



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PRACTICES AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN NEW MERGED DISTRICT KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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Abstract

Pakistan is regarded as one of the rich human resource nations, particularly in terms of the youth population. In Pakistan, 29% of people are under the age of 15 according to the 2017 census data. This bulk of population can be a blessing if they are educated and professionally trained to become active members of socioeconomic development of the country. Especially in this era we must prepare the youth of Pakistan to become economically active. At the age of 15 years, ideally the young population should be at secondary school level. This is the stage where there is huge dropout of students from the mainstream education. This paper main purpose is to give training to the secondary school students in the textile industry in new merged district Khyber. To fulfill this purpose the study was designed with mixed method approach, including document analysis, interviews and survey. All data sources were used to review and analyze the current situation of technical and vocational education in Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, developed the course content and training at secondary school level. Through an exploration of current practices and future prospects, this paper provides a comprehensive understanding of vocational education in the New Merged District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The findings contribute to educational policymakers, institutions, and stakeholders by offering insights into successful vocational education models and suggesting potential areas for improvement. As vocational education continues to evolve, this research serves as a valuable resource for shaping effective strategies that align with the needs of both students and local industries, ultimately fostering socio-economic growth and empowerment in the region.

Key Words: District Khyber, KP, Textile industries, vocational education, students,

Introduction of the study

Joblessness situation in Pakistan become worse day by day. Every year a huge crowd include in the caravan of unskilled and jobless persons. The main reason of this severe issue is teaching theories in our schools and the lack of vocational and skilled base education at secondary level. The lack of proper guides of the career and healthy activities most of our youngsters join unlawful and anti-state activities. The root causes of this grave situation of the jobless literates are the lack of practical and Vocational base education which is the dire need of the time.

Like other parts of the country the new merged district of Khyber also faced so many socioeconomic problems. Due to unsatisfactory financial condition of the parents, some



students at secondary school level quit their education. In the lack of vocational and professional education in their schools the ratio of unemployment and poverty are increasing gradually. Henceforth the present study is undertaken to tackle the issues of unemployment among youth at secondary school level in the new merge district of Khyber.

Vocational education is not provided in schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, so there is a need for school based vocational research at the secondary school level in Khyber to assess how much school based vocational training can reduce unemployment and poverty. Education plays a vital role in life of every individual as well as in the development of a country and a nation. Change in the country is totally dependent on human resource development and education is one of the most important tools to achieve that. It is the education that makes the individuals a responsible person of society and nation because it prepares individuals to realize their aims and objectives. There are two main systems of education in Pakistan i.e. formal education system and distance & non-formal education system. In formal education, technical and vocational education is the branch of professional education.

The importance of technical and vocational education is always obvious need of the time (Azubuike, 2011). Since the creation of Pakistan, every educational policy stressed technical education for social and economic development but practically invisible in our learning institutions (Ahsan & Imbeau 2003). Pakistan has blessed a lot of natural and mineral resources but the scarcity of skilled persons and economic instability, not able to utilize it for national development (Aarkrog, 2005).

All the developed and developing countries of the world spend a lot of their GDP to prevail technical and vocational education for their students to achieve social and economic goal, and to provide job opportunities for their youths (Raza, 2017). There is no proper link between the industries and school educational curricula at secondary level except the province of Panjab (Raza & Ibrahim, 2017).

Pakistan has abundant of natural resources and cultural diversity, so people generally expect it to experience good economic growth. However, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa economy has suffered from periods of macroeconomic instability, low and fluctuating growth, and low investment over the last 30 years. (Aatkong, 2005)

The high unemployment rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially in Ex-FATA, is a sign of the failure of the education system. Many school leavers and graduates are unable to find jobs, and three quarters of those who enter Grade 9 are not equipped for vocational education or employment. Only a few of these secondary school leavers can afford to attend business and technical colleges or vocational colleges. Since the secondary school curriculum is geared towards preparing students for tertiary study, many students leave the secondary school system without the skills they need to get a job. (Aechtenhagen, 2011)

Vocational and technical education plays an important role to increase the economy of any country. Raza & Ahmad (2017) Vocational and technical education plays an essential role to increase the economy of any country. Raza (2017) state that all the developed and developing countries are emphasizing on the expansion of technical and vocational education to have educated skilled manpower for national progress. Through vocational education, a country's social, cultural and economic conditions can be improved. The problems of youth unemployment, poverty, and shortage of skilled workers could be overcome through Vocational Education (VE) system which is efficient



and relevant to the country's objectives and goals. When we look at the pace of economic growth in Pakistan, it lacks efficiency as compared to its neighboring countries. According to Hasan (2019) Projected GDP Ranking (2019-2023), Pakistan Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Nominal) ranking for 2019 is lower than many south Asian countries.

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2014) as reported by Raza & Ibrahim (2017), there is a weak linkage between industry and technical and vocational education in Pakistan except in the province of Punjab at secondary school level.

Students of District Khyber are not able to gain vocational education at secondary level due to qualification and paying fee. Therefore, it is the dire need of the time to provide them technical and vocational education at school level (Hasan, 2019). Technical, vocational and practical skills contents should be included in school curriculum to make students independent and productive citizen in their future life (Aechtenhagen, 2011).

Like other effected districts of the ex-FATA by war of terrorism, district Khyber also badly affected socially and economically because of its geographical location. People are faced with poverty and unemployment, and the students of this area also belonging to these poor families. But despite all of these, there are many industries including more than 80 textile factories situated in district Khyber but most of the workers (90%) are non-local on account of skillfulness problems. as pilot project, if we train our youth at secondary level regarding textile in real environment, it will be helpful for the elimination of unemployment and all unlawful activities, and the social and economic standard of the youth will be improved due local jobs in these textile factories.

Statement of the problem

Labor force is the productive resource of a nation due to skill and vocational education who work from dawn to dusk for better tomorrow of the nation (Guenther, 2011). Most of students of district Khyber leave their schools education incomplete due to some unfavorable circumstances, or pass merely matriculation examination but they remain incapable to keep continuous further education.

Those students are compelled to migrate to other parts of the country for some labor work or selling minor commodities on bus terminals and railway stations like candies, shapers, Mize, miswak, or polish shoes. If the government provide them school based vocational education and training especially related to textile industries of Khyber at secondary school level, these students will be able to earn their livelihood through a respectable manner at the threshold of their homes, and also share their potential in the progress of nation.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study were

1. To develop course contents on textile education for secondary school level in district Khyber
2. To train the secondary school level students in textile industry of district Khyber

Research question



1. How can a vocational education course content minimize the current student's transition problem at the secondary school level in district Khyber, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?
2. What do district Khyber students derive from Vocational education training at present moment?

Significance of the study?

This study vocational education is not only important to eliminate the jobless issue in youngsters of district Khyber but also provide opportunities for further trainings which helpful for social change in society (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008). The present proposed vocational education and training will be the copy of some developed countries like Australian and American VET (Vocational Education and Training) system which will be beneficial for the students of district Khyber, Pakhtunkhwa. The results of the proposed study will be helpful to formulate school based vocational curriculum related textile industries education and training for the secondary level students in Khyber which may provide skilled labour force to textile industry of Khyber, and all stockholders and policy makers will be persuaded to formulate such types of policy to establish vocational education and training in secondary schools' level especially in new merged district of Khyber, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Research methodology

This study will be limited to male youth of secondary school of the new merged district of Khyber.

Procedure of the project

Nature of this proposed study was mix method. Data was collected through observation, interviews from the expertise of the textile industries. The students' data was collected through experimental base of pre-test and post-test. The technique of data collection process was divided in the following two phases.

Phase I: The researcher was visited to few textile industries situated in district Khyber for observation of various machines and it functions, and take interviews of the skilled person to know their viewpoints regarding different machines and process of textile fabrication. After collection the information it was discussed with educationist for validation to design module for the youth of secondary level school.

Phase II: Experimental design uses as pre-test and post-test to compare the progress of post-test with pre-test after treatment of one group (Farooq, 2007) which is shown in the following figure.

O1	T	O2
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This figure shows O1 is the observation based on pre-test, T stand for treatment (training) and O2 indicates the observation based on post-test of the same experimental group.

A pre-test was taken from 20 students at secondary school level to judge their previous knowledge regarding textile industry machines and process. Then selected students were brought for treatment (vocational training) to textile industries for 30 hours in 10 days



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.10 hours training were theoretical while 20 hours guided training were based on practice work in real environment of textile industries. and after the treatment same post-test were conducted to measure their knowledge and skill about textile machines and its process.

Population and sample

This study was conducted at secondary school level in new merged district Khyber, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa responded in the first phase included All skillful and professional personnel of the 80 textile industries of the new merged district Khyber, in the second phase 20 students of class 9th Government High School Illam Gudar was included in the target population.

Sample of the study

Data were collected from five professional experts of the convenient textile industries of the district Khyber through semi-structure interviews in first phase and 20 students of class 9th GHS Illam Gudar as control group selected as a targeted sample.

Inclusive Criteria for Respondents

Five experts and well professional personnel of the textile industries who have more information regarding to their related field and voluntarily wants to trained the students. 20 secondary school level students who desire to work in textile industries and their parents also agree with their sons in this regard.

Data collection

In a phase one the data collected through semi structured interviews. Content validity was ensured with the help of experts from the main stream and professional education departments in depth interview were conducting during which probing questions emerged. In second phase the questionnaire was distributed among 20 students of class 9th GHS illam gudar, for pretest and posttest. The researcher personally visited textile industry with secondary school students where team teaching method was used by the textile experts in the industry.

Result of the study

Paired sample statistics

	N	Mean	St. Deviation	St. Error Mean
T ₁	20	3.9600	.70427	.22271
T ₂	20	7.6600	.45265	.14314

Paired sample test

Test Value =5						
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
T ₁	-4.670	9	.001	-1.04000	-1.5438	-.5362
T ₂	18.583	9	.000	2.66000	2.3362	2.9838



Difference score calculation

The table of paired sample t test shows that Mean of pre-test is 3.9600 and mean of the post-test is 7.6600 and the difference between means of both tests 2.66000 which is statistically significance at $t = 18.583$ ($P = 0.000$). Hence it is concluded that the result of the post test is improved.

Findings

One of the interviewees replied that there isn't a policy in our province to implement a vocational training in public secondary schools of district Khyber, only theoretical subjects are taught, in the secondary school however if vocational courses are taught, they will be reducing the employability and reduce students transition from the school and will help in the economy of our country.

The students of district Khyber may learn industries machines during school time and also after school and we will help these students. If this vocational process started in school this will better for our province and country economy. All those students who are not in a position to continue their study, leave school, so they will be in a position to work in the industries and earn money for their family.

Those books are taught in our secondary school, which are mostly limited to stories, they cannot help in the economic growth of the country, the development of the country depends on the economic growth, so we have to practice in our school like developed countries. We should give vocational education and training at secondary school level.

Pakistan being one of the developing countries facing economic problems, the nation needs to introduce textile vocational skills at secondary school level. Because textile industries contribute significantly to the exports of the country.

Vocational training at the secondary school level develops students' work ethic and creativity, which matches industry skill needs and qualifies them for employment in that field. Basic industrial skills should be taught to students. It is crucial to deliver education in accordance to regional and industrial demands to introduce our new generation of industrial development programmers in order to strengthen internal industry capacities and produce skilled labor.

Discussion:

School-based vocational practices (SBVPs) are a type of education that provides students with the opportunity to learn practical skills that can help them get jobs after they graduate. SBVPs can be offered at different levels of education, but they are particularly important at the secondary school level, especially in areas like Ex-FATA, where there is a high unemployment rate.

There are a number of benefits to SBVPs. First, they can help to reduce unemployment. SBVPs teach students the skills they need to get jobs in a variety of industries. This can help to reduce the unemployment rate, especially among young people.

Second, SBVPs can help to improve the quality of life. SBVPs can help students to start their own businesses or to get jobs in industries that are growing in their area. This can lead to increased economic activity and a better quality of life for everyone.

Third, SBVPs can help to reduce social problems. Poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment are all major factors contributing to social problems such as crime and drug abuse. By teaching student's practical skills and giving them the opportunity to earn a living, SBVPs can help to reduce social problems.



this study main aims to develop course content and vocational training in the textile industry at the secondary school level in the newly merged district of Khyber, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. This could help to reduce the current transition problem and associated economic issues facing the people of the district. The study consulted a variety of sources of information, including literature on the education system of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and international literature on school-based vocational education.

The main research question was how can VET course content minimize the present students transition problem at secondary school level at new merged district Khyber, to answer this question a subsidiary research question was designed.

What do district Khyber students derive from VE training at present moment?

Data was collected from 10 students of class 9th studying at secondary school in district Khyber and five interview of the textile industries experts.

The results show that students of grade 9th of secondary school take an active part in the industries training. this result clearly confirm that claims made by Ambula, (2016) and Anderson (2000) that PNG students take an active part in the vocational education rather than academic subject.

This results also affirmed Greir, (2005) argued that Western education and lifestyle are inextricably linked to academic education. Without academic education, it is impossible to fully participate in Western society.

According to Hill and Lawson, (2004) argued that the current education system in many countries is too focused on academic subjects and not enough focused on VET skills. This is because academic subjects are seen as being more important for passing competitive examinations, which are often required for admission to universities and other institutions of higher education.

Students generally believe that VET courses are not as highly regarded as academic courses. They see VET as an alternative for people who cannot find jobs with their academic qualifications, or who are not suited for academic education and careers (Lawson, 2004). Some students view VET as a second chance for further education. However, most students agree that VET can help them get a new internship. (Klee, 2002)

Conclusion

The results of the study revealed that on the basis of observation and interview with experts concluded that various machines like cotton gain machine, spinning machine, looms machine, knitting machine, dyeing machines, twister machine and finishing machine which worked for different purposes have been identified, modified and prepared for delivered in a proper way in the textile industry. In district Khyber, there are many types of factories in which textile factories also exist. Skilled labor is required in these textile factories if we implement school-based vocational training in schools. Participants expressed their interest in the development of school based vocational training and appreciated this initiative. The survey results revealed that all course participants needed to learn these machines with awareness and training. The participants took great interest in the vocational training in the textile machinery. The school teachers were ready to teach and provide professional training in the school. But they needed clear guidance, infrastructure, curriculum, time and community mobilization. It is clear from the results of the survey that secondary school students participated with interest in this vocational training and learned a lot about machines. The results of the survey proved that the vocational training should be ensured in schools as soon as possible so that the vocational skills of students with average intelligence can be increased at the secondary



school level in new merged district Khyber.

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