

## Divulging Service Quality and Corporate Image of TVIs to Attain Student's Loyalty to TVET: A Mixed Methods Study

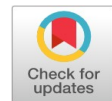
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**Abstract:** This study aimed to uplift TVET attractiveness by revealing the service quality and corporate image of Technical Vocational Institutions (TVIs) in the Davao Region, Philippines, in order to attain students loyalty to TVET using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. A survey of 350 TVET students and interview with 17 students and 17 trainers were concurrently conducted. Mean, multiple regression analysis and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data. In the quantitative phase, the results showed that TVIs have a high level of service quality and a positive corporate image which significantly influenced the high level of students loyalty to their TVET program. In the qualitative phase, students observed exceptional qualities of TVIs resulting in their satisfying experiences, but they also went through some challenges and disappointments. On the other hand, TVET trainers share their views on how to uplift the TVET image. They identified the strong points of TVIs, which creates a positive image for stakeholders. However, several challenges on TVET program implementation and undesirable services and management practices also surfaced as experienced by TVET trainers who need to be addressed. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority may review and enhance the implementation procedures, policies and standards in TVET program delivery.

**Keywords:** Education, Educational leadership, Service quality, Corporate image, Student's loyalty, TVET, Convergent parallel mixed methods, Philippines

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the study

As a service provider TVET, the TVIs in developing countries are experiencing challenges because of TVET stigmatization and public's perception that TVET is a second-class education (Essel, Agyarkoh, Sumaila, & Yankson, 2014) and a place to poor school achievers (Macha, Mackie, & Magaziner, 2018).

In the United States, the stigmatization of vocational students is clear as 27 percent of parents said that vocational education was not worthwhile, and 22 percent said they were too clever for vocational education. It was also reported that there was an over 50 percent drop in vocational education enrollment (Herrity, 2016). The decreasing demand for TVET is not just in the US, but it is a worldwide phenomenon (Abu-Ghaida & Thacker, 2015). Most of the graduates of basic education prefer to enroll in higher education programs because of their perception that TVET education leads to producing graduates who will be working in dirty blue-collar jobs making TVET as their second option (Okocha, 2010).

TVET is significant in human resource development of the country as it creates skilled manpower and enhances industrial productivity which improves the quality of life of its citizens. It has a remarkable contribution to the country's economic growth by providing suitable manpower according to the needs of the industry, society and the global world (Goel, 2011).

Thus, TVET should be recognized and valued by different stakeholders in the society as a tool for empowering people, especially the youth, for sustainable livelihood and social-economic development. Unfortunately, its significance has not been understood by the society. In order for TVET to serve

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its purpose, its public opinion must be changed to a positive one. Consequently, in the Philippines, Technical Educational Skills Development Authority (TESDA), who is in-charge of the higher TVET at tertiary level, is now continuing the efforts to enhance the image and reputation of TVET in the country (Jaymalin, 2018).

While several strategies have been done in making TVET as a legitimate education, the negative perception remains in the minds of many (Ibrahim, Rahman, & Yasin, 2012). Hence, Gapultos Jr. (2017) suggests that the negative public perception of TVET can be changed by transforming the image of TVET institutions and the best strategies to erase the TVET stigma is to strengthen the good reputation and wholesome image of TVIs. This would further attract stakeholders support and retain their loyalty. A positive image of TVET institutions can only evolve if it ties in with good service quality. Image-promoting strategies can only be successful, if trust in education and training can be established (Sisyuk, 2018; Tutlys, Gedviliene, & Vaiciukyniene, 2018). Hence, the strategy to attain loyalty among stakeholders may begin by focusing on the service quality and understanding the corporate image of TVIs.

Service quality, corporate image and customer's loyalty have been the topic of interest in previous researches of the different industries including banking, mobile communications, self-service technology and tourism (Ardyanfitri & Wahyuningtyas, 2016; Awoke, 2015; Iqbal, Hassan, & Habibah, 2018; Kim & Lee, 2010; Shen, Fan, Zhan, & Zhao, 2016). However, few studies have considered concentrating on the quality of services and corporate image of educational institutions as ways to achieve student's loyalty. In addition, most of the existing studies are using quantitative design, while this recent study is utilizing mixed-methods approach. And, to the best of the author's knowledge, the pieces of literature read were insufficient enough to discover the factors affecting the student's loyalty to TVET in the local setting since most of the studies were mostly on training in foreign countries and purely on a quantitative approach.

### **Conceptual framework**

This study aimed to explore the factors that affect the loyalty of the students to TVET. More specifically, these factors involved the service quality and corporate image of TVI as the independent variables. It is conceptualized in this study that service quality and corporate image influence the loyalty of the students to TVET as perceived by students of TVIs in Region XI. In this study, the loyalty of the students to TVET is served as the dependent variable. Furthermore, the study would like to examine the relationship between the mentioned variables. The schematic diagram of the study presented in Figure 1 visually explains the conceptual background of this study.

Service quality, as explained by Awoke (2015), is a measure of the extent to which a delivered service meets the customer's expectations. Service quality can help an organization to distinguish itself from other organizations and gain a competitive advantage. There are five perspectives of service quality, which have been identified by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) as cited by Tamilselvi (2018). These are empathy, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and tangibles. Awoke (2015) defines empathy as treating customers as individuals while reliability generally means delivering on promises. Responsiveness, as for Chi and Quan (2016), is the company being willing to help. Assurance is about inspiring trust and confidence, while tangibles are all about representing the service physically (Hartono, 2019; Zeithaml & M.J, 2003).

Corporate image refers to the overall impression left in the customers' mind as a result of accumulated feelings, ideas, attitudes and experiences with the organization, stored in memory, transformed into a positive/negative meaning; retrieved to reconstruct image and recalled when the name of the organization is heard or brought to ones' mind (Abd-El-Salam, Shawky, & El-Nahas, 2013).

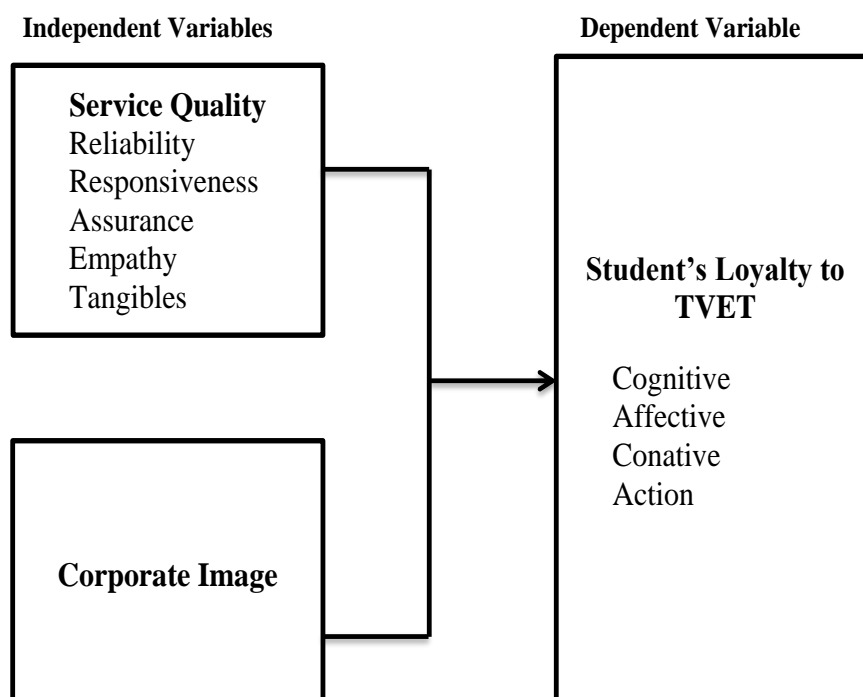


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Lee, Lee, and Feick (2001) defined customer loyalty as concerning word-of-mouth endorsement, the increased probability of purchase, and frequent buying of a firm's offerings. Consumer loyalty is formed in a progressive manner and identifiable sequential stages in the order of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty. Cognitive loyalty is the information based on whether consumers look for costs, benefits, and quality during their purchasing decision process (Jumaev & Hanaysha, 2012). Affective loyalty is when the consumers begin to develop a liking or attitude towards the brand based on an increasingly satisfying experience with the brand (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000). Conative loyalty describes the consumer's commitment or plan to repurchase a specific brand in the near future (Oliver, 1999). And action loyalty is the final phase of loyalty development in which consumers develop true and lasting loyalty (Back & Parks, 2003).

### Research questions

The main focus of this research is to reveal the level of service quality and corporate image of TVIs in Region XI and its influence in attaining student's loyalty to TVET. The design of this study is structured to answer the following research questions:

1. How do the students assess the service quality and corporate image of TVIs?
2. What is the extent of the loyalty of the students to their TVET?
3. Do service quality and corporate image significantly predict student's loyalty to TVET?
4. What are the lived experiences of student participants enrolled in TVET with regard to service quality and corporate image?
5. How do the trainer participants view the TVET program with regard to implementation and services rendered to the students?
6. To what extent do the qualitative data corroborate with the quantitative data?

## METHODS

### Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design. Mixed methods is an approach to research in the social, behavioral and health sciences in which the investigator gathers both quantitative (close-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, integrates the two, and then draws interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand research problems (Creswell, 2014). By mixing both quantitative and qualitative research and data, the researcher gained in-breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration, while offsetting the weaknesses inherent to using each approach by itself.

In particular, this study utilized a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. According to Creswell and Clark (2007), the purpose of convergent parallel design is to best understand or develop more complete understanding of the research problem by obtaining different but complementary data. In convergent parallel design, two independent strands of quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed at the same time in a single phase. Both methods are prioritized equally, and data analysis is kept independently. The results are mixed during the overall interpretation. Researchers should try to look for convergence, divergence, contradictions, or relationships of two sources of data.

The researcher also used the descriptive-correlation method in the quantitative phase. The study was descriptive since it aimed to discover how the students assess the service quality and corporate image of TVI and the extent of student's loyalty to TVET. It was also correlational since it determined the relationship between service quality and corporate image of TVIs and the student's loyalty to TVET.

On the other hand, in the qualitative phase of the study, a phenomenological approach was used to uncover the trends in thoughts and opinions of students, trainers, and administrators who are into TVET program. The qualitative phase was used to gain an understanding of underlying factors that contributes to student's loyalty to TVET. It provided insights into the problem or helped to develop ideas and strategies to solve the problem.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Status of student's assessment of service quality and corporate image of TVIs

#### *Service quality*

This study measures the service quality of TVIs in Davao Region. Service quality is a measure of the extent to which a delivered service meets the customer's expectations. Table 1 shows the student's assessment of the quality of services of their training institutions. The tabulated data obtains an overall mean of 4.16 described as high. This result manifests that the items which characterize the service quality of TVIs are often evident. This further denotes that the TVIs in Davao Region considers the importance of providing high quality of services to its students. Also, an overall standard deviation of 0.52 indicates a small range of dispersion which describes similarity of the perception of the students.

Service quality has five sub-domains namely, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Reliability generally means delivering on promises. As shown in Table 1, the category mean for this sub-domain is 4.02 which is equivalent to a descriptive rating of high. This indicates that all the service quality measures as in the questionnaire in terms of reliability are often manifested in the TVIs covered in this study. The sub-domain responsiveness is the willingness to help TVET students and to provide prompt service. The category means for responsiveness is 4.20, with a descriptive rating of very high. This means that the responsiveness of the trainers and staff of the TVIs are always evident as perceived by the students.

The category assurance describes the inspiring trust and confidence of TVET students to their training institutions. It has a categorical mean of 4.28, with a descriptive rating of very high. This indicates that all the service quality measures included in the questionnaire in terms of assurance are always evident by the students in the TVIs covered in this study. Empathy is the individualized attention that the trainers and staff provide to its students. The categorical mean of this sub-domain is 4.20, with a descriptive rating of very high. This signifies that the empathy of the trainers and staff is always evident by the students. The category tangibles provide physical representations or images of the service that

students used to evaluate quality. The categorical mean of this sub-domain is 4.08 which has a descriptive rating of high. This signifies that the quality of the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and materials of the TVI is often evident based on the perception of student respondents.

Of the five indicators of service quality, the assurance sub-domain got the highest mean rate of 4.28 described as very high, while the reliability got the smallest mean of 4.02, still has a descriptive rating within the range described as high.

Table 1: Student’s assessment of service quality of TVIs

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
<b>RELIABILITY</b>			
My training institution is...			
1. Providing services as promised.	4.17	0.74	High
2. Having sincere interest in solving problems.	4.02	0.79	High
3. Carrying out services immediately.	3.95	0.80	High
4. Providing services at appointed time.	3.91	0.84	High
5. Informing the concerned stakeholders when services will be performed.	4.06	0.83	High
Category Mean	4.02	0.60	High
<b>RESPONSIVENESS</b>			
The trainers and staff in my training institution are...			
6. Giving prompt service to students.	4.22	0.74	Very High
7. Always ready to help students.	4.36	0.76	Very High
8. Responding promptly to queries.	4.03	0.82	High
Category Mean	4.20	0.63	Very High
<b>ASSURANCE</b>			
In my training institution...			
9. The trainers and staff are trusted by the students.	4.32	0.75	Very High
10. The students feel safe while receiving services.	4.32	0.73	Very High
11. The staff members are courteous with students.	4.17	0.76	High
12. The trainers have the knowledge to answer the queries/questions of the students.	4.32	0.78	Very High
Category Mean	4.28	0.61	Very High
<b>EMPATHY</b>			
The trainers and staff in my training institution are...			
13. Giving students individual attention.	4.16	0.80	High
14. Dealing with the students in a caring fashion.	4.13	0.79	High
15. Keeping students interest at heart.	4.27	0.79	Very High
16. Understanding in the specific needs of the students.	4.23	0.77	Very High
Category Mean	4.20	0.63	Very High
<b>TANGIBLES</b>			
In my training institution...			
17. The tools and equipment are modern and up to date.	3.92	0.96	High
18. The physical facilities have visual appeal.	3.95	0.86	High
19. The materials used in the training are appropriate.	4.14	0.77	High
20. The trainers and staff members are neat and well-dressed.	4.29	0.79	Very High
21. The operating hours are convenient to stakeholders.	4.11	0.81	High
Category Mean	4.08	0.66	High
Overall Mean	4.16	0.52	High

*Corporate image*

Assessment of the corporate image of TVIs in Davao Region is one of the areas of concern in this study. Corporate image is the overall impression of the trainees as a result of accumulated feelings, ideas, attitudes and experiences with the TVI. Reflected in Table 2 is the student's assessment of corporate image of their training institutions. The overall mean of 3.95 described as high is generated. This indicator got an overall standard deviation of 0.55 which depicts a small range of dispersion in terms of similarity of student's perceptions. This result illustrates that the positive corporate image of TVIs is often evident by the students.

Table 2: Student's assessment of corporate image of TVIs

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
I chose this training institution because			
1. It has a strong name.	3.96	0.90	High
2. It makes a lot of contribution to the society.	4.09	0.74	High
3. media reports are generally positive.	3.89	0.82	High
4. employers have a positive perception.	4.11	0.79	High
5. It conserves the environment.	4.10	0.77	High
6. It has good reputation.	4.22	0.77	Very High
7. It has superior technology.	4.00	0.87	High
8. It has qualified trainers.	4.28	0.78	Very High
9. It has better infrastructure.	3.99	0.82	High
10. It was referred to me by a relative.	3.79	1.07	High
11. It was introduced to me by an alumnus.	3.49	1.07	High
12. The training fees is equal to the quality of service I receive.	3.92	0.92	High
13. The appearance of the building is attractive to me.	3.71	1.07	High
14. The location is conducive for me.	3.94	0.87	High
15. It is preferred by my peers (friends, relatives).	3.80	1.06	High
Overall Mean	3.95	0.55	High

*Status of student's loyalty to TVET*

The extent of student's loyalty to TVET is being scrutinized in this study. Loyalty is positively related to the ability of a TVI to both attract new trainees or students and retain existing ones. The tabulated data on the extent of student's loyalty to TVET is shown in Table 3, with an overall mean of 4.15 described as high. An overall standard deviation of 0.53 indicates a small range of dispersion in terms of similarity of student's assessment of their loyalty to their program. This result demonstrates that the items describing the extent of loyalty to TVET are often evident to the students. Student's loyalty is formed in a progressive manner and in identifiable sequential stages in the order of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty. These stages are the four categories investigated in this study to determine the extent of student's loyalty to TVET. Of the four indicators under student loyalty to TVET, action loyalty got the highest mean rate of 4.20 described as very high, while the conative loyalty got the smallest mean of 4.08 which has a descriptive rating of high.

Table 3: The extent of student's loyalty to TVET

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
<b>COGNITIVE LOYALTY</b>			
1. I believe TVET has better offerings in terms of skills development than others.	4.32	0.69	Very High
2. The skills training of TVET is better than others.	4.14	0.76	High
3. I believe TVET is affordable than other education. program.	4.21	0.75	Very High
4. I consider TVET as my first choice.	3.97	0.97	High
5. TVET provides me with superior skills training quality.	4.28	0.70	Very High
Category Mean	4.18	0.58	High
<b>AFFECTIVE LOYALTY</b>			
1. I have grown to like TVET more than other education programs.	4.02	0.77	High
2. I like the skills training offered by TVET more than others.	4.14	0.75	High
3. To me, TVET is the one whose training I enjoy using the most.	4.14	0.78	High
4. Compared with other education programs, I am happy with the training TVET provides.	4.18	0.72	High
5. I am usually pleased with my decision to enroll in TVET.	4.12	0.75	High
Category Mean	4.12	0.61	High
<b>CONATIVE LOYALTY</b>			
1. I am likely to say positive things about TVET to other people.	4.23	0.75	Very High
2. I would recommend TVET to someone who seeks my advice.	4.18	0.72	High
3. I intend to continue my TVET program even if its training cost increase somewhat.	4.02	0.80	High
4. I am likely to spend more money on TVET than other education programs.	3.90	0.86	High
Category Mean	4.08	0.63	High
<b>ACTION LOYALTY</b>			
1. I say positive things about TVET to other people.	4.31	0.70	Very High
2. I encourage friends and relatives to take the TVET program.	4.21	0.73	Very High
3. I have invested a good education in TVET more than the other programs.	4.13	0.74	High
4. I have acquired the necessary skills in TVET more than the other programs.	4.17	0.75	High
Category Mean	4.20	0.60	Very High
Overall Mean	4.15	0.53	High

#### *Significance of the influence of the predictors on student's loyalty to TVET*

Table 4 shows the regression analysis to determine the influence of service quality and corporate image of TVIs as predictors of student's loyalty to TVET. The results show that both service quality and corporate image significantly influence student's loyalty to TVET as supported by the magnitude of their respective p-values, which are all less than .05.

Specifically, it reveals that the influence of service quality on student's loyalty to TVET has a p-value that is less than .05 and a positive standardized beta value of 0.351. This means that for every unit increase in service quality, there is a corresponding increase in student's loyalty by 0.351. On the other hand, the influence of corporate image of TVIs to student's loyalty to TVET is also found to be significant with p-value less than .05 and positive standardized beta value of 0.413. This means that for every unit increase in corporate image, there is a corresponding increase in student's loyalty by 0.413. This means that service quality and corporate image are significant predictors of student's loyalty to TVET. However, between the two determinants, corporate image is slightly the better predictor since for every unit increase of this variable, a corresponding increase of 0.413 is realized in student's loyalty to

TVET, as compared to an increase of 0.351 contributed by a unit increase in service quality. Furthermore, the combined influence of service quality and corporate image of TVIs is 49.6% of the student’s loyalty to TVET while the other 50.4% of variation can be attributed to other factors not covered in this study.

Table 4: Significance of the influence of the predictors on student’s loyalty to TVET

Predictors	Beta Coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -Value	Remarks
Service Quality	0.351	6.607	0.00	Significant
Corporate Image	0.413	7.766	0.00	Significant

Predictors	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	F Change	<i>p</i> -Value	Interpretation
Combined	0.496	170.723	0.00	Significant

*The lived experiences of TVET students*

There were three overarching themes that have emerged from the interviews with the participants, namely, exceptional qualities of TVIs, most satisfying experiences of TVET students and challenges and disappointments of TVET students.

Exceptional Qualities of TVIs. When the student participants were asked to describe their training institutions and what did they like best about their training institution, their responses revealed some exceptional qualities of TVIs/ which became one of the three overarching themes. This theme has four codes, which includes, the commitment to quality service of the trainers and staff, conducive learning environment, relevance and quality of training, and positive school image.

The student participants narrated their impressions to the commitment to quality service executed by the trainers and staff of their training institutions. The students disclosed that their trainers are passionate about sharing their knowledge to them, assist them during training and make it sure that they will pass the national assessment. They also said that their trainers are patient and approachable and that the school staff is caring, nice, accommodating and entertains student queries immediately.

Conducive learning environment also came out to be one of the best features of TVIs as identified by the students. Another good impression of the TVI based on the responses of the TVET students is the relevance and quality of training they had. They said that they learned many things, not just theory but also the skills. Ultimately, the students considered the positive image of their school as one of the exceptional qualities of their training institution. The positive reputation of their school in the community came out as an idea during the interview with TVET students as their school was known for skills training, and it was recommended by their relatives.

*Most satisfying experiences of TVET students*

The student participants were also asked to narrate the most rewarding experiences they had as TVET students. The ideas on the *most satisfying experiences of TVET students* were group into three categories namely, satisfying training cost, fulfilling achievements, and overwhelming family support.

The TVET students considered the satisfying training cost as one of the most rewarding experiences they had as TVET trainees. They considered the privilege given to them to enroll in the program with minimal or even free training fees when being admitted in training through a scholarship program. Underprivileged parents can also afford to send their children to the training because it offers affordable training costs.

Furthermore, TVET students also have several fulfilling achievements which they considered as one of the most satisfying experiences they had. Family support is also an important factor for TVET students. For them, having all-out support from their family is one of the most rewarding experiences.

*Challenges and disappointments of TVET students*

Several ideas were gathered from the responses of the student participants when they were asked to tell the stories of the most challenging or discouraging experiences they had as TVET students. These ideas were group into codes namely, demanding academics, preoccupied trainers and discouragements



from colleagues. These codes highlighted the overarching theme, challenges, and disappointments of TVET students.

The TVET students were challenged brought by the demanding academics. According to the students, they find it difficult when they have a lot of concepts to memorize and when they need to talk in English language. Computer lesson is also challenging to them. Moreover, having preoccupied trainers is also considered to be a factor that discourages students. They affirmed that it is disappointing when their trainer cannot focus on their training because he/she is busy doing other job and sometimes their trainer has two classes at a time.

Finally, the student participants found it disappointing when they heard discouragements from other people that short-term courses are not good, and when somebody is telling that skills training is not useful. It is also disappointing to them when there was somebody who has negative feedbacks about their school. Though, they tried not to be affected by those negative comments.

#### *TVET implementation in the views of trainers*

Another batch of participants was organized to participate in the study to answer the research question which tried to unveil the views of the TVET trainers with regard to their implementation and services offered to the students. They are those who have specialized skills and experience to conduct technical vocational training to students. To be a Qualified TVET trainer, one should have undergone Trainers Methodology Level 1 training and passed the national assessment. In addition, the trainer should have industry experience in his/her field of specialization.

There were four themes that emerged when the TVET trainers were asked how they view the TVET program with regard to implementation and services rendered to students. These overarching themes were, challenges on TVET program implementation, undesirable services and management practices, strong points of TVIs which creates positive image to stakeholders, and uplifting the image of TVET programs.

#### *Challenges on TVET program implementation*

The trainers were asked to share their insights on the way their TVI implemented the TVET program to the students. Three categories emerged, which include, compliance with TESDA policies on program delivery, diverse strategies in implementing TVET programs, and difficulties in program implementation.

Trainers affirmed that their TVI is complying with the policies and standards set by TESDA in terms of program delivery is concerned. As a matter of fact, their programs are duly registered with TESDA with complete necessary documents. Diverse strategies also appeared as another significant category in implementing TVET programs. Trainers and TVI management have several and different ways of implementing the program. There are trainers who said that limiting the number of trainees to closely supervise training delivery is one of their strategies. In addition, some TVIs are shortening the nominal duration of TVET programs, and they considered it an advantage while some are opposed to this practice as they are extending the training duration which they found to be a better way also. Modular and self-paced training was practiced in which students can enroll and join the class anytime. Trainers also found it effective when they focus their training on skills and hands-on training.

Finally, despite complying with TESDA policies and standards in implementing the TVET programs, TVIs management and trainers experienced several difficulties in program implementation. The dilemma on the low enrollment rate is still existing because TVET programs are difficult to promote since most of the students prefer degree programs. Thus, most of the TVIs are dependent on the provision of scholarship slots from TESDA and government agencies. Trainers also experienced problems in conducting classes based on the student's availability. Consequently, it caused negative impression from the students when they did not conduct the training based on the set schedule.

### *Undesirable services and management practices*

Several undesirable services and management practices emerged when the trainers were asked about their insights on the services rendered to the students, as well as the practices that their TVI should stop doing. These undesirable services and management practices were divided into three significant codes and categories, namely, policies that need modifications, bad TVI management and trainers' practices and unsatisfying services.

The experiences of the trainers in conducting TVET programs led them to realize that there were some TESDA promulgated policies and standards which need modifications to improve the program delivery. Specifically, they observed that the implementation of the Competency-Based Training (CBT) approach during training results in disappointments to some students. In this approach, fast learners can move faster in all competencies leaving other students behind. The self-confidence and self-esteem of those who were left were affected. Another problem with this approach is the use of modular and self-paced method because most of the students find it difficult to comprehend what is written on the Competency-Based Learning Materials (CBLMs). Trainers are also complaining about the abrupt changing of TESDA policies and standards. Furthermore, trainers also notice some glitches in the implementation of the "multiple entry, multiple exit, enrollment every day, assessment anytime" scheme of TVET program delivery. They find it difficult to manage and according to them, there's a lot of hocus-focus in that practice. Similarly, they taught of improving the guidelines with regard to assessment procedures, specifically, the conduct of assessment anytime, anywhere, handled by different assessors.

Also, trainers have various observations on the bad management and trainers practices in which they think should be stopped. It was not surprising to the trainers that there were TVIs who are using inauthentic documents. Outdated, unreliable and copied CBLM were used to register TVET programs and were also used during the training. It was not also new to them the issue that there were trainers who got their National TVET Trainers Certificate (NTTC), a license to teach TVET programs, out of connections.

Problems exist on the part of trainers because of some management practices which downgrade the competence and dedication of trainers. First on the list is the multitasking of trainers and personnel. In some TVIs, trainers are also tasked to do the promotional and marketing campaign activities. Training schedules were not met because of multitasking of trainers. There were only few qualified trainers. Also, due to lack of personnel, sometimes student's requests are not addressed. Trainers also experienced unfair compensation, which degrades their morale. Added to that, trainers find themselves overworked. Some of them, aside from multitasking, also experienced overlapping classes because of lack of qualified trainers.

Because of some reasons, trainers are doing inappropriate strategies on the conduct of training and assessment. It is common to them the practice of training the students only on the activities which will come out during the assessment. There were also practices in which some of the trainers are conducting one day only enhancement training before the assessment date. There were also assessors who are giving competent results to students during assessment who are not really competent. And, in order for scholarship budget to be released to TVIs, they would allow the trainees to proceed to National Assessment without completing the number of hours of training or without even attending the actual training just for the institution to be paid.

On the part of TVIs management, some TVIs had complete facilities, tools, and equipment, but these are only available during TESDA inspection only. Some of the administration of TVIs are just using credentials of qualified trainers in order to be approved in the program registration. Not qualified trainers are conducting the actual training. And, sometimes, programs are just registered because it has documents on support services, but it was not actually provided to the students. And worst, some of the school owners only think of the return of investments (ROI).

Finally, there were unsatisfying services in which trainers had identified. According to them, students were provided with tools and equipment; however, some were not available, and some were not enough. Health care services are not provided. Library facilities are not functional. And, there was no improvement in facilities for many years. Others also confessed that students are properly informed; however, some requests are not attended because of unavailability of assigned staff. And they also

admitted that students were given promises but were not attained.

*Strong points of TVIs which creates positive image to stakeholders*

When trainers were asked to give their ideas on what possible image of their TVI do they think had influenced their students to pursue their TVET education, four categories have emerged highlighting the theme strong points of TVIs which creates positive image to stakeholders. These categories were TESDA accreditation and already established name, sufficient and attractive facilities, qualified and passionate trainers, and positive feedbacks from graduates and other stakeholders.

Trainers believed that being accredited by TESDA as a training and assessment center influences the choice of students to pursue their TVET program. Added to that is the image that their TVI was already an established technical school that is already known for skills training and technical courses.

Trainers also considered sufficient and attractive facilities as another factor that would encourage students to pursue TVET programs. Based on their responses, this includes, attractive building, state-of-the-art physical facilities, and good and complete facilities, tools and equipment.

The influence of the trainers on the students is something undeniable. The trainer participants considered qualified and passionate trainers as added factors to keep TVET trainees in their institution until they finish their TVET program and for them to recommend their TVI to others. Qualified trainers are those that were competent and with industry experience. Passionate trainers, on the other hand, are those who are caring, inspirational and helpful to the students.

Positive feedback from graduates and other stakeholders is one of the best tools to promote and advocate TVET programs. Trainers observed that it is helpful for their TVI that they are known to have a high employment rate of graduates. At the same time, the employers have positive feedbacks regarding the passion, skills and competence of their graduates. Testimonies and positive word-of-mouth from graduates working abroad encourage other youth to choose their school and enroll TVET programs. Also, their TVI is promoting livelihood and entrepreneurship programs to their students.

*Uplifting the image of TVET programs*

Stakeholders will patronize TVET programs by promoting TVET through information advocacy campaign and establishment of linkages highlighting the advantages of the programs and employability of graduates. In addition, the implementation of enhanced policies and guidelines will uplift the image of TVET programs. These were the ideas that came out from the trainers when they were asked how they can make the TVET programs more attractive to the stakeholders.

Promoting TVET through information advocacy campaign and the establishment of linkages is one of the best ways to make a better image of TVET in the community. This would include promoting the programs through flyers and social networking sites, promoting that TVET will give them the chance to be employed at a shorter time of training, introduce successful graduates because they are the best advertiser, promote the advantages of TVET during advocacy campaign and promoting TVET through good community involvement.

The employability of TVET graduates can also establish a more attractive image of TVET programs in society. Bringing them to employment and equipping students with confidence, knowledge, and skills with result of a positive feedback from employers. Thus, TVIs should help graduates to land a job and provide them with opportunity for employment and livelihood program. It is also important to provide pre-employment and job placement programs for TVET graduates and established linkages to possible employers.

Nevertheless, the prerequisite is the implementation of enhanced policies and guidelines to provide quality TVET. This could be done by implementing the improved assessment procedures, implement CBT, modular and self-paced learning only on adult learners and lifelong learners, implement ladderized/diploma programs, re-study the scholarship budget and make it enough for the training and provision of quality services and training delivery.

## Data integration of salient qualitative and quantitative

### *Merging-Diverging*

On the data of *Student's Assessment of Service Quality of TVI*, which is shown in Table 1, under the category reliability, item 1 which is about providing services as promised is rated high ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ). Item 4 which is about providing services at appointed time is also rated high ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ). And, item 5 which is about providing necessary information is also rated high ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ). This quantitative result is diverging with the qualitative information gathered from trainer participants. The *TVET Implementation in the Views of Trainers*, a code *Unsatisfying Services* highlighting the theme *Undesirable Services and Management Practices* was emerged. The views of trainers are in contrast with the students assessment of service quality in terms of reliability as there were core ideas revealed which states that *students were given promises but were not attained and some students requests were not attended because of unavailability of assigned staff*.

### *Merging-Converging*

Other aspects or focal points were found to have converging quantitative and qualitative results.

## Implications for educational practice

The findings of the study suggest several approaches to make TVET more attractive to different stakeholders by building loyalty among its students through service quality and positive corporate image. Hence, crafting and working on better plans in providing quality services and building a positive corporate image will lead to satisfying student's expectations. By doing so, TVIs will be able to create good reputation and gain competitive advantage. Consequently, TVET programs can be easily promoted.

Specifically, among the indicators of service quality measures, responsiveness, assurance and empathy are always evident by the students. However, reliability and tangibles are just often manifested by the students. With this, enhancing the TVIs organizational ability to perform the promised services to the students consistently and accurately will increase the quality of services in terms of reliability. On the other hand, giving priority in improving the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, tools, and materials will satisfy the student's expectation of tangibles. It is vital for the TVIs management, trainers and staff to understand student expectations to give them a suitable learning environment.

Making an excellent corporate image is necessary to uplift TVET; thus trainers felt the need to maintain TVIs good reputation and name in the community, focusing on the quality of trainers, facilities and services offered to produce best graduates.

TVET students and graduates are the best tool to promote TVET programs. Hence, it is also necessary to know the factors which would increase student's loyalty to the programs offered by the TVI. Giving the students the best experiences while they are on their training would increase their satisfaction and intensify their intention to recommend TVET to others.

The findings on service quality in terms of reliability indicate greater efforts for the TVIs to revisit their organizational structure and evaluate the job titles, job description and responsibilities of each personnel and ensure that each personnel has a responsibility commensurate to their time, skills and capacity, since multitasking came out to be the reason why services were not delivered all the time as promised.

Revisiting the existing policies and guidelines and constantly conducting monitoring and evaluation to TVIs is imperative as there were some misunderstandings on how to deliver TVET programs in terms of training delivery which results to implementation of different strategies of which some were not anymore in accordance to the Training Regulations, TESDA policies and standards.

Given the differences between students, trainers will have to adjust methods to include non-traditional teaching techniques to outfit contemporary specific academic demands of students. The interaction with the trainers is an important factor to give high quality of training services. Moreover, numerous clamors of trainers in the different areas of TVET implementation signify that there are complications in the management, implementation and program delivery requiring immediate attention.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The level of service quality of TVIs is high, which denotes that the TVIs in Davao Region considers the importance of providing high quality of services to its students. Similarly, the student's assessment of corporate image of TVIs is also high which signifies that the TVIs in Davao Region are doing strategies in order to have a positive image and reputation in the community.

The findings of this study revealed a high level of student's loyalty to the TVET program, which connotes that students have a sense of trust and commitment to their TVET program, leading them to pursue their TVET education, recommends TVET to others and say positive word-of-mouth regarding the TVET program.

Service quality and corporate image are significant predictors of student's loyalty to TVET. Furthermore, between the two determinants, corporate image is slightly the better predictor of student's loyalty to TVET than service quality. Thus, to attain student's loyalty to their TVET program, the TVI should provide quality services to the students and should have a positive image and reputation in the community.

The emerging overarching themes, namely exceptional qualities of TVIs, most satisfying experiences of TVET students and challenges and disappointments of TVET students highlight the lived experiences of TVET students. Students generally acquired good experiences being enrolled in a TVET program despite some challenges and disappointments.

The overarching themes, namely, challenges on TVET program implementation, undesirable services and management practices, strong points of TVIs, which creates positive image to stakeholders and uplifting the image of TVET programs were emerged on the views of TVET trainers in their implementation of TVET programs. Despite the revealed strong points of TVIs, TVET trainers have encountered numerous challenges and observed several undesirable practices in the implementation of TVET programs. Based on their views, they have suggested ways to uplift the image of TVET programs in the community.

Generally, the quantitative results corroborate with the qualitative findings, except, on the service quality of TVIs in terms of reliability in which the trainer insights were in contrast with the student responses. This finding is brought by the TVIs problems with multitasking due to lack of personnel. Also, trainers may have higher standards of judgment compared to student respondents.

### **Recommendations**

Since the service quality and corporate image of TVIs are at a high level and considered to be good predictors of student's loyalty to TVET, it is recommended that the institutions shall continue to find strategies to increase their service quality and corporate image into a very high level. TVIs may craft an Internal Quality Management System and an Institutional Image Building Program to meet the student's expectation and enhance their satisfaction and loyalty. It is also recommended to the training institutions in Davao Region to seek for program accreditation to TESDA as it may be the avenue for quality TVET delivery in their institution. Constant evaluation of processes and human resource management plans may also be in place internally within the institution. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority may review and enhance the implementation procedures, policies and standards in TVET program delivery. TESDA may also design capability programs for TVET administrators and Trainers Development Programs for TVET trainers.

Future studies may venture on the influence of the emerging variables from the qualitative phase. Specifically, the themes emerged from the views of trainers which include the challenges on TVET program implementation and undesirable services and management practices, as trainers observed several issues on the mentioned themes which need to be addressed. A similar study may be conducted using both the students and trainers as respondents in the quantitative phase to better explain the diverging results on their views with regard to service quality of TVIs.

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