

## **Exploring the Road Less Travelled: Attitude, Satisfaction and Competency of Senior High School Students in the Technical Vocational Livelihood Track**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*School to work transition is becoming a major concern of the current educational system. The senior high school is primarily designed not only for mastery of concepts and skills for tertiary education but also for developing competencies for entrepreneurship and employment. Among the tracks in the program, the technical vocational track is a rightful track for those who immediately wants to seek employment. Unfortunately, technical vocational education is perceived as a track for those students who are not college bound or who cannot afford college education and thus its status is devalued in the educational system (Dalley-trim & Alloway, n.d.).*

*The study explored the attitudes and satisfaction of senior high school students towards technical vocational education and determined its relationship to their employability readiness competency. The study employed a descriptive correlational research design. The respondents of the study were Grades 11 and 12 senior high school students enrolled in public schools in the City of Manila and are currently under the Technical Vocational Livelihood Track (TVLT).*

*Results of the study showed that satisfaction obtained the highest mean ratings among the variables of the study. The results likewise affirmed the research hypothesis model that attitude and satisfaction are predictors of employability readiness competency; and that, satisfaction and attitude towards vocational education are positively correlated.*

*With the changing principles and concepts of Technical Vocational Education, the theories and practice, together with perceptions and attitudes should shift alongside with it. Thus, creation of a professional learning community, review of the curriculum and strengthening of the equivalency pathways are the recommendations for a truly inclusive, transformative and sustainable TVET.*

*Keywords: attitude, satisfaction, competency, employability readiness, technical vocational track, senior high school*

### **Introduction**

School to work transition is becoming a major concern of the current educational system. The curriculum is being designed in a way that classroom activities otherwise known as performance tasks will prepare students to achieve skills needed in the “real world setting.” Such is the case on the conception of the K to 12 curriculum, the additional two years in high school is primarily designed not only for further mastery of concepts and skills needed for tertiary education but also for developing competencies needed for entrepreneurship and employment. The government clearly wants to change the public perception that secondary education is just a preparation for college, but rather, it could be an opportunity too for a rewarding career.

Among the tracks in the senior high school program, the technical vocational track is a rightful track for those who immediately wants to seek employment. However, even prior to

enrolling in the track, there are already exploratory subjects in technical livelihood education being offered in the junior high school. Suffice to say that the current curriculum pursues the return of interest in vocational education. Studies have highlighted the importance of the vocationality of the educational system for allocating graduates in the labor market, finding that vocational education enhances the transition from school to the first job (Forster and Bol, 2017) and that strong occupationally oriented training in vocational education systems has been praised by policy makers as an efficient way of lowering youth unemployment (OECD and ILO, 2014).

Globally, there is also an increased awareness and recognition of the importance of technical and vocational skills development (Palmer, 2014). In UNESCO's 2012 Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), there is already a call for a "transformative VET" which means that the target of VET is not simply on change in economics or societal change but a transformation which emphasizes on human development such as life and work skills. Likewise, VET is a central aspect of Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UN, 2015: 17). TVET is also now being pushed as part of the program for education for sustainable development (ESD) where UNESCO (2016a) describes that "TVET contributes to sustainable development by empowering individuals, organizations, enterprises and communities, and fostering employment, decent work and lifelong learning so as to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and competitiveness, social equity and environmental sustainability." This is also translated in UNESCO's strategic plan for TVET for 2016-2021 which includes three pillars of priority areas: 1. fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship; 2. promoting equity and gender equality; and 3. facilitating the transition to green economies and sustainable societies. As such, the latest document of UNESCO (2017) is all about greening the technical and vocational education and training – a milestone achievement for TVET proponents, a significant recognition to the valuable contribution of TVET not only in terms of economy and education per se but for sustainable development.

Technical-vocational education and training (TVET) in the Philippines is under the jurisdiction of Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). It was established in 1994 by virtue of RA 7796, otherwise known as the Technical Education and Skills Development Act, in response to the trifocalization of education and focuses on training requirements of those who need to acquire or upgrade their competencies to enhance employability, improve productivity or facilitate career shift. Earlier, the potential clientele of TVET includes primarily the high school graduates, secondary school leavers, college undergraduates, displaced workers and returning Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). But with the institution of a technical vocational unit in the secondary education, and consequently, a technical vocational track, this domain is expected to expand and give a more meaningful learning outcome. Currently, the Technical Vocational Livelihood Track for Senior High School is concentrated on the following: Agriculture and Fishery Arts (AFA), Home Economics (HE), Information and Technology (IT) and Industrial Arts (IA).

Unfortunately, TVET is perceived as a track for those students who are not college bound or who cannot afford college education. In fact, there is a truth to this, TVET is primarily established as a form of non-formal education. Students are differently motivated to pursue TVET (Education, 2014). The study further cited that possible employment, value for money, affordability of training and the desire to enter a specific field are just some of the reasons students choose TVET. Admittedly though, that progression to university education is a desirable option from among the respondents. Locally, a similar study was made by TESDA in 2013 and revealed that 45% of students are enrolled in the Tech Voc Track because of employment, 38% to gain skills, 7 % to upgrade skills, and a minority responded of having nothing to do or for personal use. Obviously,

there are internal and external factors that makes one pursue the technical vocational track and thus the researcher would want to determine the attitudes and likewise the satisfaction in the curriculum of the senior high school enrolled in the said track.

Notably, employment is one of the main motivation of students in pursuing TVET. As such, the enhancement of employability skills is now being highlighted apart from the technical skills needed for work. However, prior to being employed, students of TVET must be assessed based on their competency level. Competency, according to Wahba (n.d.), is the individual's ability to use, apply and demonstrate a group of related awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to perform tasks and duties successfully and which can be measured against well-accepted standards required in employment. In the Tech Voc Track, competency is measured using national standards, as such, it implies a more formal, objective process of assessing performance by clearly knowing what is being assessed and how it is assessed. On the other hand, employability skills are set of skills, knowledge and attributes needed to compete for employment and sustain job (Ismail and Mohammed, 2015). Essentially, employability skills are generic skills and can be applied to all types of jobs and positions. According to Ismail, Yatim and Zakaria (2014) the common employability skills needed by employers are communication, problem solving and interpersonal skills. Employability skills are also being measured in terms of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and thus also include creativity, teamwork and information, media and technology skills. In this study, competency will be measured as employability readiness competency, which will refer to both competency skills and employability skills a senior high school student in the technical vocational track possess in order to be employed and be part of a workforce.

With the current reform in our educational system because of the implementation of the K to 12 curriculum and likewise the institutionalization of different tracks, it is but fitting to explore into the attitudes and satisfaction of senior high school students towards technical vocational education. Additionally, the researcher would like to determine the relationship of these variables to the employability readiness competencies of the respondents.

## **Theoretical Background**

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The focus of education to produce competitive graduates ready to the demands of local and global employment is a reflection of the Human Capital Theory (Schultz, 1963). The theory is essentially from perspective of macroeconomic development and was applied in the field of education by Becker (1993). The theory states that man acquires a considerable amount of capital through education. Human capital development therefore refer to knowledge, expertise and skills acquired by a person through education and training. While university education plays a major role in the boosting the knowledge economy, the surge of technical and vocational education supports green economy (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). Nonetheless, education supports competitiveness of an individual as part of the working force of the industry be it in the local or international arena. Education encompasses the competencies acquired by students through the rich learning experiences embedded in the curriculum. These learning experiences likewise augment in the capital of a person in terms of human development. Institutions of education, whether tertiary or TVET schools, must therefore produce graduates who do not only have technical skills but the rightful competencies for employment.

Another applicable theory is the trait-and-factor theory of Frank Parsons (1909). The theory developed the idea of matching careers to talent, skills and personality. Thus, when a person has achieved an accurate understanding of his or her individual trait - aptitudes, interests, personal abilities – plus a knowledge of the jobs and the labor market then the person will have a better

understanding of his or her vocation. Parsons (1909) further affirms that when individuals are in jobs best suited to their attitudes and abilities they perform best. Similarly, when a person's attitude and satisfaction are met in a particular vocation, such as the technical vocational education, then the person is expected to demonstrate his best skills and competencies – these competencies are consequently can be translated as employability readiness competencies – all these traits and factors a complement one another in making a successful worker or leader.

### ***Literature Review***

The qualitative study of Dalley-Trim & Alloway (n.d.) among secondary students perceived the advantages and disadvantages of being enrolled in a TVET school. Among the advantages mentioned is that TVET subjects provide valuable qualifications and a “head start” in terms of post-school pursuits; thus, it provides the students to gain more life skills specifically those that link directly to employment. The subjects too were more practical in nature and thus provide a relief from the taxing demands of academic subjects. In terms of negative perceptions, the key issue is on the status of TVET in terms of the type of students this type of track is suited for and the link of their inability to enter university because of their academic grades. Clearly, TVET is stereotyped as a domain for non-academically inclined students and devalued as an educational program.

Similarly, the study of Okae-Adjei (2017) perceived negative perception of parents and employers towards TVET. Parents view that TVET is for the less fortunate in the society, non-intellectuals, low achievers and that it offers non lucrative jobs. On the part of the employers, TVET graduates are perceived to be not well prepared to be resourceful and self-reliant. They are likewise perceived to have failed to acquire important skills in communication, problem-solving and critical thinking.

While students of TVET generally perceive that TVET is beneficial to them and a viable option for those who cannot otherwise pursue postsecondary education, still there is an underlying assumption that this program is for students who lack academic capability and for those with no other options (Jordan & Dechert, 2012). The study further shows that vocational courses help students outperform their peers and earn more money in a job as well as prevent dropping out of high school. However, there is still partiality in the general perception that those in TVET land in low-wage and low-skill jobs and is still undesirable for mainstream students.

In terms of attitudes, motivation, satisfaction and vocational self-concept regarding the TVET curriculum, the study of Wu and Jia-Jen-Hu (2015), showed that junior high school students of technical education programs in Taiwan held positive skill learning attitudes, and low skill learning motivation. Most students are satisfied with the curriculum of the technical education program and have high level of vocational self-concept. Attitude and satisfaction were also significantly correlated. This study thus shows that a positive attitude towards the technical vocational program can be developed from the students if they are satisfied with the curriculum. The negative perceptions towards vocational education can be removed or at least diminished if the students will develop a sense of entitlement and satisfaction towards the career they are pursuing.

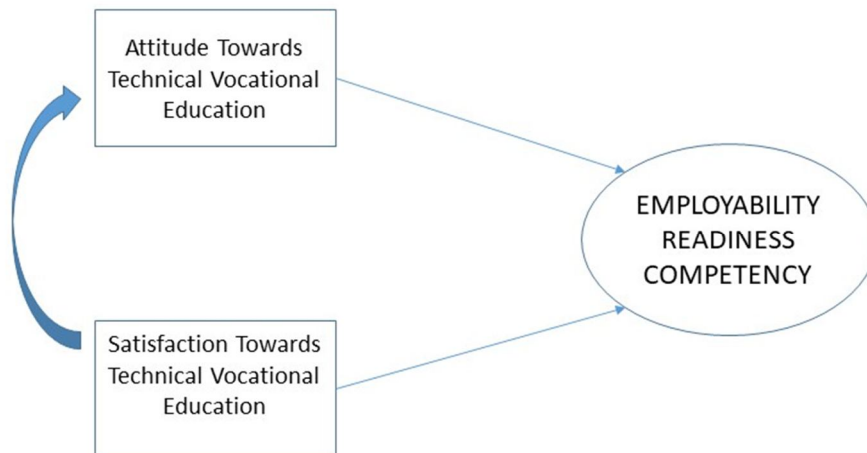
The study of Miller (2012) focused on education levels, work experience, and participation in training as factors that could attribute to the development of workforce competencies. In order to respond to changing world economic situations, the education system must be flexible for effective competency development. This is true in technical vocational education curriculum where learning also occurs by observation and modeling in real settings such as the workplace, which is why work experience fosters learning and development in ways not found inside the classroom. However, the competency-based curriculum applied in Tech Voc demands a strong and multifaceted competent faculty (Barman and Konwar, 2012). Inculcating and facilitating competency-based curriculum

likewise require the collaborative administration with other institutions to be able to continuously set and develop needed competencies based on the needs of the industries. Similar study by Sultan and Shafi (2014) conducted among high school students found out that perceived teachers' competence predicts the students' performance. Consequently, Baughman (2012) defined workplace competencies as the application of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors which are directly measurable through actions or demonstrations of the existence of those competencies in the individual. Baughman (2012) said providing students with a glimpse of workplace realities require a clear understanding of the employer expectations and an assessment process. Because most senior high school students are just entering adulthood, the attitudes, interests, values, and character development that underlie their behaviors may not be at the professional level. However, measuring their employability readiness competencies even before they graduate senior high school is a good indication of their pre-professional attitudes and skills.

In terms of employability, according to de Guzman and Choi (2013), team work skills ranked the highest employability skill among students and graduates of TVET schools. Team work skills are significantly related to concern, control, curiosity and confidence. The study further supports that attitudes, beliefs and competencies do not completely reside within the individuals but rather they are developed by working and through relationship with others. Similar results were revealed in a study made by Sermsuk, Triwichtkhun and Wongwanich (2014) that the first most required skill by employers were personal management skills, teamwork skills and fundamental skills. Specifically, employers look for demonstration of positive expression of behaviors and attitudes as well as responsibility. This is followed by the ability to work in a smooth relationship with others and to be able to participate in projects and tasks. For the fundamental skills, employers typically look for problem solving and thinking skills. The study of Rahman, Mokhtar, & Hamzah (2011) further recommends that some generic skills must be enhanced by the curriculum specifically leadership and entrepreneurial skills. Leadership and entrepreneurial skills must be strengthened in the curriculum whether one takes university or vocational education. Entrepreneurial skills refer to ability to explore and discover new opportunity, willingness to take a risk and enthusiasm to try out new method or ideas (MQA, 2005). These are important skills to be enriched especially in the TVET curriculum so that students and stakeholders alike can eventually value the need of TVET and take its course of action as an educational program for sustainable development.



### 2.3 Hypothesized Model



**Figure 1. Hypothesized Model**

H<sub>1</sub>: The better students' attitude have towards technical vocational curriculum, the higher are their employability readiness competencies

H<sub>2</sub>: The better students' satisfaction have towards technical vocational curriculum, the higher are their employability readiness competencies

H<sub>3</sub>: Satisfaction towards the technical vocational curriculum has a positive effect on the attitudes of students towards the technical vocational curriculum

### Method

#### *Research Design*

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design. According to Sekeran (2003), descriptive study determines and describes the characteristics of the variables of importance in a context. Correlational research, on the other hand, involves the measurement of two or more relevant variables and assess the relationship between or among these variables. The study intends to explore the attitudes and satisfaction of senior high school students towards technical vocational curriculum and determine its relationship to employability readiness competencies.

#### *Subjects and Study Site*

The respondents of the study were chosen using probability sampling which means that the samples or subjects in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected as respondents. Specifically, the respondents of the study were Grades 11 and 12 senior high school students enrolled in public schools in the City of Manila and are currently under the technical vocational track (TVET). There were one hundred sixty-eight (168) students who participated in the study. The study was conducted in selected public schools in Tondo, Manila which is the area where the TVET track is mostly offered.

#### *Instrumentation/Data Measures*

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The items of the questionnaire to measure attitude, satisfaction and competency was adapted from various published sources and

modified to fit the constructs of the study. The items were answered using a 6-point agreement scale where 6 is strongly agree and 1 is disagree. Validation of the items was considered by conducting a pilot test. The Cronbach value for reliability was computed and revealed an alpha score of 0.840.

### ***Data Gathering Procedure***

The data gathering procedure commenced with a letter of approval from the Department of Education Manila District Superintendent. The letter of approval was shown to the principal of participating public schools. With the approval of the principal, a letter of consent was given to student-respondents asking for their voluntary participation in the study. The purpose of the study, risks and benefits was thoroughly discussed to the students to ensure an accurate and ethical data gathering process. Survey questionnaires were then distributed and collected.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

The researcher considered ethical principles in conducting the study. First is the principle of beneficence or the right not to be harmed. Thus, the respondents were assured that they will not be harmed during the data gathering process. Respect for human dignity was likewise observed since all the information about the study were fully disclosed. The respondents were informed of their right to privacy and anonymity. As such, confidentiality of their identity and their responses are strictly safeguarded.

### ***Data Analysis***

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the collected data. The mean, mode and standard deviation were specifically used for descriptive statistics. For inferential statistics, linear regression and Pearson correlation were used to analyze the data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was the software used to compute for the statistical analysis of the collected data.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Descriptive Analysis of Variables***

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables*

<b>Demographic Variables</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
Age	18	1.24041
Gender	Male	0.51509
Grade	11	0.30805
Strand	Information and Communication Technology	1.10412
National Competency Level	NC II	0.21105

Table 1 shows the modal values of the demographic variables of the study. Most of the respondents are age 18, male and are in Grade 11. Respondents are mainly in the Information and Communication Technology Strand and mostly have second level National Competency Certificate.

However, the relatively high standard deviation for age and strand refers to the variability of the responses. The age group of the respondents varied from age 17 to 21. Given the number of years in the basic education in the Philippines, age 17 is just about the average age of students under the Senior High School Program. Thus, it is interesting to note that there are still students above 20 years of age who are still pursuing Senior High School under the Technical Vocational Track.

With regards to strand, while many are pursuing Information, Technology and Communication (ICT) strand, there are still quite a number of students who pursued Home Economics, Agriculture and Industrial Arts. This may be attributed to the locale of the research which was concentrated in an urbanized area in Metro Manila.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Attitude, Satisfaction and Competence

Variables	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	S.D.
Attitude	4.6379	2.11	6.00	0.77112
Satisfaction	4.7243	2.30	6.00	0.82184
Competence	4.6556	2.50	6.00	0.75387

Table 2, on the other hand, presents the mean scores of the respondents on the main variables of the study which are attitude, satisfaction and competence. Mean scores computed are 4.64, 4.72 and 4.66 respectively. Satisfaction posted the highest mean scores. Items on this variable were measured in terms of satisfaction with the curriculum, instructional delivery and facilities.

In terms of attitude the highest mean is on the item *I am self-motivated to succeed* ( $\mu=5.19$ ) followed by the item *I possess good attitude towards work* ( $\mu=5.02$ ). According to Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (as cited by Valitova, Starodubtsev, & Goryanova, 2015) self-determination has interrelatedness to the choice of life path or life self-determination. Thus, given that the students in the Technical Vocational track have high motivation to succeed, is a good indication that the students perceive that this track will prepare them for a specific life path that will make them successful in life. Similarly, the high mean scores in attitudes towards work presents positivity in the personality of the students involved in the Tech Voc track which according to the same study made by Valitova, Starodubtsev, and Goryanova (2015) the connection between personality and determination is a deciding factor in making a career choice. However, students perceive lowly on the items *I will be well prepared to enter the labor market* ( $\mu=4.38$ ) and *I have better job opportunities than other students* ( $\mu=4.18$ ). This has been a pressing issue of TVET where several studies mentioned that there is poor public perception in terms of employment opportunities for students enrolled under this track (Jordan & Dechert, 2012; Education, 2014). Part of the study done by Education (2014) were interview transcripts from students and some answers given by the students were “*people with degrees get the best jobs*” and “*it doesn't really matter which kind of learning could give a better job, cause jobs are hard to get on the whole.*” These responses imply that need for a curriculum that are responsive to the needs of the labor market not only in terms of employment, but rather enhancing too the entrepreneurial capability of the students.

For satisfaction, the items with the highest mean scores are *The program allows us to enhance our leadership skills* ( $\mu=4.98$ ) and *The program gives opportunities to students to showcase their tasks, output or performance* ( $\mu=4.92$ ). Subsequently, the items which obtained the fairly low mean scores are *The program allows us (students) to progress at our own pace* ( $\mu=4.56$ ) and *The equipment are sufficient to the needs of the students* ( $\mu=4.54$ ). The items under this variable referred to satisfaction towards curriculum, instruction and facilities. The results show that the students are satisfied most with the curriculum because it provides them opportunity to develop soft skills such as leadership skills apart from the hard skills that is very evident in a TVET curriculum. These hard skills were manifested in the curriculum in terms of tasks, output and performance. In



terms of instruction, teachers in TVET must be wary of the pace of instruction and lastly, equipment and facilities must be improved as these also contribute to the overall learning of the students. These same results coincide with the study of Wu & Jia-Jen-Hu (2015) where satisfaction of TVET students in Taiwan rated content the highest, followed by teaching styles and least satisfaction is placed on equipments. While the satisfaction scale may be somehow subjective, these students' perceptions must be taken into consideration when reviewing the TVET curriculum for the Senior High School Program in order to transform public perception that the curriculum is relevant, and it caters to all students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and academic ability levels (Jordan & Dechert, 2012).

Under the variable competence, which measured essential employability readiness skills needed in the workplace, the items which gained high ratings are *I do self-evaluation to monitor my performance on different tasks* ( $\mu=4.83$ ) and *I am able to work in a team environment* ( $\mu=4.80$ ). The study of Sermsuk et. al., (2014) mentioned personal management skills as well as teamwork skills as important skills that must be developed by secondary school graduates according to employers' perspectives. Personal management skills include responsibility and having a conscious effort to learn continuously, whereas teamwork skills refer to ability to work with others and participate in projects and tasks. These are also the same skills that are being developed in the secondary curriculum in general. According to de Guzman & Choi (2013) graduates' exposure to working in teams and are given a variety of projects and tasks can adapt well in different organizations. Meanwhile, low ratings were given to items pertaining to *I have managerial skills* ( $\mu=4.50$ ) and *I demonstrate negotiation skills* ( $\mu=4.47$ ). These competencies should be improved if educational leaders are keen on fulfilling the promise of K to 12 education which is to produce graduates that are not only college-bound but are also ready for employment and entrepreneurship.

***H<sub>1</sub>: The better students' attitude have towards technical vocational curriculum, the higher is their employability readiness competency***

Table 3: Linear Regression of Attitude and Competency

Variables	Standardized Coefficients	R square	F	p-value
Attitude and Competency	0.566*	0.320	78.569	0.000*

\*significant

Linear regression of the variables attitude and competency showed significant findings as presented in Table 3. The results confirmed the first hypothesis that better student attitudes result to higher levels of competency. These results also corroborated with the findings of Ngai, Cheung, & Yuan (2016) that by empowering individuals with skills, competency or other resources needed for work, people tend to align their personal values in the things that they are doing. This may be attributed to the high self determination to succeed and good attitude in work the respondents expressed under the items in the variable attitude. This means that the respondents find a purpose in the track they are enrolled in and are positive that their engagement in the TVET could provide them an opportunity for a better future. Similar results were presented in the study of de Guzman & Choi (2013) where the researchers established a relationship between career adaptability – which mostly comprise of items about concern, control, curiosity and confidence – and employability skills – which in this study was also referred to as competency skills. Comparably, the study Hodzic, Ripoll, Lira, & Zenasni (2015) also proved that an increase in emotional competences and emotion regulation strategies can increase in people's beliefs in their own capabilities and their ability to find employment.

***H<sub>2</sub>: The better students' satisfaction have towards technical vocational curriculum, the higher is their employability readiness competency***

Table 4: Linear Regression of Satisfaction and Competency

Variables	Standardized Coefficients	R square	F	p-value
Satisfaction and Competency	0.680*	0.463	143.818	0.000*

\*significant

Table 4 presents the result of the linear regression for the variables satisfaction and competency. With a standardized coefficient of 0.680 and a p-value of 0.000, the results highly suggests the confirmation of the second hypothesis. Thus, the better is the satisfaction of the students toward the curriculum, the higher will be their competency level. The study of Christian, Garza and Slaughter (as cited by Ngai, Cheung, & Yuan, 2016) are just one of the many studies that substantiated that job satisfaction is significantly related to job performance. Correspondingly, students' satisfaction in the curriculum, instruction and equipment could boost the work competencies of TVET students. While students are relatively satisfied with the TVET curriculum, there are still other areas for improvement specifically in instruction and facilities. Teachers should give a variety of performances and opportunities where students can work collaboratively and at the same time giving them also individual performances where they can reflect on their work performances and take pride in their individual output. According to the study of Wu and Jia-Jen-Hu (2015) satisfaction in the curriculum has an impact on the vocational self-concepts of students under TVET. Increase in the vocational self concept can consequently be a mediating factor to increase their interest. Volodina & Nagy (2016) implied in their study that interests are important variables in shaping ones perception of capability and outcomes expectations. Hence, it can be deduced that if a student is satisfied with how the curriculum is being implemented, it further increases their interest to pursue learning and higher work competencies can thus be achieved. For students under TVET, matching the curriculum with the needs and demands of the industry is a means to empower their future.

***H<sub>3</sub>: Satisfaction towards the technical vocational curriculum has a positive effect on the attitudes of students towards the technical vocational curriculum***

Table 5: Correlation of Satisfaction and Competency

Variables	Pearson Correlation	p-value
Satisfaction and Attitude	0.662*	0.000*

\*significant

Table 5 shows the correlation between the variables satisfaction and competency. Pearson correlation revealed a result equivalent to 0.662 and a p-value of 0.000. Thus, the results highly support the third hypothesis that satisfaction has a positive effect on the attitudes of students towards the Technical Vocational Curriculum. The study of Wu & Jia-Jen-Hu (2015) highly confirms the positive relationship between these two variables when it correlated skill learning attitudes and satisfaction. Further, Valitova, Starodubtsev, and Goryanova (2015) discussed in their paper, individualization and organization as pedagogical conditions that supports enhancement of personal characteristics of students as future professionals. Individualization refers to giving independence and autonomy for self-controlled education, it is also based on satisfying learners' needs to freely display their personal qualities and act following own interests, views and beliefs. One of the relatively low item in the satisfaction questionnaire is on the statement *The program*

*allows us (students) to progress at our own pace* ( $\mu=4.56$ ). This item manifests a certain desire for students to have time for self-directed learning. This desire can be teamed with the respondents expressed positivity in attitude and determination to succeed in their chosen path. All of these when taken together can increase the overall motivation and engagement of TVET students. As mentioned in the study of Ngai, Cheung, & Yuan (2016) self actualization among TVET students will be felt if the students felt empowered or there was a transfer of power from the teacher to the student-trainees. Such is the case whenever students does not just only comply into finishing a certain subject but rather having to finish it with an equivalent National Competency (NC) Level. The TVET program in the Philippines highly equip the students with competency needed for work and are certified based on the skills they already possess. As described in Table 1, most of the respondents already possess NC II certification. The Senior High School student-respondents are generally satisfied with the TVET curriculum, nonetheless, teachers of TVET should also explore different instructional strategies that would make students achieve a positive learning attitude towards their selected track. Based on the research of Warwas and Helm (2018) professional learning communities for Secondary Vocational Teachers can improve instructional quality, particularly, teachers are able to create a more authentic and application-oriented environment.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The Senior High School Technical Vocational Track is a track least explored by students after finishing Junior High School. Globally, there is poor public perception and recognition of TVET. Thus, evidence-based researches on TVET are necessary to raise awareness and significance of this track. The study focused on three variables - attitude, satisfaction and competency. These constructs, as proven in the study, are interrelated and proved the hypotheses of the study. Hence, attitude and satisfaction in TVET are factors that must be enhanced to increase the competency of students not only in terms of work skills but in life skills in general.

Aside from being an addition to the growing literature about vocational education, the research model used in the study can complement studies about transformative vocational education. The model is an affirmation that empowerment of an individual should not only by means of skills transfer. That, in order for TVET to be truly sustainable and transformative, the curriculum should likewise be crafted holistically taking into consideration how the work that the students are performing could best serve its purpose for personal development and for the society as a whole.

Moreover, the Philippine Qualifications Framework should truly serve its purpose especially for students under the TVET track. Such that, pathways for equivalencies and ladderization are really made possible for students. While the framework shows a flexible entry from vocational education to university education, the rigidity of university education especially in admission procedures, academic-focused requirements and number of academic load or units per term makes it hard for TVET students to cross over. Hence, development of technical colleges and universities for which there are closely related secondary TVET courses such as Business, Information Technology and Engineering, may be a way to encourage greater recognition of TVET and bring motivation to students that there are vast opportunities that await them. More importantly students should experience that equality of opportunities and capabilities exist for all senior high school students regardless of their chosen track.

In its current state, TVET focuses on human development and empowerment. Undeniably, students pursue this track for employment. However, with the changing principles and concepts of TVET, the theories and practice and even the perceptions and attitudes should move alongside with it. This study was able to capture the needed revitalization of the Technical Vocational Track by

looking into students' attitudes, perceptions on curriculum and instruction and competency skills. Nevertheless, there are still other areas of TVET that other researchers should venture to fully achieve an inclusive, transformative and sustainable TVET.

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