

# Preparatory School Students' Perception toward TVET and its Contribution to Socio- Economic Status: The Case of Selected Districts in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to assess the general perception about TVET, and its contribution to socio-economic status in preparatory school students of Amhara Regional State. To attain this objective descriptive survey research method was employed. The subjects of the study were 226 preparatory school students of five selected districts. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the target schools, while simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the sample preparatory students. To gather the necessary data questionnaires and interview were used; the gathered information was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative method of data analysis. The liner regression was used to determine if there are significant relationship between the perception and contribution to socio economic status. The results of the study shows that there was significant relationship between perception and contribution of socio economic status of TVET, they believed that TVET have strong contribution to society's economic status. However, the relative average mean score shows that there was positive perception from preparatory students and respondent also strongly agreed to contribution of TVET to socio economic status. Evidence shows that positive perceptions about TVET have a great contribution to society's socio economic status. However, the provision of the program should reach everywhere there was preparatory schools in the region and providing training which plays role in the contribution of socioeconomic status of the societies. Thus, based on finding of the study, recommendations are forwarded to mitigate the aforementioned problem.

**Keywords:** preparatory school, Student perception, Technical Vocational Education training/TVET/ and Socio-economic Status

## INTRODUCTION

Education and training being at the center of the Ethiopian government policy, and its main objective focusing on poverty eradication and improving the livelihood of the people, where these in turn requires an adjustment as an additional engine of growth [9]. By improving the capacity and productivity of society, education and training helps in ensuring food security and reducing poverty [7]. In other words, acquiring knowledge and skill is the most potent factor that significantly changes the life of people and empowering them to contribute to societal development. In this regard technical vocational education and training (TVET) sector is one of the major parts of education and training that play crucial role for human being. TVET thus, serves as an overarching term to describe all kind of formal, non-formal and informal training and learning provided by or in all different institutions.

In fact many African governments view it as a poverty reduction strategy by identifying the two major objectives: (1). as the urgent need to train the work-force for self-employment, and (2). the necessity to raise the productivity of the informal sector [8]. In the

country of sub-Saharan Africa in particular government renewing effort to promote TVET, thus plays an orientation role toward the world of work and its curriculum emphasis on the acquisition of such employment skill which are fundamental for driving the industrial and economic growth, and it is key building, this type of technical and entrepreneurial force which country need to create wealth and emerge out of poverty, [12]. Therefore, TVET is a means through which training need of individuals or groups from different socio-economic and academic background are responded to prepare them for self-employment and sustainable livelihood ,so that the youth, the poor, and vulnerable society can benefit from TVET, [8]. The government of Ethiopia has identified eight priority sectors for TVET which includes :- (1)agriculture ,(2) industry,( 3) economic, (4)education, (5)public health, (6)culture, sport and tourism ( 7)triad, mining and extractive, (8) Labor affairs and social service. The Ethiopian development strategy is agriculture development-led industry (MOE, 2007).

Future efforts to satisfy the demand of the industrial sector will, therefore, not only satisfy the

demand of the industry but also pave the way to citizen for better employment opportunity and thereby reduce poverty. The TVET system also will continue to serve a potential instrument for technology transfer through the development of occupation standard, accreditation of competent occupational assessment and accreditation establishment and strength of the curriculum development system (MOE, 2010). Therefore, TVET afford an individual the chance to acquire practical knowledge and requests skill training need in the job market or immediate self-employed. In addition [12] states that, the technical skill we need to develop as a country run by TVET institution across the country.

While many factors influence a students' decision to pursue a vocational training program, provision of vocational training institution is one the factors that plays an influential role in students' decision to enroll in these program. Parents as well as school counselors with their personal views can also influence a students' decision in joining TVET. Unfortunately, many have negative view that TVET as being a suitable education path for low academic achievers and school dropouts wants to go directly into the work force (Alave, 2011). According to Alave, TVET is often considered suitable for high risk youths, and not having challenges curriculum as compared to the mainstream academic path in which most bright students' choose to being. These negative perceptions can impact students' decision whether or not to pursue TVET and this will impact a regional agenda on human resource development.

In general, understanding the labor trend of specific are a or country apparently plays important role in alleviating problem of unemployment and underemployment that are direct cause of poverty among people, and in some cases of conflict as well, [2]. Despite, its contribution for preparing middle level professionals in various technical areas, as in many developing countries TVET is being given insignificant attention and low status from the public of Ethiopia [2]. According to the Regional Education Bureau (REB) of Amhara in the year 2015, the number of students i.e. total of 233 students have joined TVET at the selected five district and the rest remained being dependent on their family instead of creating entrepreneurial self-employment and create opportunity for other employment. Due to the perception that university education guarantee lifelong secure career, the changing nature of job market characterized by frequent changes job thereby requiring further education and training and the desire to advance in current employment and create prospect for future careers. To meet this demand, TVET institutions have increased in number and training possibly expanded.

The study was guided by the following basic research questions:

1. What is the perception of preparatory school students toward TVET?
2. What is the perception of students toward contributions of TVET to socio economic status?
3. What is the relationship between students' perception toward TVET and its contribution to socioeconomic status?

The main purpose of this study was to look into the perception of preparatory school students toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status in Amhara Region. In addition to this the researcher is trying to check the relationship between perceptions in general and contribution of TVET to socio-economic status. Accordingly, this study focused on the following specific objectives that to explore the perception of preparatory school students toward TVET, assess the perception of students toward contributions of TVET to socio-economic status and to identify the relationship between students' perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of the study was to investigate students' perception toward TVET, and its contribution to socio-economic status in preparatory schools of Amhara Region. To realize this descriptive research design was employed. This method was selected because it was helpful to show situation as they currently exists, this means the study determines and describes the way things are. Moreover, it was economical and easy to describe the current situation quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

A mixed method research design was a procedure for collecting data, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative method in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem. Therefore, quantitative data to make it easier for interpretation, the average mean value of data further from the respondent were categorized and interpreted relatively. As the first step of study was to collect data that examine student's perception toward TVET and its contribution to socioeconomic status, then, data were discussed and interpreted based on the result of study, conclusions and recommendations were provided.

## Sources of Data

Grade 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> students of preparatory schools in 2015 academic year were taken as a source of data for the study.

## Population, Samples and Sampling Technique

The target populations of the study were all government preparatory schools in Amhara region. Due

to time constraint, cost and proximity to research work and access to transport to collect data sufficiently, the researcher decided to select these five sample schools purposely. Simple random sampling was used to select

students from Grade 11 & 12 of each preparatory school. According to regional education bureau of Amhara 2015, the students' enrollments of these five schools were:-

**Table- 1: Target Population and Sample Size**

Preparatory schools	Population	Sample
woreta	247	50
Adet	518	50
Debark	241	50
Merawi	309	50
Dabat	369	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1684</b>	<b>250</b>

Source: REB of Amhara, 2015

As it was shown in table-1, the researcher randomly selected males =150 and females=100 from the total population of the five selected schools. Then, thirty (30) males and twenty (20) females were randomly selected from each secondary school. After determining the population sample from each secondary school, the next task were defining the total number of participants from each grade. Basically, fifteen (15) males and ten (10) females' respondents were selected randomly from grade 11 and 12 of each selected schools.

#### Data Gathering Instruments and Procedures

The instruments used in this study were questionnaire and interview. The purpose of questionnaire was to investigate the perception of preparatory school students toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status. To obtain quality

and proper data questionnaire was administered to 240 students in the sample preparatory schools. However, 24 items of the questionnaires have not been returned. That means the response rate was 90%. The questionnaire were constructed with close-ended written in the form of Likert- scale having five scales 5= strong agree, 4=agree, 3= undecided 2=disagree, 1= strong disagree.

The second instrument used to collect the data was interview to get detailed information regarding the preparatory school students' general perception and socio-economic status contribution, and it was administered to 10 selected students from the sample schools that were not participated in filling of questionnaire to come with new ideas. The researcher used the technique of semi-structure interview because it's more economical and safe for generalization.

**Table- 2 : Reliability of the study**

Number of items	Alpha
26	0.85

The preparatory students' perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status scales viewed by students' (N=20)

After this pilot test was done and some misconception of ideas related to the items in questionnaire were corrected.

#### Data Analysis Techniques

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative analytical procedures were applied. Data gathered through the close ended questionnaire of five (5) degree agreement were analyzed using descriptive mean and standard deviation, correlation coefficient and liner regression used to predict the relationship between two variables. According to [5], correlation coefficient is used to check the relation between two variables.

The interview responses were transcribe and systematically analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis. This approach aligns with known qualitative research methodology (Cooper and Schinder, 2003; Babou and Okiigwe, 2011; Saunder, Lew and Thornhill, 2012) cited in (Akhueomonkan & Raimi, 2014).

Hence, the researcher validated the data collected through interview by employing member checking validation procedure to maintain the accuracy of the findings of the study. Member checking is a process in which the researcher asks one more participant in the study to check the accuracy of the interpretation.

This checking involved taking the findings back to respondents and asking them (in written or in an interview) about the precision of the report.

Regarding the grade level from the total respondents 117 were grade 12 students and the rest 109 were from grade 11 students, this indicates the target group were almost provided equal participation in filling the data and express their opinions about the

perception of TVET, and its contribution to socio-economic status. In general, 216 and 10 student respondents have been participated by filling the questionnaire and interview respectively.

## RESULTS

**Table- 3: Preparatory school students' general perceptions toward TVET**

Items	Frequency						Mean	Std.D
	N	SD	D	Un	A	SA		
TVET is design for students who can't effectively cope with the rigor of conventional education system	216	82 (38%)	100 (46.3%)	32 (14.8%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.9%)	1.80	<b>.756</b>
Brilliant students should not take up with TVET programs	216	99 (45.8%)	83 (38.4%)	32 (14.8%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	1.71	<b>.766</b>
TVET is perceive as an inferior education design for student from poor families	216	77 (35.6%)	91 (42.1%)	44 (26.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.9%)	1.90	<b>.849</b>
Building the competence and commitment needed for future oriented thinking is task of TVET	216	13 (6%)	17 (7.9%)	39 (18.1%)	79 (34%)	72 (33%)	3.81	<b>1.159</b>
Unlike the conventional education TVET has the prospect of stimulating technology progress for national development	216	16 (7.4%)	13 (6.0%)	29 (13.4%)	79 (33.3%)	86 (39.8)	3.92	<b>1.259</b>
Young candidate have been joining TVET with low self-efficacy	216	71 (32.9%)	112 (51.9%)	31 (14.4%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5)	1.81	<b>1.200</b>
Young candidate graduate from TVET with low self-efficacy	216	62 (28.7%)	112 (51.9%)	40 (18.5)	1 (0.5)	1 (0.5)	1.92	<b>.727</b>
TVET graduate will have little	216	82 (38%)	92 (42%)	35 (16.25)	2 (0.9%)	5 (2.5%)	1.84	<b>.880</b>
sional r respect if his or he earning	216	20 (9.3%)	17 (7.9%)	29 (13.4%)	69 (31.5%)	81 (37.5%)	3.81	<b>1.278</b>
Self-employment is better than careers under government sector	216	14 (6.5%)	15 (6.9%)	32 (14.8%)	68 (31.5%)	94 (40.3%)	3.97	<b>1.188</b>
I spire to be self-employed	216	16 (7.5)	12 (5.6%)	29 (13.6%)	63 (29.4%)	94 (46.3%)	3.97	<b>1.216</b>
Being dependent on family is a time wastage	216	16 (7.5)	12 (5.6%)	29 (13.6%)	63 (29.4%)	94 (46.3%)	3.97	<b>1.216</b>
TVET system was characterized by existence								

<b>of training program that lack relevance to the world work.</b>	216	79 (36.6%)	108 (56%)	25 (11.6%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.9%)	1.81	<b>.783</b>
<b>Subject skill alone is no longer sufficient for a new graduate in meeting employer requirements.</b>	216	19 (8.8%)	31 (14.4%)	54 (29.6%)	70 (28.7%)	41 (18.5%)	3.38	<b>1.90</b>
<b>The absent of entrepreneurial training in the school curriculum create poor perception about TVET</b>	216	17 (7.9%)	18 (8.3%)	31 (14.4%)	74 (34.3%)	76 (35.2%)	3.81	<b>1.227</b>
<b>Most TVET graduate students get relevance employment.</b>	216	27 (12.5%)	33 (15.3%)	61 (28.2%)	47 (21.8%)	48 (22.2%)	3.38	<b>1.341</b>

The above table presents the general perception of respondents about TVET. This table contains two groups of items. There were seven statements referred to negative and eight statement referred to positive, the items referred in negative were reversed during scoring.

The mean score of 1.8 in item TVET is design for students who cannot effectively cope with the rigor of conventional education system indicate that 46% of the respondent were disagreed. In the same category of item students were asked that brilliant students should not take up TVET program, the mean score 1.71 indicate that 45.8% were strongly disagreed. The mean score of 1.90 in item that TVET is perceived as an inferior education design for students from poor families indicate that 42% of the respondents were disagreed.

Students were then asked to point out their view in regard to item building the competence and commitment needed for future oriented thinking is the task of TVET, the mean score 1.90 indicate that 33% of the respondents were agreed. Similarly, the mean score of 3.92 in the item TVET has the prospect of stimulating technology process for national development indicates that 39.8% of the respondents were agreed. The mean score of 1.81 in the item young candidates have joining TVET with low self-efficacies indicate that 51.9% of the respondents were disagreed. In the same category of the item, young candidate graduate from TVET with low self-efficacy, the mean of 1.92 indicates that 51.9% of the respondents were disagreed.

The mean score of 1.84 in the item TVET graduate will have little professional respect if his or her earning this indicates that 42 % of the respondents were disagreed. In the same category students also asked self-employment is better than careers under

governments sector, the mean score of 3.81 indicates that 31.9% of the respondents were agreed. Similarly, the mean score of 3.97 in the item I aspire to be self-employed shows that 40.3 % of the respondents were strongly agreed. Students were also asked that being dependent on family is a time wastage, the mean score 1.81 indicates that 43.9 % of the respondents were strongly agreed, in the item that TVET system was characterized by existence of training program that lack of relevance to the world of work, the means score of 3.38 indicates that 56% of the respondents were disagreed.

The mean score of 3.81 in the item subject skill is no longer sufficient in meeting employment revealed that 28% of the respondents were agreed. Similarly, the means score of 3.80 in the item the absent of entrepreneurial training in the school curriculum create poor perception toward TVET indicates that 35.2% of the respondent were agreed, then the mean score of 3.38 in the item most TVET graduate students get relevance employment indicates that 28.2 % of the respondents undecided. In addition to support to the above table, the researcher made interview with 10 preparatory school students of the sampled preparatory schools and analyzed qualitatively. Therefore, the overall mean scores showed that preparatory school students have positive perception toward TVET.

#### **Interview Question No: 1. what is your feeling about TVET?**

Finding on Q.1, indicates that a total number of 9 (90%) interviewees provided positive impression about TVET, they note that if you trained well in TVET institution you would become own job creator for self-employed and provided other individuals job opportunity. The remaining 1(10%) interviewee has no idea about TVET, she note that as she has no clear understanding about TVET.

**Table- 4: preparatory school students 'perceptions toward Contribution of TVET to socio -economic status**

Items	N	Frequency					Mean	Std
		SD	D	Un	A	SA		
<b>TVET facilitates economic growth and poverty alleviation by serving as a mechanism to prepare people for occupations.</b>	216	9 (4.2%)	9 (4.2%)	33 (15.3%)	85 (39%)	80 (37%)	4.01	1.034
<b>If well-positioned TVET could become a mechanism for curbing unemployment of graduate in Ethiopia competitive industry.</b>	216	13 (6.0%)	17 (7.8%)	32 (14.8%)	86 (39.8%)	68 (31.5)	3.83	1.138
<b>TVET enhance effective participation in the world of work.</b>	216	20 (9.3%)	9 (4.2%)	30 (14%)	82 (38.1)	74 (34.4%)	3.84	1.210
<b>TVET has a great contribution in making my country middle level economy</b>	216	11 (5.1%)	13 (6.0%)	36 (16.7%)	105 (49.1%)	50 (23.3)	3.79	1.029
<b>The availability of a skill and competence work force is driving engine of growth creation</b>	216	10 (4.6%)	19 (8.8%)	41 (19%)	72 (33.3%)	74 (34.3)	3.84	1.132
<b>TVET can play a key role in societal stability of the country</b>	216	6 (2.8%)	11 (5.1%)	35 (16.2%)	72 (33.3%)	92 (42.6)	4.08	1.020
<b>Self-employment provided individual a sense of higher self-independence and more satisfying lives</b>	216	8 (3.7%)	15 (7.0%)	36 (16.7%)	66 (30.7%)	89 (41.9%)	4.00	1.098
<b>Formal or informal TVET is helpful in preparing student adequately for the world of work and better performance in the industry</b>	216	15 (6.9%)	16 (7.4%)	45 (20.8%)	74 (34.3%)	66 (30.6%)	3.74	1.172
<b>Unemployment is a heavy burden for societal in the term of growth and competitiveness</b>	216	13 (6.0%)	21 (9.7%)	37 (17.1%)	74 (34.3%)	71 (32.9%)	3.78	1.179
<b>The essence of TVET to enhance skills acquisition and promote self-employments</b>	216	9 (4.2%)	9 (4.2%)	33 (15.3%)	87 (41.2)	76 (35.2)	3.99	1.025
<b>TVET driven by market demanded is more effective in enhancing employment and income for disadvantage group.</b>	216	22 (10.2%)	25 (11.%)	40 (17.7%)	61 (27.4%)	67 (29.6%)	3.59	1.309

The above table-4 presented and analysis data regarding preparatory school students' perception toward contribution of TVET to socio - economic status. The data organized in the form of tables were

analyzed based on the responses obtained from preparatory school students. The mean score of 4.01 in the question 'TVET facilitates economic growth and poverty alleviation by serving as mechanism to prepare

people for occupation field, this shows that 39.9% of the respondents were agreed that TVET could facilitate economic growth and alleviate poverty.

As it revealed in the table above, the mean score of 3.84 in question ‘if well positioned TVET could become a mechanism for curbing unemployment of graduate in Ethiopia’ this shows that 31.5% of the respondents were strongly agreed that TVET could shortening unemployment in Ethiopia. In the same category of item students were also asked that ‘TVET enhances effective participation in the world of work’ the medium high score 3.84 manifested that (38.2%) the respondents were agreed.

Students were then asked to point out their view with regard to item ‘TVET has a great contribution in making my country middle level economic’ the mean score of 3.79 shows that 49.1% the respondents were agreed that TVET has a great contribution to economic development. Similarly, the mean score 3.84 of item ‘the availability of skilled and competent workforce were driven engine of growth wealth creation’ this indicates that 34.3% the respondents were strongly agreed that TVET has a driven engine of wealth, growth and creation. Students were also asked to indicate their ‘views about TVET can play a key role in societal stability of the country’ the mean score of 4.08 shows that 42% of the respondents were strongly agreed that TVET could play key role in societal stability of the country.

The mean score of 4.00 in question ‘ self-employment provided individual a sense of higher self-independence and more satisfaction lives’ this shows that 41.9% of the respondent were strongly agreed that self-employment could create self-independence and satisfaction. In the same category item, students were also asked ‘formal or informal TVET was helping in preparing students adequately for the world of work and better performance in the industry’ the mean score 3.74

indicate that 34.3% the respondents were agreed that both programs would prepare students adequately for the world of work and better performance in the industry. Students were also asked that ‘unemployment were a heavy burden for societal in terms of growth and competitiveness’ the mean score of 3.78 indicate that 41.2% of the respondents were agreed that unemployment were a burden for societal growth and competitiveness.

Students were asked to point out their view about the item ‘the essence of TVET to enhance skilled acquisition and promote self-employment’ the medium high mean score of 3.99 shows that 29.6% of the respondents were agreed that TVET enhances skills acquisition and promote self-employment. Similarly, the medium high score of 3.59 in the item ‘TVET driven by market demanded were more effective enhancing employment and income for disadvantage group’ this indicates that the respondent were strongly agreed. In addition to the above questionnaire items students were also interviewed on the contribution of TVET to socio-economic status.

Therefore, the overall mean indicated that preparatory school believed that TVET has a great contribution to socio-economic of the society for this reason public should give attention to TVET program by promoting them in joining this program.

**Interview Question No: 2. Do you think that TVET contributes much to socio- economic status of society?**

The finding arising from Q.2 TVET has contribution to socio- economic status of society indicate that 8 (80%) interviewees have given impression that TVET could contribute to society economic with production, self-employment and technology development. A total number of 2 (20%) interviewees remarked that there was no contribution of TVET to societal socio-economic status.

**Table- 5: The correlation between students’ perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status**

Variables	N	Perception toward TVET	Perception toward contribution of TVET to socio economic status
Perception toward TVET	212	1	274**
N			.000
Perception toward contribution of TVET to socio economic status.	211	.000	274**
			1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2- tailed)

The above table shows that there was statistically significant relationship between students’ general perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-

economic status of society. Meaning, they had agreed that negative perceptions would affect the socio-economic status of the society.

**Table-6: The regression between students' perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status.**

Variables	R	Coefficient (b)	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-statics	Significant
Student perception toward TVET.		2.851	.274	8.319	.000
Student perception toward contribution of TVET to socio –economic status	274	.488	.391	4.096	.000

The measurement of perception toward TVET (independent variable) and TVET contributions to socio –economic status (dependent variable) was shown the degree of relationship between the two variables.

The basic assumption of the study was that preparatory school students' perception toward TVET was significantly related with contribution of TVET to socio-economic status. The overall regression result  $R^2=274$ ,  $F= 16.212<0.05$ ) shows that there is a significant relation between students' perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status. Furthermore, the effects of the variables ( $\beta=.274$ ,  $t= 8.319$ ,  $p< 0.029$  shows that there is a significant moderate that the relation within the independent variables on dependent variables.

## DISCUSSIONS

The result of this research is consistent with idea of Afeti, [1] coped that TVET be seen as a valid passport to good job but not as a second choice or the only route for academic less endowed. The research result shows that the public and parent considered that TVET track do fit for only students who have less endowed.

TVET can be considered as key indicator for country's advancement in developing that involve into technology advance once TVET must have played an active and vital role as skilled man power would have been also enable for sustainability.

The research result is inconsistent with the research of David, [6] said TVET in many countries remain locked into the role of being a supplies of skill labor to industry and it there by unable to respond effectively to the need of society. Finally, David [6] argued that TVET has significant contribution to socio-economic.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Major Findings of the Study are therefore, summarized as Follows:

- Preparatory school students have positive perception toward TVET.
- Preparatory school students believed that TVET has a great contribution to socio-economic status of the societies.

- There was moderate relationship between preparatory general perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status.

Preparatory school students disagree that TVET has not an education for academic less endowed students. The finding indicated that preparatory school students have positive perception toward TVET and its contribution to socio-economic status. The result of regression revealed that general preparatory school students perception are directly related to student perception toward contribution of TVET to socio-economic status which is consistent with pervious empirical research. Therefore, effort must be given in promoting TVET.

Furthermore, TVET expos organized at the woreda and regional levels by the TVET Agency, MOE should use as a venue to attract and encourage more preparatory school students to join TVET. Public perception of TVET can be increased via organizing conferences and workshops on the career success, mobility and job security among the Amhara people skill certification holders who are working in the region as well as other areas in country. With current facilities and expertise as well as the local government on TVET related government department and bureau should take the opportunity to disseminate this information to attract more preparatory school students to enroll in TVET.

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