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ROLE OF TVET GRADUATES IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL PUNJAB

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact of employing graduates of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) on the socio-economic progress of central Punjab. Pakistan is a country with rich natural and human resources. The role of highly skilled people in national development has become enormously vital in the new developmental period, but it is also an irrefutable fact that the gap in highly skilled personnel in Pakistan is expanding. The organization of Technical Vocational Education and Training was introduced to prepare a skilled workforce for various industries and sectors in Pakistan; however, the sixty percent of young, unskilled, and semi-skilled labor emerging from informal and non-formal sectors. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) primarily aims to enhance the skill sets of individuals employed in industry and provide them with education that is economically viable. This study explored the long run relationship between technical and vocational education and socio-economic development in Pakistan. The current study was carried out in Pakistan's Central Punjab. From central Punjab, two districts Lahore and Faisalabad were chosen. In order to obtain quantitative data, the Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size, which came out to be 478 respondents. To augment the quantitative sections, eight focus groups with TVET graduates were conducted. The main data gathering tools were the interview schedule and interview guide. Quantitative data was subjected to gamma, chi-square, and regression analysis. Analysis revealed that participation in the labor force is crucial for development. The results show how important it is for women to participate significantly in the labor force for socioeconomic advancement. Compared to non-skilled workers, skilled labor was found to get jobs in the labor market more easily. In addition, the interviewees stated that human capital contributes to socioeconomic development and serves as a significant utilization indicator. Based on the results, it was determined that Pakistan may make use of its current pool of TVET graduates by fostering entrepreneurship, human capital building, and labor

force participation. Consequently, societal discontent and unrest will arise in the nation as a result of the youth's lack of possibilities. In addition, it was recommended that the government concentrate on population welfare and youth-oriented policies in addition to resource planning and management to ensure careful workforce utilization and promote socioeconomic development.

Key words: TVET, Socio-economic Development, Punjab, Skilled labor, progress

INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is crucial to the nation's sustainable economic development. There is substantial evidence, according to Maclean of the Hong Kong institute, that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) can significantly contribute to the socio-economic progress and expansion of nations, to the advantage of individuals, their families, local communities, and societies at large. Therefore, by enhancing vocational education, individuals who would otherwise be marginalized can be empowered and the income of impoverished individuals can be increased (Maclean, 2021).

Moreover, the present-day significance of TVET lies in the fact that it offers tremendous potential for combating poverty, augmenting employability via the acquisition of skills, and promoting sustainable development across continents. TVET has emerged as a catalyst for economic development and a mechanism for bolstering social protection for marginalized and excluded members of society in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2023, the worldwide youth unemployment rate was recorded at 12.6%, which equated to 73 million young individuals. In an effort to confront this critical circumstance, nations in the Asia-Pacific region have designated the enhancement of employment-related skills (specifically via TVET) as a foremost concern for educational policy and implementation (ILO, 2023).

The governance structure of TVET is an integral part of its function and is predominantly determined by institutional arrangement and the functions of key stakeholders. These factors give rise to inquiries regarding the functions that governance systems fulfill in relation to the resources at hand, with particular emphasis on finances, innovation and quality, participation and accessibility, and significance. Financially, TVET should be supported with adequate scholarship programs and funding assistance in order to ensure an adequate supply of competent laborers who meet the requirements of the industry. Thus, TVET could

accomplish quality and innovation while being able to respond rapidly to the changing nature of skills and new technologies (Hoeckel, 2022).

In addition, participation and access should take into account the degree to which different forms of TVET foster inclusion and fairness, as well as the ramifications for the expansion of educational opportunities for marginalized communities. Furthermore, it emphasizes significant social aspects of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). This has a strong correlation with the relevance dimension as it strives to provide a greater number of individuals with viable and effective opportunities to benefit from high-quality TVET that leads to employment. Regarding relevance, it should evaluate the degree to which TVET is adaptable to the demands and specifications of the labor market. The policy domains that warrant attention are the connections between TVET programs and the labor market, as well as the results obtained from said programs. This statement posits the notion that the fundamental and critical function of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is to enhance skill levels and facilitate the utilization of those skills across all levels in response to the dynamic and intricate labour markets of the twenty-first century. Additionally, relevance encompasses the capacity and mechanism to comprehend the transition from school to the workforce; thus, it is anticipated that all forms of TVET programs will be able to recognize labor market indicators and predict the emergence of skills demands (Maclean et al. 2021).

Human capital investment is an extremely targeted phenomenon in the contemporary economy. Human capital theorists, economists, and sociologists all agree that vocational training is a crucial instrument for the socioeconomic development of nations and individuals. Human capital development refers to the process of enhancing an individual's earning capacity. The primary objective is to acquire personality traits, knowledge, abilities, and competencies via educational and training means (Mincer, 2016).

Vocational training is widely recognized as an essential means of fostering human capital development. Vocational training encompasses the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge pertinent to a wide range of occupations across diverse sectors of the economy. Vocational training enhances the likelihood of securing employment and increasing earnings,

thereby generating substantial economic and social advantages for individuals. It exerts an indirect influence on social cohesion, the reduction of mental illness and crime rates, the enhancement of health conditions, and the quality of education for children. Pertaining to this matter, it has been noted that providing vocational training to young individuals significantly impacts their social integration into the community. Vocational training possesses the capacity to effectuate favorable transformations in the wellbeing of individuals, according to an abundance of scholarly literature (Maclean and Wilson, 2009).

Vocational training serves as a social instrument to combat individual poverty through the advancement of equitable opportunities in employment, social environments, and citizenship (Patankar, 2019). Technical and vocational training have been shown by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) to increase individuals' self-assurance and confidence, thereby facilitating their participation in their families and communities. Enhancing technical and vocational competencies can have a substantial influence on the metamorphosis of rural communities. By empowering individuals to make informed choices and implement measures to better their social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances, these communities can experience a wide-ranging positive effect on society at large (Catherine and Jacob, 2014). A variety of so-called "life skills" are improved, including communication, motivation, teamwork, responsibility, violence prevention, and reproductive health education. This demonstrates that technical and vocational training is becoming an increasingly recognized method for enhancing the capability sets of young individuals (Debrah, 2013).

Efforts have been made to instill a sense of optimism among disadvantaged individuals by initiating technical and vocational training programs in most nations. Notably, these initiatives have served as a method to alleviate the psychological strain caused by sociopolitical and economic trauma, which afflicts many developing nations. Research has shown that in a nation where young people lack access to vocational and technical education, there is a heightened risk of them becoming entangled in a cycle of despair, hopelessness, delinquency, social hostility, and economic reliance. As previously stated, the observations have significantly contributed to the prevalence of prostitution, and hooliganism among the

youth population who were not provided with vocational training programs (Elebute and Shagaya, 2016).

Research has demonstrated that the notion that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is exclusively designed for the impoverished and illiterate is, at best, speculative (Sugar, 2014). Indeed, TVET facilitates the acquisition of labor market assimilation and skill development for entrepreneurs (UNESCO, 2016). The abilities gained through TVET are applicable for life, well beyond the age of formal retirement. TVET offers a multitude of advantages, such as increased earnings for self-employed individuals, improved wages for employed individuals, and the ability to generate income through the utilization of skills on a part-time basis (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2011). Furthermore, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) serves as an educational ladder by connecting its graduates with tertiary institutions for advanced studies and with businesses for hands-on work experience and skill development (Hoeckel, 2022).

Additionally, the government gains from a reduction in unemployment rates, an increase in tax revenues, and a more proficient labor force. Additional socioeconomic advantages of TVET encompass a decrease in criminal activity, as young people are actively involved in income-generating endeavors that enhance their professional growth and social status. Youth empowerment can be aided by Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in a nation by providing them with the necessary skills to enter the workforce. TVET plays a significant role in the agenda for national development and poverty alleviation, specifically by fostering the industrialization and economic expansion-oriented practical skills of young individuals (UNESCO, 2006).

Vocational education institutes in Pakistan provide courses lasting between three and two months, commencing after the eighth grade. Through apprenticeships, vocational institutions, and polytechnics, vocational education is delivered. The Pakistani government has made significant strides in recent years to enhance the vocational education system. The nation continues to fall behind, however, in terms of vocational education and training. The teaching staff is of poor quality, and the course materials are obsolete. The labor force in Pakistan is

renowned for its inadequate skill set and lack of readiness to contend in an increasingly interconnected global economy (Kazmi, 2007).

Pakistan is classified as a developing nation characterized by a rapid population growth rate, with the youth constituting the majority demographic (Hoeckel, 2022). Considering the rapidly expanding youth demographic, the vocational education sector continues to face inadequate capabilities in providing training services that enhance the skills of the workforce, thereby failing to confront the contemporary challenges of the labor market. Prominent nations in the global labor force have made substantial investments in the enhancement of skills. Industrialization and modernization are inextricably followed by the expansion of the services sector, which is prompted by investments in physical and human capital. The existing framework of vocational education in Pakistan is multifaceted, comprising numerous tiers and agencies. The provincial education department is responsible for the administration of government vocational education institutes. A wide range of skills are acquired through vocational training centers, commercial and training institutions, apprenticeship departments, and polytechnics in Pakistan. Prior to the implementation of technical and vocational education in Pakistan, the training system exhibited deficiencies in terms of responsiveness and flexibility when it came to addressing industry demands. Weak was the connection between industry and training institutions. The financial resources required to acquire replacement apparatus were paltry. There was a growing trend among institutions to prioritize supply over demand (Kazmi, 2007).

With a highly educated and competent labor population, the real problem is the creation of such organization that understand and focused in the investment on the youth and treat working men and women with decency and fairness. The basic outcome of an effective human resource development system is the facilitation of respectable job opportunities by improving individuals' ability to obtain and maintain employment. Technical vocational education must do the same thing. To address the market's immediate expectations, it is vital to recognize the need for vocational training (Khilji et al., 2012).

As a result of technological improvements and globalization and modernization of existing technical institutions are necessary. Large-scale industries and factories are critical to

economic progress in the modern period. The goal of vocational education and training programs may be to prepare participants with marketable skills. It has been observed that the Pakistani economy's antiquated structure is incapable of producing a competent labor force, which is required to improve industrial quality and productivity. Investing in vocational education is critical for improving worker efficiency and effectiveness. The present study provided a short review of the impact of vocational education on Pakistan's economic development. This research is an important addition to the relevant body of literature.

Significance

Pakistan is positioned fifth globally in terms of population size, with 65.5% of its populace being of working age. Economically, Pakistan stands at a crossroads. Propelled towards a trajectory of sustainable growth that relies on skilled labor, the nation must experience a substantial surge in investment activities and a heightened degree of export orientation. Due to the current scarcity of formal vocational training institutes and the insufficient participation of the private sector in vocational curriculum development, Pakistan is confronted with an inadequate system capable of producing a workforce commensurate with the nation's progress. This study will examine approaches to enhancing the caliber of curricula and instructional methods, as well as industry collaboration.

The youth, who make up the largest minority in Pakistani society, are the subject of this study. While making the right investments in the transition phase increases future interests, doing so unintentionally can make the economy more challenging. Global political decision-makers are cognizant of the potential that the population's divisions hold for the economy.

Objectives

- To evaluate the employment rate of TVET graduates within specific industries to gauge their contribution to the workforce
- To analyze the effects of TVET graduates' utilization in fostering entrepreneurship skills that affecting socio-economic development.

Theoretical Base: Sociological Perspective

The notion of structural functionalism is one that holds a positive outlook on the utilization of labor force for the advancement of socioeconomic conditions. One of the first functionalists, Emile Durkheim, came up with the Theory of Dynamic Density in order to examine the relationship between population expansion and the utilization of the labor force in modern society. Societies progress from mechanical to organic forms of solidarity across time. In the area of mechanical solidarity, there is a very low level of occupation and an exceedingly low population density. The variety of occupational and labor force settings, which necessitated more competent workers, led to an increase in population density and the emergence of division of labor in organic solidarity. This was a consequence of the fact that the population density increased. According to Ritzer (2010), society made an investment in its people and developed human capital by providing the populous with skills. This contributed to the advancement of socioeconomic progress.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

There is a planned way to do study that is called a technique. It gives you a way to study and check claims about what you understand. This deal isn't set in stone, and it can be broken at any time. Researchers are always looking for new ways to observe, investigate, and generalize. One way they do this is by using reasonable interpretation, which is the process of drawing logical conclusions from known facts or collected proof. Once it is proven that these steps are in line with the systematic methodology's basic assumptions, they are added to the "soundness of examination" rules that guide the systematic procedure (Babie, 2010). This analysis focuses on Central Punjab as its study area. The method of convenience sampling was utilized to select two districts, one in each of the cities of Faisalabad and Lahore respective.

The sample was obtained using a multi-step sampling process. Using a convenience sample technique, Lahore and Faisalabad were chosen at the first stage from central Punjab. Using

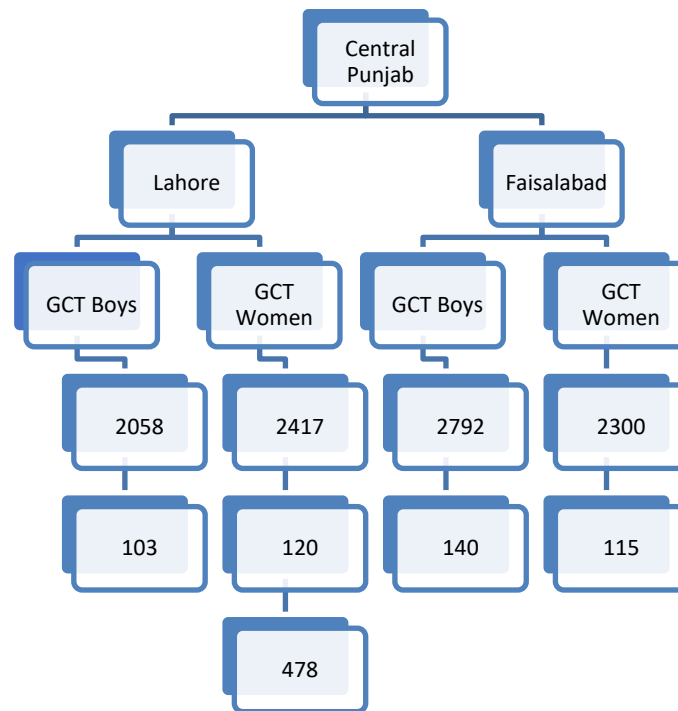
convenience selection, four government colleges of technologies two each from Lahore and Faisalabad were chosen for the second round. The third stage involved the researcher obtaining data on graduating students from the college administration (refer to Table 1).

Table 3.1: Distribution of TVET graduates passed out

District	Name of College	Passing Years			Total
		2020	2021	2022	
Faisalabad	GCT Boys	720	832	506	2058
	GCT Women	483	1162	772	2417
Lahore	GCT Boys	810	1026	956	2792
	GCT Women	525	1095	680	2300

Source: TEVTA Colleges 2023

At fourth stage of sampling procedure a sample of 478 graduated students will be selected through proportional allocation with the help of Taro Yamni formula at the ratio of 5% from each college.



A sequence of inquiries regarding the objectives of the present investigation comprises the interview schedule. The interview schedule is the preferred instrument for data

collection in this investigation. The interviewer will pose a series of inquiries to the interviewee during the in-person interview. It was developed with the objectives of the investigation in mind. The interview program includes closed-ended inquiries. The questions were posed in a local language that was readily comprehensible to the respondents or in their mother tongue, despite the fact that the interview schedule was prepared in English. The respondents' cooperation and the accuracy of the information obtained are contingent upon the order in which the queries are posed in the data collection tool. The questions are formulated by reviewing the substantial methodological literature on the topic at hand and then applying a range of scaling methodologies, from three to five perception scales.

It is a method for compiling and organizing data refinement in order to settle crucial information and generate conclusions that would aid policymakers in formulating policies (Godfrey, 1999). The data was analyzed using SPSS 20.0. There are three steps in the analysis of recent research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The most crucial aspects of the study are the data interpretation and analysis. The aim of scientific study is to acquire generalization and prediction, which cannot be accomplished without these phases. Inferences and generalizations are drawn from the traits and viewpoints of the respondents. Data interpretation and analysis are the two most important components of research. Scientific research cannot achieve its objectives of generalization and prediction in the absence of these procedures. It is possible to make broad assumptions and conclusions based on the answers given by the survey participants.

Bivariate Analysis

The foundation of bivariate analysis is the relationship between two variables. The first one is a response variable, and the second one is an explanatory variable. When looking for a correlation between two variables, the Chi-Square test is useful. In order to demonstrate the nature and extent of the relationship between two variables, gamma statistics are employed.

There is a chance that this relationship is either significant or not significant, based on what the data shows.

Hypothesis 1: Labor force participation leads towards the socio-economic development

Table 1: Association between labor force participation and socio-economic development

H0: Labor force participation and socio-economic development not associated

H1: Labor force participation and socio-economic development are associated

Labour force participation	Socio-economic development			Total
	To Great extent	To Some extent	Not at all	
To great extent	179	25	13	217
	38.3%	4.8%	2.5%	45.6%
To some extent	19	100	86	207
	3.7%	21.5%	16.5%	41.7%
Not at all	13	40	3	46
	2.5%	9.6%	.6%	12.7%
Total	211	167	102	478
	44.4%	36.0%	19.6%	100.0%

Test	Value	D. F.	P. Value
Chi-Square	317.14	4	0.000**
Gamma	0.680	--	0.000**

The relationship between labor force participation and socioeconomic development is shown in Table 1. It is evident from the chi-square value (317.14) that there is a strong correlation between the two variables. The strong positive association between the explanatory and explained variables is demonstrated by the gamma (0.680). As a result, it is acknowledged that labor force participation and socioeconomic development are dependent on one another, and the null hypothesis that labor force participation and socioeconomic development are

independent of one another is rejected. The findings are in line with Sayre's (2013) analysis of the labor supply of women in Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia. It goes without saying that the Middle East has among of the lowest rates of female labor force participation worldwide. He emphasized that marriage has a detrimental impact on women's participation for all women, but it has a greater impact on women in their 20s who have only completed secondary education or less. In contrast, women's participation is lower in Syria, Jordan, Algeria, West Bank/Gaza, and Egypt than it is in Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt. The Middle East and many Muslim nations have institutional obstacles that prevent women from participating in the job market, such as social and cultural views.

Sarwar and Abbasi (2013) calculated the proportion of Pakistani women in the labor force. They used World Bank and Pakistan Bureau of Statistics data for this purpose. They used an analysis technique that demonstrates that female labor force participation is below both the global average and developed country levels. In addition, the majority of women work in unorganized industries like agriculture. Economic, cultural, and political factors that promote gender inequality make it difficult for Pakistani women to enter the labor field. Development cannot occur without FLFP if better results are to be achieved. The gender and development paradigm, which attempted to promote equal employment opportunities for both men and women, was also relevant. The findings support those of Shahid (2017), who looked at the relationship between GDP growth, labor force participation, and gross fixed capital creation. To reach this purpose, researchers analyzed data from the Pakistan Statistical Bureau, the World Bank, and the State Bank of Pakistan from 1980 to 2012. The analysis revealed a significant relationship between economic growth and labor force participation.

Furthermore, it was consistent with Navneet's (2018) description of women's extremely low participation in the labor force. Future rates of women's labor force participation are anticipated to rise as a result of a decline in the average age and length of childbearing. More women joining the labor force can benefit these nations further if enough job opportunities are generated to include them into the workforce. It is anticipated that the economic benefits of increased female labor force participation will exceed the benefits of increased labor supply overall.

Hypothesis 2: Socio-economic development is the function of human capital formation

Table 2: Association between Human Capital formation and socio-economic development

H0: Human Capital formation and socio-economic development not connected

H1: Human capital Formation and socio-economic development are connected

Human Capital Formation	Socio-economic development			Total
	To Great extent	To Some extent	Not at all	
To great extent	185	18	14	217
	39.4%	3.5%	2.7%	45.6%
To some extent	18	105	54	177
	3.5%	24.0%	10.8%	38.3%
Not at all	8	44	32	84
	1.5%	8.5%	6.2%	16.2%
Total	211	167	100	478
	44.4%	36.0%	19.6%	100.0%

Test	Value	D. F.	P. Value
Chi-Square	317.47	4	0.000**
Gamma	0.787	--	0.000**

The relationship between the creation of human capital and socioeconomic development is seen in Table 2. The extremely large relationship between the creation of human capital and socioeconomic development is shown by the chi-square (317.47). On the other hand, the gamma (0.787) indicates a high positive correlation between the variables. Consequently, the connection between human capital development and socioeconomic progress is acknowledged, and the assumption that the two processes are unrelated is discarded. It follows that improving people's human capital is crucial to advancing society and the economy. The findings corroborated those of Fleisher et al. (2008), who discovered that there

is a relationship between China's provincial economies and total factor productivity. They also discovered that socio-economic growth is positively impacted by human development. The nation's economy is impacted by internal inventions as well, and in 1994 these effects were more pronounced. After doing a cost-benefit analysis, the researchers came to the conclusion that investing in human growth is an effective way to boost China's economic growth. Furthermore, it was consistent with the findings of Ali et al. (2018), who found that investments in human capital determine output growth. An effective human capital stock can contribute to both economic and human development. The researchers employed granger causality and Johansen co-integration techniques to examine how foreign aid contributed to the growth of human capital in Pakistan, particularly between 1980 and 2016. Economic growth, the human capital index (HDI), and foreign aid are all correlated, and there is a reciprocal relationship between the two.

Hypothesis 3: Higher the entrepreneurial activities, Higher will be the Socio-economic development

Table 3: Association between entrepreneurial activities and socio-economic development

H0: Entrepreneurial activities and socio-economic development not dependent

H1: Entrepreneurial activities and socio-economic development dependent

Entrepreneurial activities	Socio-economic development			Total
	To Great extent	To Some extent	Not at all	
Strongly Agree	148	4	16	168
	32.3%	.8%	3.1%	36.2%
Agree	38	93	3	134
	9.2%	20.2%	.6%	30.0%
No opinion	7	42	39	88
	1.3%	8.1%	7.5%	16.9%

Disagree	5	23	28	56
	1.0%	4.4%	5.4%	10.8%
Strongly Disagree	3	13	16	32
	.6%	2.5%	3.1%	6.2%
Total	201	175	102	478
	44.4%	36.0%	19.6%	100.0%

Test	Value	D. F.	P. Value
Chi-Square	355.05	8	0.000**
Gamma	0.766	--	0.000**

Table 3 investigates the correlation between entrepreneurial activity and socio-economic development, and the chi-square value of 355.05 suggests that these two variables are highly significant. The independent and response variables have a significant positive association, as evidenced by the gamma value of 0.766. As a result, we support the alternative hypothesis that reads, "There is no association between entrepreneurial activities and socio-economic development," and reject the null hypothesis that states less. Obschonka et al. (2017) conducted an inquiry into the basic competencies in leadership, creativity, problem-solving, social interaction for learning, financial management, and entrepreneurship, and the results verified their findings. They used a count index. When they established a direct and measurable relationship between the components, they concluded that knowledge was a crucial component in each of these endeavors.

However, they failed to identify the most crucial factor in economic growth. According to Sarkar (2014), economists and policymakers view entrepreneurs as critical to a country's economic development. As a result, entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a technique of stimulating and developing creative ventures that have a direct impact on a country's economic progress. Entrepreneurship is viewed as a panacea for all economic problems, including but not limited to poverty reduction, job creation, economic transformation, and individual empowerment. Being an entrepreneur is one of the finest methods to establish a self-sufficient economy and utilize natural resources. As a result, regulations are being

enacted to encourage it in both developed and poor countries. According to a 2015 World Bank research, governments around the world are prioritizing the promotion of entrepreneurship and small enterprises in order to reduce unemployment rates. This is especially true over the last 40 years, when a slew of studies have attempted to demonstrate a correlation between entrepreneurship and economic growth. Furthermore, technological advancement has a significant impact on economic growth, and creative efforts are critical to this process. If Sub-Saharan African countries wish to keep up with the rest of the world economically, they must prioritize economic innovation and knowledge. According to the World Bank, countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere poised to benefit economically from a knowledge-based economy fueled by innovation and technological advancement.

Conclusions

Based on the data, it was determined that Pakistan faces a backlog of jobs and makes use of its skilled labor force through investments, savings, labor force participation, human capital formation, and population welfare programs. If we pass up this window of opportunity, society will undoubtedly experience population pressure that will hinder the state's overall development.

In the region, technical and vocational education and training, or TVET, is seen as a method for increasing production and reducing poverty. Since there is a direct link between the percentage of post-secondary TVET students (tertiary, non-degree) and per capita income, many nations have strengthened regulatory frameworks and policy guidelines for technical and vocational education and training, as well as strengthened their partnerships with employers and the private sector. But when it comes to their top TVET priorities, wealthy and developing nations differ from one another. While the second group of nations concentrates on the cost of enrollment and implementation of TVET, the first group of countries places more emphasis on quality improvement, monitoring and evaluation of TVET, and the availability of national development plans.

In conclusion, while TVET has the potential to significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of Central Punjab, addressing the existing issues and challenges is imperative.

By implementing the recommendations outlined, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness of TVET programs, thereby improving the employment outcomes for graduates and contributing to broader socio-economic progress in the region.

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