

# A Systematic Literature Review Examining the Impact of Societal Factors on Student's Intention to Enrol in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Programs at the Tertiary Level

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i5/21533>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i5/21533

**Published Date:** 09 May 2024

## Abstract

This study investigates the sociocultural influences on people's choices to participate in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes, to comprehend the discrepancies in enrollment rates. A comprehensive literature analysis was undertaken from 2016 to 2023 utilising the PRISMA methodology, emphasising research analysing social factors influencing TVET enrollment intentions. Key sociocultural elements highlighted include the correlation between TVET and labour market demands, the perceived status of TVET programmes, and the influence of family and peer perspectives. Societal norms and misunderstandings regarding the economic results of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates influence cultural preferences for conventional academic paths over vocational education. Nevertheless, data from areas with strong governmental and corporate backing for TVET suggests these beliefs may be changed. The study emphasises the need for more research on the evolution of social views, the impact of media campaigns, cross-cultural variations, and corporate influence on moulding perceptions of TVET. Improving comprehension and correcting misunderstandings about TVET may help stakeholders advance vocational education and develop a competent, flexible workforce. This research establishes the foundation for future efforts to increase TVET participation by engaging certain segments of society.

**Keywords:** Societal Attitudes Towards TVET, Enrolment in TVET programs, Cultural Impact on Education Choice, Vocational Education Decision-Making.

**Introduction**

The landscape of global education and economy is constantly shifting, and as a result, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is becoming an increasingly important component in the process of aligning the skills of the workforce with the requirements of the labour market in the 21st century (Amin et al., 2023). It is being more recognised that TVET programmes, which are meant to teach vocational education and practical skills, have the ability to promote economic growth, decrease young unemployment, and solve the skills gap in a variety of diverse sectors (World Bank, 2018). In today's fast-paced world, with economies being transformed by technological advancements and a growing emphasis on knowledge-based industries, the importance of TVET in equipping a skilled workforce that can effectively navigate these changes cannot be overstated.

However, the success and attractiveness of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes are not simply reliant on the program's curriculum design or industry linkage. When it comes to the choices that students make on whether to register in these programmes, societal attitudes and influences have a big effect (Por et al., 2024). Cultural norms, family expectations, and the perceived value and prestige of vocational education may greatly influence student enrollment in TVET, thereby restricting its reach and efficacy (Ayub, 2017). Comprehending these sociocultural elements is essential for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders who want to increase the attractiveness of TVET and encourage it as a feasible and appealing choice for postsecondary education.

This evaluation specifically examines tertiary-level Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes that provide advanced vocational training and education leading to employment or additional educational pathways. This study intends to analyse the sociocultural elements that influence students' decisions to enrol in tertiary-level TVET programmes by reviewing studies published from 2016 to 2023. This review focuses on research examining how social views, cultural norms, and family factors affect the decision-making process of future TVET students. This research aims to explore how social variables may be managed to increase TVET enrollment, thereby fostering the growth of a competent and flexible workforce prepared to tackle the demands of the modern economic environment.

Recent studies emphasise several sociocultural factors that affect students' decisions to register in TVET programmes. The comparison between the perceived worth of TVET and regular academic paths is a notable element among them. According to Bedi (2022), vocational education is often seen as inferior to university education in several cultures, typically designed for students who did not do well academically. Not only that, but this attitude also hinders the ability of TVET programmes to provide practical professional opportunities and have a positive impact on the economy (Yeap et al., 2021). Moreover, family and societal expectations have a significant impact. Many families prioritise conventional academic endeavours above practical training, assuming that they result in more esteemed and lucrative professions.

Societal influences have a varying impact on TVET enrollment choices according to cultural and economic situations. In areas where vocational education is tailored to meet industry requirements and there is a strong need for trained workers, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) may be seen more positively. In cultures that greatly prioritise higher education as a symbol of status, TVET programmes may have challenges in attracting students, even if they provide significant advantages in terms of job prospects and skill development (Wohlin-Elkovsky et al., 2023). In countries with significant youth

unemployment, TVET programmes that provide clear paths to work might be more appealing to students and their families due to economic constraints.

Therefore, the objectives of this systematic literature review are to 1) synthesize recent literature on societal influences affecting students' intentions to enrol in TVET programs, 2) identify the most frequently cited societal factors that impact these decisions, and 3) explore how these influences vary across different cultural and economic contexts.

### **Methodology**

This research follows the format of a comprehensive literature review that was carried out with the help of the analyst matrix approach. According to Xiao and Watson (2019), a systematic literature review is a study that attempts to locate and analyse in-depth, is organised, has the potential to enhance the quality, reliability, and validity of the present review that was performed and can be repeated in the subsequent process. In light of this, the researcher employs this approach as a methodology for doing research.

### **Article Search Strategy**

The article search strategy is defined starting from the orientation of the research goal. This is a systematic literature review where an iterative approach is used to find relevant literature. Since this study is focused on the influencing elements of societal factors on students' intentions, the keywords used are based on the theme of the study title. Examples of keywords used are "Societal attitudes towards TVET", "Enrolment in TVET programs", "Cultural impact on education choice" and "Vocational education decision-making". For this study, the PRISMA principles for systematic reviews were followed. The comprehensive search of databases used in this literature search is Education Resource Information Center (ERIC), Scopus, Web of Science, Emerald Insight, Connected Paper, Google, Google Scholar, Sagepub, and JSTOR (for policy and context).

### **Article Selection Criteria**

To narrow down the search results, the researcher used several different criteria. As indicated in Table 1, one option is to restrict the search results to only include articles that were published between the years 2016 and 2023. The document type is restricted to only include articles, and the source type is restricted to only include journals. In addition, the majority of the articles to be searched are written in English. Furthermore, the scope of the search is restricted to the subjects of social sciences, arts, and humanities.

Table 1

*Article inclusion and exclusion criteria*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Year of Publication	Publications and studies from 2016 until 2024.	Publications and studies before the year 2016.
Language	English language.	If the language of the articles is published other than the English language.
Reviewed	All selected publications and studies had to be peer-reviewed	Publications and studies with no peer-reviewed had to be rejected.
Types of Reference Materials	Journal articles, Authentic electronic print media.	Reviews and personal websites (blogs).
Journal Article Review Title	In the title of the societal influences on the admission of students to institutes of higher learning.	Apart from the topic of societal influences on student admission to higher education institutes.

**Articles Selection and Exclusion Process**

Following the search in ERIC, there are as many as 1837 data that have been discovered; however, after applying filters such as open access, year range, and specific terms, there are as many as 23 data that are able to fulfil the requirements that have been established. In addition, a number of relevant journals, books, and a number of research articles that have not yet been published were thoroughly searched. In the meanwhile, searches via legitimate electronic print media such as Bernama, Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, Malaysia Kini, and News Straits Times, as well as online databases, are also used in order to reinforce the evidence process that is associated with the study issue. In order to assist the search for literature in a way that is more organised and methodical, the use of this database is necessary. Following the completion of the download, the next step is to import the article into the Mendeley Desktop programme. The use of this programme is designed to make the process of data filtering more straightforward. This programme is capable of detecting documents that are input repeatedly (duplication), and it also has the capability to connect all document files that are in PDF format to the title of the document that is mentioned in this software. These are only two of the features that this software has.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

A total of twenty articles were used for the data gathering process by using PRISMA (Fig. 1). These articles were retrieved from a number of prominent databases, including Scopus, Sagepub, Google Scholar, ERIC, Emerald Insight, and Research Gate (which contains profiles of scholars who submit their research findings along with their references). A table was created using the Microsoft Office Excel 2021 software to collect this information.

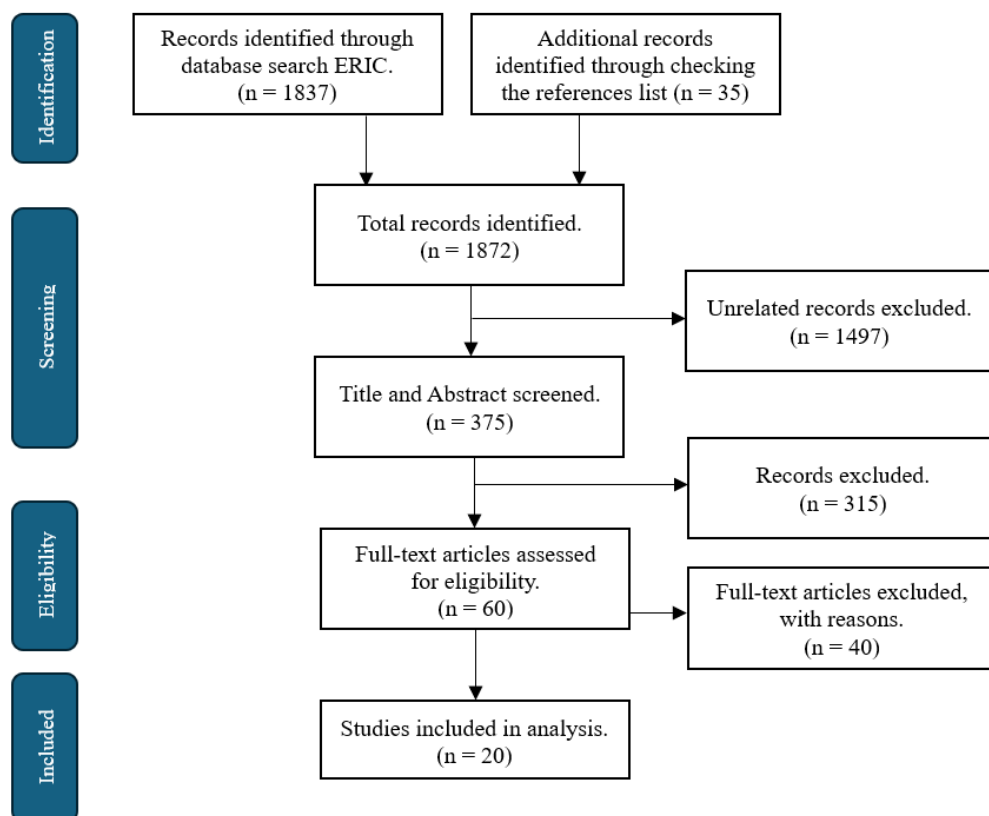


Fig. 1 Prisma Diagram Flow Chart

The table contained the following information: the title of the study, the name of the author, the year the study was published, the purpose of the study, and the type of scope of parental influence on the admission of students to previous higher education institutes. The list of previous research publications is included in Table 2, along with the author's name that was utilised in the study that was carried out. The approval and rejection criteria that have been established are included in every one of these chosen publications.

Table 2

*List of past research articles*

Num.	Name of the Author	Research topic
1	Ayanwale, M. A., Molefi, R. R., & Matsie, N. (2023)	<i>Modelling secondary school students' attitudes toward TVET subjects using social cognitive and planned behavior theories.</i>
2	Amin, S. M., Ahmad Suhaimi, S. S., & Nazuri, N. S. (2023)	<i>The Present and Future of Malaysian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).</i>
3	Ayub, H. (2017)	<i>Parental Influence and Attitude of Students towards Technical Education and Vocational Training.</i>
4	Por, N., Say, C., & Mov, S. (2024).	<i>Factors Influencing Students' Decision In Choosing Universities: Build Bright University Students</i>

- 5 Wohlin-Elkovsky, O., Wohlin-Elkovsky, T., & Monari Joseph, P. (2023). *The Benefits of TVET: Why Technical and Vocational Education and Training is a Smart Choice.*
- 6 Wang, T., Zhang, Y., Wang, J., Miao, H., & Guo, C. (2023) *Career Decision Self-Efficacy Mediates Social Support and Career Adaptability and Stage Differences.*
- 7 Azeem, N., Omar, M., Rashid, A., Abdullah, A., & Zaremohzzabieh, Z. (2021) *The Role of Perceived Social Support, Vocational SelfEfficacy and Vocational Outcome Expectation on Students' Interest in the TVET Program*
- 8 Azeem, N., Omar, M. K., Mat Rashid, A., & Abdullah, A. (2022) *Vocational Self-Efficacy as a Moderator on the Relationship Between Perceived Social Support and Students' Interest in TVET Programmes in Pakistan*
- 9 Chan, C.-C. (2019) *Social support, career beliefs, and career self-efficacy in determination of Taiwanese college athletes' career development*
- 10 Davadas, S. D., & Lay, Y. F. (2017) *Factors Affecting Students' Attitude toward Mathematics: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach*
- 11 Omar, M. K., Rauf, M. A., Ismail, N., Mat Rashid, A., Mohd Puad, M. H., & Zakaria, A. (2020). *Factors On Deciding TVET For First Choice Educational Journey Among PreSecondary School Student*
- 12 Fjørtoft, H., & Morud, E. B. (2021) *Assessment decision making in vocational education and training*
- 13 Aarkrog, V., Wahlgren, B., Larsen, C. H., Mariager-Anderson, K., & Gottlieb, S. (2018) *Decision-Making Processes Among Potential Dropouts in Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning*
- 14 Herminarto, S., Sofyan, H., Soenarto, S., Mutohari, F., & Nurtanto, M. (2022) *Students' Career Decision-Making During Online Learning: The Mediating Roles of Self-Efficacy in Vocational Education*
- 15 Sandra, E., & Mularsih, H. (2021) *The Role of Self-Efficacy in Career Decision Making Among Graduated Students from Vocational High Schools in Jakarta*
- 16 Agrawal, T., & Agrawal, A. (2017) *Vocational education and training in India: a labour market perspective*
- 17 Grundall, K., & Mack, A. (2023) *Influencing Students' Technical Vocational Education and Training Career Path: A Qualitative Research*
- 18 Gaffoor, A., & Van der Bijl, A. (2019) *Factors influencing the intention of students at a selected TVET college in the Western Cape to complete their National Certificate (Vocational) Business Studies programme*
- 19 Omar, A. S., & Mohd. Desa, Z. (2023). *Factors Influencing TVET Choices among Secondary School Students in Kuching*

- 20 Padi, A., Dzisi, Prof. S., & Eshun, Prof. J. F. (2022) *Entrepreneurship education in TVET institutions and entrepreneurial intentions of female students in Ghana: the social support factor*
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### **Finding and Discussion of Study**

The main objective of the systematic literature review is to identify the influence of the societal on the students' intention to enrol in TVET programs at the tertiary level. There are twenty publications that satisfy the criteria that were established by the researcher as a result of study that was conducted based on the results of previous research papers. Some of the highlighted literature on the relationship between social and cultural influences on the entry of students into technical and vocational institutions were systematically studied with the aim of examining how society can influence post-school students to enter TVET institutions in tertiary level. The negative perception of vocational education by the general population is a challenge for TVET in Malaysia. Compared to regular schooling, many still see TVET as substandard. Public perception of TVET in Malaysia is closely linked to its branding. TVET is sometimes seen less favourably than the more theoretical or academic education provided by most institutions in many countries. The government has made several efforts throughout the years to establish TVET as the primary choice for young people. However, there is a persistent belief that TVET degrees lead to lower social standing, salary, and job satisfaction.

The new literature analysis shows a comprehensive grasp of the sociocultural influences that affect students' inclinations to register in TVET programmes. Ayanwale, Molefi and Matsie (2023) used social cognitive and planned behaviour theories to analyse how secondary school students' views towards TVET topics are influenced by personal efficacy beliefs and society expectations, impacting their educational decisions. Amin et al (2023) examined the current and future potential of Malaysian TVET, emphasising how changing social and economic demands influence the attractiveness of TVET. Ayub (2017) emphasised that parental influence significantly affects students' views towards TVET, attributing it to the conventional favouritism towards academic routes compared to vocational education. The research conducted by Por, Say, and Mov (2024) found many aspects that affect students' decisions on which university to attend, such as how society views education and career paths.

Wohlin-Elkovsky et al (2023) advocated for the economic and practical advantages of TVET, proposing that raising awareness of these benefits might boost enrollment in TVET programmes. Wang et al (2023) examined how career choice self-efficacy mediates the relationship between social support and career flexibility, highlighting the significance of supporting societal systems in promoting professional aspirations. Azeem et al (2021) conducted a study to explore how perceived social support, vocational self-efficacy, and vocational result expectation influence students' interest in TVET programmes. Their research indicates that a supportive social environment may greatly boost students' confidence in following occupational routes.

### **Discussion**

According to the findings of a comprehensive literature analysis, the impact of society has a significant impact on the decision of students to enrol in technical and vocational schools after they have completed their secondary education. This point can be proved by some studies of past researchers such as (Por et al., 2024; Omar and Mohd. Desa, 2023; Gaffoor and Van der Bijl, 2019; Grundall and Mack, 2023; Agrawal and Agrawal, 2017; Sandra and Mularsih, 2021;

Herminarto et al., 2022; Aarkrog et al., 2018; Fjørtoft and Morud, 2021; Omar et al., 2020; Davadas and Lay, 2017; Chan, 2019; Azeem et al., 2022; Azeem et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2023; Wohlin-Elkovsky et al., 2023; Por et al., 2024; Ayub, 2017; Amin et al., 2023; Ayanwale et al., 2023).

The analysis of the results highlights the intricate nature of social factors affecting choices about Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) enrollment. The evidence consistently shows that social opinions, family expectations, and personal self-efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in influencing students' educational paths. Societal prejudices and stigmas linked to vocational education, seen as less valuable than academic routes, continue to hinder enrollment in TVET. The dominant effect of society is the perception and stigma surrounding TVET. TVET is often seen as inferior to university education due to cultural prejudices that associate vocational education with lesser academic success and limited professional opportunities (Ayanwale et al., 2023). This stigma is a deeply rooted social mindset that might discourage students from seeing TVET as a feasible educational and career option, despite the significant need for qualified vocational workers in many sectors.

Nevertheless, studies also highlight possible areas for action. Improving societal support and promoting the economic advantages and career prospects of TVET may help reduce unfavourable views (Wang et al., 2023; Wohlin-Elkovsky et al., 2023). Including occupational self-efficacy in educational counselling and assistance might encourage students to see TVET as a feasible and appealing educational option (Azeem et al., 2021). This is because people's perspectives and decisions are influenced by the societies and cultures in which they live. Alnaqbi (2015) suggest that individuals often choose their profession influenced by social norms and status, aiming to get approval from their peers and disregarding their true passion for the topic. TVET is often seen as a suitable option for those with impairments, school dropouts, and students who struggle in traditional academic courses (Alnaqbi, 2015). Another point made by Ayub (2017) is that women in Pakistan have historically had limited access to vocational and technical education, both from a traditional and Western perspective.

### **Limitation and Recommendation of Study**

There are some shortcomings in this research. One restriction is that although the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) helps eliminate selection bias, other databases may still include publications that meet certain selection criteria. The study is limited since it relies on a small number of datasets. Another constraint is the use of a restricted dataset or a limited number of publications, leading to the exclusion of certain articles from the systematic literature review. This happens when the search method on the influence of the same subject is referred to with various names or keywords and many articles found involve the influence of society on the academic achievement of their children. The subsequent limitation pertained to the criteria used for selecting full-text articles. By inputting the whole text criterion for the article being searched, results that do not include the entire text will be excluded. Articles without a full-text version need payment by the researcher to access via the database. Some publications connected to SLR investigations were excluded due to researchers lacking access to the full text for reference and evaluation.

### **Recommendation**

Further studies should be prospective, using experimental methods to investigate interventions to foster secondary school students' interest in TVET institutions. Policymakers



and stakeholders should invest in supporting research in this area to ensure that TVET education keeps pace with changing demand. Although there are several TVET-related field tracks such as architecture and construction, manufacturing and agriculture, the researchers focused on engineering and entrepreneurship courses only. Therefore, there is a need for future research on the interest in TVET courses and the effects of such courses on post-secondary students' endorsement and performance in TVET. To increase students' interest in TVET education, the public's perception of TVET needs to be improved.

In addition, representatives from TVET institutions can play an important role by guiding parents on the importance of TVET education during meetings with parents starting from junior high and high school levels and not only focused on technical schools and vocational colleges but can be extended to day schools. and maybe go to a cluster, bestari and boarding school. Apart from that, awareness needs to be fostered among parents to avoid the perception that TVET education is for children or students who are less good or weak in academics.

Future study should concentrate on creating specific interventions to change social opinions of TVET. Longitudinal research investigating how these approaches affect TVET enrollment rates would provide significant insights. Cross-cultural studies might investigate how social effects change in various situations, providing a more detailed knowledge of global TVET issues and potential.

### **Limitation and Recommendation for Future Study**

There is no doubt that there are some limitations to this study. Although the results can be adapted by the hospitality industry, this study focused only on hospitality students in Higher Learning Institution in both private and public Higher Learning Institution only in the Greater Kuala Lumpur and the recommendation is this research should be expanded in all universities and colleges that offer hospitality and tourism programs in West Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

In addition, Personality Trait research among hospitality undergraduate students in Malaysia is still at the anatomy stage. Thus, regional literature in this field is therefore inadequate compared to other countries. Consequently, with no considerable selection, this research has relied more on papers and publications from abroad. Some issues can lead to the study's vulnerabilities. The data was obtained, for instance, solely through a self-reported process, without multiple sources being included. Like most other research, the most prevalent issue is the issue of sample size because it is somewhat difficult to generalize the findings as sample only in the Greater Kuala Lumpur and students who have undergone practical training and to find those students are hard and unable to detect which of the correspondent has some experiences with the hospitality industry.

### **Conclusion**

The systematic literature review involved several leading databases, namely the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC), Scopus, Web of Science, Emerald Insight, Connected Paper, Google, Google Scholar, Sagepub, and JSTOR (for policy and context). Based on the database used, 20 articles have been identified and meet the selection criteria set by the researcher. The results of the analysis show that society's influence impacts students' admission to TVET institutions directly and indirectly.

Ultimately, the sociocultural elements that impact TVET enrollment are firmly rooted in cultural, economic, and social settings. To address these concerns, governments, educators,

and communities must work together to change how vocational education and training are seen, emphasising their crucial importance in today's and tomorrow's job markets.

This study offers an in-depth summary of current research on social factors that impact students' decisions to pursue Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Concentrating on tertiary-level programmes targets a particular vocational education sector essential for training a proficient workforce in quickly evolving economies. Societal and cultural insights underscore the substantial impact of familial expectations, cultural perceptions, and societal norms on educational decisions. This emphasis facilitates comprehension of the obstacles impeding TVET enrollment and proposes strategies to alleviate them. This study also adds to a wider scholarly and practical discussion on improving educational fairness and availability. The research promotes inclusive educational strategies that take into account the different origins and requirements of pupils by emphasising sociocultural impacts. This is especially important in the realm of worldwide educational changes, where boosting involvement in TVET is seen as a tactic for economic advancement and social progress.

### **Acknowledgement**

This study did not receive support from any public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. The authors express their gratitude to everyone who contributed to the accomplishment of this study.

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