many of India's unemployed poor have not completed primary schooling, they are not qualified for government sponsored VET programs. (Mitra 2002, p. 4) Considering this, JOYN decided to provide the poor, even the uneducated, with practical skills and a market to apply them to. For Ankur Kala, the seedling came in the form of 23-year-old An-

“According to the World Bank, the Philippines can combat its high levels of unemployment by developing employable skills through VET.”

nie Joseph being asked to start a vocational training center for poor girls facing marginalization and violence. From this, Joseph developed a vision for the center. It became ashram-like, communal, spiritual and open to all religions in an effort to cultivate a positive environment for the trainees. In each of these situations, the response – vocational training – came out of these particular situations, from communities’ strengths, needs, desires, and dreams.

Sources:

World Bank. (2010) Philippines Skills Report: Skills for the Labor Market in the Philippines. Human Development Department East Asia and Pacific Region. World Bank.





Legalize

Being able to offer official recognition to students for completing a VET program is an important element of VET school development. Having some type of certification is important for providing proof of a student's training or skills competency to potential employers. A VET program should have a qualifications system that fits local and national requirements for the field.

Each country has its own process and standards for certification and licensing. The European Union (EU) uses a system of "qualifications" which provides a set of standards that are validated by both the government and the respective industry. Qualifications are multidimensional, covering technical knowledge and skills as well as social and personal qualities that contribute to a person's ability to perform the require-

ments of an occupation. The EU has attempted to harmonize each European country's qualifications into a transnational framework for VET standards (Hoffman, 2011).

Although each nation has a different framework for certifying VET students, there are some common organizational elements when it comes to certification, whether internally, externally, or both. According to Hoffman, the most successful VET systems in Europe follow three basic steps in place to determine a trainee's learning outcomes and qualifications:

- o **Assessment:** A process used to evaluate a student's knowledge, skills, and competencies

- o **Validation:** The student's assessment is weighed against a public, tested standard. Multiple stakeholders determine whether or not the student meets the appropriate learning



outcomes.

o **Recognition:** A recognized awarding or regulatory body officially establishes a student's learning achievement and his or her qualification to enter the labor market. (Hoffman, 2011, p. 38)

Along with being able to offer certification to students, it is important for a VET program to be legally registered in order to be transparent and accountable for the way it runs its operations. Legal registration provides them with a sense of credibility, which can assist them when they are applying for government funding initiatives or trying to build partnerships in certain industries. Ankur Kala, an NGO that provides vocational training in Kol-

kata, is registered under the West Bengal Society Act of 1961. As such, it is accountable to both the state and federal government. It is not required that a vocational training center such as Ankur Kala be registered as a school, as the education is non-formal in nature. Societal registration requires annual audits and meeting minutes to be submitted to the government. The government does not conduct evaluations of organizations, so Ankur Kala conducts these internally at the Annual General Meetings which are attended by all staff. The organization practices participatory decision-making which requires constant communication between staff.

The organization received



Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) accreditation early in its history. Today, FCRA accreditation is difficult to receive due to restrictions requiring proof of promised foreign donor funds along with application. Permission is then given for an initial donation of that specified amount to be received from abroad, after which the process may move forwards. Ankur Kala also possesses Income Tax Exemption within for Indian funds, for which only a Registration of Society is required.

In the Philippines, ALS service providers need to be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or accredited by Local Government Units (LGUs) as an education service provider and with at least 100,000 pesos as savings in the bank or its equivalent in assets. They must have official business address in the province/city where the educational service will be provided certified by the Barangay Chairman. They must have good track record in advocacy and social mobilization, community organizing and development. They must put up 20% equity (20,000 pesos equivalent) in terms of space, furniture, staff and time and must have at least one technical staff dedicated to the operation of the educational program under the contract.

It is essential for a VET center to have a sustainable funding source

that will allow the school to offer relevant training equipment and instruction. For privately-funded programs, such as those run by NGOs, one of the best ways to receive adequate funding is to develop a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). This allows a private VET school to apply for government schemes that will supplement educational costs. It may also provide a training program with a government certification, which can be beneficial to graduates who are seeking employment.

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However, in order to qualify for these schemes and receive certification, training courses must be up to the proper national standards. Many certification programs in India require that trainees come in with a minimum educational level of eighth standard. Because many VET candidates have not received more than basic primary education, it is often important for NGOs setting up a training program to include basic literacy and numeracy courses along with “hard skills” training (Sanghi et al, 2012). These prerequisites to skills training have been one of many obstacles that NGOs with VET programs have had to tackle.

Source:
Hoffman, N. (2011). *Schooling in the workplace*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Sanghi et al. (2012). *Preparing a globally competitive skilled workforce for Indian economy: Emerging trends and challenges*. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 37(3), 87-128.



Recruit

TVET programs require recruitment at two levels, teacher and student recruitment. Recruitment of TVET teachers is often limited to low-trained instructors which affects the quality of TVET programs. A 2014 report conducted by the Asian Development Bank on the strategies of TVETs noted that there is a shortage of qualified instructors in vocational programs. “Reportedly many instructors and teachers have qualifications at the same level, or only marginally above, at which they teach” (Asian Development Bank, 2014). A report published by Deputy Director of Education in India indicates that a same issue exists in Indian TVET programs as it is difficult to attract quality teachers into the TVET programs. (Goel, n.d.) At the recent UPI International Conference on TVET in Bandung, Indonesia they focused on approaches of TVET teacher recruitment

and preparation. The gathering produced various training modules and courses designed to equip under-qualified teachers to teach TVET courses.

Student

In formal education student recruitment is done in the school setting where vocational training programs engage with students and market their program. Hoffman speaks of student recruitment as a crucial part of vocational training programs as it determines the quality and make-up of the program. In the case studies Hoffman provides, recruitment is conducted through recruitment campaigns which rely heavily on media marketing. In the Philippines, specifically, recruitment is done through a series of school events like career orientation week, campus recruitment, job and career fairs, and career centers. (Santamaria, et. al. 2003).

However among the urban

poor vocational training programs are marketed differently because potential students are found outside the formal classroom. In Ankur Kala, Kolkata women from impoverished and violent backgrounds find out about the program through word of mouth. There is an initial interview where the program staff visit their home to ensure the potential student is really in need, and to discuss the prospect of study with their family. In Manila, ALS staff conduct house to house visits to ask community members if they are interested in the ALS program and to promote the benefits of the program. Word of mouth is the best way that students hear about the ALS program and are encouraged to join. There is an initial orientation at the start of each ALS academic year to further promote ALS and describe the many advantages and opportunities available to students after completion of the program.

A report about guidance and counseling services in developing countries suggests that NGO's and grassroots organizations are the ones reaching the most unemployed adults and out-of-school youth from the poorest sections of communities" because they are the ones reaching them (Santamaria, et. al. 2003). These NGOs and organizations are able to cater to specific needs as they are the most connected to their communities.

Sources: Asian Development Bank (2014). *Innovative Strategies in Technical and Vocational Education and Training: for Accelerated Human Resource Development in South Asia*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank and Australian Aid.

Goel, V. P. (n.d). *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) System/ In India for Sustainable Development*

Hoffman, N. (2011). *Schooling in the Workplace: How Six of the World's Best Vocational Education Systems Prepare Young People for Jobs and Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.





Develop

Curriculum and Process Development

In most vocational education programs, the curriculum consists of learning by doing, as the primary coursework is the development of skills in preparation for a specific job. Hoffman (2011) advocates for workplace learning because it helps “give participants a leg up in applying for jobs, [and] there is strong evidence that such experiences help young people get a stronger start on adulthood and make it more transparent why certain skills, competencies, and knowledge are worth mastering” (Kindle Locations 196-198). At JOYN in Delhi, India, trainees learn through an apprenticeship and their skills (i.e. stitching, block printing, and garment design and construction) are developed and refined as they continue working at the organization. It’s sensible that

JOYN is aware of market trends so as to develop their skills training to ensure the utmost success for the organization and its workers.

At Ankur Kala in Kolkata, India, vocational learners learn cooking and tailoring skills. The trainees, who are women, have somewhat flexible schedules at Ankur Kala due to the opposing beliefs of their families that women work outside the home. In the 3-year program at Ankur Kala, the trainees can come part time and also receive a small stipend; this training includes group classes and on-the-job training that is common to most vocational programs. After graduating from the Ankur Kala training program, the trainee can join production full time and also has the opportunity to go from learner to teacher, as 80% of the trainers are former trainees. Ankur Kala’s model of trainees becoming teachers is effective, as it empowers graduates of the training program while also al-



lowing the former trainees to encourage their fellow peers to persist in their vocational learning.

One challenge that Mitra (2002) raises is the need to have a certain level of education before entering the formal route to skills training in India. Mitra argues that formal vocational education does not cater to the poorest of the poor because of the prior education required (2002). Mitra (2002) reasons that NGOs must address this issue by tailoring their vocational training to accommodate the illiterate and uneducated. The Philippines' Alternative Learning System addresses this issue of basic education before vocational schooling as the ALS curriculum is intended to prepare the individual for vocational schooling or another field of study in college education. ALS curriculum consists of Department of Education-approved course modules that cover subjects such as math (problem-solving and critical thinking skills), English and Filipino (communication skills), and history & culture (development of self and a sense of community). These core subjects in the ALS curriculum are very valuable as they help prepare program graduates for a variety of careers (Hoffman, 2011).

Another issue that has been noted is the lack of cultural appropriateness in Indian soft skills training materials, as they are often Western in thought

(Mahendra, 2013). Mahendra (2013) suggests the incorporation of Bollywood films and mythological texts into training materials to affirm the culture of Indian learners and help them learn culturally relevant communication and conflict resolution skills. Developing interpersonal skills in a culturally appropriate manner is highly valuable in preparing individuals not just for vocation-specific livelihoods, but also for other formal and informal sectors of the workforce. It's significant to understand that the culture of most developing nations differs greatly from those of Western

Developing interpersonal skills in a culturally appropriate manner is highly valuable in preparing individuals..."

nations and curriculum and training materials should be developed accordingly. What is successful in one context may not necessarily be appropriate in a different one.

Sources:

Hoffman, N. (2011). *Schooling in the workplace: How six of the world's best vocational education systems prepare young people for jobs and life*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Education Press.

Mahendra, A. (2013). Soft Skills Training in the Indian Context: Need to Prevent Cultural Hegemony. *The UIP Journal of Soft Skills*, 7(3), 46–50.

Mitra, A. (2002). Training and skill formation for decent work in the informal sector: Case studies from Southern India. Pp. 1-48.



Finance

Whether it is a business or an NGO the need to properly administer finances is key in to the life and potential growth of any organization which directly impact the people it trains and employs. The CEO/COO along with the key administrators of any TVET organization must develop, understand, and monitor expenditures on a monthly or a quarterly basis so that programs can remain fiscally viable. According to Hilde Reno, "A major reason for small business closings is failure to adequately monitor income and expenses" (Reno, 2008, p. 169). For this reason there needs to be a specific structure on how money flows in and out of the organization. Whether funds are donated or are profit, administrators and managers need to know the flow of finances so necessary expenditures are made and money is not wasted.

One suggestion is for the entire staff to have a basic understanding of the costs of running the program

and how funds are allocated. Program administrators must inform those who have been authorized to make purchases about the format for acquiring purchase approvals and the spending limits on each budget line item (Reno, 2008).

With internal structures in place, the focus on funding will require a substantial amount of time and effort from the CEO/Founder of any NGO. It is important to acknowledge the level of determination CEO's have in order to fund the mission of the organization. For example Ankur Kala, in Kolkata started with initial 900 rupee loan from an NGO. Now it is funded mainly through donations, sales from production of goods and is presently working on gaining grant funding. These progressions are birthed through key relationships that the CEO/Founder is willing to nurture and develop in an effort to diversify the funding streams.

Below are various funding stream descriptions that can benefit TVET initiatives:



Government Funding

Local Business Partnerships



Business Ventures

Private Grants



Private Donors

Government Funding: Acquiring government will require specific paperwork depending on each country. Once this stream of funding is secured, it will be offset any additional income and be made available for other project and program. In Nagpur, CNI-SSI, a local TVET school has secured government funding for 7 of its 27 vocational courses. Through this funding CNI-SSI is able to provide state certified courses, legitimate certificate of completion for all its students, and build a positive relationship with the local government.

Local Company Partnership: Partnering with local businesses to pay a VET student a “training wage” would be one way that would support the funding of VET programs. This would be one of various incen-

tives for local businesses to invest on the front end in training rather than waiting to hire and train. With a “training wage” it won’t lose money but gain money and an skilled worker (Hoffman, 2011).

Business Ventures: Business run differently than NGO’s in that they look to make a profit through the production of a product. Some businesses seek to develop youth and people in low levels of poverty and embrace an “on the job” training, much like VET. For example, JOYN, in Delhi is a business that makes profit from their products (bags, scarves, and assorted block printed textile goods). Although this model has worked for them they are looking to diversify so they have created an NGO, Joy-Corps, to help fund training and projects.

Private Grants and Donors: This funding stream is usually how many NGO’s, TVET’s working in slum areas start. There are some donors that are willing to invest initial seed funding in order to start work among the poor. For example, ALS in Manila, Philippines presently does not have any government funding for their government sponsored courses. So their main line of income are donors that give through BHM (Banaba House Ministries). These specific donors and foundations are key in developing a strong funding base and structure for bigger and more intricate funding streams.

Sources:

Hoffman, N. (2011). *Schooling in the workplace: How six of the world's best vocational education systems prepare young people for jobs and life*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Education Press.

Reno, H. (2008). *Handbook for Early Childhood Administrators*. Pearson Education, Inc.



Evaluation & Expansion

From the Indian perspective, Mitra suggests that non-governmental TVET programs for the informal sector should aim for “training for empowerment” (2002:26). This holistic approach is geared towards the market, constantly re-evaluating trends, technologies and processes, but is holistic in approach. Following this trend toward holism, the Indian Government recently initiated a one-year multi-skilling training course at select Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) (Sanghi et al, 2012). These institutes were upgraded to “Centres of Excellence” (CoEs), which are intended to increase flexibility and market-oriented curriculum revision. Institute Management Committees (a public-private cooperation) work with the ITIs to determine skill relevance in the current market.

In the Philippines, skills-based education has recently seen a decrease in government involvement and an increase in private sector involvement, according to Peano et al (2008). Still, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is seen to positively affect the employability of the poor and those who have dropped out of school early in their careers. Indeed, all of the vocational centers studied by our group are run by non-governmental organizations. NGOs, although registered and evaluated to some extent by local or central governments, have flexibility in adapting their programs according to the felt needs of their communities. These adaptations happen not only to increase marketability of vocational skills, but to address other social needs and extend the impact of the organization to other communities.

There are several examples of such institutional and curricular

revisions in the urban institutions we studied. In Nagpur, India, the Church of North India's Social Service Institute (CNI-ISSI) has progressed in the urban setting from a government-recognized vocational training center to incorporating community organizing and a women's empowerment federation. Based on feedback from Nagpur's rural surroundings, CNI-SSI started a Farmer Development Initiative, among other things. Further north, [JOYN] in the hills of Dehradun opened a location in India's capital last year. This is an adjustment for the organization as expenses are higher due to office rental fees and need for increased employee wages. Ankur Kala in Kolkata, West Bengal, moved its entire operation to the city center after spending four years in a small room in a slum across the river from Kolkata.

“NGOs, although registered and evaluated to some extent by local or central governments, have flexibility in adapting their programs according to the felt needs of their communities.”

The organization began by training a small group of women in traditional textile production, and has expanded to include social empowerment programs, local and international product sales, rural training programs and external trainings for



other NGOs and businesses. In San Mateo, Philippines, Bana-ba House Ministries (BHM) is a local service provider of the federal Department of Education's Alternative Learning System (ALS). Through mock tests and high school equivalency exams, ALS measures the success of the programs. The BHM site is relatively new; leadership has plans to improve the program through an increased budget by supplementing course work such programs as extracurricular tutoring sessions. They also hope to increase student enrollment.

Source:

Peano, et al. (2008). Investment in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Philippines. UNESCO, 19-134.

Mitra, A. (2002). Training and skill formation for decent work in the informal sector: Case studies from Southern India. Pp. 1-48.

Sanghi, et al. (2012). Preparing a globally competitive skilled workforce for Indian economy: Emerging trends and challenges. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 37(3), 87-128.