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Art & Design Teachers' Perspectives about Challenges of Work-integrated Learning in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT
The widening gap between the expectations of industry and the teaching and training practices followed by vocational institutions is a significant issue that needs attention and solutions by all stakeholders. The current study aims to explore teachers' perceptions in the vocational Art & Design sector in highlighting key challenges of work-integrated learning while preparing a competitive workforce. The integrated learning approach can help develop self-reliant learners who have limitations for an otherwise full-time training option and the regular vocational Art & Design students who need to get familiarized with the standards and requirements of their potential workplaces. Three research participants represent the specialized Art & Design areas, including Fashion & Textile Design, Interior Architecture Design, and Graphic Design, whereas three industry experts from the same domains triangulate the study. The qualitative approach of this research study helped understand the significant issues and potential challenges faced by the teachers in the dynamic training environment, where employability remains a core objective for all vocational institutes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather maximum input and insight from all six participants. NVivo software is used to investigate data for a detailed thematic analysis. The study promises to present significant issues that need to be effectively bridged between training institutes and related workplaces to meet the requirements of demand-driven vocational practices, leading to the successful implementation of Work-Integrated Learning.

KEYWORDS
Art & Design, Demand-driven TVET, Teachers' perspectives, Vocational education, Work-integrated learning.

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INTRODUCTION

In the age of technological and competitive advancement, the traditional education system is losing its worth. Graduated from the traditional educational system has mere bookish knowledge. They have limited exposure and industry-driven knowledge, which can serve as the prime cause of their unemployment. The educational era is changing all over the world. The top-class institutes in the world are opting for new teaching and learning techniques. They are switching towards a more learner-centric approach. This change can be quality of education, industry demands, competition, students' demand, and government policies. Integrated learning is also part of this significant change (Al-Gindy et al., 2020). Integrated learning is an educational system where students learn the theory and gain practical exposure by working on an industry-driven attitude. Practical projects during coursework, guest lectures, industrial visits, mentorships, and internships are the salient elements of the integrated learning environment. Students are compelled to learn industry-required skills, work ethics, job aptitude, time management, and much more. It also helps students get jobs right after graduation as they are already familiar with the norms and values of the industry. Moreover, their practical experience during the integrated learning process gives them a competitive edge over the students of the traditional educational system during the hiring process (Nuninger, 2017).

Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) has vast potential. It can contribute a lot to the economic development of the country. It can act as a game-changer by creating countless employment opportunities, skill development, elevating literacy rate, enhancing exports by producing local crafts and indigenous products. Despite several efforts, the TVET sector in Pakistan is still lagging (Nooruddin & Development, 2017). Efforts are being made to enhance the role of the TVET sector in the economic trail. Integrated learning is a phenomenon that can contribute a lot to this goal. Integrated learning in the TVET institute is progressing all over the world. However, in Pakistan, the pace is languid. Several issues are being reported by the literature that can be faced while implementing the integrated learning environment in TVET institutes. In Pakistan, these issues can multiply as Pakistan is an underdeveloped country with a lower literacy rate. Generally, the industrial linkages of usual institutes with the related organisations are weak. This factor is highly significant to explore the issues in the progression of the integrated learning environment in the TVET institutes.

The purpose of the study is to identify the challenges faced by the teachers during the implementation of the integrated learning environment. The challenges faced by the teachers of the TVET institutes and the industry remain the development of an efficient integrated learning environment.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the challenges faced by the teachers during the implementation of a work-integrated learning environment?

LITERATURE REVIEW

SIGNIFICANCE OF INTEGRATED LEARNING

The world is changing, and more and more technology is invading. People are losing their odd jobs as technology replaces them, resulting in unemployment crossing all the limits. Now and then, countries are facing recession, causing hundreds of people to lose their jobs. Moreover, lockdowns and downsizing are taking place in the entire world during this pandemic. Inflation rates are getting higher all the time. Life has become competitive in terms of affordability of good education, health, and lifestyle. These issues are needed to be addressed on priorities. Strong recommendations and policies are required to combat these problems. The market needs to create jobs for all the students who spend their time and money in the educational process. The institutes need to produce graduates who have the knowledge and skills that are required by the industry. The government must make policies that support the country's economic environment and create opportunities for the youth to get employed as soon as they graduate from the institutes (Fakih, Haimoun, & Kassem, 2020; Valiente, Capsada-Munsech, & G de Otero, 2020).

Work-integrated learning can play a significant role in addressing these issues effectively. Integrated learning is accepted as one of the most useful ways to gauge the students' interest in the learning process. This process helps students to get practical exposure during the learning process. The findings of several studies suggest that a work-integrated learning environment is beneficial for students' personal and professional development. One of the significant examples is the interest of Chinese students in the Australian education system as the Australian education system is a highly integrated learning system. It simply helps students to cover the gap between theory and practice. Only bookish knowledge cannot serve the purpose for the Chinese industry. This is why students prefer the integrated learning environment that can teach them skills, knowledge, and attitude required in the industry (Doolan, Piggott, Chapman, & Rycroft, 2019). Especially in the TVET sector, the importance of integrated learning is even more required. An integrated learning system is an excellent support to the TVET system since it calls for the same ideologies and goals. TVET is all about learning skills and knowledge that the employers and the industry require to gain a competitive and economic edge (Maclean & Lai, 2011; McLennan & Keating, 2008). Therefore, it could be realized that they can complement each other well.

The above reason provides a significant base ground to study the implementation of the integrated learning environment in the TVET sector. This study focuses on the challenges faced during the implementation of the integrated learning environment. The results of this study will have multilayered benefits. The results will help the teachers explain their views regarding the integrated learning environment on an individual level. They will also have the chance to communicate the hardships they face during implementing the integrated learning environment (Roiha & Education, 2014). On the organizational level, this study will help an organization identify the issues and address them during the implementation of the integrated learning environment. The study will help TVET institutes to adapt and rectify their systems as per the requirement of the integrated learning system (Ugwoke, Ezeji, Edeh, & Etonyeaku, 2016).

Moreover, this study will also help to understand the industrial demands as this study will contribute to sharing the industry's requirements with the institutes. This will help jot down the industry requirement and needs so that institutes and their industry partners can create an environment to serve those demands (Ugwoke et al., 2016). Last but not least, this study will help national policymakers by identifying the challenges faced during the implementation of the integrated learning environment. The policymakers can use the study as a framework to find the solution to the problems during integrated learning. This will also help policymakers make friendly policies that can help pave the way for implementing integrated learning in the TVET institutes.

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

Work-integrated learning is a type of learning space in which students acquire knowledge through experiential learning. Students are launched in a practice environment or occupational setting. Practical tasks related to students' degrees or areas of interest develop experiential learning, occupational, educational background, reflective practice, skill-oriented training, and handling various research processes expose students to the real working environment and requirements. Another definition suggested that integrated learning is an excellent tool to engage students in the fresh graduates' practical learning and develop the industry-required attitudes and skills (Jackson, 2015).

Work-integrated learning is not new in the spheres of higher education. Practical or experiential learning is always considered good, especially in vocational programs or professional certifications (Orrell, 2004). Employers, students, and universities support the idea of integrated learning. This practice is rapidly growing, and universities are adopting this process as an optional practice or as an obligation. But this trend may sometimes stir as excessive resources and vigilant

administration are required to handle WIL. Some essential requirements of work-integrated learning are environment, trained staff, well-defined process, and constant supervision (Orrell, 2004).

Work-integrated learning is also explained as a globally acknowledged strategy to develop employability skills by exposing students to a realistic learning environment. It is a strategy endorsed to engage students in applying theoretical or bookish knowledge to the real-time learning experience (Ferns, Campbell, & Zegwaard, 2014). Practical learning, activities, placements, supervised practice, internship, workshops, and stimulations are part of the work-integrated learning curriculum. Over the recent years, both public and private spheres of integrated learning have had debates and discussions about work-integrated learning. It can be said that WIL is majorly promoted due to the increasing interest of government policy and policymakers. It is said that the increased market demand of hands-on experienced students and students who demand practical learning contribute to the significance of WIL (Harvey & Norman, 2005; Yorke, 2006).

Partnerships are one of the most distinguishing features of work-integrated learning. The partnerships are between teachers, students, higher education managers, employers, professional accreditation bodies, brokerage agencies. The partnerships are usually based on mutual respect and explicit benefits (Orrell, 2004). The benefits are experiential learning, market advantage, sponsorship from different industries or international organizations (Abeysekera, 2006). Work-integrated learning culture also helps different higher education institutes to fulfill their missions and goals of future-oriented learning. This approach also helps in building a skill-oriented society and merely providing degrees to the students. As a result of work-oriented learning, a workforce is ready that is apt with the industry required to get employed. But they can be employers by opting to become entrepreneurs (Alderman & Milne, 2005; Crebert* et al., 2004; C. Smith, Ferns, & Russell, 2016).

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING & STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Student's competencies are the main target to be achieved by implementing a work-integrated learning programme (Freudenberg, Brimble, Vyvyan, & Teaching, 2010). The literature review also suggests the positive relationship between work-integrated learning and student competencies and performance (Arnold, Loan-Clarke, Harrington, & Hart, 1999). Enormous studies in literature support the positive impact of work-integrated education on students' performance, motivation, job knowledge, and industry-required skills. Learning in a realistic environment helps students develop professional behaviors and pressure-bearing attitudes (Hughes, Moore, & Bailey, 1999). Student learning shows a better graph after the implementation of the work-integrated learning program. This includes the skills of the students and the understanding of the theoretical concept, their applicability in the practical world (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). This is reported by various studies that WIL can improve students' confidence level, understanding, and employability skills (Fallows & Steven, 2000). Different authors agreed that work-integrated learning could be introduced as a formal curriculum model as it provides a solid basis for students' personal and professional development (Fallows & Steven, 2000). The studies also reveal that practical learning during the academic course work trains the students for the professional environment and positively influences the salary structure of the fresh graduates (J. McNamara et al., 2012). Another important aspect of better performance is the involvement of the employees in the preparation of course curriculum. This help in developing an up-to-date curriculum which simply boost the engagement of the students (Freudenberg, Brimble, & Cameron, 2011). A study suggested that work-integrated learning develops discipline, confidence, ownership of responsibility, analytical thinking, resource management, and increased commitment to educational goals (Dressler, Keeling, & learning, 2004). Another significant contribution that work-integrated knowledge makes is the replication and transfer of knowledge (Freudenberg & Lupton, 2004). Yet another contribution is covering the inter-knowledge gap. Inter-knowledge gap is the inability to transform theoretical knowledge into the practical experience (Tan & Veal, 2005). The absence of an inter-knowledge gap and the ability to transfer the knowledge helps the students to maintain high self-esteem, confidence, ability to handle challenging situations and urge for outstanding performance (Bandura, 1982; Subramaniam & Freudenberg, 2007).

WORK-INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Work-integrated knowledge theories claim to the better development of the students both academically and technically. Various studies in literature often support these theories. Different studies suggest that work-integrated learning positively impacts students' motivation and participation during the educational process. Students depict a higher level of engagement in the programs of integrated knowledge and show better performance

WIL provides a wide range of skills to the students. It plays a substantial role in students' growth, personal development, confidence level, and ability to transform theory in practice (Sun & Scott, 2005). Various methodologies of WIL like practical learning, guest lectures, case studies, internships, and field placement significantly contribute to enhancing students' engagement and satisfaction level (C. Smith et al., 2016; J. A. Smith & Sivo, 2012) But there are several challenges faced by the assessors and institutes during implementing the WIL theories (J. J. A. McNamara & Education, 2013). A case study of Japan and Hong Kong showed a varying degree of impact of WIL on student

performance. In Japan, students have a greater understanding of WIL and positively impact student learning and performance. Whereas in Hong Kong, WIL has a lower impact on student performance (Tanaka & Carlson, 2012). According to a study, student readiness to work and conflict resolving attitude are the fruits of work-integrated learning (Billett, 2009).

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING, TEACHERS, AND QUALITY OF TEACHING

Quality teaching is one of the most critical factors during the implementation of work-integrated learning. Teacher's qualifications, experience, exposure, and teaching methods strongly affect the learning process. Practical training of the students and helping them learn industry-required skills can significantly increase their employability chances. Industrial training programmes during holidays and workshops between regular classes significantly impact the performance of the students. But all this can only be possible with a good trainer. Curriculum, equipment, infrastructure are simply the blocks of the training or integrated learning process, but the actual strength is the teacher or the teaching style (Dasmani, 2011). High-quality teaching and learning methods help students to perform better significantly. Teachers need to be highly trained in engaging students and imparting education that helps build practical communication skills, problem-solving skills, and employees' confidence levels (Miller, 1987). With time teaching and learning approaches are changing.

The global educational community is opting for a learner-centric approach rapidly. A learner-centric approach in an integrated learning environment cannot serve its purpose until it is accompanied by quality teaching (Idris, Rajuddin, & practice, 2012). Discussion-oriented classes, a tech-friendly attitude of teachers, up-to-date teaching methodologies, visuals, or practical learning techniques significantly improved the classroom atmosphere and engagement of the students (Audu, Kamin, Musta'amal, & Saud, 2014). So the teachers must update their knowledge and techniques. Various training programmes can serve this purpose. These training programmes help teachers modify their teaching style and opt for globally recognized practices to prepare students for the local and international market. Students and teachers are encouraged by the literature and the educational institute to try various techniques and teaching methodologies to identify the best suitable practice related to their course demands and aptitude (Idris, Rajuddin, & Sciences, 2013). These practices develop better communication channels among students and teachers and promote problem-solving, critical thinking, up-to-date knowledge, and institutional reputation.

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING CHALLENGE

Despite all its benefits, work-integrated learning is not that easier to follow. Institutes have to face multiple challenges (McLennan & Keating, 2008). Significant challenges faced during the implementation of work-integrated learning are:

- Securing placements as WIL becomes widespread
- Fitting in with industry needs and becoming a partner with industry and business in their human resource development
- Skills and experience of academic and general staff
- Embedding WIL in pedagogy and courses
- Incorporating career development learning in WIL
- Resource-intensiveness
- Communication & coordination
- Quality of teaching

(Business & Council, 2007) suggested that the number of employees is a challenge. Potential employees who can offer a job to the students are the real challenges faced during work-integrated learning. As the concept of WIL is prevailing or penetrating in society, a greater number of universities are opting for this phenomenon. This creates an imbalance between the candidates and the potential number of employers.

A significant challenge is that universities alone cannot create a work-integrated learning space. The support of government, rules & obligations, employers' willingness, and industry partnerships also play a crucial role in establishing effective work-integrated learning. A range of efforts is required to develop balanced opportunities and processes for the placement of qualified students (McLennan & Keating, 2008).

Another challenge faced by the institutes is training the staff or the instructors as working with the industry, especially in partnership, is a new experience for them. Staff training, maintaining industry connections, and offering skills required by the industry are the routine challenges every vocational institute faces. Another important issue is the administration and resource management. They are maintaining healthy ties between the host organizations, quality of the

students learning, maintaining students records, financial support to the organizations, scholarships for the deserving students, community networks, resources and material of the student practice (Kenny, Jones, & Speldewinde, 2018).

Another important issue is maintaining the quality of higher education. Numerous students during the mid-stages of the learning leave the learning process and start working professionally. This lowers the quality of the work and affects the institute's reputes, creates a lot of administration and clerical problems, and impacts the financial stability of the institute (McLennan & Keating, 2008).

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to explore the challenges faced during the implementation of the work-integrated learning program. The best-suited method to serve this purpose is the qualitative analysis as it allows to engage with the participant and let the participant share all his feelings and thoughts about a particular research problem. The primary qualitative research design is derived from different perspectives like phenomenology, constructivism, and symbolic interactions. Qualitative researchers focus their research on exploring, examining, and describing people and their natural environments (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001). The fundamental qualitative research design is generally used for educational purposes. The advantage of using qualitative research design is developing a better understanding of the education process and interpreting the participants' feelings and beliefs with logical reasoning and literature background (Worthington, 2013). Work-integrated learning is a concept that has its significance proven in the literature. This study is trying to explore the challenges faced by the teachers while implementing work-integrated learning programs. Here, basic qualitative research design will help extract the most relevant data from the teachers about their experiences, understanding, strategies, and challenges the teachers face while leading a work-integrated learning environment.

The study population comprises six participants, including the three Art & Design teachers of Fashion & Textile Design, Interior Architecture Design, and Graphic Design subjects, full-time teaching at STEP Institute of Art, Design and Management teachers, a leading TVET institute in Lahore. All three participants have over three years of experience teaching vocational Art & Design courses and assessment expertise. Due to time and expense constraints, a smaller sample was chosen to collect data. The sample was collected using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive or judgmental sampling is a technique to identify data-rich participants. Only those participants are chosen who can serve the purpose and provide detailed information (Lowhorn, 2007). Three industry personnel were also interviewed who are all working in the same domains of Art & Design with experience of direct line managing the Art & Design graduates. The three industry professionals' interviews helped in the triangulation of the data and the cross-checking of the facts highlighted by the teachers. The industry representatives shared their views and helped critically analyze the academicians' facts and data.

The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. The data was collected from the participants using the qualitative interview method. A qualitative interview is a method to get in-depth information from the participants. The workplace of the teachers was used as the standard study setting. A detailed discussion of the problem statement and the research question was held with the participant to develop a proper understanding of the research purpose. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather data. The interview guide was built based on the literature. The participants shared as much information as they liked. Several probing questions were asked to get a clearer picture. Short notes were also made, along with the recording of the interviews.

Data gathered as a result of recorded interviews was transcribed. Short notes were also added to get detailed information. Nvivo software was used to analyze this data. The first step was to import data into the software. Several codes were generated to sort the information with the help of Nvivo software. A detailed thematic analysis was done by merging various codes and sub-codes. Thematic analysis is one of the most used types of data analysis. This is specially used in qualitative data analysis. It is a type of analysis in which significant themes and patterns are identified. These themes and patterns are then merged with logical reasoning to develop base grounds to answer research questions. The interpretations of the themes and patterns are made to address the research question and comprehend an analysis that can serve the research purpose. This type of analysis provided an open field to the researcher to interpret the data in the best possible way while considering its consistency and frequency (Joffe, students, & practitioners, 2012). The discussion and conclusion were built around the themes identified using the thematic analysis process.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues are one of the fundamental aspects while conducting qualitative research. Ethical issues in qualitative research design are much different from the quantitative research design. There is a relationship between the participant and the research in qualitative research design, which is its power. The participants have the dominance to deny giving information or willingly provide misleading information. On the other hand, the researcher can misrepresent the information provided by the participants and mold participants' views according to the researcher's will while reporting data. There are also existing chances of misrepresenting data while doing observations. The irony is that it can happen

either intentionally or unintentionally. Unintentional misrepresentation occurs when a language barrier, cultural change, limited or partial access to information, or subjective interpretations by the researcher.

Another significant issue is the privacy of the participant. The researcher must assure the participant about confidentiality. Complete assurance is given to the participants about their anonymity and the careful handling of the data. It is clearly stated to the participant that data will be used only for the research purpose. Moreover, all legal requirements will be kept in view, and no sensitive information will be shared without the participant's permission (Orb et al., 2001). Names and details of all six participants have not been revealed in respect of the participants' privacy.

The conceptual framework of this study is based on a detailed review of the relevant literature. The basic idea and framework of the study are developed on the work and gaps indicated by the previous researches (Dasmani, 2011). This framework enabled in critically understanding and evaluating the challenges and strategies in the domain of integrated learning.

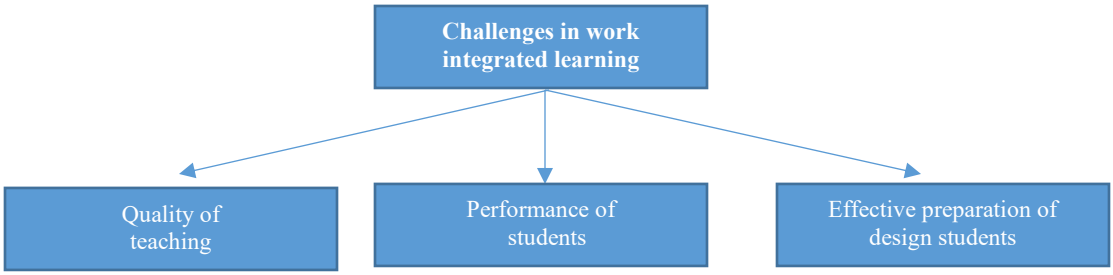

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

FINDINGS

EFFECTIVE PREPARATION OF DESIGN STUDENTS

WILLINGNESS TO PURCHASE AND PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TRAINING MATERIAL

Work-integrated learning is a particular type of learning in which students are engaged in practical tasks and theoretical understanding. In a developing country like Pakistan, vocational education is necessary for society. The element of work integration in the vocational education system strengthens the roots of the TVET sector in the country and gives a chance for skillful students to brighten their future. There exists the problem of quantity and quality of material, technical issues, outdated teaching methods, and lack of adequate training, specifically in the Art & Design vocational programmes. The major challenge in a work-integrated learning system in the vocational education system is the student's willingness to purchase adequate training material that could meet real expectations of the industry. While explaining the challenges in implementing the work-integrated system in vocational Art & Design Institute, one of the participants described the phenomena as:

> "Our TVET sector exists with multiple problems within teaching. In the Art & Design sector, these problems mainly arise from inadequate training material, size, and quality. Students are not able to arrange proper study material that restricts their learning within the training. (Participant 3)"

Another participant commented:

> "There are significant reasons why the Art & Design institutions usually have not been able to come up to the expectations of the potential employers. As a teacher, I have to compromise on significant training aspects. For example, I need different software in the IT labs, but due to outdated computers mostly, I am not able to get most of these software programmes installed. I can only demonstrate these on my laptop, but this remains a significant reason why the graduates find it a hurdle at the workplace. (Participant 2)"

ADEQUATE PROVISION OF TRAINING WORKSHOPS, GUEST LECTURES, AND JURY FROM INDUSTRY:

Students studying in vocational Art & Design education require a proper training environment, specific tools, updated machinery, workshops and interaction with the industrial personnel who could act as a jury to assess students' work. All these activities help them to make themselves capable for the market. On the other side, the existing structures of our current vocational institutes are mostly not skilled enough to provide all of these required facilities. Students learn more and develop skills needed at workplaces if they are engaged in the practical training environment. Teachers at their best try to remove all the challenges faced by the institutes, but they still face problems that restrict the students' learning.

While explaining the situation of inadequate resources and provisions about the institutes, participant 3, who is the Interior Architecture Design teacher and Programme Coordinator, commented,

> "The main problem we face is the lack of a training environment in our institutes. Other than lack of resources, the specialized courses of Art & Design require a professionally built studio, labs with updated systems, and space for practical work. We compromise on many things that are necessary for effective learning. For example, we do not find space for cutting the models as we require a bigger space, creating problems in the overall learning process."

She further explained,

> "We need a proper working environment for our model cutting activities. Interior Design students require a primary facility; an appropriate table of glass is used in industry, but we do not get them, which results in the student's weaker performance at work. (Participant 1)"

NEED OF ENHANCEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ATTACHMENT:

Vocational education is directly linked with the industry. If the students do not know the skills, they will not learn the exact standards required by the industry. Industry attachment is a factor that is neglected in our existing vocational education system, especially in the Art & Design sector. Students must be strongly familiarized with the industry principles and work standards; they must operate the related machinery, equipment, and tools. Moreover, they must develop soft skills and work on their personality, an essential part of a professional working environment. Nowadays, many students who come in vocational education already have some idea of the field. Therefore, some participants accepted that maintaining a scratch connection from the industry is not much of a challenge for them. But on the other side, the Programme Coordinator and teacher of Fashion and Textile Design shared,

> "Industrial interaction is an essential element of our Fashion Design training. Unfortunately, it is usually neglected. There should be more industrial visits; it should be included within the syllabus and curriculum to get them updated with the latest trends, fabrics, designs and modeling techniques being followed in the industry. (Participant 3)"

With a similar perspective, another participant who represented the industrial in the same sector highlighted his concern as:

> "There is a massive gap in what the fashion industry requires from upcoming designers and the academic side. Students must come with an innovative approach, yet they must also be taught to think, design, and execute practically. I am not undermining students' skills of doing experimental designs, but a part of their portfolio must also include the practical designs, which can add value to them and their potential employers. (Participant 5)"

TEACHERS QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING

TEACHERS KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF PREPARING STUDENTS FOR INDUSTRY:

Existing teachers in our current education institutes must engage students in different kinds of activities. Engaging students in various activities according to their subject requirements will help students learn more if they want to. Students learn a lot when they see the same things from different perspectives or different angles. But for engaging students, a teacher must be capable enough to deliver in the best way possible to achieve the best outcomes. One of the participants representing academia shared:

> "I understand that we have to practice a lot and that practice needs to be in line with industry practices. Any institute could ensure this by inviting Jury from the industry for formative assessments and, in some cases, even summative assessments. When the Jury criticizes and critically evaluates students, they develop the ability to actively listen and improve their designs. The problems highlighted by the Jury will ultimately help students and the faculty stay parallel with the industrial requirements. (Participant 3)"

On one side, industrial attachment is important for students' learning that will enhance their practical knowledge about the field, but on the other side, the institutes are responsible for arranging different kinds of workshops, Jury, and guest lectures that will help evolve their theoretical knowledge of the field. One of the respondents emphasizes the importance of students' learning by showing their work in front of the external Jury. She highlighted her thoughts as:

> "Assessment through external and industry-related Jury helps in building their attitude as well. Amateur designers need to learn to accept rejections as well. As teachers, we sometimes give them some leverage, but the external Jury will probably not do that. Additionally, I always urge students to visit markets while researching for their projects. I check the business cards that they are supposed to record while visiting the markets. These pieces of evidence help them in justifying their work in front of the external Jury as well. (Participant 1)"

TEACHERS MOTIVATION FOR IMPROVING INDUSTRIAL ATTACHMENT ACTIVITIES:

Teacher motivation is another crucial element in the vocational Art & Design sector that would help students raise their potential in their education. Vocational education requires teacher's dedication and commitment to engage students in industrial attachment activities that will help to prosper in their future. Sometimes, it is hard to understand the technical aspects for the teacher that requires complete motivation. If the teacher is motivated and will get assistance from the institute, they will deliver more professionally. Ultimately, this will help students to learn more, but it still requires teacher's commitment. While explaining this fact, one of the teachers commented:

> "Final year students must be engaged in the industry through frequent industrial visits. One problem I have witnessed is that students are usually allowed to visit only the general places and not the real-life workstations. This makes the whole arrangement too artificial, and the real purpose is dead. The problem of time is also there. We primarily rely on alumni students or some visiting faculty members (Participant 3)"

On one side, the educationists blame that the industrial personnel does not allow students to visit specific places in less time. While on the other side, industry representatives believe that institutions do not professionally plan these activities, and it is only a matter of ticking the task done. The institutes are required to keep constant contact with industry counterparts to develop strategic relationships. There exists a common understanding between both parties that a continuous working relationship needs to be there. One of the participants who represented the industry in the Graphic Design stream shared:

> "I always encourage students to come and interact with us to help and assist them in every possible way. It is only due to this lack of continuous interaction that the institutes are not fully teaching the latest technologies and trends that we require in the industry. We are not asked about it. For instance, Graphic Design students must be more focused on rendering techniques and efficient in handling tools, which I believe is one weaker link. (Participant 7)"

PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

NEED OF MORE PRACTICE FOR LEARNERS AT SCHOOL

One of the significant challenges that the teachers from the students face is their willingness to learn. Teachers accepted that most of the students are unwilling to spend on the learning material, which shows their motivation and commitment to their studies. Teachers try to facilitate the students by collaborating and giving them follow-up projects that release their burden and increase their commitment. Other than that, some teachers use different techniques and methods for some students to increase their commitment and performance in their work. The comments from the teachers and Programme Coordinators will help to understand the situation:

> "My general observations suggest that students do not want to do any extra work, which could be related as an added value to their portfolios, making them more employable. At times, we have to integrate their core assignments just to relieve them from extra work. This new academic trend is spoiling students, in my view. (Participant 1)"

> "I have my way of dealing with foundation semester; I deal differently with different students at different stages of their programmes, and I believe there has to be some filter that teachers could use before sending students to the industry. (Participant 2)"

> "I only use 30 minutes of the lecture in teaching and brainstorming, and the remaining time is used for practical learning. This works for me, and I believe it makes them accepted by industry with more and more practice. (Participant 3)"

While the industrial perspective about the students learning could be learned with the comments made by one of the industries representing participants:

> "I do not blame all training institutes. It will be unfair to say students do not know anything when they come to us. However, it requires more polishing and adding more into the training that they get at institutes. (Participant 7)"

DEMAND-DRIVEN AND CONTINUOUS CURRICULUM UP GRADATION

In today's era of the digital world, everything is shifted to digital technologies. The advertisement, video, and digital factors have impacted this area a lot. Currently, the Art & Design curriculum taught in our existing public and private TVET institutes are outdated and follow traditional practical skills measures. We require better and stable aspects digitally to help the students learn about the latest technologies and new machinery. While explaining the phenomena, the Programme Coordinator of Interior Architecture Design commented:

> "I have always raised this issue at every forum that the industry growth never stops. We need to stay updated with the latest technologies and everything in a practical way. The only way we can impact our industry is to stay updated with the advancement of modern technology, and this will be done by installing the latest software like Revit and Lumion as currently, we are working on Sketch-up and 3D Max only. (Participant 1)"

On the other side, a participant representing the industry from the same sector also highlighted this issue. The demand-driven and continuous up-gradation could be achieved by the graduates coming with the knowledge of latest trends; the industrial personal deemed this concern as:

> "We need graduates from the institutes with the latest information on the software. Not having hands-on learning and experience with software like Revit surely minimize their chances of employment. (Participant 4)"

QUALITY OF TRAINING:

One more important factor affecting student learning is the quality of training given by teachers in our existing Art & Design vocational institutes. Teachers should be updated with the latest technology and machinery before expecting them to impart it to students. If the teachers have updated knowledge and a better understanding of the practical work, they will deliver better. On asking about the quality of training at vocational schools to help students securing employment, one of the teachers responded:

> "Whatever you learned from the job, you can share that experience with your students. I am learning different aspects from my job here, but I think there should be some industry-related training for the teachers to help them grow more. The systems and processes that I learned being a student are already outdated. (Participant 1)"

With a similar perspective, the industry-related participant highlighted as:

> "In most cases, the problem arises from the teacher's side. They have limited knowledge about the latest trends in the field. The institutes must work on their learning and training. There must be regular industrial visits of the teachers from the institutes that would help them gain better insights into the field and give them an idea of what to teach students. (Participant 4)"

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

The above findings show a relatively lesser motivation among teachers, and it becomes a more convincing argument for teachers to avoid challenging learning environments. An interactive approach that fully facilitates teachers' essential needs and requirements must be kept in teachers' minds. A learner-centric system can help the instructor enhance quality management practices and improve student interaction and engagement (Buchanan, 2012). Although in the vocational Art & Design sector, the generic needs of teachers are quite similar, there is heterogeneity among them, which are based on their experiences, existing skills, and current exposure to the best local and international practices. The challenges of teachers also vary from one institute to another. For example, trades that fall in the category of services require more emphasis on soft skills, whereas the more hardcore technical trade teachers need more hands-on and production-oriented training skills. The teachers, therefore, have to consider aggregate common grounds to engage students in the training activities. The data also suggested that participants' understanding and knowledge consumption may vary from one cohort to another. Therefore, it is emphasized that teachers must rethink and replan their activities after personally gauging trainees' existing skills after their meetings and interactions. This will help in creating a work-integrated environment.Learner-centric approach and activity-based teaching approach help them to bond more robust and engage more effectively. Hand-on experience phenomenally improves students' motivation and encourages participation in the

learning environment. Various studies support the authentication of activity-based learning and its positive impact on learners' performance (Prins, Bulte, & Pilot, 2016). Activity-based learning, specifically in the vocational Art & Design sector, is an efficient tool to encounter participants' boredom, lack of interest, and procrastination.

Moreover, experiential learning helps the trainer to engage participants in learning the essential and dominating industry-based skills. Teachers must not ignore the digitalization of almost all forms of Art & Design. This issue seeks the knowledge and commitment of institutes to upgrade their human and material resources with updated and latest software programmes and mechanical tools in the laboratories. These strategies will help in redeeming teachers' challenges in the vocational Art & Design sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The data analysis and conclusion recommend that appropriate training is essential for performance excellence in the vocational Art & Design sector. Proper training must be provided to the teachers and the non-teaching staff to develop an adequate environment for integrated learning to flourish. Another important recommendation is the provision of the infrastructure. Infra-structure and equipment contribute a lot to the effectively integrated learning environment. Lack of updated equipment is a significant hurdle in the application of an integrated learning environment. Thirdly, industrial linkages are critical. An integrated learning environment cannot sustain if the industrial relations are weak. Weak industrial linkages derail the spirit of the integrated learning environment. Last but not least, an important recommendation is to create awareness of the integrated learning environment. The awareness campaigns must be rigorous, including students, teachers, and the staff.

LIMITATIONS

This study also faced some limitations. The sample size for data collection can be increased by conducting interviews with the teachers of other vocational Art & Design institutes. Additionally, conducting interviews for this research from the administration of the institutes and industrial personnel can also be a good enough source for the veritable understanding of this study. The institutes of graduate studies that do not offer Art & Design can also be involved as a part of this research so that their opinions regarding the field of Art & Design can also be considered for more authenticity. This research can also be deported by implementing quantitative research methodology as it is more suitable for generating specific ideas for particular societal phenomena.

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