

## **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Training providers', employers', instructors' and trainees' attitudes to generic/employability skills in Bhutan**

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### **Abstract**

The importance of vocational education and training has been recognized since mid-1960s (Ministry of Labour & Human Resources 2006). Reforms in the technical vocational education and training (TVET) system have initiated a momentous shift to a knowledge-based economy (Teh & Pendergast 2009). On the other hand, youth unemployment in Bhutan has raised concerns of a potential mismatch between workplace demands and the skills of young people leaving formal education. Today TVET is expected to equip graduates not just with technical and vocational skills but also with generic/employability skills, which are increasingly important in preparing them for employment and for work advancement (The Young Foundation 2012).

The importance of generic/employability skills and the scantiness of information about these skills have been the motivation for this study. The study focuses on attitudes of training providers, instructors and trainees towards generic/employability skills in the TVET sector in Bhutan. Findings help outline the most valued generic/employability skills by the employers in Bhutan, and suggest that these skills are best imparted in the work context. The findings also highlight the importance of industry involvement, the need to promote generic/employability skills, and to update existing national competency standards to specify these skills and clarify their assessment.

### **1 Introduction**

Generic skills (or employability skills which is the term preferred by the industry in Bhutan) are skills that are developed throughout a person's life and in different settings whether it is through work experience or in educational contexts (NCVER 2003a). Although there are differences in definitions, there is general agreement on their importance in the context of employability. Many jobs today are service-oriented and in this sector generic/employability skills are increasingly important. Skills like problem solving, team work, communications have become some of the main requirements (or 'knowledge assets') to work in the service sector. These assets have contributed to more than half of the wealth of advanced industrial societies as estimated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (Majumdar 2004).

The emphasis on generic/employability skills comes as a result of youth unemployment, which is an issue concerning both developed and developing countries. The global youth unemployment rate stood at 12.6 per cent, equivalent to 73 million young people in 2013 (ILO, 2013). With the aim of addressing this urgent situation, countries in Asia-Pacific region have identified skills development for employment (particularly through TVET) as a priority

for educational policy and practice (Maclean, Jagannathan & Sarvi 2013). According to the World Bank (2010), TVET now forms part of a larger vision for promoting sustainable development. Maclean et al. (2013) highlight the importance of skills for improving individuals' employment outcomes and increasing countries' productivity and growth. Likewise, UNESCO's TVET strategy (2010-2015) explicitly recognizes TVET's value in addressing a host of issues such as youth unemployment and socio-economic inequalities. There is a risk, however, of marginalizing generic/employability skills within TVET because of their highly specialized technical nature.

According to the World Bank (2010), nowadays employers in many economies are seeking workers who possess behavioural skills such as teamwork, diligence, creativity, and entrepreneurship. In addition workers need personal attributes, like work ethics and problem-solving skills. Thirdly, workers are required to have technical skills, e.g. dealing with corruption and bribery, as well as self-improvement skills such as self-worth, confidence and motivation which are essential to thrive in today's rapidly evolving, technologically-driven globalized economies. Employers want creative problem solvers, innovators who are updating their knowledge and expertise. Skills such as adaptability, negotiation and enterprise are becoming necessary and there is evidence to suggest that competencies within these skills have a fundamental role to play for learning to learn (The Young Foundation 2012).

A number of studies were conducted to examine requirements and necessary skills to gain and retain employment (see Table 1). The general conclusion from these studies is that generic / employability skills in addition to core technical skills are becoming increasingly important to employers.

**Table 1: Overview of international research on generic/employability skills**

<b>SLN</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Representative Research</b>
1.	Literature reviews on emerging requirements for generic/employability skills; international comparisons of generic skills; definitions of generic skills	Keating (2007); NCVER (2011); Majumdar (2004); NCVER (1999, 2003a); Young Foundation (2012); NORRAG NEWS (2011); Mukuni & Price (2013)
2.	Generic/employability skills and TVET	UNESCO (2013); NCVER (2003b, 2004)
3.	Graduates and employers perspective on generic/employability skills	Teh & Pendergast (2009); Maclean, Tsang & Fien (2013); NCVER (2004)

All the research findings reach a similar conclusion, namely that individuals are expected to have well-developed technical skills, as well as generic/employability skills that give them a high degree of flexibility, adaptability and the ability to work in a range of jobs, and gain and retain employability.

## 2 TVET in Bhutan

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan states that “the State shall endeavour to provide education for the purpose of improving and increasing knowledge, values and skills of the entire population with education being directed towards the full development of the human personality” (Article 9.15) Hence, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) focuses on the development of human resources and the creation of a knowledge-based society through its National HRD Policy (2010); the Tertiary Education Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan (2010) and the National Youth Policy (2011). In addition, the Economic Development Policy (2010) states that skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic and social development.

Bhutan values its youth as the major human resource and seeks to invest in them through a concerted effort as envisioned by their Majesties, the kings of Bhutan. Youth constitutes a substantial percentage of the labour force. Nonetheless, there is a mismatch between the available jobs and required skills, resulting in a high unemployment rate, which in Bhutan stands at 7.3% according to a recent labour force survey (2012). The highest youth unemployment rate has been observed among the population holding middle secondary qualifications (Class IX & X), followed by those holding higher secondary qualifications (Class XI & XII) and those holding bachelor’s degree. Furthermore, unemployment among female youth is higher than their male counterparts.

In Bhutan, TVET is seen as a system to equip those cohorts of young people not only with vocational skills but also with a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes indispensable for a meaningful participation in work and life. The Royal Government of Bhutan aims for TVET to close the skills gap between skills required by employers and those that employees have acquired. However, there is little research in the area of skills development in Bhutan that would provide conclusive findings on how to equip young people with the required skills to prepare them for the labour market.

In the 11th Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources has been entrusted with the responsibility to improve the quality of skilled workers. As a result, since 2010 TVET training has undergone a shift from conventional training to competency-based training. One key reform has been the development and operationalization of the Bhutan Vocational Qualifications Framework (BVQF) and, recently, its linkage with the tertiary education policy and the Bhutan Qualifications Framework (BQF).

In addition, National Competency Standards (NCS) have been introduced as a first step in the implementation of BVQF. The NCS are a definition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, as well as steps in their application for a particular occupation according to standards required by the industry (DOS 2013). These standards serve as a source of information for curriculum developers regarding appropriate skills and knowledge, and provides developers of assessment resources with specifications of skills, knowledge and attitudes to be demonstrated by TVET students. It is also a tool for employers to define and develop job descriptions, performance appraisal systems and work flow analysis. When analysing the NCS for electricians and automobile mechanics, one can find some generic/employability skills in the section on underpinning knowledge and skills.

For example, the skill “teamwork” includes the following generic/employability skills:

- interpersonal and communications skills;
- ability to access, interpret and apply technical information;
- follow personal safety procedures;
- maintain orderliness and cleanliness;
- literacy and the ability to interpret and apply service manuals;
- ability to keep records and write reports;
- estimation and costing skills.

However, performance criteria associated with these generic/employability skills and guidelines on their assessment are not specified.

Finally, the last policy document related to TVET is the TVET policy of Bhutan which is still a draft document. It is therefore difficult to assess how generic/employability skills are defined in the TVET policy at this stage. However, it can be said that the concept of generic/employability skills can be found in the vision, missions and objectives of other TVET-related policy documents. This is ensured through the philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) index, which guides all policy documents and aims for all Bhutanese to be able to access gainful employment and transform the country into an ICT-savvy knowledge society.

### **3 Objective and research questions**

Although generic/employability skills are needed for employment, very little research has been conducted in this area in Bhutan, specifically with regards to TVET. There are existing studies on this matter conducted in other countries from which Bhutan can learn. There is no definition of generic/employability skills in Bhutan or a survey that indicates how TVET instructors, trainees and employers perceive these skills, e.g. their utility, development and assessment. This paper presents findings from reviewing and documenting the current status of generic/employability skills in the TVET sector in Bhutan. This study follows the example of a similar research conducted by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) in 2003. It also examines how generic / employability skills are reflected in the National Competency Standards (NCS).

The main objective of this study is to record and document the status of generic / employability skills in the TVET sector in Bhutan.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Are NCS sufficiently focused on the attainment of generic / employability skills?
2. To what extent are employability / generic skills understood by TVET training providers, instructors, trainees and employers?

3. How are generic/ employability skills being taught in TVET subjects, TVET courses and in traineeships and apprenticeships?

## **4 Methodology and design**

### **4.1 Sample**

For this study, non-probability, purposive and quota sampling were adopted. According to Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009), the logical relationship between the sample selection technique and the purpose and focus of the research is important for non-probability sampling. In December 2013, the Department of Occupational Standards at Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (DOS, MoLHR) organised a forum for training providers. The sample of training providers consisted of all those registered training providers who attended the forum. Automobile engineering and electrical engineering are two occupations that were chosen for the study. Therefore, the sample consisted of TVET instructors, trainees and employers involved in on-the-job trainings (OJT) in the automobile and electrical occupations. Those included in the sample had to meet the registration and accreditation criteria set by DOS, MoLHR and be involved in training during the data collection period from December 2013 to March 2014. This requirement is noted as a limitation for a general applicability of the study findings.

### **4.2 Questionnaire**

The questionnaires used for this study are based on the questionnaires developed and piloted in late 2001 on a small sample of vocational education and training (VET) teachers and students in Queensland, Australia (NCVER, 2003b). The questionnaires used in this study consisted of structured questions on background, awareness and ratings of generic/ employability skills; and some open-ended questions examining the way these skills are imparted in TVET courses and through NCS.

Furthermore, this study uses the Employability Skills Framework (ESF) developed by NCVER (2004) which is a result of focus groups, individual interviews, case studies held with a sample of small and medium-sized enterprises across all industry sectors and those located in metropolitan, regional and rural areas. ESF was tested in 150 enterprises and employer groups to ensure a sufficient level of support for the framework. (See Appendix A: Table 2 Employability Skills Framework)

For this study, two DOS-registered institutions in two districts of Bhutan (Thimphu and Punakha) were contacted in early 2014. The researcher mailed instructor questionnaires to the principals of these two institutions for distribution, completion and return. In addition, the principals were requested to send instructor questionnaires to a broad sample of instructors involved in a range of industry programs. The instructor questionnaires were completed in early March 2014 by a total of 21 instructors.

Using a form of quota sampling, 30-100 trainee questionnaires were mailed to the aforementioned institutions for distribution. In line with quota sampling, instructors were asked to distribute these trainee questionnaires along with employer questionnaires to trainees who were undergoing on-the-job training (OJT) and to those employed in the automobile sector. The trainee questionnaires were completed in early March 2014 by a total of 108 trainees, which was in line with the target of 130 replies. No names or identifying information was requested on the questionnaires.

All DOS-registered training institutions undergo the same quality assurance checks, such as registration, course accreditation and development of quality management systems. Therefore, the two selected institutions might not provide a random or representative sample. However, quota sampling for instructor and trainee surveys is well accepted as a strategy for ensuring that various population subgroups are represented.

Data analysis that consisted of rating scales included frequency tabulations, percentages and mean and mode ratings. Responses to open-ended qualitative questions were content-coded. The coding helped to identify broad issues, as well as record relevant comments from respondents.

Ethical considerations such as privacy, anonymity and the right to withdraw partially or completely at any time were taken into account in the study. A pilot test, which helped to ensure that questions were clear, was conducted.

#### 4.3 Demographics of the respondents

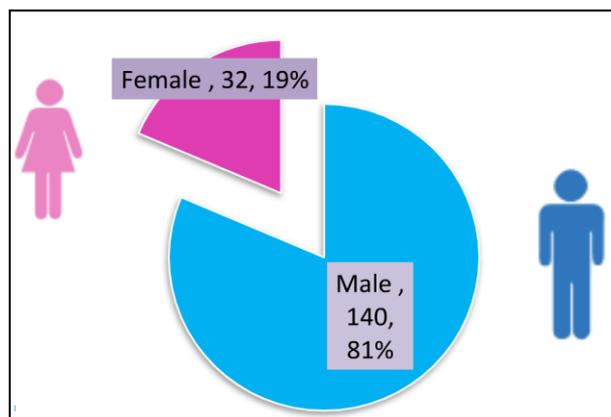


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

- About 62% of training providers were located in Thimphu (Table 3). Only registered training institutions with accredited courses (Table 12) were surveyed.
- The trainee respondents were from the two institutes and they were all at different stages of learning with around 53% of them half way through their training program (Table 13) and the majority of them completing traineeship at the National Certificate level 2 (100%-Table 11). From the two institutions 81.31% of trainees represented electrical engineering courses.

- 100% of the instructors surveyed were full time employees (Table 10) and 51.43% of them were teaching at the National Certificate Levels 1 and 48.57% at levels 2 (Table 5).
- 66.67% of the instructors and 50% of the training providers reported that the training delivery mode is a mixture of face to face classroom teaching and work-place instruction (Table 6).

#### **4.4 Study limitations**

Despite careful planning and execution, this study has its limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the study makes it impossible to claim causality. In addition, adopting a longitudinal approach may have generated a richer and more interesting insight. The results can be biased due to the non-random selection of target respondents, the use of open-ended questions to collect primary data, and potential data processing errors during the analysis of the recorded interviews. If face-to-face interviews had been conducted for this study, additional information might have been discovered that could have influenced the findings.

The findings, implications and conclusions of this study are bound by the context of the research. Further research in a number of diverse contexts, specific sectors and among different employers, could strengthen the findings and results of this study.

## **5 Findings**

This chapter presents the study findings by examining attitudes and perceptions of training providers, instructors, employers and trainees as captured in the surveys. Some of the findings are tabulated for different groups of respondents to facilitate comparison. (See Appendix A: Tabulated findings from the national survey)

### **Attitudes of TVET training providers, instructors, trainees and employers towards generic/ employability skills**

As seen in table 14, more than 60% of training providers had knowledge of generic/employability skills and related terms. However, instructors were not entirely clear about the terms ‘hard skills’, ‘transferable skills’ and ‘life skills’. More than 65% of employers were comfortable with the terms ‘employability’ (68%) and ‘work skills’ (77.78%). ‘Mayer competencies’ was a term that the majority of the respondents was not familiar with.

Training providers and instructors did not share a definition of generic/employability skills and most of them perceived communications and interpersonal skills, work ethics and attitude, discipline, team work, values, listening skills, leadership qualities, analytical and assessment skills, other than non-technical skills, as generic/employability skills. Employers, however, felt that generic/employability skills should include basic skills like literacy, and ability to estimate and communicate. They considered it important to be able to apply any skills in a variety of subject domain and that this ability should not depend on gender. It is

worth noting that ‘common sense’ was considered a generic/employability skill by employers.

70.87% of trainees had heard and had an understanding of the concept of generic/employability skills (Table 15). The majority of the employers belonged to the power and construction sector (Table 8) and 87.5% of the employers offered on-the-job training (Table 9). 70% of the employers reported employing TVET graduates for full time positions in their organizations (Table 10).

All the respondents rated the 26 identified generic skills as “important” or “very important” (Table 16). A considerable number of the respondents felt that the list was exhaustive and stressed the requirement and importance of it, however, some respondents added competencies to the list. Having a good attitude, being creative, punctual and well-mannered and having good discipline were some recurring points that were noted by most of the trainees.

When the instructors and training providers were asked about the teaching and assessment of generic skills (Table 20), 75% of the instructors and 81% of training providers believed that they were very clear in explaining why it is important to learn generic/employability skills. This was verified by 81.3% trainees responding in the same way (Table 19). Around 50% of instructors responded that NCS embeds the generic/employability skills in the process and underpinning skills and knowledge. 100% of instructors agreed that there were no guidelines in the NCS to help them assess generic skills development in their trainees. Contradicting this, the training providers (more than 50%) felt that NCS does a good job of embedding the generic/employability skills. 80% of training providers, as opposed to 30% of instructors, believed the competency standard and the curriculum is helping to produce graduates who are highly employable in a range of jobs in different industries. 64% of the employers have heard of the NCS, national assessments and national certificates (Table 18).

## **5.1 Importance of generic/employability skills for the labour market**

This subsection outlines skills that respondents perceived as important for the labour market. The majority of respondents (more than 80%) agreed that industries require TVET graduates who possess a broad range of generic/employability skills rather than only specialized/technical skills and that generic/employability skills should be imparted in TVET institutions. Findings indicate that graduates are expected to be adaptable to new work environments and new people, and to be able to communicate and work well in teams. Employers expect graduates to be self-confident, able to solve problems and take practical decisions on their own. Besides, they valued creativity and innovativeness.

In the survey, respondents were asked to select 5 skills (from a list of 26) that they considered important for the labour market (see Table 17).

Employers listed the following:

- Being able to solve problems
- Being able to understand how ideas and systems are linked to each other

- Being able to work with other people in teams
- Having a customer focus
- Being motivated

Training providers listed the following:

- Being able to solve problems
- Being able to speak and communicate well with other people
- Being creative and innovative in their thinking
- Being self-confident
- Being ethical

Instructors listed the following:

- Having a customer focus
- Being creative and innovative in their thinking
- Having a practical focus
- Being ethical
- Being motivated
- Being adaptable to change at work

Trainees listed the following:

- Having work and study skills
- Being self-confident
- Having a practical focus
- Being able to challenge how things are done
- Being motivated

For comparison, Table 16 indicates ratings (for “important” and “very important”) for each group of respondents. Overall, all groups rated the following skills as very important:

- Being able to read, spell and write well
- Being able to speak and communicate well with other people
- Being able to work with other people in teams
- Being self-confident
- Having a practical focus
- Being motivated
- Being adaptable to change at work
- Being ethical

It is interesting to note that some skills were considered unimportant. For instance, some training providers and instructors rated ‘being able to use mathematical ideas and techniques’, ‘being able to solve conflicts’, ‘being able to understand and communicate well with people from other cultures’ as not important. Some employers and trainees perceived that ‘being able to complete a task when there is incomplete information’ as not important.

## 5.2 The teaching of generic/employability skills

Respondents were asked to select 5 skills (from a list of 26) that they perceived as being taught well and 5 that they perceived as being taught poorly in TVET. (See Table 17)

Skills that respondents rated as being taught well are:

- Being able to understand how ideas and systems are linked to each other
- Being able to work with other people in teams
- Being creative and innovative in their thinking
- Having a customer focus
- Having a practical focus
- Being self-confident

Skills rated as being taught poorly are:

- Being able to understand and communicate with people from other cultures
- Being able to solve conflicts
- Being able to collect, analyse and organise information
- Being good managers of their time
- Being able to use IT
- Being able to complete a task when there is incomplete information

## 5.3 Implementation of generic/employability skills

Employers, training providers and instructors believed that generic/employability skills can be imparted in TVET subjects and courses, via NCS and the curriculum, by trained and experienced facilitators.

### 5.3.1 NCS and TVET curriculum

There were mixed responses among respondents on the way generic/employability skills should be implemented through NCS and eventually through the curriculum. Some training providers suggested that NCS should specify ‘how to learn’ and ‘what to learn’. With regard to the TVET curriculum, instructors shared that it is already very broad and that adding requirements will put an additional burden on trainees. Some, however, felt that a separate curriculum could be incorporated and facilitated through various extra co-curricular activities. Most perceived that generic/employability skills could be embedded in the existing curriculum which was supported by some employers who felt that these skills should be taught in TVET institutes with one or two classes devoted to generic/employability skills. Some training providers suggested separate classes embedded in non-technical subjects or integrated in curriculum with related theory and skills training. One respondent also touched on the interesting topic of assessment of generic/employability skills, he/she wrote:

*“Once competency-based training has been implemented, generic/employability skills need to be defined in the curriculum and adequate assessment needs to be developed.”*

Some respondents, especially employers, stated that generic/employability skills could be imparted through on-the-job training. They acknowledged that it is impossible to expect TVET institutes to be the only stakeholders in charge of imparting these skills.

In an interview with an officer responsible for NCS development, it became apparent that, although not prominent, some generic/employability skills are included in its underpinning knowledge and skills. The selection of this approach aims at keeping NCS flexible for the development of related curriculum and assessment. The officer, however, recommended further research on how to effectively incorporate generic/transferable skills in NCS. For example, would these skills require a separate unit or would it be sufficient to embed them in some units and their related elements of competence?

### 5.3.2 TVET Teachers

Although the majority of respondents agreed that generic/transferable skills need to be incorporated in the curriculum and NCS, some instructors expressed doubt about their own capabilities of teaching these skills.

One respondent wrote:

*“I am afraid that our trainers might not have all the generic/employability skills which they are required to teach to their students.”*

Another responded:

*“To ensure that generic/employability skills are developed, one should have the skills and knowledge necessary to impart those skills to others. Teaching staff should receive appropriate training to be able to achieve it.”*

The majority of instructors felt that a trained facilitator would be able to better teach generic/employability skills. Trainees were equally concerned about being taught by their instructors instead of trained facilitators, since the former lack the ability to adequately assess their performance and are less approachable.

One trainee wrote:

*“I don’t like their way of teaching because when we ask questions some instructors just get angry and say ‘do it yourself’”*

Another group wrote:

*“They assess us by looking at our faces.”*

In addition, there are no national standards for the vocational teachers. TVET teachers can only impart generic/transferable skills if they are aware of these skills and value. The importance of teachers having generic/employability skills was emphasized in a speech by His Majesty the Fifth King of Bhutan to teacher trainees of a teacher training college in Samtse district.

He said:

*“You cannot give what you do not have!”*

#### **5.4 Key findings**

Based on the findings from this study, it can be said that the importance of generic/employability skills is recognized and valued by TVET training providers, instructors, trainees and employers in Bhutan. Some of the skills listed as ‘very important’ in the questionnaires can be compared to those found in other studies, such as the one conducted by NCVET in 2003.

Although TVET systems, in general, have the responsibility for imparting generic/employability skills, substantial research concludes that these skills are best acquired when taught in real-life or real-world contexts and not just through TVET or other types of education. Employers have equal roles to play in ensuring that workers develop generic/employability skills at different stages of their lives. Findings from employer surveys in this study indicate that they acknowledge their role in developing generic/employability skills in their trainees and workers. However, besides acknowledging their role, employers should be equally equipped with skills like honesty, integrity and empathy, among others. Industry participation is one key driver for the success of TVET in general, and for learning and evaluating generic/employability skills in particular. Based on the findings, on-the-job training is considered a major source for trainees to get experience, since they could practice their technical skills as well as nurture some generic/employability skills like self-confidence and teamwork.

Finally, NCS is recognised as a useful tool that specifies the technical skills that are required of a competent technical person, which include some areas of generic/employability skills, such as teamwork, occupational health and safety. Some underpinning of generic/employability skills and knowledge are included in NCS but other skills like communicating with empathy, learning to learn, self-management and negotiation skills still need to be included, along with the learning objectives and assessment guidelines. Currently in Bhutan, TVET providers only assess key technical competencies.

### **6 Conclusion and areas for future research**

There is consensus that employers value generic/employability skills. Therefore, focusing only on technical and vocational skills in TVET will not guarantee employability for graduates. TVET systems will have to ensure that behavioural skills valued by employers are in place (World Bank, 2010). A number of studies were conducted in several countries to explore generic/employability skills in TVET, but this study is the first of its kind in Bhutan. Although it presents preliminary findings, it offers practitioners and researchers some useful insights into the perception and adaptation of generic/employability skills in TVET in the context of Bhutan. It is the first study that attempts to specify generic/employability skills for

the country. It identifies respect among employers, employees, trainees and instructors as well as empathy as generic/employability skills relevant for Bhutan.

Future research could focus on:

- ways of integrating generic/employability skills into NCS and the curriculum in a way that facilitates their teaching, recognition and certification;
- TVET teachers and pedagogical skills necessary to teach and assess generic/employability skills;
- possible partnerships between local communities, NGOs, private sector and the Government to promote the integration of generic/employability skills into related TVET policies;
- identify which areas (home, school, training, workplace, community) are conducive to develop each kind of generic/employability skills
- the role of culture<sup>1</sup> in fostering generic/employability skills;
- ways to foster green generic/employability skills.

The emergence of the green economy (Pavlova & Huang 2013) puts additional demands on the composition of generic/employability skills. Fostering these skills is seen as a considerable opportunity for Bhutan, a Buddhist country. The development path of Bhutan is closely linked to Buddhist economic principles which are based on the principles of the Noble Eight-fold Path. As a result, livelihood depends on the relationship between human beings, society and the natural environment (Rinzin et al. 2007). Quality of life for the individual, the society and the environment is enhanced by maintaining the balance between all three (Payutto 1988; Phrabhavanaviriyakhun 2001 in Rinzen et al. 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> The Bhutanese culture, which is based on a rich religious heritage, includes a code of conduct (driglam namzha) based on strict observance of vows (tha-damtshig) that emphasize the importance of kinship, loyalty (lay-jum-dray), community, hospitality, respect for one's parents, elders and superiors, mutual cooperation between the rulers and the ruled, parents and children, as well as teachers and students (Rinzin, Vermeulen, & Glasbergen 2007). Values can then be distinguished as those learned through traditional upbringing and those learned through modern education and professional training.

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## APPENDIX: Tabulated findings from the national survey

**Table 1: Employability Skills Framework**

Personal attributes that contribute to overall employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Loyalty</li> <li>❖ Commitment</li> <li>❖ Honesty and integrity</li> <li>❖ Enthusiasm</li> <li>❖ Reliability</li> <li>❖ Personal presentation</li> <li>❖ Common sense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Positive self-esteem</li> <li>❖ Sense of humour</li> <li>❖ Balanced attitude to work and home life</li> <li>❖ Ability to deal with pressure</li> <li>❖ Motivation</li> <li>❖ Adaptability</li> </ul>
Skill	Element	
Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Listening and understanding</li> <li>❖ Speaking clearly and directly</li> <li>❖ Writing to suit the needs of the audience</li> <li>❖ Negotiating responsively</li> <li>❖ Reading independently</li> <li>❖ Empathising</li> <li>❖ Using numeracy effectively</li> <li>❖ Understanding the needs of internal and external customers</li> <li>❖ Persuading effectively</li> <li>❖ Establishing and using networks</li> <li>❖ Being assertive</li> <li>❖ Sharing information</li> <li>❖ Speaking and writing in languages other than English</li> </ul>	
Teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Working with people of different ages, gender, race, religion or political persuasion</li> <li>❖ Working as an individual and as a member of a team</li> <li>❖ Knowing how to define a role as part of a team</li> <li>❖ Applying teamwork skills to a range of situations e.g. futures planning, crisis problem-solving</li> <li>❖ Identifying the strengths of team members</li> <li>❖ Coaching, mentoring and giving feedback</li> </ul>	
Problem-solving that contributes to productive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Developing creative, innovative solutions</li> <li>❖ Developing practical solutions</li> <li>❖ Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them</li> <li>❖ Solving problems in teams</li> <li>❖ Applying a range of strategies to problem-solving</li> <li>❖ Using mathematics, including budgeting and financial management to solve problems</li> <li>❖ Applying problem-solving strategies across a range of areas</li> <li>❖ Testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account</li> </ul>	

Initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex project Issues</li> <li>❖ Adapting to new situations</li> <li>❖ Developing a strategic, creative, long-term vision</li> <li>❖ Being creative</li> <li>❖ Identifying opportunities not obvious to others</li> <li>❖ Translating ideas into action</li> <li>❖ Generating a range of options</li> <li>❖ Initiating innovative solutions</li> </ul>
Planning and organising that contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Managing time and priorities—setting timelines, coordinating tasks for self and with others</li> <li>❖ Being resourceful</li> <li>❖ Taking initiative and making decisions</li> <li>❖ Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies</li> <li>❖ Establishing clear project goals and deliverables</li> <li>❖ Allocating people and other resources to tasks</li> <li>❖ Planning the use of resources including time management</li> <li>❖ Participating in continuous improvement and planning processes</li> <li>❖ Developing a vision and proactive plan to accompany it</li> <li>❖ Predicting—weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria</li> <li>❖ Collecting, analysing and organising information</li> <li>❖ Understanding basic business systems and their relationships</li> </ul>
Self-management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Having a personal vision and goals</li> <li>❖ Evaluating and monitoring own performance</li> <li>❖ Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and vision</li> <li>❖ Articulating own ideas and vision</li> <li>❖ Taking responsibility</li> </ul>
Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Managing own learning</li> <li>❖ Contributing to the learning community at the workplace</li> <li>❖ Using a range of media to learn—mentoring, peer support, networking, information technology (IT) courses</li> <li>❖ Applying learning to ‘technical’ issues (e.g. learning about products) and ‘people’ issues (e.g. interpersonal and cultural aspects of work)</li> <li>❖ Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning</li> <li>❖ Being willing to learn in any setting—on and off the job</li> <li>❖ Being open to new ideas and techniques</li> <li>❖ Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills</li> <li>❖ Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate Change</li> </ul>

Technology that contributes to effective execution of tasks

- ❖ Having a range of basic information technology skills
- ❖ Applying information technology as a management tool
- ❖ Using information technology to organise data
- ❖ Being willing to learn new information technology skills
- ❖ Having the occupational health and safety knowledge to apply technology
- ❖ Having the appropriate physical capacity

Source: Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry & Business Council of Australia (2002, p.8)

**Table 2: Location of respondents (Instructor, trainee, training provider and employer sample)**

Location	Respondent type							
	Training Providers		Employers		Instructors		Trainees	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Thimphu	10	62.5	10	35.71			20	18.52
Punakha	1	6.25			7	35	88	81.48
WangduePhodrang	2	12.5	1	3.57	11	55		
Trashigang			1	3.57	2	10		
Haa	1	6.25						
Sarpang	1	6.25	9	32.14				
Bumthang	1	6.25	1	3.57				
Mongar			1	3.57				
Paro			2	7.14				
Pemagatshel			1	3.57				
Samdrupjongkhar			1	3.57				
Tsirang			1	3.57				
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18.75</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3: Type of institution (Instructors, trainee, employer sample)**

Location	Respondent type					
	Employers		Instructors		Trainees	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Government	11	40.74	21	100	106	98
Private	8	29.63	0	0	2	2
Corporate	6	22.22	0	0	0	0
Others	2	7.41	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4: Level of Trainees (Instructor, trainee, employer sample)**

Level of trainees	Employers		Training Providers		Instructors		Trainees	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
National Certificate Level 1	3	5.77	5	31.25	18	51.43	0	0
National Certificate Level 2	13	25.00	7	43.75	17	48.57	108	100
National Certificate Level 3	5	9.62	0	0	0	0	0	0
General TVET Graduate	18	34.62	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diploma	13	25.00	3	18.75	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	1	6.25	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Teaching Delivery Mode (Training provider, Instructor sample)**

Delivery Mode	Training providers		Instructors	
	N	%	N	%
Face to face classroom teaching	6	37.5	4	19.05
In the workplace	1	6.25	3	14.29
Online	0	0	0	0.00
Mixed mode	8	50	14	66.67
Others	1	6.25	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 6: TVET graduate employment type (Employer sample)**

<b>Employment type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Full time	21	70.00
Part time	4	13.33
Contract	5	16.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 7: Sector of employment (Employer sample)**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Automobile	6	16.67
Construction	12	33.33
Power	12	33.33
Pharmacy	1	2.78
Steel fabrication	1	2.78
Mechanical	1	2.78
Information Technology	3	8.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8: Offers (employer sample)**

<b>Offers</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
On the Job Training	28	87.5
Part time job	4	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 9: Employment type (Instructor sample)**

<b>Employment Type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Regular	21	100
Contract	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 10: Traineeship/Apprenticeship (Trainee sample)**

	N	%
No	1	0.926
Yes traineeship	101	93.52
Yes apprenticeship	6	5.556
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 11: Course (Trainee sample)**

	N	%
Automobile Engineering	20	18.69
Electrical Engineering	87	81.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 12: Progress of training (Trainee sample)**

% completed	N	%
10	1	0.93
20	6	5.61
30	20	18.69
40	16	14.95
50	15	14.02
60	6	5.61
70	17	15.89
80	15	14.02
90	9	8.41
100	2	1.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 13: Knowledge of skills (Percent indicating they fully know and understand the term - employer, training provider and instructor sample)**

	Percent (%)		
	Employers	Training Providers	Instructors
i. Generic Skills	57.69	62.5	60
ii. Mayer Competencies	23.08	20	10
iii. Core Skills	48.00	73.33	57.14
iv. Soft skills	46.15	62.5	57.14
v. Hard skills	40.00	56.25	23.81
vi. Transferable skills	44.44	62.5	38.1
vii. Work skills	77.78	82.5	57.14
viii. Employability skills	68.00	74	42.86
ix. Life skills	57.69	62.5	35

**Table 14: Knowledge of skills (Percent indicating they heard of each term - trainee sample)**

	Yes
i. Generic Skills	44.12
ii. Core Skills	36.73
iii. Key competencies	57.73
iv. Employability skills	70.87

**Table 15: Rating of skills (Percent indicating each skill as "Very important [VImp]" "and Important [Imp]"- employer, training provider, instructor and trainee sample)**

	Employer		Training Provider		Instructor		Trainee	
	VImp	Imp	VImp	Imp	VImp	Imp	VImp	Imp
Being able to read, spell and write well	50.00	92.86	37.50	87.50	52.38	90.48	75.00	98.15
Being able to use mathematical ideas and techniques	60.71	85.71	25.00	81.25	28.57	80.95	74.07	97.22
Being able to solve problems	57.14	96.43	37.50	81.25	30.00	100.00	77.36	96.23
Being able to use information technology	57.14	92.86	37.50	81.25	42.86	76.19	76.42	97.17
Being able to understand how ideas and systems are linked to each other	60.71	100.00	40.00	100.00	47.62	80.95	76.64	97.20
Being able to collect, analyse and organise information	46.43	78.57	37.50	87.50	38.10	71.43	71.03	96.26
Being able to speak and communicate well with other people	67.86	92.86	56.25	81.25	61.90	100.00	66.67	99.07
Being able to understand and communicate with people from other cultures	32.14	82.14	37.50	81.25	19.05	76.19	52.34	91.59
Being able to work with other people in teams	60.71	100.00	56.25	93.75	66.67	95.24	79.63	98.15
Being able to build and manage a team of people	40.74	96.30	62.50	93.75	23.81	80.95	69.44	99.07
Being able to solve conflicts	21.43	78.57	50.00	81.25	23.81	80.95	62.96	94.44
Being a good manager of their time	57.14	89.29	43.75	87.50	38.10	90.48	70.09	97.20
Having a customer focus	39.29	89.29	43.75	81.25	47.62	80.95	66.36	97.20
Being creative and innovative in their thinking	60.71	100.00	50.00	100.00	47.62	90.48	76.64	97.20
Being able to reflect upon what and how they learn	35.71	100.00	56.25	100.00	42.86	85.71	62.04	96.30
Being able to plan and organise activities	39.29	92.86	50.00	93.75	28.57	90.48	77.78	98.15

	<b>Employer</b>		<b>Training Provider</b>		<b>Instructor</b>		<b>Trainee</b>	
	<b>VImp</b>	<b>Imp</b>	<b>VImp</b>	<b>Imp</b>	<b>VImp</b>	<b>Imp</b>	<b>VImp</b>	<b>Imp</b>
Having work and study skills	42.86	89.29	31.25	87.50	28.57	100.00	73.83	99.07
Having a practical focus	46.43	100.00	56.25	87.50	66.67	95.24	85.05	100.00
Being self-confident	66.67	100.00	68.75	93.75	52.38	95.24	86.79	99.06
Being able to change how they think and behave	28.57	92.86	37.50	87.50	33.33	95.24	55.14	95.33
Being able to complete a task when there is incomplete information	33.33	88.89	25.00	81.25	23.81	76.19	50.00	87.74
Knowing how they learn best about new skills or ideas	35.71	96.43	56.25	87.50	42.86	95.24	70.48	98.10
Being ethical	22.22	92.59	53.33	86.67	47.62	85.71	59.22	97.09
Being able to challenge how things are done	35.71	96.43	33.33	100.00	38.10	90.48	76.19	99.05
Being motivated	64.29	92.86	50.00	100.00	57.14	95.24	72.12	99.04
Being adaptable to change at work	60.71	100.00	50.00	100.00	52.38	100.00	67.62	99.05

**Table 16: Per cent of respondents listing skills as taught well, taught poorly, and important for a job in their industry (employer, training provider, instructor, trainee sample)**

	Taught well (%)				Taught Poorly (%)				Important in industry (%)			
	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai
1. Being able to read, spell and write well	1.80	1.33	<b><u>8.57</u></b>	3.90	<b><u>7.92</u></b>	1.54	1.67	1.56	3.54	3.75	4.35	4.86
2. Being able to use mathematical ideas and techniques	2.70	1.33	1.43	2.67	<b><u>5.94</u></b>	3.08	1.67	4.43	3.54	1.25	1.45	1.95
3. Being able to solve problems	<b><u>7.21</u></b>	4.00	1.43	3.29	0.99	<b><u>7.69</u></b>	1.67	4.17	<b><u>8.85</u></b>	<b><u>8.75</u></b>	4.35	4.47
4. Being able to use information technology	4.50	4.00	1.43	2.87	4.95	<b><u>6.15</u></b>	0.00	<b><u>5.47</u></b>	3.54	2.50	1.45	3.70
5. Being able to understand how ideas and systems are linked to each other	<b><u>7.21</u></b>	2.67	2.86	4.72	0.99	3.08	0.00	3.65	<b><u>6.19</u></b>	1.25	1.45	2.72
6. Being able to collect, analyse and organise information	0.90	<b><u>8.00</u></b>	2.86	4.11	3.96	1.54	<b><u>8.33</u></b>	5.47	0.88	3.75	1.45	2.53
7. Being able to speak and communicate well with other people	1.80	<b><u>6.67</u></b>	4.29	5.34	<b><u>6.93</u></b>	4.62	3.33	2.08	1.77	<b><u>7.50</u></b>	1.45	4.47
8. Being able to understand and communicate with people from other cultures	1.80	<b><u>6.67</u></b>	5.71	1.44	<b><u>5.94</u></b>	4.62	1.67	<b><u>4.95</u></b>	0.88	5.00	0.00	3.11
9. Being able to work with other people in teams	8.11	2.67	<b><u>7.14</u></b>	<b><u>6.16</u></b>	0.99	<b><u>7.69</u></b>	1.67	2.08	<b><u>7.96</u></b>	5.00	0.00	3.50
10. Being able to build and manage a team of people	1.80	5.33	2.86	1.44	4.95	3.08	3.33	4.69	1.77	3.75	1.45	3.89
11. Being able to solve conflicts	3.60	4.00	1.43	1.44	<b><u>5.94</u></b>	<b><u>6.15</u></b>	0.00	4.69	2.65	5.00	1.45	2.53

	Taught well (%)				Taught Poorly (%)				Important in industry (%)			
	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai	Emp	Trng Pvder	Ins	Trai
12. Being a good manager of their time	3.60	5.33	2.86	3.08	<u>7.92</u>	4.62	<u>6.67</u>	4.69	1.77	1.25	1.45	3.11
13. Having a customer focus	<u>6.31</u>	2.67	<u>7.14</u>	2.26	3.96	3.08	<u>10.00</u>	3.65	<u>8.85</u>	0.00	<u>7.25</u>	2.14
14. Being creative and innovative in their thinking	<u>8.11</u>	<u>6.67</u>	4.29	4.11	4.95	1.54	<u>11.67</u>	2.60	5.31	<u>7.50</u>	<u>10.14</u>	3.70
15. Being able to reflect upon what and how they learn	1.80	5.33	1.43	2.05	2.97	1.54	1.67	<u>6.77</u>	0.88	3.75	1.45	1.17
16. Being able to plan and organise activities	3.60	1.33	4.29	3.90	7.92	3.08	0.00	4.17	3.54	1.25	2.90	3.70
17. Having work and study skills	4.50	4.00	2.86	<u>8.83</u>	1.98	4.62	3.33	3.91	3.54	2.50	4.35	<u>6.03</u>
18. Having a practical focus	<u>7.21</u>	4.00	<u>11.43</u>	<u>9.03</u>	0.00	<u>6.15</u>	0.00	3.39	4.42	3.75	<u>7.25</u>	<u>6.42</u>
19. Being self-confident	5.41	<u>9.33</u>	<u>7.14</u>	<u>8.83</u>	1.98	1.54	3.33	2.08	4.42	<u>7.50</u>	4.35	<u>10.31</u>
20. Being able to change how they think and behave	2.70	0.00	2.86	2.26	2.97	4.62	3.33	<u>4.95</u>	0.88	0.00	1.45	2.53
21. Being able to complete a task when there is incomplete information	0.90	1.33	1.43	2.26	2.97	0.00	<u>6.67</u>	<u>6.51</u>	2.65	1.25	1.45	0.58
22. Knowing how they learn best about new skills or ideas	3.60	1.33	2.86	3.29	0.99	0.00	5.00	3.65	4.42	3.75	5.80	3.31
23. Being ethical	2.70	2.67	2.86	1.85	3.96	3.08	8.33	1.82	5.31	<u>10.00</u>	<u>7.25</u>	1.75
24. Being able to challenge how things are done	0.90	5.33	0.00	<u>5.54</u>	1.98	<u>7.69</u>	<u>6.67</u>	2.86	1.77	2.50	1.45	<u>6.61</u>
25. Being motivated	4.50	2.67	5.71	3.49	3.96	1.54	5.00	1.82	<u>6.19</u>	5.00	<u>14.49</u>	<u>6.23</u>
26. Being adaptable to change at work	2.70	1.33	2.86	1.85	1.98	<u>7.69</u>	5.00	3.91	4.42	2.50	<u>10.14</u>	4.67

**Table 17: General Attitude (Percent agreeing to each statement - Employer sample)**

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree
I believe I am very clear in understanding why it is important to learn generic skills	40.74	92.59
I have heard of the National Competency standards, National Assessments and National Certificates	21.43	64.29
Students only want to learn the skills that they believe are relevant to the job or industry they want to work in	10.71	60.71
Students want to learn a broad set of skills that will allow them to change jobs or industries	21.43	71.43
My industry wants TVET graduates who have broad generic skills rather than only specialist/technical skills	40.74	85.19
The TVET graduates I employ are highly employable in a range of jobs in different industries	25.93	81.48
I believe that the generic skills should be taught in the Institutes	29.63	81.48
I believe that the generic skills can be learnt at the workplace and therefore the institutes should only focus on technical trainings	35.71	60.71

**Table 18: General Attitude (Percent agreeing to each statement - trainee sample)**

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree
Teachers are very clear in explaining why it is important to be learning certain skills	38.32	81.31
I enjoy the activities we do in class to help us develop new skills	62.04	96.3
I understand how the assessment is used to test if I have achieved competence or not in a new skill	32.08	83.96
I only want to learn skills that are relevant to the job or industry I want to work in	27.78	62.04
I want to learn a broad set of skills that will allow me to change jobs or industries if and when I want to	61.68	86.92
I think our teachers are innovative in how they help us learn new skills	34.26	87.04
Teachers have a very practical focus in what they teach us	42.59	84.26

**Table 19: General Attitude (Percent agreeing to each statement - Training provider and instructor sample)**

	Training Provider		Instructor	
	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree
I believe I am very clear in explaining why it is important to learn generic skills	50	81.25	60.00	75.00
Students understand how the assessment is being used to test if they have achieved competence in a generic skill	25	81.25	5.88	47.06
Students only want to learn the skills that will allow them to change jobs or industries	61.25	100	26.32	68.42
My Industry wants students who have broad set of skills that will allow them to change jobs or industries	33.33	73.33	11.11	44.44
My industry wants students who have broad generic skills rather than only specialist skills	31.25	68.75	10.53	31.58
I assess and report on generic skills	7.69	76.92	0.00	44.44
Our NCS clearly describes the generic skills required. The competence based standards for industry does a good job in embedding generic skills:				
- in the content	21.43	50	6.25	75.00
- in the processes described	7.14	71.43	0.00	43.75
- in the assessment guidelines	7.14	64.29	0.00	58.82
-in the underpinning skills and knowledge	21.46	64.29	0.00	50.00
Our industry training package (Competency standard and the curriculum) is helping to produce graduates who are highly employable in a range of jobs in different industries	20	80	0.00	27.78
There are guidelines in the Competency standard that help me assess generic skill development in my students	14.29	85.71	0.00	29.41