

Full Length Research Paper

Educational demands to reduce avoidance of vocational education in Jordan

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This study aims to identify the educational demands to reduce students' avoidance of vocational education in Jordan. Results of a previous study addressing reasons for avoidance of vocational education, distributed these reasons into personal, social, economic, educational and vocational domains. Focus-groups method was used to identify the educational demands in order to reduce the effect of these reasons. Five focus-groups studied the domains of the factors and made suggestions, then all groups met collectively to make consensus about the suggestions, to remove repetition, to divide them into domains, and to order the demands according to their importance. Finally, a list of demands on the educational system was made. Some of these demands were short-term while others were long-term demands. These suggestions were in domains of the vocational work sector, the media, higher education, the vocational education sector and the careers education course.

Key words: Avoidance of vocational education, vocational education, mitigation of avoidance of vocational education.

INTRODUCTION

Career selection is of special importance for individuals because it contributes to their career success, adaptation and satisfaction. Students' selection of an educational stream formulates the decision of their future career. This decision is one of the most important and crucial decisions, since it determines one's life style, social status, and position on the career ladder. Therefore, it is important to align the educational stream selection with students' tendencies and abilities, and with the needs of the labor market of the future careers related to such a choice (Nasrallah, 1998).

This age is a changing age. The world witnesses industrial and technological revolutions. Numerous careers

will be different from currently practiced careers. Therefore, persons will be obliged to change their careers many times (Al-Tarawneh, 2002; Helwig, 2008). The world global labour market is exposed to rapid change due to technological, economic, political and developmental constant changes. In brief, careers diverse in numbers, broaden in domains, and become more specific in their relevant educational programs.

Because of the close relationship between educational programs and future careers, school education should equip students with a model for career selection. This demands that students and parents should possess accurate knowledge of careers, their labour market, and

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the available job opportunities relevant to types of careers, in addition to informed knowledge about students in terms of tendencies, abilities and personal characteristics (Liu et al., 2014). Therefore, it became one of the missions of the educational system to prepare students for the career decision through an educational strategy that relates school to workplace. This is known as education for careers which should focus on providing students with a framework for their future career decision that includes a spectrum of skills and attitudes, namely basic academic skills, basic habits, and decision making, necessary for adaptation to the diverse changes. Other skills include job (seeking, achieving, and retaining) skills, good work habits, and personal positive work values (ALESCO, 1998; Cheung and Dimple, 2012; Germeijs et al., 2006; The United Nations Program and Mohammed Bin Rashed Foundation, 2012).

There are different factors that affect individuals' career and education decisions. Among these there are the career ladder adopted in the labour market (Israel et al., 2001), family income and social class (Cheung and Dimple, 2012), gender (Al-Sa'aideh and Al-zyoud, 2009), family and peers influence (Israel et al., 2001; Yusuf, 2012), the available career guidance and counselling (Liu et al., 2014), and individuals' abilities and tendencies (Jeynes, 2007).

Some countries issued legislations that are related to introducing vocational education (VE) into the curricula of the early school stages. They aim to attract students' attention and help them to be aware of their abilities and tendencies. Therefore, this aspect of VE became a part of general education after it had been rated low in the educational process (Al-Tweissi, 2013). Nevertheless, there are still barriers between academic education and VE. Societies hold negative perceptions towards manual work and Vocational work in general. This has been increasing because of the weakness of the vocational work bodies (Al-Ja'nini, 1992; Al-Adwan, 2009; Al-Tweissi, 2013). This should not be the case, since the developmental movement implies to have qualified human resources in vocational sectors at all levels. So, the educational policy should be revised and developed in order to find new strategies and practices for different relevant sectors (Mahasneh, 2011).

In spite of the official interest in VE, the Jordanian community still has negative perceptions of VE in comparison to the academic education that is valued positively (Mrayyan, 2010; Tweissi, 2013). Therefore, VE is not attractive for students or for their families. This makes it vital to apply solutions that could enhance the image of VE. This was asserted in the seventh priority of the "Sector of Employment, Training, and VE in Jordan"; which states that:

"It is necessary to enhance the image of careers of Vocational Education and Training and their programs through enhancing awareness of the importance of these

sectors" (NET, 2011).

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Jordan has introduced VE through two programs for the secondary education: the first is the Comprehensive Secondary VE; which is a two-year program after passing the tenth basic grade, with the aim of preparing students to sit for the General Certificate of Secondary Education in VE. This certificate allows students to work in the labour market or to join higher education at universities and technical colleges in their specializations. The second is the Secondary Applied Vocational Education which is also a two-year program after passing the 10th basic grade, but this program does not qualify students for the exam of the General Certificate of Secondary Education; instead, they are awarded a school certificate from where they attend training in order to use it for job application; they can sit for the General Certificate of Secondary Education one year after completion of the program.

There are various bodies that offer VE at different levels and stages: First, basic education schools teach the prevocational Education (PVE) course as a part of its curriculum; this course aims to create awareness of VE and the world of work in general in addition to equipping students with non-employable skills gradually. It comprises different domains in health and general safety, general life and domestics, Engineering industries and light maintenance, agriculture and environment, economy and technology, tourism and hospitality. Second, vocational schools that deliver VE for the 1st and 2nd secondary vocational grades; it is offered in four domains (industrial, agricultural, hospitality, and home economics). Students graduate as skilled workers according to the occupational ladder in Jordan. Third, the Vocational Training Centers that affiliates to the Vocational Training Corporation graduate trainees as skilled, limited skills workers, and technicians according to the level of the training program they attend. Fourth, the technical colleges graduate technicians of diploma degree in various vocational specializations. Finally, the private companies provide training for their employees or for their employment in specific areas (Al-Adwan, 2009).

The issue of students' avoidance of VE attracted the interest of researchers for decades; Al-Sabaibah (1998) studied the tenth grade students' attitudes towards VE. The results revealed that students' attitudes towards VE were positive with no difference due to gender or level of achievement, but with difference due to the level of parents' education. Al-Banawi and Al-Ghazwi (1999) also studied the same topic but found that VE was perceived negatively with insignificant differences due to the social and economic status. However, students believed in the strength of the financial returns of VE with a significant difference due to gender and the level of the family income. Most of the study sample stated that the family conditions affect the students' attitudes towards VE.

Al-Alwan (2001) also studied the difference of students'

attitudes towards VE between rural and urban areas. Attitudes were found to be positive, and that students' in urban areas were more positive. Students who were selected to enroll in VE were found to have attitudes more than those who were obliged to do so. No significant differences in attitudes were found due to the career type of parents, their academic level and the family income.

Migdadi (2007) explored the status quo of VE in Jordan; its major problems and the endeavors made for its development. The Status quo was found to be medium positive, and positive endeavors are made for future vocational development in Jordan. Al-Farah and Abu Samahah (2010) studied students' attitudes towards VE. They stated that in light of the results of the General Certificate of Secondary Education for VE students since results showed a decrease in the success percentage of 2010 in comparison to previous years, results revealed that the academic levels of students' parents who enroll in academic education were higher than those of VE students' achievement level. This means that parents of students in the Academic education guide them towards university education, and that the ninth grade student achievement was better than the achievement of those at the vocational training centers and VE schools. Most students expressed their affinity to pursue their academic study regardless of the stream of secondary education they enrolled in. This means that VE which aims to provide the labour market with appropriately skilled people missed its target to convince students to move to the workplace after study completion. The motives behind students' joining VE were much; among them were the personal preference, the low achievement level, job seeking, good income seeking, parents' preference and teachers' advice. More relevantly, Yusuf (2012) also studied the reasons for students' avoidance of VE and the role of the school principals to encourage them towards enrolment in VE. She revealed that the most important reasons were psychological and social reasons.

In the Arab countries, Abu-Asbah (2005) studied the main problems of VE in secondary schools in Palestine. Sixty-two problems were reported in seven domains. Those were management and organization, teachers' professional development, curriculum and planning, finance of VE, facilities and equipment, and the negative image of VE held by the community. The results showed no significant differences that can be attributed to gender or class. Chammas (2007) summarized the recommendations of the conference of enhancing the social image of VE in the Eastern Arab countries. It ascertained the importance of initiatives that could contribute to enhancing the social image of VE through introducing real modifications to the relevant policies, legislations, curricula of teaching and training, in addition to systems and practices of vocational guidance and counselling. It also stated that the private sector can participate in

meeting the needs of VE in terms of facilities, in addition to taking part in curriculum development to enhance its relevance to the needs of the workplace, and enhancement of the environment of the workplace, particularly if used for training.

Moreover, the importance of the role of the media in guidance and vocational counseling was emphasized. In Kuwait, Al-Harbi (2007) studied avoidance of VE among students and its relationship to social and economic factors. A medium degree of VE avoidance among students was found, with a weak relationship with the economic and social level of the family and the type of the career of students' father, parents' academic level and family size. Halabi (2012) also investigated the status quo of VE in the Arab world using Syria as a case study. It was revealed that students do not prefer to enroll in VE because they feel embarrassed to be a VE student due to social aspects. This is due to the forced separation between VE and academic education. There is also a misunderstanding among both students and the society of the nature of VE, its concept and its importance. This misunderstanding was attributed to the absence of career guidance and counselling. It was also reported that the relevance of the VE curriculum to the work reality is weak and the unsuitability of the educational programs to the needs of the labour market, leading in its turn to the inability of graduates to compete in the labour market.

Most of the reviewed previous studies focused on the status quo of VE in addition to the students' and society attitudes towards it. In summary, various technical problems were reported regarding content and delivery issues. Some studies reported positive, while others indicated negative attitudes towards VE, and that the enrollment ratios are under the target level. However, these studies did not address the solutions for the reported problems except in their discussion and interpretation of their direct results that were based on quantitative data methods collected through closed ended questionnaires, a factor that makes the suggested solutions inadequately valid and reliable.

In Jordan, Al-Tweissi (2013) carried out the only study that proposed a solution for the problem of the negative image of VE. It used perceptions of experts, collected through closed-ended item questionnaire. Solutions resulting to the study were classified into six domains: methods and approaches to instruction and training, the infrastructure and the learning environment, policies and legislations, media and communication, programs for awareness and vocational guidance and participation among bodies relevant to VE. Solutions included educational implications; namely to have current educational materials and equipment that reflect modernity of the workplace, to have approaches and methods that are more student-centered in the Delivery of Prevocational Education (PVE) courses in order to enhance their attitudes and vocational tendencies, in addition to enriching its curriculum by introducing activities that

enhance respect to manual work and to people doing such work. Moreover, it was suggested to activate the promotion of the vocational work as a choice for future career utilizing the encouragement of parents and field visits to real workplaces particularly for students in higher basic grades, making use of the collaboration with the private sector and the international bodies to conduct innovations for vocational awareness, using media to have continuous endeavor for awareness dissemination. Finally, it was suggested to reduce the fees of study and to award special allowances to VE graduates in the sector of vocational work.

Decision about type of education and in turn type of future career is complicated due to the numeracy of the contributing factors. Relating to school curriculum, educationists identify four stages to achieve the career education that should be completed in a right way in order to gain the ability to take the decision of career selection (Al-Sayyed, 2009). In the first four basic grades, the world of work and its relation to life should be introduced to students, in addition to the main families of careers, their names, and their main tools; this stage is called career awareness. Through the fifth to the seventh grades, more detailed information is presented to students about careers, their names and tools in addition to conducting some useful work for individuals and families (below the employable level of skills). Through the higher basic stage of education (grades 8 to 10) students should be introduced to careers in a more detailed manner. They should do tasks similar to those done by craftsmen in the workplace; the curriculum should be selective in the tasks to be done according to the abilities of students, their career tendencies, and type of careers practiced in the local environment with the aim of exploring their vocational abilities and interests. At the end of the basic education stage, students select their further educational stream (Academic or vocational, and if vocational which domain to select); by this selection they identify the type of their future careers.

To understand the mechanisms that lead to students' career decision, Porfeli and Lee (2012) offered a general perspective of vocational identity development to children and adolescent through a review of the pertinent literature of three developmental strands- career exploration, commitment and reconsideration. Identity exploration involves learning broadly and deeply about a particular life domain. Career exploration involves the self and the world of work to obtain a better understanding of the general features of the self and to learn about potential career options that might suit these features. It answers the question "What kind of work will be suitable to me?"; the answer to such a question often comes from the work experiences shared by parents and the media. Moving from abroad to an in-depth exploration, Students try to find an answer to the question by seeking out and learning about careers and the extent to which they might be suitable to their features. However, if the transition

from the broad to the in-depth exploration is without enough relevant experience, the vocational identity will not be well established, and decisions for the selection of career will be a non-informed decision (Patton and Porfeli, 2007).

Career commitment generally has two components: deciding on a career and identifying it. A career commitment involves making a choice and then attaching one's self to that choice. Career commitment is the product of a process that is presumably rooted in childhood and made manifest at an early age when adults begin to pose the age- old questions, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" The answer to this question is often influenced by a number of personal characteristics, most notably by gender, social class and age (Germeijs et al., 2006). Adolescents generally exhibit increasing career decidedness over time, but the pattern is highly variable. The decidedness research suggests that increased decidedness contributes to favorable outcomes like personal adjustment, career maturity persistence in pursuing an undergraduate degree, and favorable academic and work outcomes (Creed et al., 2005). Apparently, career commitment is an integral part of child and adolescent career development. However, premature foreclosure to a career choice before establishing a clear and realistic sense of self can be rather unfavorable in the long term (Creed et al., 2005; Skorikov, 2007).

Career reconsideration refers to reexamining current commitments and making an effort to compare available alternatives to further specify a career choice or change career choices. Reconsideration can emerge when one has established a career commitment but maintains a flexible attitude towards it. Career reconsideration is believed to be reflective of the variability that people tend to exhibit in their career commitments over time. Reconsideration may be facilitated by career flexibility, which reflects openness to alternative careers that may emerge over time. However, it can be prompted by career self- doubt, which is the tendency to question whether one can achieve a suitable career choice or not (Porfeli et al., 2011).

The study and vocationalising the educational system

The relationship between the general education and transition to the workplace has been raising a big debate since the last decades. The 'Vocationalisation Debate' is a controversy that has developed internationally since the 1960s, mainly concerning the provision of vocational education at secondary school level. Different issues are related to this debate. These include cultural issues relating to the status of vocational education as seen by the students, the teachers and the wider community including the students' parents. Other issues are

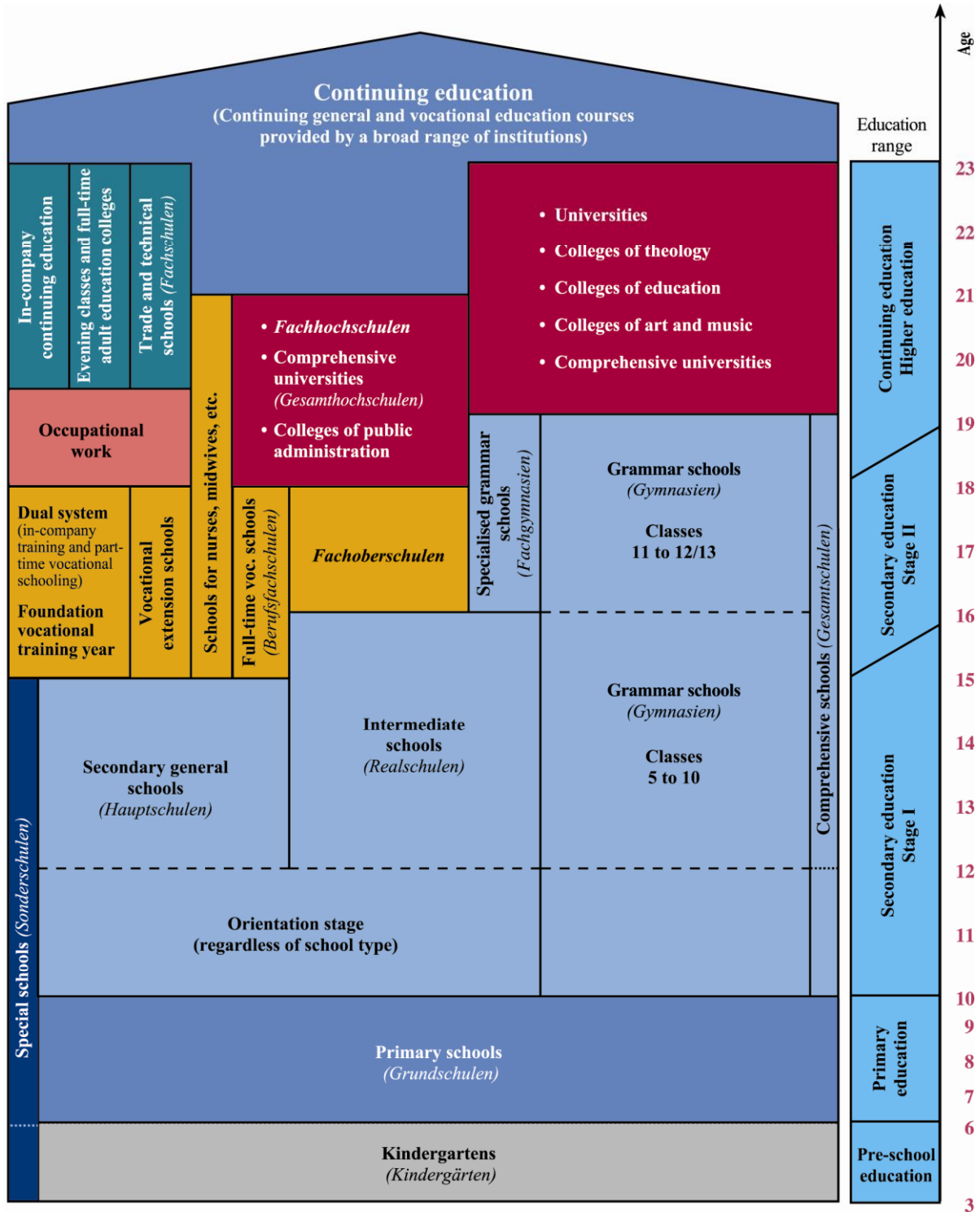


Figure 1. The German vocational education system. (Source: Hippach-Schneider; Krause and Woll (2007).

economic, regarding the cost of the programs in comparison with that of academic education; and some functional issues concerning purely vocational schooling versus purely academic schooling or the provision of

diversified curriculum (Hayward, 2004).

Increasing evidence has come to the conclusion that vocationalising the school curriculum is not viable (Grubb, 2004). Since the mid-1970s, aid agencies such as the

World Bank started showing significant shifts in their sponsorship from vocational to non-formal education and other programs (Hayward and James, 2004). Most of the evidence castigating the inclusion of vocational courses as part of school curriculum seems to be based on economic arguments. It was found that vocational courses are expensive. Significant contributions to the debate have concluded that policies emphasising the provision of vocational education in schools are doomed to failure (World Bank, 1991). They contend that schools should concentrate on increasing access to and improving the quality of general education. However, the suggestion to delay providing vocational education until after secondary education implies denying the majority of pupils the opportunity to acquire even basic vocational skills (Hayward, 2004). Although the bulk of literature provides evidence counter to a policy of vocationalising the school curriculum, protagonists have provided counter-evidence in support of its provision. Although acknowledging that vocational subjects were substantially more expensive than academic.

The term "vocationalising" has been developed until divided into "old" and "new" vocationalism; old vocationalism is education that is orientated towards the expressed needs of graduate employers. It typically involves listening to employers' words about what they want most to see in new graduates, and then making room for that in the curriculum. At the heart of the old vocationalism is the development of employability skills. These are normally developed through stand-alone courses or embedded in existing courses and may be included in the assessment criteria. By contrast, new vocationalism is orientated towards developing students' capacity and disposition to learn. The term that most precisely captures the new vocationalism is 'preparedness to learn'. This term includes two elements: ability to learn, and inclination to learn. Students who have successfully completed education have thereby been prepared to be effective learners. It is reasonable to believe that graduates are more prepared also to learn in the sense of willingness, even keenness, to learn than non-graduates (Touner et al., 2016).

International context

In educational systems, there are successful experiences in vocational education throughout the world that can be exported. However, a national vocational education system is a tool for achieving certain objectives, which may differ from one country to another. There is no "best" system; each system can be judged only by its success in achieving those identified aims.

A dual education system combines apprenticeships in a company and vocational education at a vocational school in one course. This system is practiced in several countries, notably Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Switzerland, but also Portugal, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Australia and Egypt, and for some years now in China and other countries in Asia.

In the European Union, there are currently 5.7 million young people under the age of 25 without a job. In Greece and Spain, the unemployment rate for this age group is over 50%. The affected countries are looking for ways to improve the transition between school and employment, and are increasingly turning their sights on the dual vocational training system. Combining theoretical reflection in vocational schools with practical in-company experience not only ensures that the business world will have skilled workers with real-life training, but also facilitates the young people's transition into the labor market (Euler, 2013).

The European Union and its member states share this view. Interest in the dual vocational training model is greater than ever. In its strategy paper "Rethinking Education," the European Commission makes the compelling statement, "Work-based learning, such as dual approaches, should be a central pillar of vocational education and training systems across Europe, with the aim of reducing youth unemployment (Euler, 2013).

Countries such as Spain, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Slovakia and Latvia are looking at adapting their vocational training systems in line with Germany's dual system. But a strong interest in the dual system extends even beyond the borders of Europe, with India, China, Russia and Vietnam having already arranged to cooperate with the German government. The objective is not for these countries to adopt the German vocational training system in its entirety. After all, experience shows that Germany's dual system is suitable as a model but not as a blueprint. Any country wishing to import a foreign system of vocational training must take existing framework conditions into consideration and implement the dual vocational training in line with the country's own educational, social and economic objectives. Thus, the objective should be to prudently import adapted elements of another country's system, but not an exact copy of it (Euler, 2013). From Figure 1 an overview of the education system can be seen:

Compulsory full-time education begins at the age of six and lasts nine years (or ten years, depending on the *Land*). After that young people who are no longer in full-time education must attend a part-time (vocational) school for three years. To simplify, in Germany compulsory education exists for persons aged 6 to 18 and for trainees in the dual system (even if they are over 18).

Following four years of primary school for all, educational paths are divided in the 'subdivided school system' consisting of secondary general schools, intermediate

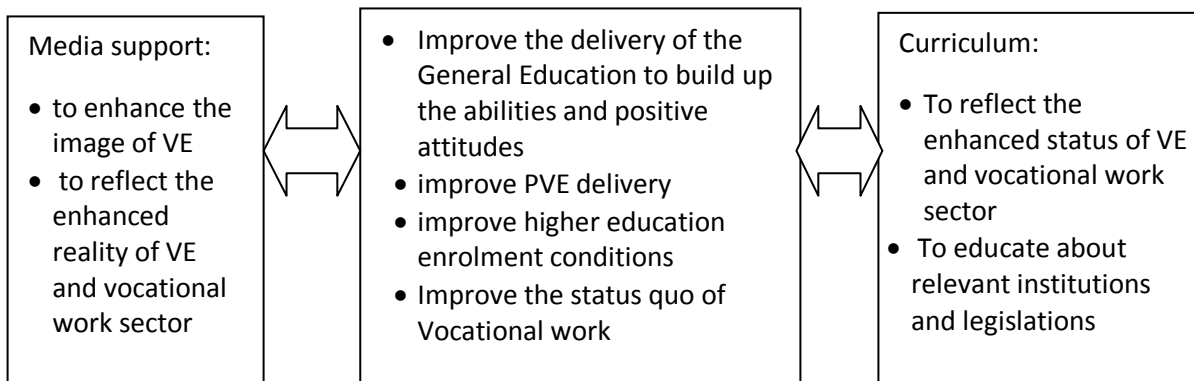


Figure 2. Schematic presentation.

schools, grammar schools and, in almost all the *Länder*, also comprehensive schools. In the dual system, the various paths often come together again. Those learning under it include those who have completed their education in special, secondary general, intermediate, comprehensive, vocational and grammar schools. The dual system is far and away the largest field of education at upper secondary level, with approximately 53 % of an age cohort training for a recognised training occupation. After completing their training in the dual system, the majority of participants then take up employment as a skilled worker – later on, many of them make use of the opportunities for continuing vocational training. Under certain conditions, however, those who have qualified may also obtain the academic standard required for entrance to a *Fachhochschule* in one year at school full-time, and go on to higher education. Successful participants in continuing vocational training are also increasingly permitted to study at colleges. Of the vocational schools, the full-time vocational schools have the highest numbers of students. These schools prepare students for an occupation or for vocational training, usually in the dual system. Under certain conditions, attendance at a full-time vocational school is credited as the first year of training in the dual system.

Entitlement to study at a college or *Fachhochschule* can be acquired in some educational programs in the full-time vocational schools. Educational programs last one to three years, depending on the particular vocational orientation and objective. Around one in six students at a full-time vocational school is learning a recognised dual-system training occupation. In such cases, the schools' final examinations may be given parity with examinations in the dual system by means of Federal statutory instruments. Large numbers of students also attend the schools for nurses, midwives, etc., which provide training for non-academic occupations in the healthcare sector, such as nursing and paediatric nursing, midwifery, therapeutic massage and occupational therapy. As regards organization and premises, many of these schools are

attached to hospitals, in which both theoretical and practical training takes place.

Fachoberschulen and vocational secondary schools normally build on vocational training in the dual system, consolidate vocational knowledge and lead to the academic standard required for entrance to a college. Overall, there are many points of transition between school-based and dual vocational training and from vocational training to colleges. In 2005, some 20% of those beginning academic studies had completed a course of training in the dual system. Tertiary education includes the colleges and other institutions offering programs of study providing vocational qualifications for students who have completed upper secondary education with an entitlement to study at a college or *Fachhochschule*.

Having a glance on the stages of the dual system and its specifications in terms of its earlier introducing of employable skills than other systems, its combination of in campus education with company training, in addition to the flexibility to move among the streams might render it a good model to adopt by Jordan that have a high ration of un-employability among graduates while having jobs in different careers at different levels

Career development, which is a long-term and a multi-stage process cannot be left without a continuous commitment from the educational system to enable it to take place in the right way (Yawkey and Aronin, 2001), and schools are asked to take a major part in career education efforts. In summary, this means that formal school curriculum should effectively and carefully handle the relevant content and activities to allow students to pass through each stage of career development maturely. It is also vital to note that career selection is highly influenced by learning from the hidden curriculum that results from resources like experiences and expectations of families, peers, and different types of media that could formulate preconceptions and prejudices into students' minds, in addition to the real situations and experiences that are received by the students' sensors

(Porfeli and Lee, 2012). Recent studies demonstrate the role of everyday experiences in families as authentic learning opportunities that children are eagerly engaged in (Hedges and Cullen, 2011).

Because Jordan has a problem of un-employability in different domains of careers that are academic in nature, students still enroll in the educational programs that lead to these career domains, while leaving VE that Jordan needs due to different types of reasons. It was decided to investigate what action is required to enhance enrollment in VE and what suitable interaction should take place between these actions and the education system.

Problem of the study

Despite the interest shown by MOE and other providers of Vocational Education and training (VET), statistics show that levels of enrollment in VET are lower than target levels. Moreover, these levels decreased in the last decade (Yusuf, 2012). A number of studies addressed the factors that affect students' selection of the type of secondary education; the latest among these studies was the study of Al-Sa'aideh (n. d.) who found different types of factors that contribute to the students' avoidance of enrollment in VET (educational, social, personal, vocational, and economic factors). Studies that investigated how to reduce the students' avoidance of enrollment in VET, especially within the educational system (Al-Tweissi, 2013), since schools are the places where students are prepared for the decision of their future education and careers (Al-Tweissi, 2011; Al-Sayyed, 2009). Un-employability and existence of foreign workforce percentages in the society are indicators of the ultimate feedback of evaluation of the educational system. Unfortunately, these two factors are high in Jordan; un-employability was 30% in 2014, while foreign workforce occupied 21.1% in general, and fully occupies some careers with only national workforce at the level of leadership in these careers (Al-Sa'aideh, n. d.). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the educational demands to reduce students' avoidance of VET through finding the answer to the question:

What are the demands on the educational system to reduce students' avoidance of enrollment in VET?

Importance of the study

Importance of the study stems from the importance of enrollment in VET, since it positively affects providing the labour market with workforce in different areas of work. This contributes in achieving balance between offered and sought jobs, and reduces the un-employability. In this way, it contributes to the social and economic development. This is of great importance to Jordan because most of the offered jobs are in vocational areas,

and very minor jobs are offered in non-vocational areas where students highly enroll in the programs that lead to these careers. In addition, enhancement of enrollment in VET could indirectly enhance higher education in Jordan, as it could reduce the number of students joining University, particularly in public Universities where large numbers of students in classes is one of the major factors that force the faculty to use lecturing rather than active learning methods.

The results of this study are useful to all country institutions, particularly educational ones; namely the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Vocational Training Corporation. Social institutions and media will make use of the results of this study by knowing their anticipated roles in promoting VET. In addition, curriculum developers for all stages of education will benefit from these results by knowing the demands on the curriculum relating to the selection of future careers and the actions required on the curriculum planning, implementation and assessment. Parents also benefit from the results of the study by knowing how to manage the factors that influence their children decisions, in order to provide them with better guidance to take realistic decisions concerning their future.

METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive qualitative methodology; educational demands to reduce avoidance of VE using the focus-group technique. Focus groups were formed of people from different parties relating to each domain of reason for avoidance (details about focus groups are in the section of subjects of the study).

Instrument of the study

Reasons for students' avoidance of VE were introduced to the focus groups as they were categorized and published in the study of Al-Sa'aideh (n. d.). Focus groups were selected according to the domains of these reasons (each focus group studied one domain). Domains and associated reasons are shown in Table 1.

Study Subjects (focus groups)

Based on studying the reasons of students' avoidance of VE mentioned in Table 1, five focus groups were formed (one group for each domain) in order to study the reasons and give solutions to the reasons in that domain. Individuals in the focus group were selected according to their relevance to the reasons included in the domain of study. This selection was validated through consulting the list of each group by a panel of five faculty members in educational research and five curriculum developers. Table 2 shows the types of individuals selected in each group.

The researcher used his personal relationships to bring people who agreed to participate in the focus groups. However, he did not participate in the discussion to ensure impartiality and validity. His task was only to coordinate the date of meeting and initiate the discussions, and to introduce the members of the focus groups to the goal of the discussion, the main procedures, and the form of the required data (a list of the demands that could reduce the

Table 1. Reasons for avoidance of VE as introduced to the focus groups.

Follow/ Educational reasons	Personal reasons
lack of lessons related to careers in the curriculum	Discrepancy between VE and students' academic ambitions
selection of students to enroll in VE because of their low achievement level	VE does not satisfy the social status which the students target
PVE activities do not sufficiently attract students to VE	Students' physical abilities do not enable them to enroll in the VE domain that they like
PVE subjects included in the curriculum do not promote VE	VE does not enable students to study at universities
Lack of the weekly lessons allocated to PVE in comparison to other subjects	VE does not enable students to develop their practical abilities and skills
Lack of media encouragement to enroll in VE	VE has limited opportunities to go to university
Obsolescence of buildings and facilities of the vocational schools	work conditions of the Vocational work are negative
Lack of meetings and seminars with vocational career holders to talk to students	Students have no affinity to enroll in VE
Economic reasons	Social reasons
Lack and instability of financial income of vocational careers	Peers academic tendencies force students not to enroll in VE
career domains for VE are limited	Family academic tendencies do not encourage students to enroll in VE
dominance of foreign workforce on the labour market	family do not like their members to go to VE
availability of sufficient vocational workers to satisfy the needs of labour market	Community negative attitudes towards VE
Un-employability among VE graduates	parents' academic achievement enforces student not to enroll in VE
VE do not lead students to careers that they prefer to work in	weakness of the services of vocational bodies for VE students
danger and health hazards in vocational work	Students' feeling that they are lower than their colleagues who enrolled in academic education
Career reasons	students' lack of mastering vocational skills
lack of job security in vocational work	Families count VE as time loss
Limited promotion opportunities for graduates of VE schools and centers	Educational reasons
Negative image for manual work	negative image of vocational schools contributes to students' avoidance of studying there
Lack of new specialties in vocational schools	Students perceive the that -vocational education is not important
-	discouraging results of visits paid by students to vocational schools

avoidance to VET relating to the reasons mentioned in the domain to be discussed. Demands should be ordered according to the priority).

Procedure of data collection

Data was collected in two stages:

First stage: Discussion at focus group level: Every focus group discussed one of the domains of reasons for avoidance of VET. The focus group identified the demands that could reduce the effect of such reasons on the level of avoidance in that domain; they summarized their suggestions of demands and list them. It was clarified to the focus groups to study each reason separately and in details. Only one focus group met at a time to discuss the relevant domain, and to ensure that rigorous discussion will take place, while observing the circumstances of the group members.

Second stage: discussion by all groups collectively: Arrangement for a meeting for all members in all focus groups was made in order to categorize the demands in new domains, to

remove repetition, and to order the demands according to priority of each new domain. All suggestions of demands made by focus groups were listed in one sheet according to the domains of reasons; groups were asked to do the following during the second stage:

1. To identify the repeated suggestions in order not to be discussed more than once during the discussion by all groups, and to be include once in the study results.
2. To suggest a new category (in anew list) of the demands according to the sector that should respond to the demand;
3. To discuss the new category of demands in order to have consensus about it
4. Each group met again to order the demands according to priority
5. Each group presented its prioritized list to discuss it with the whole group
6. The whole group decided interactively the final order according to priority.

The two stages produced a new list of demands categorized according to the sector that would respond to such demand into six new domains (sector of vocational work, the media, the Higher

Table 2. Individuals of each focus group according to the studied domain.

Focus group to study the educational reasons		Focus group to study the personal reasons	
Type	Number	Type	Number
M/F students	2	M/F students	4
Elementary education teacher	1	PVE teacher	1
Social studies' teacher	1	Social studies' teacher	1
Science teacher	1	Educational counsellor	1
PVE/VE teachers	2	VE teacher	1
Educational counsellor	1	Parent	1
Scientific Curriculum developer	1	Employer	1
Social Curriculum developer	1	Focus group studied the social reasons	
Focus group to study the economic reasons		M/F students	2
VE graduate/ in private sector	1	Male parent	2
VE graduate/ public sector	1	Female parent	2
Unemployed VE graduate	1	PVE teacher	1
Employer	2	Social studies' teacher	1
Company manager	2	Educational counsellor	1
Journalist	2	VE teacher	1
Focus group to study the career reasons			
Employer	2	VE graduate/ private sector	2
Company manger	2	VE graduate/ public sector	2
VTC representative	1	VE Department representative	1

education, the general education, the VE, and the demands relating to the PVE course). Therefore, the study procedure (in the two stages) ensured validity and reliability of the results through the repetition of studying the reasons and their relationships with the suggested demands by all groups and the whole group collectively. All groups agreed on the demands categorization and priorities. It is worth mentioning that the demands in Tables 3 to 8 are those agreed upon by the whole group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demands were categorized into domains

These domains will be presented from the general to the specific; the general demands that address the policy concerning the vocational work sectors will be the first, then demands to media, higher education, general education, VE, and finally, the demands to the PVE course that is taught through the basic education stage to achieve the career awareness necessary for the students' decision of the future education and careers. Discussion of the results was dedicated to mechanisms through which each suggested demand could reduce the students' avoidance of VE through analysis, and through connecting it with similar ideas in the relevant literature and previous studies.

First: Suggested demands to the sector of vocational work

Focus groups proposed five demands to the sector of

vocational work that could enhance the prejudice of the negative image of vocational work. These demands are shown in Table 3. The image of vocational work in the society is negative (Al-Tweissi, 2013; Al-Tarawneh, 2000). This is due to the prejudice that the income of vocational jobs is relatively low, the perceived lack of jobs opportunities, and the hardness of the work conditions (Yusuf, 2012).

It is expected that the earlier mentioned suggestions to enhance the work condition of vocational work; namely the working hours, the minimum fares, and the other employee rights through the on-ground *application of the Work Act* or through providing job opportunities internally and externally, that can be achieved also through government *arranging contracts* with countries that have job opportunities to employ graduates of VE; this will reduce the numbers of un-employability among vocational workers and VE graduates. This reminded the people of the good experience of the MOE in seconding contracts signed with the Arab Gulf countries that have been providing jobs for the MOE teachers for many years giving the chance to appoint new teachers instead of those seconded to other countries. Despite Jordan higher education institutes graduates, with many people in different educational subjects, there is no un-employability in these fields particularly among male teachers, also the Ministry of Health that has a successful experience in seconding professionals to other countries leading to a need to employ even the new graduates. Once un-employability is reduced among VE graduates, attitudes of the society towards it will be promoted, and students

Table 3. The suggested demands to the sector of vocational work.

S/N	Suggested demands
1	To apply the Work Act that limits the number of working hours and the minimum fares. Curriculum should educate students about the Act and its applications
2	To give incentives and overtime fares for individuals whose work requires longer hours than the legal limit. Curriculum should educate students about this issue in a way that shows it as an advantage of joining VE
3	The Government can work towards signing long-term contracts with other countries that need vocational workforce like Arabic Gulf Countries in order to provide jobs for VE graduates, and to show that in the school curriculum
4	Provide small and affordable loans to VE graduates in order to start their own projects and workshops, curriculum should educate students about these opportunities.
5	To expand the occupational classification and characterization and to spread awareness about that through the educational and media channels.

then will enroll in its associated specialties motivated by their families and local communities.

To provide loans to graduates

To make more reduction in un-employability and to enhance the image of the status quo of vocational work, it was suggested for the Government to provide loans to graduates of VE. This will enable them to start up their own projects as a self-employment and to provide opportunities to employ others. Research established that self-employment through small and medium projects are one of the main methods to reduce un-employability and to improve quality of services and goods (Qoufi, 2011). Therefore, when conditions of VE Graduates enhance through their small projects, the students' perceived image of VE related specialties will be enhanced, then they will not mind joining these specialties. It is unavoidable that to sustain the enhancement occur due to this factor should be supported through the curriculum and through educating students about these future opportunities.

To expand the occupational classification and characterization and to spread awareness

Jordan started to classify and characterize the occupational levels in all occupational groups. This endeavor has been handled by the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) (Al-Adwan, 2009). Having this classification and characterization of occupations will be of many advantages to the society; among them is to specify tasks of each level of each occupation and to specify its competencies that are required for the

individual to be certified in it (Al-Masri, 2003). Having this endeavor completed will enhance the image of the vocational work; since it will enable vocational workers and graduates to upgrade their level of certification according to the occupational ladder, and in turn, their job-levels will be upgraded either in their current jobs or through getting new jobs. This will also enable them to get jobs in other countries that adopt similar systems of classification and certification either regionally or internationally; Arab Gulf countries and European countries that usually pay high salaries use such systems. When numbers of graduate of VE get jobs in these countries, their financial and social conditions will get better leading to a rise in the society attitudes, particularly students, towards VE and then enrollment numbers will rise.

It is vital to spread awareness about classification and characterization of the occupations, and to educate people about ways to deal with the system of certification. This takes the form of media programs and information through the school curriculum and activities. This will enable students to be aware of a new path for their future career promotion that comes through experience and informal education after VE graduation. Awareness of the different paths to future career promotion (rather than to go to Universities) will give students motivation to enroll in VE as it will not be considered the end of life as people in Jordan currently perceive it (Yusuf, 2012).

Second: Demands related to the media

Media has a major role in promoting ideas particularly with the fast advancement in information and tele-communication technology. Table 4 shows the suggested demands on media to reduce students' avoidance of VE.

Table 4. Suggested demands to the media.

S/N	Suggested demands
1	Continuous education through different media channels about the importance of VE for society advancement and future of individuals
2	Producing educational programs about VE and its associated specialties; institutions; available job opportunities; the different paths that lead to qualification in it
3	Medial educating about the importance of work for life and the rejection of shame culture
4	To discuss that the society belief that all students should go to the University is faulty at all societal levels
5	Educating about workers' rights and duties in the relevant laws
6	The medial educating about the importance of the establishment of local workers replace foreign workers
7	The medial educating programs should depend on the practical field status quo not on theoretical interviews

Importance of VE and the need for educating about it

The seven suggested demands to media shown in Table 4 aims to improve the negative image held by the society of VE and vocational work in general. Therefore, the suggestions called the media to focus on educating about the importance of VE for the country construction and for individuals' future. This is crucial for the Jordanian society because of the dominant paradigm that office jobs that are usually achieved after getting an academic certification are the best, and that all individuals should try to get such jobs (Yusuf, 2012; Al-Tweissi, 2013). To change this, there should be a continuous education, and clarification about the specialties that are offered in VE, their relating jobs, and availability of these jobs, names of institutes that provide these specialties, in addition to clarification about the educational, training, and experiential paths that lead to certification in these specialties.

Is the university the only chance for good future?

The idea of the necessity of seeking office jobs by all is related to the idea that all school students should go to Universities; this unrealistic idea needs to be discussed and clarified for the society (as mentioned in the suggested demands). It is vital to clarify the diversity of life and human needs that lead to diversity of careers in the society, and the mutual importance of all these careers for human beings. Specifically, it should be clarified that different paths of education lead to different acceptable careers in terms of their level and income achieved by workers in these careers. Suggestions of focus groups established the necessity to educate people about the rights and duties of workers and employers in the relevant laws. This educating, as years go by, will enhance the level of worry adopted about the future of people who do complete their higher education and inter vocational work.

Getting rid of shame culture

Suggestions of focus groups to media also focus on getting rid of the Shame culture; since the Jordanian society avoid working in some careers resulted in the dominance of the foreign work force on these careers (Al-Tarawneh, 2000; Al-Mahasneh and Alsa'aideh, 2015). Although some of students enroll in VE programmes that lead to these careers, they do not accept to join such careers, a factor that increases un-employability. Because of un-employability, students will not enroll in these specializations. Therefore, efforts should be made to get rid of shame culture, and to encourage people to have jobs in these careers. This will lead to enrollment of more students in these careers and, consequently, more graduates will accept having these careers.

The need for replacement of foreign workers

Focus groups ascertained the need for educating all categories in the society about the vitality of the establishment of local workers replacing foreign workers, because this is important for job seekers, families and employers (current and potential ones) who are the crucial factor of this target. Employers who prefer to recruit local employees rather than the foreign ones (despite the difference in wages) are the ones who put the national interest ahead of their own interest; this will not happen without deep and integrated understanding of the national issues.

The need for people from the vocational field to talk (practical not theoretical)

It was stated to depend on reality and to communicate with the relevant people who are in the field of vocational work. This explains the strategy of media that could be adopted in educating the society about VE, since people

Table 5. Suggested demands to the higher education.

S/N	The suggested demands
1	To enable VE graduates to study at universities the same as their counterparts in other secondary education streams
2	To search for more flexible systems to enable VE graduates to pursue their higher education successfully since they are of lower achievement levels than those of their counterparts of academic education. To inform students that VE graduates can go on to universities through the school curricula
3	To adopt flexible learning systems through non-conventional learning like distance learning, competency-based learning and career practice tests in order to enable vocational workers to pursue their studies and upgrade their competency levels
4	To move the acceptance policy in higher education from the student level of achievement in the GCSE into entry tests for each specialty

do not believe in theoretical interviews with white-collar people; they are highly influenced by people who undergo the real experience.

This idea was ascertained by Paulley and Ibebeitei (2014) when they explained the essential qualities and role of the Nigerian technical and vocational education teacher (TVET) for meeting the challenges of the new millennium. It was reported that in Jordan, people usually think that people who call families to send their children to vocational schools through media, they themselves do not accept to send their children to these schools. Therefore, their media talks will be of less effect than those of successful experiences shown by either workers or employers (Mrayyan, 2010).

Third, suggested demands to the higher education

Focus groups provided four suggested demands for higher education to reduce students' avoidance of VE. These demands are shown in Table 5.

The social need for higher education

Suggestions relating to higher education reflect the current contradiction between the aim of VE, which is to satisfy the need of the labour market of the different levels of vocational workers, and the desire of the individuals and the community to achieve a university degree.

Therefore, the most important suggested demand was to open the gate for VE graduates to join universities likewise their counterparts who graduate from other streams of secondary education. It is reported in the experiences of other countries, even those developed ones, that in spite of the good occupational level that the VE graduates could achieve, they still need to gain a good social status; this demands that VE institutions and pathways should provide their graduates with the opportunity to pursue university education; Moodie and Wheelahan (2009) recommended this for the vocational educational system in Australia.

Flexible systems and approaches to enter Universities

The suggestion of providing VE graduates with opportunities to enter universities cannot stand alone because of the fact that not all VE graduates can pursue their university study like graduates of other educational streams (Al-Tarawneh, 2000). This leads to the second suggestion to search for flexible systems that could enable VE graduates to pursue their higher education successfully. This demands to develop a qualification system with the presence of a National Qualification Authority to accredit the programs provided by the different education and training providers, and to develop a system of equivalence of the different qualifications and their associated training units. This could help to recognize the qualifications or training units in order to enable vocational graduates to continue their study by completing the requirements that they did not study in their previously gained qualification. This is called the "Recognition of Prior Learning" when the previous learning comes from a program that leads to a certificate or an award; it is called Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning when it comes from practical experience; obviously suitable assessment tools are required to assess this prior learning (Stanwick, 2006; Wheelahan and Carter, 2001; Wheelahan, 2009; NQA, 2015).

Therefore, focus groups mentioned more flexible approaches of higher education through which VE graduates can pursue their studies, namely competency-based programs, and certification exams that enable individuals to provide evidence of their skills and knowledge regardless of the source of such knowledge and skills. Candidates can then follow the program to bridge the training gap in the units and competencies which they were not able to prove competence. Moreover, it was suggested to keep students aware of these systems through the school curricula.

Moving from depending on GCSE to aptitude tests to enter universities

Concerning the entrance requirements of the university,

Table 6. Suggested demands to the general education.

S/N	The suggested demands
1	Curriculum should inform the students about their abilities and tendencies and to orient them towards suitable careers
2	Curriculum subjects should address the relevant careers, and their mental, physical and special requirements
3	To review the curriculum to check for balance between what students should learn and the knowledge and skills relating to future careers
4	Curriculum should clarify the limits of the peers' relationships in decision taking in order not to affect their peers' decisions of career selection
5	Teacher-student relationship should be improved to play their roles in advising and guiding students instead of their peers
6	Curriculum should introduce students to the different systems in the country in order to enable them to deal with them in their future life
7	Developing the critical analytical, and logical thinking abilities of the students in addition to their skill of decision taking
8	Students should be aware of the job security in the labour market and the factors that affect it, the provisions of the work law and procedural regulations. Students need to learn to respect law as prospective workers and employers
9	The curriculum should clarify the role of the Vocational Training Corporation in details
10	The curriculum of academic subjects should include lessons to promote VE and to clarify its importance for all grades, particularly Arabic language and Islamic Education
11	To activate the role of the vocational guidance committees in schools, to conduct training for members, to monitor and record their activities
12	To follow up the access of the awareness leaflets and posters to schools and to use technology in in this issue
13	To disseminate the message of the importance of VE to parents and families in order that families could take their roles in encouraging students to choose VE instead of the obstruction of students who wish to choose it
14	Clarification of the fact of the high income of vocational workers and technicians through live models or real stories in school textbooks and the media, and to make students conduct press reports with the vocational workers as extracurricular activities
15	To change the stereotype image inherited about craftsmen of workers of dirty clothes into the image of technologically equipped experts
16	To fight against the shame culture by offering successful examples of VE graduates, conducting interviews with them, and to introduce ideas about their business and income in the curriculum of different subjects
17	It should be clarified that VE students can pursue their higher education and to be shown the way to do that, including the specialties and the extra courses required for VE student to study in order to apply for higher education. through the curriculum awareness leaflets
18	To link education to students' life through the curriculum and not to deliver knowledge theoretically

focus groups also suggested to move from depending on the student's achievement in the GCSE by adopting Aptitude Tests for each specialty. This enables to have realistic standards that help in predicting relevant abilities to make progress in the specialty the student has chosen to study. The idea of these tests implies that the student cannot be accepted in a program unless he/she proves having the required basic abilities for entering of this program. These tests usually have a higher degree of predictability of students'success in the relevant fields than that of the GCSE which has no statistically proven indicators for success in the higher education programs (Al-Smadi et al., 2010; Al-Daaseen, 2014; Al-Rashdan, 2002; Jaradat, 2003; Mashayekh, 2013).

Fourth: Demands to the general education

Focus groups provided eighteen suggested demands for the general education to reduce students' avoidance of VE. These demands are shown in Table 6. Focus groups

suggestions relating to the general education focused on objectives of learning required to achieve in order to reduce students' avoidance of VE.

Inform the students about their abilities and tendencies and where they fit

As for student's personality, suggestions stated the importance of building a balanced personality that perceives things realistically concerning the personal abilities and to direct these abilities towards the matching domains of specialty, in order for the person to succeed in his future career, in addition to having a specialty that enables him to find a job opportunity. This demand people not to have negative attitudes towards work generally or towards specific careers (the second suggestion). The importance of the positive attitudes towards work and towards the various careers was ensured by Tanggaard et al. (2015) when relevant abilities were used as the criteria for accepting students

in VE specialties. The experiment was successful regarding the higher percentages of enrollment of the programs and the completion percentages of the subsequent programs in which the students enrolled.

Curriculum should be realistically linked to real life

The third suggestion indicated that school subjects should be linked to real life, either when presented in the curriculum or through the teaching activities. This can be achieved through linking tasks with their scientific concepts, the technologies developed based on these concepts, and mathematical relationships used to develop these technologies, in addition, devices and equipment that are produced from the concepts studied by the students, and the relating work ethics, values, habits and behaviors.

Recently, more development has taken place in the idea of teaching subjects in an integrated way through teaching scientific knowledge in integration with the technologies based on this knowledge, the relevant engineering principles used to produce products and their associated services, in addition to the artistic skills used to produce these products (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematic- STEAM). This is a philosophy to promote integration between the different domains of knowledge based on the paradigm that the isolation of these domains is artificial. STEAM mainly relies on the problem based learning employing the creative abilities, and diminishes the importance of memorizing facts and concepts since learning takes place through problem solving in their real contexts. This philosophy is applicable through all educational stages, and it improves different types of thinking (Engineering, critical, creative) in addition to problem solving skills (Claymier, 2014).

The importance of using this philosophy in teaching in the general education in order to enhance the prospective enrollment in VE was reported by Paulley and Ibebeitei (2014), they emphasized it as one of the essential qualities and roles of the Nigerian technical and vocational education teacher (TVET) for meeting the challenges of the new millennium. Therefore, it was suggested to emphasize the review of the curriculum in order to achieve balance between theoretical information and practical experiences, because it was reported that education in developing countries mainly focuses on theoretical information rather than on skills based on this information, and even when addressing skills, curriculum is criticized by focusing on detailed skills rather than multi- use generic skills (Psacharopoulos, 1997; Okorsaye-Orubite, 2008).

This brings the idea of vocationalising the curriculum in its “old” and “new” paradigms giving way to review the school curriculum, and in the context of a third world country, like Jordan, this might imply a need to think of

the dual system in order to lessen the numbers of academic degrees’ holders and increase the number of people who are ready to inter to the labour market earlier (Euler, 2013).

Teachers’ versus peers’ effect on decision

Focus groups’ suggestions still focus on addressing and building the balanced personality towards achieving the right career selection. Therefore, the fifth suggestion demands that curriculum should clarify the limits of the relationship between colleagues so that they don’t have the greatest effect on the career decision of their colleagues. This demands an effective development of students’ leadership and independence skills that are strongly related to the decision taking. Moreover, it was suggested to maintain a positive relationship between students and teachers in order for teachers to have the major role in vocational guiding of their students rather than students’ colleagues. This was also mentioned by Minhua (2015) when he mentioned that the social reproduction of the bad image of vocational education is dominant, and the school efforts fail to improve its image among students.

Perceived job security and understanding the work act

Another suggestion that could contribute to reducing students’ avoidance of VE is to acquaint students with the status quo of job security in the labour market and the factors that affect it, in order to enable them to choose their future job realistically. The eighth suggestion stated the importance of acquainting students with the Work Act in order to know their rights and duties as prospective workers and employers as well. Studies of Al-Tweissi (2013) and Al-Tarawneh (2002) reported that one of the important reasons for students’ avoidance of VE is the un-acquaintance of vocational workers of their rights and duties, and their consequent ignorance of the bypasses of the employees’ rights committed by employers.

Awareness of the role of vocational training corporation

Awareness of the whole image of vocational work is linked to the role of the VTC that should be well known to students as a training provider and a regulatory body of the occupational work market. If students are acquainted with VTC, it will be a source of information for them about the available training opportunities and their domains. Students’ knowledge of the role of VTC as a regulatory body of the occupational work will enable them to be informed continuously about levels of vocational work

and qualifications required to achieve work in each level (the ninth suggestion). This help to broaden students' knowledge and understanding of the institutions they can join either currently to get certified or in the future to upgrade the level of their qualification. The importance of this idea was emphasized by Steven et al. (2005) when they mentioned that knowledge of standard based occupational levels, the pathways to achieve these levels, and the transfer between them encourage students to enroll in these pathways according to their own circumstances, abilities and targeted level.

Lessons to promote VE in academic subjects

Focus group suggestions emphasized the integration of the task of reducing the avoidance of VE withall the school curriculum, not only the PVE curriculum. Focus groups in their tenth suggestion emphasized the need of lessons to promote VE and clarify its importance in the curriculum of the academic subjects for all grades. The curricula of the Islamic Education was particularly mentioned in order to link the idea with religion promotion of work, in addition to the Arabic Language lessons because the author can devote full lessons to explain the idea of having careers in the future and to present articles and information about VE associated specialties, and the availability of job opportunities in these specialties. This can be referred to the fact that language comprehension of subjects and concentration on the included ideas and information could be an evidence of achievement of the related cognitive objectives. This is vital for the issue of VE avoidance since it could solve the problem of shortage of information (knowledge weakness) about VE that was reported as one of the reasons for its avoidance (Al-Tarawneh, 2000; Al-Tweissi, 2013; Yusuf, 2012). Liu et al. (2014) pointed that the school stage is important for the vocational development of the student, and they consider that learning offered by the whole school curriculum about the world of work is the base for continuing life-long vocational learning. Herault and Zakirova (2015) also emphasized that delivering knowledge about the world of work and information about careers is fundamentally the role of the school.

Activating the school vocational guidance committees

Focus group suggestions also addressed the role of the accompanying curriculum (extra-curricular activities) that are conducted in parallel with the delivery of the formal curriculum. The eleventh suggestion called for activating the role of the Vocational Guidance Committees at schools, and for conducting training courses to these committees in order to have knowledge about the various methods of conducting individual and group vocational

guidance. This is important because members in these committees usually believe that the role of the vocational guidance committee is only to conduct a session for the tenth basic grade students shortly before they decide the stream of the secondary education.

In fact, vocational guidance is a long term process which includes different and various activities because career choice is strongly related to students' attitudes towards the available specialties (Minhua, 2015; Liu et al., 2014). It is well known that emotional objectives (including attitudes' modification) demands long time and various approaches (Odeh, 2005; Abu, 2010; Salamah, 2009, Al-Laqqani and Al-Jamal, 2003).

Awareness leaflets and posters

The focus groups in the twelfth suggestion emphasized on the central role of the departments of VE at the Ministry level and the educational directorates' level. It was mentioned that leaflets and posters should not only be sent to schools without ensuring the students' access to these leaflets and their understanding of their content by clarifying it at schools. Focus groups recommend using technology with its effects of sound, image, movement, and continuity and repetition of the message. This is of a good advantage since repetition of a message by managerial parties indicates the importance of this message when received by the audience (Al-Rawadieh, 201).

Families' awareness

Additionally, focus groups recommend that the message of awareness about the importance of VE should also be conveyed to parents in order for families to participate in the role of awareness dissemination about VE by enhancing attitudes of their children towards VE. This is crucial in Jordan because families are currently one of the hindering factors of the efforts to have students enroll in VE because of their negative attitudes (Al-Masri, 2003; Abu-Asbsah, 2005; Yusuf, 2012).

What content and teaching/learning activities?

Focus groups moved to address curriculum content and teaching/learning activities. They suggested in the thirteenth suggestion to have among the instructional approaches students conducting interviews and press reports with successful career holders, presenting life examples of these career holders in the curriculum (The fourteenth suggestion). In the fifteenth suggestion, it was demanded for curriculum content to develop a positive image of the vocational workers as knowledgeable professional and technologically equipped experts of their

fields. This suggestion might help in changing the stereotyped image in the mind of the society due to pre conceptions formulated by families by the dominant drama trends that disseminate an image of clothes dirtiness, strong language and difficult work conditions. This negative image became an alternative concept that is difficult to change as children become older. Then, these negative images have become boundaries between students and these careers making them avoid enrolling in the educational pathways that lead to these careers, except for those who are obliged because of their low achievement level.

Minhua (2015) mentioned that the social negative image of VE in the rural areas of migrants in China prohibited students from enrollment in VE except for those bad ones who continued on the same behavioral style in vocational schools; a factor that reflected a negative image of the schools themselves and the careers that are taught in these schools. Thus, the process became a kind of continuous reproduction of the same kind of students studying in these schools and working in these careers.

Fight against shame culture through presenting positive real examples

Focus group called to fight against Shame Culture through presenting positive examples of successful VE graduates, the career they have, and the levels of their income. This is to be done through the curriculum of different subjects and extracurricular activities (the sixteenth suggestion). The focus group aims to persuade students that income of Vocational career holders is good and acceptable for life. This will be useful since the income level is one of the determinant factors of students' decision concerning the acceptance of the education that leads to such careers (Israel et al., 2001). Focus groups recommended to include life models and real stories in addition to endeavors of media because learning experiences produced from these types of activities have strong and long term effects on students.

VE is not the end of the dream (university education)

Additionally, focus groups stated that curriculum should clarify to students that joining VE does not mean the loss of the opportunity to follow-up university education; it is necessary to understand (through the school curriculum) that if the learner studied the extra scientific subjects requested for the university application, s/he can apply for the university education on a shoestring with academic education graduates (the seventeenth suggestion). This idea is of high importance, particularly for the Jordanian Society, since the enrollment number in VE has improved for the last few years after issuing the regulations that

allow VE graduates who studied the extra scientific subjects to apply for universities. Therefore, high achievers joined VE in order to gain high General average in the GCSE utilizing the relative easiness of the subjects in comparison to academic education in order to easily achieve university admission (Al-Adwan, 2009; Al-Tweissi, 2013; Yusuf, 2012).

Fifth, demands to VE policy

Focus groups provided eight suggested demands for the policy of VE to reduce students' avoidance of VE. These demands are shown in Table 7.

Holistically, it seems the rom demands suggested by the focus groups that they aimed to treat the students' negative attitudes held by students towards VE (Al-Tarawneh, 2000; Al-Tweissi, 2013; Yusuf, 2012; Abu Asbah, 2005), because it is well known that students easily enroll in specialties to which their attitudes are positive. However, it is difficult to have them enrolled in specialties to which their attitudes are negative. Therefore, the focus group suggested demands aimed to achieve two targets: First, to enhance the status quo of VE in terms of schools, graduates job opportunities, link between program content and labor market needs; Second, to provide financial and moral incentives to students to join VE.

To review the VE provision

In the first suggested demand, focus groups asked to study the status quo of VE in order to improve its curricula, school facilities, teachers' abilities and teaching practices. This demand resulted from the poor status of the vocational schools in terms of negative reputation resulting from less student' attendance, plenty of behavioral problems, obsolescence of devices and equipment, weakness of teachers' qualifications, in addition to obsolescence of the curriculum content in most specialties (Yusuf, 2012). Enhancing students' status quo will gradually enhance the image of the vocational schools held by the society and the students in the surrounding schools. This could be integrated with other suggestions to enhance students' enrollment in the vocational specialties offered by these schools.

Top enhance availability and accessibility of VE

In the second suggested demand, focus groups called to provide VE schools in all areas (at least one male and one female school) in each district. This is expected to enhance enrollment in VE because of the social and economic conditions of a big ratio of the Jordanian families which make them unable to pay the expenses of

Table 7. Suggested demands to VE policy.

S/NThe suggested demands	
1	To study the status quo of VE in order to improve its curricula, school facilities, teachers' abilities and teaching practices
2	To provide VE schools in all areas (at least one male and one female school) in each district
3	To consider location when establishing new schools in order to build vocational schools in a central location that can be accessed by students from all areas
4	To make VE more complimentary, and to provide compensations for transportation, meals, and professional clothes in order to promote joining VE
5	To provide specialties in vocational schools according to the nature of careers practiced in the area and the needs of the labour market
6	To link VE to the needs of the labour market, and to modify curriculum continuously in order that graduates would not to lose job opportunities due to obsolescence of their skills
7	Cooperation between the VE and the vocational work sectors to provide jobs for VE graduates, and to clarify that in the curriculum
8	To distribute students to educational streams and to VE specialties according to their affinity not according to their achievement level

the daily transportation of their children to go to schools, in addition to the conservation of some families about the travel of their children from one area to another (particularly females who are at the age of adolescence). Therefore, it was recommended in the third suggested demand to study the locations of the newly built schools in order to have them in central and accessible locations that can serve more than one area, a factor that can reduce the transportation costs and the social embarrassment mentioned above. The problem will be alleviated if VE becomes more complimentary, and compensations for transportation, meals and professional clothes are provided to students, which is the fourth demand suggested by the focus groups. Minhua (2015) mentioned this as one of the factors that could help "better" students enroll in vocational education in China, mainly for migrant societies, since such societies usually suffer from bad economic situations.

To link the VE with the labor market demands

Focus groups demanded in the fifth suggestion to offer specialties in the Vocational schools according to the nature of the local area and the requirements of the labour market of these specialties. This might be helpful because graduates of these specialties will have the job opportunities that are available in the local area; a factor that contributes to reducing the un-employability among VE graduates. In return, this will enhance students' and their families' attitudes towards VE, and this will enforce them to register their children in VE, particularly if these specialties qualify people for self-employment either by having students initiating their own business, or working in their family business. Self-employment projects are currently counted one of the alternative sources for job opportunities since projects that start small will get bigger in the future (Qoufi, 2011).

In order to go deeper in the solutions, focus groups demanded in the sixth suggestion to link the VE with the labor market requirements, and to conduct continuous reform. They stated that explicitly "so that students will not graduate without finding jobs because the skills that they mastered are moving out of date". It is expected for this suggestion, when implemented, to contribute to students' joining of VE programs because when graduates find jobs, the economic status of these graduates and their families will get better; consequently; this will enormously enhance attitudes of other students and their families towards VE. The researcher perceives that implementing this suggestion is very necessary, because of the debate across the country about the need for harmony between the knowledge and skills included in the programs and the needs of the labour market at different levels and different specialties. These knowledge and skills lack relevance to the occupational standards developed to ensure quality of the training programs and the certification of people to practice these occupations. Unfortunately, studies provided clear evidence that this claim is correct (Al-Syouf, 2007; Al-Mahasneh and Al-Sa'aideh, 2015). Ross and Wang (2014) recommended similar actions to be taken in China to improve VE and achieve the enrollment intended rates.

To provide jobs for VE graduates (who and how?)

The seventh suggested demand addressed the need to provide jobs for VE graduates through a cooperative coordination between the public and private sectors. Thus, schools, educational directorates, MOE and VTC as training providers and companies, institutions, factories, shops and individuals as places of work can cooperate to provide jobs for VE graduates. This will enhance the students' attitudes when they witness their graduated colleagues finding jobs and their social and

economic status improved.

However, this suggestion implies additional tasks for people who are involved in VE (teachers, specialty coordinators, school administrators, VE departments at the level of the Educational Directorates, and the department of VE at MOE level) to develop and implement an integrated strategy to achieve this goal. More importantly; this strategy should be committed and strongly supported by MOE and other relevant public institutions like Ministry of Work, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Public Sector Reform. Jordan government has a positive experience in this kind of cooperation; in having low percentages among graduates of the VTC, because training in workplaces, which is a part of the training program helps in introducing the trainees to the employers, knowing their characteristics and what skills they master, and therefore employers can attract graduates to work in the workplaces where they received their practical training (Mrayyan, 2010).

Studies proved that graduates of programs that have higher percentages of work place training have lower percentages of unemployment and better jobs in comparison to those of programs that have higher percentages of in-campus training. Studies also proved better abilities to develop and make progress in their jobs (European Training Foundation, 2012; Ross and Wang, 2014).

The need for better students

In integration with other suggestions, focus groups studied the long term demands after the implementation of other suggestions. They stated that it will be vital to have students of higher motivation and higher achievement levels to join VE. The focus groups suggested that students should be allowed to select their domain of education without conditions and constraints (the eighth suggestion). This will be achieved if all the suggestions were conducted in parallel. In this way, there will be no need to oblige the low achievers to enroll in VE, since VE itself will become attractive for students and their families. At that time, students will select VE motivated by their aptitudes, tendencies and desires. However, this needs a reasonable time to be achieved. In addition it needs to review the structure of the educational system in order to have more streams that could lead the student towards different levels of careers; this reminds to the German educational education system and the idea of the dual system (Euler, 2013)

Sixth, demands to the PVE (PVE) course

Focus groups provided fourteen suggested demands for the course of PVE to reduce students' avoidance of VE.

These demands are shown in Table 8. The course of PVE is considered the main course from which the MOE aims to achieve the objectives of students' awareness of the importance of VE and to enable them to join the domain of education that is appropriate for their abilities and tendencies, and which proves useful in terms of availability of jobs (Hazaimah, 2015).

However, the delivery of this course at schools suffers from many problems. These problems include the students' negative attitudes towards this course, lack of resources available for its implementation, weakness of teachers' capabilities, its teaching by not specialized teachers in many schools to complete the teaching load, transferring lessons of PVE to academic courses in order to enable teachers of these courses to complete the curriculum in the semester, in addition to making students do irrelevant tasks within the lessons of PVE such as playing or cleaning the school facilities. Some private schools do not even consider PVE as a part of the curriculum and do not teach its content by putting only fake quotas for it in the school timetable (Daghlal, 2004; Al-Bado, 2013; Tweissi, 1998; Alsaydeh, 2002; Ahmed and Al-Sa'aideh, 2007; Ahmed and Al-Sa'aideh, 2012; Al-Sa'aideh, 2013). These problems affect the implementation of the PVE curriculum as they generate a gap between the formal curriculum that is developed to be taught at schools and what is really taught. This makes the achieved learning outcomes much less than the intended outcomes from the formal curriculum. This matter becomes more complicated if the formal curriculum of PVE has some shortcomings of obsolescence of its content and weakness of relevance to real life (Al-Bado, 2013, Hazaimah 2015), in addition to weakness of relevance of its content to the general objectives of PVE (Abu-Hassan, 2013; Al-Sa'aideh, 2014).

To make PVE as a basic subject

Focus groups started their suggested demands related to PVE with a change in the curriculum policy; they asked to make PVE as a basic subject in the success and failure of students and to have its marks counted in the Student GPA. This suggestion is expected to contribute to increasing the students' and their parents' interest in PVE, since studies revealed that students and their families do not care about courses that do not have marks and those which are not counted in the students' GPA. (Daghlal, 2004; Kospin, 2014; Herault and Zakirova, 2015).

Objectives, subjects, and ideas to be included in the PVE curriculum

In order to enhance the role of the PVE course in

Table 8. Suggested demands to the PVE course.

S/N	The suggested demand
1	Make PVE as a basic subject in the success and failure of students with its marks counted in the Student GPA
2	The curriculum should aim at student awareness of VE as one of the routes of education according to the educational policy in Jordan, and that there is no objection that successful students can join university education, if they passed the additional required scientific courses
3	The discussion through the curricula that the community belief that each student must join university is a wrong belief at all levels of community-based organizations
4	To spread students' awareness through the curricula of the fact of the diversity of careers, their requirements and opportunities available currently and prospectively
5	The development of the PVE curriculum for all grades so as to commensurate with the developmental stage of student
6	To activate the lessons of PVE in schools and to develop specific conditions to arrange these lessons in the school timetable before revising them and approving them by the Education Directorate
7	To provide the requirements for the implementation of the curriculum of PVE in all schools centrally and not to rely on the schools to provide them
8	To provide vocational workshops in all schools with a reasonable degree of facilitates to enable students to exercise their talents and develop their capacities
9	To focus on the practical side of the subjects of PVE and other subjects like science, so that the students get used to work and production from early age, and identify attitudes and tendencies toward VE
10	To Work on activating the PVE curriculum through paying attention to making various vocational activities.
11	To host successful professionals to meet with students through the lessons of PVE
12	To pay visits to vocational schools and vice versa, in order to meet the students and inform them of the available careers, through the lessons of PVE
13	To hold specialized workshops for teachers of PVE, and activate their role in the schools.
14	Not to transfer teachers who proved their failure in the other subjects to teach PVE, and not to teach PVE by non-specialized teachers

achieving the career awareness, focus groups suggested objectives, subjects, and ideas to be included in the PVE curriculum. It was recommended for the curriculum to aim at student awareness of VE as one of the routes of education by educational policy in Jordan, in addition to the aim of clarifying the community mistaken belief that each student must join the university at all levels of community organizations. It was also recommended that the PVE curriculum should explain the diversity of careers, their requirements and available opportunities at present and in the future, and to clarify that joining some of these careers doesn't demand a university certificate.

This could imply an increase in the number of lessons allocated to PVE, and to move the curriculum earlier from generality to depth in content. This means that curriculum developers should not wait until the higher basic grades to address integrating training units as practiced in the labor market. All these suggestions could help to raise the desired benefits of the PVE, and could result in joining high achievement students to VE in the future. In China, Minhua (2015) demanded to have PVE deeper at early educational stages in order to make VE more attractive for students in the rural areas. Herault and Zakirova (2015) and Tanggaard et al. (2015) also stated

that when the curriculum builds up students' vocational abilities at early stages, it helps to establish positive attitudes towards having vocational careers in the future.

To develop the contents to fit with the developmental stages of the students

It was additionally suggested to develop the contents of the PVE curriculum to fit with the developmental stages of the students, because the current skills contents are simple and naive, and therefore they do not attract students' intentions (Al-Jawarneh and Al-Baraket, 2009; Al-Sa'aideh, 2014). Relating to this, Paulley and Ibebeitei (2014) emphasized that whenever the vocational content is more up-to-date, serious, and relevant to the evolving work status, it will be more attracting to students maintaining their motivation to study and, also benefit from it.

To render the teaching of PVE more effective (how)?

Because of the problems that face the implementation of

the PVE curriculum, that hamper the achievement of its objectives in raising students' awareness, focus groups submitted the suggestions (6 to 12) that aim to render the teaching of PVE more effective in reducing the avoidance of joining VE. These suggestions can be summarized in activating the lessons of PVE in schools and developing specific conditions to arrange these lessons in the school timetable in order not to make these lessons to be always at the end of the school day, since having lessons of a subject at a late time of the school day reflects the lack of school interest in this subject, and vice versa (Haroon, 2013).

Focus groups confirmed the necessity of providing the requirements of the implementation of the PVE curriculum in all schools through central tenders, and not to rely on schools providing these requirements; since the operational guidelines for the PVE implementation recommend to allocate (15%) of the school budget to this course, but this does not occur at most schools. Some schools allocate lower percentages, some do not allocate any percentages at all (Daghlas, 2004; Al-Sa'aideh, 2014). It is well known that the delivery of vocational subjects requires raw materials, tools, equipment, and devices to conduct the practical exercises included in the curriculum. Modernity and sophistication of these requirements reflect a high level of care from the school in the course. This will be positively reflected on the students' attitudes towards the course (Haroon, 2003). However, this will be conducted in a balanced way taking into account the economic situation of the country, since financial constraints were reported as reasons for not introducing vocational skills in the school curriculum (Hayward, 2004; Touner et al., 2016).

Focus group also emphasized doing the best to achieve the curriculum objective in developing the students' talents and capacities. They prescribed to provide vocational workshops in all schools with a reasonable degree of facilitate to enable students to exercise their talents and develop their capacities. This could take place through upgrading the current facilities of the PVE workshops, or through establishing separate workshops and estimating their facilities taking into account the nature of the local area, the occupations practiced in the area and the diversity of the students' talents and career interests. If schools succeed in acquainting students to the experiences that develop their talents and entrench their interests up to a degree that enables them to select them as future careers, the school succeeds in producing creative persons in these careers (Al-Tweissi, 2011). Watson and McMahon (2008) pointed out that the relevance of the school context to the real life and workplace, in addition to the depth of the skills acquired by the individual in certain domains of life are crucial factors in the decision of taking this domain as the future career and selecting the educational path that leads to qualification in this domain.

Therefore, the focus group's suggestion to deliver the

school subjects (not only PVE) practically could acquaint students with work and production from early ages, and help them to identify their trends concerning future educational path (either vocational or academic). Achieving this educational objective is considered one of the basic elements of education towards Knowledge Economy (Al-Ibraheem, 2004; Tran, 2013; McMahon and Watson, 2008). Focus groups' suggestions addressed the teaching/learning activities of PVE; they suggested having successful professionals to meet with students and talk to them about their professional journeys and how they have developed in their careers. Field visits were also suggested to vocational work sites and vocational schools in order to introduce them to vocational work realistically and practically. This would render PVE teaching a kind of guidance to join VE, and in turn, and thus joining vocational jobs in the future (Okorosaye-Orubite, 2008).

The PVE teachers

Focus groups' suggestions were made also to improve teachers' effectiveness in teaching PVE. It was suggested to conduct workshops and specialized training courses for the PVE teachers to have numerous tasks and diverse roles to deliver the PVE curriculum (Alsaydeh, 2002). He/she has to master his/her roles and tasks in order to deliver the curriculum effectively. This made the focus groups propose teaching PVE by PVE specialize teachers since the instructor who is non-specialized cannot handle the topics appropriately. Specialized teachers gives a chance to achieve the target of improving students' attitudes towards VE, Noting that studies have reported that even specialized teachers themselves face problems in teaching PVE, as a result of multiplicity of areas of topics included in the curriculum. This, sometimes, makes teachers deliver subjects theoretically without practical training (Al-Sa'aideh, 2013; Ahmed and Al-Sa'aideh, 2007).

This is mentioned in the educational literature related to similar topics, Evans (1998) reported that teachers of the "Design and Technology" course in the United Kingdom were suffering from the variety of the course topics, and that the initial teacher-training programs could not provide them with the required subject-matter knowledge and competencies that enable them to teach curriculum of various areas of knowledge. Accordingly, the focus could be on the activities and methodologies of professional development for teachers in order to achieve an effective teaching of the PVE curriculum (Onasanya, 2013).

Amendment in the implementation of the curriculum could be considered through collaborative teaching between the teachers. Two relevant studies, one adopted the views of teachers showed that teachers of other subjects can help PVE teachers in the teaching the interdisciplinary topics included in the curriculum (Al-

Sa'aideh, 2010). Another study showed experimentally that teaching PVE through collaboration of teachers of other subjects with the PVE teacher in planning and implementation of teaching was effective in enhancing the theoretical and practical achievements of students and improving their attitudes towards PVE (Al-Sa'aideh and Alzyoud, 2015).

Curriculum developers, and educational supervisors can benefit from global developmental initiatives; the most recent of which was the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and the integration between Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM), that are considered as the latest initiatives of the integration of the various topics with teaching through an interdisciplinary approach. Studies about these initiatives revealed that students enjoy this approach in a way that increased their motivation due to what they produce through the learning activities they carry out (Namje and Yeonghae, 2015). Going deeply into utilizing these initiatives could lead to a development in the whole school curriculum producing a holistic integrative curriculum that hides the manual nature of knowledge which students have negative attitudes towards, particularly in Jordan.

Conclusion

The overall results of the study showed that the solution to improve the attitudes toward VE and to enhance the enrollment numbers is integrative. Negative aspects of the reality of the vocational labor sector must be improved through governmental measures in cooperation with all stakeholders to improve the conditions of work and wages. This will improve the ratios of the restoration of local workers for the foreign workers. Effectiveness of this improvement will be increased if reflected in the school curricula and in the media through its contribution to the improvement of students' and families' attitudes towards vocational work and therefore towards VE itself.

The status of VE should be examined and improved in several areas; its education and training pathways should be multiplied in addition to its specialization. These specialties should be more current than they are now, and should be more relevant to labour market needs. Vocational education institutions should be more available and more accessible than they are now, and VE at these institutions should be more sponsored by the state, in addition to the need, on the long run, of making acceptance in VE voluntary (not compulsory) because of the low level of student achievement. When achieving these ambitions, they should be communicated to the community through the school curricula and the media so as to contribute to the enhancement of the students' and their families' attitudes towards VE. As many countries think to import the model of the dual system (Euler, 2015), Jordan could investigate the possibility of

employing such a system utilizing the benefit of foreign support for new innovations particularly that involve importing the European experiences to the Jordanian educational system.

The PVE course, that aims to enable students, on the long run, to take reasonable decisions relating to future careers, should be delivered more seriously than is done currently. It should be taught by specialized teachers through new paradigms that use practical approaches to deliver the course in integration with the curricula of other subjects. These subjects must also contribute to educate students about VE and its domains. All school subjects are required to equip students with thinking, problem solving, and decision taking skills that enable them to take the proper decisions appropriate to their tendencies and abilities.

To make education more available for VE graduates and for all, flexibility of the pathways of the university education must be increased, its contents and methods of delivery should be modern and sophisticated, and should take advantage of technology innovations so as to empower people to join this education through the pathways appropriate to their capacities and circumstances.

In order to complete the course of action in alleviating the avoidance of joining VE, school curriculum has to educate students and their families about the necessity and importance of VE, and to educate students about the relevant institutions and legislations. Schools should not stand alone in this national wide task, they have to be assisted by the media, since media can easily communicate with all categories of the community, and can convey messages to the community in various methods. More importantly, all improvements that take place in sectors relevant to VE must be reflected in school curricula and in the media to have sustainable effects on the attitudes of students and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All suggested demands in all domains of the study are recommendations. However, the researcher would like to raise the following recommendations:

1. To improve the status of the vocational work conditions and wages, and to reflect any enhancement in the media and in school curricula
2. To improve the status of VE in its specialties, certification pathways, availability, and cost, and to reflect this improvement in the media and in school curricula.
3. To educate students through the General Education curricula about the status of vocational work and the VE specialties and institution that offers these specialties in order for students to choose VE and its resulting careers in the future.
4. To improve the status of the General Education

towards improving the skills of students in thinking, problem-solving, and decision-taking.

5. To increase flexibility in the tracks and the acceptance conditions of the Higher Education so as to enable successful students in VE to pursue their Higher education.

6. To improve the delivery of PVE through diverse activities so as to contribute in enabling the students to take the right decisions concerning the selection of future careers.

Conflict of interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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