

**A STUDY OF EFFECTIVENESS OF MARKETING OF STUDY  
PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY TECHNICAL COLLEGES OF DEPARTMENT  
OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SRI LANKA**

By

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## Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to gather information from young people about their Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) experiences and also their lecturers, parents, and institutions about their perceptions of their children, students, or employees VTE experiences.

VTE enhances the chances of getting a new apprenticeship and for some experience. VTE also leads to other types of study, uses hands on approach, were the main benefits as perceived by 85 per cent of respondents. Also parents in remote areas (Kegalle and Kandy) strongly perceived that VTE is an alternative if you are unable to find a job. VTE is considered a second chance for students who want further education.

The majority of participants (more than 90%) viewed information about the quality of DTET – VTE teaching staff lecturers and potential employment prospects as very important in deciding whether or not to participate in VTE. A proportion of teenagers and others who viewed location / training centre/ technical colleges, career guidance services and financial assistance as very important information.

The Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET) which is the Apex body which governs the VTE courses through Technical Colleges in the country is the pioneer in Vocational and Technical Training in Sri Lanka. The DTET has 39 Technical Colleges spread across Sri Lanka and has been a heavily funded state body under the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training that makes a very marginal contribution (25%) in terms of training proceeds. There are many factors that have been attributable to this pathetic scenario due to inefficiencies stemming from focused primary need for not having understood to market the institute (DTET) and marketing the technical training programmes and other services to its vast potential unemployed / employed youth base.

The Customers of the Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET) are students classified as who may be an employee, jobless, part-time worker, or self employed who is savvy or thirst for technical knowledge. This technical knowledge

brings him or her personal value creation and satisfaction in the spheres as a knowledge worker in today's world to engage in any economic entity that would bring him or her self satisfaction to live independently.

The DTET is an organization under the policy framework of Technical and Vocational Education Commission (TVEV), offers about 40 different types of courses to different industrial segments. In the recent past Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission developed competent-based training programs and a National Qualification Framework which introduced new series of qualifications called National Vocational Qualification (NVQs). These qualifications were developed, produced and introduced in association with the relevant other institutions, industries, and launched through the DTET Technical College's network.

With legacy of experience and history in the arena of vocational and technical education the institution has failed to market its services for the intended purpose of its customers. It is a known fact that technical college programs are selected by candidates as a last resort in the sense when a candidate can't afford to select any other program due to financial constraints or no other option they turn towards technical colleges.

This research was aimed at finding the effectiveness of the marketing activities carried out by DTET and to recommend cause of action to popularize its services amongst the intended market segments. Educational institutions face marketing problems. Many encounter changing student needs and societal expectations, increasing competition for scarce resources, in addition to legislators and community groups asking tough questions about the educational institutions' mission, opportunities, and strategies.

This valuable finding would help DTET to improve its marketing activities to regain its market position as well as to enhance its services to thousands of young youth in Sri Lanka to be poised to engage in some form occupations.

We have enough success stories, case studies, tested and proven evidence of using the concept of Marketing to Value-Chain Creation in educational services such as DTET.

The market is open for student's choice/s. The creation of such value chain services broadly depends on many marketing facets based on these student needs and wants. Our customers are students those who need and want technical know-how with skills-based into whether they are employed, unemployed or self employed. The spectrum of "vocational education and training of any spheres" is the core of DTET self sufficiency.

The dependency on government funds create a scar for DTET authorities and employee motivation thus hinder personal growth and organizational development. This specific research has attempted to address a broad spectrum of valuable impetus through marketing concept, orientation and productive corporate governance.

DTET should also focus on competing institutions conducting similar training programs and thereby implementation of standards becomes very handy. Sri Lanka has been poorly branded / rated for not having standards (ISO Standards – SLI - Sri Lanka Standard Institution) and enough international brands for its positioning.

Today youth are not yesteryear youth who just kept mum for education, and they are vibrant. Even the parents are more worried lot, unless and until their children find employment. Similarly, an organization that spends a penny on external training ensures that a return on investment is 200%. The 322 students, 15 authorities, and lecturers views were mostly on negative side of feelings to accept challenging work force to be, provide challenging courses and delivering with value-added technical courses were seem as out of reach for DTET management. .

It was unfortunate to observe that the concepts of Marketing covers Marketing Principals, Customer Care and Marketing Communication, Advertising and Sale Promotions, New Product and Service Development, Market Research, Managing Retail Service Business, Managing Advertising and Sales Promotions, Sales/Staff force, Managing Direct Marketing online Services, Developing Pricing Strategies, and Marketing Positioning, Managing Product line Service were not aware of by the team of management at the DTET.



Also it was observed that DTET lacks international body or recognized authority for technical education and training affiliated to certify its' courses and thereby add more value. If this is possible, then it becomes a sort of an international certification body or value-added recognition to uplift the overall standards and positioning of the course/s that students follow. It should also help harness potential to grow and shape the competitive-edge of DTET.

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Finally, it was impromptu that DTET management was totally unaware of the concepts and value of practice of marketing principals that would set the future of DTET long-term existence.