

**Narrative enquiry of career paths and career success of former
TVET students' in Mauritius: A critical investigation**

**By
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at the

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how holding a formal TVET qualification can construct a career path and engage in the career success achievement process. The TVET reality in Mauritius continues to face stigmas and stereotyping: society at large considers that TVET is solely being reserved for less academically brilliant people, catering for dropouts and failures of the academic stream. This kind of poor reception towards TVET by the community has had a marked impact on making TVET appear unattractive. The TVET stream constitutes an area in which employment opportunities are extremely high. Career-minded people have not studied empirically the attributions associated with TVET qualification holders who wish to achieve success in their career journeys.

Career success is an important but often overlooked outcome of TVET qualification holders' career experience. The fact is that finding the key determinant to career success of TVET qualification holders as employees continues to be critically important to employees, being concomitantly significant for employers. Understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic career success predictors of this specific category of workers will help future employees to navigate both their professional and personal lives. The ultimate objective of this study is to critically investigate the extent of the journey of some TVET qualification holders before they reach their career success destination. Whether they faced any particular hindrances or opportunities en route is the subject of the study.

The study used a qualitative research approach from an interpretive paradigm. The method adopted for the present study is a narrative enquiry. The narratives of four former TVET students holding formal TVET qualifications were collected, and an analysis from their stories

was made. The study draws on social, human capital theories. It also partly uses the capability approach element of functioning, from Amartya Sen.

Findings suggest that there were some influential factors that had pushed students into the TVET stream. A discussion thereon would digress from the main objectives of the study. The experiences of these TVET students suggest that they were adequately engaged during their studies. The study suggests that these participants had linear career paths. The predictors of their career success consisted of both objective and subjective career success elements. TVET was the key player in achieving career success.

Suggestions for future research, and implications for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and TVET providers, are provided.

DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I, **Hemandar Kumar Madhow**, declare that:

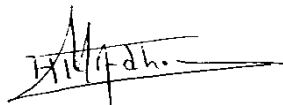
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ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



6 November 2015

Mr Hemandar Kumar Madhow 213573507
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Dear Mr madhow

Protocol reference number: HSS/1357/015D

Project Title: Succeeding against the odds: The career narratives of former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students in Mauritius

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 29 September 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Cedefop	Centre Europeen pour le Development de la Formation Professionelle
CPE	Certificate of Primary Education
CTE	Career and Technical Education
EIW	Electrical Installation Work
HSC	Cambridge Higher School Certificate
IVTB	Industrial and Vocational Training Board
MES	Mauritius Examinations Syndicate
MIE	Mauritius Institute of Education
MITD	Mauritius Institute of Training and Development
NC3	National Certificate level 3
NC4	National Certificate level 4
NTC	National Trade Certificate
OE	Occupational Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSAC	Primary School Achieving Certificate
PVE	Professional and Vocational Education
RAC	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
SC	Cambridge School Certificate

TVE	Technical Vocation Education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNEVOC	International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WE	Workplace Education

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis takes as its focus the contribution of the TVET education of former TVET students in the shaping of their career paths and career successes. It places career path and career success predictors of former TVET students who followed a formal TVET course at the forefront in the wider context of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) perspective in Mauritius. The chapter presents an overview of the TVET landscape on the island of Mauritius, offering related aspects regarding career paths and career successes. The research problem and the relevant critical questions, as well as the methodology and research methods adopted for this study, have been outlined.

1.2 Background to the Study

This thesis is a critical investigation of the career paths and career successes of former TVET students who have successfully completed a TVET programme in a publicly owned TVET training centre in Mauritius. To understand the phenomenon under study, the Mauritian educational system is being described, reflecting how people opt for TVET programmes. Mauritius has a 6 + 5 + 2 education structure, that is, six years of compulsory primary schooling from Standard I/Grade 1 to Standard VI/Grade 6 which leads to the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). From 2017, this has been replaced by the Primary School Achieving Certificate (PSAC). This is followed by five years of compulsory secondary education from Form I (as from 2017 known as Grade 7) to Form V (Grade 11) leading to the Cambridge School Certificate (SC); and a further two years at secondary school, ending with the

Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC). Education is free and compulsory up to the age of 16 years old, as stipulated by the Education Act of 2002.

The education system before the present reform which took place in January 2017, generated a high rate of failures at the end of the primary cycle, mostly owing to the competitive nature of the examinations system. Although this is still the case, with the new reform, the prime focus is to attenuate failures. The present reform could not be evaluated at this stage: it will be fully implemented by the year 2020. The new reform will be adopted by the primary and secondary school system, introduced as from January 2017, recognising a nine-year basic and continuous education. The structure of 6 + 5 + 2 remains, but with minor modifications. The Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) has been replaced by the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) at the end of the primary stream. Those who are not successful in the PSAC exams on the second take, are channelled to the lower secondary school extended stream. Here they are taught a curriculum different from those who have been admitted to Grades 7-9. After Grade 9 students will be called to take part in the National Grade 9 examinations. Upon success, they will be directed either to the upper secondary schools for academics studies depending on their exams results, or directed into a TVET institution.

Previously, before the reform, at the primary level, those who failed twice at the end of the primary school examination were directed to the pre-vocational schooling for a duration of three years. The previous educational system at the primary level, with the grading system, led to a chronic failure rate averaging 35% among the cohort of primary school leavers. In the late 90s, the pre-vocational stream has been able to capture the majority of primary school failures. The pre-vocational stream provided a skills-based curriculum. After completion of the pre-vocational stream, these people needed to compete for a seat in a TVET institution. In 2002,

with the introduction of the 11-year compulsory education, pupils have to remain in school until they are at least 16 years old. The present education system produced dropouts and failures at the secondary level, having a traditional focus on the provision of an education emphasising the academic component, being exam-oriented. These pupils were channelled to a TVET training institution to compete for a seat for a specific TVET programme. The existing TVET institutions provide a very limited number of seats, and offer a limited number of programmes, owing to available infrastructural facilities. Therefore, those rejected from the secondary schooling by way of failing the exams or through dropout, could not automatically be admitted to a TVET course.

In Mauritius, TVET was set up primarily to cater to dropouts and failures from the main academic stream. It took in mainly students who had read up to Form III secondary education or equivalent, or beyond. Students had to be at least 16 years old to enrol in any TVET programme. This was a politically motivated decision rather than a pedagogically driven initiative for addressing the chronic failures of primary and secondary school.

At the international level, the creation of TVET dates many centuries back. According to CEDEFOP, 2001, TVET in Europe was developed from a relatively common apprenticeship system rooted in the guilds. Since then it has evolved into a number of different forms and organisational structures. TVET came into being in countries desiring economic and social development. In Mauritius, at the time of the French settlers, craftsmen and artisans were brought from France to start construction work on the island. This was the beginning of informal TVET in Mauritius. During the colonial era, after the general emancipation of slaves, agricultural work and certain technical work still carried the stigma of slavery and was therefore associated with their previous menial and degraded status (Ramdoyal, 1977).

According to Afeti, (2014) technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is the most practical avenue for acquiring readily employable skills for the world of work. PWC (2015) posited that Africa needs skilled workers. In particular, competent artisans and technicians are needed to fill skills gaps in various sectors of the economy, including the building and construction industry, manufacturing, tourism, and agro-processing sectors. Ramdin (2016) posited that vocational education in Mauritius often has a recurrent theme. He pointed out that everyone says it is a good thing and it is vital for the economy; however the academic pathways have the higher status. In her address, the Minister of Education (2016) observed that we are still operating in an environment in which technical, but especially vocational education, is considered as having blue-collar stigma. The technical and vocational education and training system in Mauritius has always been regarded as being reserved for academically poor people. This is despite the prominent role that vocational training has played in the development of human capital throughout the economy. These negative perceptions of the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector are causing much harm in limiting the career opportunities available to Mauritian youth. TVET-related jobs have the capacity to absorb large numbers of young people – in the formal sector, in enterprises, and for self-employment purposes in the informal sector (City and Guilds, 2011).

An entrenched and largely historically biased outlook that a TVET system reflects a deficit approach to education and training still prevails in many countries. New TVET activity in developing countries such as the former Soviet Republic of Central Asia, Vietnam, and Indonesia, remains constrained by an outlook that TVET is inferior to a university education (MacDonald, Nink, Duggan, 2010).

Current provisions of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes in Mauritius are largely carried out by government-owned training centres coordinated by the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD). There are thirteen TVET training centres scattered around the island. The present TVET infrastructure can only enrol around 3000 trainees on a full-time basis, yearly. Owing to the limited enrolment capacity of our TVET training centres, ironically, applicants, mainly dropouts and failures of the secondary school, together with those who have completed their pre-vocational education, are required to compete for a seat through a selection exercise, normally comprising a written exam. Because of limited seats offered by TVET training centres, potential trainees are called to undergo an entry test as a selection exercise. Only the candidates who pass the test with certain specific traits are enrolled. Seemingly, this selection process of recruiting trainees prohibits a considerable number of candidates from entering into the TVET stream. This in itself creates a category of people not academically fit to pursue further studies, nor having the eligibility to enrol in a TVET. Paradoxically, this creates a population without the necessary skills to meet labour market needs and requirements. The current TVET system faces a number of difficulties: as mentioned above, insufficient access for the entire population rejected by the academic streams remains a problem.

Quality is uneven, and often low. Investment in TVET has been lacking over many years, resulting in insufficient and outdated equipment, facilities, and materials. The budget allocation from government is relatively low compared with the mainstream education sector (Ministry of Finance, 2017). Another issue faced by the present TVET system, is not sufficiently investing in strengthening the training workforce through continuous staff development programmes. Such would ensure that skills taught at the training centres are currently needed by the industries, having the ability to update and offer new competencies demanded by

industry. This shortcoming is impacting on the quality of training delivery and training inputs. Occupational and pedagogical up-skilling is limited, and occupational standards and curricula are often outdated. This directly impacts on the quality of skilled workforce one must produce to meet the needs of the present industries requirement. Presently, this phenomenon is not only affecting TVET graduates, but is also taking place at university level with their graduates (TEC, 2015). The industry relevance of TVET is low, and industry involvement in TVET is minimal. This is because presently Mauritius TVET stream is being provided primarily by a supply-driven training system which caters for failures and dropouts from the secondary schools, and not for evolving market requirements. Many enterprises organise in-house training independently for their employees, with the support of the levy grant system (HRDC, 2016) because TVET graduates do not satisfy the skills and knowledge requirements needed by industry. For the last fifteen years there have been no advisory committees to which industries would routinely be invited. Their contribution to the enhancing of the level of the TVET programme would be by providing the current and future requirements of their workforce. Public training providers often have limited understanding of the requirements of the modern labour market. Courses are often not updated to reflect the needs of employers; and no post-training support is offered to assist trainees' transition to the labour market. There is a growing demand for skilled labour at all levels, according to the government budget speech (Ministry of Finance, 2016/2017).

One of the salient features of TVET is its determination to equip graduates with employable skills through hands-on practical training and competency-based training. This would guarantee employable skills among TVET graduates. Not all the TVET graduates are employable in the trade in which training was obtained. In some trades such as plumbing, automotive mechanics, welding, garment making, beauty therapy, the figure is alarmingly low

– 60% do not secure employment in these fields after training. Normally, MITD conducts tracer studies for capturing information about graduates having obtained a job, without specifying in which trade. The tracer studies fail to capture relevant information and to evaluate the effectiveness of Mauritius TVET programme in terms of trainees obtaining employment relevant to the course followed. Tracer studies are the only instruments used by the MITD to keep track of whether TVET graduates secure a job. That is insufficient to have a profound understanding of the effectiveness of the TVET courses offered by the MITD. TVET programmes are expected to prepare more labour-market-responsive graduates, given that they undergo competency-based training. World Bank (2014) raised concern about TVET providers not producing graduates with relevant job competencies that match the current and future industry needs. Around 90 per cent of CEOs in Africa argue that availability of key competencies among graduates, including those from technical education backgrounds, is extremely low (PWC, 2015); warning that this situation denies economies the skills they need to drive growth. This situation consequently renders learning institutions less relevant in the context of the labour market (PWC, 2015). All the accounts mentioned above argue about the importance of the relevance and currency of the TVET programmes. This is considered a vital element for increasing employability opportunities. The issue of employability of former TVET trainees becomes more and more evident; TVET being designed to equip people with the necessary skills to perform tasks for a specific job in which training was obtained.

The other issue with a TVET programme requirement is to meet the needs of industries. The TVET centre is designed to provide technical skills and vocational education required to perform tasks for a particular line of work. Such education is traditionally distinguished from one year full-time training for a National Certificate Level 3 (NC 3) or the newly revamped TVET programmes. These date from January 2017, the National Certificate Level 4, which is

a two-year full-time duration programme. Such programmes focus on training for job-specific trainees who are typically bound for one of the skilled trades, rather than providing an academic training for students. The present programmes offered by MITD training centres provide accredited training in job-related and technical skills, covering a number of careers and industries. These include trades in automotive mechanics, jewellery making, welding, plumbing, refrigeration & air conditioning repairs, electrical installation work, art & craft, beauty therapy, hairdressing, aluminium making, precision engineering, panel beating, body repairs, printing, hospitality/hotel studies, telecommunication, metalwork, ICT, electronics, cabinet making, woodwork, and garment making. TVET centres need to provide job-specific training, therefore it is imperative to have strong cooperation between the centre learning activities and the activities of the industry. This will produce competent and high-quality performance workers. The present TVET system suffers from a weak linkage between TVET training centres and the industrial world of work, not gauging what is taking place in the real workplace. Such a situation negatively impacts the contents of the curriculum, which does not suit the needs of the industries, producing trainees not fit for industry requirements.

The study investigates the views, interpretations, barriers, advantages, and opportunities of former TVET students in the shaping of their career paths, and the influential factors of their career success, if any. Of the very few pupils able to secure a seat in this competitive TVET programme offered by the MITD, not all manage successfully to reach the end of the programme. Normally, the TVET institutions in Mauritius face high dropout rate, around 30-40%. In certain specific programmes such as welding, and cabinet making, the dropout rate climbs as high as 50-60%. Taking into account the high dropout rate, of those who continue and complete the TVET programmes, only 60% are able to pass the exams, achieving TVET certificates. Therefore, investigating this reduced size of TVET population embarking on their

career journey becomes an important phenomenon for an empirical research. Industries are becoming more and more sophisticated, with high-tech plants and machinery. The need for high-level skilled workers is greater than ever, and has created career opportunities. There is very little academic material on basic skilled TVET students' career opportunities, and on their career success. While there is research on other fundamentally important groups of employees not holding TVET qualifications, such as teachers, doctors, lawyers, and managers, it is widely recognised that skilled workers holding TVET qualifications represent a major group of stakeholders aspiring to a successful career path.

As noted, the government is funding the TVET institutions which represent a dynamic system of education critical to the developing of Mauritians' industrial and social well-being in view of reducing youth unemployment. According to Lucas & Claxton (2009) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) aims to promote employable skills and to boost economies. The TVET stream is expected to prepare more labour-market-responsive technical graduates, given that it lays more emphasis on competency-based training which focuses on knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitude, together with wider attributes (Lucas & Claxton, 2009). PWC (2015), reported that indeed, technical knowledge is not keeping pace with economic growth. According to UNESCO (2013), the world is currently facing a youth employment crisis. In some regions, notably the Middle East and North Africa, more than 26% of young people cannot find jobs. In Greece, Spain, and Macedonia the youth unemployment rate now exceeds 50%. In many countries, young people lack basic foundational skills, and therefore have difficulty finding worthwhile jobs, or becoming self-employed. Similarly, it is said that TVET is increasingly being viewed as a potential solution to the youth employment crisis. TVET's orientation towards the world of work and the acquisition of employable skills means that it is well placed to overcome the skills mismatch issues that have impeded smooth

education to employment transition for many young people. Recently, the Mauritian government introduced the National Skills Development Programme (NSDP) with a view to reducing the youth unemployment rate. The said NSDP programme provides unemployed people with basic skills in various trades areas identified by the government which are viewed to be important for the economy. These people joining the NSDP courses are being paid a monthly stipend of Rs 5000 plus a transport allowance of Rs 1000 as incentive to provide them with skills' acquisition. There is a question that is being posed here: how much has the Mauritian TVET achieved by way of assuring employment opportunities to those who follow its courses?

In addition, it is now widely acknowledged that TVET plays a vital role in contributing to broad social and economic goals, particularly in the worldwide shift toward a highly skilled workforce. Many studies document the direct and indirect economic benefits of TVET to communities, including employment, entrepreneurial and social inclusion. Over the last few years, the economic value of TVET qualified workers has also increasingly been emphasised.

Despite ongoing rhetoric regarding the importance of TVET for a productive workforce for society and the economy, employees holding TVET qualifications in industries continue to struggle against intense prejudice, being considered inferior to white-collar employees (UNESCO, 2013). The tradesman displays labour-force characteristics which differ enormously from the white-collar profession. The average earnings of tradesmen holding TVET qualifications are consistently lower than other workers with comparable educational and demographic profiles. TVET students also experience much higher rates of unemployment and underemployment (Ministry of Labour Report, 2015). There are increasing numbers of TVET students reaching the world of work who seem to experience very high levels of

underemployment and very low incomes. It is also noted that they often obtain work unrelated to the course that they followed (MITD, 2016). This is not only the case for TVET graduates – university graduates are also jobless. Helping the unemployed become more employable is now a public policy issue (Hogan, Chamorro-Premuzic, Kaiser, 2013). An enormous population is joining the university programme compared with the TVET population, therefore, it is evident that university graduates have surpassed rates of unemployment compared with that of TVET. TVET institutions' training programmes are at a disadvantage in the sense that industry prefers recruiting a university graduate rather than a TVET students. Graduates possess more maturity and they are adaptive to work and technological changes occurring in industry. TVET students have a narrow and limited employability except in the tourism sector where such qualifications are desired by employers (MITD, 2015). TVET qualifications holders' careers lead to a number of questions that are insufficiently addressed by the extant literature. These questions are: Are TVET students easily employable after termination of their course? Do they have skills related to industries' current skills needs? How far have they reached in terms of career progression as holders of TVET qualifications: do they have real career success in their profession? Mauritius is embarking on its next phase of economic development with the setting up of smart cities, the light rail system, assisting Mauritius to become a high-income-earning country (Ministry of Finance Budget Speech, 2017).

In terms of these questions, the present study tries to determine the career journey of the TVET graduates for career success, if any. The above depiction is of the present TVET stream: a limited enrolment capacity, the struggle students face to secure a seat, the number of enrolled TVET student populations becoming more and more reduced, with the phenomenon of high dropouts rate and an average passing rate of 50-55% of the remaining students in the TVET programmes. The study will examine factors that account for former TVET graduates being

successful or unsuccessful in their chosen career. There is a question as to which competencies TVET students need to possess in order to engage in their career development so as to have a fulfilling career. The notion of a traditional career, chiefly determined by an employee's preliminary training and by opportunities provided by employers, has shifted to the concept of a changing career, largely guided by the employee him- or herself (Kuijpers, 2006).

A career is a sequence of jobs an individual holds during his or her work history. While success in one's career is a natural expectation of individuals, the nature of that success depends on what one expects from it (Supangco, 2011).

Has a TVET course been a contributing factor to the chosen career of students? The study will also examine the career paths of certain people, seeking to have the employers' opinion concerning the courses offered by the TVET providers. The researcher will try to establish whether TVET courses provide job readiness. Answers elicited will form part of the recommendations of the study.

It is not currently understood how former TVET students' career paths are constructed. Are they construed according to the framework of occupational classifications that distinguishes workers as blue- or white-collar workers? It is a worldwide phenomenon that TVET courses have been stigmatised and stereotyped. Such thinking has been deeply rooted in the minds of many, including Mauritian people. TVET is considered a demeaning educational pathway. This study attempts to understand factors that have been important in shaping the career paths and career successes of former TVET students, despite such poor reception towards TVET.

The careers literature depicts that the selection and pursuing of careers by individuals has considerably changed over time (Hennequin, 2007). It is assumed that there has been a documented shift from traditional career paths in which linear progression of employees were the ultimate outcome of their career success, to protean career paths in which career mobility matches employees' aspirations. McGrath (2005) postulates that students and other TVET stakeholders consider low prestige as among the critical lingering challenges bedevilling the TVET sector. Furthermore, TVET qualification holders learning mainly vocational skill occupations reported experiences of discrimination, stereotyping, and other negative issues surrounding the blue-collar profession. It could be argued, therefore, that the body of research that explores career successes of academic professionals could be developed further to enhance understanding of how TVET qualification holders' motivation to enter relate to subsequent experiences, and whether or not this has an impact on the achievement of success. It is against this brief background and description of the particular structure of the Mauritian TVET-related challenges faced by the TVET qualification holders, that the need for stronger career advancement is motivated and problematized.

1.3 Significance and Relevance of the Study

The significance of this study rests on the belief that societies require skilled workers for accelerating economic development of a country through TVET qualifications. Understanding the career paths of these people will help the TVET colleges to design their courses such that industries will immediately consider these students their potential future workforce. The accent is on discovering the career paths of former TVET students holding TVET qualifications. It is important to elicit whether TVET qualification holders are able to gain and maintain a job in a formal organisation. Understanding the career success factors of the few TVET graduates who are able to make it will enable the researcher to determine facts pertaining to the predictability

features of TVET courses in endeavouring to provide graduates with sustainable career paths leading to career success. In a nutshell, the study sets out to decide whether the career paths of former TVET students have led to career success, and whether such an outcome is more or less predictable. In its heyday – 1990-2000 – the Mauritian TVET worked in close collaboration with industries. TVET’s vital ingredient for efficiency is the nexus between curriculum content and industries requirements. Technical education and vocational training (TVET) has existed as an organised structure within the Mauritian educational system for five to six decades. The establishment of technical and vocational training centres across the island has spearheaded government efforts in introducing structured TVET programmes to Mauritians’ future generations.

The world is currently facing a youth employment crisis. Globally, over the past decade, young people aged 15-24 are now three times more likely than adults to be unemployed (ILO, 2012). According to UNEVOC (2013), one of the main reasons for high youth unemployment across the world is a growing mismatch between the supply and demand of skills, which disproportionately affects young people in developing countries. UNEVOC (2013), in its report, postulated that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is increasingly being viewed as a potential solution to the youth unemployment crisis. UNEVOC (2013) professed that TVET’s orientation towards the world of work and the acquisition of employable skills means that it is well placed to overcome the skills mismatch issues that have impeded smooth education-to-employment transitions for many young people. It is also noted that, to have a significant impact on youth employment outcomes in an era of rapid technological change and globalisation, TVET institutions will need to undergo a major transformation.

The existing literature clearly depicts that there is a serious issue of youth unemployment. TVET's founding aim is to work in close collaboration with industries with a view to erasing skills mismatch, and increasing employment opportunities for TVET graduates. TVET is supposed to reduce the youth unemployment crisis as established by UNESCO. The Mauritian economy is showing steady signs of recovering to a higher growth path and focussing on a New Era of Development (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2018). The government is aiming high to boost the economy with massive investment in development. This requires a productive and skilful workforce to achieve the government economic objectives. This may be effectively achieved through a good TVET system. The present status of the TVET systems gives limited access to the TVET programmes owing to limited enrolment capacity, high dropout rates for those admitted to a TVET programme, lower pass rate, employability issues, TVET programme currency and relevance with industries requirements being questionable, and poor training of staff. Has this happened with the current TVET courses? The study is probing the real payoff of the TVET in terms of career pathing, job creation, and career success. The study intends to determine whether the TVET programmes implemented by Mauritian TVET colleges offering TVET courses work in terms of job opportunities. How do past students manage their career journeys? The research wishes to understand those few TVET graduates who have achieved satisfaction and who believe themselves successful in their careers. Unfortunately, there is currently little evidence-based research and data on the effectiveness of past interventions by TVET colleges in helping young people into employment.

The majority of the student population enrolling for TVET programmes enter at the National Certificate for Course Level 3, which is a basic skills level course. Trainees are called to learn

the basic competencies of an assistant craftsman. Thereafter, they have to work under direct supervision of a craftsman.

The findings of this study would be useful to the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD). It would help in the formulation of policy guidelines with regard to re-vamping the existing curriculum, making it more attractive to industries and increasing job readiness. It would provide guidelines for maximising job opportunities for TVET graduates. The study would assist the Ministry of Human Resources and other stakeholders within the TVET landscape with the provision of policy direction and guidelines. Such would ensure that TVET colleges deliver courses which are more labour-market responsive. The findings will also help in understanding the TVET qualification holders' career path, capturing their upward job mobility and how this relates to their career success.

1.4 Problem Statement

The Mauritian education system is based on the British model, as described under the background header. It is free in principle at state institutions. Those dropping out at the lower secondary schools, having read up to Form Three or Grade Nine, are eligible to join a TVET programme. Students who fail the secondary O-level and A-level are also potential candidates for being enrolled in a TVET programme. MITD has been set up as a government agency to provide training services throughout Mauritius. It exists to enhance the island nation's skills base.

The government has instituted the MITD as a TVET provider, and also to cater for those not having any schooling avenues after the age of 16 years, so as to adhere to the provision of the Education Act of 2002. The MITD also provides TVET courses to all secondary school leavers,

dropouts, failures, also catering for those who have completed the full cycle of the pre-vocational programme. MITD provides a one-year full-time basic training programme in various technical and vocational trades for the above population. The one-year full-time programme is pitched at the National Certificate Level 3, commonly known as the NC 3 courses, which are at the lowest skills level of the programme. Holders of NC 3 qualifications are required to work under direct supervision of a skilled craftsman. Those successful at the level of NC 3 have two options. They either join the world of work or continue for a higher TVET programme, normally the NC 4 level, which is considered the craftsman level. The NC Level 4 courses are only offered for a limited number of trades, not for all the NC 3 level trades.

Taking into account the figures depicted by the available statistics from MES (2015), around 9000-10000 people have the opportunity of accessing a TVET training. The present enrolment capacity of the MITD for the NC 3/NC 4 courses on an annual intake is around 3000 only. This clearly shows that a large number of this population, up to 7000, do not secure a seat at the MITD. They may therefore not be able to secure good employment in this ever-changing labour market in which skilled workers are in high demand.

All these figures converge towards one single fact. Of the students rejected from the academic stream, not admitted to a TVET institution owing to the restricted intake capacity, only one third of this population will gain a seat in a TVET institution. The unfortunate students not admitted to a TVET institution are not equipped with the required skills to be absorbed into the labour market. In this category of people, it is largely female students who refuse to join a TVET programme on the basis of the cultural belief and biased view that TVET is a strongly male-oriented institution. These women opt to join informal sectors, becoming sales assistants, labourers, domestic workers, etc. The male population within this category not having a place

in a TVET schools, normally those holding a marginal pass at the O-level, prefer to join the police force or become lower-grade public civil servants such as labourers or workers which do not require specialised skills. Others not holding O-level qualifications opt to be security guards, fishermen, or they join the informal sectors, SMEs, which normally are categorised as unskilled professions.

The population that has managed to be enrolled in a TVET programme at the MITD, follow National Certificate Level 3 courses or the newly introduced NC Level 4. Introduced in January 2017, NC Level 4 applies to trades such as automotive mechanics, welding, plumbing and pipe fitting, electrical installation work, hairdressing, beauty therapy, refrigeration and air conditioning, garment making, sheet metal fabrication, industrial machine maintenance, panel beating, spray painting, woodworking, aluminium making, pre-press, printing and plate making, jewellery making, housekeeping, barman, pastry making and baking, cooking, hotel-related trades, among others. The NC 3/4 level or other TVET courses suffer high dropout rates in certain trades less attractive, for example woodworking, welding, plumbing, and sheet-metal fabrication. In these trades the dropout rates reach from 50% to 60%.

Around 30% to 40% of the students enrolled in NC 3/4 and other TVET courses do not pass their examinations, and therefore exit the course without a certificate. These students have a very limited chance of embracing a career in the occupation they have been trained for. Furthermore, those who successfully complete the NC 3/4 and any other TVET courses, may never be employed in the trade in which they studied. Students who have an NC 3 qualification possess very basic hands-on skill which allows them to be recruited for a job at the level of an assistant craftsman. Such employees have to work under the direct supervision of a craftsman. This is in itself a major setback of the NC 3 qualification, making it less attractive to industries'

human resources needs. Apart from the NC3/NC4 TVET programmes, there are many other programmes offered by MITD at a higher level, namely, at diploma, higher national diploma, and brevet technician level. The present labour market requirement is fully-fledged skilled workers. This is the reason for the present TVET reform being introduced as from January 2017 on a pilot basis. This applies to an NC 4 qualification, which is of two years' full-time duration and pitched at craftsman level. All the courses offered by MITD will be at the level of NC 4 and will be fully effective by 2019.

Bailey, Hughes, Moore (2004) claim that employers today expect new employees to have more knowledge, and more skills and to be more intrinsically motivated than employees two decades ago; however, vocational education today does not fulfil these expectations. There are indeed serious doubts about the level of knowledge and skills students have (Boutin, Chinien, Moratis, Van Baalen, 2009; Billett, 2009). One key equation now having a massive impact on job location is the balance between labour cost and the application of technology to reduce the labour component, not only in manufacturing, but also in many services. The intrusion of computers into all aspects of design, changes the skills required of all new workers in the majority of classic technologies. This is the main reason for most manufacturing industries enabling migration of jobs from low-wage countries back to higher-technology countries which they had left during the past 20 years. For TVET, a revolution in curriculum is required, not only to prepare graduates for an immediate job, but also for continuing employment. Robotics, automation, and 3D printers have intruded into the workplace, pervading almost every aspect of the employment situation. Such a revolution will disrupt not only the workplace, but employment prospects for those without mastery of the necessary knowledge. An important reason for these disappointing observations is that most students fail to develop a clear career choice during their time at school (Geurts & Meijers, 2009). Lack of intrinsic motivation, Plane

(2009) notes, results in students making rather random career choices. This, in turn, results in high dropout rates. According to Company (2009), the only way to address this problem is for TVET colleges to invest in career-guidance programmes in their institutions.

According to Wahba (2015), the TVET in most of the developing countries is expected to play two crucial roles in national sustainable development (social, economic, and environmental development). The first role is to provide training opportunities and career advancement avenues for the increasing number of school leavers. The second role is to provide skilled manpower that is needed at all levels of the economy. The skills so developed should be able to lead to self-reliance in the absence of salaried employment, enhancing the industrialization process. Wahba (2015) postulated that most developing countries have a large percentage of skilled, yet unemployed people. UNEVOC-UNESCO forum (2015) averred that TVET needs to provide courses and training programmes related to employment with a view to enable the transition from secondary education to work for young trainees, supplying the labour market with a competent workforce. UNEVOC-UNESCO (2015) has postulated that there is a myriad of problems facing developing countries' TVET systems. People tend to view TVET in a negative way – as education and training meant for those who have failed in society. This is because most parents believe that becoming engineers, doctors, lawyers, professionals of one type or the other, will give their children better job opportunities. Another significant challenge for TVET in developing countries, is that TVET graduates are not being employed in related trades for which they were trained. UNEVOC-UNESCO (2015) recognised that a TVET institution should build its credibility by effectively training the candidates and contributing to career development of the student, rather than acting as an institution for rolling out training programmes.

According to Alfero and Hassan (2013), TVET-based qualifications and careers have the reputation of being poorly recognised, and are perceived to be skills deficient in the workplace. Many employers do not acknowledge the certification, owing to the poor quality of the training that is being delivered. Employability is one of the most pre-eminent issues arising from the TVET system for TVET graduates. Presently, Malaysia is planning to set a target for at least 75% of graduates to be employed in relevant fields within six months after graduation (Alfero and Hassan, 2013).

At the national level in Mauritius, there is no data available that can indicate that the TVET programmes are aligned with the labour market needs. There is a tracer study conducted at the end of the programme during the award of the certificate ceremony which has only a 50% response rate. The said tracer study gathers only information on whether trainees are employed. This is big data, not looking at trainees' employment in the field in which training was followed. Therefore, the real figure does not emerge. Leaver surveys or longitudinal studies are not conducted in Mauritius; therefore one is unable to capture the return on investment of present TVET courses offered by the MITD. Therefore, this present study will be helpful to policymakers and TVET providers. It will act as an official document from which further research may be carried out in deepening the understanding about pertinent issues for TVET, in order to address such in terms of present and future challenges facing this sector. There is a paucity of data and written literature in Mauritius concerning TVET. This study will therefore act as a sort of a database of TVET-related information, mainly TVET trainees' ways of constructing their career paths and career success.

In this present context, for instance, would someone trained as a plumber be free to perform plumbing work, to have real opportunity to accomplish competencies learned post TVET

training? (Walker, 2005). The study intends to understand and assess former TVET students in terms of their ability to achieve valuable functioning as set out by Sen (1987) according to his capability theory. If people are trained in a specific trade, their valuable functioning would be job specific. Why does this functioning not allow students to gain the freedom to achieve occupation relevant to competencies learned from training? Crucially, ‘functionings’ depend on both individual and institutional conditions and contexts within which potentials (freedom) may be achieved. This will be the theoretical lens through which this study will focus.

McGrath (2012) pledged a new theoretical lenses for TVET, positing the various core concerns of TVET in a southern-hemisphere-oriented account of the failing of conventional public TVET. Concerns included low pass rates, poor labour market insertion, poorly qualified trainers, inadequate resources, low curricular relevance, dead-end qualifications, and high inefficiency. The Mauritian TVET also faces drawbacks such as persistent low pass rates, high dropout rates, trainers’ competencies not updated, curriculum not matching the needs of industries, TVET qualifications not leading to employment, certain sectors being in a dead-end position. This study will direct the researcher to understand by focussing on the issue of employability and career success of the former TVET students. The study seeks to find the causal effect of employment, career paths, career success determinants, TVET structural, institutional, personal, and curricular issues faced by former TVET students. The main objective of the TVET stream is to provide employment opportunities for those embracing TVET education. The research problem is the focus of this study. It is therefore necessary to investigate the career pathways of such people to ascertain the determinants of career success for increasing the visibility of the TVET stream.

From the above it is clear that the Mauritian TVET system faces certain systemic issues. Problems include the continued low pass rates, high dropout rates, TVET qualifications leading nowhere, TVET is less attractive to the public and to industries at large, the new generation of youths being poorly motivated to acquire new knowledge and skills; the classic technologies in manufacturing industries being replaced by more sophisticated technologies with the intrusion of automation, robotics and 3D printers; total absence of career counselling for TVET students, producing skilled people yet unemployed people; curriculum irrelevancy with current and future needs of the industries; lack of credibility with TVET providers; total absence of statistics concerning TVET graduates' employment situation, and career trajectories; TVET programmes not aligned with the labour needs; poorly qualified trainers; inadequate resources; high inefficiency; dead-end qualifications; workshops poorly equipped; infrastructural issues such as TVET schools poorly equipped with basic amenities such as chairs, tables, IT labs, etc.; lack of leadership at the head of the TVET organisation; and difficulty in career progression for TVET qualification holders. To conclude this problem statement, it is clear that in Mauritius the challenges facing the TVET stream are daunting. It is evident that there is a lack of coherence, resulting in further accentuating the stigma and stereotyping associated with the TVET stream. In the absence of real statistics at the national level, the most pressing issues were about the career progression of TVET qualification holders. There is interest in knowing how those TVET students who have been successful in obtaining a TVET qualification in this impoverished TVET system started their career journey. This realisation led the researcher to ask how former TVET students construct their career trajectories. The researcher wondered whether these former TVET students' career paths had led them to achieve career success. This study focusses on the graduates of TVET in Mauritius by collecting data through narratives from employed TVET graduates. The findings of this study will lead to empirical validation of

the importance of career counselling for TVET graduates; in particular for its contribution in developing clear career paths and in the shaping of career success of these graduates.

1.5 Aims of the Study

A career represents a person's entire life in the workplace. In addition, for most people, work is a primary factor in determining the overall quality of life. Therefore, it is important to study careers and career success, because work plays a key role in people's lives (Hall, 2002). Therefore investigating the extent to which TVET programmes are career-oriented will be an important element of this research.

Traditionally, TVET courses were regarded as a passport for easy access to employment in manufacturing industries. Recently, in the last two budget speeches of 2015 and 2016 (Ministry of Finance) by the Mauritian government, it was stated that there is a serious shortage of skilled workers which is undermining the economic growth of the country. Industries are turning to expatriate workers. However, with high numbers of people with NC3/4 and other TVET qualifications, the present government has expressed concern over lack of job opportunities for this category of person. Normally, TVET graduates' biggest job market has been in manufacturing, hospitality industries, and SMEs. The researcher felt compelled to study the career paths of a handful of these graduates within this sector, to understand the particularities of their career journey in ultimately achieving career success. This thesis aims at these important aspects open to empirical research, given that ministerial reports have claimed poor provision for skilled workers by existing TVET institutions. Reports state that the primary objective of TVET is to prepare students to acquire the necessary skills for paid employment or self-employment in specific occupations. It is said to provide employment for economically challenged youth worldwide (Olelewe, 2016). Okafor (2011) posited that many TVET students

after graduation become unemployed because the skills acquired are dysfunctional and irrelevant to the labour market. Hence it is important to study the career trajectory of these students who have chosen TVET courses as an access passport to employment.

According to OECD (2013a), individuals are affected when skills mismatch results in a higher risk of unemployment, lower wages, lower job satisfaction, and poorer career prospects. The OECD report (2016) posited that youth stand to gain significantly from participating in TVET programmes in terms of improved job prospects after graduation and smooth school-to-work transitions. Therefore the researcher intends to assess to what extent career development in terms of career paths, and career success listed above, are interrelated.

The literature on career success has been largely based on academic qualification holders such as engineers, managers, medical practitioners, scientists, female workers with MBAs, and disabled persons employed in white-collar professions. There are few studies on career pathways and achievement of career success for the TVET population. It is therefore the aim of this thesis to fill this gap in work, in the areas of careers paths and career success for those having undergone a TVET education, by providing knowledge of the TVET qualifications holders' struggle for a career; and their narrated stories for their progressive journey to career success, including turning points, obstacles encountered, and specific strategies adopted to combat them.

This thesis critically investigates the extent to which a sample of former TVET students who followed a TVET programme has achieved work commensurate with their qualifications, skills and knowledge; and specifically, the extent to which they were involved in finding employment opportunities within the related trades in which they were trained or any other trades; and

driving through their career trajectories to understand how they are successful in their chosen careers.

The study also aims to critically investigate the career experiences of former TVET students' holders of a formal TVET qualification and who were enrolled at a government-owned TVET institution. The study, therefore, sets about a critical investigation of the career paths and career successes of former TVET students.

The study is also aiming to assess these TVET qualification holders' ability to achieve their earned functioning after being trained with job specific competencies through a formal TVET training within the perspective of the capability approach developed by Sen (Walker, 2005). Capability is the alternative combination of functioning that are feasible for a person to achieve according to Sen (Walker, 2005). According to Walker (2005), the capability approach is mostly based upon individual functioning in order to achieve something. Thus, the capability approach has individualistic dimensions within would add value to the present study through individual narrative accounts of former TVET students in understanding their career trajectory, leading to career successes. This narrative enquiry is a qualitative study aimed at discovering and exploring the meanings of career success and perceived influences on career success among former working TVET students in Mauritius.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine how former TVET student holders of a formal TVET qualification construct their career path.

2. To investigate factors influencing former TVET students to succeed in their chosen career.
3. To investigate limitations/constraints or opportunities which former TVET students encountered in their chosen career.

1.7 Research Questions

The central interest for this study is the career narrative, career path, and career success construction by former TVET students. The starting point for this research includes the following research questions:

1. How do former TVET student holders of a formal TVET qualification construct their career paths?
2. What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen career?
3. What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journey for success, and why would this be so?

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The study draws from three theoretical frameworks discussed in further detail in Chapter Two. First, there is the human capital acquisition through a TVET programme with its effects on career success. The initial human capital is earned through formal TVET courses. Subsequent human capital is obtained either formally or informally on the job. Some such skills acquisition proves useful, aiding in career success. The second theoretical framework used for this study is one which models social capital effects on a full set of career outcomes of these former TVET students. Such processes are known to be determinants of career success. Social network

approaches to career success, growing out of a sociological research tradition, tend to focus on occupational status and job mobility as the primary career outcome (Burt, 1997).

Third, and functioning as the framing orientation of the study, is Amartya Sen's capability approach. This approach provides a comprehensive framework for conceptualising the quality of life and well-being of individuals (Landorf, Doscher, Rocco, 2008). The capability approach provides a normative framework informed by the principles of social justice and more recently by what Sen (2009) has termed 'comparative justice' (Sen, 2009). The capability approach, at its core, is about providing individuals with the opportunity of living the life that they have reason to value, enabling individuals to become agents in their own lives (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009).

1.9 Research Design

1.9.1 Research design and methodology for the study

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe narrative enquiry as a methodology "in its infancy", stating that it underscores a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, "lead storied lives". Narrative enquiry, according to Clandinin and Connelly is "the study of experience as a story, then is first and foremost a way of capturing and thinking about experience". The narrative enquiry approach developed by Clandinin and Connelly forms the basis for the methodology used in this study.

Narrative enquiry will be used to analyse data from a group of five former TVET students who are presently working professionals located in geographically diverse areas of Mauritius Island. Former TVET students having undergone formal TVET programmes are

the focus of this study. In today's technological world, industries need highly qualified, skilled workers. This answers the research questions established by the present study. Freeman (2003) postulated that narratives are understood to provide us with ways of making sense of things in and through our interactions with others. Therefore, the researcher intends to collect narratives from the above group of people to explore career progression, expectations, and what this reveals. The collected data will also be analysed to interpret influential factors for career success; as well as to discover reasons for their careers being shaped the way they are. These narratives will finally help the researcher to make a necessary recommendation in answer to the present research questions of the thesis.

This study follows a narrative enquiry, as it generates data in the form of stories and typologies of stories (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Spector-Mersel, 2010; Riessman, 2004) which embrace the assumption that a life-telling story is an authentic unit that accounts for human experiences. In this study I explore the meaning of the individuals' experiences as told through their stories, retelling them within a framework that makes sense, identifying themes or categories of information within the participants' narratives, and by constructing them within a chronological sequence.

1.9.2 Participants in the study

The researcher used a purposive sampling from the TVET sector's database which provides a list of graduates and trainees from the sector. The researcher has selected participants who have undergone a formal TVET training programme and currently hold down a job. In terms of gender, there is a fair distribution of 1 female and 3 male participants, aged from 18 years upwards. Interviews were conducted with those

participants to collect their lived experiences. The time and place of the interviews was decided by each participant, as a matter of convenience. The interviews have been audio recorded using an electronic voice recorder, after having obtained necessary permission from the participants. This has enabled me to consolidate their narratives, and to gather some important points that have triggered interest for TVET and established a connection with their careers.

As described above, the data-gathering instruments will be mainly interviews, with the additional support of photo elicitations, research journal, and field notes. After the collection of the data, the interviews will be transcribed. As the interviews have been conducted in the Kreole Morisien language, after the transcription, the entire transcripts will be translated into English. Data analysis will then take place. According to Glesne (2006), data analysis is the process of organising the data for the researcher to proceed with the meaning-finding interpretation that the research is trying to reveal. Data analyses included transcribing, translating, coding, and constructing a narrative.

1.10 Limitations and Delimitations of the study

This narrative enquiry provided an analysis of the stories told by former TVET students who followed formal TVET programmes in which some are pitched at basic-level skills, and others at technician level in a government-owned TVET training centre. The fact that the study focused on various types of programme requiring different entry prerequisites for admission – NC 3/4 compared with Higher National Diploma courses – could be perceived as a limitation, the profiles of trainees differing. Although the findings may be relevant to other organisations, generalizations of the findings to other contexts, such as an established programme offered by private TVET institutions or other less attractive trades in government-owned TVET

institutions may have severe limitations. Another limitation is that the NC 3 level programme which is of one-year full-time duration, is being phased out by the new reform as from January 2017. By 2019 it will no longer be offered. A new programme will be provided which is an NC 4 courses of two years' full-time duration at skilled level. A more mature course could perhaps have provided more insight into the TVET full-time programmes. The study was also limited to the government-owned TVET institution which is the major player in the Mauritian TVET landscape, participants coming from these training centres. This can constitute a constraint for not capturing similar concerns from the very few existing private TVET institutions.

As for the present study, a narrative enquiry is being used as a methodology. In a narrative enquiry, the limitation that comes along mainly during interviews is the danger that the interviewee's discourse becomes dominated, or at least unbalanced by stories and commentary not pertinent to the research questions. Further limitations which pose potential threats, in particular to interpretive credibility, include some 'seductions' of the narrative (Riessman, 2010). 'Narrative seduction' occurs when a story is so crafted as to seem capable of only one interpretation. Normally, in a research context, we assume that one single narrative interview represents a whole life story. This constitutes one kind of seduction.

A major delimitation of this study is the inability to generalise the data to a larger population. Also, other TVET training programmes have not been covered under the population sample of the research methodology. The data were obtained from four former TVET students from public-operated TVET training centres in Mauritius. The participants' perceptions may not agree with perceptions of others in the privately funded training centres, or other technical trade areas, or other industries, forming part of the sample.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations and delimitations, the study has value in discovering the career paths of former TVET students holding basic skilled competencies in driving and shaping their careers/career mobility/career success. The value of the present study is to understand the actual ecosystem of invisible and subliminal influences that thwart semi-skilled workers' careers.

1.11 Conclusion

This study focusses on exploring and understanding the career experiences of former TVET students, how their career paths were shaped, and what factors led to career success. The study also assesses the 'functioning' ability of the capability approach of former TVET students who are holders of a formal TVET qualification, in achieving the capabilities to function in particular jobs after having obtained core skills in a specific trade. The research is to explore the career narrative of these people on how they established their career paths after their training; and also to understand factors that have contributed to their career success. The stories of these students will give insight into the TVET courses in relation to their career paths leading to career success. The revelations of their career narratives will shed light on their career path trajectories in achieving career success offered by the TVET programmes. The study attempts to understand the various influences behind their career successes. The study will try to determine how former TVET students are constructing their career pathways and which factors have contributed to their career success. Also to discover why they have constructed their careers in such a way. There were five former TVET students from manufacturing industries as participants for this study. A narrative enquiry is being employed for the methodology part of the study. Field data were gathered through interviews, observation, and artefacts. Appropriate approvals from concerned authorities and companies have been obtained to conduct the study prior to entering the field. From the collected data, proper analysis techniques

will be used to draw certain codes and themes so as eventually to come with some interpretation of extant literature and conceptual framework. Following this, recommendations will be drawn up for existing TVET programmes that have been able to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in providing holders of these qualifications with job opportunities, career paths, and career success. Recommendations will contribute to the body of knowledge and the understanding of career mobility, career paths, and career success of former TVET students holding formal TVET qualifications.

1.12 Summary of the Chapters

The thesis is subdivided into six parts: the introduction, the review of related literature, research design, findings through the information told, cross-case analysis and discussion, conclusions, and recommendations. It comprises six chapters, the contents of which may be summarised as follows:

Chapter One provides an introductory orientation to the study. In so doing, it outlines the research problem and research questions, together with the aim and objectives of the study. Attention is also directed at the research methodology and research methods utilised in the study.

Chapter Two is the review of related literature which examines scholarly and professional publications both theoretically and empirically that directly support or challenge the proposed focal point. The focal area is TVET, career mobility, career path, career planning, and career success. Existing literature related to the research topic of the present study is being critically evaluated. The chapter falls within a conceptual and theoretical framework from which the researcher will filter the interpretation of its findings from data collected.

Chapter Three defends the choice of research methods used for this study. The chapter describes how the research was conducted and includes details of the research settings, the criteria used in the selection of respondents, and problems encountered during the fieldwork. The methodology used for the present research is a narrative enquiry. It further discusses the approach adopted for the analysis of the qualitative data, how the data was processed for analysis, and reviews the method of coding and thematic analysis.

Chapter Four gives the results, which show certain narratives following the interviews of each of the participants. It then shows the analysis of the themes developed pre-dictated by the interview. The theme opens with a presentation of overall findings arising from an examination of the qualitative data collated via the in-depth interviews. The analysis will be related back to existing literature on career mobility, career pathing, career success, and other related topics.

Chapter Five offers the cross-case analysis, presenting an interpretation and discussion of the findings from the cross-case analysis, which compares similarities and differences across the four narratives. The undertaken cross-case analysis amalgamates the results of the study from the four participants' stories, to draw and analyse with the emerging themes, reiterated trends and patterns with existing literatures and theories. It also presents and discusses the findings and establishes a dialogue with the literature reviewed and theories in relation to the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study. The findings must be interpreted within the context from which they emerged, to provide interaction between the application of particular theoretical perspectives and the data gathered.

Chapter Six represents the conclusion and recommendations of the thesis, and summarises the key research findings and the implications of these for the sector and society as a whole. It looks to address the gaps in basic skilled TVET qualification holders' career paths, influential factors of their career success. It concludes by providing answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has given an overview of the present study, starting from contextualising the phenomenon of the study, highlighting the gist of the problem under study, and providing the essence of the methodological approach adopted for the present study. The first chapter set the scene for the entire scenario of the present research.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the research that has already been done on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and the influential factors with regard to career paths and career success.

The interest in career paths and career success determinants has grown over the years, as evidenced by the large number of literature work outcomes, focussing on career pathways, career decision-making, career strategies factors, career as individual agency, career planning factors, and extrinsic and intrinsic career success (Fen Lee, 2011; Poon, 2004; Van et al., 2008). In this chapter a synthesis of empirically researched literature is produced for the purpose of understanding various concepts from seminal articles related to the main theme of the study. A growing body of literature has examined and studied the different concepts of TVET, career paths and career success, however, there are still some key problems with much of the literature relating to TVET outcomes within the world of work and careers. It also provides the theoretical framework that has undergirded research already conducted on the theme of the

study. It provides the reason for the selection of the specific theoretical frameworks adopted for this research thesis.

2.2 The Historical Background of TVET in Mauritius

A background of TVET in Mauritius is being presented from the first settlers in Mauritius, taken from extant writing on the development of education in Mauritius.

In 1877, eight mechanical engineering and two horticultural apprenticeships were founded. By 1900 a few needlework apprenticeships had also been founded. These apprenticeships were the technical education in the colony. No theoretical instructions were given to the apprentices, only practical work. Agriculture attracted only apprentices of Indian origin (Ramdoyal, 1977). By 1905, manual work was introduced in five schools, but only woodworking was taught. At last, in 1917, a technical school was created for pupils belonging to a primary school in Port Louis, teaching woodworking. The then British government proposed that those successful candidates be encouraged to continue academic studies, whereas unsuccessful students were encouraged to take up an industrial scheme (Ramdoyal, 1977).

Private secondary schools mushroomed everywhere in Mauritius. Competition for jobs had now grown fiercer than ever. In 1932 the government closed the trade schools and farm schools. The then government did not find it relevant to train artisans. There was little done to improve the status of manual work. After the eradication of malaria in the 1950s, technical and mechanical skills continued to be acquired haphazardly on the job, and very little value was being placed on standards of workmanship (Ramdoyal, 1977).

In the past, the government's attempt at providing vocational education had been a mixture of poor planning and there was therefore a lack of faith in this type of education (Bunwaree, 1994). The institutions which were designed to provide vocational education were transformed into 'academic institutions' within a few years. In 1977 and 1978, UNESCO and the World Bank carried out a comprehensive study on occupational training in Mauritius. The study revealed that the government had failed to provide the kind of vocational training required for its manpower needs, mainly because of a lack of coordination of all activities in this area. The result of this study was the creation of the Central Training Office (CTO) in 1978 (Ramdoyal, 1977).

Mauritius has been a classic instance of monoculture, dependent on a single industry – sugar – with a more or less static need for labour. By 1969, one government central school and two senior primary schools – one for boys, the other for girls, were established to provide a free three-year post-primary course with emphasis on practical education of a prevocational nature. In addition, the John Kennedy College (one of the government secondary schools) offers a technical and vocational course alongside the academic streams.

In the field of industrial training, in 1967, an Industrial Trade Training Centre (ITTC) was set up with UNDP financial assistance. Courses were offered – machine shop, welding and metal fabrication, plumbing and pipe fitting, carpentry and joinery, and masonry and concrete work (Ramdoyal, 1977).

Technical and vocational education has experienced a relatively slow evolution in Mauritius, mainly because of the inherent academic bias characterising the education system, the resistance to curricular reforms, and the generally low status of technical jobs in the

employment market. However, with development from agricultural to a more diversified economy, geared towards manufacturing and the gradual transformation of occupational patterns, technical and vocational education (TVE) is now becoming more rapidly accepted (Bunwaree, 1994).

Parents prefer their children to obtain an academic education, rather than a vocational one, which is often referred to as a second-rate education. In Mauritius too, vocational and technical education has for a long time been regarded as second rate, something for the less academically able (Ramdoyal, 1977). Our schools are following the elitist policy of working for those who can pass. The high achievers have the advantage of better general intelligence, higher socio-economic status, and greater personal involvement in studies as a result of greater parental interest (Bunwaree, 1994). Whether provision of vocational and technical education to the poorer performers is a solution or whether it simply produces an underclass are questions that come to mind when technical and vocational education is being considered in Mauritius (Bunwaree, 1994).

With the setting up of the IVTB in 1989, some people now speak of democratization because some of those who fail the last year of primary school will be channelled towards the prevocational centres instead of remaining idle or working illegally. Once more, this shows that the concept of democratization is either not understood or is simply used conveniently to make people believe that they are being given a fair chance. A strong ideology of meritocracy and ability exists in the country. In fact, the schools discriminate in favour of those who possess the required cultural, social, and human capital (Bunwaree, 1994).

According to the existing literature on the inception of vocational education in Mauritius, TVET continues to carry a serious stigma as a colonial legacy, in that manual work is tagged for lower-class citizens and academically poor people. It has been depicted from the historical background of the educational development that TVET is a political solution for a pedagogical approach. Our policymakers have always favoured academic education at the expense of TVET, and with the label that it comes next in line to the academic stream.

2.2.1 The present reform of the Mauritian educational system

The main character of the Mauritian TVET is provision of an alternative educational route for those who have not been able to be academically successful. In Mauritius TVET is generally said to be located in one or more distinct institutional setting; normally in post-school vocational training institutions or in enterprises. The pattern of participation in TVET in many Anglophone African countries is that it is for those who fail to be selected for academic schools. Despite the pointers to significant changes in work organisation and their implications for education and training, vocational education does continue to provide opportunities for disadvantaged youth in many different types of programme (King, 1993). Bunwaree (1994) argued that, whether the provision of vocational and technical education to the poorer performers is a solution, or whether it simply produces an underclass are questions that always strike their minds when TVET is being considered in Mauritius. Kelly & Price (2009) articulate that TVET nowadays is considered a new model of schooling with tremendous potential in providing underachievers from the academic stream with desirable occupational competencies. The new reform in the Mauritius educational system which started in January 2017 is called the nine-year basic continuous schooling. It has among its objectives to give greater recognition to the value of TVET in building human capital and for sustainable development (Ministry of

Education, HR, TE, 2016). This is in itself a testimony that TVET previously was not given due recognition by the government; and the present reform will strive to reverse this low status.

In Mauritius, a total of 18000 students took part in the primary education exams in 2016 and only 12000 students passed the exams (MES, 2016). Of the 18000 who joined the secondary schools, after five years, only 13000 sat for the secondary school exams (Statistics of Mauritius, 2016). This clearly demonstrates that, annually, the primary and secondary schools churned out from the system around 10000 without a proper primary and secondary education. The present reform allows students to embark on their educational journey through various routes. Therefore the new reform will allow students to opt for the TVET in case they do not have the necessary abilities to pursue further academic studies. The reform recognises that the students enrolling in the primary stream from their fifth year will continue their schooling for nine continuous years of education. At the end of the six years of primary education, students will be called upon to take part in the Primary School Achievement Certificate, also known as PSAC. The students will be assessed through continuous assessment rather than a formal exam, thus removing the stress from both students and parents of competing in formal examinations. At the end of the PSAC, the best achievers will be channelled to the lower secondary school, continuing their education for three more years up to the ninth grade. On reaching the ninth grade, the students will compete for a formal examination at the national level. The high achievers will be admitted to the academic colleges which constitute the upper elite secondary-school stream. Those with average or below average scores in the ninth grade examinations will be given an opportunity to continue to the upper secondary school

stream at various regional colleges, or to opt for any courses available in a TVET college (Ministry of Education and Human Resources, 2016).

The government of Mauritius has established the goal of becoming a high-income country by 2020. According to ITC (2017), to achieve this goal, there must be a number of development priorities, among which skills development is arguably one of the most important. The entire belief supposes that skills are an important component of competitiveness, and that exporters tend to have more access to skilled workers. The ITC report 2017-2021 mentioned that improved skills not only lead to greater increase in productivity, output, and differentiation, but can also help in attracting greater levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (ITC, 2017). The government has put forward a certain number of initiatives to bring back people, mainly the unemployed, to enter the workforce through skills development programmes. To this end, the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) runs a placement and formation programme. The government also created the Youth Employment Programme (YEP). The YEP is to promote the transition of young people from the spheres of education into the workforce (ITC, 2017).

2.3 TVET and Career Development

There has been extensive research undertaken on the various composites of the theme of the study, partially touching the main focus of the present study (Hall, 1997; Defillipi, 1994; Savickas, 2009; Super, 1980). There have been numerous studies on career success predictors, career paths for people from different sectors of employment mostly possessing academic qualifications and situated within the white-collar profession (Seibert, Kraimer, Liden, 2001; Heslin, 2005; Abele & Spurk, 2009). People holding TVET qualifications are not represented empirically; and how their career path leads to career success predictability is unknown. For

lack of literature with regard to the theme of the study, the researcher is presenting a condensed brief on existing literature that has been deemed relevant to the theme of the present study.

2.3.1 Perception towards TVET in the present era

The perception towards TVET in most European countries is characterised by a lack of parity of esteem, which relates to the perceptions of TVET as the second-best choice, compared with academic routes (Kersh & Juul, 2015). Kersh & Juul (2015) claimed that the poor perception towards TVET situated in most European countries is characterised by a so-called academic drift, which tends to position the TVET as the second-best choice. This poor perception towards TVET is found not only in European countries; in Mauritius also, people who are opting for TVET, are faced with serious downgrading (Bunwaree, 1994). TVET has a lower status than academic colleges in Mauritian society. TVET worldwide holds the same kind of status; TVET is mostly producing blue-collar workers which have very limited career prospects in enterprises. TVET is important from the perspective of industry needs for a productive workforce.

Kersh & Juul (2015) in their study, pointed out that most government policies used vocationally related educational programmes to initiate a range of schemes for disadvantaged young people. This has contributed to some extent to the public perception of TVET programmes as being suitable specifically for unemployed young people or for those who did not succeed at school or had certain problems of being socially disengaged. Similarly, the Mauritian government has also adopted the same approach in tackling youth unemployment. Failures from the academic stream, these students come under different vocationally related educational programmes under a range of schemes. These include the National Skills Development Programmes (NSDP), National Apprenticeship Programmes (NAP), the Women Back to Work Programmes (WBTW), and National Empowerment

Foundation (NEF) in its past three budgets (2016, 2017, and 2018). This has further exacerbated the low status of TVET perception in the public mind (Ministry of Finance, 2016, 2017, 2018). Kersh & Juul (2015) depicted, ironically, that in Denmark, despite TVET qualifications giving favourable job opportunities and access, Danish people have the problem of lack of parity between TVET and the academic track. Young people, their parents and society as such, tend to attribute more prestigious status to academic education than to TVET (Kersh & Juul, 2015). Mauritius is not far away from such kind of reception towards TVET qualifications. It is deeply rooted in the general public mind that TVET is meant for failures even though that TVET qualification holders and some blue collar jobs earn very well, such as tilers and, plumbers, among others.

According to Ogbunaya, Ekereobung, Udoudo (2015) TVET is the only refuge where youth unemployment may be salvaged. In the present era, TVET plays an important role in different spheres of the developmental stages of a nation, be it socio-political or socio-economical areas. TVET is a catalyst for alleviating youth unemployment, and curbing the consequences of joblessness. TVET is geared towards providing students for entry into the labour market in general. It also provides opportunities for access to higher education and training. TVET students engage better in productive work, adapting to rapidly changing labour market and economies, and participating as responsible citizens in their respective societies. This researcher positions and presents TVET of having an omnivagant perspective in which it has the power to solve every ill of society, such as eradicating poverty through decreasing youth unemployment, enhancing social justice and social security of a country, while giving TVET qualification holders enhanced career prospects.

2.3.2 TVET as a career prospects stream

Linten, Prustel, Woll (2014) claimed that choosing a career in TVET is not only imperative, but it is an attractive entry ticket into the global education and job market. Considering the position of Linten et al. (2014), it is clear that TVET has an important contribution to make to the human development not only in impregnating human capital attributes through training provision, but also in providing a larger platform for further educational articulation and successful accessibility into the job market.

Linten et al. (2014) postulated that TVET has embedded within it aspects of attractiveness, permeability, mobility, and transition. Attractiveness refers to the “capacity of vocational education and training to encourage individuals to deliberately choose vocational and training education and training, to offer quality qualifications that open up career prospects and to persuade employers to recruit holders of TVET certificates” (Cedefop, 2014). “Transferability (permeability) is the capacity (of skills and competences) to be transferred to and used in a new occupational or educational environment” (UNESCO-UNEVOC/NCVER, 2009). Mobility commonly refers to the “movement of members of the labour force between areas or industries or the ability of an individual to move and adapt to a new occupational environment” (SADC Glossary, 2011). School-to-work transition is “the move from education or training to employment, covering the period between learning education and entering the labour market” (Cedefop, 2014).

Eichhorst, Planas, Schmidl, Zimmerman (2014) posited that TVET is often seen as the silver bullet for the youth joblessness problem. Lovsin & Ljubljana (2014) have recognised that the lesser attractiveness of TVET coincides with the fact that representatives of lower social classes have a weaker economic position and more

frequently have TVET qualifications than representatives of higher social classes. Lovsin & Ljubljana (2014) also observed that there is a trend of high unemployment among young people with academic qualifications which is the opposite of that of TVET qualification holders. Ratnata (2013) pointed out that the perception of TVET is still an issue. He mentioned that in many countries to the present day TVET is rated as second-class education. Parents who can afford it, rarely send their children to a vocational school.

2.3.3 Career guidance importance for TVET stream

Zelloth (2014), in his study, showed that career guidance has come under attack for having lost its impartiality, being used in favour of general and academic education pathways and careers. He proposed a taxonomy of possible career guidance intervention models in order to increase the relevance and impact of career guidance in relation to TVET. It is argued that both career guidance prior to TVET, as well as career guidance within TVET, can make an important contribution to TVET if certain conditions are met. While the first could serve as an eye-opener to stimulate TVET demand, and as a change agent to improve TVET supply, the latter can help to improve efficiency of TVET. He added that this may be better accomplished if a new career guidance paradigm, that of changing from a psychological to a pedagogical or hybrid model, is more widely introduced.

UNESCO (2002) claimed that vocational guidance and counselling is widely accepted as a powerful and effective method of helping to bridge the gap between education and the world of work, as well as between school and society. It is a means of assisting young people to make appropriate and judicious educational choices that will enable them to develop their potential and to have access to work opportunities that are compatible with

their interests and abilities. It helps to instil confidence and positive attitudes in fulfilling the eagerness for lifelong learning and career success.

According to Watts (2013) career guidance is under-explored in TVET. Watts (2013) claimed that careers are commonly not ‘chosen’ at a single point in time, but ‘constructed’ through a series of interrelated learning and work choices made throughout life. There has been a tendency to take the view that career guidance is largely irrelevant within TVET, on the grounds that entry to a vocational course implies that a career decision has already been made (Watts, 2013). OECD (2010) argued that career guidance is relevant to the key policy issue relating to the development of TVET, mainly in addressing the relationship between TVET and occupational flexibility. Career guidance and counselling will allow individuals to make decisions about what they are to learn in a well-informed and well thought-through manner, linked to their interests, their capacities, and their aspirations. Investments in education and training systems are likely to yield high returns. It is noted that most students fail to develop a clear career wish during their time at school. There is a lack of appropriate counselling and guidance talks in the secondary colleges. This has resulted in students making rather random career choices. Most of the time this impacts in the form of high dropout rates. Therefore it is of high priority that TVET institutions invest in a well-structured career guidance. In Mauritius training centres managers have little or no vision regarding career guidance and counselling, which has resulted in ineffective career guidance in a TVET system context.

2.3.4 TVET apprenticeships mode

Smith (2013) posited that apprenticeships may be seen as the ultimate in cooperation between TVET providers and industry, as they are based on a combination of work and

study. This helps to move young people into the full-time labour market. Lerman (2013) mentioned the advantages of apprenticeship training for intermediate level skills, which enables easy access to jobs and careers.

According to Agrawal (2013), the TVET stream is quite small. Despite there being a growing demand for a skilled labour force, the labour market outcomes of those who have followed the vocational path are not good.

2.3.5 The interplay of career-related concepts within TVET

According to Zakaria, Yamin, Maarof (2017), most vocational students have a low level of career management. In helping skilled workers towards career success, the TVET curriculum has applied the elements of career management to the students. The above-mentioned researcher has further recognised the phenomenon of students who are less knowledgeable about their career at the end of school as among the main reasons they choose a career that does not fit with their needs. Career management skills are important for TVET students who must take responsibility for their own careers to be more successful. To develop human capital with the right competences, career management skills are critical requirements that can fill the industry gaps.

Hennequin (2007) postulated that the social status of blue-collar workers, especially manual or unskilled workers, is not well recognised in society; such workers are often considered as merely having jobs rather than careers. Hennequin (2007) also pointed out that often blue-collar workers' contribution at work is only recognised internally within the organisations in which they work. They tend to be seen as less important and

prestigious at the societal level. This image of blue-collar profession has a direct implication on ameliorating the inferior status of TVET which the public perceives. People associate the TVET stream with providing students with competencies and qualifications so as to join the blue-collar profession. As long as industries will not value the importance of blue-collar jobs as the productive force of these industries, people will always not opt to join this category of profession. In this era of technological and knowledge society, we should stop categorising professions according to uniforms, colours, intelligence capabilities, and manually-operated tasks.

More recent evidence by Schulzke (2015) shows that many have argued that the emphasis on college degrees has obscured high-value career paths that are more technical and hands on, but usually do not come with the prestige of a bachelor's degree. The same author reveals that 20 per cent of technical certificate holders make more than the average bachelor's degree holders. He also added that students from poorer families are incorrectly steered toward technical careers, while wealthier students have the same push towards four-year degree programmes. Schulzke (2015) further recognised that the stigma attached to technical careers remains, as there is a built-in bias against applied careers.

Shah (2002), in her doctoral thesis, looked at the career success of disabled high flyers. The participants were professional disabled persons and academically high flyers. The disabled persons mostly preferred to work in traditionally structured organisations which are more stable and supportive. Her studies recognise the importance of education in playing an important role in achieving careers and career success. Therefore human capital possession is undeniably a main attribute in achieving career success. The disabled persons' career paths are mostly individual constructs.

Omar, Krauss, Sail, Ismail (2011) claimed the benefit of TVET education on occupational outcomes. Some longitudinal studies carried out in the US reported that students with vocational education backgrounds tend to earn higher incomes than non-TVET students (Bishop & Mane, 2004). These authors also reported that holders of TVET qualifications in certain trades were more successful in the labour market; as it was claimed that they have better jobs and earned significantly more than non-TVET students. According to Omar et al. (2011), the changes in economies and world markets demanding an adaptable and skilled workforce could shift the position of TVET students toward greater career advantages. Hennequin (2007), in her study, mentioned that blue-collar jobs generally do not offer opportunities for upward progression into bureaucratic careers. Conversely, Omar et al. (2011), in their study, demonstrated that TVET stream can lead to career success as evidenced by career pathways of upward mobility leading towards supervisory and even managerial roles for TVET late bloomers.

2.4 TVET Qualifications and Career Paths

This part of the chapter presents a discussion of current thinking about TVET concepts, career paths, and career success, including a critical review of the skills and dispositions suggested by various theorists to be necessary for careerists to flourish in an era of intelligent skilled workforce needed by the industries that have taken place outside Mauritius.

2.4.1 Conceptions of TVET

Throughout the course of history, various terms have been used to describe elements of the field that are now conceived as comprising TVET. These include: Apprenticeship

Training, Vocational Education, Technical Education, Technical Vocation Education (TVE), Occupational Education (OE), Vocational Education and Training (VET), Professional and Vocational Education (PVE), Career and Technical Education (CTE), Workforce Education (WE), and Workplace Education (WE). Several of these terms are commonly used in specific geographic areas (Baryamureeba, 2014).

According to UNESCO (2008), TVET is defined as “those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life”. UNESCO (2008) has considered TVET the subset of the educational system. In accordance with UNESCO’s definition, TVET is more oriented toward inculcating hands-on experiences in order to be more skilful for occupational fitness. TVET has an all-encompassing approach to training in technologically and scientific driven areas.

In the US, vocational education is simply referred to as Career and Technical Education (CTE), which ultimately fulfils the same role and function as the TVET. Career and Technical Education (CTE), often referred to as vocational education, provides occupational and non-occupational preparation at the secondary, post-secondary, and adult education levels. CTE is an element of the nation’s workforce development system. As such, CTE plays a role in reducing unemployment and the associated economic and social ills (Dortch, 2014).

Generally known as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) by UNESCO, or Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the European context, or career and

technical education (CTE), such systems have as their only mission to prepare people to acquire skills and knowledge for mastering specific trades and crafts. Courses enable students to become technicians or to gain higher professional proficiencies such as engineering, nursing, and accountancy.

From the above list of definitions, vocational and technical education has varied appellations and connotations in different parts of the world. The objective is always to impart to someone valuable knowledge related to the current and future competencies in connection with a specific trade. Such trades are required by any industries/professions/entrepreneurs who wish to remain productive and functional. Present changes in the world of work are occurring rapidly. More people now make several changes of career direction in the course of their lives, where this situation provides opportunities to learn new competences in order to do so. Increasingly, therefore, learning and work are intertwined on a lifelong basis. The policy significance attached to TVET in generating high employment opportunities has been significantly elevated in the last decade through a series of linked policy reviews carried out by a variety of international organisations (OECD, 2014; World Bank, 2016; UNESCO, 2015).

2.4.2 The reception of TVET

TVET has been neglected. It has received little attention compared with other parts of the education system, and is often seen as having lower status (OECD, 2011). To increase the attractiveness and prestige of vocational education and training, we have to improve its quality and responsiveness to labour market needs (Cedefop, 2011). The demystification of the TVET stream from holding low status in the eye of the society would be a very long process. It would incur making TVET more attractive in terms of up marketing the TVET

programmes. Wages associated with a blue-collar job must be upgraded to make it more appealing to potential TVET students.

Many countries face significant skills gaps across a range of industries, particularly in technical and specialised fields. These gaps persist despite distressingly high unemployment rates even in developed economies. TVET has the potential to address both challenges: closing skills gaps and reducing unemployment. However, TVET suffers from the perception that it is inferior to the general academic education provided by traditional universities. In most countries, students, parents, and career advisors still hold a strong bias in favour of degrees from traditional universities. They see TVET programmes as a second tier option suited to students with lower aspirations or lesser academic abilities (Puckett, 2012).

Dzeto (2014) portrays TVET in these terms. The present educational system trains young minds to engage in white-collar jobs. Germany and Finland have above 50% of upper secondary students enrolled in TVET courses. This in itself testifies to these countries having all developed a very strong manufacturing base, remaining highly competitive. These countries were able to steer large numbers of their secondary and higher education students into technical fields of study. The analysis for African countries falls below 20%, which indicates that we fall short of TVET enrolment rates compared with the most competitive economies in the world. For this reason we should demystify and destigmatise the TVET system (Maiga, 2013).

Yangben & Seniwoliba (2014) posited that, for many years, technical and vocational education in Africa has been considered a career path for the less academically endowed.

This perception has been deeply rooted in the minds of the public by the low academic requirements for admission into TVET programmes, and the limited prospects for further education and professional development. African governments give the impression that the primary objective of the TVET stream is to keep dropouts from the secondary school system off the streets. It is not seen as a means of providing training which produces skilled workers for the employment market. Similarly, in Mauritius, to be admitted to any TVET programmes, students may have studied up to grade 9, which is the lower end of the secondary education stream (MITD, 2018). TVET in Mauritius has been predominately designed to cater for dropouts and failures from the academic stream.

According to the World Development Report (2018), TVET can yield wages on a par with an equivalent level of general education. For example, the 2018 World Development Report recognises that, for instance, in Brazil, workers with upper secondary TVET earn wages about 10 per cent higher than those of workers with a secondary education. Despite this encouraging result, TVET programmes in many developing countries remain an unattractive alternative for young people. We have similar issues in Mauritius. A TVET qualification holder in certain trades such as electrician or refrigeration and air-conditioning technician earn better wages than someone holding simply a secondary college certificate (Statistic of Mauritius, 2016).

2.4.3 TVET and the world of work

According to ILO (2015), most of the countries in the world give predominant attention to general education systems, whereas TVET and skills development have equally central roles to play in the development of core skills for employability. Quality TVET and skills

development are considered the most important tools for equipping young people with skills they will need, answers to the unemployment issue, and giving career prospects.

Changes in the world of work mean that more people now make several changes of career direction in the course of their lives and have to learn new competencies in order to do so. Increasingly therefore, learning and work are intertwined, on a lifelong basis. The Higher Education and Training Department of the Republic of South Africa, in its paper to the cabinet of 2013, laid emphasis on the importance of the post-school system, including TVET institutions in preparing workers for the labour market. Post-school systems should have mandates to enable individuals to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment or through establishing a company or cooperative. The post-school system should enable everyone to make a living for themselves and contribute skills to a developing economy. How far the Mauritian TVET has been able to achieve this goal one cannot say, as there is a dearth of empirical studies and longitudinal studies on this theme. One cannot therefore be certain whether TVET institutions have been able to ensure that all students actively contribute through their skills received during training, to developing the country's economy.

TVET normally provides technical skills to students in a specific trade area. According to Grubb & Ryan (1999), TVET, in practice, orientates toward four different types of programme. These are (1) Pre-employment TVET, (2) Upgrade training for employed people, (3) Retraining mainly meant for retrenched workers or those willing to switch careers, and (4) Remedial TVET, which provides training to individuals out of the mainstream. The programme that is adopted in Mauritius is the pre-employment TVET. Many of the TVET programmes imparted to trainees in the public TVET schools are meant

to enable trainees to secure employment in specific trades which are needed by the industries (Krishan et al., 2013). According to Gray (2016), in five years from now, one third of skills (35%) considered important in today's workforce will have changed. Gray (2016) argued that, by 2020, the Fourth Industrial Revolution will have brought us advanced robotics and autonomous transport, artificial intelligence, and machine learning, advanced materials, biotechnology, and genomics. These developments will transform the way we live and the way we work. Some jobs will disappear, others will grow, and jobs that do not exist today will become commonplace. What is certain is that the future workforce will need to align its skill-set to keep pace. Some advances are ahead of others. Mobile Internet and cloud technology are already impacting the way we work. Artificial intelligence, 3D printing, and advanced materials are still in their early stages of use; however, the pace of change will be fast. Business leaders, educators, and governments all need to be proactive in up-skilling and retraining people so that everyone can benefit from the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

2.4.4 TVET work-related training modes

Good-practice apprenticeships offer structured training, assigning a professional trainer to oversee apprentices, apprentices having a written contract that stipulates training arrangements and an assessment to verify acquired skills. A strong partnership between the education system and industry is crucial to making the delivery of apprenticeship training effective (World Development Report, 2018). In fact, apprenticeships schemes in Mauritius are also structured as a replicate of the German dual systems of training. Apprentices have to enter into a written contract between the training provider, the employer, and the apprentice. Recently, the apprenticeships' mode of training has come under attack in the budget speech of June 2018, by none other than the Prime Minister. As

in the budgetary measures for the financial year of July 2018 to June 2019, it is proposed to have a National Apprenticeship. Around 3000 apprentices will be trained. Cost of training will be fully remunerated by the government. In the actual model the apprentices were remunerated partly by the government through the training provider and the employer. The apprenticeship scheme was questioned about its effectiveness in supplying the pressing needs of skilled workers required by the industries, to be more productive (Ministry of Finance, 2018).

2.4.5 Present evolution of occupations and industries relevant to TVET programmes

Technological developments have made the workplace more demanding of autonomous workers who can take decisions without waiting for instructions. Hence there is a need for greater integration of academics with TVET, to widen the understanding of TVET students in preparation for these roles (Subran, 2013). In earlier times, it was possible for some workers to practise an occupation in the same manner over a lifetime, because changes in the essential aspects of the occupation were slow in coming. Because of the rapid growth of technology and changed public expectations today, there must be continuous curriculum changes in order for education and training curricula to be relevant. Postmodernism radically reduces the hierarchical distance between white-collar and blue-collar work and between academic studies and TVET (Hennequin, 2007).

2.4.6 Career paths conceptualization

There are various definitions of a career. Greenhaus (1987) has defined a career as a series of jobs held during an individual's lifetime, whereas Hall (2002) sees career as an

identification with and involvement in one profession. Super (1980) defines a career as a sequence of positions held during the course of a lifetime, whereas Arthur, Khapova, Widlerom, C.P.M (1989) opined that career is an “unfolding sequence of any person’s work experiences over time”.

There is a perpetual shift in the landscape of career, there being emergence of various concepts and metaphors which have been developed to capture such. For instance, protean career pertains to the ability to rearrange and repackage one’s knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the demands of a changing workplace; in addition to one’s need for self-fulfilment (Hall, 1997). In the case of a boundary-free career, this describes a sequence of job opportunities that go beyond the borders of a single employer, so that individuals are independent, rather than dependent on traditional organisational career arrangements (Defillipi, 1994).

Career pathing is, simply put, developing milestones of opportunities within the same organisation for workers to attain. Career paths do not necessarily mean upward mobility. Career paths can focus on building cross-functionality as well as increase in responsibility, but not necessarily promotion. Career paths may be clearly defined changes to one’s responsibilities within the organisation. Traditionally, it was thought that promoting vertically was an important part of building career paths. However, one should be encouraged to think about expanding professionals horizontally (Croteau & Wolk, 2010).

During the industrialization era, large industries provided employment opportunities which offered bureaucratic employment opportunities. Careers were predictable and followed the movement in the upward direction along the organisation’s ladder. At that

time the metaphorical career paths emerged (Savickas, 2000). According to Savickas (2000) most of the organisations in the twentieth century adopted a bureaucratic career whereby the employees had only way of advancement. The bureaucratic organisations were hierarchical, and therefore individuals could only move vertically. In this specific context, an individual was moving from one level to the next, taking on more responsibilities and reaping better rewards.

The bureaucratic organisations are also referred to as hierarchical organisations. Garmon (2004) posited that, in the world of hierarchical organisations, the progress in career could be described as a linear career ladder. An employee would be expected to go through the ranks upwards. In this modern era, bureaucratic organisations are fading away and being replaced by a leaner organisation structure. Hierarchies are disappearing, and people are not following prescribed career paths — they manage their careers independently.

In smaller organisations, there is a flatter organisational structure in which employment tends to be temporary and contingent upon career progression (Savickas, 2000); and in such organisations career progress is non-linear (Garmon, 2004).

According to Walker (2013) in his discussion about career paths in hospitality management, normally organised in a hierarchical way:

“A career path does not always go in a straight line, as sometimes described in a career ladder. We may begin in one area and later find another that is more attractive. Opportunities come our way and we need to be prepared to take advantage of them.”

Hayes, Ninemeier, Miller (2012) define a career ladder as a plan that details successively more responsible positions within an organisation or an industry.

2.4.7 Career success conceptualization

There has been extensive research on the definition of career success. Career success is being portrayed as both subjective and objective positions. Objective career success is being characterised by tangible indicators; whereas subjective dimensions of career success are delineated by aspects such as a person's internal apprehension and evaluation of his or her career.

According to Van Maanen (1977), the objective perspective of career success is defined by focussing on the visible aspects of an individual's career situation, such as profession, work role, salary, type of work, career progression, and status or prestige associated with a position or level on a hierarchy. This is measured through salary, managerial level, and the number of promotions (Melamed, 1996; Whitely, Dougherty, Dreher, 1994). The most widely used measurements of objective success are monthly salary, hierarchical status, and salary progression (Abele & Spunk, 2001). Also, the total compensation and number of promotions are observable measurements for career success (Pfeffer & Blake, 1987; Seibert, Kraimer, Liden, 2001; Whitely, Dougherty, Dreher, 1994; Kirchmeyer, 1998). Teachers can measure their career success on the basis of the learning outcomes of their students; whereas academics may benchmark on the number of publications and peer recognition. These indicators may not bring any increase in salary or gain automatic promotions, yet they are important indicators for career success measurement for these categories of people (Heslin, 2005).

Later, with the advent of career theories in the beginning of 1970s, there was another dimension of career success incorporated within such. Thus career success also incorporated the aspect of subjectivity. Subjective career success describes mostly the

personal interpretation of one's career, and does not include the reflections of social norms on one's career (Heslin 2005; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, Bretz, 1995; Seibert et al., 2001; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, Feldman 2005; Breland, Adams, Duke, Treadway, 2007). Subjective career success measures career satisfaction (Martins, 2002), job satisfaction (Burke, 2001), advancement satisfaction (Martins, 2002) and perceived career success (Turban & Dougherty, 1994). Aryee, Chay, and Tom (1994) posit that career prospects and employment security are also elements of subjective career success. According to Holbeche (2000), career prospects and employment security are important career-related issues to employees, which contribute to judging their own career success.

Career success is vital, and very meaningful for both individuals and the organisation to which they belong. From the point of view of the employees, career success is described as a source of power, happiness, and satisfaction, and also the acquisition of material advancement (Gattiker & Larwood, 1990; Judge et al., 1995; Poole, Langanfox, Omodei, 1991). In this perspective, employees who benefit from career success feel happier, are more productive at work, give their best performance, motivate their counterparts, and are more successful in their internal perspective than those who not successful.

Career success has become an important topic for research. Increasingly, it is becoming key for both employees and employers to understand its ingredients, so that the recipe may be prepared and proposed on the menu for management in deriving better career success (Super, 1990).

2.4.8 Human-capital importance for career paths to career success

Cox, Taylor, Harquail, Celia (1991) postulated that human-capital imperatives such as education, seniority, training and experience play an important role in achieving career success. Following this reasoning, women and men with comparable education, training, and experience would achieve similar levels of career success.

Cox et al. (1991) posited that there are four dimensions of career paths which are particularly important to career development and success, especially to promotion frequency and salary increases. These are line and staff job assignments, organisational mobility, functional specialization, and job mobility. The salaries of line assignments are generally higher than those for staff assignments at comparable hierarchical levels. Organisational mobility, defined as single versus multiple-employer careers, has been shown to affect career success. It is said that a multiple employer career path can lead to higher salaries and swifter promotion rates, since changing employers is a tactic often used to achieve an increase in salary or a promotion that might not be forthcoming within an organisation. The degree of functional specialization has been found to influence career success. In the case of job mobility it has shown that it increases career success when a job changes, as these are interpreted as developing relevant experience.

2.4.9 Career success and career paths: tension between blue- and white-collar jobs

The definition of blue-collar workers is those who normally perform physical work and whose career paths are relatively restricted (Gibson & Papa, 2000). Hennequin (2007), shows how blue- and white-collar workers may hold distinct ideas about the meaning of career success, given the dissimilar indicators of success and differing paths to such

success that characterise the two groups. According to Lucas (2003), blue-collar workers are at a particular disadvantage in terms of attaining career success. In white-collar careers, there is a focus on knowledge work, opportunities for hierarchical advancement and management of employees; whereas blue-collar occupations are characterised by stationary hierarchical levels and management by supervisors or mechanical controls (Gibson & Papa, 2000).

2.5 Constraints and Opportunities in TVET Career Paths

Mauritius being a young nation, the sector of research in the social science area is not well developed. This constitutes a major hurdle for researchers looking for data and empirical literature. Empirical, local studies conducted in Mauritius are scanty, demanding the present research. The present government has identified that Mauritius has a weakness in this area. Little research has been conducted to tackle the various challenges faced by the country. For this reason, the Ministry of Finance, in the budget speech of 2018-2019 earmarked Rs 70 million to be entirely devoted to research for the University of Mauritius (Ministry of Finance, 2018). The absence of literature concerning the main theme of the study, from the local perspective, is considered a limitation of the study.

2.5.1 Inherent problems associated with TVET in Mauritius

The inherent perception of the society, parents, and stakeholders is of TVET being the second choice, once academic education has been excluded. Most Mauritian parents want their children to become engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, lecturers, mainly joining the white-collar market, hoping that such a career route will lead to a glamorous social status (Bunwaree, 1994).

The income earned by blue-collar employees is a negative determining factor for parents encouraging their child into a TVET stream. The salary in this sector is lower compared with white-collar professions. If students who received a vocational education routinely earned better incomes than those who choose the academic route, parents would certainly give greater consideration to their choice (Le Mauricien, 2015).

Social class for TVET people has a negative bearing on the image of TVET. Even though a plumber may be making more money than an administrative officer, the latter will still enjoy a higher social status in Mauritius than a plumber. In some circles a university degree is still a ticket to social mobility (Bunwaree, 1994).

Poor investment has been made by the government in quality TVET programmes. Providing good TVET means substantial investment in high-tech equipment so as to impart best hands-on practical exercises to trainees. The budgetary provision for TVET is very low in comparison with budgetary provision to main-stream education (Budget speech, Ministry of Finance, 2016).

For TVET to be effective, the main ingredient is the relevance of the training courses to the labour market and industries. A very close collaboration between TVET centres, the labour market and industries is important, in order to align the curricula with skills needs of the industries. Most existing curricula are not updated to be abreast of technological changes taking place in the industries. Therefore TVET programmes are not labour-market driven, which poorly serves trainees for employment (Ministry of Education, 2015).

The limited number of training centres thus could not absorb all the people that have been left out of the academic stream (Bunwaree, 1994). MITD, which is the key TVET provider in Mauritius, can only supply around 3000 seats during one training calendar in its various training centres (MITD, 2016). According to the existing statistics, this clearly depicts that more than 10,000 people are ejected from the academic stream (Statistic Mauritius, 2016). A pertinent question is being asked here: where do those people go who have not been able to secure a seat in a TVET institution? This pertinent question is abundantly addressed in the literature on the discourse of the NEETs. According to Gutierrez-Garcia, Benjet, Borges, Rios and Medina-Mora (2018), a growing group of emerging adults in many countries around the world are not incorporated into the education system or the labour market: these people are tagged as “NEET: not in education, employment nor training”. This group of adults labelled NEET has been extensively researched in the US and European countries. Unfortunately, in Mauritius regarding labour market analysis, this is not being done in depth. NEETs have not been statistically investigated, thus the researcher could not discuss the characteristics and traits of the Mauritian NEET. Gutierrez-Garcia et al. (2018) postulate that college entrance and entry into the labour market typically takes place during emerging adulthood; the successful transition from school to work is a societal expectation for this stage. However, in reality, it deviates from social expectations, as there is a significant proportion of the population of emerging adults who do not follow this path, partly due to limitations in access to higher education and high unemployment.

There is no career guidance at entry points in secondary school. Career guidance is an essential feature for removing stereotypes about TVET, and providing students with objective knowledge on the advantages of TVET (Bunwaree, 1994).

Employability rates, after one has followed a TVET programme in Mauritius, are very low. The annual tracer studies carried out by the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD, the main governmental training provider, reported that very few who followed the training course are absorbed into the labour market, without specifying the trade in which training was followed (MITD, 2015). A tracer study questionnaire is being administered to trainees during the awarding of certificates ceremony, having only one question which the trainees must answer with respect to employment: whether or not they are working. The answer to this question does not generate any precise information on whether TVET students, after training, do obtain jobs in trades related to training followed. Padachi & Lukea-Bhiwajee (2013) reveal a lack of appropriate trainers and shortage of qualified resource persons in specific areas of training required with the business in Mauritius.

The above list of problems in the context of the Mauritian TVET is an indication that students who joined this stream face great odds compared with those who go through the academic stream. These problems are major obstacles for a welcoming acceptance by parents and society at large. Trainees are aware beforehand that they will face many difficulties when joining the TVET stream. It may be seen as a waste of time attending a TVET course if ultimately not securing employment relevant to the field of study. The new educational reform of 2017 is trying to reverse this tendency. Whether this will materialise, only time will tell. The effective date by which we can make a real evaluation of the reform will be 2020.

2.5.2 Needs of TVET for the Mauritian economy

From an economic perspective, TVET has been termed one of the major keys to unlocking the problems of unemployment and accelerating the economy through skills development,

both in developed or developing/underdeveloped countries (Bhurtel, 2015). In an increasingly competitive global economy, with rapid and far-reaching changes in technology, trading patterns, and consumer demand, developed and developing countries confront new opportunities and new challenges. For this reason countries will need a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to adapt to all the challenges ahead. The relative success and prosperity of an economy depends on how productive it is. Without an adequately skilled workforce, firms will be unable to take full advantage of new technologies and production techniques. In the global economy, countries tend to specialise in areas where they have comparative advantage. The comparative advantage of the industrialised world lies in more knowledge-based goods and services. For any country to be prosperous and successful it needs to ensure that it is well placed to succeed in such knowledge-based goods and services, which it cannot do unless its workforce is adequately skilled. Businesses require a skilled workforce to take advantage of new technologies and production techniques (HM Treasury, 2004). TVET is an effective and efficient tool for empowerment, for enabling youth and adults alike to escape the trap of poverty, and contribute to their community's economic and social well-being. Education, and in particular TVET, holds the key to poverty alleviation and economic expansion (UNESCO, 2013).

Mauritius supersedes many African countries, including South Africa, in global metrics such as the Human Development Index (HDI), the competitiveness index, and information technology (Dusoeye & Dogarah, 2016). Mauritius is stepping from a mono-crop agricultural economy to an industrial one; advancing through the phase of service- and knowledge-based economy (Betchoo, 2014). Ramguttty-Wong (2000), suggests that the

economic development of Mauritius is comparable with the West, but co-exists with an extraordinary backwardness with regard to female empowerment.

2.5.3 The career choice of Mauritian students

Kaneez & Medha (2018)'s study of 400 students across Mauritius, reveals that the majority of Mauritian students' careers choice are influenced by environment and personality factors, and not influenced by opportunity factors. The researchers also recognise that parental influence has a significant effect on the career choice of their children. Kaneez & Medha (2018)'s study recognises that the three most influencing factors of career choice of Mauritian students are educational attainment, cultural and social context of family and community, and cognitive ability. The authors were surprised that they found in their study that Mauritian students were not aware of any career guidance; and students did not benefit from any career guidance at their schools.

Kaneez & Medha (2018)'s study encapsulates the issue of career choice of the Mauritian students particularly through influences of external elements such as parental, environmental, and personality. It also reveals that educational attainment and cognitive ability factors are constituents of the key force for career choice, either by obtaining a formal qualification through academic or vocational stream. The authors commented on the absence of career guidance in secondary colleges, which is supposed to be a key aspect for effective career choice. Secondary college students are not provided with career guidance; therefore the Mauritian TVET stream which suffers from low social status is not considered at all for career guidance.

2.5.4 Skills mismatch claimed by the Mauritian industries

In its 10-year master plan developed by the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (2017), it was reported that the Mauritian SMEs are in fact affected by shortages of adequately skilled employees, the problem of skills mismatch, and low learning achievements, lack of technical skills, and the problem of employability, lack of entrepreneurship education, limited expenditure on education and training, and the quality of education adequate to industry needs. The same report made an analysis of recruitment patterns in Mauritius, which reveals that it is much easier to find employees with the right qualifications rather than with the right skills. The author of this report also posited that the overwhelming barrier for SMEs is to recruit labour with the right attitude and work culture (Ministry of Business, Enterprises and Cooperatives, 2017). As argued in the master plan for SMEs, the Mauritian industries suffer seriously from acute mismatch of training skills requirement supply by the existing providers of training and vocational education institutions. This is impacting on the provision of proficient human capital for enabling industry operations to be more effective.

2.5.5 Opportunities in TVET career paths

According to EasyUni Staff (2017), there has been an increasing push in Malaysia for students to embrace TVET as a more compelling educational route, as opposed to viewing it as second-class education. Currently, the marketability of TVET graduates in Malaysia's employment market is higher – around 98% compared with university graduates which is around 60%. It is also mentioned that TVET qualification holders are being employed more rapidly. TVET graduates are also offered higher wages owing to the high demand for graduates with a specific skill set. In a similar way, New Zealand is also encouraging students to pursue TVET courses that will mould them into industry-ready workers,

considering them as an invaluable asset in striving towards a knowledge-driven economy. TVET is becoming a more promising educational avenue and giving TVET students better career paths opportunities mainly in developing economies such as Malaysia and New Zealand. In Mauritius there are no statistics on hand to confirm that TVET is playing a vital role in boosting Mauritian development and addressing youth unemployment.

Consequently, owing to the current global challenge of youth unemployment, underemployment and poverty, the once undermined and outmoded TVET career path has been invigorated in the international policy debate on education. The UNESCO framework of action outlined clearly that youth employment were relatable to TVET. According to the Centre of Career Information (2015), currently TVET must endeavour to equip trainees with innovative attitude, creative and highly skilful workmanship etiquette, while accomplishing responsibility in work which constitutes factors influencing success in TVET careers. In this context, TVET providers must provide sufficient knowledge and skills that enable one to act in a wide variety of situations at the workplace.

2.5.6 Constraints in TVET Career Paths

The negative image of TVET in developing countries is the social class. A plumber, or any blue-collar professional can be earning as much as an engineer; however, he remains a plumber or tradesman with a lower social status. Money does not always equate to higher social status. Apparently, in some circles, a university degree is still the ticket to social mobility, even if it does not lead to employment or increased income (UNEVOC-UNESCO, 2017).

The worldwide phenomenon of youth unemployment is a serious concern for policymakers. According to Osidipe (2017), the issue is a persistent problem of unemployment, with the inadequate provision of requisite skills training and knowledge acquisition delivered by TVET providers to students unemployed owing to lack of adequate employable skills. The African continent is faced with high unemployment among job seekers. OECD (2008) observed that a skilled and knowledgeable workforce not only improves a country's investment climate, but it is also a key factor of productivity and growth as well as increasing international competitiveness. The above constitutes one of the constraints that TVET has in exposing students to career awareness. TVET should expose students to career path opportunities in the world of work, enabling youths to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology taking in place currently in our industries.

2.6 Theoretical Frameworks Selected for the Present Study

Applying the human, social capital, and capabilities approach of Sen, this study addresses the problem ontologically, empirically, and theoretically, in deepening the understanding of theoretical grounding intertwining TVET and careers. This is useful: central to the study is the need to address the human capital acquired, which has a direct bearing on career success for those who have undergone a TVET education. This study used the Human Capital theory to investigate the contribution of education and skill level gained by the former TVET students to become outliers in their profession. In Mauritius, it is known that TVET does not have a good reputation as it is still perceived as meant for failures of the academic stream.

The human capital theory was seen to provide an appropriate theoretical framework for the current study. This model demonstrates the processes involved in individual developing of their human capital through training or acquiring skills per on-the-job training. In addition, this theory has been mostly used for research into career success. The other useful element for the study is the aspect of social capital acquisition by these TVET students to address enablement that affects the lives of these people. The study also tries to examine the social constructs embedded within the structure of TVET as acknowledging through the voice and experience of these students the manner in which they understand, mediate, and respond to these social structures in building their career paths and career success. The social capital theory is being used in order to determine how the social structure of those former TVET students has a direct bearing on their learning environment; finally navigating them through their career paths and contributing to making them successful in their jobs.

The challenge is to include the voices and experiences of former TVET students in a manner that takes cognisance of the ways in which the human capital is inherited through training and skills acquisition from a TVET programmes. Also, the social structure of the lives of these students go into the creating and facilitating of the process of finding a job and constructing a successful career. The study also enlists the capability theory developed by Amartya Sen within the perspective of the TVET landscape. The researcher will be using this theory to understand the substantive freedom that TVET qualification holders have provided so as to gain a real opportunity for living a life they value and have reason to value through employment opportunities as a skilled workforce.

The implications of the capability approach to the evaluation of TVET, is that it shifts the emphasis from normative and instrumental measures to a focus that evaluates educational policies and institutions in terms of how they improve the quality of life and well-being of individuals (Walker, 2006). The emphasis is on the “real freedom that people enjoy” to “lead the kind of lives that they value and have reason to value” (Sen, 1999). According to Sen (1995), the capability approach is a concentration on freedom to achieve, in general, and the capabilities to function, in particular. Functioning is, in a sense, more directly related to living conditions, since this encompasses several aspects of living conditions. Therefore, someone having followed a TVET course is a vital human capability that enables the holder of the qualifications to make choices in areas related to the trade in which training was acquired. In another words, the TVET programme allows the person with the necessary functioning to be a skilled worker in the trade in which training was obtained. Thus, by extrapolating the capability approach, it is understood that TVET plays a commensurate role in achieving freedom for the individual, while playing an economically instrumental role. Such frameworks will serve as an epistemological guide that will help to interpret the knowledge presented in this study.

2.7.1 Human capital

The most common theory specifically addressing career success in existing literature is the human capital theory. This theory describes that everyone differs in quantity and quality of human capital in terms of education, experience, skills, and personal characteristics that they bring to the job. The amount and effectiveness of the human capital one has and expends on the job is the main determinant of career success (Ishak, 2015).

Normally individuals acquire general human capital through formal schooling. However, human capital acquisition does not stop upon graduation. Employees gain both general and firm-specific human capital through learning by doing, or on-the-job training (Frederiksen & Kato, 2011).

Human capital and career success are linked together. Demographic factors such as age and marital status, and personal factors like education and experience are strong predictors of career success (Ng et al., 2005).

2.7.2 Theories of social capital

According to Coleman's (1990) definition, social capital is any aspect of the social structure that creates value and facilitates learning actions among students within the academic environment. Another simple definition of social capital is the links, shared values, and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust one another and so work together (OECD, 2014).

In the social capital theory, relationships or ties are considered the basic data for analysis. In this context, a network is defined as the pattern of ties linking a defined set of persons or social actors. Granovetter (1973) conceptualised social capital under the weak-tie theory, which focusses on the strength of the social tie used by a person in the process of finding a job. Granovetter (1973) established that weak ties were more likely than strong ties to have been the source of information about job openings for the sample of job-holders he interviewed.

According to Ishak (2015), the social capital theory is defined as investment of resources such as trust, norms, and networks inherent in social relations, with expected returns.

Networking is defined as a behaviour whereby persons seek numerous and various business contacts that may also ‘spill over’ into private life. Similarly, networking also represents the dimension of making friends and allies.

2.7.3 Capability approach

The capability approach was pioneered by economist Amartya Sen (1980) and further expanded by Nussbaum (1988). The capability approach provides a normative framework for conceptualising and evaluating the quality of life and well-being of individuals (Landorf et al., 2008). Sen and Nussbaum never try to link the capability approach directly to educational processes and outcomes; however, there are several researchers who try to do so. Among them are Robeyn (2006) and Walker (2011).

The value of the capability approach for education is its commitment to social justice, human well-being, freedom, development, and human agency; and in its practical emphasis on what people are actually able to do and be. The fundamentals of the capability approach are about providing individuals with the opportunities to live the lives that they have reason to value, enabling individuals to become agents in their own lives (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009). The capability approach is similarly attractive for TVET, if not more so than for higher education, as it challenges through its commitments to human well-being the neoliberal and productivist underpinnings of the TVET policy that prioritises human-resource development above human well-being (Walker, 2008).

2.7 Value that the Present Study will add to Existing Literature on the Theme of the Study

The literature reviews conducted in this chapter have demonstrated the presence of a number of opportunities for further research. The reviews centre on the successful navigation of traditional patterns of careers which are argued to be increasingly prevalent amongst the blue-collar profession. It is known that TVET outcomes lead mostly to blue-collar jobs in the African and Mauritian economies. The working lives of TVET qualification holders display a striking congruence with the attributes of a bureaucratic structured career. The existing literature appears to indicate that the TVET stream and its outcomes have revolved around the blue-collar profession. TVET stigmatization interprets the traditional career person as blue-collar, meaning a restricted perspective for career paths and career success. The black spot for TVET has not been eliminated even in this present era of fast technological changes.

A study on the career path and determinants of career success in the traditional career of TVET qualification holders will necessarily be somewhat exploratory and descriptive in nature. From the existing literature reviews, it may be observed that relatively little is known about the working lives of TVET qualification holders. What is documented by big statistics such as the tracer studies has been conducted by MITD at the end of the TVET programmes (MITD, 2017). A number of constructs are suggested by TVET researchers and career pursuers as being potentially interesting to an individual who is undertaking a career characterised by a hierarchical structure. It therefore may be of use in a critical investigation of career paths and predictors of career success in the world of professions normally taken up by TVET qualification holders. Therefore, for this study, the human capital, social capital, and capability approaches have been chosen as the most appropriate framework for assessing the differing contributions of these theories in constructing and shaping careers. As there are no existing qualitative measures of capitalism and functioning skills based on the human capital, social

capital, and capability approaches, a conceptual framework is developed which will be part of Chapter Three all the way through the present doctoral study.

It would be interesting to know how TVET qualification holders skills' attainment become a human capital acquisition in this relationship of constructing and shaping career pathways, leading to career success. The relationship between social capital elements such as networking involvement and the TVET academic/vocational divide can also be investigated as it impacts on their career. The present study is seeking to address the gap presented in this literature review by exploring how TVET qualification holders construct their career paths, defining and achieving career success.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of existing literature in relation to the TVET stream, career path, career success determinants, the theoretical framework of the study, and the value adding to the present literature. It has highlighted that the TVET worldwide is constantly progressing in terms of accessibility. However, literature has also articulated that TVET in underdeveloped countries and on the Asian continent has an inferior image. The existing literature portrays that the Mauritian TVET has suffered from stigmatization since colonial times, and still carries this stigma of being reserved for a specific segment of the population, that is, those who are considered to be academically poor. This chapter also identified a variety of factors that can have an impact on someone's career. It examined the importance of career success predictors which can contribute to making an employee successful. It also provides a theoretical framework that is useful for the present study. The chosen theoretical framework for this study is mainly based on career success factors, the social, human capital, and capability

approaches for the TVET students. The next chapter focusses on the research design, that is, the methodology and research methods used in the present study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

TVET students occupy around 10%-15% of the entire educational population (Statistics Mauritius, 2016). Despite this student population enrolling in a TVET stream, not all those who have undergone TVET programmes have secured employment related to the trade in which they followed training. Industries continued to complain that they are facing an acute scarcity of skilled workers (Ministry of Finance, 2016). This under-representation has been attributed to TVET suffering continued stigmatization. There is also the issue of poor remuneration, whereby TVET qualified people claim that they do not have an attractive salary compared with white-collar professions with more or less similar educational background.

To aid the retention and attraction of TVET qualified people in organisations, the present research argues for an in-depth investigation into how these former TVET students have experienced career success. This is important, given that such groups of people have received little empirical focus. This study will be a useful launch pad for TVET qualifications holders aiming for better career prospects. Research into career success is becoming more and more important nowadays. There is a need for further research on career success, using various sample groups with their specific situations and experiences in mind. The purpose of this study is to understand career paths, and career mobility, identifying specific factors that influenced the career success of former TVET students. The phenomenon under scrutiny is the understanding of the career journey of former TVET students within the perspective of career mobility, career path, and career success. The researcher has observed a knowledge gap,

following a gap in the understanding of the career route of former TVET qualification holders whose numbers are scanty compared with the entire educated workforce. The author deemed it necessary to investigate possible strategies for effectively leading sustainable change required by the Mauritian TVET stream.

In the previous chapter, the literature has set out the theoretical basis for the study. Existing literature was explored to gain insight into TVET and career success. The purpose of the study is to explore the predictors of career success of former TVET students. Difficulties that they encountered in their journey for success must be taken into account. Was being a TVET student an inhibitor or an enhancer in galvanising career achievement? There are three research questions that this study addressed.

The research design is used in this study, a qualitative research approach, appropriate for developing an in-depth understanding of participants' narrative of their career journeys, being former TVET students. As Glesne (2011) has pointed out, the in-depth understanding in qualitative research occurs through listening, interpreting, and retelling participants' accounts in a manner that is meaningful, with the use of appropriate triangulating data sources, prolonged stay in the field, and after performing certain verification. In this study, the participants, former TVET students, recount their experiences of being part of an alternative education programme, the TVET stream, from which they were able to graduate. Since these participants credit their career success with their TVET education, this affords them a very meaningful forum on which to narrate their perceptions, influences, hindrances, and enhancers in achieving such.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design in terms of the research methodology and research methods used in the present study. It gives a description of the context of the study, participants involved, procedures of data collection, method of data analysis, issues of validity and reliability, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. The researcher details the sampling and recruitment procedures and present brief biographies of the study participants. In order to preserve participants' anonymity, all names used are pseudonyms and identifying details have been changed.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is normally considered a plan or blueprint of the researcher's method of conducting the research (Babbie, 2005). Creswell (2007) postulates that this is interpreted as the entire process of research from the conceptualising of a problem to writing the thesis. Actually, this is a qualitative study utilising a narrative enquiry research as the method. The research design will highlight the direction that must be followed when generating data, and the way in which it will be analysed. Maree (2007) describes a research design as a strategy which moves from underlying philosophical assumptions to specify the selection of participants, data gathering techniques, and data analysis to be conducted.

The present study used a qualitative research design. It allows the researcher to be the main instrument in the process of the data collection procedure. The researcher will use semi-structured questions. The design instrument is selected to allow for the participants' voices to narrate their stories (Creswell, 2007). In this particular situation the design, which is qualitative, will allow the study to be more manageable rather than rigid.

The qualitative research design allowed the researcher to make assiduous interpretations of everything seen, heard, and understood. According to Creswell (2007), these facts cannot be dissociated from the researcher's own background, history, and understanding.

The methodological aim of the present study is to hear the stories of former TVET students' past narrative accounts of how they were channelled into the TVET system. How successful they are currently in their career will be scrutinised. Such students have gone through an educational stream which is considered less enriching in the Mauritian context. The lived experience of the former TVET students, and this effect on their careers, will be the basis of this study, through a narrative enquiry method.

The focus on former TVET students' careers stories as data and method in this study offers an understanding of their motivation, actions, and points of view; as opportunities or inhibitors in discussing their interpretations of the TVET stream as a contributing factor in shaping their career success. To be clear, "life story" will be used in a generic sense to refer to the elements and characteristics of a former TVET student's experiences in his or her career pathway. The students' personal and professional lives will be examined, while a personal narrative will be used to stress the role of the stories in representing the TVET students' voices.

3.3 Research Methodology

Methodology refers to a discussion of the underlying reasoning for using particular methods. This discussion includes describing the theoretical concepts that inform the choice of methods to be applied, placing the choice of methods within the more general nature of academic work, and reviewing its relevance to examining the research problem (USC, 2018). It has been noted that some writers use the terms 'methodology' and 'method' interchangeably (Hussey &

Hussey, 1997). They consider that methodology refers to the overall approach taken, as well as to the theoretical basis from which the researcher comes; and that method is the various means by which data is collected and analysed (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). However, underpinning the methodology, of necessity, is a philosophical stance in relation to the purpose and place of research in general, and this research in particular. An interpretivist position was adopted by this research. That is, it is considered that there are multiple realities that make measurement difficult, and we can only seek to understand real-world phenomena by studying them in detail within the context in which they occur.

According to Guba & Lincoln (2005), normally, the choice of the research method depends on the research questions and the philosophical perspectives from which the questions are to be investigated. For the present study, a qualitative approach has been adopted with the use of narrative enquiry. This study was devised to understand how former TVET students construct their career success, taking into account any factors that have enhanced or inhibited their career success and the way in which they construct their career success.

There are many scholars who claim that human learning is best researched by using qualitative research (Domegan and Fleming, 2007; Smit et al., 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). This study is about the construction of career success for those who have undergone TVET training. When the understanding of an event is a function of personal interaction and perception of those in that event and the description of the processes that characterise the event, qualitative approaches are more appropriate than quantitative designs to provide the insight necessary for understanding the participants' role in the event, and their perceptions of the experience.

“Narrative inquiries almost always are about people’s lives their interest, concerns and passions”. The researcher uses narrative enquiry as a window into the complexities of former TVET students’ lives and experiences contributing to their career success. What personal stories do they share about their lives, after being a student of TVET, in shaping their career success? How does their human and social capital give them a lens into the role that such plays in their career success? Succeeding against the odds: the career narratives of former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students in Mauritius draws from narrative enquiry for its methodological framework and research design. (Bateson, 1994) and (Wortham, 2001) have shown that, through narratives, people share their experiences. Wortham (2001) posits that identities are developed through narratives. Bateson (1994) explains that much of what we learn is through experiences. Narratives help us learn to understand ourselves and act as windows into the life experiences and viewpoints of others.

“Experience happens narratively”, say Clandinin & Connelly (2000). Narrative enquiry is a form of narrative experience. The above researchers added that “educational experiences should be studied narratively”. For this research, narratives are an entry point to examining the role that social, and human capital and ‘functioning’ have on career understandings of former TVET students. TVET students are a subgroup of trainees enrolled in an educational stream that is completely different from the academic stream, having the aim of achieving occupational fit. The experience of career, and determinants of career success of TVET students, is culturally complex. For TVET students, as a result, the cultural complexity intensifies in the intersections between the labels that TVET carries in the Mauritian society as being inferior, the odds faced, the social and human capital inheritance within their career journey.

There are many reasons for the researcher choosing narrative as a methodology for this study. The researcher was curious about how narratives of former TVET students illustrate their ways of knowing, and any hindrances or conducive circumstances influencing their careers, and the social and human capital playing in their lives, in constructing their career and career success.

Brunner (1991) posits, “People narrate their experience of the world and their own role in it”. It is said that, through people’s stories, we can understand their views and how experiences have shaped those views.

The two main philosophical dimensions in a qualitative research, namely, the ontology and epistemology, are being examined in this study, using narrative enquiry as method. Epistemology is the study of knowledge of how we know what we know. In the philosophical sense, we may refer to ontology as a particular system of categories accounting for a certain vision of the world (Wolf, Nicholls, Reynolds, Osborne, 2016). Narrative enquiry was first used in the context of capturing and describing the personal stories of teachers as a methodology by Connelly and Clandinin. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) posit that narrative enquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time, and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context. In light of such, narrative enquiry is considered a means by which we can systematically gather, analyse, and represent people’s stories as narrated by them. This enables the understanding of the views of truth, reality, knowledge, and personhood. From these perspectives, narratives may be theorised and utilised from various ontological and epistemological dimensions that take on a different conception of knowledge and truth.

The fundamental question concerning ontological belief is, “What is the nature of reality?” (Hatch, 2002). According to Hatch (2002), the narrative enquiry falls under the purview of constructivism. This type of research focusses on constructing meanings and realities, as participants are called to tell their stories. During the process of the interview, the researcher and the researched co-construct their realities and understandings of the stories, as they engage in social meaning-making discourses. Spector-Mersel (2010) explicates that people have the tendency to create their realities through narratives and that realities are essentially narrated reality.

The epistemological issue in the context of this study within the perspective of the methodology used is the narrative enquiry. According to Hatch (2002), the fundamental question answering the epistemological belief is through the question, “What can be known and what is the relationship of the knower to what is to be known?” According to the point of view of Hatch (2002), knowledge, in general, is a human construction: the knower himself constructs what is to be known. According to Spector-Mersel (2010), the way we understand the world constitutes reality, as well as how we interpret the events of our lives. Stories are said to be a construct of one’s circumstances, individual biographical and cultural history. How the stories are being shared, together with their social interactions, shapes a narrative epistemology. It is through narrative that we present our understanding and our realities of the world as we see it (Sikes & Gale, 2006). According to Worth (2004), in general, our stories are told through our perspectives, as well as through other stories we narrate. Our stories are constructed through the lenses of other experiences and beliefs. The stories that belong to us are biased in their telling, which has a direct effect on our realities and view of the world. It is said that our realities are shaped through our experiences. The researchers must understand people’s realities as these experiences are being narrated (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

3.4 Research Paradigm

The term paradigm has been explained variously by scholars. According to MacNaughton, Rolfe, Siraj-Blatchford (2001), a research paradigm should consist of three main elements: a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology, and criteria for validity. Other scholars, such as Neuman (2000) and Creswell (2003) consider the paradigm as being epistemology or ontology or even research methodology. Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) classify variable theoretical paradigms as positivist or interpretivist, emancipatory, constructivist, transformative, critical, pragmatist and deconstructivist, or post-positivist. Creswell (2003) and Yanow & Schwartz-Shea (2011) mention that reality is discovered through participants' views and experiences in an interpretivist paradigm. As it is people who give meaning to their social world, the interpretive researchers seek to investigate how humans perceive and make sense of this world. According to Phothongsunan (2010), interpretive studies are often idiographic, using small numbers of participants. As for the present study, only four participants have been purposively selected. As explicated by Phothongsunan (2010), the purpose is not to generalise, but to explore the meanings which participants place on the social situations under investigation.

The researcher considers the study to be situated in the interpretivist paradigm, therefore, considering the accounts from various scholars, it is theoretically understood that the interpretive paradigm allows researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants. The study seeks to explore the lived experiences of former TVET students with the purpose of uncovering the reality of contributing factors in gaining successful careers relevant to the trade in which they followed at a TVET institution.

The question that also needs to be asked is: Is narrative enquiry a paradigm? In much literature, researchers have referred to narrative enquiry as a research methodology. Spector-Mersel (2010) questioned the above consideration, proposing the idea of requesting researchers to consider narrative enquiry as a paradigm rather than a research method. In this context, Spector- Mersel (2010) proposes that researchers consider framing their enquiry within the theories of narrative and enquiry in contrast to following the process laid down in the methodology. The above author also maintains that, in a narrative paradigm, the themes in the stories emerge mostly from the data, rather than from the procedures, as suggested by particular research methodologies.

The premise of narrative enquiry is based on that humans come to understand their own lives and the world around them through story (Andrew, 2008). Josselson (2006) postulates that narrative enquiry implicates the collection of these stories, and pays attention to meanings that people assign to their experiences. Polkinghorne (1988) sees narratives as ways in which we render meaning to our existence. The author also suggests that we do not collect stories to decide whether events really took place; instead, how people ascribe meaning to these events. Pinnegar & Dayes (2006) posit that, in narrative enquiry, it is the researcher's desire to 'understand rather than control and predict'.

These scholars believe that through narrative enquiry, the various ways of knowing, and diverse ways of questioning what knowledge is and how it is constructed, are enumerated. Candinin & Rosiek (2007) postulate that, in a narrative paradigm, researchers believe and recognise that there is never a single way of knowing. There will be multiple possibilities of interpretations and other means of explaining things.

Spector- Mersel (2010) posits that narratives have an enormous power to shape reality. There is a clear distinction between narrative enquiry having to be believed, and that reality is constructed in the telling of the narrative. Riessman (2008) gives a better understanding of a narrative enquiry paradigm by highlighting the main characteristics of narrative enquiry. The said author mentions that stories must be considered as a whole unit and analysed with a holistic approach, as opposed to a categorical analysis. Riessman (2008) also added that, in a narrative enquiry, attention is given to contexts and how the context influences the narrative. The same scholar posits that what is being studied often emerges during the enquiry; and that stories being collected did not exist prior to the telling. In other words, the story is being fabricated during the process of telling. Narrative enquiry pays attention to and gives great consideration to the individual participant.

3.5 Research Approach

Lincoln, Lynham, Guba (2011) posited that research approaches are plans and procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Normally, research opens with at least one research question about one phenomenon of interest. For example, in the present study, how do former TVET student holders of a formal TVET qualification construct their career paths? Research questions help researchers to focus thoughts, manage efforts, and choose the appropriate approach or perspective from which to make sense of the phenomenon of interest. The three common approaches to conducting research are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. The research questions will give the researcher the necessary hints about the type of data needed. For instance, will numerical, textual, or both numerical and textual data be needed? Based on this assessment, the researcher selects one of the three aforementioned approaches to conducting research. It is said that the quantitative approach will generate numerical data,

whereas the qualitative approach will normally generate textual data, while the mixed methods approach will produce both numerical and textual data.

The decision to adopt a qualitative approach for the present study is mainly to access the human experiences of time, order, and change. Narrative enquiry is presently being used. A relatively new qualitative methodology is the study of experiences understood narratively. The main focus is to understand about and to study experience. Narrative enquirers think narratively about experience throughout the enquiry. As the study is looking to capture the factors contributing to former TVET students' career success, these participants' experiences, as narrated by them, would be the key elements for analysis.

Marshall & Rossman (1999) postulate that qualitative research has become increasingly important in the domain of social sciences. It is also routinely applied in fields such as education, nursing, social work, and also in management. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explicated that qualitative research seeks answers to questions about how social experiences are generated and given meaning. According to Polkinghorne (2005), "Qualitative research as an enquiry aimed as an enquiry aimed at describing and clarifying human experience as it appears in people's lives".

Qualitative research is important in my study, as it will allow me to investigate each particular case under the lens of its most natural setting. This will afford me a better understanding of my participants' viewpoints, showing their contribution and influences. The qualitative research approach will help give insight into the participants' perspectives, which is a main characteristic of such a dimension in the present study. Since the researcher is a TVET practitioner, this research approach gave me the opportunity to reflect on and analyse most of

the data, in that the participants in his study are former TVET students. This will give him a better understanding of aids and inhibitors that they might have encountered in being TVET students, and the construction of their career successes.

For three major reasons, he has opted for a qualitative approach. First, the study is field-focussed. It is mainly concerned with theories related to individual experience in a specific context: having gone through the TVET stream, and their career success construction (Park, 2009). Second, being considered neutral in the study, the researcher have lengthy experience in the TVET sector, being a TVET practitioner. This will add a tone to participants' voices, and their feelings will be better understood. Third, storytelling was a major aspect of the study in the process of data collection and data analysis.

In this study, former TVET students will be assessed, how they faced obstacles or opportunities, if any, as a result of being a product of the TVET stream; and the construction of their career success, career success-related interpretations of the experiences, and dialogues with their pasts, present, and future career journey.

Under the qualitative research approach, methodologies and theories are applied to explore and recognise human experience. Among these are ethnography, case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, and narrative enquiry. The researcher is using a narrative enquiry which focusses on qualities of life, and lived experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

3.6 Research Type or Strategy

The research strategy for this thesis was established by adopting a way in which the research objectives may be answered. There are two main types of research strategy: quantitative and

qualitative. The present study is adopting a qualitative strategy. The qualitative research is subjective in nature and mainly concentrated on opinions and perceptions, rather than on hard, measurable data. Qualitative research is a type of research in which the researcher relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words or text from participants; describes and analyses these words for themes; and conducts the enquiry in a subjective, biased manner.

The methodology employed in this study is rooted in the narrative enquiry. My intention in the present research was to explore the formation of the contributing factors of career success of former TVET students.

The career narratives of former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students in Mauritius focusses on eight former TVET students who have embraced career success in trades that they have followed after training. Each participant was a TVET student from one publicly-owned TVET training centre (MITD). Narrative enquiry is based on the stance that, through our stories, we construct our identities and “ways of knowing”. Narrative enquiry provides the researcher with one of the best ways to reflect upon experiences. This methodology is well suited to giving in-depth insight into how a particular educational stream, namely TVET, has influenced and shaped the career successes of some of those having entered this stream (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Clandinin & Connelly (2000), posited that narrative enquiry is the best method of studying educational experiences.

According to leading narrative enquiry researchers, Clandinin and Connelly (2000), human beings are storytelling organisms who live storied lives, experiencing the world through their

own eyes. Humans make meaning of their lives through stories about their lived experiences; and this gives an insight into how they view the world (Clandinin, 2006).

In this view of students' knowledge related to their education system, students/teachers/job holders know their lives in term of stories. They live stories, tell stories of those lives, retell stories with changed possibilities, and relive the changed stories. This narrative view is of former TVET students' knowledge on how they embarked in this stream, any obstacles or opportunities they faced, but offering more than students' telling stories of specific classmate and events. We mean that their way of being successful in their careers coming from a TVET stream, is storied. As former TVET students, they are characters in their own stories of career building, which they author. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

“Experience happens narratively. Narrative enquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore educational experiences should be studied narratively” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) stress that narrative enquiry educational settings are much more than seeking out and hearing stories. In the present research, narratives are an entry point for examining the role experience has on human capital understanding and constructing career success identity. The Mauritian educational system is more of an elite type of system. The TVET stream is supposedly reserved for academically poor students. In light of this situation, their experience of working and gaining career success is a complex issue. For TVET students, the human capital complexity intensifies in the intersections between being channelled to the TVET stream without volition, the role of their parents, obtaining job in this competing job market, and the poor recognition in the Mauritian society of blue-collar positions. As a result, they are members of a unique group of students who delve into capital and cultural tensions in both their personal and professional lives.

There are many reasons for the researcher choosing narrative as a methodology for this study, among those which have already been enumerated in this chapter. The researcher is curious about how stories of former TVET students illustrate their ways of knowing; and the role human and cultural capital plays in their lives; and how this has shaped their careers and career success. Brunner (1991) postulated that, “People narrativise their experience of the world and of their own role in it. Through people’s stories we can understand their views and how experiences have shaped those views.”

This enquiry is based on an in-depth study of the educational route and work narratives of four former TVET students, paying close attention to the factors that either facilitated or hindered their career success. The study takes account of how they navigated their career paths, what the important metrics for career success have been, identifying the influential factors for the career success of these former TVET students. Narrative research has the common practice of devoting much more space to fewer participants than does other qualitative forms of research. Narrative enquiry must go beyond merely telling of stories (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007). These authors posited that, in analysis of narratives of any studies using narrative enquiry as method, the data will consist of narratives which will be used for analysis. The narratives will help to create categories. Narrative enquiry was popularised by Clandinin & Connelly (1990), which drew its foundations from John Dewey’s philosophy that we are all “knowers” who reflect on experience, confront the unknown, make sense of it, and take action. Nevertheless, over the years, narrative enquiry has gained growing acceptance and practise in other disciplines such as medicine, nursing, for disabled persons, children, law, counselling, and psychotherapy (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

Narrative enquiry is a way of expressing experience, and understanding it. This is a useful research tool for understanding former TVET students' career success interpretations. There is collaboration between the researcher and the participant in this type of method. According to (Bruner, 1987; Carr, 1986; Dyson & Genishi, 1994), narrative enquiry provides researchers with a rich framework through which they investigate the ways in which humans experience life, together with unconnected events that have occurred through narrated stories. According to (Bell & Kozlowki, 2002; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Webster & Merova, 2007; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), the interpretation of the stories gives tremendous insight into the emotional, physical, social, cultural, political, ethical, and historical aspects of a participant's life; humans draw meaning through stories they have lived. Narrative enquiry enables social science researchers to investigate and to gain a profound understanding of particular aspects of life experiences. Yang & He (2011) posited that narrative enquiry provides the "narrative ways of knowing".

Clandinin & Connelly (2000) concurred that narrative enquiry serves the dual purpose of both examining the ways of expressing experience, as well as of understanding it. These researchers reached their views through a research perspective, claiming that narrative enquiry is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus which help to build a strong bond between researcher and participants. Fundamentally, the researcher, during the enquiry, enters in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both as individuals, and socially. In an educational set-up or workplace situation, narrative enquiry gives former TVET students a time and space within which they can explore, individually and collectively, the stories of their career development and career success construction in their own contexts.

Such an enquiry is driven by the participants' inner desire to understand their experiences, to reconcile what is known with that which is hidden, to confirm and affirm, and to construct and reconstruct understandings of themselves as employees/career holders.

Clandinin & Huber (2002) stated, "Stories to live by are shaped in places and live in places. They live in actions, in relationship with others, in language". Consequently, narrative enquiry is both product and process (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Fontana & Frey (2008) explained that narratives are vehicles that can bring the worlds and stories of the participants alive, which makes narrative enquiry suitable for this study.

Narrative is most often portrayed as: (a) a short story chronicling an event with characters; or (b) as a comprehensive story that covers an important segment of one's life, such as school, illness, war, etc; or (c) as a narrative that covers someone's entire lifespan (Chase, 2008; Kim, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1995). It is through the narratives that the participants express how and why specific happenings began or occurred, detailing more open-ended experiences that produce challenging questions instead of offering concrete answers (Barone, 2000; Saldana, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1995).

So far, from research design under Section 3.3 to the research type/strategy under Section 3.7, the researcher has been able to highlight the various perspectives of the methodological approach for the present study. The above sections have enabled me to sort the given research questions systematically, using correct methodology. It was necessary to choose a methodology for the specific problem; and to know not only the research methods necessary for the research undertaken, but also to understand the entire philosophical basis of the methodology in carrying out a good research to answer the present phenomenon under study.

The above sections have given an insight into, and been situated in the research paradigm in which the researcher is positioned; the research approach which is adopted for the present study, namely the interpretivist approach. The strategy for the thesis is qualitative, using a narrative enquiry.

3.7 Research Methods

This study examines the career narratives of former TVET students in Mauritius utilising a narrative enquiry research method. Narrative enquiry involves the researcher retelling participants' life stories. According to Creswell (2003), there are four types of primary qualitative data collection, namely, observations, interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials. Interviews are widely being used to collect participants' narratives. The methods used were interviews, supplemented with visual interviews with pictures and drawing. A purposive sampling has been used to select the participants. Four former TVET students have been selected. The interviews in a narrative enquiry are often conducted in an informal conversational manner, to encourage participants to reveal their individual stories. The selected research site/s, will be convenient places, the choice of the participants.

Stories of participants, together with their life experiences at the point where they chose or were encouraged into the TVET stream as an educational option, to the point of constructing their career success, is under scrutiny. Storytellers move back and forth in time and place, telling their personal and social experiences. Therefore former TVET students' accounts of their experiences of career success may be interwoven with their past experiences of their educational, personal, and social milieus. The researcher thus generated narratives about the participants' life histories spanning their joining a TVET course to their success in their careers.

The researcher related this to the TVET course followed, in order to explore how their past experience as TVET students has contributed to shaping their career success.

3.8 Research Population

According to Parahoo (1997), the definition of population is “the total number of units from which data can be collected”, such as individuals, artefacts, events, or organisations. Burns & Grove (2003) describe population as all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study.

It was critical to establish criteria for the selection of participants who were expected to add valuable input leading to a stronger understanding of career success predictors of former TVET students, together with any inhibitors or opportunities along their way. Understanding their career mobility and career paths was important in constituting the population for this study. Creating a framework of how specific sampling techniques were utilised makes it possible to explain why particular participants were chosen for this study (Schwandt, 2007). For this study the following criteria were put in place for the selection of the participants: The study population would comprise men and women. Participants would be at least 18 years of age and should have graduated from a MITD training centre in any programme of at least one year full-time duration. The list of participants was obtained from the MITD training centre, which is the leading training organisation in Mauritius. First participants are drawn from a list of potential former TVET students who are presently working in trade areas in which they obtained their training. These participants are normally called by the MITD for the certificate award ceremony as guest speakers to showcase to the general public that they are role models who have achieved career success after having opted for a TVET course. After having obtained the ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the researcher invited

participants from this list to participate in the present study via a formal signed letter. The researcher provided the participants with information about the research project, including the background, rationale, and research purpose. As a purposive sampling was used, participants confirmed with me their participation in my study via email and telephone conversation.

In qualitative research, Holloway & Wheeler (2002) assert that sample size does not influence the importance or quality of the study; there are no precise guidelines in determining sample size. The number of people in a qualitative research are not normally known beforehand. The sample may be changed in size and type during research. Sampling goes on until saturation has been achieved, namely, when no new information is generated.

After identifying an initial list of participants who graduated from MITD training centres at the National Trade Certificate (NTC), National Certificate (NC) Levels 3 or 4, or any other formal TVET programmes, the list was shortened, by seeking participants who had secured employment in the trade offered by the programme, or any other profession, and considering that the MITD played a critical role in their career; also, being the brand ambassador of the TVET stream by carving out a successful career after the training course. The researcher utilised a homogeneous and convenience sampling for the present study to select four participants under the specified criteria.

Purposeful sampling is the practice of selecting participants from a known sample that is rich in useful data for a particular study (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). Thorne (2008) stated that purposeful sampling should be employed to gain an understanding from specific participants “by virtue of some angle of the experience that they might help us better understand.” Purposeful sampling was appropriate for this study as it assisted in selecting participants who

could detail their experiences of having attended a TVET institution, having succeeded in their career, deciding whether TVET afforded an opportunity or an inhibitor in the construction of their career success.

Glesne (2011) postulated that homogenous sampling is considered the selection of participants having similar characteristics, enabling the researcher a better understanding of an experience shared by these participants, while comparing and contrasting these experiences. Patton (2002) explicated that a homogenous sampling allowed the researcher to view a particular group or subgroup in an in-depth manner. In the present case, the participants were all former TVET students, having graduated from the National Trade Certificate at least at Level 3, and being credited with having succeeded in their careers. The sample is considered homogenous because all the participants share the same characteristics in the sense that they were selected based on the same risk factors (joined a TVET stream rather than the main academic stream. Their choice was considered less attractive, struggling their way to career success). They all graduated from a MITD training centre despite being associated with those risk factors.

Table 3.1: Participants' Demography

Participants' List and Details

SN	Name	Sex	Course Followed	Occupation
1	Shawn	M	Tourism and Hospitality management	Lecturer
2	Jessica	F	Electrical Installation work	Electrician
3	John	M	Air-conditioning and Refrigeration	Maintenance Contractor
4	Jake	M	Air-conditioning and Refrigeration	Senior site supervisor HVAC service dept.

3.9.1 The positionality of the researcher

In a narrative enquiry, perhaps more than in any other studies, the position of the researcher is critical to the process of gathering data. The researcher used open-ended questions as a means of encouraging the participants to take the lead in conversations. Overall, the interview was framed by sets of questions that the researcher had already prepared for the purpose of the study. There were several prompts being used during the interviews as a strategy for eliciting stories. The researcher needed to talk about what had motivated the participants to join the TVET stream; and during the conversations provided an opportunity for them to process any obstacles they had faced when acquiring TVET training. Their experiences as TVET students were collected. The researcher took note that, as the researcher, his position was not to find narratives but instead, to participate in the creation of the stories (Riessman, 2008). In Riessman's perspective, he suggested looking for accounts of the former TVET students' experiences and capital in constructing their career success. After having conducted the pilot study, the transcripts from the pilot study indicated that he had talked too much, and made comments that appeared to limit what the former TVET students might have gone on to express.

3.9.2 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted, with one individual sharing the same criteria as in the sampling list, but not forming part of the sample. The pilot study, in preparation for the main study, was conducted with one individual with the aim of exploring the methodological implications for narrative triggering (Gubrium & Holstein 2007) in storytelling and how this enables individuals to conduct subjective meanings. The researcher used the interview strategy for collecting stories of former TVET students and

some images as visual metaphors. This strategy provided for a more structured approach which enabled a more detailed explication of the emotional dimensions of career success after having been a TVET student. The data collected during the pilot study became a determining factor to test whether the data instrument was suitable for collecting pertinent information to answer the research questions. The pilot study supported the dissertation study in several ways. First, it gave me the opportunity to consider and adjust the logistics of the interview process, including the recording device to be used, how to schedule the interviews, and how to establish record-keeping procedures. Second, the researcher realised that the ways in which he presented and worded the prompts had significant influence on the extent to which the former TVET students shared more detailed stories. The pilot study enabled me to modify the questions used for the interviews so as to generate rich data.

3.9.3 Data collection

The data-collection instrument used in this study is the interview collection type. The majority of the data collected was obtained through interviews. Additional data sources included journal notes and memory elicitations. Glesne (2011) explained that interviews may be thought of “as the process of getting words to fly”. We believe that interviewing is a very simple task, simply asking questions and receiving answers. Fontana & Frey (2008) posited that interviewing remains one of the most common and most powerful ways in which we try to understand fellow humans. Glesne (2011) stated that face-to-face meetings are conducted or negotiated between two or more people in an effort to gain an understanding of the how’s and what’s of people’s lives. In the present study, conversations in person were crucial to obtaining an in-depth understanding of former

TVET students' lived experiences — factors encouraging them to join TVET. And afterwards, conversations answered how they progressed towards career success.

In this study, the official face-to-face meetings were conducted, asking questions of the participants to elicit responses which could be analysed to answer the research questions. The data collection was conducted between August 2017 and October 2017. The formal meeting duration was about one hour or more per participant. The duration of the conversations in person depended entirely on how much information was generated in answering the research question and how far the raw data were useful and meaningful. The memory elicitations were of memories shared between the participants, the period during which they attended a TVET training programme and their experiences within the work environment. These shared memories included times they were students in a TVET institution, and about their feelings on being a TVET student, and how society perceived them at that time being a TVET student. The other useful memories would be the integration process during employment, how were they treated and motivated to progress in their career. The researcher also referred to a researcher journal that he kept, which included his reactions, hunches, and questions pertaining to the interviews and documents.

Normally, Schwandt (2007) postulated, there are three types of commonly designed interviews used in qualitative research: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured or conversational interviews. In the case of structured interviews, the interview questions are prepared well before the face-to-face meeting conducted by the researcher; and all the questions remain the same during the process of the interview. In a semi-structured interviews, questions are normally pre-planned; however, the approach is more flexible, as it allows the researcher to change the questions in the course of the

interview, on the grounds that the information presented is useful to the study. In an unstructured or conversational interview, the questions are asked impromptu during the time in which the interview is taking place, and these are mostly in the form of a conversation (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Glesne, 2011; Schwandt, 2007).

In the present study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview. Where appropriate, he guided the interview in such a way as to be as conversational as possible. According to Fontana & Frey (2008), using a semi-structured format enables one to ease into the process and make the participant comfortable, while establishing rapport. The said author also mentioned that it is important to build a partnership between the researcher and respondents, as this will allow them to work together to create a narrative – the interview. This is a desired outcome of the interview process. There were several questions asked as points of discussion to help guide the interview. The leading questions were open-ended.

3.9.4 Data -collection process and analysis

According to Glesne (2006), data analysis is the process of organising and storing data for the meaning-finding interpretations that you are learning to make about the shape of your study. Creswell (2007) provides a data analysis into a spiral way in which four elements feed into a loop of description, classification, and interpretation, as presented in the diagram below.

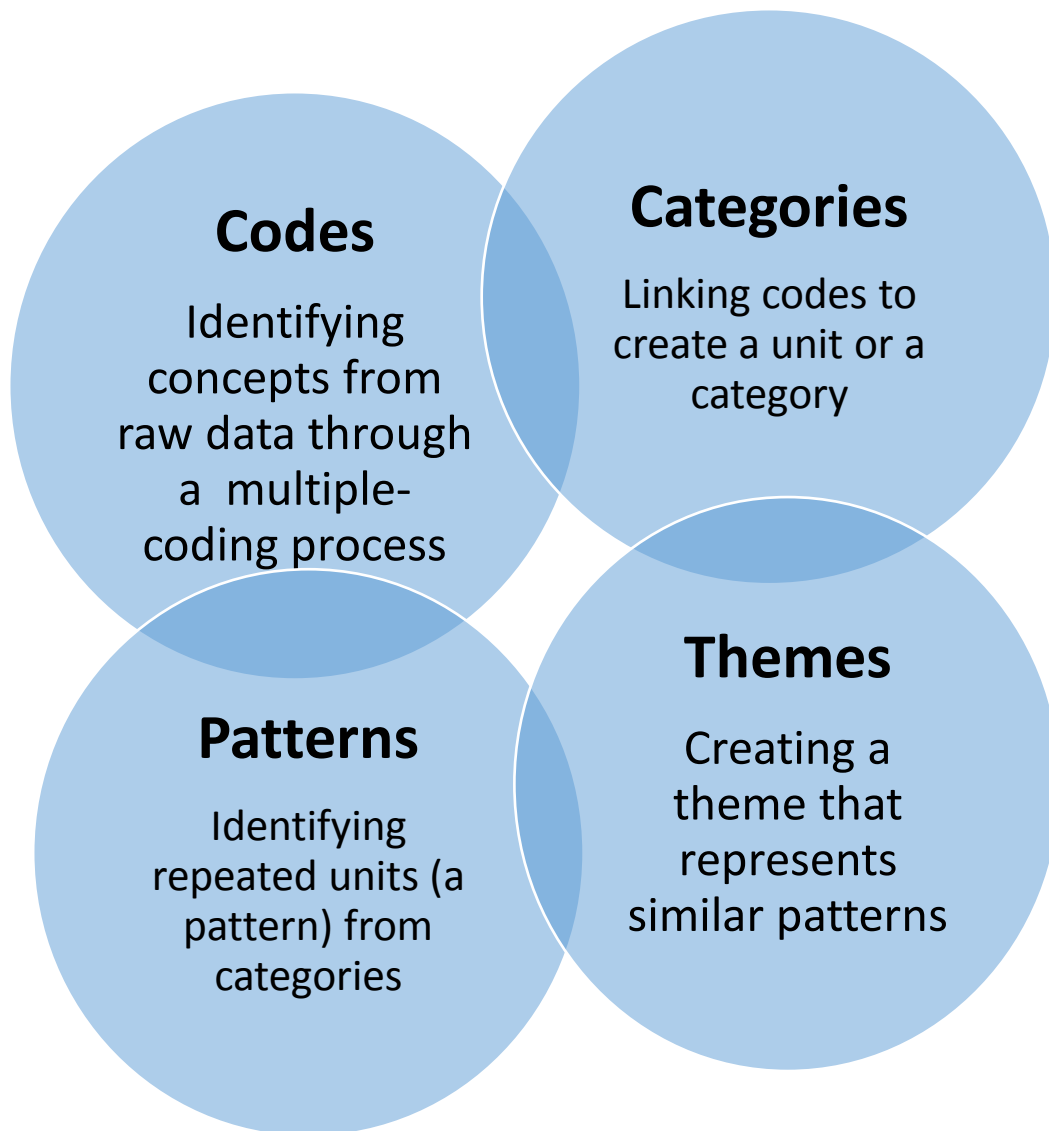


Figure 3.1: Data analysis: four elements

Data analyses included transcribing, translating, and coding themes, and drawing and constructing narratives. For the present study, the researcher used interviews and field notes to collect data. Data was collected to capture information having a direct connection with the research questions. An electronic digital voice recorder was used to record interviews of participants. All the interviews were audio recorded and saved in a separate folder for each participant on my laptop.

The participants sampled for this study are represented pseudonymously to avoid disclosure of their real identity. The audio recording is being transferred to my laptop and saved in a special folder. The saved voice format of the interview is being written on DVD/USB Pen Drive for transcription. Interviews have been conducted entirely in the Kreole Morisien language. Therefore, after the transcriptions, the full transcripts have been translated into English. The whole transcription, as well field notes and any other relevant documents, have been analysed chronologically (Creswell, 2007). After the translation, the data coding become evident. The Microsoft Word/Excel has been used to group data by code, making comparison of themes, checking frequency of themes across interviews, and relating how these themes are connected to one another and to the research questions.

The participant interviews lasted sometimes around one hour, and in some cases more than an hour. As mentioned above, interviews were digitally recorded and fully transcribed by me. Data were analysed using the technique of thematic analysis, which focussed on the content of the story, rather than how it is told (Riessman, 2008). According to Brewer (2002), the analysis of data collected implies the process of putting the data in order, organising them into patterns, categories, and descriptive units, and searching for relationships between them. Holloway & Wheeler (2010) stated that the process of analysis is complex and non-linear, and reliant upon the entire working of the researcher in a systematic, orderly, and structured fashion. The ability to analyse data involves thinking that is both self-conscious and systematic. Jones, Brown, Holloway (2012) postulated that a qualitative data analysis incorporates exploring, managing, and interpreting data collected over time. Scholars have mentioned that analysis of qualitative data is considered a very time-consuming activity that demands patience from the researcher. As the interviews were conducted in the Kreole Morisien language, the audio recordings had to be transcribed into full verbatim transcripts of the interview. The transcription was

completed using Microsoft Word. The data for the present study came from around 10-12 hours of audio which resulted in eight full transcripts of the narrative interviews, many pages of verbatim transcripts.

During the transcription, comments were added making notes on the participants' mood or tone; intonation and emphasis were also noted where appropriate. The transcription exercise was carried out as soon after each interview as possible, so that the event was fresh in my mind, also enabling me to recall key moments with ease. The transcription could be considered the first stage of analysis. Frank (2000) asserts that it is essential to take time over the analysis process, otherwise analysts risk misunderstanding. As the interviews were conducted in the Kreole Morisien language, for the next stage of analysis, the transcription had to be translated into English. All transcripts were translated into English.

After translation, the researcher conducted the initial coding of the data. Initial coding is defined as what was happening in the data. Researchers refer to the process of creating codes by doing a close reading of the data and mining it for ideas (Glesne, 2011). The next step was creating categories from the worked out codes. As Glesne (2011) asserts, coding is a progressive process of sorting and defining scraps of collected data. After the compilation of the list of initial codes, the researcher formed categories from patterns that emerged out of the coding exercise. This is a meticulous exercise, which required reading through the data several times.

The researcher proceeded with a thematic analysis. As postulated by Holloway & Wheeler (2010), in the context of a thematic analysis, the researcher analyses the narrative as a whole in order to reflect the, "core of the experience that truly represents the narrators' accounts". In

another words, the narrative materials may be analytically processed through breaking the text into relatively small units of content and submitting them to descriptive treatment. In this process we dissect the original story into small sections which belong to a defined category. For drawing themes, a margin was placed on the right-hand side of the narratives' page, so that themes could be inserted manually. A highlighter pen was used to assign codes. After the coding, the researcher processed the sorting of codes. All similar codes were grouped together, which led to the emergence of a theme. An ongoing analysis was undertaken, to further refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis offers, generating clear definitions and names of each theme.

The final phase of the analysis was producing the report or narrative which comprises a selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back from the analysis to the research questions and literature, and producing a scholarly report of the analysis. Thematic analysis identified five key themes from the data collected from the eight narrative interviews: becoming a TVET student, being a TVET student, inhibitors/enhancers of career success, career success construction, and the perceived construction of career success. The final stage was theoretical interpretation, bringing meaning and providing explanations for the findings and based on the experience of former TVET students in the formulation of their career success construct.

3.9 Conceptual Framework for the Study

A conceptual framework is the structured form of the variables used in a study to accurately address the defined research problem based on the underlying objectives of the study (Smyth, 2004). Consequently, the present conceptual framework is developed based on the existing literature review and the theoretical framework so as to demonstrate any relationships existing

among the key variables of the study. The conceptual framework of the study is depicted in Figure 3.2. This study attempts to empirically investigate how former TVET students who followed a formal TVET course constructed their career paths, what the determinants of their career successes are, and aspects of their career mobility. A conceptual framework has been developed to serve this primary focus on understanding predictors of career success and career paths construction.

The conceptual model for this research consists of three main independent variables, i.e., the human capital (education level/TVET course followed, organisational rank, and occupational tenure), social capital (networks, trusts), and the capability approach, mainly the functionings element. The model consists of one main dependent variable, i.e., career success/career mobility (subjective career success includes job satisfaction and career satisfaction; and objective success includes compensation, promotion, salary, and occupational status, as depicted in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: A conceptual framework of career success for former TVET students

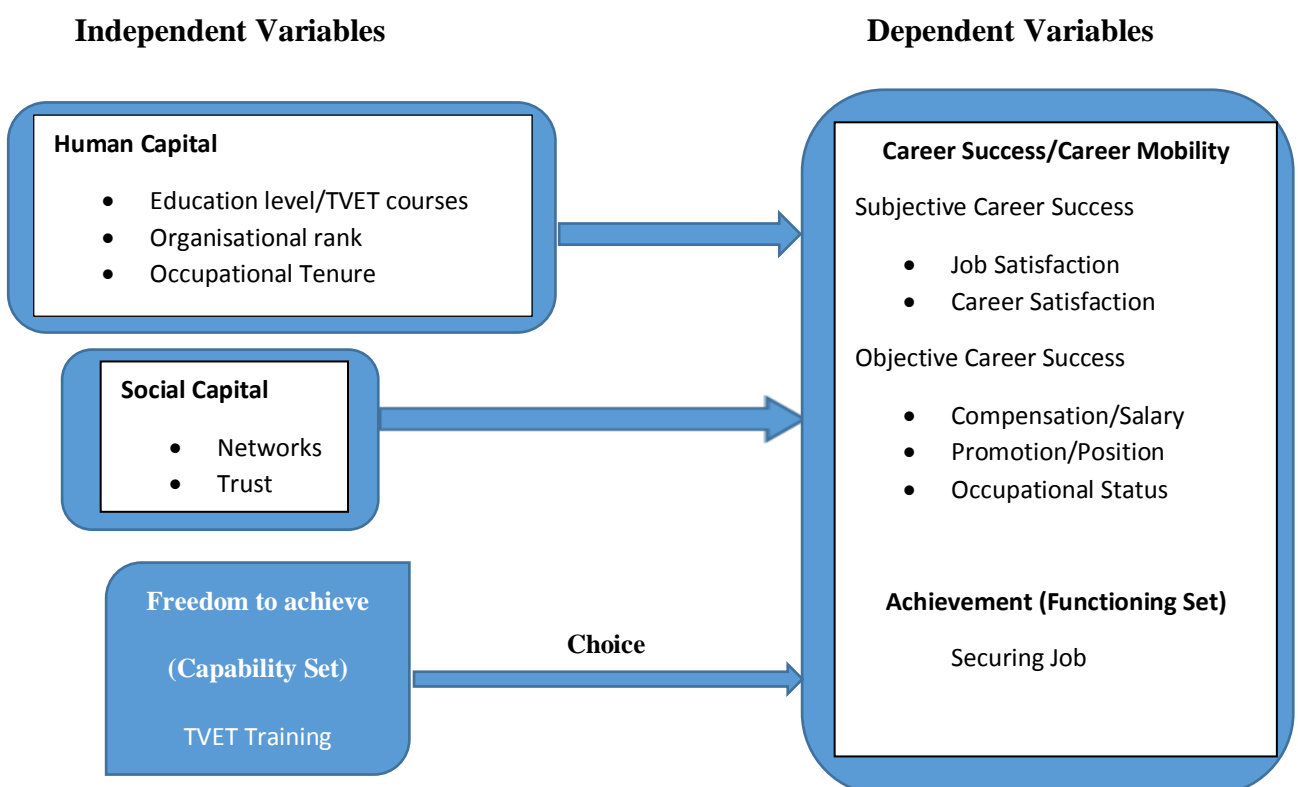


Figure 3.2 above represents the conceptual framework of the study. The preceding section has introduced the relevant theoretical bases and definitions of key constructs concerning human capital, social capital, and capability approach components that have important dimensions in the construct of career path, career mobility, and prediction of career success. Imported sets of variables that predict career success include human capital, that is, education, training, professional experience; and social capital, mainly the elements of networks and trust. In this model, the main elements of human capital, such as the education level, TVET courses followed, organisational rank, and occupational tenure have been integrated. The networking and trust elements within the perspective of social capital have been incorporated as independent variables. Independent variables are linked to the determining factors of career success as a dependent variable, with components of determinants of subjective and objective career success. The model also incorporates the capability approach concepts developed by Amartya Sen (1980) having as independent variables the freedom to achieve (capability set) TVET training, and the dependent variable as the functioning set, securing a job. Based on the framework, it seems reasonable to assume that the human, social capital and capability approaches are useful for career paths, and career mobility, and determinants for both objective and subjective career success.

3.10.1 Definitions of variables

All major variables of the conceptual framework have been defined in the table below.

Table 3.2: Variables for the Conceptual Framework

Concept (Variable/Construct)	Definition
Education level (Under Human Capital)	This is defined as the combined knowledge of skills, innovativeness, and ability of the

	<p>company's individual employees to meet the task at hand (Bontis, 2001).</p> <p>It is acceptable that the conceptual foundation of one's human capital is based on "something like knowledge and skills" acquired by an individual's learning activities; in another words, human capital equal to knowledge in the broad sense (Dae-Bong, 2009).</p>
Training (TVET courses followed) (under human capital)	<p>Training: this is the component of human capital that workers acquire after schooling, often associated with some set of skills useful for a particular industry, or useful for a particular set of technologies (Dae-Bong, 2009).</p>
Organisational rank (under human capital)	<p>Research suggests that the presence of a well-structured internal labour market positively influences the opportunities for objective career success in terms of hierarchical mobility and financial remuneration (Nabi, 1999).</p>
Organisational tenure (under human capital)	<p>Occupational tenure is defined as average service of employees, often measured in years (Phillips, 2003).</p>
Networks (under social capital)	<p>This refers to "the level of resources or support that a person can draw from their personal relationships" (OECD, 2013), but also includes what people do for other individuals on a personal basis.</p>
Trust (under social capital)	<p>This refers to the share values that shape the way people behave towards one another and as members of society. Trust and values that are beneficial for society as a whole (such as, for example, solidarity and equity) can determine how much people in a society are willing to cooperate with one another (OECD, 2013).</p>

Job satisfaction (subjective career success)	Job satisfaction, in particular, is usually directed towards one's immediate emotional reactions to one's current job, whereas career satisfaction is a broader reflection of one's satisfaction with both past and future work history, taken as a whole (Judge et al., 2007).
Career satisfaction (subjective career success)	Items that fit under the career satisfaction umbrella ask respondents to directly indicate how they feel about their careers in general, whether they believe that they have accomplished what they wanted to in their careers, and whether they believe that their future prospects for their careers are good (Seibert & Kraimer, 2001).
Compensation/Salary (objective: career success)	Dependent measures of objective career success (Ng et al., 2005)
Promotion/Position (objective career success)	Dependent measures of objective career success (Ng et al., 200)
Occupational status (objective career success)	This may be viewed as a reflection of societal perceptions of the power and authority afforded by the job (Schooler & Shoenbach, 1994).

3.10 Trustworthiness and Credibility

The notion of trustworthiness in qualitative research is an important issue in assessing the quality of research. According to Merriam (2009), who provided with strategies used to guarantee trustworthiness, which usually pertains to internal and external validity. Webster & Mertova (2007) posited that “trustworthiness of narrative research lies in the confirmation by participants of their reported stories of experience”, that is, member checking. The process of member checking means that participants are provided the opportunity to check that the research faithfully and adequately reflects the participants’ social world (Holloway & Brown,

2012). In the effort to guarantee maximum trustworthiness, the researcher opted for member checking, allowing the participants to go through the complete transcripts to ensure that their narratives reflect accurately what really happened during the interview, and deciding whether they agreed with their responses to the questions. Member checking was conducted for the interpretive narratives that emerge from inductive analysis. According to Merriam (2009), conducting member checking on the interview transcripts and providing feedback on the interpretive narratives, constitute a process of “triangulation”.

According to Mishler (1990), validity lies in the community of people evaluating the findings. It is these people who determine whether or not they can rely on the study for use in their own work. Mishler (1990) also argues that validity is not assured by following certain procedures; abstract rules and standard procedures cannot be applied. The researchers also pointed out that there are no rules for assessing validity. Mishler (1990) postulated that validation is considered the process(es) through which we claim the “trustworthiness of the observations and interpretations”. According to Polkinghorne (2005), stories are about personal meanings and not the actual facts of the events; stories are the best evidence available about how people experience their lives. Polkinghorne (2005) further explicated that validity is determined by the believability of claims to knowledge. Thus conclusions are valid when there is sufficient evidence to believe the claims that are offered.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Clandinin (2006) noted that researchers engaged in narrative enquiry need to understand that ethical treatment of the data includes researcher and participant negotiation, respect, mutuality, and openness. Ethical clearance approval was obtained in writing from the University of KwaZulu-Natal ethical committee panel; and ethical considerations featured highly during the

data-collection process, mainly while conducting interviews with participants in the study. The main ethical issues that were important for this study consisted of the role and the positionality of the researcher, the necessity of obtaining written informed consent from participants; highlighting the benefits in participating in the study; issues of relationship and leaving the field; anonymity; and also how to tackle unforeseen ethical issues that emerge during and after the research study. According to Gratton & Jones (2010) whatever the research design, ethical issues should be considered of paramount importance; research should be socially and morally acceptable. All the participants were duly informed of the aims of the study and the protocols for the interview. Interviews were organised by day, date, time, and place convenient to the participant. An informed consent letter was sent to the participants, and their consent was obtained. Participants were told that they had the right to withdraw from participating in the study any time, without any sort of repercussions. The issue of personal narratives of participants would be treated with strict confidentiality. Participants were given assurance that, during the development of the narrative reports, they would not be identifiable; they were given pseudonyms to ensure strict anonymity. The researcher informed the participants of the purpose, nature, data-collection methods, and extent of the research, well in advance of commencement. At the outset, the researcher explained to all the selected participants their typical roles. The researcher had obtained informed consent in writing which was sent to the ethical clearance committee of the UKZN.

In the present study, the researcher has given a full guarantee to the participants that they will not be put in a situation in which they might be harmed following their participation, whether physically or psychologically. All the participants were made aware that the research was strictly meant for academic purposes, and their participation in it was absolutely voluntary. Nobody was forced to participate in this study.

The participants were given full assurance that, if they felt uncomfortable at any time during the interview, they could take a break, end participation, re-schedule the interview, or withdraw from the study. If any participant became distressed, this was recorded in the field notes by me. Effort was put into gaining the trust of the participant. The researcher considered that he conducted the data-collection exercise in the best possible way, as a person of integrity; this was essential to the success of the study. After the interviews, the researcher thanked all the participants for their participation in the said study through a personal phone call.

3.12 Findings from Collected Data

Four former TVET students were selected for this study. A purposeful sampling was chosen to ensure that participants closely represented a homogenous sample of TVET courses offered by MITD training centres. The chosen participants were working people with a formal TVET qualification. The study site chosen was the place convenient to the participant. Participants were interviewed individually, using a semi-structured interview protocol. Interviews began with a review of the study purpose, ensuring that fully informed consent had been given. For the purpose of the study, all participants were notified that pseudonyms would be assigned to them, to preserve anonymity and avoid disclosure of their real identity. A synopsis of the findings from participants is presented below;

Shawn is presently working as a university lecturer. He narrated how he joined the TVET programme in the year 2006. He never dreamt of being a TVET student. As with all college students, he wanted to be a university graduate. He strongly held the belief that having a university degree is more prestigious than a TVET qualification. In his opinion, TVET is reserved for those who failed the academic stream. Shawn always thought that TVET was an

educational route which led to becoming a plumber, welder, or motor mechanic. It was only after joining the TVET stream that his demeaning attitude towards TVET completely changed. After his HSC exams, he wanted to be enrolled in a degree programme at the University of Mauritius. Unfortunately he was not successful in gaining a seat at the university as his HSC results did not meet the entry requirement at that time. Shawn's parents were poor, therefore could not afford to have him admitted to a private university, as it was fee paying. He was left with the only option available at that time, that to join a TVET course. He was pushed into TVET course, not as a matter of choice, but on grounds of social and financial status. The choice of a TVET trade in which he was going to enrol was based on the industry which was appealing at that time, and generating better employment opportunities. At that time, the tourism sector was booming and flourishing. Shawn chose to follow a diploma course in Tourism and Hospitality management at one of the MITD training centres. Shawn's participation in TVET has widened his educational scope and brought social justice. He was at risk of social exclusion after being excluded for tertiary education following his non-admission to the University of Mauritius.

The teaching and learning in a TVET was completely different compared with the academic stream. The trainers used different teaching strategies which were entirely relevant to the workplace situation. Shawn experienced a new forms of pedagogy during his TVET classes, normally known as "learning by doing", which is characteristically the way in which vocational pedagogy is conducted. Part of the learning requirement, as prescribed by the curriculum, required that he undergo industrial placement. This was extremely important to understanding the practical application of learning and skills taking place within the world of work. After having successfully completed his TVET programme, Shawn's dream of pursuing a university degree did not fade. Finally, his TVET qualification was the enabling factor to secure him a

seat for a university degree: the TVET centre where he followed his programme had a twinning agreement with the said university. The conceptualization of freedom in the capability approach holds that we can only judge whether people are successful by looking at the kind of freedom they enjoy to do and be what they have reason to value. Shawn, with his TVET qualification, had the freedom to do what he valued the most: that is, to fulfil his dream of holding a university degree qualification. It can also be said that TVET was the enabling force as a means for social cohesion and justice which linked to his everyday livelihood activities. This contributed to creating and maintaining open democratic societies, by allowing him to have greater flexibility in terms of educational opportunities and career diversity. TVET had played an important role in Shawn's life with expansion of the capability approach theory of Sen. This allowed Shawn the capabilities to fulfil his dream of being a university degree holder; and the capability of aspiring to embrace a protean career. Shawn's career path was linear; he had strong job satisfaction which is a determining factor for his career success. According to Shawn, his TVET qualification had a fundamentally instrumental function in providing the necessary human capital required by the tourism industry, enabling him success in his career path.

John was another participant in this study. John always wanted to know how technical equipment works. He was influenced by his siblings, as they were all in blue-collar professions. During his adolescence, his tinkering ability was another motivating factor for him getting enrolled in a refrigeration and air-conditioning course. After having completed his School Certificate with a poor result, he joined the TVET programme. In the training centre, the teaching and learning strategies used in the delivery of training were completely different from that of the academic stream. The curriculum contents were delivered through 30% theory and 70% practical classes. It was intensively practical, as learners needed to be occupationally

competent at the end of the programme. His teachers were very supportive and helpful. He was disappointed concerning the curriculum content, as it was not aligned with technologies being currently used by the industries; and the workshop was poorly equipped with tools and equipment. The inability of the TVET institution to prepare him for employment by meeting existing workforce needs, their inappropriate curriculum, inadequate and outdated teaching materials and equipment was one of the setbacks, according to him. After his studies, he was employed as maintenance officer in a hotel, where he was called to perform tasks which were partly relevant to the TVET programme he followed. The TVET qualification gave him the valued capabilities to realise the maintenance ‘functionings’; to perform related tasks with the purview of the maintenance department.

John had been offered on many occasion jobs from other companies related to refrigeration and air-conditioning repairs and facility maintenance. In his fifteen career years, he had changed three employers, owing to better job offers. He climbed the hierarchy by gaining promotion and increases in remuneration. His TVET qualification and his work experiences had provided him with capabilities embedded in developmental paths, allowing for his assuming higher responsibilities from the perspective of the capability approach. John, coming from an indigent family, reported that TVET has been instrumental for bringing the necessary social justice by providing him with employment and a sustainable career path. It could also be imputed that the TVET qualification has brought some social justice in John’s life in meeting the needs of a marginalised societal group, taking care of his well-being by making him employable and permitting his making a livelihood. The refrigeration and air-conditioning course followed, enabled John to develop capabilities as a refrigeration and air-conditioning technician – skills which support a sustainable livelihood. His career path was linear. John

considers TVET an opportunity in achieving career success on account of his several promotions and job satisfaction.

The human capital lens gives insight into educational issues because it focuses on the agency of human well-being, in terms of skills, knowledge, and competencies that enhance people's productive possibilities. John's case shows how human capital played a vital role in his career by providing him with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies in the field of refrigeration and air-conditioning repairs, enhancing his productive output. His vivid testimony has proven that TVET has helped him to acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to work to support himself and his family. He is also an active and effective member of a community. This is in total resonance and in accord with the human capital theory and the capability approach.

Jessica, a Mauritian girl, native of the Rodrigues Island, narrated her TVET journey and career path. Jessica's parents were very poor. They did not have funds for her secondary school educational materials. Since childhood, she had dreamed of becoming a motor mechanic or electrician, despite knowing that these professions are highly male dominated. She admitted that, during the early years of this century, culturally it was not accepted that women joined non-traditional occupations. In these early years, there were very few girls that had the courage and perseverance to be in these professions, flouting all the taboos. Jessica was the only female in her TVET programme. She faced continuous discrimination during practical classes. Her male classmates were very non-collaborative, holding the attitude that females are not meant to perform technical tasks. She was successful in her studies. After obtaining her TVET qualification, she was offered the post of electrician in a private company. There is a powerful

argument and a strong developmental case that attracting women to TVET is more likely to improve their livelihoods; that education is valued, and civic responsibility is enhanced. Jessica was among this category of people whose potential human capital was rightly utilised.

Jessica's case seems to challenge traditional perceptions of appropriate roles for men and women in the workplace. Jessica became the trendsetter, attracting females to TVET, which particularly remains underrepresented by women. Jessica finally gained employment as an electrician in a firm which supplied electricity for the island. There she faced much bullying from her male counterparts, as she was the only female electrician. It took her more than one-and-a-half years to gain acceptance in this male-dominated environment. In her early years of work, there were many sexist remarks and approaches made to her, in that situation her work assignments were completely different. Still, Jessica had the self-reliance to face the calumny and to overcome the denigration by her male colleagues. TVET has enabled to improve Jessica's life, especially as she comes from a marginalised group; and these women are discriminated against through gender-specific labour-market traditions.

There was a distinct difference in teaching and learning through TVET; there was much time devoted to practical classes. During practical classes, Jessica was required to work in groups. It was during that period of time that male trainees were very sexist, refusing to allow her to participate equally in the practical activities. This unwelcoming attitude from her male classmates stems from Mauritius having a lack of social acceptance for women who work alongside men. Such determines that technical, mechanical, or engineering roles are more-or-less off-limits. Jessica finally obtained employment, typically in women non-traditional occupation, with a good pay packet, and offering her higher social and economic acceptance

and mobility in society. The human development of capability through TVET focuses on enhancing the freedom of Jessica to live the kind of life she values. Jessica wanted to be a technical person, despite knowing that she had to overcome the hurdle of traditions and stereotyping in joining, as a woman, a non-traditional job.

Jessica achieved the qualification of electrician per her TVET programme functioning. She gained the same results as her male trainees. This therefore represents that Jessica had the same job opportunities as her male classmates, in valuing electrical installation work over any other academic programme. It is clear that her TVET programme has increased her freedom to pursue her valued functioning of being an electrician. Jessica has had a linear career path. She has been promoted to the supervisory level and has job satisfaction both of which constitute career success determinants. What can be said is that, from the capability approach perspective, it is the functioning, such as being technically skilful as an electrician through a TVET programme, that has made Jessica secure in her place of work, despite that this profession was traditionally not meant for women. Jessica has an educated mind, and did not give up. Such are indicators of human well-being in society. Sen himself agreed that education or skills play an important role in improving human well-being. Jessica achieved such by being successful in her career and having the ambition to move higher up the hierarchy. It is worth noting that Jessica has brought about a change in the workplace and also helped her male colleagues to develop their mindsets, notably with regard to gender issues. Thus, opening up new employment opportunities for many women is challenging the way people conceptualise and go about work.

Jake's story is different from the other three participants. He is the only participant in this study who obtained his TVET qualification from the apprenticeship mode of training. After

completing his School Certificate, he had the opportunity to continue his academic education by pursuing his Higher School Certificate secondary education. He opted for TVET instead, influenced by his parents and peers that an academic education would not lead to employment. To gain employment, he had to go through a TVET course. A decision was taken to enrol in a TVET course. As building construction industries were flourishing, Jake decided to take up a refrigeration and air-conditioning course. He applied for the said course to be followed as a full-time/training centre-based mode. Unfortunately, he was not selected, owing to limited enrolment capacity in that mode. Instead, he was offered the opportunity of following the said programme per a dual-system mode.

Jake was completely lost in this model of training. He needed to learn this course by being an apprentice in a company. Apprenticeship is a particular way of enabling trainees to learn by doing. The training was conducted one day at the training centre, and the remaining days at the place of work. The training was delivered with Jake needed to be under a more experienced tradesman or journeyman. This was to modelling the behaviour; the apprentice attempts to follow the model, and the journeyman provides feedback. One of the advantages of such work-based learning is to facilitate the transition from learning to work, by ensuring a better understanding of the workplace culture; and the acquisition of good work habits. In other words, a good proficiency in all dimensions of the craft is demonstrated, not only in the technical, but also in entrepreneurship skills.

For the first six months, Jake was not performing tasks directly related to the curriculum contents. Instead, he was placed at the store to help the storeman in issuing tools and equipment. Jake did not have a choice in the type of work he was involved in. Being exposed

to store work would not allow him to gain experience in certain other areas. For instance, there was very little refrigeration work compared with air-conditioning maintenance and installation. It is clearly mentioned by pedagogical experts that, in apprenticeships, one cannot learn from afar. Instead, one learns amid the engagement of participating in the authentic, dynamic, and unique swirl of genuine practice. In his early stages of apprenticeship, Jake operated in situations of practice that were frequently ill-defined and problematic, and characterised by vagueness, uncertainty, and disorder. Learning in this situation was not just about learning to do, but also required an understanding of the context in which the learning will be applied, which Jake claimed to be completely absent.

Jake's TVET qualification helped him to acquire a good job. Jake's TVET training was identified as an important capability, both the training centre experience and the workplace experience stages during his apprenticeship. The apprenticeship period has created practical capability. For example, the capability of "being able to think and reason" is related to the working environment. Jake claimed that he has been promoted to the supervisory level which constitutes the highest level of progression as a blue-collar professional. He is hoping to become a manager for which he needs to have management qualifications. These he intends to pursue in the years to come. His career path is linear. The capability sets that he received from his TVET course have given him many job opportunities and achievements in his career.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter presents the research methodology that has been used for the present study. The study has used an interpretive paradigm, and a qualitative research design. The data collection was conducted through the use of narrative interviews. The method used for the selection

process of the population was highlighted. The various phases of data analysis have been clearly elaborated. It was also indicated that there is an issue of trustworthiness. The researcher has ensured all ethical considerations. In the next chapter I will be proceeding with the findings of the data collection. This chapter will delineate the interpretation of the findings. Chapter Four will shed light on the data that have been collected in the form of narratives of four former TVET students. In this chapter I will present data for which a narrative enquiry was used as a method. These will be the stories shared by four participants on the way in which they have constructed their career successes.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS THROUGH THE INFORMATION GIVEN

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of former TVET students in order to determine the way they constructed their career success from the perspective of having undergone a TVET course. The study was also set to understand these people's career paths, career mobility challenges, and opportunities which they faced during their career journey. The goal of this qualitative narrative enquiry was to capture the lived experiences of former TVET students in order to understand the issues that motivated them to join the TVET stream; how they constructed their career successes; factors enhancing or inhibiting the career success of former TVET students; the approach and the reasons for former TVET students choosing such to construct their career success.

The researcher reviewed each transcript while simultaneously listening to the audio-recorded interviews, to acknowledge the stories as exactly narrated by the participants. After having reviewed all the translated transcripts, The researcher sent them to each participant via email for member checking, to ensure accuracy of transcription. I used Microsoft Word and Excel to analyse the data. At the initial stage, the transcripts were coded using the Microsoft Word software, by highlighting key elements related to the research questions; emerging themes were drawn. During the initial analysis of the data, large quantities of unrefined narratives were collected. Further codes were assigned and constructed from the initial data product. At this stage, coding produced a shrinkage of the huge amount of data. Further analysis and coding considerably reduced the findings down to a few major categories which represented the main

findings of the study. These few categories were then classified into emerging major themes which represented the crux of the findings.

To begin with, the researcher will offer each participant's personal description, providing their background, and outlining the experiences that led them to join the TVET stream. He will highlight any relevant feelings towards the TVET stream. Any opportunity that TVET has brought to the participant's career will be highlighted. He will finally offer an interpretation of career success determinants from the perspective of the participants. The stories told by participants will be presented as one of three vignettes: (i) paving my way to skills through enrolling in a TVET programme, (ii) from TVET to the labour market, journeying along my career path and (iii) my quest for career success. These vignettes encompass each participant's journey from their enrolment in the TVET programme, including significant events of their lives in their career.

4.2 Stories told by Participants

4.2.1 Story of Shawn the lecturer: Participant Number 1

4.2.1.1 Paving my way to skills through enrolling in a TVET programme

Shawn is a lecturer in a private tertiary education institution. At the time of the interview, he had nearly completed correction of student assignments. When he was asked about his TVET journey, it was as though it was not worth remembering. For him it was a long-time-ago episode. He joined the Hotel Schools in 2006. Initially, he was enrolled in the Diploma of Tourism and Hospitality management programme after completing his secondary school.

“I planned to join a University degree programme. In my mind holders of a university qualification had higher chance to get a job and they were highly respected in our society. I was holder of a School Certificate (SC) and a Higher School Certificate (HSC) and with these secondary school certificates it was difficult to find a decent job. I didn't come out with flying colours in my secondary school exams. I tried my luck to get admitted in one of the publicly owned university as it was free. My application for a seat was turned down. My hope for a university admission started to become blurred and my dream for being a university graduate turning to be unrealistic. Financially my parent was not in a comfortable position”. Shawn's opportunity of being admitted to a university faded.

“My parent financial predicament could not afford me to get admitted in a private paying university as well. So, the opportunity of having a university degree completely vanished. Due to my parent financial problem, I couldn't also try for an overseas university. It was obvious that academic studies were costly and accessibility limited to academically brilliant students. After all doors had been closed for me to pursue a university programme, I was pressurised from my parent side to do something. My parent forced me to opt for a TVET programme. It was their choice and their idea that I needed to accept joining a TVET programme.

“Well to be truthful, for the TVET programme I have joined it because I was not accepted at the University of Mauritius, My SC, HSC results was not to the standard, not as per the criteria of selection for entry in the University of Mauritius. So I had to do something meanwhile, and this programme was up and my parents force me to do something and convinced me to go for it.

“The only option left was a TVET programme. My parent was insisting so that I joined a TVET course as there was no avenue left for me to join university. At that time the tourist sector was flourishing in Mauritius. Lots of new hotels were being constructed. The tourism course was trendy and after the course opportunity for employment was really high. To get a decent job and with my parent pressure building up on my shoulder. I decided to get enrolled for the diploma course in Tourism and hospitality management at the Hotel School of Mauritius. Tourist sector was the second key sector contributing to our economy with a high growth in our GDP.

“Prior enrolment for the TVET course, I had poor perception concerning TVET stream. It was deeply rooted in my mind that TVET in Mauritius was primarily met for people willing to learn a skill to become motor mechanics, welders or any other manual works. I had a downgrading image concerning TVET as the entire Mauritian society projected this kind of image about TVET. This was the main reason why my first choice was a university degree as it holds higher status in our society. Initially I thought that TVET was reserved for only academically poor people. I held this negative perception about TVET even the day joining the TVET course. Despite holding such kind of attitude towards TVET, I went for a TVET course on the ground that not to be idling without anything in hand. I admitted to the fact that the probability to get a job was higher with a TVET certificate than banking on my secondary school academic qualifications. Once I was admitted in the programme, I was surprised to see the high esteem that industry places on TVET course offered by the Hotel Schools. I saw that the tourist industry had a very good views about TVET students. Industries had high trust on the training programme delivered by the said institution. My negative perception about TVET faded away after being impressed that how industry valued TVET trainees. They are the

lifeblood of the industry and the productive workforce for them. I believed that the poor recognition of TVET was due to the influence of the society which had been inherited from our ancestors. So initially I had a poor reception towards TVET before enrolment. The negative reception toward TVET belief got eliminated after joining a TVET programme and after noticing how industries valued skilful workforce.

“My own averment concerning the rigour of the programme was hectic and tedious. The structure of the course was rigorous. The curriculum was based as per the requirement and the need of the industry. All were set to follow strictly the hotels standard. The curriculum was very demanding, engaging and challenging. There were different modules apart from the tourism and hospitality management competencies, I had to learn life skills, communication skills, entrepreneurship among others. Therefore the school imposed a strict control and set very specific rules and regulations that I needed to abide. The school training staff could not make their training delivery in an amateur way. They were expected to produce skilful workforce for the industry. Once training completed, the trainees needed to fit as a full-fledged employee with all the necessary skills required to be functional and operational in the hotel sector. The school imposed strict discipline on me, I was required to be punctual all the time, absences were limited to a minimum number, wearing of formal attire all the time during the school days, to adopt communication styles that are normally used in the hotel industry. The training staff were very strict. The environment was challenging in this TVET institution. The course requirement was that I needed to excel daily to be accepted and earn the respect from the trainer. I needed to be up to the standard as set out by the tourist industry. As part of the requirement of the programme, it was integrated a mandatory component of industrial attachment. I was required to go for

internship for a specific period of time. The industrial attachment was very enriching as I was exposed about the real facets of the world of work taking place in front of my eyes and had the real feeling of same. The industrial attachment was very intensive. I had to perform as a professional in the field which was assigned to me in a renowned hotel.

“The internship had enable me to have a better understanding about what was expected from me after the training. The TVET course was tough. I did not pass my exams on my first attempt. This was probably due to the lack of interest when joining the programme. At first it was not my first choice. The second probable cause would be that the programme rigour was highly demanding and I was not prepared to adapt in such a condition mainly with the intensity of training. He was allowed for a resit. This time I was successful. After all, hard works pays. After the training, I didn't look for a job.

“The environment was challenging, you have to constantly excel yourself excel yourself daily, it was a daily challenges, challenge routine in the sense that you have to be up to the standard and know the standard, know the standard first of all, have to learn, to have to do internship very intense on this dual learning programme, your learning programme at the end of the day, my industrial attachment is very much part of the engagement of the student towards the completion of their diploma so in term of content, the overall curriculum of the Tourism diploma is very engaging and very challenging.

“The training programme had enable me to have access to a French university and as well to pursue for an undergraduate degree course. This was only possible following

that the said university has a twinning agreement with the said TVET institution. Finally, my long cherished dream of being a university graduate was getting materialised. The said TVET course opened my door for further studies. This eventually had enable me to have new opportunities and new career prospects. After all what I hold dear about being a university graduate became true with this TVET programme”.

4.2.1.2 From TVET to the labour market journeying my career paths

“After my TVET programme, I didn’t want to join the world of work. I preferred to pursue my tendered dream for further studies. This was attained, as I have been able to get a seat at the University of Anger in France which was a strategic partner of the Hotel School. Ultimately opportunity to pursue my further study, the enabling element was this TVET programme. This TVET programme aimed to provide an articulation for TVET students who are in quest to continue their further studies. After all the TVET has contributed in making me to become more competent for a university degree programme. This was not possible with my academic qualifications obtained during the secondary school. I admitted that TVET had played an important role where I am now and as well acted as a stepping stone by giving me a new opportunity to pursue my further study. This further study has enabled me to have a larger scope for better employment opportunities and as well for a better career. I got it in my mind at the very beginning when joining the TVET programme that solely this programme would not make me reach high.

“The career I opted was not in the TVET field in which I studied. The TVET course was in Tourism and Hospitality management. My further study was in transport and logistics. It was completely different from tourism and hospitality management

programme. The transport and logistic sector has little similarities with the TVET course followed as tourists have to travel to reach their tourist destination using either air or any other alternative modes of transport. Somehow little link could be make with the TVET programme. My career after the TVET and the university programme was related to air travel. So the TVET programme followed has helped me a lot in my career mainly to be better knowledgeable in my work as I had exposure with the labour market during my industrial attachment when following the TVET course. Despite having moved away from the relevance of the TVET course but I had nevertheless a strong belief that my job was partly relevant to the tourism and hospitality sector. I believed that the career payoff with the TVET course would have been very minor.

“I had the perception that the TVET programme would provide me with job opportunity having little salary. Salary was a determining factor whether I was going to stay with TVET career related job or move in another direction. I also believed that the scope of promotion was very little with the TVET course related job. As my field of interest was transport and logistics, I didn't expect that I would have employment opportunity with the TVET diploma where they were going to value my competencies and area of interest. I started working as a sale agent in a call centre just after my HSC result pending reply for my applications made to universities to secure a seat. Just after obtaining my degree qualifications. I opted to be an infrastructure developer in Thailand. There I launched the transport programme for a new terminal. This job was mainly related to my field of competences in relation to course followed in the degree programme. This enabled me to build up and strengthen my competences in becoming an expert consultant in the area of management, transport and logistic. I was also appointed as a consultant in Mauritania, where I was in the team of consultant

consortium for the construction of a new airport terminal. This was very challenging as I was involved in the launching of a whole new airport infrastructure.

“My career path was mostly influenced during my undergraduate programme. During this period of time with my fellow classmates I drew my career objectives. As being part of a consortium of consultant in the field of management and infrastructure development consultancy, I had fallen in love with the job of international consulting. There was a great influence of these international consultants and this aspiration had contributed in the shaping of my career as a consultant. A series of people had also guided in my career taking from the TVET lecturers, university lecturers and the international consultants. I had a very bad souvenir concerning the period where I was jobless for more than one year despite being qualified. This was having a bitterness taste for him. I couldn't understand the logic why being a specialist in my domain but it was not recognised in Mauritius as a job generating element. I had very limited job opportunities. All my lived experiences related to my qualification were useless in Mauritius. This didn't give me a vantage point for employment. I better read related stuffs pertaining to my job for increasing my efficiency in the performance of my duty.

“There are factors that are detrimental for example being here for a year in Mauritius with all the qualifications background knowledge, industry application, not finding a job for a year, is very hard, these are fall backs of being too much specialist in your domain in local region like Mauritius so I am not for example for over here teaching my ten years of industry experiences.

“Actually I am a lecturer in the faculty of management in a private university. I think that holder of logistics competencies helped me to secure the job of lecturer. I knew that my experience earned so hardly are not fully utilised here. I also recognised, that my competencies were being used in another way. I joined the lecturing profession to the fact not to be jobless. This is the main reason why I am presently working in an area where I am not specialised in. I am fully aware that my competencies will be difficult to be fully utilised in Mauritius as there are very limited number of infrastructural developments taking place here. The local context doesn’t allow me to use my experience. I sincerely accept that even though that my job is not directly related to my qualification, but I have a strong sense of belonging in what I am doing presently.”

4.2.1.3 To rove in quest of career success

“I claim that even though that my job is not related to my qualification but I have strong ownership in what I am presently doing. This is particularly a sign of commitment towards my work and also a contributing factor towards career success. I also added that over the past in my previous job and as well in the present one I have complete job satisfaction. My prime motivation in my work is how far I am satisfied in whatever I am doing. I admitted that my career is well recognised. My career has been rewarding as I have been in so many time called by my TVET school to be the guest speaker during the certificate of award ceremony as a role model to other TVET students. I am required to address the audience about my career path where it can be used as a source of inspiration. I am presently upgrading my qualification to meet the requirement of the actual labour market. I continuously update with relevant and current knowledge to be fit and functional in this ever changing career domain requirement.

“My career philosophy presently is embracing change. I am having to face a new challenge as I am also parent of a child. This has brought a new dimension in my life to have the right balance between family and work life. My present biggest new career challenge is being parent and coping at the same time with family life and work. I am learning how to make necessary adjustment so that I acquire the necessary skills to cope with the said situation without one of them suffers. There is lot of concession that I have to make with regards to have the right balance between work and the family. I am passionate for high research in industry related to my field of study. I am fixing a new challenge, that is, to write an academic article in an academic journal”.

When asked how he would define in his own words the term success, Shawn said that anyone achieving something productive out of his day is considered successful. *“I argued that failure is a conditional element for success. I said that someone needed to understand what failure is so that he can be successful. The path to success most of the time is passing through failures. I mentioned that failure is a springboard for success. The struggle that goes after failures have a contributing factor towards success, this is what I claimed. The definition of success consist of many elements in my views. I gave an example if someone has not succeeded in getting a promotion, the said employee will double his effort to be better prepared for the next promotion exercise. If someone is better prepared, obviously success will be knocking at his door. Sometime failures are associated with negative opinion from people in that situation it is advisable to acknowledge same as weakness. This will enable the person to work on his improvement to eradicate his weaknesses. During my lectures, I used to give example of people who initially failed in some events but succeeded in life such as the founder of the website Alibaba.com. Thus, my students get better motivated.*

“The core values that has underscore my career is mainly understanding others and understanding himself, know where you are. This will broaden your perspective to confront any unforeseen event. About my career position features, I maintained that I don’t have any specific yardstick. There is no measurement concerning my career position, I always benchmark with others in similar position who are having a good track record. I also try to understand what my competitors such as consultant in the same field, how are they operating and in case this is paying off. I will adopt same strategy and approach. After having achieved the set KPI by my employer, this will be an indication about my operational effectiveness. This will give me more height to negotiate for better position.

“I consider myself to be a leader. I believed in possession of the main leadership quality. I said that I am a role model for my followers and students. One of my leadership trait, is using extensively the latest technology for the execution of my work. I used innovative approaches for executing my work in a more effective manner. This also indicates to my followers that I am abreast with the latest technology, I am not outdated. I am overly positive in my present job. I motivate my students by encouraging them not to give up in any circumstances. I do my work with lots of enthusiasm and dedication, this is fundamental character of leadership quality. I have elaborated a personal technique which I believed to have high payoffs. I negotiate and concert a lot so that to consolidate trust between my students and me.

“About my career progression, I see that my career is progressing positively as expected. Presently I am gathering experience which will be useful for my future career progression. I admitted to be an ambitious persons. For the time being I am working

towards upgrading my academic credential with regard to future career progression. I work hard and associates myself with industry to be in pace with their needs and requirements. The career expectation which I cherished, in whichever sector I will join, I will do my best to move forward and to reach higher and higher. I noted that my fellow classmates who followed the TVET course have considerably progressed in their career. I see them successful in their career because they have moved in hierarchy. Deep down, I believed that the career progression for those holding a TVET qualifications stagnated in the same field for their entire lifetime. Therefore their career path is linear and unilateral.

“My personal definition of career success is how confident you are in your work. Also, career success is very personal to someone. My own career success determinants are job satisfaction and also progression through the hierarchy. Throughout my career path, in all my previous job, I was fully satisfied in my work. The career success elements in my present job is having a mitigated effect, partly satisfied related to my performance but not satisfied with my salary. In my opinion, career success is how happy you are in your achievement. I am happy with my present position. Previously when I was a consultant as structural developer and in management, I had job satisfaction but there was no scope of growth in my work. After the completion of my contract of work as consultant, with the economic downturn brought me to unemployment. This was most frustrating to be jobless. In my previous job, I had lot of job satisfaction but poor job security and high risk of being jobless. In my present job I am happy, there is a nice and conducive working environment. Due to these factors I will continue to work even though that my salary don't satisfy me.

“To answer in an objective way, I am not too happy these are thing in life, previously career was good, but most of it was good, now currently job, salary could be better, subjectively I am very satisfied, I tend to be both about my success. I don't want to see you, to over sell myself.”

4.2.1.4 Reflections

The case of Shawn illustrates a typical example of a TVET entrant who joins the sector by default rather than by choice. This phenomenon is documented in extant literature through the concept of parity of esteem. The socio-economic status of the parents constituted an important factor in Shawn’s educational attainment. However, the interest in the narrative of Shawn emerges from his change in perspective as he progressed along his learning journey. He realised all the career doors that TVET offered, which led him to comply with and appreciate his training. His case is of even greater interest because it reveals a protean career pathway, one characterised by flexibility and more individual control over his career. His narrative reflected twists and turns. It clarifies that admission to TVET can also provide opportunities for further academic university degree programmes. Shawn clearly indicated that holding a superior attitude towards TVET before enrolling in the TVET stream (not recognising the way in which the programme was conducted) would not allow him to discard the stereotyping attitude adopted towards the TVET stream. Shawn had set his mind on an academic university programme. He therefore used his TVET course as a springboard. People who have individual control over their careers, and are able to change profession and organisation, are known as protean careerists. This is the case with Shawn; and this type of career possesses mostly subjective predictors of career success.

4.2.2 Story of John, the refrigeration and air-conditioning technician: Participant Number 2

4.2.2.1 Paving my way to skills through enrolling in a TVET programme

John is a former TVET student who had followed the National Trade Certificate Level 3 (NTC 3) course in refrigeration and air conditioning at the Professor Jackson Training Centre (PJTC). He pursued further training via private tuition in refrigeration and air conditioning under the City & Guilds scheme at the technician level, Part I. His former TVET trainers gave him this programme through private tuition. He followed the City & Guilds course to upgrade his TVET qualifications. He was successful in this course. How did he fare in the TVET landscape?

“From the childhood I was very curious to know how engineering stuffs work. I used to play with dry cells, lamps, sockets, toy D.C engine. I used to dismantle them to understand how they function. Since then, my interest for the technical subject started to arise. My interest to understand the notion of how cooling is achieved in a refrigerator bring me closer to the TVET world.

“During my childhood, I used to play with batteries, bulb, and unused electrical switch. I was looking to understand how its function. The bulb for instance, how it is lighted. I used small toys cars engine and was fascinated to see how this stuff drive this toys. The fascination for understanding how engineering stuffs work, have bring me to the TVET world. I wanted to know how cooling is done in refrigerator. I thought that there is only one engine in refrigerator. It was only in my course I got a better understanding how the refrigerator function and operates. I fallen in love with this trade.

“This has been a determining factor in choosing TVET and fallen in love with the trade of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC). I joined TVET to engage in the capacity building in the field of RAC to become a full fledge RAC technician. From my childhood interest to the TVET training and up to now, I am still in the said trade. I have not decided to change vocation. I have a great affection for technical training mainly the RAC section. Apart from my interest to understand how engineering stuffs worked, have drove me to the TVET world. My family background has also impacted for the choice of the TVET programme. My two elder brothers are also in the technical field. I was daily exposed with technical related issues as my brothers were automotive mechanics. Whenever, they were repairing automotive engine, I was helping them. This has double my motivation for technical education.

“My two elder brothers are also in the technical field. One is a trainer in a TVET institution. He is training people in the automotive mechanics trade. The other one is a trained automotive mechanics. He worked in one of the district council and he is in charge of the automotive maintenance workshop. During their study, they were conducting practical exercises at home. After their training they were also exercising their skills by undertaking some car servicing. During this moment, I used to help them. That has increase my interest for technical subjects.

“I admitted that getting enrolled for the TVET programme was not based on the fact that I had a poor academic background. Interest for TVET was something inborn since infant. Therefore my SC exams result was not an issue, I decided not to resit to improve my SC result. I opted for a TVET programme in refrigeration and air conditioning which I had cherished since long. Once admitted in the programme and whereby I was

already having some basic knowledge in the trade following my past tinkering abilities. I admit that the course was not challenging. This remark was made on the ground that the course curriculum didn't include latest and current technologies in this areas of refrigeration and air conditioning. My interest was so profound for new technologies but the programme content didn't cater for same. I was a bit disappointed as the course didn't satisfy my expectation. He continued with the programme solely because I needed to have a TVET qualification for my future career progress.

“My account about the reception towards TVET was not an issue. As for me, I didn't believe that TVET is a stream that is mainly reserved for a specific category of people in the society namely those who haven't been successful in their academic studies. This belief is mainly due to the fact that my entire aim since childhood to adolescent was to be technically proficient in an engineering related trades. I was so passionate for technical stuff that has pushed me for TVET. My profound interest for refrigeration and it was a windfall that the TVET centre just started to offer programme in the field of refrigeration and air conditioning. This was a golden opportunity for deepening my knowledge in this area and as well to get a formal qualification. So being stubborn as a mule to understand how a refrigerator achieves cooling was instrumental to get enrol in a TVET programme in refrigeration and air conditioning? I was more than happy as the programme also provided training in the air conditioning equipment. I was happy to increase my competencies in this new area. So the air conditioning component in the programme has increase my career prospect as if it was not solely refrigeration, it would have limited job opportunities mainly maintenance of refrigeration units, chilling room and cold stores. The air conditioning component has broaden my scope of employment opportunities.

“The curriculum didn’t cover advance element of air-conditioning. Therefore on my own I had to upgrade my knowledge in this specific area. In the programme there was old equipment which were operating mechanically and as well I was not provided training in splits units. Presently those technologies have gone obsolete. I mentioned that today we have split units, the use of inverters, solar powered equipment. All these equipment were not available during the training. This was the major setbacks for making the programme more attractive which I believed. With the fast changing technologies, I admitted that the programme was not providing to make me become competent enough to be a good air conditioning technician. The curriculum didn’t provide teaching component in electronic. Electronic is very important to become a proficient technician. All the inverters components in an air conditioning units or refrigeration units operate electronically. Therefore not knowledgeable in electronic has limited my scope for maintaining equipment equip with inverter modules.

“The training centre gave me the fundamental of the functioning of refrigeration and air conditioning. The fundamentals are not all that you require, at that time when I was taking my course. I learnt how a refrigerator operates manually, also learnt how a window air conditioning equipment works. At that time only heard we do have split unit air conditioning. In the training centre there was no such type of equipment. With new technologies we came with split unit and refrigerator equip with inverters. Concerning inverters, I have not yet able to master it because it comprises of too many electronic parts. I didn’t possess any electronic knowledge.

“We need to upgrade our training courses in the trade of RAC so that it includes as well inverter modules. Normally the basic functioning of RAC are the same but only the

inverters make variation of the rpm of the engine motor by incorporating an electronic variation system, which is a variator. All this I don't have competencies. Is the MITD delivering such type of training programme? If yes, this is a very good thing if no MITD needs to upgrade it programme.

"I confirmed that there is scarcity of skilful people for maintaining inverters. Actually the repairs and maintenance on such kind of equipment is being undertaken by the suppliers themselves. I asked why such an important unit was not part of the curriculum and wondering whether the TVET institution has been able to upgrade the curriculum to rope in this component in its learning units. I admitted that the trainers were very supportive and collaborative. Among the trainers, I amid the eulogies for one trainer. The trainer was very competent and knowledgeable. I adore the way he was teaching. He was my role model.

"Mr Guster, he was my instructor, the way he conducted his class was so motivating and interesting. When he says something, I was astonished that how he can explain without a single look in his lesson note, every time I was telling myself how can he stored all this technical stuff in his head. I was able to understand afterwards how to memorise knowledge in the head.

"I believed that TVET plays an important role for our economy. Please looked at myself I am a product of the TVET system. TVET has enable me to be employable and having a decent job. I think aloud that TVET needs to be proposed as an alternative route in the present educational system. As it allows to have access to the labour market more easily. Anyone joining TVET needs to love the trade for which he/she enrolling and

should not be chosen under the parent influence. The person looking for a TVET education in a specific trade, needs to love the trade very well. I experienced some friends of mine who joined the TVET course but finally who didn't show any affection for same. They are presently not working in this trade. This has been a wasting of their time and wasted the public fund required to run such a costly programme.

"The issue of reception towards TVET, I had not received any bad feeling from other people. Except that one boy advise me not to go for technical trades better to opt for hotel trades. As at that time the hotel sector was the biggest job generating sector. I thought that in the hotel industry, we would have ended being either a barmen or housekeeper. Whereas in refrigeration and air conditioning there is plenty of employment opportunities, such as working with suppliers/ maintenance department, also integrating the facilities support and management team and working for himself as an entrepreneur.

"My perception for TVET haven't change, it is not because my kid fails his exam, then I will send him to TVET as I have a son who is interested in Automobile Mechanics even though that I am a refrigeration and air conditioning technician. I haven't influenced him. He chose automotive sector because his uncles are automotive mechanics, His uncle will help him to better understand automotive engineering and obviously this will help him to progress in this trade.

"Yes I recommend people to join TVET programme but not to get enrol in courses because your parents have chosen them for you. Trainees need to love profoundly the trade in which they are. Many of my friends who followed the same training

programme, are presently not working in that trade area. It was a waste of time and money as they could have followed another programme which would have been more beneficial for them or which they like.”

4.2.2.2 From TVET to the labour market journeying my career paths

Just after having completed his NTC 3 course in refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC), John proceeded with furthering his competencies in the same area. He opted to study the City & Guilds Technician Level 1 by way of private tutoring. The private tutoring was conducted by his former instructors at the TVET institution. After having completed this technician qualification, he applied for the post of assistant technician at Max Freeze Company. He succeeded in becoming their assistant technician.

“I followed a course in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning at NTC level 3 at one IVTB centres. Messrs Jugnauth, Ramgoolam and Duval were my trainers. After completing the course, I wanted to learn higher level programme in the same field to upgrade my competencies and qualifications. Messrs Jugnauth, Ramgoolam and Duval gave me private tuition to do City and Guilds Technician Level Part I in Refrigeration and air conditioning. After finishing the course, I applied for a job as assistant refrigeration technician in a company name Max Freeze Company Ltd. I worked there for two years and the said company closed down afterward.

“I worked for two years there. Unfortunately the company met with some economic difficulties and it was closed. Just after that event, I joined Mona Lisa Beach Hotel as refrigeration and air conditioning technician. I had the responsibility to assess all the RAC equipment prior submitting an evaluation report concerning the status of these

equipment in term of running condition/servicing schedule/repairs worthiness or scrapping out. I was also assigned additional tasks in my scheme of duties such as to look after all the technical issues related to the good operation of the hotel. I was looking and maintaining the plumbing and piping systems, the electrical installation works and the air conditioning maintenance. I worked there for fifteen years. Meanwhile, I was offered a position of electrician in one of the highest growing company in Mauritius. The proposed salary was far better than the previous job. I left the hotel and proceeded to join the new company. I was employed as a technician looking after facilities maintenance for the past five years.

“Just after closing of the Max Freeze Company Ltd, I joined Mona Lisa Hotel. There I was responsible for the refrigeration and I had a supervisor as my immediate superior. I was responsible for refrigeration and also for air conditioning. I was responsible to look after all refrigeration and air conditioning equipment, I checked whether same could be repair or not. In case I am not able to repair it then it was sent to the supplier for repairs. I worked for fifteen years in this hotel and I also performed as electrician, plumber there. I did nearly everything in the hotel in the maintenance unit.

“I had it planned to join the world of work in the field of refrigeration and air conditioning since my adolescent hood. The love for refrigeration and the trade pushed me to choose a profession related to my passion for RAC. So during my career I faced with some awkward situation as I was called to execute maintenance on new equipment which was equipped with inverters. This specific component operates electronically. So the competencies in this area were not dispensed during my training at the TVET School. My employer was in an obligation to provide on the job training in that area

so as to make me become fully competent to handle such kind of machines. Factors that were instrumental in my career were mainly my commitment and dedication. I was committed in my training during TVET School which has contributed in coming out with flying colours in my TVET exams and ultimately the same philosophy was applied in my work. I give 100% in my work. All my work is irreproachable. I strongly believed that where I am today, my TVET qualification has a tremendous contribution in my career.

“My career goals, I am ambitioning to become the head of the maintenance unit one day in the present company where am working. In my previous job at the Mona Lisa Beach Hotel I was recruited as a technician and was able to climb the ladder to reach the position of supervisor. I think that I possess the necessary skills to be at a supervisory level. In the present company I am an electrician despite holding qualification in refrigeration and air conditioning, I was selected for the said job. My supervisor is very helpful and cooperative. They communicate well and there is a good synergy between them. Actually I don't feel that there has been some barriers that have come across my career progression. My career is progressing as I expected. I believed that I have a good reputation as a RAC technician, this is the reason for a rich and fruitful career journey in this field. Employers recognised my competencies by the evidence that I was immediately recruited just after my TVET graduation, then transited between three more companies, which was through head hunting.

“What is my career goals, one day I wish to become the in charge or the team leader of the maintenance section in the present company? When I was working in the hotel, I was already in charge of the maintenance unit as I joined there as a technician.

Afterwards, been promoted to supervisor. I was also called to look after electrical system, then I obtained a proposal from XYZ Company to join it maintenance team as an electrician. I possessed qualification in refrigeration and air conditioning nevertheless they gave me the job. My present supervisor help me a lots and train me to understand the tasks more easily.

“Presently, I am a facility maintenance technician which I don’t perceived it as if I have been moving away from my refrigeration and air conditioning passion as previously I was doing in the hotel sector. In facility maintenance there is also repairs and maintenance of air conditioning equipment. Apart the passion for my work, I am also passionate for spending quality time with my children and breeding pets such as birds and dogs. I admitted that I couldn’t say that my career progression will be constant in the future. As in this trade namely refrigeration and air conditioning every day the technologies keep on changing. These equipment are becoming more sophisticated. It is becoming an imperative for continuous learning to have a better grip on electronic component, if not I will not be fit for the job in the near future. The RAC trade has enable me to undertake private work as a side business. I do repairs and maintenance of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment for people and other companies outside working hours. I keep on repeating and saying that all I am, is because of my TVET qualifications.

“My career progression whether it has been recognised or rewarded. I can say yes it has been recognised and rewarded. I did electrical maintenance more than refrigeration when I first joined work. The then team leader asked me that being qualified in refrigeration and air conditioning, if he purchase tools and equipment for

maintaining these equipment, can I repair same. I agreed with his suggestion on spot. My team leader recognised that I was more competent in refrigeration and air conditioning rather than in electrical system. They recognised my competencies, in that vein they gave me necessary support to organise for the maintenance and repairs of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment. At the precise moment our company was dealing with many suppliers outsourcing repairs and maintenance work of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment. After the setting up of the maintenance of refrigeration and air conditioning unit, our department no longer required to outsource repairs and maintenance work of RAC equipment. The company started to do saving with this situation. For any new RAC equipment, I was installing it and afterward doing the servicing which was more profitable for the company.”

4.2.2.3 To rove in quest of career success

“Throughout my career and training I have been strongly committed to my duties be it as trainee or worker. This was my motto which has enable me to pass my TVET exams with very good grades and being outstanding students and workers. I give all the time 100% of myself in my work. This is the basic characteristic for succeeding in life and in my career. It is deeply rooted within myself that where I am presently, I owned it from the TVET qualification. I want to become the head of the maintenance unit. Previously when I was working in the hotel, I was able to reach the position of maintenance supervisor where I joined as an electrician. On basis of my performance I was promoted. Presently I am an electrician in this new company. I got this job despite I am not holding any qualification in electrical works. My supervisor is very helpful. We communicate very well. I am aiming to become the head of the maintenance unit one day in my present job. “My family help me when I was following the RAC

programme financially. My parent didn't even know what a TVET programme was or what is refrigeration and air conditioning course all about. They even didn't know in what trade I was enrolled in. "When you see my brothers are in Automotive Mechanics whereas I am in refrigeration and air conditioning which is completely different. If today I am successful, I have put all my effort in achieving same, people trust me and value the work that I am doing, because I am very dedicated and committed.

"My family has supported me financially for my studies whereas where I am today, is simply my dedication and commitment to my study and work. I am highly motivated in my work. All that I have achieved it is solely by myself. My TVET trainers have motivated me very much. Their encouragement and advice has brought me a decent position. I had plenty of opportunities, it would mean that my competences have been well recognised by my employer. My employer is very supportive and cooperative. In all the way, for example they have provided me with necessary tools and equipment so that I can perform my assignment correctly without any risk pertaining to safety and security. My most satisfaction that I got in the past years, is when I left the hotel sector to join the facility management team in the present company.

"The most satisfying thing for me during the past years, when I left the hotel sector and joined my new company. In the new company I deal mostly with facilities maintenance which is completely new to me and the working environment is different. This was satisfying to me. Was it difficult integrating the facilities management department? I would say no, it was not difficult to learn, I master it quickly. I learn the working set up and the work environment which was completely different from that of the hotel sector.

“My definition of success in my own term would be succeeding in my task after many others who have tried to do it but was not successful. This is success for me. For example if a broken air conditioning equipment is sent for repair. After all other technicians try to fix it and was not able to make it. Afterwards, this assignment was handed over to me and where I have been successful in repairing same with my own hand. I consider that success. My career philosophy is being very passionate with my work. I work with high devotion. I have a spiritual approach in executing my task.

“I talked to my equipment because I believed that I am passionate with my work and have developed a spiritual connection with it.

My career values that I have adopted in my work. Doing things differently compared to other technician. Putting a smile on my clients’ face, by satisfying them all the time. I want them back so that to have this loyalty from them. To do that, I simply give them something additional for free which was not required in the part of the work. Example doing a servicing, I do some additional work which is not part of the main job, by servicing the blower, changing rusted support bracket and painting rusted part. They see that I am doing the job differently compared with other technician undertaking similar task.

“Leadership quality and trait: I consider myself a leader as my ideas are received and accepted positively by my superior and boss. Therefore influencing people at higher level, I consider that being a leadership quality. Career progression is a very dynamic process for me. With the emergence of new technologies, the skills that I possessed would definitely not be useful. I should better looked for upgrading same to understand

how electronic stuff works, if not I will become obsolete. This is the risk in the technical world.

“Refrigeration and Air conditioning course has enable me to be an entrepreneur. I also do side lucrative activities such as part time maintenance of RAC equipment at my home or client places. My TVET qualification has brought me where I am actually. My definition for career success is having job satisfaction what I call career success. Poor performance mean unsatisfied boss and no increase in salary. So job satisfaction has to be placed high in my agenda for succeeding in my career.

“My career success is having job satisfaction. For example if my job is not good and I am performing poorly in maintaining the equipment. Therefore my boss would not be satisfied and finally he will not give me a salary increase.

“I have job satisfaction in my work. I am very dedicated and devoted worker. I try to do my job well. I earn the respect from my superior and my boss. Superior and employer are happy, definitely I will be satisfied. I don’t believe that I have reached career success yet. As I need to learn a lot as technology keep on changing in my trade therefore I believe I am only competent at 10% and still to learn the remaining 90%. There is a long way to go.

“Not yet reach full career success as there are many more thing to learn in my field as technologies keep on changing. For the time being I have mastered only 10%, 90% is remaining. I need to learn more yet.”

4.2.2.4 Reflections

John's innate admiration for technology was behind his enrolment in a TVET programme. It was a childhood desire to discover how mechanical objects work. The case of John is particularly interesting in the sense that he always wanted to deepen his understanding and knowledge about his childhood fantasy concerning how a refrigerator could achieve cooling. He was a tinkerer, as he always attempted to repair anything mechanical. The factors that are likely to inform choices of John's study and career were typically both social and structural influences. John's opting for a TVET course was influenced by both structural and social factors. His strong structural belief about technology, and taking his brother's profession as a model, paved the way to the refrigeration and air-conditioning course. This was the most appropriate choice of career to suit his interests, abilities, aptitude, capabilities, and values. John's narrative also revealed that the TVET course curriculum did not cater for the latest technology available in the market at that time. Also, the workshop was poorly equipped, tools and equipment being inadequate. This was the shortcoming of the existing curriculum to which John is referring. It was a complete mismatch from a learning outcomes perspective, and for entering the world of work. John obtained work just after completion of his TVET programme. This is testimony to the TVET stream being demand-driven in supplying necessary skilled workers to the labour market. TVET's attractiveness would be that ability to provide real opportunities of employment to its graduates.

During his career, John faced rapid changes in technology in the refrigeration and air-conditioning business. He was required to upgrade his qualification to be abreast of the latest innovations taking place in this sector: this was one of his challenges.

Technological change has had a profound impact on the labour market (Lynch, 2002). UNESCO (2003) estimates that above sixty per cent of technical workers' skills become obsolete in less than three to five years. Lifelong learning is the only way to prevent obsolescence and remain competitive in a job market where work is becoming increasingly knowledge intensive.

John's career path is linear, as he moved from one rung of the ladder to another. He had experienced job mobility as he moved from one organisation to another in the same profession. Being a blue-collar job holder within his organisation had a limiting effect on his career path and career success opportunities. Research has showed that those having more job mobility find career success more easily achievable. This is the case for John. He believed that having achieved success in his career as in any blue-collar profession reaching at the supervisory level is the highest possible position to climb. John's narrative confirmed that one job facet of blue-collar workers focussed on the limitation of career prospects, employers remaining at the supervisory level of the hierarchy. Is John's career success a consequence of his job mobility or his perseverance in lifelong learning to remain skilful and updated in this fast-changing technological world of work?

4.2.3 Story of Jessica, the woman electrician, Participant Number 3

4.2.3.1 Paving my way to skills through enrolling in a TVET programme

Jessica is from Rodrigues Island, one of the islands forming part of the Mauritian territory. Rodrigues Island's economy is based on agriculture and tourist. Natives of Rodrigues Island are called Rodriguans. Many Rodriguans come to Mauritius for work

as the economy here is more flourishing. Mauritius has a manufacturing sector, ICT sector, and financial services sector, and also a more developed tourism sector. Therefore, many Rodriguans come to Mauritius for employment opportunities, and also to pursue further studies. Jessica is one of these hopefuls.

“I left the Rodrigues Island in quest for a job. As I didn’t want to be a machinist in a textile manufacturing factory. I decided to join a TVET training centre. I did my NTC 3 in Electrical Installation Work (EIW). After the course I worked at Paul Pot Ltd as electrician. I then decided to further upgrade my qualification by following the NTC 2, in EIW. The NTC 2 programme is higher than the NTC 3 programme in terms of level and competencies. I joined the TVET training centre just after completing my School Certificates (SC). My SC result was not that good. Initially coming to Mauritius was for getting a job. Job that was readily available was machinist in textile industry. I didn’t want to join the textile industry because working hours range from early morning to late in the evening. You are treated as a slave there. I wanted to do something different where I can get encouragement from others. Initially I wanted to follow a training programme in automotive mechanics, but I didn’t get admitted. Then I turned to electrical works.

“My decision to come to Mauritius was to get a job but not in the textile industry as the working hours is long and workers are still treated like slave. I wanted to do something different where people can extend their encouragement to me. I decided to go for technical trades training. First I decided to enrol in automotive mechanics but I was not accepted. Then I join the electrical installation work programme.

“I love both trades that is automotive mechanics and electrical installation works. Since I was a child, I dreamed to work at the national electricity supplier company. So electricity was also my preferred subject. I spent a memorable moment during my study. The challenges that I faced during my TVET study is that male trainees have a tendency for discrimination against female trainees. As I was the only female trainee, the male trainees were supportive but during practical classes they showed their machoism. They didn't like female to lead practical group, as if female trainee could not handle manual work. They thought that this was only male works. The boys wanted me to be in their group for practical class but not as group leader. The choice for TVET was based on my passion for automotive engineering and electricity. Since childhood I wanted to work like a man.

“The reason for joining TVET is not solely because of being from a poor family. Yes in Rodrigues my family was very poor. It was also that I was lazy for academic study. Now I regret because I have not study seriously my academic study, probably my fate would have been different. My family was very poor. My parent has five children, two brothers and three sisters in all. My parent didn't have money to buy our school stationaries. My two brothers failed their primary school exams. My sisters and I studied up to SC.

“We were very poor, my parent has five children to look after, apart poverty being the cause for joining technical trade. It is also that I was very lazy in my academic study. Now I regret same because if I wasn't lazy I would have more opportunities. My two brothers failed the primary school exams and all the three sisters studied up to SC. My parent didn't have money to buy copy books and other school materials.

“People have this perception that TVET is meant for academically poor people. I joined the TVET course because I wanted to get the necessary competencies to be an electrician and to progress in life. Today I am proud where I am because all this is because of the TVET qualifications. I am so proud with my TVET course, it has only given me opportunities. I don’t perceive TVET to be degrading if not I would have not been there”.

4.2.3.2 From TVET to the labour market journeying my career paths

“Just after completion of NTC 3 in EIW, I joined Paul Pot Company in the trade of electricity. Paul Pot Company was a major building construction company. I was recruited as assistant electrician. Then I decided to upgrade my EIW qualification, I left the company to get enrol back in the TVET programme at NTC 2, EIW course. After successfully completing my NTC 2, I joined back Paul Pot Company. I worked for a few years there. Afterwards I applied to one electricity supplying company. I got the job there. This was my childhood cherished dream of being a worker in this company. I was recruited as a trainee technician, then got promoted at the level of cadet technician. Now I am a full-fledge electrical technician in the said company.

When I was a kid I always thought to work in the electricity supplying company. I dreamed working there when I will become adult. I didn’t know in what area but always wanted to join the said company.

“The biggest challenge that I faced during my career, it was discrimination from the part of the male workers toward me as I am a female. Those men had difficulty to accept woman working in a superiority position than them. It was a sexist approach. In the beginning when I just joined as technician, my male counterpart didn’t accept whenever

I was assigned team leader responsibility. Whenever I distributed their duties, they refused to execute same and they do all other assignments except the works attributed to them by me. It took time to normalise the relationship with the male counterparts. Finally we have reached a more civilised way of doing job. The male counterparts use vulgar language to communicate.

“I didn’t want to become a machinist. I always want to embrace a technical vocation. Fortunately, I got job related to the course I followed. My career where I am, is solely because of the TVET qualifications. I didn’t struggle hard to find my career path, the only difficulty I met was discrimination from the male workers.

“The difficulty that I met in my work. As the only female technician among 800 qualified male workers. I had to get along and work with them. Moreover it was not easy to get use to their vocabulary. In the long run they amended their ways of behaving with me and became respectful”.

4.2.3.3 In quest of career success

Jessica being a woman, working in a male-dominated domain was the biggest challenge that she faced. Male workers do not readily accept women working in a higher position to them. Whenever she was assigned the responsibility of being team leader in her unit, her male counterparts acted in a very uncooperative way. The situation has become normal now.

“I understand that my male counterparts doesn’t want me to be their superior. They had such kind of complex of seeing woman in a superiority position. Men were not respectful and were sexist.

“Whenever called to be team leader for a unit. They male counterparts refused to collaborate and they do tasks not assign to them. Now thing is normal.

“I was motivated as I was the only female technician among 800 male counterparts. I faced discrimination at the beginning in this male dominated profession. Through perseverance and hard work I have achieved this position. TVET has been the biggest contributor in making what I am today. I have not faced any other obstacles in my career progression. I am very happy about my career progression. My career is rewarding and well recognised. It is with great pride that I perform my duties in a male dominated profession. Everyone sees that I am working in a highly masculine domain. As I am among the very few women that have achieved such a position in a male dominated profession this is the reason for being in this award ceremony as the guest speaker. In the past years, the most satisfying thing that happened to me was that people recognised that women in technical profession are more respectful and gentle. People has reported to one minister that I executed my tasks with high care and precaution. The minister had called me personally to congratulate me for that.

“As a woman I do my tasks with care and precaution. The public showed their appreciation towards me. One people had informed the minister about the very professional way of doing my tasks. The minister personally called me for congratulating me. Therefore women in technical profession are very respectful in their work.

“The definition of success for me is something very personal and private. The bottom-line is that we need to feel whether we are doing something satisfactorily, this is success. Other people should not judge our success. My core values is to execute my duties with care. All the tasks assigned to me are being done without any hesitation. Yes I do believed that I am a leader. As I am in charge of four people under my authority, I called myself a leader. The leadership quality that I possess is delegation, whereby I like to delegate many responsibilities to my subordinates.

“I believed that I had achieved career success, from an assistant technician, promoted to cadet technician and now to technician position. The career success definition is achieving a position in life with the support of others and with perseverance. Also career success means getting promotion. Another factors of career success is job satisfaction which is above all. Whatever job you do, as my father used to say be it you are a labourer or scavenger, your work remain yours and you have to do it well with all satisfaction”.

4.2.3.4 Reflections

Jessica, the Rodriguan girl was leading the way by breaking down the established gender-discrimination wall in TVET colleges and becoming enrolled in a traditionally male TVET programme. Gender discrimination in TVET results in inferior educational opportunities for women and girls enrolled in “traditionally female” programmes. The TVET stream attracts a very small number of females. There are uneven patterns of enrolment that favour males over females in Mauritius on social, economic, and religious grounds. In the present era, careers are becoming more unisex; the gender gap

is gradually being closed. Jessica's poor academic results and the socio-economic status of her parents were motivating factors for her enrolling in a TVET programme.

Jessica faced discrimination from male colleagues at her place of work. It is known that women who adopt roles predominantly held by males seek support from their colleagues while facing challenges of feeling incompetent, and putting up with mistreatment and lack of a voice in their workplaces. Jessica is considered a woman going after the career of her dream, as she takes on her role as electrician in an electricity supply company. She has had a linear career path, as her organisation still follows a traditional pyramidal structure. Normally blue-collar professions have very restricted career prospects. Jessica is looking to be at the supervisory level in years to come, the highest position reserved for a blue-collar careerist. Jessica's career success indicators are both subjective and objective. She has been elevated in rank, gaining promotion, has had a salary raise, and she has felt job satisfaction. Jessica had multiple employers at the beginning of her career, owing to her job mobility. This could have been one factor that has contributed to her career success.

4.2.4 Story of Jake, air conditioning specialist: Participant Number 4

4.2.4.1 Paving my way to skills through enrolling in a TVET programme

Jake is an air-conditioning technician. He is presently in charge of the air-conditioning department for one of the renowned suppliers of air-conditioning equipment. Jake had undergone his TVET course through the dual system mode which is commonly known in Mauritius as the apprenticeship system. In the dual mode, the trainees are required

to attend the training centre for one day and the remaining four days of the week he is at his place of the work in a company as an apprentice.

“My educational path, I sat twice for the School Certificate (SC) exam to improve my result. My SC result was improved slightly. After the SC, I didn’t want to continue with academic education instead I wanted to go for a TVET course. My parent was interested that I pursue my academic education. Finally my parent agreed that I joined a TVET programme. Jake chose TVET instead of academic study on the ground that academic pursuit is too lengthy in terms of duration. An academic study will have cost me three years of my life and then after the HSC, I would have remained unemployed. Therefore, I would require to go for an additional tertiary education such as doing management or accounting. After that there was also uncertainty for an employment. Whereas in the case of a TVET course, the success rate for getting a job was high. At that time in 2000, the construction industry was developing fast and potential for employment was very much high in trade such as electric or air conditioning. The choice for enrolling for RAC course was comforted following the advice I received from one of my father’s friend who was an engineer in one broadcasting station.

“I have always been good in tinkering. I strongly believed that going for an academic study would be a waste of time. My parent was convinced with me that a two years TVET programme would be more convenient for me and shorter than studying an academic study. My parent didn’t have a poor perception concerning TVET. At that time TVET courses were on great demand in the year 2000. I applied for the RAC programme, just for the said programme, the training centre received more than 2000 applications for only 25 seats. So for getting selected you should be really lucky enough

as access was very limited. I got enrolled in the apprenticeship mode whereby I needed to attend theory class at the training centre one day per week and the remaining days of the week as apprentice in the industry practising on the job training in my specific trade. At first I was a bit scared because the world of work was complete new for me. My co-workers were very supportive, whenever I didn't understand some specific learning points at school, I used to ask the employees there. They used to help me in that way.

“One setback of the dual training system was the tension between apprentice and skilled workers. Not all the workers were cooperating to help me getting the skill needed as per the provision of the curriculum and properly explaining me similarly as in a training centre set up. The first month of the apprenticeship was quite difficult. I needed to wake up very early in the morning so as to reach work on time and returned home late at night. I was not used of that during my college time. The another setback with the apprenticeship mode that at the beginning for nearly three months I was attached to the company store as a helper which was complete outside the scope of the apprenticeship contract and this was not meeting the curriculum provisions. I was issuing spare parts. Nevertheless, this had helped me a lot for my future development in the way that I mastered specifications of parts and identification of parts became easy afterwards. So finally the apprenticeship provided the company to employ apprentices and these apprentices were deployed in areas not essentially required as per the contents of the curriculum. Before I enrolled in the TVET course, there was a perception that TVET was meant for academically poor people but at present this kind of opinion had faded out.

“People believed that those people who are failures in the academic stream are directed to TVET. After all, they don’t have any choice than to join TVET. I always had this kind of thought myself. But now when I think where I am, I don’t regret at all having joined a TVET course. What I am, is all because of the TVET course.

I had the feeling that people down looked TVET but that didn’t bother me at all. The most shocking attitude that I came across was when my team was called for an intervention for the repair of air conditioning equipment in an office. The people working in the office simply left the site upon our arrival, as if we are unwanted people. It was in my mind that these office people believed that wearing of an overall make us looked dull and we the blue collar workers stand in the lowest strata of the society. It was seen that we suffered this issue of parity of esteem between white collar and blue collar profession.

“I had trainers who motivated me to complete the training as at one time I was deciding to leave the course well before the completion time as my parent wanted that I gave them helping hand in their business that they had newly launched. My trainers’ encouragement forced me to stay and worked hard for the exams where I came with flying colours. Presently my company was looking for skilled workers in the field of air conditioning but could not find suitable skilled people despite we are having TVET institution delivering this kind of programme. The company turned up for expatriates and it had recruited twenty expatriates technician due to the acute shortage of very good skilful technician locally. The locally trained people, normally our youth are having exaggerated demand and expectation as they are looking for extremely high pay

packet despite they are not skilful and they severely lack employability skills such as they are not punctual, have high absences and having serious dismissive attitude.

“I also testified that the actual TVET trained people are not performing technically well, they have attitudinal problem and they leave the work whenever they like. Their capability in terms of technical responsiveness are very poor. I found that the actual trainees of the present TVET institution are very immatures. In my opinion if my company is turning for expatriates’ technician simply because our locally trained people are not equipped with skill required by the industries. There is a complete mismatch. I noticed that our TVET institution is recruiting trainees henceforth as from 15 years old and also these trainees don’t possess a sound academic background. This make them unapt in furthering their technical competencies to match the growing and fast changing requirement of the industry.

“I believed that TVET institution needs to recruit trainees with a good academic profile such as holding a very good Form IV or SC background, they need to be literate, numerate and computer literate as well. Presently I am receiving apprentices from TVET training centres, these trainees are very disobedient and doesn’t show any interest in the work. This situation is worrying for the industry. I believed that industry is suffering from shortage of skilled workers as TVET institution is failing to consider the actual requirement of the industries. TVET is called to play an important role in our economy therefore I think the training centres need to look into all these shortcomings. I still argue that we will call to accept that the only recourse that is left for those who have not been able to be successful in their academic education, evidently TVET will come at their rescue.

“I think there is a real problem with our youth, after having followed a TVET course and obtained a TVET qualification, they don’t want to work for a salary ranging between Rs 6000-Rs 7000. Instead they want to earn salary more than Rs 12000 to 15000 per month even though, they don’t have any experience. Another issue with MITD, is that presently it is recruiting trainees as from 15 years old. These trainees don’t have enough maturity to work in the world of work and they haven’t master Technical competencies well”.

4.2.4.2 From TVET to the labour market journeying my career paths

Jake’s career path is unique in the sense that his career and TVET training were interconnected. He was enrolled as an apprentice in the RAC trade. He joined the MXY Ltd as an apprentice. This mode of training which is called the apprenticeship system (AS) allows the combination of the classroom theory teaching at the training centre and the psychomotor skills learning that is the practical component in industry. Jake was called to attend school one day per week for theory classes, and the remaining four days he was performing on-the-job training in the company where he was assigned as apprentice.

“Presently I am a senior supervisor at HBSC. My main responsibility is to install, commission and head a team of technicians in the field of air conditioning and fire extinguishers. Since my childhood I used to tinkering and this had pushed me for a technical trade training as at that time the construction sector was flourishing. I opted for a TVET course in RAC for rapidly getting access to employment which was more guaranteed with such course. My career started when I got enrolled in the RAC course under the apprenticeship mode. I was an apprentice at the MXY Ltd in the field of air

conditioning. So my career journey started as from the day I joined the TVET programme. As apprentice I was called to perform certain tasks that were not relevant as per the requirement of the curriculum provision. Technicians in the said company helped me to understand clearly about the functioning of components whenever I was in doubt.

“My career took a new turn during my apprenticeship period when one of my supervisor was proceeding on an overseas leave. As I was the only person among the technicians being computer literate at that time, he handed over to me his assignment that I needed to attend during his vacation period for nearly one month. Before he proceeded on his vacation leave, he trained me how to fill in a job cards, how to tackle some administrative tasks and how to do jobs distribution. After he resumed from his leave, he was so satisfied that I did the job so well that immediately he told me to work as his assistant which I refused. My refusal was on the ground that I haven't yet mastered all the technical issues for being a competent technician. So my focus was to become a competent tradesmen before aiming to move at higher level. I worked as a technician for more than two and half years then there was an internal vacancy at the supervisory level in the area of air conditioning. I postulated for the said post and eventually I succeeded in getting the job. Following this promotion I was called to follow training in effective supervisory time management and other related courses relevant to this position. All managers gave me necessary support for being a good supervisor.

“My career progression was based on merits, being competent and strong commitment towards my work. Meanwhile, I got many job offers from rival companies. I didn't jumped on these opportunities at once even though the remuneration was one and half

time higher. After realising that at MXY Ltd I had already reached the highest position and there will be no more avenue of career progression. Then I decided to leave the company for another renowned company in the field of air conditioning equipment distribution. Their offer was good and higher than the previous employment with attractive condition attached to my employment contract. I believed that many companies wanted me to work for them simply as I was a very hard worker. I was so committed in my work that I was always working during odds hours.

“My working hours was so long, sometime worked till nine o’clock at night. Sometime was called at one in the morning for maintenance intervention. My pregnant wife was left alone with her labour pain as I was attending work at one o’clock in the morning. I didn’t assist my wife delivery as I was working.

“Actually I am at the supervisory level. I am very happy concerning my career position. In the near future I am envisaging for a management position as at the moment I am not holding necessary qualification to reach there. Presently I am focussing mostly on my family life such looking after my son who is a little boy. In five years’ time I will try to endeavour for achieving my career goals. TVET qualification was instrumental in my career progression. My career is fully recognised as many rival companies are looking for me to join them. In other auxiliaries departments in my own company they sought my helps on every occasions such as stock taking and inventories management among others. Some people in the company are jealous about my career progress and they act as a hindrance by circulating all sorts of rumours. I don’t pay a damn heed about them. My career plan I had already envisioned with precise aims and targets so I have no worry for my career future.

“So I had a clear vision about where I want to reach concerning my career, then I didn’t bother about the attitude others who don’t have a clear career plan. My other colleagues started creating some sort of clan, which had not affected me despite of their gossips, I continue to move ahead. My career progression had been stable and continuous”.

4.2.4.3 Quest for career success

Jake, since an apprentice, had showed his talent in being computer literate. This had enabled him to replace his supervisor. He was performing satisfactorily at a higher level of responsibility.

“My career success started while I was still an apprentice. I took the responsibility of the supervisor during his leave period of one month. On his return, he was extremely satisfied with my performance. He immediately offered me to be his assistant. I turned down this offer knowingly that I had not reached the competent level required for a technician. I continued to work as a technician with passion and dedication for about two and half years. An internal vacancy arose for the post of supervisor in the air conditioning department. I applied and got promoted. This promotion was based on merits and my dedication in my work. I was a hard worker and very committed to my work.

“I was so devoted and committed in my work, I didn’t think of quitting my job to work for another rival company despite many offers were made to me. I kept on turning down these offers. The offer consisted of higher pay packets even that I didn’t leave my company. I continued to work at the same company for an additional three years. Then

I decided to leave the company for another one as I had already reached the highest position in my category in the said company. The other company offered me higher salary and better fringe benefits. I believed that my career success was due to the fact that I worked hard and during very odds hours without looking at the negative impact that it was having on my family and social life. I am planning to reach at least at the level of management in the next five years as I do not possess the required qualification for the time being. I need to upgrade my qualification so as to meet the prerequisite for this post. At present I am paying more attention about the brought up of my son.

“For the time being I am not aiming for anything higher in terms of post. I am focussing after my child. Furthermore, I need to upgrade my qualification so as to become eligible to postulate for the post of manager. It is too tight therefore my own imposed timeline will be for the next five years to upgrade my qualification to fit for the criteria for the post of manager.

“I had a very good career recognition as many companies pestered me to join them. Even in my own company, other auxiliaries department occasionally sought my help for doing their stock take, inventories among others. This is a testimony of recognising my competences. My biggest satisfaction in the past years is that everyone recognised that I am a hard worker. International visiting engineers from manufacturer told my managers that Jake is an asset for the company. Such praise itself constitute a testimony of my valuable contribution toward the company through my hard work.

“My definition of success in my own words is the process of continuous improvement. It is also reaching the highest rung of the ladder with dedication and through

performance. I also believed that the struggling for success is through falling and rising up without giving up. My core career values is embracing integrity and as well need to do my job passionately and showing strong commitment. I considered myself to be a leader as part of my duty is to lead a team of technician therefore I believed firmly that I possessed the necessary leadership trait for which my company had placed it trust on my shoulder as a supervisor. One of the leadership trait is to continuously motivating my people. People take me as their role model at my workplace.

“I maintained that I had already achieved career success but want to progress further and meanwhile I had taken a respite so as to give maximum attention to my child. I am strongly convinced that my TVET qualification had helped me where I am. I received proposal from my colleague to open an enterprise where I will be the director but due to financial constraint I had not proceeded ahead with that project. The experience earned through my dedicated work enable me to have lots of job offers from other rival companies. I would say that career success should not be determined by someone salary. Career success for me is how I do my work to my level best. How satisfied you are with your job is an important determinant concerning career success. Therefore job satisfaction is a key element whereby someone can say he has a successful career. I have some testimonials that I received from managers whereby they are showing their gratitude to me as I had been very collaborative, cooperative, helpful and hardworking employee in my company. I love my job which is in itself motivating me to work harder and harder”.

4.2.4.4 Reflections

Jake's philosophy was that academic pursuit would not make him employable. The TVET stream is the one which generates greater employment opportunities. This confirms the strength of this educational route, despite the stereotypes and stigmas attached to it. For a long time now, access to TVET in certain trades is an issue, owing to availability of a limited number of seats at the training centres. Jake admitted that he was obliged to take up an apprenticeship, not having been admitted to a full-time TVET programme. TVET usually has been under-resourced whether in terms of facilities, equipment, or quality training. One way of ameliorating these shortcomings is through industry-based learning or an apprenticeship programme.

The apprenticeship programme provided Jake with systematic acquisition of a full skill set in the workplace, pertinent to his occupation. Before beginning his training, Jake questioned the quality of the apprenticeship scheme. The training programme should respond to the needs of the labour market. Apprentices should learn the full skill set required for the occupation. This was not the case for Jake at the beginning of his apprenticeship programme. Jake's career path is linear, as he operates in a bureaucratic organisation. He has had multiple employers which has increased his opportunity of career success. His career success predictors were both subjective and objective. He received job promotion, and a salary increase; he also experienced job satisfaction. As a blue-collar professional, Jake has limited avenues for higher managerial responsibilities. To mitigate this position, Jake has to proceed with a university degree programme in management.

4.3 Thematic Analysis

4.3.1 The emerging themes

The volume of data generated in the stories, conversations, and reflections of the former TVET students was considerable, and much appreciated. The former TVET students who told me their stories represent a diverse group of industry professionals who have made career progression and believed that they had reached career success in their chosen career. I examined how these former TVET students had opted for a TVET programme as their alternative educational route, and enquired into their perceptions of TVET. I also tried to understand from their stories their career paths and what make them believe that they have a successful career by their own definition of the term career success. Starting from that common denominator I determined from participants' stories and reflections whether they had had a successful career when being holders of a TVET qualification.

Participants' narratives are used to support these emerging themes. Quotations, stories, and excerpts from interview data all corroborate the themes and categories resulting from the analysis of the data. Participant stories are infused throughout the analysis. The stories in the preceding paragraphs reflect the critical moments in the lives and careers of the participants. This present paragraph shines a spotlight on the macro-social processes which mould everyday experiences, illustrating the importance of understanding the interconnectedness of the social system, human capital system, and functioning when researching individual stories of career paths and career success coming from the TVET stream. Regardless of whether they had benefited, certain key themes emerged from the data:

1. Influencing factors for enrolling in TVET
2. Stigmas and stereotypes

3. Socio-economic status of parents
4. Choice of trade
5. Intrinsic motivation
6. Curriculum responsiveness and institutional issues
7. Training related to industries requirement
8. Structural issues of TVET
9. Challenges during training and career
10. Opportunities during training and career
11. Career aspirations
12. Career paths and trajectories
13. Career success factors

4.3.1.1 Influencing factors for enrolling in TVET

To understand the factors contributing to these participants to enrolling in a TVET course, it was necessary to discover how these former TVET students were channelled into this stream. Interviews provided a space for these participants to reflect on and explore what the prime motivation was in opting for a TVET programme.

The central argument voiced by former TVET students on their reasons for enrolling in a TVET programme was that they sought simply to prepare themselves for the world of work. They hoped to prepare themselves for work that proved fulfilling. Some were pressured by parents to join TVET, as other academic avenues were not available. Thus their employment marketability was increased. The most dominant factors were their poor academic qualifications that did not allow them any option other than taking a TVET programme. The common factor was that these TVET students were not doing

well at the secondary colleges. They had poor school certificate (SC) results. Shawn narrated that he was looking to be admitted to a university to pursue a degree course after his HSC. He did not obtain a seat because of his poor results. He also admitted that a university degree is considered more prestigious in our society.

Jessica confessed that she was lazy during her academic study course. This had contributed to her poor SC result. Jessica now regrets her apathy. Listening to the participants' stories uncovers a tension between parental influence and the accounts of these people's academic results carrying greater weight when enrolling in TVET. There was one predominant element that accounted for all participants enrolling in the TVET programme. This was their limited social, economic, and educational resources. It was noticed that all students were from poor families. These former TVET students had all experienced poverty. This clearly portrays that the socio-economic background of their parents was instrumental in their enrolling in a TVET programme.

Another major common factor spurring students into the TVET programme was their fondness of tinkering. Tinkering played an important role, and accompanied the showing of interest in enrolling in a TVET course. Doorley (2014) and Lucas et al. (2014) suggested that tinkering begins with problem-solving and curiosity about how something works. John claimed that he was good at tinkering. He often tried to understand how an electrical switch functioned by dismantling old, used electrical switches. He also admitted his profound interest in a better understanding of how refrigerators achieved cooling. This propelled him into joining the refrigeration and air conditioning programme. A love of tinkering therefore kindled the flame for technical trades.

4.3.1.2 Stigmas and stereotypes

Under the theme of stigmas and stereotypes, the participants had reflected on the various attitudes of stakeholders towards TVET. The study is also focussed on people's perceptions and attitudes towards the blue-collar profession and on women working in technical trades in a male-dominated sector. Stories narrated by participants showed that there is an influence of parents on their children's future career options. Moreover, parents and society do not have sufficient prior knowledge on TVET and its importance and relevance. Society at large in Mauritius has a poor attitude towards TVET. Shawn said it clearly that obtaining a university degree was more acceptable in our society than holding a TVET qualification. Shawn always believed before becoming enrolled in the TVET course, that TVET was meant for someone to become a welder, mechanic, or a plumber. In the same context, the narratives acquired from former TVET students showed a high level of satisfaction by trainees after completing the TVET course. It was voiced that the negative perceptions of some of the participants were completely changed after enrolment. Industries obviously valued TVET trainees as a productive and skilful workforce.

There is also tension between white- and blue-collar workers. Narratives suggested that there is a social class difference between the two professions. Jake articulated that during one of his maintenance interventions in an office, all the officers left the office, which came across as a slur on his lower academic status. The differences in connotation between white- and blue-collar work affects perceptions of the service industry, unlike in manufacturing and agriculture. The differences between white- and blue-collar workers may seem to designate a difference in social class, although the line

between these types of workers is fading. As the technology associated with jobs previously considered blue-collar increases, so does the amount of education needed.

The narrative revealed also the existence of discrimination that women have to face when working in a male-dominated occupation. Jessica told me that she was a victim of discrimination, as she was the only woman electrician in a highly male-dominated occupation where eight hundred male electricians were her counterparts. This challenge could have affected her retention and career success. Jessica faced this challenge, coping with it and persevering despite it. Jessica was undermined in her work on several occasions by her male counterparts. The situation has been normalised now. The challenges women face in attempting to penetrate successfully and persevere in an historically male-dominated work environment emanate from traditional gender hierarchies and norms that prevail in the family and society. Despite gender equality and empowerment, the household unit has a traditional structure, which still prevails, accepting males as the dominant gender (Hartmann, 2010).

4.3.1.3 Socio-economic status of parents

Under this theme, the narratives of all the participants offered a common pattern that their outcome of their educational paths was based on the socio-economic status of their parents. Their parents were poor, and could not afford for them to gain access to a paid university, in the case of Shawn. Jessica's parents could not buy school material for her during her school days. Jake's parents could not fund his entrepreneurial endeavour to own his own workshop. Shawn narrated that, at the time that he was seeking university admission for a degree programme, his parents could not afford for him to enrol in a paying university, as academic studies were costly. This trend seems to indicate that

social background of parents constitutes a determining factor for orienting former TVET students towards technical skills programmes. Narratives clearly report that enrolment in TVET is strongly associated with the socio-economic status of parents. This factor constitutes an external influence on students' enrolment decision at this level. Here, in the present study, it is clearly underlining that indigent families are financially constrained, hence cannot invest in education of their children.

There is a direct link between this situation and raising educational achievement. We need to consolidate and build the social capital of families identified as socially excluded or affected by poverty. The voices, and choices mentioned by the former TVET students about their motivation in opting for TVET draw attention to the socio-economic structure of families. Lower socio-economic families appear to have been given little information from which to make effective educational choices. Sandefur, Meier, Campbell (2006) examined the effects of social capital, family structure, family income, and parental education on enrolment in colleges by age 20. The study demonstrated a relationship between family factors and post-secondary educational attainment, through parents influencing post-secondary educational choices. Furthermore, parents with higher income and levels of education tend to invest more substantially in social capital. Their children are therefore more likely to attend a degree course, and less likely to enrol in a one- or two-year or certificate programme, or not to enrol at all.

4.3.1.4 Choice of trade

Most participants were not told that they had to take their TVET courses in a particular trade. They simply made their own decisions. Several participants entered into their

TVET programme in a specific trade under the influence of their family, friends, and relatives. One participant had family members in careers linked to a technical trade, which influenced him to enrol in a TVET course. John had his two brothers in the automotive mechanics trade. When his brothers were repairing cars, he used to assist them.

Jake said that his father's friend convinced him to go for a refrigeration and air conditioning course. At that time there was high demand for such technicians, and the construction industry was booming everywhere. Electricians and air conditioning technicians would be highly sought after. Shawn was the only one who was not influenced by someone to choose his trade. He never planned to join the TVET stream. He always wanted to be a university graduate. He said his decision to choose a tourism and hospitality management course was solely because it was trendy at the time: the tourism sector was generating many employment opportunities. Finally, Shawn did not pursue a career in the tourism sector. Jessica wanted to be an automotive mechanic. However, she was not accepted for the course. She turned to her second-best trade choice which was electrical installation work. Subsequently, she enrolled in electrical installation work to pursue her dream of becoming an electrician in an electricity supply company.

John was passionate about refrigeration. He wanted so much to understand how a refrigerator achieves cooling that the first opportunity presented to him to enrol in such a TVET programme, he accepted immediately. There were stories of a childhood fantasy to be in the technical trade. Jessica wanted to work in an electrical company, and John wanted to understand the functioning of a refrigerator. It was clear that the

choice of the trade was strongly driven by the participants' own interest, and childhood fantasies. Such sectors were flourishing and offering maximum employment opportunities.

The narratives revealed that the most influential factors in selecting a trade in a TVET programme were (1) possibility of gaining employment upon completing the programme with vocational skills gained, (2) parental and family influences, and (3) childhood fantasies about machines and anything technical. There are many factors that can influence the choice of technical subject — from childhood fantasy, strong interest in all things technical, influence by friends, family, or parents, and sectors having higher employment opportunities.

4.3.1.5 Intrinsic motivation

According to Niemiec & Ryan (2009) intrinsic motivation refers to an individual embarking on an activity because it is interesting or self-fulfilling. Therefore it was important to understand what motivated these former TVET students to enrol in their training programmes and maintain their motivation as they navigated through their chosen courses. The present study enabled me to discover that intrinsic motivation played a large role in the decision to become a TVET student, and continuing in their chosen career. John and Jessica's childhood fantasies to work with technical subjects had encouraged them into their respective trades. Their personal interest was a motivating factor for joining a TVET programme and making a career in the trade area of interest.

John, Jessica and Jake were all very much engaged in tinkering. Such an interest was their guiding passion prompting their choice of TVET courses. Jessica wished to have real-life experience on maintaining electrical lines. Participants explained that it was their choice to enrol, which played a role in their motivation to enter and continue their TVET courses. The ability of these former TVET students to choose their technical trade according to their interest created excitement and intrigue that led to engagement and connection to the school, curriculum, and people in the TVET courses. John had the desire to become a refrigeration technician as he wished to understand how refrigerators achieve cooling. Because of this desire, he chose to enrol in the refrigeration and air conditioning course, being connected both socially and emotionally.

Throughout most participants' stories, the freedom to choose their trade provided these former TVET students with a feeling of commitment and intrigue. Such participants took ownership of the courses they chose. When students have the autonomy to choose their technical subjects there appears to be more buy-in and determination to engage and continue, in order to be successful.

4.3.1.6 Curriculum responsiveness and institutional issues

In order for vocational or occupational programmes to be effective they must remain responsive to a range of issues, including, but not limited to the needs of employers, shifts in technology, and, more broadly, the needs of the students and society (Wedekind & Mutereko, 2016). Curricular relevancy was a theme that inspired students to come to school, engage in their studies, and continue their motivation in their programme. For Shawn, learning something new was the only inspiration for him to

attend hotel school every day. He radiated a sense of joy and excitement when he spoke about new and unfamiliar learning that took place during his TVET course.

Throughout the data-collection phase, many participants enumerated with confidence and pride the technical skills they had mastered. There were also stories about participants who yearned to learn new and relevant information that could be useful in their lives; however, they came across curriculum content not responsive to their expectations. John articulated that the curriculum did not respond to the industry requirements and changes in technology. He narrated that there was absence of electronic competencies in the curriculum which did not enable him to maintain air conditioning equipment which was equipped with inverters. He recommended that the curriculum be upgraded. Shawn described his TVET experience as learning new and unfamiliar content; and mentioned that the tourism and hospitality management course was challenging and engaging. He also added that the environment was challenging, and the tourist industry greatly appreciated the training which was dispensed by the school.

Jake was enrolled in the TVET programme as an apprentice under the apprenticeship mode. He claimed that for about three months after being enrolled in the programme, he was not assigned tasks pertaining to the curriculum provision in the trade in which he was enrolled. This was not motivating for him, and also constituted lack of monitoring on the part of the training centre. Jake also revealed in his narrative that, during his apprenticeship period, he did not have support and help from all the other workers. He also mentioned that his company had recently recruited twenty expatriate air-conditioning technicians despite having a TVET institution training people in this

area. He said the reason for his company going for expatriates was that Mauritian trainees did not have employability skills — their technical abilities were questionable, not meeting the actual needs of the company. Jake said that the present trainees lack maturity, and show no interest in learning the right techniques as required by the company.

A curriculum that is not able to adjust to the changes in the knowledge field, in technology, in the conditions of the labour market, in variations in regional or local or firm-specific conditions or the needs of the students, very quickly becomes outdated and potentially irrelevant. Consequently, the students enrolled in the programme are not deemed employable.

4.3.1.7 Training dispensed — was it related to industries' requirement?

As a matter of global competition, it is evident that a nation's competitive advantages lie much in the high quality and competences of its manpower, resulting from quality training programmes through TVET. Similarly, the quality and competence of TVET output is also revealed through the nature and strength of its cooperation with industries in relationship to the labour market needs. Cooperation as the link/partnership relationship between the vocational school with industry/world of work is crucial in building quality and competent TVET products which can impact and fit the industry needs. Shawn's narrative has demonstrated that the training school he attended had a very strong link and cooperation with the industry, mainly in the tourism sector. Shawn said that his poor perception of TVET faded.

He noticed that the hotels valued the training institution trainees' competencies. He mentioned that the tourist industry showed and placed great esteem on the training programme delivered by the training centre. Shawn's narrative clearly depicted that, for tourism trade, the TVET training centre had consolidated its partnership with the industry. When it came to other sectors, such as manufacturing industries, the stories were completely different. Participants mentioned that there was no coherence between the needs of the industries and the curriculum content. It seemed that training was lacking, and that socio-economic requirements and linkages were very weak. John clearly showed his disappointment concerning the curriculum content which was being used to teach the refrigeration and air-conditioning course. He said that new technologies in the trade were not being taught, and this had seriously impacted on his performance at work.

John gave a testimony that he worked with old and obsolete materials during his training because the curriculum did not provide learning units on electronics components related to refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment. John believed that, owing to this shortcoming in the curriculum, he was technically deficient in maintaining equipment equipped with electronic modules. Under this emerging theme, Jake made pertinent remarks during his interview on his company having recruited expatriate craftsmen in refrigeration. He associated his move from his company with the company having a very bad experience relating to the quality of our locally trained people in this area. The company faced previously, according to Jake, a very dismissive attitude by the locally trained people, lack of discipline and maturity, and they were technically poor, and not competent enough to perform according to the company's expected performance criteria.

Consequently, the weak linkages between TVET service providers and the industrial world of work resulted from this problem in correlation with other external factors. This has led to the decline of the quality of the trainees' technical proficiency within the place of work, vis-à-vis industries' requirement. TVET institution cooperation with industries cannot be marginalised in the present socio-economic and technological context, as such cooperation cannot be dissociated from the broader concepts of national development, manpower requirements, industrialization, technology acquisition, and research. According to Wedekind & Mutereko (2016), in all the cases, the TVET curriculum responsiveness required a thoughtful consideration of the students, employers, and societal needs.

In the present context, when developing or upgrading the TVET curriculum, it is imperative that the training provider ensure that the curriculum matches the occupational standards required by the industries. The occupational standards must emanate from the industries, and should be updated regularly to match the current and future development taking place in occupations. When the training provider is developing its curriculum, it must ensure that it matches the latest occupational standards. And the curriculum documents must obtain the approval of the consortium of industries. This will ensure strong collaboration between TVET institutions and industries. Industries could not refrain from recruiting TVET trainees on the grounds that they do not possess the necessary skills required by the industries, the curriculum being vetted and approved by them.

4.3.1.8 Structural issues concerning TVET

This theme emerged during the collection of data. Narratives of participants revealed some structural issues related to the TVET system which are considered critical and also relevant to the critical questions posed by this study. There was one issue that warranted mention in this study concerning access to the TVET programmes. Jake narrated that, in 2000, when he applied for the training course in the trade of refrigeration and air conditioning, there were only 25 seats available for the said course. Selection was made from over 2000 applications. It is obvious that there were over 1975 applicants who did not secure a place. The question is where they went. Clearly, access to TVET is unequal with respect to spatial distribution/location, age, specialization, and ownership. Policymakers must adopt policies that enable improved equity of access to training opportunities.

TVET is usually more expensive than academic education in terms of cost per trainee. In order to increase enrolment capacity without increasing the unit cost of training per trainee while upholding high ethical and professional standards, policymakers must consider reengineering the actual apprenticeship mode of training, in line with labour-market needs. Within the framework of its strategy for TVET, apprenticeship, which is also called the dual training system, needs to be reinforced, by consolidating strong links with industries, and building up strong institutional support in promoting skills that lead for employment.

The trainers' impact was also captured during the data collection phase. Participants showed great admiration for their trainers. Most of the study participants said that they spent a memorable time during their training course. All the study participants

commented on how competent their TVET programme trainers were, and that the trainers were one of the main drivers for their decision to stay on their course. Jake, for instance, mentioned that at one point he was keen to leave the course; however, his trainers had encouraged him, and convinced him to continue with the course. Shawn narrated that his trainers were very strict, and never compromised on discipline issues. John said he was so impressed with one of his trainers that he was now imitating him as a role model. From their narratives, it was found that participants had formed strong bonds and relationships with their trainers. Stories clearly portray that participants considered their trainers as father figures, seeking advice from them. They admitted that the trainers were caring and kind. The trainers' impact was not only connected to the training centre but also to student motivation to persevere in their studies. Shawn and John confessed that they were motivated to pursue further studies following advice and support from their trainers.

4.3.1.9 Opportunities

The narratives clearly showed that TVET had helped these participants by enabling them to do the job for which they were trained. TVET had been a contributor to their career development. The stories of former TVET students concerning opportunities with the TVET programme they followed were exciting. Shawn mentioned that the course itself required more psychomotor skills which was completely different from the standard academic education which he was used to. All the participants found great mentors amongst their trainers. Shawn admitted that during his studying years he learned a great deal; he changed quite drastically, in the sense that he matured. All the participants averred that there has been a complete transformation of their personalities, in that they became much better and more skilled as people. They attributed this to their

mentors and trainers. Past students mentioned that tutors had had a huge influence on their lives. Shawn confessed that the TVET course he followed enabled him to access a degree programme at a French university on the grounds that the TVET school where he was had a “twinning” agreement with the university.

Luckily, all the participants found interesting industrial placements. All the stories agreed that TVET had managed to help them obtain worthwhile employment. This led them to use their learned trades’ skills, applying them in the workplace. All the participants mentioned that they had had many job opportunities since then. Jake and John mentioned that job offers were coming from everywhere. The participants told the researcher that, looking back, they do not have any regrets about having opted for a TVET course; and they strongly believed that they had made the correct decisions. The TVET course also provided them with opportunities for self-employment. Jake, John and Jessica undertake private jobs when they are not officially working for the company.

From the narratives of the participants it seems clear that TVET had paved the way to career and career success. It can be said that TVET has been the blueprint to career success. TVET courses allowed these participants to gain credentials for accessing the labour market. The TVET courses have also given the opportunity for access to higher degree courses. TVET courses had enhanced the entry into the workplace of these participants. Also, the TVET courses had provided opportunities for preparing these people for lifelong learning. Everyone is satisfied, having a good job, because of the TVET course they followed.

4.3.1.10 Challenges

The challenges confronted by the former TVET students were not exhaustive. The narratives revealed some challenges faced by the study participants during their TVET courses and also during their career journeys. The main challenges faced during the TVET course time showed that, in technical subjects such as with the refrigeration and air conditioning programmes, there was a lack of updated training equipment in the workshops, inadequate learning facilities, absence of industrial synergies, and poor exposure for the TVET trainees during on-the-job training (apprenticeship mode). John admitted that, in his case, training was conducted with the use of obsolete training equipment; and workshops were no longer compatible with current industrial practices. John confessed that the training did not help him much in terms of providing him with the competencies required for an updated technician.

These challenges were further worsened when it came to the apprenticeship mode of training. As an apprentice, Jake was not attached to the technical unit, as per the apprentice contract. The apprenticeship mode, also referred to as a dual training system, is further worsened by poor exposure available to TVET trainees/apprentices during their on-the-job training, largely because of the weak monitoring mechanism put in place to coordinate the operational features of the dual training system. Jake also confirmed that he was not prepared to join the world of work immediately after leaving secondary college. There was a lack of preparedness for school leavers to join as apprentices when admitted to the dual training system. John articulated that the challenge is exacerbated by the lack of state of the art technology and workshops, especially in the engineering trades. In general, according to the stories of the study participants, TVET institutions have not been able to attract meaningful technology to

their sites. This will eventually affect the quality and competencies of a graduate in such circumstances. Shawn projected that in the tourism sector there was strong collaboration between hotels and the school. For this reason the hotel school was attracting many students. In the manufacturing and other sectors, there was no synergy between industry and training centres; and thus, there is a wider variance between the curricula that TVET training centres offer, and what industries expect.

Another challenge faced by former TVET students was discrimination. In Mauritius, TVET is traditionally perceived to be a male-dominated stream. Of recent decades, the issue of gender sensitization has become an important issue to be addressed, mainly in the TVET stream. Crucially, it is necessary to improve gender equality. Jessica told me that she felt discriminated against during practical classes by male trainees as though males believe that they hold a monopoly on manual work.

Jessica incurred a sexist approach from her male colleagues as she was the only woman in the job. Electricians in an electricity supply company tend to be men. The tone is set for masculine stereotypes creating gender tension and demotivation. For example, engineering and technology have been fields heavily populated by men for a long time. Jessica, in the early stages of her work, felt inhibited by such a male-dominated environment. She perceived it as highly stressful and difficult. It was impossible for her to be appreciated and valued by her male counterparts. The society has been structured in such a way as to create gender stereotypes. The traditional gender stereotype is that women's primary social roles are wife and mother; whereas men play the primary role of breadwinner (Franks, Schurink, Fourie, 2006).

Hartman (2010) argues that male workers play an important role in maintaining sexual divisions in the labour process. Jessica reported that male counterparts used vulgar language which showed a disrespectful attitude towards her. Jessica, as an electrician working in the electricity supply industry, expressed that on work sites she was not respected to the same extent as men were, and she was intimidated by the much larger number of male professionals. There were long-term implications of sexism in this sector. Jessica felt she had to work under considerable pressure to perform well, by comparison with her male counterparts. Jessica, as a woman electrician in this male-dominated environment, experienced sexist jokes, derogatory comments, and sexist behaviour from her male colleagues. Jessica admitted that over time this sexist behaviour had stopped, and the relationship between her and her male counterparts had been normalised.

Women working in male-dominated professions and environments face experiences that are very different from their counterparts in more gender-balanced and female-dominated professions. These experiences affect women's integration and potential success in male-dominated professions. There are very interesting opportunities for career growth for women in male-dominated professions. With technological advances leading the change in the global economy, and no country graduating enough professionals in the STEM fields to fulfil the global demand, there are many available positions that pay well and have a future of low unemployment (Red Shoe movement, 2017). Challenges that these former students faced were also concerned with the structural and institutional issues pertaining to TVET delivery. It was evident that trainees were taught on obsolete equipment, and there was poor monitoring of apprentices undertaking their on-the-job training. It was also noted that in some

engineering trades there was weak cooperation with industries: this impacted on the quality of the TVET products.

4.3.1.11 Career aspiration

Under this theme, most of the participants had a clear understanding of what they wished to do straight after completion of the training course. The participants readily shared how their TVET course had impacted their career aspirations. Only Shawn was diverted from his chosen career notwithstanding the relevancy of the TVET course he followed. Shawn chose to pursue further academic studies for a university degree programme. Approximately 75% of the study participants wished to pursue a career in the same particular field to which they had dedicated themselves in their TVET courses. John, Jake and Jessica worked in the related field after the course they followed. John and Jake followed refrigeration and air conditioning courses. They are now respectively refrigeration and air-conditioning technicians, Jessica followed a TVET course in electrical works installation: she is presently an electrician. Shawn was the exception, following a course in Tourism and Hospitality Management, but becoming a structural developer, management consultant, and presently lecturing in a privately owned university in the faculty of management. The narratives clearly showed that 75% of the participants chose careers related to the trade which followed on from their training. They easily assumed the skills and experience gained during their training, applying such in their present occupation.

Shawn chose a path different from TVET. After completion of his HSC, he showed great interest in a university degree programme. He joined TVET as a last resort, wishing to pursue a post-secondary academic path. He conceived that at the end of his

TVET course, he would find himself in a blue-collar job, which he considered a negative aspect of the TVET. The stigma associated with blue-collar jobs is a demotivating factor for people such as Shawn in forging a lifelong career. In Mauritius, blue-collar workers receive salaries far lower than white-collar workers. TVET in Mauritius has been recognised as a means of enhancing the country's development in its bid to become a high-income country by 2030; with the supply of skilled workers in the various sectors of the economy. To achieve same, blue-collar job stigma should be ended. Policymakers have made very little effort in this direction, as evidenced in the present educational reforms undertaken in improving TVET delivery. Policymakers need to concentrate on addressing the mitigation of blue-collar jobs stigma.

The issue of poor perception towards TVET and poor blue-collar job attitudes appears to have drawn little attention and strategic direction. The circumstances surrounding Shawn's choice of participating in TVET programme was perhaps the reason for not pursuing his career option in TVET-related areas. TVET image and status needs to be enhanced and attractiveness increased; which will involve changing perceptions and attitudes of the public about TVET, by partnering with international institutions to improve the quality of TVET. In that instance, all existing TVET students should be allowed to have a mandatory period of internship in high profile industries, which will help reposition the Mauritian TVET by improved participation of industries in training delivery.

The accepted wisdom of career aspiration is that young people should form career ambitions around the subjects they like, and avoid fields they dislike. John planned to become head of the maintenance unit. He stated that, as he knew almost all the ins and

outs of the facilities management, he believed that he was competent enough to compete for this position in the near future. In the case of Jake, he had his future career planned and carefully constructed, even preparing to upgrade his management qualifications to be fit for the managerial position in his technical department. For the time being, Jake had taken a break in the pursuit of his future progress. He is spending time with his son and family. Jessica dreamt of being an electrician and she has already attained the said position. She is planning for the future to climb the ladder to become a supervisor. Shawn is still willing to continue with his international consulting, and intends publishing some research articles.

Most of the study participants had a clear understanding of where they were going in the future. It was evident that the majority of the participants who were fond of the technical trades had joined a career in the field relevant to the course they had followed. About their future career, they believed that they had earned enough experience in their technical trade. Now it was time to move higher in position by way of promotion at supervisory or managerial level. Either way, most of the participants had a plan for what they wanted to do in the future, and how they were going to get there. This finding was critical in understanding the career aspirations of these former TVET students, after having worked and earned experiences in their technical trades. Whether they will continue to remain in this position or move to a non-manual position such as a supervisor or manager, will be a useful topic for future research.

4.3.1.12 Career paths/trajectories

In the context of the thematic analysis, the study participants revealed their career paths after obtaining their TVET qualifications to the present time. The narratives of these

participants captured the transitions of these students from TVET to work. Students for tertiary education are in short supply and coordination of the TVET training centres with industry is poor. TVET has clear initiatives to direct and support its graduates to gain access to occupations in which training is given. Political discourse has emphasised the importance of TVET for better preparing young people for the demands of the economy and the labour market. From participants' narratives, one may observe the career paths experienced by graduates of the system.

Shawn was the only TVET student that took up his occupation in non-course-related areas. In the interview on his career path, Shawn shared how he had embraced the concept of a non-linear path throughout his career. He joined as a structural developer, then turned to management consultant, progressing through roles in developing an airport terminal, before moving into lecturing in a private university. He made sure that his move was seamless. He found the link between the roles he was moving between and his love of change. His ability to adapt to different situations certainly helped him succeed in his non-linear career path. About a non-linear career path, Shawn said "setting career goals is important, as well as being prepared to step outside of your comfort zone. In an increasingly competitive market, it's crucial to understand that a single decision will not define your entire career".

Jessica provided her comments particularly in relation to the challenges faced by her as female electrician in a male-dominated sector, where she confronted sexist approaches from her male counterparts. She affirmed that her aspirations of being a technician and leading a team were legitimate, and are very similar to those of her male counterparts. It was hard to compete in this sector because the competition was very tough and there

were no females who achieved that level. From their narratives, it is clear that those who made their career in the field of their TVET study had opted for a linear career path. Shawn was the only one who diverted from his TVET programme, opting for a non-linear career path. All the study participants are following their passion or love of their profession.

All three participants who joined an occupation relevant to the course they followed, had had linear career paths. They remained in the same profession/functional area for their entire careers. They had moved between companies, business areas, and product lines, but found their fulfilment in building increased expertise in one functional area. They are referred to by most organisations as individual contributors; or in the case of very experienced professional, “subject matter experts”. John, Jake and Jessica stayed in their respective fields for a fairly long time with the aim of increasing their competencies, becoming subject matter experts. John said that he wished to increase his competencies and knowledge in the latest air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment, so as to maintain an edge over other technicians. Over 25% of all careers, including entrepreneurial careers, occur within formal organisational contexts and are predicated on fixed notions of organisational control, loyalty, and long-term membership (Granovetter, 1995). The notions of upward and linear career movement within hierarchies have become entrenched and popular: employees strive to achieve upward career path movement, leading towards career success.

According to Singular (1983), the linear career path is commonly known as the ladder as in “climbing the corporate ladder to the top of the pyramid”. All the study participants except Shawn, aimed to climb the next rung of the ladder. Jake mentioned

that he was presently taking a rest; eventually he would pursue further studies to upgrade his qualification, meeting the criterion for managerial position. Traditional linear career models pinpoint growth and progress at specific hierarchical levels. The length of time in a position, the social desirability of the position's title, and the amount of power accorded a particular organisational role describe the individual's organisational power and personal worth (Buzzanell, 1991).

4.3.1.13 Career success determinants

Career choices and success are affected by one's immediate environment, parents, and social context; as well as one's idiosyncratic characteristics such as age, gender, specific talents, interests, and values. Adding to this wide array of influences are also broader issues, such as geography and political and economic climate (Zikic & Hall, 2009).

The previous theme of career paths of former TVET students clearly shows that careers were predictable, secure, and linear in the majority of cases. When it comes to Shawn's story, his career was also predictable in the sense that after he studied for his degree programme, he joined an occupation relevant to that programme content. According to Baruch (2006) nowadays, organisational and environmental systems are highly dynamic and fluid, making careers more unpredictable, vulnerable, and multidirectional. Traditionally, careers were closely linked to hierarchies (Wilesky, 1961). People competed for promotions, and climbing up the ladder was the ultimate indicator of success (Rosenbaum, 1979).

Nearly three out of the four participants are constantly positioned/positioning themselves for promotion, and climbing the ladder in the established hierarchies in their respective organisations. Consequently, it can be said that these organisations are still valuing a hierarchical type of organisational structure, in which upward movement would be the ultimate goal of employees in measuring their career success. There was a feeling of pride captured in participants during the interview, for having obtained promotions and assuming higher responsibilities. Having moved higher up the ladder helped them reach a position of prestige. Nowadays, careers and success therein are defined and formed more individually (Heslin, 2005). In this holistic perspective, careers are not limited to moving up the ladder (Carlson & Rotondo, 2001) in the work sphere; careers include a lifelong sequence of role-related experiences which individuals hold (Super, 1980). In the particular situation of these former TVET students, there was movement towards an objective element of career success as they strived hard to climb the ladder in the hierarchy. Promotion is mostly considered as observable, measurable, and verifiable attainments; it has the objective of career success. In the case of Jake it was clear that he had stagnated in one position in his previous company. There were no future avenues for promotion. He preferred to leave the company and move to a rival company as the salary offered was better. In this particular situation, income is a tangible element; therefore it is a predictive objective factor of career success. In the case of Shawn, however, he showed dissatisfaction with his present salary as lecturer, despite claiming that he has job satisfaction. His remuneration is not commensurate with his satisfaction. There is a contrast between the claims of having job satisfaction, considered a subjective career success determinant and dissatisfaction with his salary. Abele & Spurk (2009) show that subjective success contributes greatly to objective success. Certain research reveals that objective and

subjective career success measures correlate positively; however, only moderately (Diemer, 2008).

All study participants showed strong career motivation and commitment, which is considered person-centred factors of career success predictions. All the participants' stories revealed consistently their motivation to do their present job, meeting expectations from their related department and superiors. Thus, career motivation is primarily characterised by an individual's flexibility, realistic insight into his or her skills and abilities, ways in which to successfully pursue individually defined goals, and ways in which one subjectively values his or her professional life and career success. Jake was highly motivated to show his talent when first assigned responsibility to step in the shoes of his supervisor, the latter going on leave for a month. Jake gave of his best in executing this new assignment with dedication and commitment. In career motivation and commitment there is an element of career resilience, or the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, even when circumstances are discouraging or disruptive (Day et al., 2004). Jake showed his capacity for occupational self-efficacy, and was motivated to successfully perform occupational tasks and challenges irrespective of the particular field of occupation. Jessica faced sexist remarks from her male counterparts despite that she showed career resilience. She responded effectively to this discriminatory situation, successfully overcoming it and reaching her target as per her fixed career goals. Overall it may be assumed that all study participants had a higher level of career commitment which had contributed to their job satisfaction. This may be correlated with a subjective career success element.

Career values play an important role in determining career success. According to Brown (2002), work values are values that individuals believe should be satisfied as a result of their participation in the work role. Financial prosperity and achievement are examples of concrete work values. Jake talked about embracing integrity as a key philosophy in his work. This had contributed to his career success. Shawn had as his motto 'understand others'. This was his core career value; whereas John strived hard to maintain highly satisfied customers. Jessica was always gentle and caring to clients, so as to leave indelible footprints in the minds of her customers. John also admitted that he liked to do his job very differently, so that clients felt the need to return out of customer loyalty. These individual career values are the basis for self-evaluation, the evaluation of others; and they play an important role in establishing personal goals (Brown, 2002). The career values represent the beliefs people have about what is important in their work. The present analysis showed that the career values vary greatly from participant to participant. So how well these participants satisfy their values in their job had a definite impact on job satisfaction, which constituted an element of subjective career success. Some career theorists posit that work which is consistent with our values will be work we are more likely to invest our energies in, to master the roles, and achieve success.

Ng et al. (2005) found that human capital and socio-demographics have a strong impact on objective indicators of career success. In particular, acquired skills and knowledge are positively related to subjective and objective career success (Boudreau, 2001). Participants recognised the contribution of their TVET course in the construction of their career and success. They admitted that they had acquired the necessary technical skills and knowledge relevant to their present trade, from the TVET course they

followed. This had had a direct effect on their career success. There is confirmation of the beneficial effects of acquiring human capital formally through a TVET course for the construction of career success. It was clearly demonstrated by the study participants that their human capital earned during their TVET training was linked to their career success. All participants accepted that they had job satisfaction in their career; and this is because they are committed to their work.

The participants' narratives revealed that careers are seen as a lifelong concept in which the individual nowadays is the main agent. These former TVET students engaged in building their human capital through their training and qualifications obtained during their technical studies in a TVET training centre. Career success had also been characterised by these former TVET students as both subjective and objective. The most evident objective career success was seen in their promotions. It was necessary to possess certain core career values to gain impetus for career success. Everyone accepted that they had job satisfaction which make them happy where they were.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the data collected through the field work has been analysed thoroughly to generate key findings, so as to answer the critical questions of the present study. Interviews were codified, classified, and categorised into themes. This chapter provided the narratives of each participant under three vignettes. After these narratives, the researcher drew the emerging themes in relation to the critical questions. Under each theme, there was a comparative analysis with existing literature.

The findings presented in this chapter served to show that the former TVET students' reception of TVET and their concept of career success had influenced their careers. As well as the narratives highlighted, there were some challenges and opportunities encountered by these study participants. The following themes emerged from the analysis of the participants' stories: influencing factors for enrolling in TVET, stigmas and stereotypes, social background, intrinsic motivation, choice of the trade, curriculum responsiveness/institutional issues, training related to industries' requirement, challenges, opportunities, career success factors, career aspiration, and career paths or trajectories. While the themes were discussed separately throughout this chapter, there does appear to be some level of interdependence between them which will be explored in the next chapter.

In the following chapter, the significance of these findings will be discussed in detail. Furthermore, a cross-case analysis will be performed, on which I will discuss the similarities and differences across the four narratives. I also discuss the findings from the theoretical framework and in conjunction with the literature review.

CHAPTER FIVE

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presents an interpretation and discussion of the findings from the cross-case analysis, which compares similarities and differences across the four narratives. The undertaken cross-case analysis amalgamates the results of the study from the different stories of participants. It will help to analyse emerging issues from previous chapter, reiterated trends, and patterns with existing themes.

This chapter aims to gain a deeper understanding and a more holistic analysis of the key factors which shape the career paths leading to career success of former TVET students. After presenting the findings from the first and second stages of the analysis, and producing the detailed story write-ups in the previous chapter, this chapter presents the findings of the cross-case analysis. It is hoped to develop a solid and a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that predict the career success of former TVET students, by travelling through their career path. The cross-case analysis brings together the key issues and insights from the four stories narrated by the four participants in this study. Miles et al.(1994) postulated that cross-case analysis provides deeper understanding and explanation than derived from studying isolated cases; it therefore develops more sophisticated descriptions. According to Hartley (2004), cross-case analysis is a valuable technique in illuminating contrasts and similarities between the cases.

Yin (2009) posited that the aim of cross-case synthesis is to build a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the details of each case differ. Under each part of the findings, theoretical discussions are provided. In so doing, the key themes which emerged from the findings are linked to existing literature and theoretical perspectives.

The second part of the chapter discusses and analyses former TVET students' experiences, by juxtaposing the findings against the theoretical framework and literature review. The study draws on human and social capital theories, as well as part of the Amartya Sen theory of capability approach, mainly the element of functioning and career success predictors as a theoretical lens. This theoretical lens provides for understanding, analysis, and interpretation of the lived personal and professional experiences of former TVET students, in shaping their career paths, leading them to career success.

5.2 Visual Display of Table of Emerging Themes

In this chapter, this study adopted a cross-case analysis in which emerging themes, reiterated trends, and patterns across the different narratives of the study, were analysed. Also, a cross-case analysis often includes a visual display of similarities and differences across cases (Mathison, 2005). In this context, the chapter contains a visual display of a table to illustrate similarities and differences realised from the analysis of the four stories narrated by the participants of the study.

Below is a tabular overview or summary of the cumulative findings from the four stories in relation to the theme of the study.

Table 5.1: Overview of the Themes of the Study Aggregate Findings

SN	Themes	Story 1	Story 2	Story 3	Story 4
1	Influencing factors to enrol in TVET	No university admission, academic result not satisfying requirement	Childhood fantasy for technical subject, tinkering	Poor academic result/love technical subject	Poor academic result/belief TVET will provide better employment opportunities
2	Stigmas and Stereotypes	TVET reserved for academic failures	Liked TVET	Having better academic results, would not choose TVET	Liked TVET, faced discrimination for being blue-collar worker
3	Socio-economic status of parents	Family was indigent; could not afford university study	Family was indigent	Family was indigent	Family was indigent
4	Choice good for the trade	Hotel sector generating highest employment opportunities	Tinkering, childhood fantasy	Childhood fantasy/love of engineering	Highest employment opportunities

5	Intrinsic motivation	Not his first choice, so not highly motivated	Highly motivated as his childhood fantasy was being realised through this study	Highly motivated, liked trade subjects	Highly motivated, being enrolled in the trade he likes the most
6	Curriculum responsiveness and institutional issue	Content matched the needs of hotels sector	Content not meeting real needs of the industries	Content not totally meeting industry needs	Content not meeting the needs of the industry
7	Training related to industries' requirements	The curriculum matches the needs of the hotel sector; and good collaboration between hotels and school	Training did not incorporate latest technology that was being used in industry	Mismatch with what was required by industry	Mismatch with what was required by industry
8	Structural issues with TVET	Quality training delivery was motivating, and strict trainers. No career guidance	Motivating trainers/poor workshop equipment/curriculum content not in line with industries' requirement.	Motivating trainers/ faced with sexist behaviour in class by male trainees.	Motivating trainers/poor quality apprenticeship/ no proper monitoring/ performing tasks

			Absence of career guidance.	Absence of career guidance from AM to EIW	not in line with curriculum. Absence of career guidance; parents gave him advice
9	Challenges during training and career	Unemployment, not working with competencies learned	Training on obsolete equipment/lack of industry exposure/blue-collar profession, limited career prospects, worked outside the scope of TVET course	Faced with sexist remarks and discrimination, being a female in a male-dominated TVET programme and career.	Poor monitoring while being an apprentice, doing tasks outside those prescribed by the programme. Blue-collar workers are discriminated against
10	Opportunities during training and career	Internship, pursue further studies, becoming consultant	TVET qualifications enable one to secure a job, high job mobility, blue-collar profession career prospects only aspiring to	TVET qualification enabled him to secure a job, upgrading of qualification s,	Take greater responsibility during apprenticeship, exposure to real world of work, high job mobility.

			become a supervisor.		
11	Career aspiration	Different professions, individual control of his career	Becoming a supervisor the only legitimate position for a blue-collar worker	Becoming a supervisor the only legitimate position for a blue-collar worker.	Already a supervisor: the highest position for blue-collar worker, aspiring to become a manager; needs to follow a university degree programme
12	Career paths and trajectories	Non-linear career paths: he is more in a protean career.	Linear career paths, blue-collar highest position, hierarchical organisational structure	Linear career paths, blue-collar highest position, hierarchical organisational structure	Linear career paths, blue-collar highest position, hierarchical organisational structure
13	Career success factors	Being protean careerist, mostly subjective indicator	Traditional organisational structure, having both subjective and	Traditional organisational structure, having both subjective	Traditional organisational structure, having both subjective and objective

			objective indicators for career success	and objective indicators for career success	indicators for career success
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5.3 Factors for Joining TVET

Each of the participants spoke of ways in which they arrived at a TVET programme. They spoke of how this had helped them gain career goals accomplished through technical trades' knowledge acquisition. These former TVET students explained that they had entered a TVET institution. There were some valid reasons for this; their TVET qualification has played an important role in success within their jobs.

Similarly, across all the cases, one thing that emerged was that participants recognised that TVET had a lower status than an academic institution, such as a university (Kersh & Juul, 2015). Story 1 clearly showed that the student always had in mind that TVET was for those who intended becoming manual workers. The findings above are a strong indication of the influence of socio-economic status of family influencing the choice to select a TVET course. The striking correlation between all the narratives, was that, academically, they were not high flyers. This had edged them towards a TVET course. The social background and academic results were determining factors among all the narratives for enrolling in TVET. This is not far from what has been postulated by Kersh & Juul (2015), that most government policy has used vocationally related educational programmes to initiate a range of schemes for disadvantaged young people. This is to some extent the reason for public perception of TVET programmes being specifically for young people who have not succeeded in their academic education; socially, they cannot afford to opt for higher academic education. Despite the continued rhetoric concerning poor perception towards TVET, society tends to attribute higher

status to academic education. Nevertheless, TVET alleviated youth unemployment and was a major stakeholder in providing a skilled workforce (Ogbunaya, 2015). All the narratives converged on the fact that their TVET programmes had enabled them to gain employment, which confirmed TVET as a conduit for employment, according to Ogbunaya (2015). There was substantial agreement among the four narratives that the TVET qualifications provided candidates with promising career prospects. Access to critical knowledge and skills at the workplace was achieved, relevant to the trades in which the qualification was obtained. Linten (2014) inferred that choosing a career in TVET if only because there was no other choice, was still a legitimate way of gaining access to global education and the job market.

One case found that TVET lack of attractiveness was an issue. He did not have another alternative; whereas the other three cases showed that TVET had been attractive to them from a young age because they were passionate about all things technical. The three cases support Cedefop's (2014) claims. TVET has to be imbued with attractiveness, which would encourage individuals to deliberately choose TVET. The institution must offer qualifications opening up career prospects and persuading employers to recruit holders of TVET qualifications. The three cases do not give a precise indication about whether their passion for technical tinkering motivated them to take a TVET programme. Did the TVET stream draw these individuals towards it, it being the best stream providing plentiful career prospects?

5.4 Stigmas and Stereotypes Factors

One participant clearly stated that TVET was not his first choice. He and his parents associated TVET with manual workers only. One subject wanted to take a TVET course because of his fantasy apropos of engineering. One participant mentioned that if she were an academic highflyer, she would be in a better position than presently, as a blue-collar profession. One

participant recounted that he opted for TVET as he did not wish to pursue an academic route. In his opinion this was more lengthy in duration and costly, with few job opportunities. For him, TVET was the quickest route to obtaining a qualification and having greater employment opportunities. Everyone admitted somewhere in their narratives that they had encountered people remarking that TVET was inferior to academic education. They also believed that career prospects of TVET qualification holders were mainly in the line of blue-collar professions. One participant admitted being faced with blue-collar discrimination from the white-collar workers during the performance of his duty. The academic – vocational divide is manifested here in people's mind today, in Mauritius. There is a division between TVET and academically oriented programmes on exiting the secondary college level.

The narratives clearly infer that there is a poor perception of TVET. Emphasis was laid on those not successful in academic education being propelled into TVET. The literature review put forward this unfortunate stigmatisation of TVET. The institution was branded a field for learners with poor academic credentials. Essel, Agyarkoh, Sumaila, DeGratt and Yankson (2014) made it clear that the negative perceptions of TVET are the cause of stigmas and stereotyping. Ironically, this comes from intellectuals who are better positioned to demystify the situation. A female trainee had sexist remarks made during her TVET training by her male colleagues. Engineering trades were normally considered highly male-dominated TVET programmes. She also was subjected to stereotyping, being a female in a traditionally male-dominated blue-collar job. More women are gradually entering blue-collar jobs that previously have been male-dominated. Palmer & Lee (1990), in their study, referred to this issue, and confirmed that male co-workers treated other male co-workers more favourably than they would treat female co-workers in traditionally male-dominated blue-collar jobs.

5.5 Socio-economic Status of Parents

Participants, in general, confirmed that coming from indigent families was the most determining trait for their educational attainment. They believed that social capital inherited had direct implications on their choice of a TVET programme. Education makes it possible for young people to prepare for prestigious occupations, and for moving up the social ladder. On the other hand, a great deal of research indicates that a child's educational opportunities tend to vary proportionately with the social status of his parents. Across all socio-economic segments, parents undeniably face major challenges when it comes to providing education for their children. One of the critical educational decisions young people make is the selection of a post-secondary college educational route after completion of their secondary education. Leppel, Williams, Waldauer (2001) maintained that the initial choice of post-secondary college studies is the single best predictor of one's higher education choice upon graduation, and one's initial career or occupation.

5.6 Choice for the Trade

There has been much research on the decision-making process which students follow when selecting a higher education institution. These studies mentioned the following factors behind the decision-making process: need for recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, developing and managing their marketing mix, choice of factors such as media, institutional accessibility, and academic and non-academic programmes. Other factors were social opportunities, economic considerations, the reputation of the institutions, value location, non-academic services, scholarship, affordability, prestige and quality, career preparation, admission requirements, employment possibilities, course content, student experiences, sporting aspects, and financial considerations (Bonnema & Van Der Waldt, 2008; De Jager &

Du Plooy, 2006; Martin, 1994; Hannukainen, 2008; Drew & Michael, 2006; Arpan, Raney, Ziunuska, 2003; Punnarach, 2004; Bajsh & Hoyt, 2001; Espinoza, Bradshaw, Hansman, 2002; Van Dimitros, 1980; Hawkins, Best, Coney, 2004). Two cases illustrate that the choice of the TVET programme was determined by employment possibilities offered by the specific trades. One participant confirmed the issue of information search. He was looking to deepen his understanding of engineering, because he delighted in tinkering. One student of a TVET programme greatly admired technical pursuits, then found herself in a male-dominated blue-collar profession.

5.7 Motivational Factors

The cross-case analysis indicated that three of the four participants in the study showed high motivation for the trades they chose. Their careers were related to the programme of study they had followed. This is consistent with the reviewed literature, in which work motivation is considered an important aspect directly impacting on productivity, and driving employees to career success. This is consistent with the position of researchers such as Dwivedula & Bredilet (2009), who argue that work motivation plays an important role for an employee. This is characterised by dimensions such as a secure and interesting job, ability to perform the job, recognition from superiors and colleagues, and adequate pay and feedback on performance. One participant stated that motivational factors were not there for him to continue a career in the trade in which he obtained his TVET qualification. He conceded that job context factors were few in the hotel sector; therefore he had a complete change in vocation, opting for an academic educational path.

Work can lead to a feeling of great satisfaction for many workers, which constitutes a key element for achieving career success. From the literature reviewed, it is clear that the TVET

stream produces technicians which mostly embrace blue-collar jobs. It is important that these skilled workers experience positive feelings toward their tasks, so that they remain motivated to provide the best quality work. Moreover, the structure of the work and the employees' degree of satisfaction with the job are important in increasing motivation and satisfaction with their work. All the participants in this study showed great job satisfaction, which implies that they were highly motivated.

5.8 Curriculum Responsiveness and Institutional Issues

Wedekind (2016) made it clear that, for any vocational or occupational programme to be effective, it should remain responsive to a range of issues, amongst which the needs of employers, shifts in technology, and the needs of the students and society are considerations. Wedekind (2016) further added that a curriculum that is not able to adjust to the changes in the knowledge field, in technology, or to the conditions of the labour market, variations in regional or local, or firm-specific conditions, or the needs of students, quickly becomes outdated and totally irrelevant. This has a direct implication in that those enrolled in these programmes are not suitable for employment. Three participants enrolled in TVET engineering programmes found that their curriculum was not responding to the specific needs of the industries; and material taught in class was already obsolete.

One participant, in the hotel sector, mentioned that the curriculum contents covered what was basically required by the hotel industries. This was probably because TVET in hospitality management does not require heavy investment in terms of equipment compared with that of engineering trades, where heavy investment is required in high-tech machinery. Terblanche (2017) confirms that a TVET curriculum required for better industry involvement would enhance responsiveness to industry needs and requirements. Mauritius has constructed its

TVET system around the “supply side”. The decisions concerning the TVET programme are taken by the institution and the Ministry of Education within the various education administrations. Such decisions are based on catering to dropouts and failures within the academic stream. There is little serious reference to labour market needs and their future development. Also, there is little consensus amongst TVET specialists on the relationship between attractiveness of the TVET courses and TVET leading to sustainable occupations. There is some agreement that the contribution of TVET to the process of economic growth of a country is an important feature. This is an undeniable fact, and contrasts with the poor appeal of TVET to the public. Some TVET specialists argue that this lacklustre appeal is a consequence of the poor human resource planning and minimal industry participation. Such has led to insufficient dialogue between the various stakeholders in the policy implementation process.

It was unanimously agreed that there was total absence of career guidance prior to the initial selection of a TVET programme. Literature reviewed consistently put forward the importance of career guidance for the TVET stream. UNESCO (2002) maintains that vocational guidance and counselling are powerful and effective methods of bridging the gap between education and the world of work; also very helpful in school and society. Zelloth (2014) further argued that both career guidance prior to TVET, as well as career guidance within TVET, will make an important contribution to TVET; first, by serving as an eye-opener to stimulate TVET demand and act as a change agent to improve TVET supply. Demand will help to improve efficiency of TVET. All participants reported the non-existence of career guidance and counselling which they believed could have contributed to better understanding of the world of work in all its facets.

Two participants complained that their workshops were poorly equipped; they did not have the latest machinery and equipment. In the literature reviewed, much attention has been drawn to TVET as a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work. Ogbuanya (2014) averred that the acquisition of relevant skills for technical proficiency can only be acquired in a well-functioning workshop, stocked with relevant equipment and facilities. This is widely accepted to ensure quality TVET programmes, affording dependable and sustainable employment skills to the learners.

The cross-case analysis reported that two participants showed concern about quality issues of the TVET programmes they followed. This was mainly apropos of content not matching the present needs of the industry, lack of monitoring during the apprenticeship period, and practical training conducted on obsolete equipment. One participant lauded the relevancy of the programme to the current needs of the hotel industries. Obierika (2016) cited that quality assurance in TVET is a concept connected with high performance in activities involved in TVET such as teaching, learning, infrastructure, student behaviour, and the entire academic process. The researcher added that the quality of TVET also refers to input and output of the programmes – the expression of standards by which certain goals may be achieved. The literature reviewed confirms the importance of having a well-structured quality assurance system for an efficient TVET. This is presently absent, as reported in the narratives of two participants.

One participant took his TVET programme through the apprenticeship mode, admitting that there was poor monitoring, and also confirming that he was performing tasks not according to the provision of the curriculum, nor as per the trade requirement. UNESCO (2015) suggests that “work-based learning should be promoted in its various forms, including apprenticeships”.

UNESCO (2015) further maintains that “public policies should foster and facilitate quality apprenticeships to help youth to develop their knowledge skills and competencies and gain work experience”. A well-established apprenticeship system plays a vital role in smoothing school-to-work transition by providing relevant work experience in a real labour-market environment while students learn a trade. This was not the case for the apprentice presented in the study. He did not earn work experience in the relevant trade in which he was being trained.

Sexism and discrimination were other key TVET institutional factors which one female participant echoed as impacting upon smooth integration of female trainees into a male-dominated TVET programme. This case shows the extent of gender segregation in the male-dominated trades. A strong view was expressed by female students that they were fully capable of doing the male-dominated trades; however, gender stereotypes and feelings of intimidation deter women from entering these trades (Struthers, 2016).

5.9 Challenges and Opportunities Faced by TVET Students

All the participants mentioned that the TVET qualification had contributed positively to their employability. This confirmation from respondents’ narratives that the TVET stream was a good source of employment proves that the TVET stream remains the ideal route for gaining work and addressing youth unemployment. Also, the literature on TVET tackling of youth unemployment has been increasingly highlighting the importance of quality TVET, well placed to address issues such as skills mismatch. Such issues have impeded a smooth school-to-work transition for many young people (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2013).

Three participants of the four were trained in an engineering trade, gaining a blue-collar profession. This infers that TVET produces technicians, catering mainly to the blue-collar

profession. One participant reported that he had received disrespectful looks from white-collar workers while executing his task as a blue-collar employee. These findings complement the work of other scholars who have focussed on this persistent tension between white-collar and blue-collar workers. For instance, MacFingall (2015) pointed out that, historically, the white-collar worker appeared to feel superior to a blue-collar worker. The scorn affected blue-collar workers, who then felt inferior. Such derision could arise from the dirty clothes of many blue-collar workers. The manual labour naturally causes their clothes to become soiled and sometimes even to carry an unpleasant odour. Literature reviewed consistently placed TVET as a production machine for producing technicians. Such graduates have employment opportunities in the manual work domain. It is widely accepted that blue-collar job profiles are predominantly addressed through technical education.

Two participants reported that they were working in occupations not related to the TVET course followed, despite being recruited for a position relevant to the programme followed. TVET plays a crucial role in providing skilled manpower that is needed at all levels of the economy. The skills so developed should lead to self-reliance and enhancement of the industry. ILO (2015) states that TVET plays a central role in the development of core skills for employability. Quality, demand-driven TVET, offers skills developments for equipping young people with skills they will need. On a programme level, TVET training centres should ensure that the content is viable long-term, linking skills developed during the training period to nationally-recognised competencies as presently required by industries. This linkage would ensure gaining access to employment relevant to the programme followed (ILO, 2013).

One participant preferred not to enter into employment after completion of his TVET programme. Instead, he pursued further academic studies at the level of a university degree

programme. As a result, his career destination was not similar to those who joined the labour market just after completion of their training. On the other hand, the other three participants preferred to enter into work related to their TVET qualification obtained. All of them took up blue-collar positions. The opportunities in terms of career progression for a blue-collar professional are often limited. The highest possible achievable position would be in a supervisory capacity. Literature reviewed has consistently revealed this position concerning blue-collar workers' recognition status, career progression, and career success, which is somewhat different to that of white-collar workers (Hennequin, 2007; Zakaria, Yamin, Maarof, 2017; Schulzke, 2015).

5.10 Career Aspiration and Career Pathing Factors

Career aspirations of the four respondents were analysed. It appears that one case reflects an apparent difference in internalization of career progression. This participant wishes to be in control of his career. He is not willing to remain in only one organisation or in one profession. This person's career is flexible and open to suggestion rather than fixed and inflexible, as in a traditionally bureaucratic career. Two participants accepted that they were in a blue-collar profession, therefore their final target in terms of climbing the ladder of hierarchy would be to become a supervisor. In one case, the participant had already reached the highest position in his blue-collar job; that is, being a supervisor. He now wishes to become a manager. To achieve this ideal he must pursue further academic studies; that is, taking a university degree course. In all cases, reference was made to continuous upgrading of competencies to cope with the rapid changes occurring in technology. This counters the position of Argote & Ingram (2000) in their emphasis on learning playing a critical role in white-collar work. The reason for advancing this position was that white-collar environments frequently evolve rapidly. Workers must continually learn new facts to perform well and remain relevant. This contrasts with the stand

of scholars in TVET in which emphasis is placed on reskilling of technicians to be abreast of constant changes in technology. It is commonly known that, although we have been taught mutual respect in school, people continue to scoff at workers on what is perceived as a lower rung.

5.11 Career Trajectories of Respondents

Three students joined the technical trades' profession related to the TVET programme that they followed. Their career paths have not taken many twists and turns. One exception in this cross-case analysis wished to move into multiple professions, learning everything he could about consultancy services. The shape of the career path taken by this person is distinctly non-linear. Coming to the three respondents who joined the blue-collar profession, the fate of these workers was tied to organisations. They identified their jobs rather than a profession. These people have remained in the same functional areas, being technologists, and finding their fulfilment in building increased expertise in one functional area.

Three respondents in the blue-collar profession confirmed that the organisation in which they are working normally adopts a traditional hierarchy type of organisational structure. These industries having a bureaucratic structure therefore provide bureaucratic employment opportunities. The literature reviewed consistently confirmed that organisations with bureaucratic structures offer careers which are predictable. They followed the movement in the upward direction along the organisation's ladder (Savickas, 2000). Career advancement for blue-collar professions is climbing only one step higher, arriving at the supervisory level. The bureaucratic organisational structure offers the same to blue-collar professionals with limited

career opportunities, which leads to a dead end for them. These three participants had followed a linear career path.

5.12 Career Success Factors

One participant appeared a protean careerist, having individual control over his career. This indicated more of a subjective type of career success determinant. Being in a protean career realm, he has control over his career goals. He is driven by psychological success rather than objective career success such as remuneration, rank, or power. The remaining three participants are in technical trades' professions, working in organisations adopting a bureaucratic/hierarchical type of organisational structure. They revealed characteristics of both subjective and objective career success. The three participants in blue-collar professions offered success stories. They followed largely attainable ideals. These kinds of remarkable achievements can be useful for individuals who are pursuing traditional blue-collar career tracks in reaching modest to moderate levels of professional and financial success. Lucas et al. (2004) confirm that blue-collar workers are at a particular disadvantage in terms of attaining the same magnitude and similar type of career success as white-collar workers. In contrast to white-collar careers, which focus on knowledge skills, opportunities for hierarchical advancement and management of employees, blue-collar occupations are defined by their physical labour component and generally are characterised by stationary hierarchical levels, typically in low-ranked positions and managed by supervisors or mechanical controls (Ansberry, 2003; Gibson & Papa, 2000). Career success tends mostly to relate to people having employment; and by extension, TVET is meant to lead someone to being employable, a stepping stone to career success.

5.13 Discussion

5.13.1 Human capital

This finding applies to the educational level as noted under the human capital theory, whereby possessing hands-on skills is an important attribute for gaining quality employment. A TVET education was an important element in influencing the productive capacity and earning potential of former TVET students. The findings pointed out not only the importance of the educational level but also the knowledge, skills, competencies, and life skills embodied in the former TVET students, acquired during their TVET training when obtaining employment. The study has unpacked the interrelationships among skills gained from TVET courses and TVET qualifications, educational levels, work experience, industriousness, and intelligence. As discussed in the literature review, the foundation of one's human capital is the knowledge and skills acquired by an individual through learning activities (Bontis, 2001).

Indeed, OECD (2013) argues that individuals whose human capital is inappropriate for current and modern employers may struggle greatly to gain employment. Analysis and interpretation of findings on issues in modern economies where rapid technological changes are taking place, have left many of the former TVET students redundant. As such, they need technical upgrading. However, there is a small body of literature on the role which TVET plays in increasing opportunities for self-employment or good employment contracts. In the recent study by UNESCO-UNEVOC (2013), it appears that TVET plays a crucial role in equipping students with occupational competencies for joining the world of work, or for self-employment.

TVET also presented overall positive opportunities enabling students to acquire entrepreneurial skills so as to launch themselves into entrepreneurial endeavours. There

is an absence of literature, particularly on TVET qualification holders' success factors in developing their own enterprises. In the findings, one female participant faced sexism and discrimination in her place of work, despite having the same or higher human capital as her male counterparts. Differences in treatment and job opportunities are not necessarily due to differences in human capital, but the result of discrimination and labour-market imperfections (Dae-Bong, 2009).

Human capital is said to bring about development in various ways by providing the labour market with a supply of skilled workers. However, the situation in most developing countries such as Mauritius might prove otherwise. Recently, the closure of manufacturing industries has left many with technical and vocational skills idle. Mauritius and other developing countries cannot fully exploit the abilities and skills of human capital as they do not have enough jobs to offer. Thus, these developing countries have become a human-capital-generating machine for the developed world.

Earlier literature focussed on the formal schooling phase as an important element of human capital in the participation of the economic health of a country. Traditionally, this has been measured mostly on 'cognitive' measures rather than psychomotor measures which are widely used in TVET teaching. However, studies on human capital have not established the relationship between skills, tasks, and wages. Skills, tasks, and wages are interlinked; accordingly, the participants become skilful, developing efficient technical tasks, and enabling the skilful worker to draw higher wages (Ishak, 2015).

The finding supports the suggestion that human capital obtained with a formal TVET programme and career success are intertwined. Unsurprisingly, the finding shows that

skills training received during TVET courses matters crucially for former TVET students in obtaining earnings, and providing better career opportunities in terms of promotion and career mobility (Ng et al., 2005).

The researcher can testify that the evidence in this study shows that TVET graduates have enhanced their productive possibilities through skills, knowledge, and competencies when looking through the human capital lens, as it focuses on the agency of human beings. The human capital approach to TVET illustrates that economic growth and individual incomes are important because they are the means of expanding people's freedom in society. The researcher believes that to win the hard-fought battle towards achieving economic development and sustainability for Mauritius, it is imperative to have quality human capital in the area of TVET. A lack of investment in TVET infrastructure and delivery will have a direct consequence on human capital development, and lead to mediocrity of skilled workforce needed by high-tech and innovating industries. TVET providers in Mauritius need to constantly upgrade their training facilities, revamping their curricula to match the current and future needs of the industries.

The researcher advocates that the most important outcome of an effective human capital development per a TVET system is that it opens up quality employment opportunities. It enhances employees' capabilities to secure and retain jobs, to progress at work and cope with the work dynamics, changes and clear career path destination. The human capital received from TVET has also emerged as the primary and most effective means for giving females equal opportunities of employment in non-female traditional occupations. It is clear that TVET plays a pivotal role in increasing productivity

capacities and human capability engendered through knowledge and skills acquired during TVET programmes.

5.14 Social Capital

In the context of the school set-up social capital, in the form of parental expectations, obligations, and social networks that exist within the family, school and community are key features for student success. Coleman (1990) developed the concept of social capital so as to conceptualise social patterns and processes that contribute to the disparities of an individual achievement. The finding sheds light on the socio-economic status of former TVET students' parents. This clearly shows that their families were indigent. The social pattern that emerges from the findings, is that, at the family level of the participants, parents' financial capital was interconnected with the choice of their children's educational path. The only option left to them was a TVET programme. It is also noted that youths from indigent families are more likely to take TVET courses because of the eroded social capital associated with this category of family structure.

The form of social capital contributing to individual learning outcomes has a direct link with future career and life. The findings clearly reveal that positive learning outcomes were achieved by former TVET students. This resulted in immediate employment and the start of their career journey, just after completion of the training programme. Social capital is also argued to be an intangible resource that either emerges or fails to emerge from social relations and social structure. The findings draw attention to the inconsistency in the literature, from a TVET perspective, between social relations, social structure, and skills development.

Literature clearly pointed out that expansive networks of individuals with access to larger stockpiles of social capital have more to offer than do very small networks of individuals of more limited means. The findings do not correspond with the necessity of networks for those undergoing TVET training, as mentioned in the social capital theory. In the case of former TVET students, the network did not exist at all, which does not support Coleman's (1990) standpoint concerning the importance of strong networks.

As former TVET students were from indigent families, the findings reveal that there is interconnectedness between the social structures of these people and the facilitation of decisions to join TVET stream. The study has also unpacked the interrelationship of social structure and types of educational path. Mostly students from poor families are prone to be dropouts, failures of the academic stream. The only recourse left to them is TVET programmes. Coleman (1990) and Lin (2001) emphasised the importance of networks. Networks facilitate the flow of information, particularly when it comes to opportunities and choices. Former TVET students acquired jobs relevant to their trade. The training they took was not facilitated by social networks. Students learned useful, practical skills needed by the industry during their TVET course.

Coleman (1990) has provided a more fine-grained analysis on the various ways that an individual's social networks affect their careers in organisations. The researcher added that the role of social processes in career success play important roles. However, Granovetter (1973) postulated that the effect of social capital on career mobility and career success is associated with access to information, resources, and sponsorship, or social credentialing, as discussed in the literature review. In the present findings, the narratives of former TVET students did not produce the above-mentioned result, therefore, no such relationship can be established

concerning career mobility, or career success was conceived with the support of social networks tied up with sponsorship according to social capital theory.

TVET students who participated in this study confirmed that they have been able to build their social capital by creating networks, gaining confidence in practical classes; and had developed high self-esteem through the respect they received from their trainers and peers. This has helped participants in this study, in particular, a marginalised female trainee, to find work and interact more easily with those around them. The partnership that TVET providers had with employers and universities, such as twinning agreements with universities, and apprenticeship agreements with industries, have built strong social capital. Trust between people is a key element of social capital. TVET has been a catalyst of trust: participants in this study clearly confirmed that they highly value the trust and respect of their trainers.

The researcher notes that TVET has proven to bring social justice in maintaining social inclusion at the highest level, by effectively contributing, in generating a higher rate of employment opportunities. Inevitably, when we talk about employment, we mean that there are earnings associate, which empowers TVET qualification holders with livelihoods and with escaping poverty. The study participants were from indigent backgrounds. The conceptualization of TVET has always prioritised social justice and sustainable development. From the narratives it is clear that TVET had helped in promoting democratic citizenship towards a truly substantive democracy, by impregnating strong social capital within the population.

5.15 Capability Approach

The capability approach has been used in this study as a theoretical and conceptual framework. The value of the capability approach for TVET stream was its practical emphasis on what former TVET students are actually able to do after learning a specific trade subject, being involved as a proficient technical person relevant to the trade learnt. Fundamentally, the capability approach provides individuals with the opportunity of living the lives that they have reason to value. Former TVET students have specific reasons for valuing their chosen trade: the ultimate objective is to be a technical specialist associated with the course followed. The study has clearly demonstrated that participants who followed training in a specific trade obtained employment relevant to the course they followed. Central to the capability approach are concepts of capabilities, functionings, and freedom, which are considered useful metrics for interpersonal evaluation. Former TVET students revealed a positive relationship between their well-being, their ability to choose their respective trade for a TVET training, as directly conducive to well-being. Functionings, on the other hand, represent conduct, the life one values, and personal achievements leading to well-being. The findings support the argument that there is a connection between the course followed, employment related to the course followed, and these former TVET students' earning a living post the TVET course, thus achieving well-being. The finding establishes that TVET students were fully functioning according to the capability approach.

In the capability approach it is clear that 'capabilities' (opportunities) and 'functionings' (doings) are crucial elements for social justice, providing a distinct approach to TVET evaluation. The findings have provided evidence that former TVET students have the ability to harness their skills, driving these elements of 'functionings' into employment, career progression, and career success.

It is clear that someone enrolling in a TVET course has already set his or her mind to gaining employment at the end of the programme. Job readiness is privileged above all other considerations, from the perspective of TVET providers. The findings reveal that TVET institutions have been able to achieve 'functionings', as they are able to make their trainees employable. TVET's sole emphasis is on employability of its learners. The findings support that TVET learners' outcomes are measured from a productivist approach, taking employability as the main indicator.

It is clear that TVET provides access to and participation in acquiring work-related competencies as part of a capability set, and is not merely a means to an end. In other words, it is what makes choice (capability) possible. The findings of the study pinpoint that TVET courses followed by the former TVET students focussed on the development of the individual and on work. This is a means of ensuring that students have access to the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they need to work in a vocation or broad occupational field.

The capability approach has been used as a lens in this study in which the researcher notes that the central commitment of this approach is concern about social justice: the dignity of each person is being placed on the summit. This approach emphasises the quality of life and well-being of individuals. TVET has been able to bring social justice by putting the needs of people first; by providing them with jobs, leading to poverty alleviation, enabling a clear career path, and achieving career success. This study has proven that TVET can bring social justice to TVET qualification holders through jobs, and thus provide for better human dignity. In addition, the study shows that TVET qualifications have sparked career expectations and raised hopes for a better future in many TVET students. From the viewpoint of the capability approach, the TVET qualification holders' access to the labour market is tremendously higher.

The study shows that the employability rates are also much higher. Employability is not the same as gaining employment; it is about the freedom to choose a job one has reason to value. The ability to access work and choose a job is the outcome of being skilful and holding hands-on competencies provided by the TVET qualification. Such a qualification gives the real freedom to choose the job one has reason to value. TVET providing high employability demands give TVET qualification holders valuable opportunities to access the skills and abilities required for work. Qualifications also provide valuable opportunities in the labour market that contribute to human dignity, social justice, a sustainable career path, and human flourishing.

The study applying a capability approach clearly argues that TVET has been a useful way of labour-market activation. This draws attention to freedom of choice, motivation, and individual value and access to resources. The researcher admits that the capability approach has not accounted solely for TVET students moving up in their career hierarchy and achieving career success. The capacities inherited from TVET programmes were sufficient to perform work tasks related to the course followed, but did not show in-depth connection concerning functionings in terms of climbing the organisational career ladder, and impacting directly on the intrinsic and extrinsic determinants of career success.

The capability approach is said to solve problem of inequality by democratising access to education. However, the study showed compelling evidence that the Mauritian TVET lacks the provision of adequate numbers of seats for all applicants for a TVET programme. This disadvantages a large number of potential students which finally enlarge the NEET group. This is common parlance for people “not in education, employment nor in training”. Consequently the capability approach has not effectively been given the right attention by Mauritian

policymakers in resolving access to training through TVET. This aspect is identified by this study as one constraint. The study shows that women are worse off than men on some dimensions; such as being a trainee in a male-dominated trade or employee in a male-dominated occupation. The study revealed that the achieved functioning of female trainees in TVET programmes relating to male-dominated occupations can constitute inequalities in capabilities, when being constantly faced with sexist attitudes from male counterparts. Some ambiguities arise from the capability approach in addressing freedom for women to operate as do their male counterparts in strongly male-dominated jobs; which is somehow different from gender inequalities.

5.16 Career Path and Career Success Predictors

The dominant and traditional point of view on career paths in the present century is exemplified by new career concepts such as the protean career and limitless careers, among others. Literature also pointed out that the traditional bureaucracy or hierarchical organisational structure of career paths is still being practised by some employers. Super (1980) clearly proposed that career changes are not only normal, but are psychologically beneficial in a climate of rapid social change.

As discussed in the literature review, and pointed out by Ng et al. (2005), one faces various kinds of change in one's career. In an individual career there may be professional advancement, a descent down the job ladder, and a job change in which one remains on the same hierarchical level. Literature also mentions that changes in career path take place within an organisation or between various organisations; and there are multiple types of career paths or trajectories. Regarding the occupational status, we can distinguish between upward, lateral, and downward mobility. The findings revealed that former TVET students are mainly employed as blue-collar

workers. Gibson et al. (2000) argues that blue-collar occupations are characterised by stationary hierarchical levels and management by supervisors or mechanical controls. The study confirmed that all former TVET students had a stationary career path, thus upward mobility was restricted only to supervisory level. The findings clearly showed that blue-collar workers had limited upward mobility, with the only option to remain at supervisory level. Their career paths were therefore linear: these participants were working in traditional organisations who adopted a hierarchical organisational structure. Findings demonstrated that participants were willing to move upward for higher salaries and to gain management control. This confirms the point of view of Cox et al. (1991), who mentioned that career path is important to career development and salary increase. The study also found that blue-collar workers who are seriously motivated to learn more so as to be abreast with technological changes, experienced occupational change. These workers' occupational career patterns tended to be more stable and static for a longer period of time. Blue-collar workers' avenues of promotion are narrow and limited.

The researcher witnessed that mostly TVET students find themselves in a blue-collar profession. The blue-collar profession shows a contraction in career path opportunities. TVET qualification holders have quality job opportunities. There is a predominant societal prejudice associated with blue-collar occupations in terms of working conditions, training, career opportunities, and downgrading looks from other categories of workers. These are some impediments to attracting students into TVET. Policymakers need to aim at the enhancement of societal acceptance and attractiveness of certain job profiles in the blue-collar sector in order to eliminate prejudices of low salary. This will improve income opportunities for young Mauritians, and will help the TVET sector to become attractive. The blue-collar sector constitutes the working class, which has high job opportunities in the present context of the

Mauritian economic development. Behind the façade of high jobs creation, the reality is more complicated: internal promotion systems have ground to a halt, and wages have stagnated.

Career success is traditionally described as having an objective and a subjective component. Existing literature has rated career success as accumulated positive work experience, and psychological outcomes resulting from such employee work experience (Seibert et al., 2001). Career success also plays a vital role and is meaningful to any employee, as well as for the employer. Literature review discussed in this study conveys that, from the perspective of the employee, career success is a source of power, happiness, and satisfaction. All these intangible aspects of career success help in the acquisition of material advancement which plays a motivational role in striving for career success.

Analysis and interpretation of findings clearly shows that participants in the study who gained career success, were happier and had more job satisfaction, by their own standards, than those workers who did not gain career success. The findings of the career success of former TVET students also revealed a positive relationship between the knowledge of the method and predictors of career success, which were very useful for them in developing strategies for career development and growth. The findings clearly show that workers who were successful in their careers, were highly motivated for their future career development and growth. The present findings also suggest that those successful workers reflected higher job performance and positively impacted on the overall growth of the organisation. Workers who are more satisfied with their careers were a strong driving force in effectively contributing towards the overall health and performance of the organisations.

Literature reviewed for this study found several predictors of career success; among which were human capital attributes such as training, promotion, increase in salary, and job satisfaction, to name a few. Promotions, raises in salary, and job satisfaction were most commonly investigated in this study. These categories of determinants have provided important insights into the antecedents of career success for former TVET students. The present study addressed the relationship between various predictors and career success, using a sample of former TVET students with a narrow range of occupations, mainly blue-collar workers.

The most prominent subjective career success predictor in this study was job satisfaction. Among the significant predictors, job satisfaction proved to be the best predictor of subjective career success for former TVET workers, who were mainly blue-collar workers. The participants drawn for this study were former TVET students who became blue-collar workers. From the analysis, TVET qualification holders during their careers, experience career success when certain aspects of their work is related to the competencies learned from their TVET programme; and particularly when their hands-on skills are being translated into valuable performance as a productive output for the organisation.

The findings express that job satisfaction was a key career success predictor for blue-collar workers, provided that the specific aspects of their work were given due consideration, such as support from the employer, aspiration for progression, non-discriminatory attitudes, conscientiously executing responsibilities, recognition and value, monetary gain, and working in a very conducive environment. Career success determinants of former TVET students were not solely within the objective or subjective career success domains. Career success predictors were blended within intrinsic and extrinsic domains; with importance placed on gaining rewards, attaining recognition, receiving a salary increase, hierarchical positions, reputation,

and job satisfaction. The study has revealed a very interesting element of career success: the importance placed on continuing formal education in view to attaining higher hierarchical position, mainly in managerial and consultancy areas. This sentiment of earning higher qualifications was shared by participants aspiring to attain the highest achievable position in their organisation, as their future plan at their late-stage of their career. The research suggests that Mauritian TVET qualification holders' career success predictors are not stereotyped as solely remuneration and promotions, as many also target individual achievements.

5.17 TVET Conceptual Issues

The poor reception of TVET as holding a low status in society in the former TVET students' lives was apparent in their narratives. All their narratives portrayed that general academic education had higher social status than TVET. The findings provided evidence that students and parents are still strongly biased in favour of degrees from traditional universities. Indeed, the findings mirror those of Puckett (2012), who argued that society sees a TVET programme as a second-tier option suited to students with lower aspirations or lower academic abilities. The findings of this study support the view of Dzeto (2014), that the present educational system trains young minds to engage in white-collar jobs. Therefore, TVET practitioners, providers, and policymakers must take this point seriously. Stigmatization of TVET constitutes a major barrier to well-being. Belonging emerged as a socio-relational context of relationships with academic educational pathways. The findings support the idea of Maiga (2013) that we should demystify and de-stigmatise the TVET system.

The findings of this study reveal that TVET students normally take up a blue-collar profession. The wages of blue-collar workers are often lower than those of white-collar workers in Mauritius. Therefore, policymakers need to take cognizance of this, that adjusting wages of

blue-collar professionals to be on a par with white-collar professionals will mitigate the issue of parity of esteem suffered by TVET suffers. There is strong contrast in wages among blue-collar and white collar workers. In addition, the World Development Report (2018) affirms that TVET can yield wages on a par with an equivalent level of general education. This would be important in acknowledging and valuing the contribution of blue-collar workers as being the productive workforce of the manufacturing industries.

The former TVET students had quicker access to employment than did their academic counterparts. There appeared to be no ill effects of the adoption of TVET for education. One former TVET student talked about being unemployed for a long period of time, over a year, after having left TVET, pursuing a university degree programme. Literature review discussed in this study confirms that various international organisations accept that TVET plays an important role in generating employment opportunities. These have been greatly elevated over the last decade (OECD 2014; World Bank 2016; UNESCO 2016).

The only participant who obtained his TVET qualification through the apprenticeship mode of training in this study complained that there were no mechanisms for assessing the proper delivery of apprenticeships offered by the training institution. The findings show that there was poor monitoring in overseeing apprentices, and no proper control in making assessments to verify acquired skills. Apprentices were considered cheap labour and were deployed to perform routine work-based activities, without any sort of formal training in the industry. The findings clearly contrast with efficient and effective models of apprenticeship; also indicating the defective partnership between TVET training centres and industry. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of other studies, in which non-cooperative relationships between TVET providers and industry seemed to be powerful in affecting the quality of training, seriously

undermining the industry-based training mode. This is totally at odds with the World Development Report (2018), in which emphasis is laid on a strong partnership between TVET centres and industry being crucial to effective delivery of apprenticeship training.

The continuous rapid changes of technologies taking place in the industries have further increased the challenge for TVET providers. TVET providers have constantly to ensure the upgrading and reviewing of their curricula so as to be aligned with current and future needs of the industries. Training conducted on obsolete equipment was one of the major concerns which emerged in the former TVET students' narratives. They claimed that when they joined the world of work, there was complete mismatch between skills acquired from training and skills needed in the industry. This seriously impacted on the quality of their work. Literature discussed in this study shows that it is in mostly underdeveloped countries that TVET colleges are poorly equipped with tools, equipment, and qualified trainers. According to Ogbunaya (2015), working with obsolete equipment and underqualified trainers is the main cause of poor quality training.

Although career guidance for enrolling in a TVET course and trade subject choice is complex, there is some evidence that former TVET students choose a specific trade without having the appropriate advice of qualified career counsellors. Other research findings have also suggested that both career guidance prior to TVET, as well as career guidance in relation to TVET, can make an important contribution to TVET if certain conditions are met (Zelloth, 2014). The findings revealed that one apprentice was not at all prepared for joining the world of work from the very beginning of his apprenticeship. He found it very difficult to cope with the world of work. The transition from school to a place of work is not easy, therefore TVET providers must properly educate apprentices on life and employability skills training, prior to sending them

into the industry. TVET providers must give assurance to potential apprentices that they will be properly equipped with the necessary vocational guidance to bridge the gap between school and the place of work. This is appreciated by UNESCO (2002), which claims that vocational guidance and counselling is widely accepted as a powerful and effective method of helping to bridge the gap between education and the world of work, as well as between school and society.

Some prior TVET students openly expressed their frustration that curriculum content did not match industry needs. What they learned in the TVET training centre could not be put into practice in the industries, as the technology was far ahead of what they had been taught. Literature discussed in the study corresponds with research studies that, for the rapid growth of technology and changed public expectations today, there must be continuous curriculum changes in order for education and training curricula to remain relevant (Hennequin, 2007).

The study is quite revealing in terms of TVET qualifications having sparked career expectations and raised hopes for better futures for those embracing TVET programmes. It is clear that TVET has enabled TVET qualification holders' with development and economic well-being as members of the Mauritian society, and offered them opportunities for professional fulfilment.

The ongoing rhetoric of TVET was about not sufficiently preparing students for employment by inability to meet existing workforce needs, inappropriate curricula, inadequate and outdated instructional materials and equipment. The desired learning outcomes for TVET were achieved from narratives of the participants that trainers used vocational pedagogy, in which the outcomes are framed in terms of skills relating to particular vocational domains, with greater emphasis on routine expertise. This is simply not good enough, as it limits the set of capabilities

that tradesmen require in the present context. The teaching and learning strategies need to have greater interest in wider skills such as employability, lifelong learning, and entrepreneurial and functional literacies.

The Mauritian apprenticeship model lacks a preparedness element for apprentices concerning the transition from school to work. From findings of the study, there is a lack of attractiveness of apprenticeships, compounded by entrants tending to come from early secondary college leavers, resulting in lower aspirations to pursue their training. The apprenticeship model produces a higher employment status, as apprentices are directly recruited after completion of their apprenticeship contract. The quality of training and monitoring by the training provider were issues impacting on overall quality of the apprenticeship. There is a valuable point in the Mauritian dual-training system, whereby the period for off-the-job training runs for a shorter time than the period of on-the-job training. This allows apprentices to have a considerable amount of industrial exposure. There are certain advantages commensurate with a dual-training system in that it facilitates the transition from learning to work by ensuring a better understanding of the workplace culture and the acquisition of good work habits; and mastering all dimensions of the craft.

5.18 Conclusion

The first part of the chapter presented and discussed the findings of the cross-case analysis; and the second part established a dialogue with the literature reviewed and theories in relation to the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study. So far these findings have been discussed specifically in relation to the literature on human and social capital, as well as on the capability approach, and TVET concepts. The findings must be interpreted within the context

from which they emerged, to provide interaction between the application of particular theoretical perspectives and the data gathered.

The next chapter presents a general summary of this study, discusses the contributions, acknowledges the limitations, and offers suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study was guided by the interest in learning how former TVET students constructed their career paths and success, taking into account any barriers they have faced or opportunities they have encountered as holders of a TVET qualification. A narrative enquiry approach was chosen for the research. The researcher understands the value of narratives in capturing the complexity of former TVET students' career pathways and experiences. The decision was based upon the approach by Schaafsma & Vinz (2011), who suggest that the study of narratives allows researchers to search for meanings rather than to look for answers, and, throughout their search for meanings, researchers come to terms with the new questions they discover in the research process.

The previous chapter has explored the individual life stories of four former TVET students presently holding a career. These former TVET students were enrolled in government-owned TVET training centres. These participants' narratives were analysed and key findings were drawn. Some thirteen themes emerged from their narratives. The primary aim of this chapter is to discuss and evaluate the analysed field research against the existing body of knowledge, supporting theories, and models linked to the parent debate. Each research objective is discussed by relating the literature reviewed to the analysis of the data gathered, leading to an overarching conclusion regarding the research problem. An overview of the research problem will be summarised, with the theoretical framework grounding the study, research methodology, key findings, and additional findings. This chapter reviews the contributions of

the key findings of this study to the theory and practice. This chapter will also elaborate on the compatibility of the present research findings with previous literature. The study of narrative enquiry into the career paths and career success of former TVET students in Mauritius reported in this thesis, is directed at answering these questions: (1) How do former TVET students who are holders of formal TVET qualifications construct their career paths? (2) What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen career? and (3) What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journey for success, and why would this be so? From the stories of the study participants, the researcher will examine how far these questions have been answered, and are correlated with existing literatures and theories. This chapter sets the scene for (1) a review of the study, (2) a discussion of the findings, (3) the limitations of the study, (4) implications, and (5) suggestions for further research. This chapter shows clearly the distinct contribution the thesis makes, in the context of previous work. Practical implications flow from these conclusions and contributions with limitations of the research are noted.

6.2 Review of the Study

Over the past decade, the number of post-secondary college students requiring a seat in a TVET training centre has increased, and the number is expected to continue to climb; however, the enrolment and accessibility rates for a TVET programme have not increased over the years. The figure has remained almost fixed since 1989. There are still only about 3000 TVET students enrolled annually, with high dropout and failures rates. This is often because the TVET infrastructure has remained unchanged. No new training centres have been constructed, and there has been no major reengineering since early 1990. Of these 3000 TVET students, only some 2000 passed their exams successfully. From this population of TVET qualifications holders, not all joined an occupation relevant to the training followed. There are no empirical

and official studies on this subject, making it difficult to offer an exact percentage. However, from TVET practitioners' comments, more than 40% of TVET qualification holders are not successful in gaining employment relevant to their training. Furthermore, on an annual basis, our post-secondary colleges supply for further education/training a population size consisting of School Certificates (SC), Higher School Certificates (HSC) and dropouts after grade 9/10, which amounts to a population size of more than 30000 students. Of this population, TVET institutions cater for a population of around 3000, with success rates below 70%.

Most of the TVET student population comes from low-income sectors of society. In recent years, research has indicated that the educational and career trajectories of these young people are complex; and in many cases do not correspond to the economic sector of the training received (Larragana, Cabezas, Dusallant, 2014). Also, TVET students continue to show high dropout rates, although research is scarce on the factors that explain this situation (Arias et al., 2015). Enrolment rates, especially in TVET programmes are still low compared with the market demands (Mulungo, Kihiruru, Irira, 2016). As TVET is increasingly being classified as a supplier of skilled workers for the labour market, the focus is on the career path and success of former TVET students as an important national concern. According to the stock and flow theory of human capital, these investments are expected to increase individuals' career success, as perceived by both subjective and objective career success indicators. As very few people make it through the TVET stream from this tiny population of enrolled TVET students, it was interesting to understand how this rarely studied group of former TVET students has constructed their career paths and successes. This narrative enquiry, or qualitative study aimed to unearth and explore meanings of career success and perceived influences on career success among working former TVET students in Mauritius.

This study sought to expand knowledge on the constructs of career path, career success, challenges, and opportunities of being a TVET qualification holder. The career and career success and the importance of merging these variables when working with former TVET students came under scrutiny. Research questions were constructed to understand how these former TVET students holding formal TVET qualifications construct their career paths, and the factors responsible for success in their chosen careers. The structural, institutional, personal, and curricular issues of TVET, whether a contributing or hindering factor for them, also came under scrutiny.

6.3 Discussion of the Findings

Participants responded to an interview carried out by me in which their narratives had been collected. The stories of four former TVET students who were participants in this study, were analysed to answer the research questions of this study. The research questions guiding this study were:

- (1) How do former TVET students who are holders of formal TVET qualifications construct their career paths?
- (2) What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen career?
- (3) What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journey for success and why would this be so?

Various aspects of the results are drawn together to answer the research questions and reveal the distinct aspects of former TVET students' careers paths providing specific dimensions of their career success, specifically in being holders of TVET qualifications.

6.3.1 Major findings for Research Question 1

How do former TVET students who are holders of formal TVET qualifications construct their career paths?

The first research question sought to understand how these students holding of a formal TVET qualification constructed their career paths. In general, having a TVET qualification has met expectations for all the participants in this study, and especially for those whose first choices were technical and vocational trades as their dream profession. Most of the participants had a clear understanding of where they were going in the future. There is strong evidence from the narratives of the participants that the majority of the participants who enjoyed their technical trades had joined a field relevant to the course they had followed. It appears that all those who engaged in a profession related to their field of study had long-term security and a promised career path offered, whereas only one participant decided to further his TVET studies by taking a university degree course, the course was not related to the TVET programme; the student has therefore enjoyed a non-linear career path. The research participants were specific about careers they wished to pursue, and had a clear picture of how to arrive there. It was evident that each participant been propelled by deep motivation. The strongest evidence was their own intrinsic motivation as seen in all participants' claims for their career paths.

The results suggested that the career paths of the former TVET students were mostly linear career paths, except for one participant whose was non-linear. He had changed his study path after his TVET programme by taking a university degree course. From the analysis, students with strong attachment and high esteem for their technical trade, this having been a childhood fantasy, traversed a bureaucratic/hierarchical career path, also referred to as a

linear career path climbing up the corporate ladder to the top of the pyramid. Traditional linear career models pinpoint growth and progress at specific hierarchical levels. The length of time in a position, the social desirability of the position's title, and the amount of power accorded a particular organisational role describe the individual's organisational power and personal worth (Buzzawell, 1991). Often people consider that upward height and rapid growth equate to success in tall hierarchical systems. The participants in the study had been promoted in their careers, and suggested that this was a result of proven competence based on their TVET results. It was felt that their technical knowledge attainment contributed to upward movement. These linear images presume progression, orderliness, and rational hierarchies based on skills attainment and competence, with built-in competitive incremental stages (Kanter, 1989).

The study results show that the career pathways of the research participants were connected to the training programme they had followed. This had enabled successful and high-achieving TVET trainees to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector; and to advance over time to successively higher levels of employment in that sector. There is clear evidence that there is a direct linkage to the TVET course attended. The occupation was relevant to the training programme, which has enabled employees to progress seamlessly from one level to the next, earning more credentials while improving their career prospects and working within the field. Former TVET students demonstrated a typically linear career path. They have been in the same profession relevant to the TVET programme they followed, which places limits for on a varied career. On the other hand, it is possible that these former TVET students are paving the way for new career options outside the trades they learnt from TVET centres and earned competencies within the same trades for so many years.

The study also suggested that there was no clear career development path set up by the employers at the participants' workplaces. The study pinpoints that, with the absence of a career development path, some participants were not given necessary support from the employer. Such support could have increased their competency level to address changes in technologies and in taking on managerial responsibilities. One participant mentioned that he needed to upgrade his qualifications to gain essential managerial competencies so as to be fit for the next promotional level. According to SHRM (2015), a career development path provides employees with an ongoing mechanism for enhancing their skills and knowledge: this can lead to mastery of their current jobs, or to promotions and transfers to new or different positions. It is also said that implementing career paths may also have a direct impact on the entire organisation by improving morale, career satisfaction, motivation, productivity, and responsiveness in meeting departmental and organisational objectives. The study suggested that the participants had defined career path movement: the nature of the work had a direct bearing on their capability built in from the core competencies acquired at a TVET. These participants were able to move from one role to another in logical steps in areas related to the occupational sector of their previous positions, but with added responsibility for supervisory tasks.

The study also pinpoints that TVET qualification holders often embark on blue-collar careers. Fewer young people are pursuing blue-collar careers, largely because of the stigma attached to labour-intensive work. The blue-collar workers have limited scope for career prospects. The highest position they can reach would inevitably be at the supervisory level. This reveals that working in a skilled trade is not a revered career path. The study also reveals that the TVET stream is a direct route for stepping into a blue-collar profession. This may be the reason for many people believing that those who pursue TVET

will not have an illustrious career. The blue-collar profession has suffered from low wages which makes TVET undesirable. Developing countries such as Mauritius seem to deride a TVET qualification. This is in contrast with the approach adopted by world's largest industrial nations (G7). There is a natural correlation between TVET and economic prosperity. The world's largest industrial nations (G7) have developed systems to create a skilled workforce, with TVET one of the major catalysts for such human development.

Blue-collar workers, who compose more than a half of the Mauritian labour force (Statistics of Mauritius, 2017), are at a particular disadvantage in terms of attaining similar type of career success to that of white-collar workers. Blue-collar occupations generally are characterised by stationary hierarchical levels (typically in low-ranked positions) and management by supervisors or mechanical controls (Ansberry, 2003). In this particular situation, the participants in the study confirmed that they hold blue-collar occupations, which typically are not tied to an ascending staircase or ladder of career development. Therefore, participants in this study being blue-collar workers, have a somewhat stationary movement in terms of their career progression, and are not aligned with white-collar workers for the purpose of a career path.

The study highlighted the barriers for blue-collar workers, despite holding accredited TVET qualifications from rising beyond a certain level in a hierarchy. In one case, the findings of this study revealed that the participant is aspiring to move upwards in the hierarchy beyond the confined restricted zone for the blue-collar profession. Criteria for promotion have been raised to the extent that contenders require university degree qualifications. This constitutes an obstacle hindering the advancement of TVET qualification holders in their career paths. This limitation in terms of career prospects for

this category of workers inevitably takes into account difficulties that they undergo, usually when trying to advance within areas of their careers; and often while trying to advance within their lives outside their work spaces. The findings of this study pinpoint that the participant in question, in his effort to move further upwards in the hierarchy, had to sacrifice his time, money, and family to pursue further academic studies.

The study also showed one case in which the former TVET student who pursued further academic studies in obtaining a university degree qualification had a better chance of joining the white-collar world. This identified that possessing a university degree qualification is likely to be a major factor for gaining white-collar job employment, unlike those holding a TVET qualification. It is astonishing that individuals holding TVET qualifications are more employable as blue-collar workers, with rarely a chance of gaining entry to the white-collar world. It is evident and undisputed that skilled TVET qualified employees are likely to have higher job mobility within the blue-collar profession in the same position and areas. In the white-collar profession, one also has a possibility for job mobility if in the same line.

6.3.2 Major findings for Research Question 2

What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen careers?

One of the most prominent original contributions of this narrative enquiry relates to the second research question of this study, which aimed to explore factors that have contributed to the success of former TVET students. The interpretation of the narratives from the interviews of the participants revealed a number of themes encompassing criteria

for success that could be defined as either subjective or objective, in line with current literature examples Heslin (2005) and Seibert et al. (2001). The study demonstrates that former TVET students who are in occupational contexts aligned with the training followed are solely driven by continuous vertical advancement and external rewards associated with traditional career paths. The thematic analysis enabled the identification of success criteria for the research participants from which a number of commonalities and differences were identified.

The study highlighted the way in which career success is perceived, measured, and assessed in occupations held by former TVET students, which may be either objective or subjective. Most of the participants had a clear understanding of what they wished to do in their future careers just after completion of the training course. The findings revealed that there were clear career aspirations. Findings suggested that nearly all the participants would continue in the vocation embraced relevant to the trade training followed. A common theme that emerged from the interpretation of interviews was that all participants hold some core career values which were regarded as contributing factors for considering their careers successful. Specifically, these findings are supportive of Dik & Duffy (2009), who suggest that personal definitions of career success can often be integrated with the values of the organisations offering employment. Career values play an important role in determining career success. Brown (2002) posited that work values are the basis for self-evaluation, and the evaluation of others, playing an important role in establishing personal goals (Brown, 2002).

The study shows that each former TVET student had his or her own subjective definition of career success which pointed to job satisfaction. Everyone talked about having strong

job satisfaction which is one of the main predictors of career success. All participants associated their success with being good at what they did, and receiving personal recognition for accomplishments. This shows the importance of psychological success: pride and personal accomplishment become more important than external or tangible indicators such as salary growth. Research shows the strong impact of the human capital factor such as the TVET institution was an important contributor to career success. Every participant recognised the contribution of their TVET qualifications in the construction of their career and success. Since its inception, the human capital theory has been expanded to explain the link between education, skills, and experience, and gaining promotion. Studies examining individuals at every stage of their careers have shown that investment in education, training, and experience is one of the main determinants of career success. Conversely, holding of a TVET qualification is more likely to help someone climb the ladder of career hierarchy in terms of job promotion, thus leading towards career success.

The study also suggests that there was strong career motivation and commitment showed by the former TVET students during their careers, which was also a determining factor for constructing a successful career. This presupposes that employees who are satisfied with the work that they do and with the culture of the organisation employing them are consequently motivated to continue their relationship with that organisation. Employee motivation is an innate force shaped and maintained by a set of highly individualistic factors that may change from time to time, depending on the particular needs and motives of an employee (Pinder, 1998). People who are motivated to achieve success, always wants to know how well they are performing their tasks. The study highlights that all the participants have strong career commitment, remaining in the same occupational sector, which clearly denotes the link between these workers and their occupation. This is

consistent with the participants of the study who showed that with high career commitment, they spend more time on skills development and have lower intentions to leave their jobs and careers.

The research also highlighted that earnings and hierarchical job position, and number of job promotions were also counted as measures of career success by the former TVET students. This work has provided considerable evidence regarding the determinants of career success of former TVET students. Objective elements also play an important role in career success. The network aspect of social capital was not revealed by the present research. The concept of social capital, weak-tie theory (Granovetter, 1973) focusses on the strength of the social tie used by one in the process of finding a job. In the present study, the former TVET students had not shown any type of social tie in the process of finding their job. The findings shows that the participants without social networking were able to secure employment and had increasing high job mobility on the basis of their earned experience and competencies from their workplace. Therefore, the interpersonal connections and relationships within the social networks clearly did not work for these TVET qualification holders in shaping their career paths and career success. Importantly, this study shows that social capital impacts were not influential at all in job searching, pay scales, promotion potential, and organisational influence. The study reveals that having a TVET qualification does not require better social capital in strengthening their career dynamic. These students were specific about the careers they wished to pursue, and had a clear picture of how to gain such. Each participant been motivated to succeed. The strongest evidence was their own intrinsic motivation as evidenced by comments made by the participants themselves.

The study also reveals, in the context of the conceptual framework of this research, that the element of capability approach functioning was brought into perspective with an objective to test whether this played an important role for TVET qualifications holders in the construction of their career success. The functioning aspect of the capability approach is apposite to the discussion, in affording TVET students occupational readiness in the world of work. Also, it brings to light the question of the capability approach view of the human as both a rational agent in charge of his own development, and as an instrument for the development of necessary skills through TVET education, to be fit and functional for the labour market.

The study suggests that the former TVET students had the freedom to achieve their choice of the TVET trades they had fantasised about since childhood. Their TVET training had enabled them to achieve the capabilities to function in a particular occupational sector of the economy. Research revealed that the element of functioning, as defined by the capability approach had enormously contributed to the capability of these former TVET students in achieving development of vital technical skills. This assisted them to become socially and economically fit in their society, through obtaining meaningful employment. The former TVET students are active participants in fostering social inclusiveness through an alternative educational route, namely, the TVET stream. The capability approach to human well-being is a “concentration on freedom to achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular” and the core concepts of this approach are “functionings and capabilities” (Sen, 1995). “A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve” (Sen, 1987).

From the capability approach perspective, the study reveals that it is the functionings through the skills mastered during the TVET programmes, such as being practically competent tradesmen/tradeswomen, that have provided security in the workplace. Having an educated mind, among other factors, is an indicator of human well-being in society. This has been the motivating force behind the career paths and career successes of these former TVET students. The study shows that the human capital earned from TVET has enabled these former TVET students to increase their productive capacities. This had played a positive role in their career paths and career successes. There is clear indication that the TVET qualification has played an important aspect in the career lives of these former TVET students, by giving them the kind of freedom to enjoy and be what they have reason to value. This is this freedom that has provided the opportunities to these people in their employment, allowing them to accomplish what they value in their day-to-day lives.

6.3.3 Major findings for Research Question 3

What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journeys for success, and why would this be so?

The study suggests the influencing factors that had motivated students to join a TVET course. This was to prepare themselves for the world of work. TVET was their only recourse because their academic backgrounds were not brilliant. The research also highlighted that the majority of participants had a profound affection for tinkering. Tinkering played an important role in pursuing their studies, therefore they opted for a TVET programme. Their educational outcomes are one of the key areas influenced by family incomes, which resulted in opting for TVET course. The study highlighted that the

former TVET students were from indigent families. Poverty influences a child's educational attainment, along with social networks. Thus, the evidence is clear and unanimous that indigent children arrive at school at a cognitive and behavioural disadvantage. The study suggests the socio-economic status of students' parents was a key factor for enrolling in a TVET course. In this present study, it was clear that financially struggling families, owing to severe financial constraint, could not provide the necessary school materials. This had an impact on their children's educational outcomes. The researcher investigated the effects of social capital on the family structure: family income was a driving force in enrolment decisions by adults aged twenty. In the majority of cases, the parents' influence was tagged as decisive in post-secondary educational choices.

The study shows that people from a disadvantaged background cannot afford for their children to participate in gaining higher education. Higher studies cost too much, and thus accumulate less human capital. Declercq & Verboren (2014) pinpoint that students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds participate less in higher education because they accumulate less human capital during high school, have lower preferences for education, and are more sensitive to costs. How did they arrive in TVET? There is no mention of a counsellor assisting them in choosing their trades. Furthermore, not a single participant commented on receiving any sort of career guidance counselling. This finding is particularly interesting, because it implies that the participants, most of whom are disadvantaged students, receive very little guidance if any, on possible future career goals and aspirations, and how best to achieve these goals.

The stories of former TVET students reflected that stereotypes and stigmas do exist within the context of TVET in our society. TVET has long been associated with such stereotypes

and stigmas, being known as reserved for academically inferior people. Such stereotypes suggest that TVET is a programme for economically deprived people of society, and for students with special needs. The study indicates that, before enrolling in a TVET programme, students are conscious that society at large has the opinion that TVET is an avenue for people of low socio-economic status. This perception is altered once these students become enrolled and perform well in their TVET courses. They become readily employable after the course into an occupational sector relevant to training followed. The study suggests that, once these students gain pertinent employment as an outcome of their TVET qualification, the deeply rooted negative perception of TVET fades. Throughout history, under-represented and disadvantaged students have been targeted to enrol in TVET, presuming that disadvantaged and under-represented students were not capable of attending college and pursuing white-collar careers. The findings of the study confirms this stand.

The lived experiences of former TVET students clearly demonstrated that they had successfully manoeuvred through their studies with high dedication. Holding of TVET qualifications had been a propeller and vector for career success. The study revealed that the choice of the trade in which the participants were enrolled, was based upon the possibility of gaining employment immediately after completing the course. Second, childhood fantasies about engineering could be realised. In one exceptional case there was parental influence.

This study showed that in some technical trades the TVET programme curriculum was meeting the current needs of the industries; whereas in the engineering field, the curriculum content was not responsive to the technological changes taking place in the

industries. The study also suggested that there was poor cooperation between TVET institutions and industries, in terms of what was presently required by the industries. The study pinpoints that it was indeed necessary to have strong partnership between TVET institution and industries to minimise mismatch. Students needed to be enabled and developed with college and career readiness skills, preparing students to meet the challenges of the future. The study highlighted that research participants were being trained on obsolete equipment. Training institutions failed to address the skills needed by the industry, and the career aspirations of the youth. The apparent mismatch between industry needs and the educational outcomes points to a potential lack of responsiveness on the part of the education institutions to enhance the employability of their graduates (Wedekind, 2016).

There is also evidence of gender stereotyping in the workplace, mainly in male-dominated professions. One research participant was a female facing sexist behaviour from her male counterparts. As in this technical profession, traditionally, it was a male-dominated job. It took a little time to settle differences and reduce the undermining attitude from male counterparts, which was one of the major obstacles perceived by this female TVET student. It is known that women sometimes face obstacles in the workplace because of gender stereotypes and a culture that rewards behaviour and strategies used primarily by one gender. Gender stereotyping may cause valuable talent to leave the organisation in pursuit of other options. Fortunately, this was not the case for our female study participant.

The study also suggests structural issues pertaining to the TVET operation, mainly in engineering trades: inadequate and outdated teaching material and equipment. The curriculum was not abreast of the latest technological changes taking place in the industry.

This was considered by participants to be an obstacle at the workplace. The main thrust of TVET is to develop skills in learners, skills that are practical in nature. The acquisition of relevant skills of constructing, designing, and repair can only be acquired in a well-functioning workshop, having relevant equipment and facilities. This ensures quality, dependability, and sustainable skills for the trainees (Ogbuanya & Okoli, 2014). Participants referred to the real-world context of their courses and the hands-on experiences they had during industrial placement. Students were proud of the technical skills they had learned.

The study also highlighted that there was an issue of demand for a TVET course versus the number of available seats. It was noted that, in certain high-demand TVET programmes, there were very limited numbers of seats available. Inevitably this made the entry selection process more difficult. TVET training centres have to review their enrolment capacity in certain high-demand trades to accommodate the weight of demand for post-secondary colleges. The study revealed the supportive character of the TVET trainers. The trainers played an important role in encouraging students to complete their training; they were regarded as a source of inspiration. Trainers did well in their responsibility of acting as mentors to the trainees. The quality of the teacher and trainer workforce is one of the key elements in overall quality control of VET institutions (OECD, 2009). It is also pointed out that the knowledge and skills of teachers and trainers in VET institutions must remain up to date (OECD, 2009). Trainers play a key role: they pass on practical skills, while transmitting theoretical knowledge, helping apprentices accept the social codes of the workplace. More broadly, they are responsible for the management of apprentices.

The study also shows that the TVET programmes and qualifications have impacted directly and positively on these former TVET students gaining access to good employment and sustainable jobs. This has helped them escape from poverty and marginalization. The TVET course had been a contributor to their career development. The participants' narratives indicated that TVET had paved the way to adoption of career and career success. The study reveals that, for the dual training system, there was poor coordination between TVET institutions and industries. Those apprentices who were enrolled in this mode of training did not receive training relevant to the course content, as stipulated by the official curriculum document. The apprentices were conducting other tasks assigned by the industries rather than performing assignments relevant to curriculum provision.

It may be interpreted that the TVET institution had poor coordination and monitoring pertaining to the assessment of the effectiveness of the running of the apprenticeship modes of training. This may also lead to a perception that apprentices are a form of cheap labour, causing misuse of apprentices by industries. This can affect the ultimate efficiency of the dual systems. Evaluation provides individual learners with the opportunity of giving feedback to their trainers. Perhaps this is most useful when it is gathered early on in the process, so that they may benefit from any resultant adjustment. The participant being enrolled as apprentice had received very little formal training in the workplace, but was mostly involved with usual work activities of the industry. This finding reveals an important signal, that formal training provided to the apprentice by the industry was significantly lower, and would evidently impact negatively on the quality of training. The particularity of this finding is likely to pinpoint that industries prefer to use apprentices in daily routine work activities rather than ensuring the imparting of practical and hands-on

know-how to the apprentices. This shows clearly lack of commitment on the part of industries in fulfilling their responsibilities, as entrusted by the dual system of training.

The study shows that one research participant who pursued a university academic degree programme after his TVET course met with a long period of unemployment. This study confirms that academic qualification holder's employability rate is slow compared with TVET qualification holders. All three of the other participants gained employment after completing successfully their TVET course. Presently, Mauritius is facing unemployment among educated and young people, owing to lack of competences demanded by the labour market. Therefore, TVET in Mauritius provides the opportunity for sustainable and strategic solutions for national training needs. It also ameliorates the unemployment problem in both formal, and non-formal sectors, supplying the required quality and relevant human resources.

The study shows that TVET qualifications have valued functionings to achieve employment which allows TVET qualification holders the kind of opportunities they need, enabling them to achieve the lifestyles they have reason to value. The study witnesses that all participants who accepted TVET, claimed that it worked towards their well-being. The study reveals that TVET programmes have placed the well-being of TVET students at the centre of its concern, by providing opportunities for income generation, and with it, employability and the capability to work. The study also shows that it is through the development of current and new industrial occupational types of knowledge in the workforce that are both vocationally relevant and contribute to a sustainable democracy, that the distant ideal can become reality. From the capability approach point of view, TVET plays multiple roles, capability for employability, expansion of capabilities

dimensions such as “the ability to dream” or to aspire to achieving a successful career. From the viewpoint of the human capital approach, the study shows that TVET has produced valuable sets of abilities, knowledge, and skills for economic growth, increasing the productive capacities of former TVET students.

The study also suggests that TVET in Mauritius can be considered developmental, as all the participants in the present study having consumed TVET programmes are progressively and regularly improving their well-being through opportunities of employment, clear, distinctive career paths, and career success from promotion, salary increases, higher responsibilities, higher positions, job satisfaction, and adapting to technological changes in employment. It is evidenced by the participants of this study that TVET significantly increased chances of finding quality work; and it is central to reducing poverty. TVET giving assurance of employment worked as positive social capital for the career success of these former TVET students. The study also reveals that TVET institutions have built social capital by working collaboratively with industries. This kind of partnership must be further strengthened and reinforced.

6.4 The Limitation of the Study

The chosen methodology is narrative enquiry, which is the most suitable for this particular study in capturing the lived experiences of career paths and careers success of former TVET students. In narrative enquiry, the population size was selective and limited. The purpose was to learn from the participants in a setting the way they experience the meanings they place on, or how they interpret their experiences. Therefore, the researcher thought it wise to choose a narrative enquiry as the study method which allowed for discovery and which did justice to their perceptions and the complexity of their interpretations. There was no control group with

which to compare this finding. Do non-TVET students of similar backgrounds, ages and designations, have the same clarity regarding the construction of their career and career success? The findings of this research are based on a sample of former TVET students, all of whom graduated from a publicly owned TVET institution. Will the findings be the same for TVET students who studied in a private TVET institution of which there are very few in Mauritius? Another limitation of the research was the availability of these former TVET students to participate in the interview exercise to collect their narratives. One participant's employer had initially granted gate-keeper access and consent to conduct the interview with the said participant. At the time of entering the field, the researcher was refused access to the site, and to the participant for the purpose of conducting the interview. Another two participants had left the country, emigrating to Canada. This may have resulted in under-representation of the views expressed by specific TVET qualification holders working in other trades than those which have been presented in this study. Considering the contextual side of careers on the African continent, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution when applied to TVET students outside Mauritius. The sample did not allow me to analyse the relationship between career success and its determinants on a larger spectrum.

Another limitation of the study is that it does not have an in-depth analysis of issues pertaining to the structural, institutional, personal, and curricular aspects of the TVET system in Mauritius. The study has not collected additional data to distinguish among multiple explanations before settling on any one theory to explain the findings. All of the stories collected were based on narratives and self-reports from the individual participants. Participants may have answered the questions based on what they perceived was socially desirable or how they thought other students would respond, as opposed to giving an honest response. This study does not intend to present any definitive universally acceptable model of

career pathing and career success development of former TVET students. Such an attempt is neither practical nor accurate, as a multitude of contextual factors are related.

6.5 Implications of the Findings

The research has increased knowledge on how TVET qualification holders conceive their own career success. The goal of this study was to understand the lived experiences of former TVET students' career paths and career successes. The findings represent how these people holding a TVET qualification experienced career paths, determining predictors of their career success, and the impacts that TVET had on their career experience.

The study has a direct implication for the relative opportunity of gaining upward job mobility and career success of TVET qualification holders. Companies are looking for technically talented people. They compete to retain these talented people by means of rewards such as higher pay packets. They also facilitate smooth movement of their careers by having well-structured career avenues, limited mainly to technologists at supervisory level. The study clearly shows that people holding TVET qualifications with sound skills proficiencies have a greater chance of being employable by industries, where the most talented TVET graduates are valued. Opportunities to move from the bottom of the technical career ladder to higher positions in the organisation are speedier than in other work environments. The understanding of the career pathing and career success of these TVET qualification holders seems to give higher leverage in terms of employability. It gives necessary and enormous momentum for eradicating stigmas and stereotyping associated with TVET. This will allow a completely a new start for society at large, and for industry, giving the necessary thrust to TVET graduates; as the study shows career trajectories of these people seem to be comparatively smoother.

The participants' stories indicate that their career success measures constituted both objective and subjective determinants, promotions, and increase in salary being the objective elements; and job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, deep sense of responsibility and embracing core career values being the subjective elements. This implies that the career success constructs which had played an important role in their career derived both from an individual perspective being the subjective measurement; and from the employer perspective being objective, by climbing upwards in the hierarchy. The subjective element of their career constructs therefore give them the ability to self-manage their career and to be adaptive to learning demands. This study pointed out that TVET qualification holders had relatively advantaged job conditions, according to their narratives.

This study has been able to unpack the interrelationships among TVET qualification holders' labour market segments, TVET qualification holders' career paths, career success, and their knowledge and skills development. Knowledge-flow implications are provided by this study. Attention is paid to the extent to which skills learnt in a TVET institution have been vital to industry. Spillovers in industry could occur by individual TVET qualification holders' career mobility, path and success. These special implications resonate with the human resource training effect of publicly funded TVET institutions. When discussing the spillover effect of knowledge/skills acquired from the TVET education, such is being related directly to what is being practised in the industry. This increases the effectiveness and efficiency of the TVET programme. When such transfer takes place, what has been taught at training centre has been transposed to the place of work. This makes TVET programmes more appealing and attractive, further consolidating and strengthening the bonding between TVET providers and industry. The other important implication of the study is that policymakers and TVET institutions must ensure the usefulness of the various knowledge/skills acquired from the TVET programme.

These may be interpreted as the effectiveness of the real TVET education mission, which emphasises the advancement of knowledge/skills received in the TVET trades areas. Such skills and knowledge provide an adequate competency base for employment across various labour market segments, with the ultimate objective being clear career progression to reach career success.

TVET institutions can use the results of this study to design and revamp their training programmes, aiming at enhancing the career success of its trainees. It is well known that careers being a more individualistic approach, understanding individual career paths and career successes of each TVET student would be very useful for effective marketing of the training programmes. TVET institutions need to have an effective management of the careers of their former students, so as not to lose competitive value and to be a benchmark for reengineering its courses. The career success of former TVET students has demonstrated that society holds a stereotyping attitude towards the TVET stream, despite that career progression/success is more easily achievable. This should be used as a tool to eliminate this kind of perception of TVET in the minds of people. The other implication of this study is that TVET institutions must pay more attention to developing so-called skills, with a special emphasis on being relevant to the current and future requirement of the industries. This will be only achievable if TVET institutions and industries work together in designing training programmes. There must be a strongly cooperative attitude between these two strategic partners in the TVET field. This will make TVET programmes more attractive, and will lead to having 100% of its trainees employable.

Furthermore, the results of the current study show that nearly all the participants chose their TVET trades either out of curiosity about all things technical, under parental influence, or

through employment opportunities for job seekers. Students arrived at the TVET without proper assistance by career or guidance counsellors. None of the participants received any sort of career guidance counselling. Therefore the participants which were mostly disadvantaged students receive no guidance at all on future career goals and aspirations, nor how best to achieve these goals. It is high time that policymakers and TVET institutions develop well-structured career guidance mechanisms to guide these students in training programmes in sectors which have high growth, generating vast employment opportunities.

6.6 Suggestions for Further Research

This study has initiated research into understanding how former TVET students embarked on their career journeys, and their career success achievement process. On the basis of this in-depth qualitative quest in determining predictors of career success identified from former TVET students in this narrative enquiry, it could be argued that the way in which career success has been traditionally measured and supported is still convenient in the present occupational context. In light of these findings, this study has opened the Pandora's Box for future research, in terms of understanding the career progression of TVET qualification holders. There are interesting areas for research, such as understanding career aspiration, core career values of blue-collar professionals. It will be also helpful to research the contribution of human capital to career development.

The findings of the present narrative enquiry research provide fertile ground for targeted research into underlying dispositions and attributes of TVET qualification holders on the opportunities for employability within the relevant field of their study, TVET programme responsiveness towards career progression and career success, need for longitudinal studies on TVET students' careers, and TVET leavers' destination survey. Further, it is of value to

investigate the potential link between salary as an objective element of career success by TVET qualification holders; and broader aspects of TVET stereotyping which have an impact on the attractiveness of TVET programmes, hitherto not empirically demonstrated. Another valuable extension to the present research would be to develop and evaluate training programme curriculum contents. Such should engender important skills and abilities responding to the industries' needs and requirements, with a view to creating TVET graduates associated with enhanced employment and career progression outcomes.

As mentioned, the need for a TVET leavers' destination survey would be worthwhile. TVET students' world of work experiences and outcomes for periods greater than 18 months could be tracked after successful course completion; extending the research into work situations.

Although this thesis has made some important discoveries with regard to career paths and factors for career success of TVET qualifications holders, it recognises that this is an under-researched area, and deserves more attention. Further, it presents an opportunity of examining more in-depth young people's having gone through TVET but not being successful; despite having a TVET certificate. Career decision making, and career path could be compared with formal holders of TVET qualifications.

6.7 Conclusion

This study began with three research questions: (1) How do former TVET students who are holders of a formal TVET qualification construct their career paths? (2) What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen careers? and (3) What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journey for success, and why would this be so? The study explored how former TVET student holders of

formal TVET qualifications journeyed in their career towards achieving career success; and what the factors were which contributed to their achieving what they have accomplished so far. Additionally, the study provided the ability to better understand perceptions towards TVET, and how far TVET has been an important player in the construction of their career success. The study demonstrated how involvement of the TVET course followed had shaped these participants' future educational and career progression. What made the study unique was the use of former TVET students' voices in answer to these questions, providing empirical research on how former TVET students' career paths and career success were constructed. The study accomplished what it set out to do.

The study used narrative enquiry methods. After having collected the narratives of four participants and analysed their stories, the researcher attempted to answer the research questions in uncovering the lived experiences of former TVET students. Participants provided in-depth insights into their lives, their educational paths, views about the TVET programmes, experiences during their career, motivation for their career progression, and determinants that have constructed their career success. In answering the research questions this study helped to fill the gap in empirical research about TVET qualification holders' career paths and career success, in general. The research has established several implications for policymakers as well as for TVET providers. As the landscape of public education sector undergoes reforms, hearing calls to evolve and change, it is important for TVET providers to develop high-quality TVET programmes that integrate technical aspects. This would inspire the TVET students to enhance their career progression outcomes, for positive connections with current and latest trends in the industries. This will enhance the TVET programmes as well as the sense of belonging for all TVET students. The research also established that the TVET stream produces mostly technologists. Such professionals usually enter the blue-collar profession. The study has

confirmed the limitations in terms of career path and progression for such workers. Blue-collar workers have a more stationary career path. Career prospects are limited to reaching supervisory level. The study established that there is a sort of glass ceiling for blue-collar profession as far as reaching the other side of the hierarchy, which is considered white-collar professions. The only way to reach the next career level for blue-collar professionals is through upgrading of their technical qualification to that of university academic degree qualifications.

The study established that TVET significantly increased chances of finding quality work, and is central to reducing poverty. The capability approach can make an enormous contribution in formulating a TVET that can improve the lives of its citizens. There seems to be a thrust for improving of people's quality of life in policy designs for a good TVET system across Mauritius. The study showed that TVET qualifications have valued functionings for achieving employment. This allows holders of TVET qualification the kind of opportunities they desire, and enables them to achieve the lifestyles they have reason to value. The functionings gained by former TVET students from their TVET providers and appreciated by them were not limited solely to practical skills to be used only at the workplace: they were also related to increased self-esteem. That is, experiences learned from training helped mainly female trainees to rebuild confidence in themselves, overcoming the sense of inferiority and marginalization they have been feeling when working in a male-dominated occupation.

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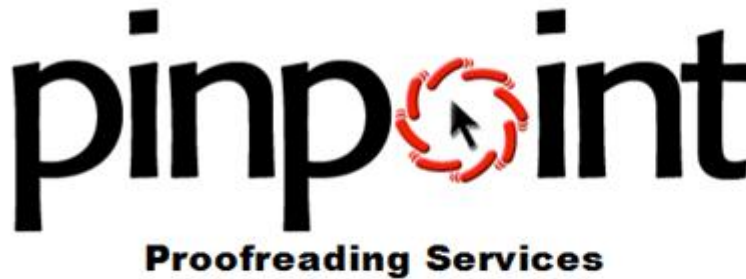
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1



Lydia Weight
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Pinpoint Proofreading Services

40 Ridge Rd
Kloof, Durban
3610

28 November 2018

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Lydia Weight, have proofread the document titled: Narrative Enquiry of Career Paths and Career Success of Former TVET Students in Mauritius: A Critical Investigation by Hemandar Madhoo. I have made all the necessary corrections. The documents are therefore ready for presentation to the destined authority.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Weight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a stylized "W".

L. Weight

Turnitin Report

Narrative enquiry of career paths and career success of former TVET students'in Mauritius: A critical investigation

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	"International Handbook of Education for the Changing World of Work", Springer Nature America, Inc, 2009 <small>Publication</small>	1 %
2	Submitted to Barry University <small>Student Paper</small>	1 %
3	ir.uiowa.edu <small>Internet Source</small>	1 %

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Gatekeeper Permission

31 July 2015

Mr P.K. Joosery
Officer in Charge
MITD

Dear Sir

RE: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH WITH ONE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

I am an Assistant Manager working at the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) and currently enrolled at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) as a PhD student. My research involves the collection of narratives from former Training and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students about the construction of their career/career success. The study will be to shed light for any stumbling blocks (if any) and opportunities faced by former TVET students in constructing their career success. It will lead to an increasing emphasis for TVET being an employment detonator as central to successful career.

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to interview one of your employees in view to conduct this research. As part of my data collection, I will be using interviews, artefacts and metaphors. There will be interviews which will be audio recorded. Each interview will last around 90 minutes. I want to assure you that every precaution will be taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the information collected from the employee. The name of the participant will not appear on any text and in the study pseudonyms will be used. The identity of the organization will not be revealed. As with any research conducted under the auspices of the University, my study is guided by strict ethical considerations that protect the participant at all times. Such considerations are anonymity, confidentiality of responses and

the right to withdraw from the study at any time without negative repercussions for the research participant.

It is hoped that the findings of the research will not only enrich my own understandings of the topic but will be used to generate images that will affirm the forces of TVET which will give life and energy to the Vocational and Educational world.

Yours faithfully

MADHOW Hemandar Kumar

493, Residence Union Park, More SIT, Union Park

Mobile: 57786484

PhD student

Letter to participant

1 August 2015

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral student presently enrolled with the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa). After my personal phone call in the month of July 2015, whereby I highlighted the context of my study. The study is about to shed light for any odds (if any) and opportunities faced by you as a former TVET student in constructing your career success. It is done with a view to provide a deeper understanding about influences of career element contributing in achieving career success of former TVET students. At the very outset I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for accepting to participate in my research which is all about collecting your career narratives as being a former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students. This study will be the focus of my dissertation as I am pursuing a doctoral degree in Philosophy (Education) through University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to carry out this research with one of your staff of your company/ or (Individual participant) to have your formal acceptance as participant(s) for this study. I am following up and arranging interviews with participant(s) which I have obtained gatekeeper permission with your employer. The data production tools for this research will be interviews. Information that participant(s) share for this study is considered confidential. For my research, your name will not appear in any text as I will be using pseudonyms. If you have any questions about the “informed consent form” which is forwarded with this letter, do not hesitate to ask me as I will be happy to clarify any concern.

I will be audio-recording our interview so that I can give you my full attention during the interview and make sure that I capture every word of your responses to my questions. At a later point, I will also provide you with a chance to review the interview transcript to help verify the information collected during the interviewing exercise. The interview will help me to collect your narratives for onward analysis. I will also capture the essence of your career evolution

and any progress through workplace observations, some photographs marking a memorable events connected with your employment, artefacts related to your career will also be helpful for drawing element of your career. At the end of our interview, you will be welcome to ask me any questions pertaining to my research.

Thank you in anticipation for sharing your thoughts and experiences. The information collected will remain confidential. You will be given an opportunity to have a look into the transcript before finalising the thesis.

Thank you again for your input and participation.

Yours faithfully,

Hemandar Kumar Madhow (Mr)

Doctoral Student

Assistant Manager at the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) /Mobile:
57786484

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Narrative enquiry of career paths and career success of former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students' in Mauritius: A critical investigation

Declaration

I _____ (full names of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this
research project and I consent to participating in the interviews.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Participant Information Sheet

Narrative enquiry of career paths and career success of former Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students' in Mauritius: A critical investigation

Dear Participant,

I invite you to take part in a research study as part of a study under the auspices of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This study will examine how certain elements of your training and career life have enabled you to be successful. The main objectives of the study are to understand how successful you are in your chosen career, how you have constructed your career paths and any hindrances or opportunities you met with during your career journey.

The duration of the interview will be approximately around 90 minutes and will be audio taped. Every effort will be made to ensure that no one will know that you took part in this study. If I use any information that you share with me, I will be careful to use it in a way that will prevent people from being able to identify you. To protect your identity I will ask you to provide a different name during the interview. You are free to withdraw from the research at any stage without negative or undesirable consequences to myself. All information is only intended for the research purposes. All data recordings and transcripts will be stored on a hard disk with passwords.

Permission to conduct this research study has been obtained from University of KwaZulu-Natal. The supervisor of this project is Dr Thabo Msibi from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education. Should you have any questions about your participation and your rights in the study you may contact Ms Phume Ximba of UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or call her at 27 31 2603587.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Hemandar Kumar MADHOW

Draft Instrument

- a. How do former TVET students' holder of a formal TVET qualification construct their career path?
- i. I would like to hear about your experience of having a successful careers after being a TVET students. You can tell your story in any way you feel comfortable, perhaps beginning with telling me a bit about what have pushed you to be enrolled as TVET student and how you felt being a TVET students at that time and then your journey of holding a higher job position presently in the relevant TVET training programme that you followed?
1. When did you join TVET and which vocational training you followed?
 2. What motivated your choice for this course?
 3. Are you satisfied with the course followed concerning the delivery, practical sessions, attachment (if any) and theories teaching?
 4. What was the duration?
 5. Have you undergone any foundation course in TVET before enrolling for the basic level course?
 6. After the basic level course, were you motivated to pursue further training or to join the world of work?
 7. What was the duration of the advance level course?
 8. Did you stop training after the advanced course or you continue with further advanced training programme?
 9. What influences you during the course?
 10. What circumstances have pushed you to pursue studies in TVET?
 11. What was your first job?
 12. Experience in your jobs, what changes have been brought in shaping your career?
 13. How many years have you been to that profession?

14. What has contributed to have an enhanced career path?
 15. What has contributed for motivating or demotivating/ encouraging/ discouraging you in the pursue of your career?
- ii. After that, I only used prompts from their story to explore an issue more deeply or to gain clarification.
 - iii. Follow-up questions to each key research questions.
 - iv. Space for reflective notes.
 - v. Open-ended question with follow up questions to probe for deeper meaning.
- b. What factors account for former TVET students being successful in their chosen career?
- i. I would like to hear about your experience about the odds that you faced as being a TVET student and how you struggle to be successful in your career and how you overcame these odds.
 1. Why have you chosen TVET instead of academic education?
 2. What was your socio-economic background?
 3. During your TVET study, were you doing a part time job?
 4. Who funded your TVET course?
 5. What difficulty did you faced to grasp the basic concepts of the vocational course at the start of the programme?
 6. What was your opinion concerning people choosing TVET instead of the main stream education?
 7. Were you perceived to be considered as failure of the academic stream and TVET was the sole recourse for you to access employment?
 8. How long it took you to get a job after the training followed?
 9. Did you find any occupation relevant to your training followed immediately after the course completion?
 10. How was the learning at the workplace?
 11. Was it difficult to transfer the teaching learned at the training centre to the work place?
 - ii. After that, I only used prompts from their story to explore an issue more deeply or to gain clarification.
 - iii. Follow-up questions to each key research questions.

- iv. Space for reflective notes.
 - v. Open-ended question with follow up questions to probe for deeper meaning.
- c. What are the challenges or opportunities they encountered whilst navigating their career journey for success and why would this be so?
- i. I would like to hear about things that you believe had contributed in shaping your career success and the reasons that you think these factors have shaped same.
 - 1. What have motivated you to strive for career success?
 - 2. What internal or external forces have contributed to make you successful in your career?
 - 3. What struggles/difficulties have you faced before reaching here?
 - 4. Were there any preconceived/hidden conditions that have contributed for this success?
 - ii. After that, I only used prompts from their story to explore an issue more deeply or to gain clarification.
 - iii. Follow-up questions to each key research questions.
 - iv. Space for reflective notes.
 - v. Open-ended question with follow up questions to probe for deeper meaning.

TABLE 3.9: Interview Questions

SN	Questions	Remarks
01	How did you come to be a TVET student?	
02	What motivated you to apply for the training programme?	
03	What is your motivation for joining a career related to the trade in which you followed training?	
04	What factors do you think have been instrumental to your career so far?	
05	What are/were your career goals?	
06	In what ways has your training course provided you support towards your career goals?	
07	Who has been the most help in your career path?	
08	What factors do you think have hindered your career progress so far?	
09	In what ways do you think your career progression has been recognised or rewarded?	
10	What has given you the most satisfaction in the past year?	
11	About what are you passionate?	
12	How do you define success for you personally?	
13	What core values underscore your approach to your career?	
14	Do you consider yourself to be a leader? Why?	
15	How do you see your career progressing now?	
16	What was/is your apprehension about TVET stream?	

17	Was there any odds you faced as a former TVET students to be where you are now?	
18	Were there any opportunities as former TVET student to hold the career position where you are now?	
19	What is your interpretation of career success in your own term?	

Some guiding questions

1. Can you tell me about your day?
2. Presently what are you doing following your TVET training?
3. Can you walk me through your education, what encouraged you to join a TVET stream?
4. Name factors that were most challenging for you during your course?
5. Describe your decision-making process for attending the TVET stream?
6. Describe your perception of the TVET stream prior to your enrolment?
7. Each interview was recorded using an electronic voice recorder. After each interview a transcription was generated.

Appendix 9

Transcription: Shane

Q: Can you explain to me how you spent your day today

A: Day today is fine doing markings, about 70%, half way mark have been reached, so *LAUGH loudly, correction for assignment right now and later for work session I have to stay*

Q: *Can you talk about your TVET programme you followed?*

A: *The TVET programme when I was at the IVTB, so I can see that was pretty much time ago, it was a diploma, so the diploma is here in 2006 in Tourism and management and ever since, your question is what have I done since then, I have been doing project management, structured.*

Q: *Just after the programme what do you do?*

A: I have not worked directly, I went to further my studies, I did a bachelor degree in logistics in France because this TVET being a vocational student at the Hotel Ecoliere they have a partnership with University of D'Anger in France so that it made my doors open to have access to a degree at euh.. euh.. in France.

Q: OK, you talked about logistics different from the TVET course?

Q: What pushed you to join a TVET programme

A: Well to be truthful, for the TVET programme I have joined it because I was not accepted at the University of Mauritius, My SC, HSC results were not to the standard, not as per the criteria of selection for entry in the University of Mauritius. So I had to do something meanwhile, and this programme was up and my parents forced me to do something and convinced me to go for it.

Q: So it was your parent decision to join TVET, it mostly a parental choice

A: It was mostly influenced by parents but I have my say into it in the sense that I was a bit realistic guy so I see that I was not accepted by UTM, by UOM, by any other, I didn't even, I... I really didn't take the chance to look at an abroad University, my parent was not looking in that direction so I was looking more at a local base so they didn't want to spend too much of money on the programme, I found that, on the industry trend of Mauritius tourism sector it would be a scope that would be employable to me, it would be profitable to get in and I also joined their thinking that way. Ok. At the end of the day, let's be realistic, I need to get a job, I have to work in the sector, why not to give a try.

Q: Can we say that the door was closed to you for the academic education so that was an alternative route for your TVET?

A: Today I have a bachelor degree, today I am here, the fact that ..euh..euh.. the TVET opened the door to further education this is the reason why I am here, I have achieved so much in my career. Yes this was Yes

Q: what was the most challenging when you followed your programme>

A: The TVET programme

A: Eum...Eum.It very rigourous and very disciplinary, at the hotel school, Mrs Juwaheer being one of my teacher as well

Researcher intervened saying that Mrs Juwaheer who recommended him to be participants.

A: So at least I understand what you are doing and dah... and dahI understand what your questions are what was challenging there, was mostly the, the the.. environment, the environment was challenging, you have to constantly excel yourself excel yourself daily, it was a daily challenges, challenge routine in the sense that you have to be up to the standard and know the standard, know the standard first of all, have to learn, to have to do internship very intense on this dual learning programme, your learning programme at the end of the day, my industrial attachment is very much part of the engagement of the student towards the completion of their diploma so in term of content, the overall curriculum of the MITD for Tourism diploma is very engaging and very challenging.

Q: Next question what was your perception of the TVET prior your enrolment? Did you have for instance certain perception for instance that TVET is only reserved for academically poor person, for failures from the main stream or

A: Favourably I will not lie to you about this, Researcher your perception, A: Yes let talk about my perception in the beginning because at that time it was IVTB and now MITD, Most of the people talked about as a vocational institute, so places where "Kot enan soudeur, mecanicien, so actually I was I don't like having done such kind of job prior to that I don't have mind to that, I didn't mind above, but I knew that I am not studying at Losanne not at UTM, UOM, so yeah. So there was the said factor however the bad perception but not the perception let imagine the negative perception when joining the programme when starting the programme the perception immediately change because because you put sense that the industry respected the MITD programmes so you could sense from what euh...euh.. euh...an industry practitioner in tourism, in hospitality had very good reviews of the students of the MITD coming from the Hotel School of Mauritius one of the first I think who had delivered these kind of programmes the vocational programmes for the industry so this is where you literally understand that ok that ok that is not that bad. Yes initial bad perception instead of that bad, let say prior to prior to influence.

Q:Ok so, can we understand that prior enrolment you that you perceived that TVET was having downgrading status.

A:No No downgrading downgrading status let say I do not I didn't understand the status ok I do get a role in a programme I do a programme because HSC was over, six months before enrolling I was working as euh..as euh.. 'agent' sales agent in call centres, so I had to do something, I knew that I had to do but I had to do something, it was not that my parent forced me towell they are convey factors, they are their decision their decision factors are there but I knew that I have to do something whether UTM or UOM or anybody even if it would be mechanic, I could have ended been mechanic but yeah I would have gone with anything.

Q:Do still believe that TVET as a last resort reserved for academically poor person?

A: Being there, having there where I would say about it you are telling me that academically poor person there is one element but ..but there is also the fact that of ..of..of..factors of money so let say.. if my parent could have paid the Charles Telfair I would have been here if they have it at that time, which was called DCDM if my parent could pay, I would be here.

Q: Can we consider that social status was one factor that pushed you in the TVET.

A: Yeah, financially, I could not afford, as my parent could not afford a full paid course here let say Rs 100000, Rs 200000. They guided me to this step, I had nothing else to do, no other programme has accepted me and only ah.. ah .. Laugh.. the hotel school had accepted me so I had to do a training in a trade. I had a perception that it was mostly vocational, it is a negative perception that at the end of the day I would not be aim,I will not reached high, this initial factor was there. Yeah this was there.

Q: So I would not asked you the question what motivated you to apply for the said course as you have already answered this part. So what motivated to join a career that you were trained and or you joined or it was completely

A: Very interesting question, there are similarities but are very little, there are similarities at the end of the day tourism is about travel there is littel of travel in it and I am working in it and have worked for the past ten years in travel related but at a more infrastructural aspects of the job so as change from tourism

Q: Completely far away from your from your study

Q: From what you have been doing

A: There is an element in it, tourism has an element in it, tourism drive the economy, there is no tourism there is no air travel for example, I am dependant on air travel, my job my scope of development from my job is air travel, there has to be air travel for my job to exist, in the sense that we need infrastructure for this, for this for the part of the economy for this driving factor of the economy so the diploma in tourism help me gather knowledge but help me stirred out tourism and hospitality into infrastructure development, I moved away from tourism to infrastructure development which caters for at the end for travel for tourism, business whatever it is but it is now on a to put it in a different value change.

Q: What factors have been instrumental to your career? So far

A: Factors

Q: For career did it for instance promotion, status, job satisfaction

A: Oh...Oh being down to earth being truthful to myself not a secret getting out of tourism, having studied in tourism and worked in tourism the money part is very less, you are not going to be paid very well in the beginning and the scope of promotion is there but it is going to take time and more studies may be in the related fields. So having done, experienced the study, tourism and hospitality management, still interested in it but happy to have export something else because over here we do not have the opportunity to explore these items factors of logistics and air transportation. We are pretty, our education is starting to getting there, having possibilities, ten years back there would be no possibility from to exploration transportation,

engineering except if you are taken in a government programme in Mauritius or parent have no money to send you to do that. So not being in that category to me I started the tourism and I barely passed it, ha,...ha., ha...ok I had to resit the exams because euh..., euh,...some some euh..euh..., it didn't worked out well in the beginning for the whole programme, let get back to your question what was it.

Q: what factor has been instrumental in your career so far/

A: The factors emm... emmm....factors the study access that this programme give me to France the BSc into

Q: Can we consider it was an open door for further study rather than career opportunities

A: Yes basically it opens door to my studies from the studies I change the career prospect, I move the career prospect from travel, tourism and hospitality to transportation infrastructure

Q: What are your career goals? Tell me

A: Career goals Career goals progress whatever it is, it is not to be the CEO not be the general manager it's to make progress in emerging market progress in developing in an emerging market under developed market.

Q: Actually you are holding what position here?

A: Here I am a lecturer, I am a contributing member to the faculty of management I am developing modules for new units, I have been taken on board because I am a logistical practitioner which makes that I can develop transportation modules this is new here there don't exist here. So this is why they taken me to do here and I teach lots of other modules but here I am basically a lecturer. Prior to that I have been allocating eum..., eum..., infrastructure development at a global scale so my previous work was in Thailand where I launched the transport programme for a new terminal there, prior to that I was in Mauritania where I launched a whole new airport, whole new infrastructure.

Q: So you are more airport related?

A: Airport

Q;So my next question is who has help the most in your career? do you have someone. A role models

A: When I was at the TVET I was strongly well I may be a bit critical towards the TVET because having been there, I loved the experience loved the outcome of it euh..., euh...,I wish to specially highlight the support of my lecturers my main lecturers , the people who was in charge of the class of the programme, they have been of strong support, moral support up to now, we still keep in touch and still they guide me and still share our assignment for our research or things like that so we are very much in contact with my past teachers so there is this bonding element that have formed euh .., in in in for the TVET part, for the TVET instructors, other than that euh.....my career path has been mostly influenced by seeing others when I moved to that bachelor programme and I looked to how international consultant, management consultant works and what's their responsibility and their works and i really

thought to myself why can't be like that so this is what bring me , drove me to become an independent consultant. These are the people there as such no one single people but most of series of people who have mentored or guided me through the steps

Q: Do you think that there some factors that hindered your progress, career progresses up to now? or you have elements that has only enhancing your career/

A: The more we grow, the more we nurture, we more we know what nurtures and what hinders our development, we tempt to eliminate, or go away. There are factors that are detrimental for example being here for a year in Mauritius with all the qualifications background knowledge, industry application, not finding a job for a years, is very hard, these are fallbacks of being too much specialist in your domain in local region like Mauritius so I am not for example for over here teaching my ten years of industry experience, I am having pull to my reading resources rather than my whole industry application what have done over the past ten years. So it is basically upkeeping books, reading books finding proper elements to guide the module development . I can't just fit for in my own element such that airport development and had a module on airport development, yes I would be it could be that the essence of what I have done and do in the past ten years but unfortunately but now this level has not been reached yet. We deal with the international business because I was working into international business, we deal in global trade because that what we intend to do, to facilitate at a management consultancy level for an airport development level. This how I am, this basically finding the elements which help me go forward and not just staying back and falling back not having a job.

Q: Can we understand that you are working in an area that you are not specialised in?

A: At the moment I have these thing I have the background knowledge, have the have the have the Chartered Institute of Logistic, I got the qualification, I am developing further modules into it so it is a two way traffic, you can't say that I am not having the proper experience, I have the proper experience, I have the proper experience I have everything that I need to, that is it is more challenging in the local context. You understand that from the international perspective back to a local perspective we got a reduce market, engineering faculty not that much present you know these all the factors that .

Q: Do you feel that you have a sense of belonging in what are doing for the time being?

A: Oh Oh yes basically what I have done now I move in out from industry practice now I am into academic practice.

Q: What about your job satisfaction can we talked about that ?

A: Over the past the job I had so far, from what I have done, yes I am satisfied, I am very satisfied, all of these are be it TVET be it the bachelor degree, be it the master degree, the chartered degree all these are contributing factors

Q: In what way do think that your career have been recognised or rewarded?

A: In ways, I have been asked to speak at guest lectures I have been asked to do the opening speech at the graduation ceremonies to motivate students, ah..., ah/.....,

Q: As a role model

A: That's one part, reward for me is getting access to further knowledge which is currently happening right now. I am having very interesting change in career so I am embraced change at the end of the day and I was, told them in my interview here there is no job title which tell you change manager, it doesn't exist in any organisation but at the end of the day that what we have to do. To adapt, change, to make new set up, there is no change you are static

Q: Can we say that you are an advocacy for change management.

A: Yes

Q: Do you consider yourself to be a change agent.

A: yes, yes

Q: my next question is that what has given you the most satisfaction in the past years.

A: Oh Oh, balancing family and work life so are you parent; Researcher: Yes, A: Being parent is the biggest challenge.

Q: How do cope with that, is your work more demanding?

A: Both of them are hard, working as an independant consultant going out in the field in Mauritania or lost in Thailand, this is difficult to manage a family with so you have to make concession, you have to really put yourself in the right mindset for this to happen. so learning to do that is what's the outcome of these experiences of everything that's here, is learning how to do that learning to achieve a proper balance, learning to trade off basically is what all about.

Q: What are you passionate may be?

A: Research high research in industry

Q: Have you been able ,..... how many papers have been able to write in a journal;

A: I am so far, this is the next challenge for me, writing in a journal, this the next challenge to me, I don't want to enrol into a doctorate programme, I want to write an article first, how the review is, even it is refused or even it's negative as outcome it doesn't matter for me. For me the outcome that count, the learning process that I get from it.

Q: So let me ask you one very key element in my study how do you define success for you personally, not talking about career success, success itself in a wider range.

A:Success is wanting to wake up, not to go through your day, but to achieve something productive out of your day, it can be small element, it can be your child to learn guitar today or play a new note in the guitar, it can be eh..., eh..., it can be new element from your correction that students have come up with which is above average for me this is element of success, success cannot, success always defined for me success is how much failure you have been gone through, success for me is conditional for having gone through failure, there is no success without failure, for me this is the shortest way to define success for me to have success there has to be fundamentals, there has to be, not regular failiures all the time, there has, to have ten failures and one success.

Q: Some people say that failures stepping stones, spring board for success.

A: I strongly believe in that

Q: Are you meaning that/

A: Yes, Yes

A: You have to fall down and basically as I tell to the students that you have to fall down the most important I have, I am not interested in the answer, I am interest in how you got the answer, so for me failure is the same, you fall down how you get in place is most important, an action happens and what is your reaction to the event is to what it contribute either to the success or the failure.

Q: Or in another way can we say that the way going out of failure guarantee...?

A: Not guarantee that going out of failure is success.

A: Success has too much of elements in it.

Q: First you talked about achievement,

A: Two world apart,

Q: Opposite

A: Yeah, for me to be successful, to have success it depends well what is your definition of success is but for me success comes from failure, there has to be failure even in writing for example for refusal to have an article published, a refusal to get promotion recently, ah..., ah .., ah ...a head hunting company wanted general manager construction unit and they told me that you have lots of the what we are looking for but some of the key elements you don't, so it's not based on them that my work should go down, my work if you do not know your work you will not know where you stand, so a negative, so a refusal to be considered or a negative response for me is not a failure at there is a response there is an acknowledgement, there is all the right for them not to acknowledge that but you gone through the selection process whether what was the outcome so these for me are not failure, failures is depend on how you look at it ,on how .

Q: So what happened Shane if you have students that fails, so how you motivate same, can you tell them that failures will bring them towards success or are going as a lecturer.

A: As a lecturer, I tend to go directly to the point, eh..., eh, I don't like, I try to have a proper relationship with students so they have in terms of teaching, I was doing that yesterday, I given them elements lots of that lots of people have failed and have succeeded Alibaba, Jekeroy Leek, all these people have gone through heartbreaking difficulties.

Q: therefore you don't encourage them to fail?

A: I encourage them to try, even the result is bad, the fact that you have learn the whole outcome is going to determine your success, is not that easy, it is not one, unfortunately difficult to define.

Q: What core values underscore your career?

A: What >>

Q; How Committed

A: Understanding where you are and where you want to go. The core value here is understanding, you have to know where you are.

Q: How you scan your achievement .. position?, you say where you are then you are talking , position

Q: How you mapped it out, do you used some measurement or yardsticks

A: I don't a logical methodology when it comes to myself, when it comes to mapping out my progress my progress you benchmarked it against other management consultant C.Vs' for example against competitors c.v, competitors profile so that how you understand you are, what you can do , what you cannot do, how you have been taken to do the job or not taken to do the job.

Q: Are you considering that benchmarking with someone credentials is...

A: Someone credentials is obviously is some sort of, we used the kPI, laugh, ha, ha, ha..., we used the KPI settings

Q: So do consider yourself to be a leader and why?

A: I can only hope to answer positively to your question, yes I consider myself to be a leader in my, various topics, consider my students , consider myself a leader to them, as I try to bring a positive role model, I try to be a positive role models, in the way I teach, in the way I used technology in my class, in the way I interact with them, in the way that I explained to them, I don't hesitate as you were talking about success and failures, I do not hesitate to showcase failure can be stepping stones to success, so this is what, so this how I worked together with my students obviously this is the fact that this a new job and I am being overly positive about it .. yeah for my students I try to,,...the feedback is here, is very positive, so I'm leading them so it about explaining to them what it is that you are wanting with them, want from them, what is your input what going to be, it about having, being truthful to your,,... what your demand and my demand... my demand is this and what is your demand for this, lets match it, okay, lets matched it, managed it, works together towards completing this module, for the semester, for example,

Q: How you see your career progressing from now

A: positively, I don't know when, why, where but I can only told you positively because I am, what I am doing I am gathering experience.

Q: Do you have some ambitions?

A: Ambitions, I have ambitions

A: We were talking about this example of a general manager construction, which was taken, selected, going prior selection but was not taken, so I am also on various other selection process, so I just work hard maintaining my industry and now being in the academie and having an academic credential trying to..

Q: So are you envisaging to away from teaching profession

A: I don't think so, because even I ...

Q: General Manager position, CEO position

A: Unfortunately that would be difficult that would be difficult but that would be difficult but yest I would be which ever industry I get in, for example be it academic, teaching, be it managerial, management consulting, any other position it's about moving forward, it about keeping track of the industry, I have already prior selection of thing that I like, it mostly towards the aviations related, airport related, so this is for me I still keep whether I am in the industry, whether I am working as a constructor, whether I'm painting a house for some body, I still abreast what we are calling industry intelligence. This how I can go forward. Probably I am not phrasing it properly the answer to your question but....

Q: it's okay

Q: So did you faced some odds when joining the TVET , so going through your narratives I understand that you were not forced by your parent but you joined it because there was limited option

Q: So have any oppportunities with the TVET programme?

A: I have my colleagues, who were in the same TVET programmes to me and we maintain contact they have worked in the tourism field they have so far come out pretty nice, emm.. rate of growth is something want to tend to want, for the past ten years wanted to grow right now I am not so .. eh..eh.. I am not so needy for that, I know that will happen, I don't want that to, I just have to put the elements in place to happen, had the element match to happen but my colleague had ended in representing tourism, key players in tourism sector, some have gone separate ways, and what can I say if you have been in the TVET programme for hospitality or Tourism, for example, you would tend to stay in the same field but that doesn't mean it mandatory for you, to stay, it up to you to explore what potential you are

Q: So Shane can in your own term, give an interpretation or give your own definition of career success, previously we talked about success, now I am talking about being more focus, how would you define career success for me.

A: I believe solely being personal, career success comes from eu..euh.. first all from you, how confident you are in the element that you bring forward be it to a meeting be it to a press

conference, be it to an industry conference, how confident you are in that so that would be one element of success and unfortunately or fortunately another element of success would be how you are portrayed, the general media,

Q: You know normally we tend to define, there is two elements of career success, one we call it objective career success and a second one is subject career success, one way of measuring objective career success, mean that normally, your promotion, your salary, we can measure that, it tangible whereas subjective career success is your own definition mean that job satisfaction, no need to climb up the ladder you are still satisfy with the job, so where you situate yourself , to get more precise.

A: Subjectively very satisfied, with my job for me my career success, I am currently having both elements, what is opposite to career success then, for failure.

Q: Some people doesn't achieve success in career that doesn't mean they are constantly a failure,

A: To answer in an objective way, I am not to happy these are thing in life, previously career was good, but most of it was good, now currently job, salary could be better, subjectively I am very satisfied, I tend to be both about my success. I don't want to see you , to over sell myself,

Q: A definition for you

A: For me, a definition, how able to explain the correlation of what you have done, properly, how happy you are, in explaining this, how happy you are of your achievement, for me this is a success.

Q: Happy with your position and your job.

A: YeahYeah I am happy about it, I am very happy to have, ah..ah..ah to be working as a lecturer, I believe it can, I can have other position in years to come, but for me being

Q: it happens that if you are offered for instance a new position with higher salary even though condition in terms workmanship, work environment not happy are you going to opt to leave your position.

A: I did that already, I had a decent career, but no scope for growth, I was already unsatisfied. so I got an offer as an independent consultant to go to open the Mauritania airport, which I immediately jumped in because that what I wanted to do, I structured my career to be like that but unfortunately one contract two contract but no more contract, so basically economic downturn of th company, no more renewal, I found myself without job, for me success is having been selected directly to teach, without going through a whole, bunch of industry knowledge about teaching and basically having done primary research, done research previously, and being current on the industry what's going on there, has been good enough for me to get a job as an, as a free lecturer, who , obviously, I have my my my subject, my modules, and have a timetable but I feel very free in my job, this is the job working environment over here is something that I would let take a competitor like UTM and, UOM, I would definitely not go for higher 10000 or 20000 more salaries, because of the working environment.

Q: Shane my methodology is narrative, qualitative a lots, firstly I will your narrative.

Analysis of Transcripts 01 (Shawn)

Anchor Codes

1. How do former TVET students' holder of a formal TVET qualification **construct their career path?** **Actual career trajectory/career path/reaching where s/he in her/his career**
2. What **factors account** for former TVET students **being successful** in their **chosen career?** **Curriculum responsiveness/ training related industry needs/ supports/personal ambition/career success determinants**
3. What are the **challenges or opportunities** they **encountered** and **why?** **Structural/Institutional/ Personal/Curricular/stigma as failures/**

Transcript	Codes	Categories & themes
<p>Q: Can you explain to me how you spent your day today</p> <p>A:Day today is fine doing markings, about 70%, half way mark have been reached, so LAUGH loudly, correction for assignment right now and later for work session I have to stay</p>	<p>Greeting, duties</p>	<p>Present duty: Actual Task and Greeting</p>

<p>Q: Can you talked about your TVET programme you followed?</p> <p>A:The TVET programme when I was at the IVTB,so I can see that was pretty much time ago, it was a diploma,so the diploma is here in 2006 in Tourism and management and ever since, your question is what have did since then, I have been doing project management, structured.</p> <p>Q: Just after the programme what you do?</p> <p>A: I have not work directly, I went to further my studies, I did bachelor degree in logistic at france because this TVET being a vocational student at the Hotel Ecoliere they have a partnership with University of D'Anger in</p>	<p>TVET course trying to remember, less importance</p> <p>Diploma in Tourism</p> <p>Changed TVET to academic study</p> <p>Not joining work after TVET,</p> <p>Undergrad in abroad</p>	<p>TVET journey: recalling, long ago, less importance</p> <p>TVET programme: Diploma in Tourism management and hospitality</p> <p>After TVET: Opted for academic study</p> <p>World of work after TVET: Not joining work</p> <p>After TVET: Opted for an undergraduate programme abroad</p>
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<p>France so that it made my doors open to have access to a degree at euh.. euh.. in France.</p> <p>Q: OK, you talked about logistics different from the TVET course?</p> <p>Q: What pushed you to join a TVET programme</p> <p>A: Well to be truthful, for the TVET programme I have joined it because I was not accepted at the University of Mauritius, My SC,HSC results was not to the standard, not as per the criteria of selection for entry in the University of Mauritius. So I had to do something a meanwhile, and this programme was up and my parents force me to do something and convinced me to go for it.</p>	<p>TVET drives for further study in the academic stream</p> <p>Joined TVET because no access to university and poor result from academic stream</p> <p>Parental choice imposed for joining TVET</p>	<p>Opportunities with the TVET course: Access and enable to pursue academic study</p> <p>Reception towards TVET: Joined TVET as reason not having been able to secure a seat in a university</p> <p>TVET as a choice: Parental choice/ Imposed decision</p>
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<p>Q: So it was your parent decision to join TVET, it mostly a parental choice</p> <p>A: It was mostly influenced by parents but I have my say into it in the sense that I was a bit realistic guy so I see that I was not accepted by UTM, by UOM, by any other, I didn't even, I...I really didn't take the chance to look at abroad University, my parent was not looking in that direction so I was looking more at a local base so they didn't want to spend to much of money on the programme, I found that, on the industry trend of Mauritius tourism sector it would be scope that would be employable to me, it would be profitable to get in and I also join</p>	<p>Influenced by parent for not obtaining a seat in university</p> <p>Parent Finance situation, couldn't go overseas university</p> <p>TVET in Tourism, it was trendy, and easily employable</p>	<p>TVET as a choice: Not obtaining a seat in university, parent channelled me to TVET</p> <p>TVET as a choice/Personal interest in TVET: Parent financial situation, couldn't afford for overseas university, no interest in TVET</p> <p>TVET course choice: The tourism course was trendy and after the course opportunity for employment high</p> <p>Personal reason for TVET course: To get a job pushed me to</p>
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<p>their thinking that way Ok.</p> <p>At the end of the day, let be realistic, I need to get a job, I have to work in the sector, why not to give a try.</p> <p>Q: Can we say that the door was closed to you for the academic education so that was alternative route for your the TVET?</p> <p>A: Today I have a bachelor degree, today I am here, the fact that ..euh..euh..the TVET opened the door to to further education this is the reason why I am here, I have achieved so much in my career. Yes this was Yes</p> <p>Q: what was the most challenging when you followed your programme></p> <p>A: The TVET programme</p>	<p>To get job joined TVET in Tourism. Try TVET for that reason</p> <p>The TVET programme has contributed for his bachelor degree/opened door for further education</p> <p>Springboard for his career</p> <p>TVET course was rigorous and very disciplinary part of the requirement of the hotel industry</p>	<p>join the said programme as tourism sector was flourishing in Mauritius</p> <p>Contribution of the TVET course: To increase his opportunity to secure access to university degree which was not permitted with his initial academic qualification. TVET stepping stones for further education and boosting his career</p> <p>TVET institutional/curricula/training delivery aspect: Course rigorous, institution imposed serious discipline, training dispensed as</p>
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<p>A: Eum...Eum.It very rigorous and very disciplinary, at the hotel school, Mrs Juwaheer being one of my teacher as well</p> <p>Researcher intervened saying that Mrs Juwaheer who recommended him to be participants.</p> <p>A: So at least I understand what you are doing and dah... and dahI understand what your questions are what was challenging there, was mostly the, the the.. environment, the environment was challenging, you have to constantly excel yourself excel yourself daily, it was a daily challenges, challenge routine in the sense that you have to be</p>	<p>Environment was challenging</p> <p>Requirement to excel daily was a routine in a TVET course</p> <p>Up to standard</p>	<p>per requirement of the industry.</p> <p>Trainers were strict</p> <p>TVET</p> <p>institutional/Personal/Curricula:</p> <p>Environment was challenging, the course requirement was that we needed to excel daily in view to be accepted and earn respect from the trainer. You needed to be up to the standard as set out the tourist industry</p>
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<p>up to the standard and know the standard, know the standard first of all, have to learn, to have to do internship very intense on this dual learning programme, your learning programme at the end of the day, my industrial attachment is very much part of the engagement of the student towards the completion of their diploma so in term of content, the overall curriculum of the MITD for Tourism diploma is very engaging and very challenging.</p> <p>Q: Next question what was your perception of the TVET prior your enrolment? Did you have for instance certain perception for instance that</p>	<p>Internship very intense in TVET</p> <p>Dual learning mode in TVET</p> <p>Engaged in industrial attachment</p> <p>Curriculum was very demanding, engaging and challenging.</p>	<p>TVET</p> <p>institutional/personal/curricula aspects: Internship was part of the programme, it was very intensive, and partly a dual mode of training was integrated in the programme.</p> <p>I needed to engage in industrial attachment.</p> <p>TVET</p> <p>institutional/personal/curricula aspects: Curriculum was demanding, engaging and challenging</p>
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<p>TVET is only reserved for academically poor person, for failures from the main stream or</p> <p>A: Favourably I will not lie to you about this,</p> <p>Researcher your perception, A: Yes let talk about my perception in the beginning because at that time it was IVTB and now MITD, Most of the people talked about as a vocational institute, so places where "Kot enan soudeur, mecanicien, so actually I was I don't like having done such kind of job prior to that I don't have mind to that, I didn't mind above, but I knew that I am not studying at Losanne not at UTM, UOM, so yeah. So there was the said factor</p>	<p>Confirm poor perception of TVET by him before enrolment</p> <p>Everybody talked TVET was reserved for mechanics, welders, only for trades' workers.</p> <p>Downgrading image in his mind</p> <p>Not having the same status as University people.</p> <p>Negative perception of TVET</p>	<p>Receptions towards TVET: Poor perception of TVET before enrolling for the programme.</p> <p>Receptions towards TVET: TVET was familiar in the Mauritian society to be reserved for mechanics, welders, only for manual workers. A downgrading status of TVET was deeply rooted in my mind.</p> <p>Reception towards TVET: TVET was not a part in term of status with that of University</p> <p>Image of TVET: Negative perception about TVET</p>
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<p>however the bad perception but not the perception let imagine the negative perception when joining the programme when starting the programme the perception immediately change because because you put sense that the industry respected the MITD programmes so you could sense from what euh...euh.. euh...an industry practitioner in tourism, in hospitality had very good reviews of the students of the MITD coming from the Hotel School of Mauritius one of the first I think who had delivered these kind of programmes the vocational programmes for the industry so this is</p>	<p>Perception changed after enrolment, high esteem by industry.</p> <p>Very good reviews by industry about TVET students.</p> <p>Now understanding TVET is not that bad.</p> <p>It is ok</p> <p>The bad perception about TVET was influenced by society</p>	<p>Image of TVET: the negative perception of the TVET changed once enrolled, saw the high esteem that industry is having.</p> <p>Industry perception on TVET: Industries mainly the tourist industry has a very good reviews about TVET students and had a strong belief in the training.</p> <p>Personal belief about TVET: Changed when understood that industry value TVET trainees, then my personal belief about TVET has completely changed.</p> <p>Reception towards TVET: The bad perception about TVET is mainly due to the influence of our</p>
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<p>where you literally understand that ok that ok that is not that bad. Yes initial bad perception instead of that bad, let say prior to prior to influence.</p> <p>Q:Ok so, can we understand that prior enrolment you that you perceived that TVET was having downgrading status.</p> <p>A:No No downgrading downgrading status let say I do not I didn't understand the status ok I do get a role in a programme I do a programme because HSC was over, six months before enrolling I was working as euh..as euh.. 'agent' sales agent in call centres, so I had to do something, I knew that I had to do but I had to do</p>	<p>Joined TVET as academic studies was over.</p> <p>No good job after academic studies.</p>	<p>society inherited from our colonial masters</p> <p>Reason for enrolling in the TVET: completed the academic stream</p> <p>No good job was being offered to me after having completed the academic stream</p>
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<p>something, it was not that my parent forced me to ...well they are convey factors, they are their decision their decision factors are there but I knew that I have to do something whether UTM or UOM or anybody even if it would be mechanic, I could have ended been mechanic but yeah I would have gone with anything.</p> <p>Q:Do still believe that TVET as a last resort reserved for academically poor person?</p> <p>A: Being there, having there where I would say about it you are telling me that academically poor person there is one element but ..but there is also the fact that of ..of..factors of money so let say.. if my</p>	<p>Parent pressurised for TVET</p> <p>Parental imposed decision</p> <p>Needed to do something,</p> <p>Not getting entry to university</p> <p>TVET for academically poor people</p> <p>Financial status of parent limit access to university then only resort to TVET</p>	<p>Parent stand after completion of academic stream: No access to university, they forced me to join the TVET. Parental high influence for opting for the TVET course.</p> <p>Reason for enrolling in TVET: not admitted in the university which was the first choice, being young needed to do something, so enrol for TVET</p> <p>Reception towards TVET: TVET was meant in his mind for academically poor people</p> <p>Reason for enrolling in TVET: financial predicament of parents</p>
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<p>parent could have paid the Charles Telfair I would have been here if they have it at that time, which was called DCDM if my parent could pay, I would be here.</p> <p>Q: Can we consider that social status was one factor that pushed you in the TVET.</p> <p>A: Yeah, financially, I could not afford, as my parent could not afford a full paid course here let say Rs 100000, Rs 200000. They guided me to this step, I had nothing else to do, no other programme has accepted me and only ah.. ah .. Laugh.. the hotel school had accepted me so I had to do a training in a trade. I had a perception that it was mostly vocational, it is a negative</p>	<p>Parent ability to finance university degree, TVET would haven't been my choice.</p> <p>University courses not affordable,</p> <p>Parent recourse to TVET</p> <p>No other option,</p> <p>No entry to University</p> <p>Got admitted in TVET</p> <p>Not to idle, doing TVET course</p> <p>Knowing TVET has bad image</p>	<p>for paid university, no access to public funded university, therefore the only option was left was the TVET course.</p> <p>If my parent had the financial capability to fund my university degree, TVET would have not my choice</p> <p>Reason for enrolling in TVET: Paid private university courses was not affordable</p> <p>My parent pushed me in the TVET course as there was no other option than that and access to university was limited.</p> <p>Reasons for enrolling in TVET: got admitted in the TVET programme knowingly that TVET hold a bad image, simply not be roaming here and there without doing nothing.</p>
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<p>infrastructural aspects of the job so as change from tourism</p> <p>Q: Completely far away from your from your study</p> <p>Q: From what you have been doing</p> <p>A: There is an element in it, tourism has an element in it, tourism drive the economy, there is no tourism there is no air travel for example, I am dependant on air travel, my job my scope of development from my job is air travel, there has to be air travel for my job to exist, in the sense that we need infrastructure for this, for this for the part of the economy for this driving factor of the economy so the diploma in tourism help me gather knowledge</p>	<p>Job related to air travel</p> <p>TVET course helped me to be knowledgeable in my work</p>	<p>Career: After TVET and undergrad, job related to air travel</p> <p>Contribution of TVET in career: TVET helped me to be better knowledgeable in my work</p>
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<p>but help me stirred out tourism and hospitality into infrastructure development, I moved away from tourism to infrastructure development which caters for at the end for travel for tourism, business whatever it is but it is now on a to put it in a different value change.</p> <p>Q: What factors have been instrumental to your career? So far</p> <p>A: Factors</p> <p>Q: For career did it for instance promotion, status, job satisfaction</p> <p>A: Oh....Oh being down to earth being truthful to myself not a secret getting out of tourism, having studied in tourism and worked in tourism the</p>	<p>Move away from TVET course</p> <p>Job relevant to part of TVET course</p> <p>TVET course provides job with little salary</p>	<p>Career not related to TVET:</p> <p>Move away from the relevance of the course but nevertheless my job is relevant part of the TVET programme.</p> <p>Career payoff with TVET course: The TVET course followed provided with job opportunity having little salary.</p>
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<p>money part is very less, you are not going to be paid very well in the beginning and the scope of promotion is there but it is going to take time and more studies may be in the related fields. So having done, experienced the study, tourism and hospitality management, still interested in it but happy to have export something else because over here we do not have the opportunity to explore these items factors of logistics and air transportation. We are pretty, our education is starting to getting there, having possibilities, ten years back there would be no possibility from to exploration transportation,</p>	<p>Salary was determining factor</p> <p>With TVET course scope of promotion little</p> <p>TVET provides little opportunity to explore my field of interest</p> <p>Limited opportunity to exercise in the field of his interest</p>	<p>Salary was a determining factor whether to stay with TVET career related job or move in another direction. The scope of promotion was very little with the TVET course</p> <p>Career prospect with TVET: there was limited opportunity that my field of interest would have been valued in case I opt for job related to the field of study which I followed</p>
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<p>engineering except if you are taken in a government programme in Mauritius or parent have no money to send you to do that. So not being in that category to me I started the tourism and I barely passed it, ha,...ha.., ha...ok I had to resit the exams because euh.., euh,...some some euh..euh..., it didn't worked out well in the beginning for the whole programme, let get back to your question what was it.</p> <p>Q: what factor has been instrumental in your career so far/</p> <p>A: The factors emm... emmm....factors the study access that this programme give me to France the BSc into</p>	<p>Parent no money to finance academic studies</p> <p>Not passed the TVET at the first attempt</p> <p>Lacking interest in TVET course at the start of the course</p> <p>The TVET course enable me to have access to France for my undergrad course</p>	<p>Academic studies: Academic studies costly, parent couldn't afford this</p> <p>TVET curricula/personal/institutional aspects: Not passed the TVET course at the first attempt. Lacking interest in TVET course at the start of the course.</p> <p>Opportunities with TVET: It has enable me to have access to France for my undergrad course as the TVET institution and the said</p>
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<p>Q: Can we consider it was an open door for further study rather than career opportunities</p>		<p>programme has a twinning agreement with the said university.</p>
<p>A: Yes basically it opens door to my studies from the studies I change the career prospect, I move the career prospect from travel, tourism and hospitality to transportation infrastructure</p>	<p>TVET opened door for further studies</p> <p>New career prospects</p>	<p>Opportunities with TVET:</p> <p>Opened door for further studies.</p> <p>With that I had new career prospects and has enabled me to realise my career dream.</p>
<p>Q: What are your career goals? Tell me</p>		
<p>A: Career goals Career goals progress whatever it is, it is not to be the CEO not be the general manager it's to make progress in emerging market progress in developing in an emerging market under developed market.</p>	<p>Career goals, make progress in emerging market</p>	<p>Career goals: Aiming to progress in the area of emerging market</p>

<p>Q: Actually you are holding what position here?</p> <p>A: Here I am a lecturer, I am a contributing member to the faculty of management I am developing modules for new units, I have been taken on board because I am a logistical practitioner which makes that I can develop transportation modules this is new here there don't exist here. So this is why they taken me to do here and I teach lots of other modules but here I am basically a lecturer. Prior to that I have been allocating eum., eum., infrastructure development at a global scale so my previous work was in Thailand where I</p>	<p>Lecturer in faculty of management</p> <p>Having logistics background helped me to get this job of lecturer</p> <p>Prior being lecturer, worked abroad as infrastructure developer</p>	<p>Actual job: Lecturer in faculty of management at the Charles Telfair Institute.</p> <p>Contributing element for present career: Being holder of logistics competencies, helped to secure the job of lecturer</p> <p>Career paths: Prior lecturer, was infrastructure developer in Thailand. Project consultant for new airport terminal in Mauritania.</p>
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<p>launched the transport programme for a new terminal there, prior to that I was in Mauritania where I launched a whole new airport, whole new infrastructure.</p> <p>Q: So you are more airport related?</p> <p>A: Airport</p> <p>Q;So my next question is who has help the most in your career? do you have someone. A role models</p> <p>A: When I was at the TVET I was strongly well I may be a bit critical towards the TVET because having been there, I loved the experience loved the outcome of it euh..., euh...,I wish to specially highlight the support of my lecturers my main lecturers , the people who was incharge</p>	<p>A bit critical towards TVET</p> <p>Supportive lecturers in TVET</p>	<p>TVET contributed in his career:</p> <p>A bit critical towards</p> <p>TVET institutional/personal/curricula aspect: Supportive lecturers, good</p>
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<p>of the class of the programme, they have been of strong support, moral support up to now, we still keep in touch and still they guide me and still share our assignment for our research or things like that so we are very much in contact with my past teachers so there is this bonding element that have formed euh ..., in in in for the TVET part, for the TVET instructors, other than that euh.....my career path has been mostly influenced by seeing others when I moved to that bachelor programme and I looked to how international consultant, management consultant works and what's their responsibility</p>	<p>Moral support from teaching staff.</p> <p>Good Guidance from TVET lecturers</p> <p>Still with contact with TVET lecturers and strong bonding</p> <p>Career path influence during undergrad programme</p> <p>Inspired form the works of international consultants and management consultant</p>	<p>pedagogical and psychological support from trainers, good career guidance from the part of the trainers. Strong bonding with the TVET trainers, very collaborative and cooperative trainers.</p> <p>Career path influence: My career path and career objectives were set during my undergrad course.</p> <p>Career path influence: Aspiration came from the works of international consultants and management consultant. Dreamt to be like them.</p>
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<p>and their works and i really thought to myself why can't be like that so this is what bring me , drove me to become an indepedent consultant. These are the people there as such no one single people but most of series of people who have mentored or guided me through the steps</p> <p>Q: Do you think that there some factors that hindered your progress, career progress up to now? or you have elements that has only enhancing your career/</p> <p>A: The more we grow, the more we nurture, we more we know what nurtures and what hinders our development, we tempt to eliminate, or go away. There are factors that are</p>	<p>Dreamt to be like them</p> <p>A series of people guided me in my career</p> <p>Becoming more matured in age, developed the skill to get rid with elements that hinders development</p>	<p>Career support: A series of people guided me in my career</p> <p>Barriers/hindrances for career: More becoming matured, developed necessary skill to get rid with barriers/obstacles that would prevent career progression</p>
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<p>detrimental for example being here for a year in Mauritius with all the qualifications background knowledge, industry application, not finding a job for a years, is very hard, these are fall backs of being too much specialist in your domain in local region like Mauritius so I am not for example for over here teaching my ten years of industry experience, I am having pull to my reading resources rather than my whole industry application what have done over the past ten years. So it is basically upkeeping books, reading books finding proper elements to guide the module development . I can't just</p>	<p>Jobless for more than one year despite being qualified</p> <p>Specialist in a domain is not recognised in Mauritius</p> <p>Industries experiences haven't not be useful in Mauritius</p> <p>Reading resources from books help me to navigate.</p>	<p>Obstacles/barriers/bad souvenirs in careers: Remained jobless for more than one year despite being qualified</p> <p>Barriers/obstacles/bad souvenirs in careers: Despite being a specialist in my domain, I was not recognised in Mauritius, due to limited opportunities. All my industrial experiences haven't been useful in Mauritius to have a better job. Here in Mauritius reading materials tell how to perform your duty therefore I read a lot.</p>
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<p>fit for in my own element such that airport development and had a module on airport development, yes I would be it could be that the essence of what I have done and do in the past ten years but unfortunately but now this level has not been reached yet. We deal with the international business because I was working into international business, we deal in global trade because that what we intend to do, to facilitate at a management consultancy level for an airport development level. This how I am, this basically finding the elements which help me go forward and not just staying back and</p>	<p>Experienced earned not having application value</p> <p>Competencies used in another way not be jobless</p>	<p>Career Support: Experienced earned are not being fully utilised here</p> <p>Competencies usage: Competencies being used in another way so that not to be jobless</p>
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<p>falling back not having a job.</p> <p>Q: Can we understand that you are working in an area that you are not specialised in?</p> <p>A: At the moment I have these thing I have the background knowledge, have the have the have the Chartered Institute of Logistic, I got the qualification, I am developing further modules into it so it is a two way traffic, you can't say that I am not having the proper experience, I have the proper experience, I have the proper experience I have everything that I need to, that is it is more challenging in the local context. You understand</p>	<p>Presently working in area not specialised in.</p> <p>My competencies are not utilised here in Mauritius</p> <p>Got experience, not matching local needs</p>	<p>Actual career competencies:</p> <p>Working in an area where not specialised in. My competencies are not utilised here in Mauritius</p> <p>Industry related/Career related competencies and experiences: I got experience but not being used in the local context</p>
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<p>that from the international perspective back to a local perspective we got a reduce market, engineering faculty not that much present you know these all the factors that .</p> <p>Q: Do you feel that you have a sense of belonging in what are doing for the time being?</p> <p>A: Oh Oh yes basically what I have done now I move in out from industry practice now I am into academic practice.</p> <p>Q: What about your job satisfaction can we talked about that ?</p> <p>A: Over the past the job I had so far, from what I have done, yes I am satisfied, I am very satisfied, all of these are</p>	<p>I have a sense of belongingness in what I am doing</p> <p>Over the past, I have job satisfaction in all my job.</p>	<p>Industry related/Career satisfaction: Even though that my job is not related to my qualification but I owned in what I am doing.</p> <p>Career success determinants: over the past in my previous job and as well in the present one I have complete job satisfaction</p>
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<p>be it TVET be it the bachelor degree, be it the master degree, the chartered degree all these are contributing factors</p> <p>Q: In what way do think that your career have been recognised or rewarded?</p> <p>A: In ways, I have been asked to speak at guest lectures I have been asked to do the opening speech at the graduation ceremonies to motivate students, ah..., ah/.....,</p> <p>Q: As a role model</p> <p>A: That's one part, reward for me is getting access to further knowledge which is currently happening right now. I am having very interesting change in career so I am embraced change at the end of the day and I was, told them in</p>	<p>My career is recognised as I am considered by MITD as role model, called as guest speaker during award ceremony</p> <p>Updating knowledge</p> <p>Changers are occurring in my career</p>	<p>Career recognition/career rewarding: Yes my career is recognised and rewarding as I have been in so many time been called by my TVET institution to be the guest speaker during the certificate award ceremony as a role model to other TVET students.</p> <p>Career rewarding/progress: Continuous updating and upgrading so as to be fit into this ever changing career requirement</p>
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<p>Yes, A: Being parent is the biggest challenge.</p> <p>Q; How do cope with that, is your work more demanding?</p> <p>A: Both of them are hard, working as an independent consultant going out in the field in Mauritania or lost in Thailand, this is difficult to manage a family with so you have to make concession, you have to really put yourself in the right mindset for this to happen. so learning to do that is what's the outcome of these experiences of everything that's here, is learning how to do that learning to achieve a proper balance, learning to trade off basically is what all about.</p>	<p>Being parent is the biggest challenge</p> <p>Working people need to make concession to cope with family and work</p> <p>Still learning to balance working and social life</p>	<p>New career challenge: being parent is the biggest challenge and to cope with family life and work life. How to adjust and manage without none of them suffer</p> <p>New career challenge: still learning to balance working and social life</p>
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<p>Q: What are you passionate may be?</p> <p>A: Research high research in industry</p> <p>Q: Have you been able ,,... how many papers have been able to write in a journal;</p> <p>A: I am so far, this is the next challenge for me, writing in a journal, this the next challenge to me, I don't want to enrol into a doctorate programme, I want to write an article first, how the review is, even it is refused or even it's negative as outcome it doesn't matter for me. For me the outcome that count, the learning process that I get from it.</p> <p>Q: So let me ask you one very key element in my study how do you define</p>	<p>Passionate about high research in industry</p> <p>The next challenge is to contribute in an academic journal.</p>	<p>Passionate in: High research in the industry related to my field of study</p> <p>Next challenge: To contribute and write an academic article in an academic journal</p>
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<p>success for you personally, not talking about career success, success itself in a wider range.</p> <p>A:Success is wanting to wake up, not to go through your day, but to achieve something productive out of your day, it can be small element, it can be your child to learn guitar today or play a new note in the guitar, it can be eh..., eh., it can be new element from your correction that students have come up with which is above average for me this is element of success, success cannot, success always defined for me success is how much failure you have been gone through, success for me is</p>	<p>Achieving something productive out of your day is success</p> <p>Failures is a conditional element for success.</p>	<p>Definition of the term success in my own words: Achieving something productive out of my day is success</p> <p>Condition for success according me: Failure is a conditional element for success</p>
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<p>conditional for having gone through failure, there is no success without failure, for me this is the shortest way to define success for me to have success there has to be fundamentals, there has to be, not regular failures all the time, there has, to have ten failures and one success.</p> <p>Q: Some people say that failures stepping stones, spring board for success.</p> <p>A: I strongly believe in that</p> <p>Q: Are you meaning that/</p> <p>A: Yes, Yes</p> <p>A: You have to fall down and basically as I tell to the students that you have to fall down the most important I have, I am not interested in the answer, I am interest in how you got</p>	<p>Failures spring board for success</p> <p>Struggling after failures will lead to success</p>	<p>Definition of success: Failure is a spring board for success</p> <p>Definition of success: Struggling after failures will lead to success</p>
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the answer, so for me failure is the same, you fall down how you get in place is most important, an action happens and what is your reaction to the event is to what it contribute either to the success or the failure.

Q: Or in another way can we say that the way going out of failure guarantee...?

A: Not guarantee that going out of failure is success.

A: **Success has too much of elements in it.**

Q: First you talked about achievement,

A: Two world apart,

Q: Opposite

A: Yeah, for me to be successful, to have success it depends well what is your definition of success

Success consists of many elements

Definition of success: It consists of many elements

<p>is but for me success comes from failure, there has to be failure even in writing for example for refusal to have an article published, a refusal to get promotion recently, ah..., ah ..., ah ...a head hunting company wanted general manager construction unit and they told me that you have lots of the what we are looking for but some of the key elements you don't, so it's not based on them that my work should go down, my work if you do not know your work you will not know where you stand, so a negative, so a refusal to be considered or a negative response for me is not a failure at there is a response there is an acknowledgement, there is</p>	<p>Failing to get a promotion, will lead for success.</p> <p>Negative respond is not failure is acknowledgement of</p>	<p>Definition of success: not succeeding to get a promotion will motive the employee to be better prepared for the next promotion exercise which will lead for success</p> <p>Definition of success: Negatively responding it doesn't constitute</p>
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<p>failed and have succeeded</p> <p>Alibaba, Jekeroy Leek, all these people have gone through heartbreaking difficulties.</p> <p>Q: therefore you don't encourage them to fail?</p> <p>A: I encourage them to try, even the result is bad, the fact that you have learn the whole outcome is going to determine your success, is not that easy, it is not one, unfortunately difficult to define.</p> <p>Q: What core values underscore your career?</p> <p>A: What >></p> <p>Q; How Committed</p> <p>A: Understanding where you are and where you want to go. The core value here is understanding, you</p>	<p>Success have no single definition, difficult to define</p> <p>Core values underscore my career is understanding</p> <p>Know where you are</p>	<p>Definition of success: there are myriads of elements when consider success</p> <p>Core values underscore my career: Understanding others and understanding myself, know where you are</p>
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<p>have to know where you are.</p> <p>Q: How you scan your achievement .. position?, you say where you are then you are talking , position</p> <p>Q: How you mapped it out, do you used some measurement or yardsticks</p> <p>A: I don't a logical methodology when it comes to myself, when it comes to mapping out my progress my progress you benchmarked it against other management consultant C.Vs' for example against competitors c.v, competitors profile so that how you understand you are, what you can do , what you cannot do, how you have been taken to do the</p>	<p>No logical methodology to measure my career position</p> <p>Benchmarking against others</p>	<p>Career position: there is no measurement concerning my career position, I always benchmark with others, my competitors and those who are having renowned position in similar trades</p>
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<p>job or not taken to do the job.</p> <p>Q: Are you considering that benchmarking with someone credentials is...</p> <p>A: Someone credentials is obviously is some sort of, we used the kPI, laugh, ha, ha, ha..., we used the KPI settings</p> <p>Q: So do consider yourself to be a leader and why?</p> <p>A: I can only hope to answer positively to your question, yes I consider myself to be a leader in my, various topics, consider my students , consider myself a leader to them, as I try to bring a positive role model, I try to be a positive role models, in the way I teach, in the way I used technology in my class, in the way I</p>	<p>Benchmarking against someone credentials, setting KPI</p> <p>Consider myself a leader</p> <p>A good role model to my followers/students</p> <p>Leading by using technology</p>	<p>Career position: achieving set KPI</p> <p>Leadership quality: I consider myself a leader</p> <p>Leadership quality: I am a role model for my followers and students</p> <p>Leadership trait: Using of latest technology to deliver my work</p>
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<p>interact with them, in the way that I explained to them, I don't hesitate as you were talking about success and failures, I do not hesitate to showcase failure can be stepping stones to success, so this is what, so this how I worked together with my students obviously this is the fact that this a new job and I am being overly positive about it .. yeah for my students I try to,,...the feedback is here, is very positive, so I'm leading them so it about explaining to them what it is that you are wanting with them, want from them, what is your input what going to be, it about having, being truthful to your,,.. what your demand and my</p>	<p>Innovative approach when doing my task</p> <p>Showcase failure to my students</p> <p>In my new job overly positive</p> <p>Leading my work with enthusiasm</p> <p>Dedicated in work</p> <p>Negotiate a lots in my work, to have trust</p>	<p>Using of innovative approaches for executing my work more effectively/efficiently</p> <p>Leadership quality: I showcase failure to my students and told them to never give up</p> <p>Leadership quality: I am overly positive in my present job</p> <p>Leadership quality: Leading my work with high enthusiasm</p> <p>Leadership quality: I am very dedicated in my work</p>
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<p>demand... my demand is this and what is your demand for this, lets match it, okay, lets matched it, managed it, works together towards completing this module, for the semester, for example,</p> <p>Q: How you see your career progressing from now</p> <p>A: positively, I don't know when, why, where but I can only told you positively because I am, what I am doing I am gathering experience.</p> <p>Q: Do you have some ambitions?</p> <p>A: Ambitions, I have ambitions</p> <p>A: We were talking about this example of a general manager construction, which was taken, selected,</p>	<p>Career progressing positively</p> <p>Gathering experience with earn experience</p> <p>Ambitious</p>	<p>Leadership trait: negotiate and concert a lots so that to consolidate trust between me and my students</p> <p>Career progression: Progressing positively</p> <p>Career progression: Gathering experience which will be useful for my career progression in the future</p> <p>Career progression: I am very ambitious persons</p>
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<p>going prior selection but was not taken, so I am also on various other selection process, so I just work hard maintaining my industry and now being in the academic and having an academic credential trying to..</p> <p>Q: So are you envisaging to away from teaching profession</p> <p>A: I don't think so, because even I ...</p> <p>Q: General Manager position, CEO position</p> <p>A: Unfortunately that would be difficult but yes I would be whichever industry I get in, for example be it academic, teaching, be it managerial, management consulting, any other position it's about moving forward, it</p>	<p>Work hard with industry</p> <p>Building solid academic credential</p> <p>In whichever sector, moving forward to reach higher and higher</p>	<p>Career expectation: work hard with industry</p> <p>Career progression: Building solid academic credential</p> <p>Career expectation: In whichever sector, moving forward to reach higher and higher</p>
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<p>about keeping track of the industry, I have already prior selection of thing that I like, it mostly towards the aviations related, airport related, so this is for me I still keep whether I am in the industry, whether I am working as a constructor, whether I'm painting a house for some body, I still abreast what we are calling industry intelligence. This how I can go forward. Probably I am not phrasing it properly the answer to your question but....</p> <p>Q: it's okay</p> <p>Q: So did you faced some odds when joining the TVET , so going through your narratives I understand that you were not forced by your parent</p>	<p>Needs to be abreast with what is happenings in the industry</p> <p>Opted for the TVET programme because there was limited option for academic studies and parental pressure</p>	<p>Career expectation: Needs to be abreast with what is happening in the industry</p>
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<p>but you joined it because there was limited option</p> <p>Q: So have any opportunities with the TVET programme?</p> <p>A: I have my colleagues, who were in the same TVET programmes to me and we maintain contact they have worked in the tourism field they have so far come out pretty nice, emm.. rate of growth is something want to tend to want, for the past ten years wanted to grow right now I am not so .. eh..eh.. I am not so needy for that, I know that will happen, I don't want that to, I just have to put the elements in place to happen, had the element match to happen but my colleague had ended in representing</p>	<p>TVET classmates have considerable progressed in their career, successful in their career</p>	<p>Opportunities with TVET course: my fellow classmates have considerable progress in their career, they are successful in their career</p>
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<p>tourism, key players in tourism sector, some have gone separate ways, and what can I say if you have been in the TVET programme for hospitality or Tourism, for example, you would tend to stay in the same field but that doesn't mean it mandatory for you, to stay, it up to you to explore what potential you are</p> <p>Q: So Shane can in your own term, give an interpretation or give your own definition of career success, previously we talked about success, now I am talking about being more focus, how would you define career success for me.</p>	<p>Those in TVET tend to stay in the same field</p>	<p>Career progression with TVET: those with TVET qualification tend to stay in the same field for their lifetime.</p>
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<p>A: I believe solely being personal, career success comes from eu..euh.. first all from you, how confident you are in the element that you bring forward be it to a meeting be it to a press conference, be it to an industry conference, how confident you are in that so that would be one element of success and unfortunately or fortunately another element of success would be how you are portrayed, the general media,</p> <p>Q: You know normally we tend to define, there is two elements of career success, one we call it objective career success and a second one is subject career success, one way of measuring objective career</p>	<p>Career Success how confident you are in your work</p>	<p>Definition of career success:</p> <p>Career success is how confident you are in your work</p>
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<p>success, mean that normally, your promotion, your salary, we can measure that, it tangible whereas subjective career success is your own definition mean that job satisfaction, no need to climb up the ladder you are still satisfy with the job, so where you situate yourself , to get more precise.</p> <p>A: Subjectively very satisfied, with my job for me my career success, I am currently having both elements, what is opposite to career success then, for failure.</p> <p>Q: Some people doesn't achieve success in career that doesn't mean they are constantly a failure,</p> <p>A: To answer in an objective way, I am not to</p>	<p>Career Success: Job satisfaction and also to progress in hierarchy</p> <p>Previously fully satisfied with job</p>	<p>My own career success determinants: Job satisfaction and also progression through the hierarchy.</p> <p>Carer success in previous job: Was fully satisfied in my job</p>
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<p>happy these are thing in life, previously career was good, but most of it was good, now currently job, salary could be better, subjectively I am very satisfied, I tend to be both about my success. I don't want to see you , to over sell myself,</p>	<p>Actually there is mitigated effect about career success, partly satisfied with the job but not satisfied with the salary</p>	<p>Career success opinion for the present job: Mitigated effect, partly satisfied with the job but not satisfied with the salary</p>
<p>Q: A definition for you A: For me, a definition, how able to explain the correlation of what you have done, properly, how happy you are, in explaining this, how happy you are of your achievement, for me this is a success.</p>	<p>Definition of career success how happy you are in your achievement is career success</p>	<p>Career success definition: how happy you are in your achievement is career success</p>
<p>Q: Happy with your position and your job. A: YeahYeah I am happy about it, I am very happy to have, ah..ah..ah to</p>	<p>Happy with my position</p>	<p>Career success determinants: I am happy with my position</p>

be working as a lecturer, I

believe it can, I can have other position in years to come, but for me being

Q: it happens that if you are offered for instance a new position with higher salary even though condition in terms workmanship, work environment not happy are you going to opt to leave your position.

A: I did that already, I had a decent career, but no scope for growth, I was already unsatisfied. so I got an offer as an independent consultant to go to open the Mauritania airport, which I immediately jumped in because that what I wanted to do, I structured my career to be like that but

No scope of growth in work, unsatisfied

Career success factors:

Previously I had job satisfaction but no scope of growth in the work, which finally brought me to jobless

<p>unfortunately one contract two contract but no more contract, so basically economic downturn of the company, no more renewal, I found myself without job, for me success is having been selected directly to teach, without going through a whole, bunch of industry knowledge about teaching and basically having done primary research, done research previously, and being current on the industry what's going on there, has been good enough for me to get a job as an, as a free lecturer, who, obviously, I have my my subject, my modules, and have a timetable but I feel very free in my job, this is the</p>	<p>Lack of job security, risk for becoming jobless</p> <p>Work environment nice, happy to continue working</p>	<p>Career success factor: Previous job had lot of job satisfaction but poor job security, high risk of being jobless</p> <p>Career Success determinants: In my present job I am happy, nice</p>
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<p>job working environment</p> <p>over here is something that</p> <p>I would let take a</p> <p>competitor like UTM and, UOM, I would definitely not go for higher 10000 or 20000 more salaries, because of the working environment.</p> <p>Q: Shane my methodology is narrative, qualitative a lots, firstly I will your narrative.</p>		<p>working environment, will continue to work even the salary doesn't satisfy me</p>
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