

The Value of Vocational Education and Training in Advancing Human Development and Reducing Inequalities

The Case of Palestine

Randa Hilal

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the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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Abstract:

This thesis aims at examining the contribution of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to advancing Human Development (HD) and reducing inequality, using the example of Palestine as case-study rich in multi-layered inequalities, some of which are experienced in the region and worldwide, while others are specific to adverse conditions. The case of Palestine provides fertile ground for understanding inequality and human development, and for echoing the developed knowledge through to the understanding of VET and HD globally.

The thesis contributes to the previous work on VET and HD introduced by McGrath (2012c) and shaped by many scholars, including McGrath and Powell, through the Capability Approach (CA). It uses Powell's (2014) work on "aspiration" and capability lists (CL) and relates VET to human development within the Palestinian context. The thesis provides empirical evidence of the VET Learners' and graduates' capabilities and functions achievements through VET in the adverse conditions present in the Palestinian context. The thesis validates and develops the VET CL, integrating inequality elements and linking it to political economy theory.

The thesis utilises Gender and Development Theory (GAD), complemented by the intersectionality approach. The research borrows Kabeer's (1999) "empowerment framework", based on the notion of "choice" in addressing disempowerment, to analyse how VET can contribute to reducing inequality.

The thesis also engages with Political Economy arguments and specifically the work of Phillip Brown, Andy Green and Hugh Lauder (2001) on the need for "social transformation" to achieve the aim of a high skill society, suggesting an increased role for government and social partners and the political will for skills upgrading. In this regard, the thesis analyses how adopted policies are used to reduce or reproduce inequalities.

The research used quantitative and qualitative methods, and engaged 1,240 people representing VET graduates, students, teachers, counsellors and management of VET institutes, in addition to policymakers on national and regional levels, as well as teachers and principals of general schools, employers, community representatives and government

officials. 33 VET institutions were engaged representing the different VET providers being; governmental, non-governmental, semi-governmental and UN bodies. Selected institutes and consulted people presented different identified inequality elements.

The Thesis presented empirical evidence on the increased value of VET for the marginalised, and for marginalised communities in adverse conditions. It presented that VET graduates' achievements in employment, self-employment and different kind of work as well as in their speed in transiting to the World of Work (WOW) in comparison to their peers. Also presented their ability to generate income and other economic resources for poverty reduction and starting new families. In addition, it highlighted the empowerment achievements of the graduates and its link to achieving their aspirations. Confirming the transformation of the graduates through empowering the dis-empowered. Nevertheless, graduates were faced with internal and external structural challenges. Internal in social attitudes and institutional policies and measures, while the external is in the military occupation and its effects on mobility and socio-economic status. The structural challenges have clearly affected graduates functionings, and achievements of empowerment and aspirations. The thesis presented models of institutes and best-practices by others to support VET learners in overcoming some of the internal challenges, and highlighted the deficits in national policies and measures; it also highlighted a major international deficit. In addition, the thesis has presented the VET contribution to marginalised community resilience.

The thesis presented methods of measuring empowerment, functionings and achievement of aspirations as voiced out from VET graduates and learners and triangulated with other resources.

One of the main contributions of the thesis is in bringing in GAD to CA in HD approach to VET, and in linking them to political economy, providing a holistic framework to examine VET contribution to HD and reducing inequality. The thesis was able to link arguments about VET and inequality in an international context, and provided empirical evidence for the significance of the link between VET and empowerment in the reduction of inequality, thus indicating the importance of VET in the debate on inequality, and the

importance of empowerment measures and goals for identifying the role of VET in reducing inequality and advancing human development.

Key terms:

Vocational Education and Training, Human Development, Capability Approach, Capability List, Aspiration, Gender and Development, Intersectionality, Inequality, Marginalised, Empowerment, Choice

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Finally, I thank God for providing me with the energy, patience, determination, abilities and insights to accomplish this journey of knowledge and wisdom

Lastly, I would like to dedicate my work for the marginalised worldwide, and for marginalised Palestinians in particular, hoping that during the coming years, occupation would have ended, and future blossomed.

List of Publications

The following publications are based on the research carried out for this PhD;

Hilal, R., & McGrath, S. (2016). The Role of Vocational Education and Training in Palestine in Addressing Inequality and Promoting Human Development. *Journal of International and Comparative Education*, 5(2), 87-102.

Hilal, R. (2017). TVET Empowerment Effects within the Context of Poverty, Inequality and Marginalisation in Palestine. *International Journal of Training Research*. DOI: 10.1080/14480220.2017.1376384

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Abbreviations

ACRI:	Israeli Human Rights Organisation
BSA:	British Sociological Association
CA:	Capability Approach
CCI:	Chambers of Commerce and Industry
CL:	Capability List
CRO:	Church-Related Organisation
EJ:	East Jerusalem
ETF:	European Training Foundation
ESRC:	Economic and Social Research Council
FGD:	Focus Group Discussions
GAD:	Gender and Development
GEMR:	Global Education Monitoring Report
GMR:	Global Monitoring Report
HCT:	Human Capital Theory
HD:	Human Development
HDCA:	Human Development Capability Approach
HDR:	Human Development Report
IDP:	Internally Displaced People
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
NIS:	New Israeli Shekel
LFPR:	Labour Force Participation Rate
LM:	Labour Market
LWF:	Lutheran World Federation
MOE:	Ministry of Education
MOEHE:	Ministry of Education & Higher Education
MOL:	Ministry of Labour
MOSA:	Ministry of Social Affairs
NECC:	Near-East Council of Churches
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NORRAG:	Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training
OCHA:	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in oPt
oPt:	Occupied Palestinian territory

PA:	Palestinian Authority
PCBS:	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PE:	Political Economy
PhD:	Doctor of Philosophy
PWD:	People with Disability
RSQ:	Research Sub-Question
RWTC:	Ramallah Women Training Centre
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SRA:	Social Relations Approach
SRC:	Social Rehabilitation Centre
TVET:	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UKFIET:	The Education and Development Forum
UN:	United Nations
UNCTAD:	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO:	United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA:	The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in oPt
UNRWA:	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USD:	United States Dollar
VET:	Vocational Education and Training
VSS:	Vocational Secondary School
VTC:	Vocational Training Centre
VTP:	Vocational Training Programme
VTSD:	Vocational Training and Skills Development
YMCA:	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA:	Young Women's Christian Association
WB:	West Bank
WBL:	Work-Based Learning
WID:	Women in Development
WOW:	World of Work

Chapter 1. **Introduction**

Problem Analysis and my Motives for the Research

Prior to the start of my PhD, as international discussions around the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commenced, there was an increasing focus on gaps in the international debate around Vocational Education and Training (VET) in development, and more vocal calls to highlight the role of VET in the development agenda. In 2011, I presented a paper on the case of Palestine and VET's contribution to poverty reduction at The Education and Development Forum (UKFIET) conference. This experience was a turning point in my life in that it exposed the underrepresentation within the international debate of the role of VET in human development, and the need for new theoretical frameworks and case-studies to further knowledge and bridge the gaps in that knowledge.

With regard to inequality, although VET and skills development had traditionally not been seen as a tool for addressing inequality and contributing to human development (HD) (King & Palmer, 2013a; UNESCO, 2013, 2014), the increase in youth unemployment rates to unprecedented levels in the first part of the 21st century had led to a renewed interest in VET's potential to address the global challenges of youth unemployment and marginalisation (ILO, 2011, 2013; UNESCO, 2010). In addition, although the international debate about VET prior to 2015 had highlighted the link between VET and the needs of the marginalised, this had not yet been adequately reflected in the international literature, nor had it been mainstreamed into policies and strategies, including the Millennium Development Goals (King, 2012; McGrath, 2012a).

The debate on the value and importance of VET within different contexts and for various groups has been on-going. This debate has tended to use traditional theories of economic development, with little attempt to align VET to human development or to show its contribution to addressing inequalities. As such, McGrath (2012c) has called for the need for new frameworks of analysis with fresh lenses and theories for TVET. In this regard, the contribution of VET for human development has been discussed in case-studies

undertaken in Palestine (Hilal, 2012), South Africa (Powell, 2012) and Tajikistan (Wallenborn, 2009). In starting this PhD, therefore, I wanted to build further on this work by highlighting the contribution of VET to development and to serving youth.

Scholarly contributions to VET within HD has brought new insights (Anderson, 2008; McGrath, 2012a, 2012c; Powell, 2012, 2014; Powell & McGrath, 2014; McGrath & Powell, 2015a, 2015b, 2016; López-Fogués, 2014, 2016; DeJaeghere, 2016). This was reflected in the UNESCO Third International Congress on TVET, in Shanghai that presented a vision of “transformative TVET” (UNESCO, 2012), and within the UNESCO Global TVET Strategy 2016-2021 (UNESCO, 2016b)¹.

This research, therefore, responds to the need for new case studies and frameworks for analysis. Specifically, it will analyse, the valued and achieved functioning and capabilities of VET learners in Palestine, in line with their aspirations and hopes, and will develop further the work conducted by scholars with regard to the VET capability list.² In this regard, VET learners are considered in the research as the students and graduates of VET. I want to analyse the skills development policies, regulations, institutions and systems for the state-building effort in Palestine, while examining the relationship between the value of VET and different marginalised groups in the society. This is done through a human development lens, added to the political economy theories that go beyond economic development theories and approaches.

Moreover, my long experience working with VET institutes that use VET as a tool to address poverty reduction and inequality, getting in touch with marginalised youth and seeing the transformative effects after their graduation, has provided me with the motive to illustrate these effects and the appreciated value of VET by the marginalised as a way of contributing to the international debate.

Hence my long experience has drove my motives for the research, and informed the research; snapshot of my career background below illustrates a time-line of my experience.

¹ In international literature TVET and VET are used interchangeably, I point to them as they appear in most cases. In my research I am highlighting the VET levels, which are the first three levels within TVET in the Palestinian setting, without the tertiary levels.

² Definitions of terminology used are all listed in Box-2 at the end of Chapter 3.

Snapshot 1: Snapshot of my Career Background:

- 1984: Graduated as Electrical and Electronics Engineer from UK
- 1985: Accomplished Masters' degree in Electronics from UK
- 1986-1990: University Lecturer
- 1992-1995: TVET related programmes (head of unit and then director)
- 1995-Sept 2000: Director of YMCA-VTC (first women director of a male oriented VET institute in Palestine, and introduced women for the first time in Palestine in Electronics (Non-conventional field) in a male-oriented VTC)- MOE followed.
- Oct 2000-Sept 2004: Director of LWF VTC: Introduced women for the first in LWF and established VTC in Ramallah
- Oct 2004-Sept 2008: Director of VTC in Ramallah, and pioneered apprenticeship training in Palestine, alongside other GIZ programme.
- 2003-2008: Co-Founder and Chairperson of NGO-VET League
- Jan 2009: Started Consultancy Company as a partner, but worked as a consultant since 1990, conducted many studies and consultancies related to TVET, gender and development.
- 2011 Participated in UKFIET international conference and presented a paper, followed by an academic article.
- Oct 2012: Started my part-time PhD

In addition, Kabeer (2015) has called for the use of Gender and Development theory (GAD) as a means of addressing inequalities, based on feminist researchers past experience of using GAD to analyse poverty. My previous experience in GAD theory has motivated me to use this theory as a further framework for the analysis of inequality and how VET can contribute to reducing inequality. I will be using the empowerment framework within GAD, and build on the empowerment and agency discourse, as well as structure and agency, to analyse the structural challenges to achieving equality from a GAD perspective.

The thesis therefore challenges the traditional economic framework used for analysing VET that has served to undermine all the other values of VET and its value for different groups. The research instead seeks to integrate GAD and intersectionality into VET within an HD analysis, linking this with political economy and the international debate on VET. This is to be done for the case of Palestine, within the context of its quasi-status, working under the conditions of emergency as a result of military occupation and state-building in preparation for full emancipation.

The context of the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) is unique for its combination of being under military occupation, having fragmented territories and being controlled by

various restrictive measures and regimes. The oPt is challenged by multi-layered restrictions on the movement of people and goods, and controls over the economy and its growth, which have restricted the economy and destroyed systems of livelihood, as various World Bank reports have highlighted (Niksic, Cali & Nasser-Eddin, 2014; Niksic, Nasser-Eddin & Almubaied, 2015). This has placed the population in a situation where they are in need of humanitarian support, especially certain vulnerable groups and communities as noted by UNOCHA (2014, 2015, 2016b). The result has been increased unemployment, poverty and marginalisation which, in turn, has shed light on VET as one of the tools that can be used to address vulnerabilities and that can contribute to human development (Niksic, Nasser-Eddin & Almubaied, 2015; ILO, 2015b; UNCTAD 2016). Moreover, analysing the needs of VET learners in this context would provide insights into the development needs for the future economy, education and training systems that could support the Palestinians in their state building efforts. The establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 1994 has placed the development of state building goals onto the agenda, yet the reality of the current system of highly constrained autonomy and of extensive development and humanitarian support needs exists as a major challenge for both the PA and any VET system.

The complexity of this context and the intersectionality of inequalities highlight the importance of applying inequality theories and approaches to the analysis of VET's role and contribution within such a context. Palestine therefore provides a case-study that is rich in examples of marginalisation and inequality within which to assess VET's role and contribution. This richness and complexity can be captured through the multiple lenses of the various theoretical frameworks I am using, bringing new insights to the debate about VET's contribution to HD and the reduction of inequality.

Thus far, different models have been used to articulate the role of VET in terms of addressing inequality in the oPt. These models presented by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have not been up-scaled, however. Despite support from the international community for VET in Palestine, achievements on the national level are still below anticipated levels and the sector is in need of reform (Hilal, 2013a, 2015a; Leney & Jweiles, 2014; Kuhail, 2015). Moreover, minimal research has been undertaken on the

value of VET in the oPt and on its contribution to human development. A small body of literature exists that highlights the challenges to VET but limits its analysis to the system only (Hashweh, 1996; Kuhail, 2009; Alzaroo, 2009). An even smaller body exists in respect to gender inequalities in access and in specialisation (Adwan, 2009; Abu-Nahleh, 1996; Hilal, 2009b). Some researchers have looked at student and teacher perceptions of Vocational Secondary Education, but have done so without considering the vulnerability element, such as gender, disability and poverty (Hamdan, 2002; Abu-Asbeh, 2005; Mattar, 2008). Meanwhile, other studies and international reports have pointed out the importance of VET for employment and economic development in the oPt by highlighting the need for reform and for a closer skills-economy match (ETF, 2016; World Bank, 2011a, 2012a, 2013b, 2016).

For these reasons, the research will identify the marginalised, assess structural challenges and enabling factors related to policies and practices, and provide an insight into related institutional, regional and national policies and measures, using the structural analysis of the GAD and the political economy. This is also driven by my motive to contribute to the reform of VET in Palestine and to make best use of available resources and best-practices to serve the marginalised VET learners, and has driven my motive to contribute to the global debate on VET's contribution to development and reducing inequalities.

Rationale - The Research Contribution

The research will address the knowledge gap in the oPt and with regard to VET world-wide, while simultaneously aiming to contribute to the global debate on VET. The structural analysis and the use of political economy analysis are the contribution of the research at the Palestinian level, as well as its illustration of the case-studies and best-practices that could enable their up-scaling. This contribution could be used to support the Palestinians' efforts in future state building.

The research will further contribute to the growing account of VET's contribution to HD within a Capability Approach (CA) framework, by adding yet further proof of VET's contribution to CA within an adverse context. It will also contribute to the VET capability list developed by Powell (2014), by adding the marginalisation dimension and linking it to structure and political economy.

Another key contribution that the research brings to the academic world is in integrating GAD and intersectionality within the account of VET's contribution to HD, as part of inequality theories and approaches, specifically by addressing inequalities in the context of marginalisation. GAD will be used as a theory for analysing marginalisation and inequalities, responding to Kabeer's (2015) call for scholars to learn from feminists' earlier contributions to poverty reduction based on gender theories. Intersectionality, developed by black feminists to analyse multiple layers of inequalities, will also complement my analysis of inequalities. This is a new perspective to analysing VET, but is in line with the global interest in reducing inequality, and contributes to linking various SDG in the international arena.

An important addition of my research would be in the holistic theoretical framework I am using to address the research question, as well as the links formed between the multiple lenses of the framework. My framework provides an overall understanding of VET's contribution to human development, and demonstrates the marginalised status of VET learners in this study, and others conducted by various researchers done in different settings around the world. As such, addressing human development in VET should be coupled with addressing marginalisation.

My research adopts a rigorous mixed methodology, using both qualitative and quantitative methods with triangulation. The methodology starts by listening to the voices of youth, the VET learners, beginning from their aspirations and tracking their achievements over time. Then, it consults with different stakeholders and policy level representatives, analysing systems, policies and measures. It further presents case-studies and best-practices that could be learned from and up-scaled. Another important element of my methodology is that it involves all learners within both the governmental and non-governmental VET sectors. This is important, as the international and national literature has identified a gap in terms of the formal available data, excluding the majority of marginalised VET learners.

Hence, the significance of the research is five-fold. First, it will contribute to the international debate on the importance of skills development and the role that VET can play to the human development agenda in general and within a context of marginalisation

specifically. Second, it brings the inequality analysis through GAD, complemented with intersectionality, to the analysis of VET as a tool for addressing marginalisation and inequalities. Third, through a political economy lens, it will contribute to constructing societal skills for Palestinian state building efforts. The fourth contribution will be in bridging the knowledge gap in the literature on VET in Palestine, particularly with respect to the contribution to HD, and to reducing different forms of inequalities. It will also bridge the knowledge gap internationally by adding inequality analysis, contributing to VET and HD, and providing a holistic theoretical framework consisting of the three lenses, bridging current knowledge gaps and presenting a new theoretical framework. Finally, it contributes through the rigorous methodology used, giving voice to the VET learners, and making policymakers accountable.

Although my work presents Palestine as a case study, it can be used within similar countries, including other fragile states, conflict countries, middle income countries, and to various countries from the South. Moreover, it provides value for VET internationally, since it addresses knowledge gaps in relation to VET and adds a new perspective for analysing VET world-wide.

Objective and Aims of the research

The main objective of the research would be to obtain a full understanding of VET contribution to advancing Human Development and reducing inequality, and the related process to such contribution. While the research aims are to:

- Explore the contribution of VET to learners' achievements and aspirations, building on existing accounts for the case of Palestine.
- Analyse marginalisation within the Palestinian context, understanding learners' attraction to VET, and identifying ways in which VET has increased their empowerment and reduced their inequality.
- Analyse structural challenges to VET learners' achievements and point out the policies and measures of the institutional, regional and national policymakers, linking it to political economy.

- Link the analyses of achievement of aspirations to achievement of functionings, and achievement of empowerment for various groups including the disempowered, with an analysis of the structural challenges and relevant policy gaps.
- Identify whether inequalities are reduced, perpetuated or reproduced, and hence unbundling the root causes, and unpacking how VET is contributing to HD and reducing inequalities.

Structure of the research

The research consists of nine chapters, Chapter One is the introduction, which sets the scene and introduces the research. Chapter Two presents the Palestinian case, by presenting background information on the oPt context, and the identified marginalisation in the oPt. The chapter also presents the VET system, as well as a literature review of current research and the central debates.

Chapter Three will present a literature review of the three lenses used within the theoretical framework, after briefly discussing the VET orthodoxy and the global VET and development, VET and inequality debates. The chapter presents the capability approach (CA) within Human Development (HD), with a focus on Capability Lists (CL) and aspiration. It then presents the GAD theory and the intersectionality approach as a main contributor to the inequality argument in the thesis. Furthermore, the chapter presents the political economy arguments and the link with skills formation. The theoretical framework is presented in the second part of the chapter with the analytical framework, research question and sub-questions and the list of definitions extracted from the literature review, presented in Box-2 at the end of the chapter.

Chapter Four presents the methodology. It discusses the methods of work and the positioning/epistemology, tools and data collection, data processing, sampling, validation and analysis, steps carried out, challenges and ethics, as well as reflection on the overall process.

Chapters Five to Eight present the findings, according to the aims of the research, sub-divided according to the four sub-questions, organised as follows:

- Chapter Five presents inequalities within a context of marginalisation. The chapter draws on the inequality literature, GAD and intersectionality, and links these ideas to the marginalised people identified in the context of Palestine to analyse who is accessing VET and why VET is attracting the marginalised.
- Chapter Six analyses VET contribution to Human Development through identifying capabilities and achievements of VET graduates with focus on marginalisation. This chapter builds its arguments on the CA to HD and further links to previous work on VET within HD.
- Chapter Seven explores agency, empowerment and achieved aspirations. The chapter capitalises on the empowerment framework within GAD, measures the empowerment achievement, linking it to marginalisation, and addresses agency and aspirations.
- Chapter Eight analyses policies and practices that are expanding HD and reducing inequalities. This chapter, therefore, investigates the VET policies, measures and approaches of VET institutes, identifying favourable conditions and policymaking processes that we can learn from, and how these serve to promote human rights, advance human development and reduce inequality. This chapter capitalises on political economy arguments and the GAD discussion of institutional structures.

The chapters presenting the findings of the research triangulate results from different sources, and link the empirical research with the literature and framework when relevant.

The ninth chapter presents the overall conclusions, reflecting on the overall findings and relating these to the international and national debates, while providing operational suggestions at the national and global level.

Annexes include tools, information sheet and consent forms, the people who participated in the research, general tables of survey findings presented in Excel based on analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), example of the work from the field to documented interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD), coding used of transcripts and quotes and photos of data storage, all presented on the attached CD.

Chapter 2. The Context: The Case of Palestine

The Overall oPt Context

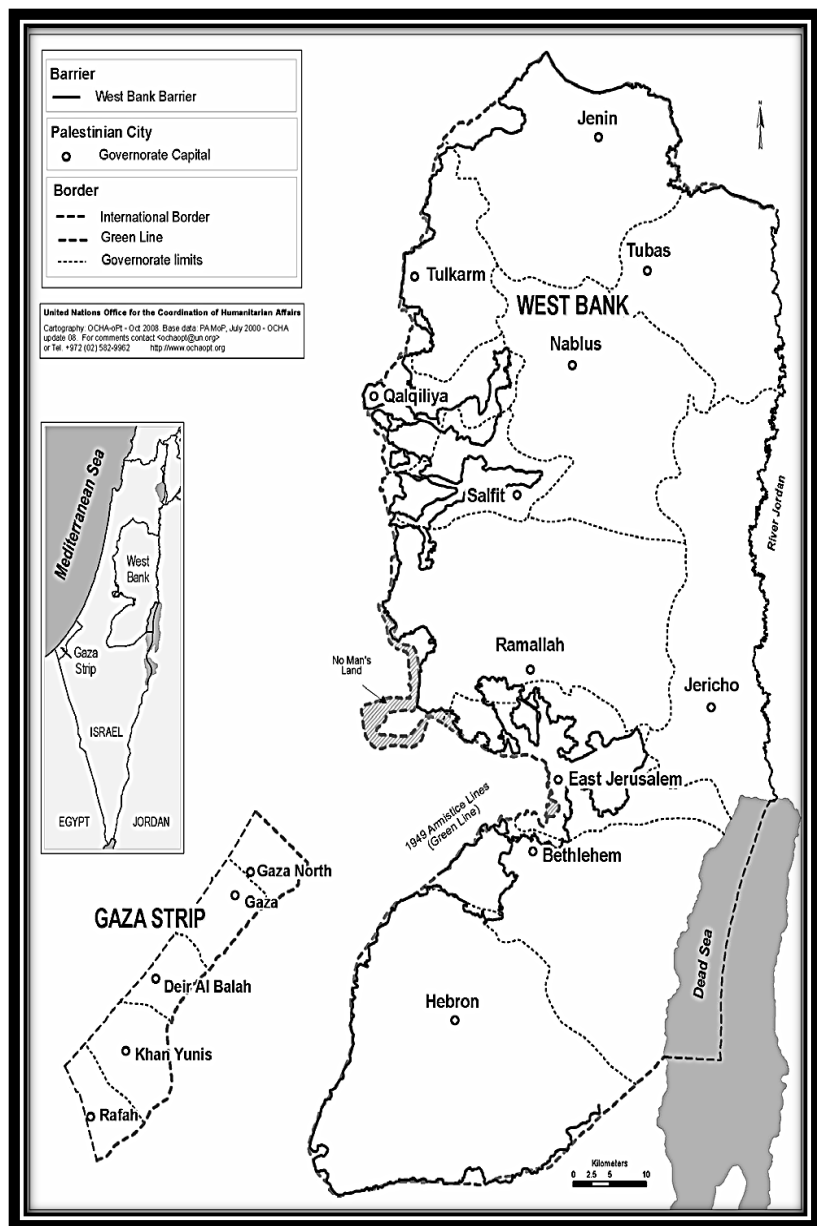
The Palestinian Territories have a unique status in being, on the one hand, under military occupation, while, on the other hand, preparing for state building. This status has resulted from a series of treaties with the Israelis since 1993 that provided a temporary agreement aiming at ending the occupation of the territories. These treaties, known as the Oslo Accords, handed over services such as health, education and social welfare to the Palestinians. The treaties allowed for the existence of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in governing Palestinians in the oPt. It also resulted in the division of the West Bank (WB) into different zones. The failure to end occupation and the on-going violations of human rights after more than 20 years has created a humanitarian crisis among the Palestinians and increased their vulnerability. The UNOCHA has long identified the Territories' status as one of "protracted protection crises" as repeatedly noted in its documents, including its 2017 annual Humanitarian Response Plan (2016b). In their 2016 annual report, UNOCHA (2017) have explained:

The humanitarian context of oPt is unique amongst today's humanitarian crises and remains directly tied to the impact of the Israeli occupation, now in its 50th year. The occupation denies Palestinians control over basic aspects of daily life, whether they live in the Gaza Strip or in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Their ability to move unimpeded within their own country, to exit and return, to develop large parts of their territory, build on their own land, access natural resources or develop their economy is largely determined by the Israeli military. (p.1)

The oPt consists of three different zones, the West Bank (WB), East Jerusalem (EJ) and Gaza, that are separated from each other³. Access of people and goods are restricted as the UNOCHA Map below indicates. The WB is further divided into zones A, B and C, where C (constituting 60% of the WB) is almost all under the control of the Israeli military, adding additional vulnerable groups in need of humanitarian protection.

³ The "occupied Palestine territories" (oPt) is the name that describes its realities before 1993, the existence of the PA, this was replaced in UN documents and in PA official documents in 2012 by the designation "The State of Palestine", I will use oPt in the research as it's "clear that occupation is a continued reality and statehood an aspiration" (Hilal & McGrath, 2016, p.88)

Palestinians in each area face different restrictions. For example, Gaza is under total land, air and sea siege and has an economy mostly dependent on humanitarian aid, following its destruction by the prolonged siege since 2007. The population in East Jerusalem, isolated from the remainder of the WB and Gaza, are facing daily restrictions to their existence, whether in the form of home demolition, confiscation of IDs or limitations on the existence of Palestinian institutes and economic establishments.



Map 1: The oPt overview map,
source UNOCHA

Meanwhile, those living in area C of the WB are facing various restrictions on the movement of goods and people, with limited access to their land and resources, subject to settlers' violence and facing destruction of their livelihood systems and demolition of their housing and economic structures. This research will reflect on the figures from UNOCHA and relate these to vulnerability and marginalisation (UNOCHA various resources, accessed on www.ochaopt.org).

Furthermore, the on-going expansion of Israeli settlements, in contravention of international humanitarian law, is further restricting the status of Palestinians in the WB including East Jerusalem, as the UN-Secretary General recently stated:

Current Israeli practices related to the presence and expansion of settlements [...] continue to have a profound impact on land and housing rights, the right to water and sanitation and freedom of movement, and result in restrictions on the right to education

Report by the UN Secretary-General, January 2016

In its annual report, the World Bank (2013a) has noted the negative impacts of the multi-layered system of restrictions not only on short term growth, but also on the competitiveness of the Palestinian economy over the longer term. Moreover, a World Bank report on area C has indicated that the expansion of settlements in the WB and zoning of area C (which is 60% of the land in the WB) have led to loss of economic potential and impeded growth. It estimated that granting Palestinians access to Area C would increase GDP by a third (Niksic, Cali & Nasser-Eddin, 2014). The World Bank has further stressed that occupation has led to a contraction of the economy, affecting the industrial and agriculture sectors and causing job losses in various sectors. The World Bank (2016) report has noted:

The Palestinian economic outlook is worrying: recovering slowly from the recession of 2014, the per capita income growth has almost stagnated and projected growth levels will not support an improvement in living standards (p.4)

It also noted that political instability and the long-lasting restrictions on movement, access and trade are the main impediments to economic growth in the Palestinian territories. This has reduced the production base of the Palestinians, pushed investments to be among the lowest in the world, and eroded private sector competitiveness. They highlighted the lack of progress in relieving constraints in Area C, and the inability of Palestinians to tap its economic potential.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2016) has noted the deformation of the economic structure and low productivity. It has argued that occupation imposes a heavy cost on the economy of the oPt, halving its size, UNCTAD stated:

[M]ilitary occupations typically involve the exploitation, impoverishment, marginalization and displacement of the occupied people, as well as the destruction of their assets and appropriation of their resources. Equally damaging are measures and policies by the occupying Power that undermine the capacity of occupied people to access and utilize their resources, move freely within their homelands and conduct normal trade, economic and social transactions with neighbours and trading partners. (pp.7-8)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2015b) report on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories, noted the effect of the economic deterioration on workers and their families, the closure of Gaza and the delay in implementing reconstruction plans and development for Gaza and its population. While it highlighted the importance of private sector development in economic development and state building, the report noted that the current initiatives for increasing investments and opening markets are challenged by the prevailing climate of restrictions and uncertainty.

The PA and its partners have a dual track approach that has been reflected in their various strategies since the founding of the Authority, including 2011-2013 and 2014-2016 national development plans. These entail state building and the end of military occupation; both have been endorsed by international donors. Although the international community is supporting the PA, the reduction of donor support, and the deterioration of the humanitarian status of the oPt through various context-related-shocks such as the war on Gaza (2007, 2009, 2014) and the second intifada (2000-2006), have added to the political division between the WB and Gaza and have burdened the PA with additional fiscal constraints (Hilal, 2013a). While the oPt as a whole is a low middle-income economy, the economy of Gaza is at lower category from that of the WB. This indicates the importance of the national and regional analysis the research undertakes.

In addition to the PA, the international communities who are supporting the state building efforts, the UNOCHA, the humanitarian organisations working on providing humanitarian needs, the non-governmental actors of various Christian, Islamic and secular NGOs are also providing services and support to the Palestinian community, some for over a century.

One of the important development and humanitarian actors in the oPt acting after the plight of the Palestinian People in 1948 has been the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).⁴ Palestinian refugees are considered the longest in history, and have continued for four generations. Currently there are over 5 million registered refugees in the WB, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, 40% of whom are in the oPt. Most refugees are situated in the refugee camps that UNRWA supervises. It provides services including basic education and vocational training (UNRWA, 2017). In the WB and Gaza UNRWA provides development and humanitarian support to its beneficiaries; the refugees who are considered to fall into the most vulnerable groups.

The above-referenced international reports and resources have clearly indicated the context in which marginalisation of the population, vulnerability of communities, and fragility of the economy occurs in the oPt. This research will address the effect and role of VET within this context. The coming section will detail the marginalisation of groups and communities, from which the definitions of the marginalised Palestinians in the oPt used in the study will be displayed.

The importance of the Palestinian case is not only that it holds various similarities with Southern countries in terms of the marginalisation of women and youth, but also that it is a free market economy that consumes rather than produces for its own market. It also shares similarities with other fragile countries where injustice, conflict and the rights' deficits are leading to further marginalisation of groups.

Marginalisation and Inequality in oPt

The identified marginalised are listed in Box-1 below and detailed thereafter in this section.

Box-1: The Marginalised Groups in oPt

The identified marginalised groups are: a) socially- marginalised groups, e.g., youth, women and people with disabilities, b) economically marginalised groups such as the poor, the unemployed and vulnerable workers and c) academic drop-outs and potential

⁴ UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees (UNRWA 2017, II)

drop-outs. Those categories are shared globally, while in the case of Palestine further groups can also be added who are d) marginalised by the context of the occupation. Furthermore, the context has its own effects on all the other marginalised groups.

These groups are detailed below and will be used as a variable of analysis throughout the thesis⁵.

The Economically Marginalised Groups

Unemployment in Palestine has reached 25.9%. Female unemployment is much higher than that of males, while youth unemployment is among the highest in the world and has been around 40% for over a decade (again, female youth unemployment is even higher than that of male youths). Unemployment among refugees is also higher than the national figures, according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) (2016); unemployment is also higher in Gaza than the WB.

The ILO report cited above has noted the aggravated economic status and the increased search for work in Israel and Israeli settlements by the Palestinian workers from the WB, as well as the vulnerable status of the more than half of them who lack permits. Such workers are risking their illegal status to earn income to sustain their families, especially with the high difference in salaries between Palestinian and Israeli markets.

In 2010, poverty rates in Palestine reached 25.7% among households according to consumption and 48.6% according to income. It was higher for female headed families, for large families, families with higher numbers of children and dependents, and for heads of households who are outside the labour force. It was highest in Gaza and among refugees (PCBS, 2011). Coping mechanisms have included pooling of resources, reducing expenditure and consumption, and relying on public assistance and borrowing. In recognising their priorities, individuals and families are forced to compromise, affecting mostly those with pre-existing vulnerabilities (Mushasha & Dear, 2010).

Various Palestinian studies have illustrated the poverty, inequality, vulnerability and marginalisation within the oPt. One of the most widely cited studies in this regard is the

⁵ Any reference to these groups does not imply any degrading or failing, but rather describing the marginalisation reality

Palestinian Participatory Poverty Assessment report by Jamil Hillal (2002), which noted that poverty in Palestine results from unemployment, low income, absence of a [working age] male in the household, illness, disability, old age, orphan-hood, large family size, restrictions on women's freedom to work, alcohol and drug addiction and low levels of education.

The Context-Related Marginalised Groups

The UNOCHA literature has further explained the context related vulnerabilities. According to their 2016 annual report, UNOCHA (2017) identified two million people in vulnerable groups in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, the vast majority of whom are “exposed to conflict and violence, displacement, and restricted access to livelihoods and essential services” (p.1). The report highlighted causalities, those affected by settlers' violence, and those in detention. The report also highlighted those affected by forced displacement. This includes remaining of 90,000 families from Gaza, unable to build their destroyed homes due to restricted access of materials through Israeli-controlled checkpoints and Palestinians forcibly displaced from East Jerusalem due to house demolition, which has been conducted at a rate of over 100 a year, reaching 190 demolished structures in 2016. UNOCHA has also emphasised that most Bedouin and herding communities across Area C are also at risk of forcible transfer due to the destruction of their infrastructure, restrictions of movement, attacks by settlers and plans by Israeli authorities for their re-allocation. The report has also noted the siege on Gaza, the 572 blockades and physical impediments the WB has, as well as the barrier, the 84 gates, and the seam zones. Added to denying access to Gaza and East Jerusalem except through a restricted permit regime, all these measures are affecting the life of the people.

Ex-detainees are also facing various political, social and economic vulnerabilities, with over 800,000 Palestinians detained since 1967 (Alawneh, 2013).

Children and youth in East Jerusalem are facing high vulnerability. UNOCHA (2011b) has noted the lack of classrooms in East Jerusalem under the full authority of the Israeli occupation, which has pushed 9,000 children out of school. This situation persisted in 2015, according to the Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) (2015), 43% of classrooms in East Jerusalem are inadequate, and drop-out rates are 26% at 11th grade

and 33% at 12th grade. Moreover, ACRI has reported that Palestinians living in East Jerusalem are facing increased poverty, which affects 75.4% of Palestinians and 83.9% of children. They have also noted that more than 100 Palestinians in East Jerusalem in 2015 had their residency status revoked, similar to 2014. In addition, child detention is very high, as UNICEF (2015) has reported the detention of 422 children by December 2015, including those from East Jerusalem.

FAO and MAS (2008) adds the factors related to the Israeli occupation aggravate vulnerability, indicating that closures, movement and access restrictions, and obstructing the Palestinian control of their natural and economic resources limit job prospects, adds to poverty, and depletes Palestinians' assets through the loss of land and belongings. They based their work on Darcy's (2004) work on vulnerability that identified two forms. One form relates to acute shocks, which, in the case of violent conflict, and in addition to the actual violence, often leads to mass displacement, loss of assets, and overall disruption of life and what facilitates it. The second form relates to a prolonged crisis, characterised by chronic food insecurity, high mortality and morbidity, disruption of education and health services, unsustainable survival strategies, and dependency on external assistance. Both forms exist within the Palestinian context.

These previous studies clearly indicate the context-related vulnerabilities, resulting in loss of assets, income, resources, and in certain cases food-insecurity and aid-dependency. Certain studies have noted the social and psychological impacts as well, and have also highlighted the internal challenges that aggravate vulnerability.

The Socially Marginalised Groups

The Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) (2014) has identified vulnerable groups as those who are deprived, in-danger, the poor and the weak. They defined the vulnerable groups they are serving as including: households in poverty, battered women, or women subjected to gender-based violence or households headed by women, children (drop-outs, orphans, juveniles), elderly, handicapped and ex-detainees.

A national study on violence (PCBS, 2012b) indicated that half of the population has been subjected directly to political, psychological or physical violence due to the

occupation, mostly male, and that youths are mostly subjected to violence at checkpoints and blockades. Women have been subjected to public sphere psychological violence. 37% of women were subjected to psychological, physical, sexual, social and economic violence within households, with higher rates in Gaza and in refugee camps compared to other groups. Unmarried male and female youths were also subjected to violence within households.

Gender studies and Palestinian feminists have highlighted the vulnerability of Palestinian women and girls in the patriarchal system, the violence of the military occupation and the resulting structural barriers. Taraki et al. (2006), meanwhile, have illustrated the experience of Palestinian women through the experience of Palestinian families in survival, resistance and mobility under occupation. Abdo-Zubi (2006) defined the forces of poverty influencing the Palestinian women, bringing out the role of the patriarchy in its internal and external forms, i.e. “Internally” expressed norms, traditions, practices and perceptions, and “externally” expressed political violence practiced by the Israeli occupation. She has charted their experience of the loss of spouses, social-psychological experience of dis-empowerment, impediments in access to basic services. She has also expressed violence practiced against women, and identified gaps in the structural appearance of women within the national data of work and poverty. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2008) documented the different violent experiences faced by girls in accessing the hundreds of physical impediments commuting to school or home and indicated how the military occupation has transformed gender relations, through militarising the space and violating human rights including the right to education. In another paper, Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Woodsum, Zu’bi and Busbridge (2014) noted the processes of displacement and the effects of attacks on the domestic sphere through house demolition, engender agency and produce creative resistance. Muhanna (2016) has clarified the effect of the Palestinian context on gender roles, since the political economy and power relations deprives both males and females from enacting their gender roles, illustrating how the gendered domestic-public division is reconfigured to serve the immediate needs of family survival and security.

Another study conducted by the World Bank (2010), in cooperation with Care International and Women Studies Institute at Birzeit University has illustrated the gender dimension of economic collapse, indicating that “the violence resulting from the occupation has led to loss of life, land, property, and free movement of people, and has fragmented social space, a key source of material and moral support especially for women” (p.13). The last Palestinian Human Development Report (PHDR) has noted that women and girls face deep-rooted discrimination at institutional, legal and social levels (Mushasha & Dear, 2010).

Various studies have indicated the marginalisation of youth, through their exclusion from the labour market as well as exclusion from public life. Indeed, the comparative retreat of their role has also been apparent during more than two decades of state building, which has marginalised the young in comparison to their prior active participation in public life in the struggles that preceded the state building era (Bailey & Murray, 2009).

Although the last PHDR has indicated that the human insecurity in Palestine is rising due to the different drivers within the Palestinian context, this can only be remedied through protection and empowerment. The PHDR has highlighted the poverty of disempowerment, indicating the importance of addressing women’s inequality and empowering youth (Mushasha & Dear, 2010).

This section has clarified the different vulnerabilities, all of which are aggravated by the external factors being the military occupation, while certain groups are facing additional internal factors being the social attitudes, prejudice and the patriarchal society, which though experienced globally, take specific national form.

VET in oPt

VET Providers

Various church-related and non-governmental actors have provided VET in Palestine since 1948. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) also started providing VET soon after. As hundreds of thousands of Palestinians became refugees, VET was provided as an additional humanitarian

assistance for skills development that could lead to employment and family support. For many Palestinians, VET is linked with support to refugees.

In 1994, the PA resumed their authority over education following the Oslo Accords. This responsibility entailed unifying the fragmented education systems between the WB, under Jordanian rule between 1948 and 1967, and following their systems, and the Gaza Strip, which had been under Egyptian rule during the same period. It also entailed rebuilding the schools and their infrastructure, curricula and teacher development, after their neglect during the period of Israeli control of education, 1967-1993.

Since taking on responsibility for education, the PA through its two main ministries, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), and the Ministry of Labour (MOL), has been responsible for governing and regulating the sector. In addition, the government is also running VET, with responsibilities for this divided between various ministries. MOEHE runs Vocational Education (VE), within the VET levels⁶. The vocational secondary schools (VSS) are part of the formal school system the MOEHE runs, which started in the 1960s under the Jordanian authorities in the WB and then spread to Gaza. The MOL, meanwhile, runs Vocational Training (VT) through its Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), which were started under the Israeli occupation of the WB to provide cheap labour to its settlements. Thus, the Palestinian MOL had to work hard in order to change the image of VTCs. Finally, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) has run its own VTCs as part of its rehabilitation of juveniles, children with disabilities, and for the economically and socially disadvantaged groups it serves. Meanwhile, there are other ministries that are engaged in running VET; such as the Ministry of Islamic Awqaf and Religious Affairs which is allowed to run education in Jerusalem, overseen by the MOEHE, and the Commission of Detainees, serving ex-political prisoners, although after a while they became semi-independent. These last two systems will be treated as semi-governmental systems in this thesis.

⁶ VET levels: Vocational Education and Training levels that corresponds to Limited workers, workers and vocational, being practiced at Vocational Secondary Schools (VSS) and Vocational Training Centres (VTC)

Private sector institutes have also found opportunities to provide VT for drop-outs and the unemployed. Previous studies have indicated that there are around 10,000 VET graduates annually from around 130 private and public institutes (Garesck et al., 2015, Hilal, 2013b). Additionally, other NGOs and Church-Related Organisations (CROs) started VET in the nineteenth century and have continued since then (e.g., Salesians and Young Women Christian Association (YWCA)) (Abu-Loghod &Hammad, 1997).⁷

The complexity of the history of VET reflects the complexity of the context, yet it is important to set out the VET provision in order to explain the different providers' target groups, policies and measures, which will be analysed later.

Inevitably, the existence of diversified social partners and VET providers with varying missions and histories adds value to the Palestinian case. Some of them are presenting models of best practice that we can learn from and this particularly adds to the significance of the Palestinian case. The international support and the donors' interest in the oPt, and in the VET sector, provides an opportunity to analyse different interventions and the roles that can attribute value to the on-going debates. This research seeks to highlight these models through case-studies, while looking at the challenges and opportunities for up-scaling. It will analyse the policies and strategies of the PA, the different ministries and their social partners. It will also review the different interventions and plans in order to identify the actions, inactions and different challenges. This will be done within the political economy theoretical framework, informed by international VET debates.

TVET National System and Governance

Once it assumed authority over the education system in 1994, the PA worked on developing a TVET strategy in a participatory way that could move the system forward, striving to meet the obligation of state building and the associated preparation of its human resources.

The preparation of the first TVET strategy began in 1995 involving various stakeholders, NGOs and private sector representatives. It was adopted in 1999, with an action plan and

⁷ The numbers of different types of institutions are presented in Table 4.1. The PA has adopted the Arabic Occupational Classification - a five-level framework. The study will limit itself to the first three levels.

implementation mechanism in 2003. The implementation mechanism and structure were not effective despite various efforts to activate it. The strategy was revised in 2010, calling for the prioritisation of high quality and relevant TVET (MOEHE & MOL, 2010). The overall objective of the National TVET Strategy is to create a knowledgeable, competent, motivated, entrepreneurial, adaptable, creative and innovative workforce. The proposed structure of the governing body was of a participatory body that engages the different TVET providers and private sector representatives led by the two governing ministries, MOEHE and MOL alternately. The body was activated between the years 2003-2004, during which the VET-NGOs organised themselves within an NGO-VET League. This and UNRWA were represented within the governing structures.

System development has been hampered by the wider context and a lack of the political will to move TVET forward and implement the agreed strategies. This has prevented significant progress, although recently (end of 2016/2017) renewed efforts have been exerted in this regard.

The lack of activity in respect to the formal TVET structure during the years 2004-2016 and the increased interest of donors in the sector has led to an informal coordination structure being established, which is expected to be adopted as part of the formal governance structure.

VET as a national priority was manifested in the National Development Plans (2011-2013) and (2014-2016). In both TVET was noted as one of the methods towards state-building and addressing youth unemployment as well as an aspect of social protection. Moreover, the National Strategy of Social Protection takes a rights-based approach focusing on prevention, empowerment and protection against poverty, marginalisation and exclusion, and it has also noted TVET as a means of supporting marginalised children, linking with Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA)'s efforts in this regard, as well as a tool for economically empowering ex-detainees.

Delivering VET and Education in an Emergency Situation

The multi-layered regime of restrictions to mobility in the WB has directly affected hundreds of thousands of students and tens of thousands of teachers commuting between

areas to access their schools, resulting in delays, absences and an increase in student and teacher frustration (MOEHE, 2009).

The classroom shortage in East Jerusalem illustrates how the education system is overwhelmed by context-related challenges. In addition to the lack of permits for building new schools, UNOCHA has documented six schools with pending demolition orders in East Jerusalem, and 18 schools with demolition orders in Area C (UNOCHA, 2011c). The inability to construct the necessary infrastructure limits educational access. Furthermore, permits for teachers are difficult to obtain and thousands of families have to pay for education in private schools to compensate for class shortages (UNOCHA, 2011a). All of these obstacles also lead to drop-outs, especially among girls.

Currently, the context-related vulnerable areas are facing humanitarian crises affecting the children's and youth's right to education and training. TVET institutes running in these areas are overwhelmed by the military-occupation measures and the policies and restrictions imposed on the population. The research will highlight the effects of this context on their policies and measures.

Literature Review of VET, Development and the Marginalised in the oPt

This section will illustrate the available literature of VET and development, and VET and marginalisation, and how it was developed, identifying the knowledge gap within both areas, that my research will cover.

Literature on VET and Development in the oPt:

This section reviews a range of literature regarding VET and development, starting from presenting VET's role and moving to explore its historical development and the challenges related to previous negligence and current governance and policies. Literature has also identified VET's importance in youth employment and private sector development, while calling for a better match to the market and reform of the system. While studies have focused on VET's contribution to economic development, none have highlighted the contribution of VET to HD. This will be focus of this research.

One of the earliest studies on Vocational Education and Training undertaken in Palestine was conducted by Massoudi and Al-Qiq (1990) who highlighted its historic development,

role and responsibilities. Mi'ari (1991), on the other hand, highlighted the challenges facing the system. From the onset of the establishment of the PA, various reports and documents were published on the external and internal challenges facing the Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector (Hashweh, 1996; Shakhsheer-Sabri, 1998; Swaelem, 1995; Abd-Elshafi, 1993).

Various papers delivered to national conferences on TVET have called for the reform of the TVET system through enhancing the quality of education and training through improved linkages to the labour market and institutional responsiveness, along with the adoption of new methods of teaching and training, infrastructure enhancement, and transformation of the governance structures (Kuhail, 2009; Jweiles, 2009; Hilal, 2009b). Further papers and studies have indicated the importance of reform in the legal framework, and in developing a financing, monitoring and accountability system, as well as in the policies and regulations (Hilal, 2013a; Leney & Jweiles, 2014; Kuhail, 2015).

Moreover, various papers and studies have highlighted the contribution of VET to youth employment in the oPt and the challenges faced by different groups in this regard. Alzaroo's (2009) paper highlighted the challenges facing the Vocational Secondary Education system, while El-Haddad (2009) investigated the link between VET and employment through UNRWA VTC graduates. Adwan (2009) analysed the status of VET graduates compared to the Palestinian population as a whole, based on the population census conducted in 2007, and found that VET graduates had greater employment success in the labour market. He concluded that VET provision should be enhanced. I have also presented a paper based on a PCBS national study indicating that VET graduates are more likely to be self-employed or employers than the population at large, as well higher participation rates among women and youth (Hilal, 2009b; PCBS, 2006). Higher employment and participation rates of VET graduates in different systems were also found through a survey conducted in the WB supported by the BTC (Hilal, 2011). Moreover, the ILO school to work transition survey showed that transition rates of young VET graduates were higher than those of youth in general (Sadeq & Elder 2014; Sadeq, 2016). Most of the studies, however, have also found that employment is affected

by changes made by the VET institutes; a relationship that will be analysed further in this research.

The World Bank (2012a, 2013b) has noted the importance of addressing the relevance of TVET to the labour market. Various studies on relevance and skills gaps have indicated the importance of partnerships with social partners, as well as of the engagement of social partners within the TVET structure, such as the BTC studies (Hilal, 2011, 2013b; Gabrsccket al., 2015). The issue of the relevance of TVET thus became a priority for the Ministry of Labour (MOL), Ministry of Education (MOE) and Ministry of Higher Education (MOEHE) (MOE, 2010; MOL, 2010; MOEHE &MOL, 2010). Moreover, the World Bank (2011a), in their economic monitoring report on Building the Palestinian state, highlighted the problem of out-dated programmes and a skills mismatch as well as the non-institutionalisation of the relationship with the labour market. In a regional report, the World Bank (2008) noted the mismatch between education and the labour market in the Arab world, including Palestine. The World Bank (2013b) has highlighted the importance of engagement of stakeholders in work force development through the strategic framework, system oversight and service delivery. The European Training Foundation (ETF) has also highlighted the issue, as has the ETF (2012, 2015, 2016) Torino Process reports; both resources have indicated the importance of the reform of TVET systems and programmes.

Literature on VET and Marginalisation in the oPt:

Many of the international and regional reports on Palestinian VET present their findings without noting how being under military occupation and existing within a quasi-state has a marginalising effect on VET, education and training, and indeed on the population as a whole. Specifically, reports do not reflect the effects of this marginalisation in their analysis and the presentation of their findings, although admitting this fact does not necessarily absolve the PA from its responsibility and accountability. Hence, this study combines an analysis of the external factors related to military occupation and the internal factors related to the responsibilities of the PA, thus representing an original attempt to link the two parallel systems.

Hamdan (2002) and Abu-Asbeh (2010) addressed the issue of the challenges faced on the vocational education side of VET by investigating the general education teachers' and students' perception of Vocational Secondary Education. The negative perception of VE was a key finding, regardless of gender, grade, specialisation or location. The studies identified the lack of knowledge about VE added to the lack of guidance and counselling. The former study was limited to the WB, while the latter covered WB and Gaza, of course, both studies were limited to vocational education, and did not test other variables related to vulnerability. Mattar (2008) investigated the attitude held by general education students towards VET in Gaza and found that most of the students had a negative attitude towards VET regardless of different variables. Despite the value of these studies, the link to vulnerability factors is missing, a gap this research covers.

Another gap in the literature concerning VET in Palestine is in respect to its contribution to reducing inequalities. Al-Romahi & Al-Da'ify (2005), Adwan (2009) and Abu-Nahleh (1996) noted the gender gap in enrolment and specialisations and Alzaroo (2009) confirmed this finding through a tracer study of VE graduates. Here my contribution to the field has been to add to these studies through analysis of the impact of VET on women's access to the labour market (Hilal 2009b; 2012; 2013b). I have highlighted the effect of VET on poverty reduction among women and youth (Hilal 2012). I have also explored skills gaps and needs assessment of VET graduates with clear gender-desegregation data and analysis (Hilal 2011, 2013b). El-Haddad (2009) has tackled UNRWA's VTC in Gaza, study was limited only to VET's contribution to development, analysing the system and institutional measures and challenges faced, but without reference to its impact in terms of reducing the marginalisation of refugees. A study by the World Bank on UNRWA's education system (Abdul-Hamid, Patrinos, Reyes, Kelcey & Varela, 2015) has presented the lessons learned from working under adversity, concentrating on resilience and development. Abu-Nahleh's (1996) study, meanwhile, tackled women's participation in VE and its socio-economic effects, using a gender lens to analyse policies, challenges and needs. Other papers and studies on marginalised localities (Gaza, East Jerusalem) and groups (youth, refugees, drop-outs, ex-prisoners, People with Disability (PWD)) have called for VET as an answer to their marginalisation (Hijazi & Masarweh, 2012; Bailey & Murray, 2009; Abu-Fasheh, 2013; Alawneh, 2013).

These studies and others, however, have not explored the contribution of VET to their marginalisation. My research will analyse VET's contribution to reducing inequalities and the impact of VET according to marginalisation factors.

The UNOCHA (2014) has been able to identify the vulnerable inequalities related to the context. UNOCHA was able to provide data not available through the national data system, which had tended to overlook such inequality. Nonetheless, studies have fallen short in identifying the contribution of VET to human security and within humanitarian status, although many of these studies were done in respect to education in general rather than VET per se. This research will therefore highlight the impact of VET on marginalised communities.

In previous work, I have illustrated how the oPt context has contributed to the marginalisation of youth and women by increasing their unemployment rates and reducing their labour market participation rates, both of which compare negatively to the rest of the world and the region. Yet I have illustrated that some of the NGOs' VET institutes were able to contribute to reducing poverty rates and increase access of women to the labour market (Hilal, 2012). I have used a rights-based analytical approach in raising the voice of youth (Hilal, 2011, 2013b), and tried to highlight the role of VET in addressing inequalities (Hilal, 2009b, 2012).

In conclusion, studies on VET in the oPt have called for reform of TVET, enhanced governance, efforts to improve the relevance of VET to the labour market, and updated VET institutes. Most studies have linked VET to economic development, and sometimes to social development. Yet the contribution of VET to human development is non-existent, while the link to inequalities within a context of marginalisation is weak. This research will respond to these gaps. Moreover, the analysis of the contribution of VET to context-related vulnerabilities has been lacking, hence this study will also address in parallel to the above, VET's contribution to state building and to humanitarian efforts. Overall, this research is therefore an original addition to the Palestinian literature on VET in Palestine, covering the identified gaps and adding new theoretical frameworks for analysis.

Chapter 3. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter will start by introducing the scholarly debate on VET, with focus on its contribution to development and inequalities, indicating the gaps in current research. VET within the Human Capital Orthodoxy will then be presented. Thereafter, the three key strands in the literature upon which the theoretical framework of this thesis is based will be identified, namely skills formation in Political Economy theory (PE), Capability Approach (CA) within Human Development, and Gender and Development (GAD) theory and intersectionality in the context of inequality theories. VET will be explored in the context of each of these strands of prior research, again identifying gaps in current knowledge. The chapter will conclude by outlining the theoretical framework of the research, along with the research questions and definitions used in the research.

VET, Development and Inequality in Global Debate

The Global Debate on VET and Development

According to the Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training (NORRAG) policy paper (NN 38), vocational training and skills development (VTSD) was a key sub-sector during the sixties and early seventies, it became less popular during the eighties, before returning to the international agenda in the new millennium. The paper noted the drive behind rising interest and the importance of the state measures and resources. The paper stated; “The belief that skill formation enhances productivity and sustains competitiveness in the global economy has been a strong motive, the rhetoric about the knowledge economy has further reinforced this trend”. It further noted the government concern about drop-outs, youth unemployment and poverty, and the ability of VTSD to address these issues. The policy paper expressed, “the conviction that VTSD is a powerful instrument for creating employment opportunities and pro-poor economic growth provided it is complemented by active labour market policies and business promotion measures. The state needs to have a vision of its own technological, agricultural and industrial development and of how the education and training system relates to this vision and to be backed financially”. (NORRAG, n.d.).

Despite the continuing underestimation of VET within the world community (King, 2012), McGrath (2012c) has noted the increased emphasis on education, skills,

employment policies in reports, where in 2012 two world reports concerning VET were prepared at the time being the UNESCO World Report on TVET (UNESCO, 2012), and the 2012 GMR (UNESCO, 2013). He further revealed the gap between the rise in policy and programmatic interest in VET's role in development, and the academic debate, especially in the South. This led him to call for closing the gap and new theories that could place VET within the development agenda, as well as., developing research agenda to overcome such gap.

With regard to the role of VET, a clear shift was witnessed in the years to 2015. This has been linked to the shift in the international development agenda from economic development to human development and the contribution of various scholars on VET and human development. McGrath (2012c) has argued that one of the most important contributions of the background report for the UNESCO world congress is the use of three lenses for the policy review of VET: i.e. its economic, equity and transformative roles. He also noted that this report locks itself into the liberal tradition of educational philosophy by understanding VET as contributing to the wider vocation of becoming more human.

The UNESCO (2012) Third International Congress on TVET, in Shanghai, agreed a vision of “transformative TVET” and called for a better visibility and support for TVET as an integral part of the post-2015 international education and sustainable development agendas’. Accordingly, the UNESCO (2015a) Recommendation Concerning TVET has indicated the role of TVET as going beyond the productivist agenda, stating:

TVET contributes to sustainable development by empowering individuals, organizations, enterprises and communities and fostering employment, decent work and lifelong learning so as to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and competitiveness, social equity and environmental sustainability. (p.2)

This vision introduces the shift towards a human development agenda, concerned with individuals as well as organisations and society, together with a clear emphasis on social equity.

The SDGs have managed to elevate TVET on the global agenda through target 4.3 stating:

Target 4.3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

This target measures participation, while targets 4.4 to 4.6 measure outcome and inclusiveness. The 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) presented the challenges with such measures, however, since in many places data is collected for schools only. Whilst vocational schools under the MOE would be included in the Palestinian case, the range of other institutions would be excluded. Moreover, outcomes are often measured in terms of the skills acquired, without any clear link to the TVET vision or the SDG vision. This means that there is a gap in the ability to monitor progress towards achievement of the goal, the target and the vision.

Moreover, the SDG4 call for “quality” still lacks clarity in terms of the meaning of quality skills and the ways of measuring these. McGrath and Powell (2016) have highlighted that “quality” TVET is not just about attaining employable skills or employment, but employment that sits within an overall view of the learners’ vision and within a political economy framework.

On the other hand, and within the UNESCO 2012 Shanghai vision of “transformatory” TVET, the UNESCO (2016b) Global TVET Strategy for 2016-2020 aimed to link TVET to the SDGs:

The Strategy aims to support the efforts of Member States to enhance the relevance of their TVET systems and to equip all youths and adults with the skills required for employment, decent work, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning, and to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a whole (p.2)

Within an agenda that sits on the three pillars of fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship, equity and gender equality, and the transition into green economies and sustainable societies, the TVET strategy sees TVET as making a contribution to SDGs in terms of inclusive employment, gender equality, inequality and poverty (Goals 8, 5, 10 and 1). This kind of vision would require the GMR to extend its measurement to include these goals and relevant targets, linking these assessments with VET and, at the same time, linking VET with all the SDG indicators.

VET and Inequality in Global Debate

The UNESCO (2010) Global Monitoring Report has evidenced inequalities, exclusion and lack of educational opportunities due to various factors. It looked at the mutually reinforcing interactions between poverty, gender, ethnicity, geographic location, disability, race, language and other factors that create cycles of disadvantage in education. In addition, it looked at the informal discriminations embedded in political, social and economic processes, and defined marginalisation as a product of institutionalised disadvantage and of policies and processes that perpetuate this disadvantage. The GMRs have highlighted the power of education in transforming lives, and have called for the Education for All agenda to overcome marginalisation, developing measuring tools and anti-marginalisation strategies that enable children to enjoy their right to education.

The GMR has indicated that developing skills among youth can play a role in combating marginalisation, it has demonstrated through successful models that long-term planning of skills development can play a critical role in creating employment and addressing marginalisation, furthermore, it has called on countries to integrate skills development into their national strategies to combat poverty.

Various studies, however, have indicated that educational reforms have failed to address marginalisation through VET. According to King and Palmer (2006), it has mainly been left to NGOs to tackle this issue. Studies by Cheng (2010) in Cambodia and Wallenborn (2009) in Tajikistan have noted that NGOs were more successful in addressing the needs of the poor and the marginalised, whilst King and Palmer (2010) have noted the challenges of up-scaling best-practices to national levels. Previously, I have presented the role of VET in Palestine based on analysing the contributions to gender equality and poverty reduction in the oPt made by two VET institutes (Hilal, 2012).

The global EFA meeting in 2014 and the Muscat Agreement have highlighted the importance of education in addressing inequality, reflected in the UNESCO (2015a) Recommendation Concerning TVET;

Member States should give attention to learners with disabilities, indigenous people, nomadic populations, ethnic minority groups, socially-excluded groups, migrants,

refugees, stateless people and populations affected by conflict or disaster, as well as to unemployed people and vulnerable workers. (p.5)

This is a bold commitment, yet the practical measurement of its achievements is insufficient. Although the SDG is calling for “equitable” and “inclusive” education, the measurement of target 4.5 shows no sign of adequately addressing TVET, a problem apparent in the treatment by the 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) (UNESCO, 2016a).

This research, therefore, is intended to add value to the global agenda on TVET by providing empirical evidence and methods to measure VET’s contribution to human development and the reduction of inequality. To begin this task, however, we will focus first on understanding traditional theories of VET.

VET within Political-Economy

Background: The Human Capital Orthodoxy

The classical political economy presented in Adam Smith’s “*Wealth of Nations*” (1776) treated labour as a homogenous category, without identifying difference in skills or resources (Smith, 1976). Human Capital Theory (HCT), developed in the 1960s, rejected the classical argument and highlighted the need for a broader concept of capital for the post-industrial societies to address the economic changes and the need for high skills, a concept that included upgrading the skills of workers through systematic investment in education and training. HCT, therefore, called for investment in human resources for all and highlighted the need for widespread know-how beyond the elitist and the managerial or technical employees to include workers of all levels, so as to meet the new economic challenge of rapid development, increased technology and globalisation. The theory called for increased investment in education and training (Becker, 1964).

The drawback of HCT is that it limits the potential for increases in economic productivity and economic growth, as well as of international investment, to mainly capacity building and self-investment of workers. The mechanical linkage between the upgrading of skills to enhanced capacity, enhanced employability, and ultimately productivity and earnings is seen as overly simplistic (Anderson, 2008; McGrath, 2012c). This has, in turn, served

to limit the government's role to investing in general education and training over involvement in national economic policies.

Anderson (2008) criticised HCT for seeing the role of VET purely in terms of productivism,⁸ which he sees as emblematic of how assumptions about training-for-growth and skills-for-work are reproduced systematically. These assumptions are not in line with human development approaches and limit the benefit and role of VET to the economic arena, implicating it “in the allied process of neo-liberalization and its global, negative-sum game of national economic competitiveness” (p.124).

The recent questioning of market-driven policies has highlighted the importance of looking for new theories and approaches within which VET might be better situated. Examples of critiques of the market-driven orthodoxy include the work of the economist Atkinson (2015), who has highlighted the problem of increasing inequalities within nations, between nations and between the global north and south as a result of market policies, globalisation, referring to this and its effects on workers and populations as the “economics of inequality”.

Within the same context, Standing, an ex-ILO official, (2011) has highlighted the emergence of a new class that he calls the “precariat” as a result of the neo-liberal model of “growth and development depended on market competitiveness’ and its resulting labour market approach to flexibility, transforming the instability risks onto workers and their families. According to Standing; the precariat is a “Class in the Making” (p.7): people who lack labour-related security, and varying control over aspects of work and labour including skills development.

These critiques suggest that the basis for HCT is starting to lose its validity and that there is therefore a need for new theories and approaches to VET. Moreover, HCT Theory is related to the achievements of individuals without addressing their characteristics such as

⁸ Productivism differ from productivity, which in economic terms refers to the quantity of output produced per unit of input (e.g. labour hours); but productivity can also refer to the creation of something new or valuable for non-economic reasons. Freed from any associations to productivism, productivity can promote individual autonomy and well-being as it “stands opposed to compulsiveness and to dependency, not only in work but in other areas, including personal life” (Giddens, 1994, p.180, cited in Anderson, 2008).

gender, race and ethnicity and without looking into different countries political-economies, which confirms the need to investigate beyond the orthodoxy.

Skills' Formation Analysis within Political-Economy Theories beyond the Classical Theories

The human capital orthodoxy has also been challenged by new political economy theories of skills formation that are based on economic sociology and the new institutionalism (Brown &Lauder, 1991, 1996; Green, 1997; Lauder, Brown, Stuart-Wells & Halsey, 1997; Brown, 1999; Brown, Green &Lauder, 2001). Brown, Green and Lauder (2001) argue that skills acquisition and utilisation are social acts that represent more than the sum of individual action. Rather, they present a social capacity model that represents a holistic approach sketching the main ingredients of a national agenda for high skill societies that can provide economic competitiveness, social justice, human freedom and security in post-industrial societies. The model depends on various conditions that provide the institutional foundation and is based on relationships of trust that are rooted in a historical context and that are affected by the social and political conditions of nations.

Specifically, they contend that the nature of skills and their relationship to productivity is changing. They illustrate that the high-end skills needed by the labour market are much more complicated than is suggested by the HCT. The requirement for entrepreneurship, the acquisition of social skills and facilitation of innovation and creativity would require much more than just technical skills. Acquisition of these high-end skills requires “social transformation”, and what they call a “High Skill Society”. This approach suggests increasing the role of the social partners and the government in both the demand and supply side of skills upgrading. In this case, political will and government responsibility is essential in terms of facilitating communication, and in coordination and organisational and institutional set-up. Such an approach will enhance the process of upgrading, utilising and spreading skills; it can also promote life-long learning. In addition to the above approach, they present a different vision for national states under globalisation, calling for “smart governments” to facilitate “smart economies”. They based their argument on a detailed study of skills formation strategies in the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan,

South Korea and the United States, that indicated different ways of addressing skills formation reflecting the historic, cultural, social, political and economic conditions in each country, such as social partnerships based on labour law as in Germany or industrial policies as in Japan, Korea and Singapore.

Feeding into the above argument, the various authors contributing to Hall and Soskice's (2001) edited volume "*Varieties of Capitalism*" show how the institutions and educational and training set-ups follow the economic systems of different northern countries. Differentiating between free market countries (such as the United States and the United Kingdom) and controlled market ones (such as Germany and France); they identify the different reform policies adopted by the different systems, revealing that the success of employment policies is related to the political choices of a nation. They conclude that a market-driven approach to VET will not lead to the necessary improvements, in contrast to policies, systems and schemes based on the political economic system, which encourage cooperation with social organisations, facilitate national and regional VET development schemes, and provide support and protection policies for graduates. Underpinning their approach is the assumption that developing state and institute's schemes, systems and policies helps to engage state, social organisations and regional institutes both in developing VET and in providing subsequent opportunities for its learners.

The narrowness of the notion of skills has also been pointed out by various scholars. Allais (2012) argued that capitalism and neo-liberal policies affect our understanding of what constitutes skills and of the VET system as a whole. Moreover, she argues that the notion of "skills" traps vocational education in the narrow urgent needs of employers limits vocational education. Instead, she called for "locating vocational education policy in broader social policy—better regulated labour markets, job security, more egalitarian social welfare, and an expanded vision of citizenship". (p. 633)

The work of McGrath and others in South Africa has contributed to the link between VET and society of skills, where they argued that any reform of the TVET system should be linked with political economy through various policies and cooperation schemes

(McGrath, 2004; Akoojee, 2005, 2010, 2012; McGrath et al., 2006; Kraak, Lauder, Brown & Ashton, 2006; Kraak 2009; McGrath & Akoojee, 2007a, 2007b, 2009).

Based on the above debates, one could argue that neo-liberal policies, and the open market approach, weaken economic and social policies and the state's role. Hence, negatively impacts the outcomes and value of VET as well as education, employment and social policies as a whole. Thus, some educators might de-value VET within such a context, resulting in the voice of youth and the marginalised and their need for employable skills for full economic and social participation being side-lined.

Hence, Political-Economy (PE) theories address the overall political and economic policies and structures, which is important in my analysis, and which are used in the thesis to analyse the institutional measures and national policies in respect to VET. Yet these theories fall short in representing learners' voices and aspirations. Hence, I will couple this approach with other approaches and theories that enable me to start from the VET learners themselves, and move through gender theories for inequality analysis in order to analyse how VET contributes to human development and reducing inequality.

VET within Human Development- the Capability Approach

In his work “a policy in need of a theory”, McGrath (2012c, p.630) has called for the importance of building a “human-centred development account of VET”. McGrath has showed how the orthodoxy of VET sits well within the productivism paradigm, linking VET to productivity and economic growth, as well as employment, without consideration of the human element. Thus, he highlighted the importance of considering the human development and capabilities approach in any future VET research.

Capabilities and Functionings

Unlike the productivist approach and traditional economic approaches to measuring development, which are concerned with national economic parameters and indicators, the human development approach is concerned with well-being of the people and their freedom, as noted by Sen (2000, p.17)

“human development” is an illuminating concept that serves to integrate a variety of concerns about the lives of people and their well-being and freedom, (D1)⁹

In his contribution to Human Development, Sen has been concerned about the capabilities of human beings to achieve their well-being and basic human freedoms. In particular, in his definition of capabilities and functionings, Sen (1992) refers to a person’s or group’s potential to promote or achieve valuable functionings.

It represents the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve. Capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person’s freedom to lead one type of life or another (...) to choose from possible livings (p.40). (D2)

Sen has also emphasized the notion of “freedom” and its link to “opportunities” within CA, freedom concerns “the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value” (p.31).

In her work on social justice, Nussbaum (2003, 2011) argues that capabilities can go beyond opportunities to also represent processes for change. She argues for capabilities based on entitlements and rights that would lead to equality, with human dignity at their core, i.e., being treated as a dignified human being, having self-respect and not being discriminated against for any reason including religion, gender, race, physical handicaps and age. Furthermore, Nussbaum (2000) has argued that unequal human capabilities are attributed to unequal social and political circumstances. In this regard, Robeyns (2003) has also noted that the inequalities in achieved functionings reflect inequalities in capabilities, in turn reflecting social set-ups and obstacles. Both scholars have indicated the importance of highlighting gender inequality within a capabilities approach. Robeyns has further noted that such analyses should extend to resources that cause gender inequalities in capabilities and functionings. Resources are thought of within the capability approach as the means to achieve people’s capabilities and functionings.

Alkire (2005) has noted that the capability approach constitutes well-being, agency achievements and freedoms. Furthermore, she has noted that capabilities related to well-being could be basic or complex in the form of self-esteem, or related to agency, in

⁹ In the literature review part of the chapter (D#) will appear at the end of certain paragraphs, this refers to the source from which definitions for the research were drawn, as listed in the theoretical framework section Box-2 at the end of this chapter.

pursuing goals that people value, and that capabilities are functionings and freedoms to achievements. Following the arguments of Nussbaum, Robeyns and Alkire, the notion of capabilities can be extended to include opportunities, processes and agency, in addition to functionings and freedoms to achievement.

Capability List

Sen considers the choice of people to the set of capabilities they value is at the heart of human development, and that people should value and have reason to value these capabilities. Sen (2000) insists on public reasoning for these capabilities and functionings to achieve human well-being. He has further argued that it is important that “people evaluate explicitly and critically what they want” (p.21). Sen (2004) has mentioned how capabilities should “respond to public reasoning and to the formation of social values” (p.78), and that supporting the public debate about the choice of people’s capabilities is one of the main contributions of the human development approach.

Nussbaum has developed the capability approach to social justice by moving beyond the comparative use of capabilities only to the construction of a “normative political proposal that is a partial theory of justice” (Nussbaum, 2000, p.223) (D3).

Nussbaum (1988, 2000, 2003) has suggested endorsing a list of valuable capabilities in order to apply the capability approach to social justice and gender inequality. She defends the universality of her list, albeit with a need for some adaptation in different contexts. Robeyns (2003) has also developed a capability list based on gender equality elements. Sen (2004), however, argued that lists should not be fixed globally and have to take into consideration “different social values”, hence varying with time, conditions and the purpose of the capability list.

In education, Walker (2008) has developed a list for higher education tested in South Africa, which Powell (2014) adapted for VET college students, also in South Africa. I will be adapting this in my work.

Aspiration

Aspiration is central to my work. I consider aspiration of VET learners and graduates as a starting point to test the achieved and valued functionings of VET learners, thus allowing

self-diagnosis and raising their own voices within the debate. In this I borrow Powell's (2012) notion of the "capability to aspire", which she develops from Appadurai's (2004) notion of the "capacity to aspire" and Leßmann's (2011) "capability to choose":

The term draws on Leßmann (2011) and Appadurai's (2004) joint concern with human agency in selecting from available opportunities and on Appadurai's notion of the ability to conceive of and then create an imagined and hoped-for future which contains an array of opportunities currently or seemingly not available. (p.11) (D4)

Aspirations are related to hopes, preferences and choices, they are linked to cultural and social notions, influenced by social context and formed through interactions with others (Powell, 2012, Conradie & Robeyns, 2013). Indeed, Appadurai (2004) has argued that aspirations are themselves a resource for change, in that the "capacity to aspire" could provide the poor with the "resources required to contest and alter the conditions of their own poverty" (p.69). He also emphasises the importance of the "cultural map" in which aspiration is located, and called for the need to find ways to understand the link between these aspirations and the scenarios, contexts and norms among the poor (p.83).

Finally, in her discussion of the link between aspirations and capability lists, Nussbaum (2016, p.1) noted that in so far as a capability list is based on social justice entitlements, then the list is itself aspirational, as it would create a space for people to aspire.

VET and Human Development

The previous work on VET and Human development shaped by many scholars, including McGrath and Powell, has advocated for the extension of VET's role beyond productivism, towards explaining capability, functionings and aspirations, and their operationalising process within VET (Anderson, 2008; McGrath, 2012a, 2012c; Powell 2012, 2014; Powell & McGrath, 2014; McGrath & Powell 2015a, 2015b, 2016; López-Fogués, 2014, 2016).

In her reflection on the South African VET system, Powell (2012, 2014) has indicated the importance of using the capability approach as a normative tool of evaluation instead of the orthodox methods of evaluating VET which do not respond to learners and human development. She emphasised the importance of the capability approach's distinction between capabilities (opportunities) and functionings (doing), emphasising that the

distinction is important to identify inequality of opportunity and hence social injustice. Powell developed a capability list in her PhD work (2014, p.206) that I will examine in the Palestinian context, building on the inequality and gender elements, as presented in Box-3 in chapter six.

DeJaeghere (2016) in her longitudinal study of girls in technical and vocational school in Tanzania, drawing on the CA and aspirations, has noted “how aspirations and agency are socially embedded and relational”, indicating that agency can occur despite gendered constraints to aspirations.

López-Fogués (2016), meanwhile, has examined VET in human development in Spain after the global financial crisis. She developed a theoretical framework to assess VET learners’ capabilities and functionings within a social justice lens and, linking individuals to social structures, she argued that a deeper analysis of power structures is important to make educational meaningful.

Critiques of CA

There have been various critiques of CA in the context of HD, questioning its adequacy in general and its relevance for specific marginalised groups, while other scholars have noted the need to marry the approach to other theories and approaches.

Gasper (2002), for example, has argued that although CA is an advance on welfare and economic approaches to development, it remains incomplete, neglecting the being and the needs. In addition, he points out that it emerged as a dialogue between economics and philosophy, but did not engage with other theoretical approaches such as sociology and anthropology. Gasper draws on the work of other scholars to emphasise the importance of examining the nature of the social institutions within which capabilities and functionings can be realised. Bok (2010, p.176) has argued that “raising aspirations” for students from disadvantaged status is inadequate on its own for reaching higher education, as it is “inadequate for describing the needs of students in disadvantaged contexts”. Alkire (2005), meanwhile, points out to the need to include other elements within the capability approach, such as equality, justice and women’s agency, and that these should be

developed within the space of capability as ends rather than means, so as to operationalise the CA.

Complementing CA

Since this research is investigating equality and justice, it is necessary to turn to those gender theories that have long worked on gender inequalities in power and agency in relation to institutions and socioeconomic processes, as a means of complementing the understanding of the Human Development and Capability Approach (HDCA). In this regard, the following sections focus particularly on Gender and Development (GAD) and intersectionality approach.

VET within Gender and Development Analysis

CA sets the basis for human development and inequalities, yet it needs to be complemented with the institutional and structural elements shaping and affecting the individual's capabilities and choices, and producing or perpetuating inequalities. Hence, the discussion now turns to gender theories that will contribute additional elements to CA and inequality. This discussion will also link with political economy understandings of structures, institutions, policies and overall socio-economic conditions. It will summarise the epistemology of gender theories with a focus on GAD theory, and present the concepts and frameworks that are central to this research.

The capability approach to human development has come under attack from many feminist scholars. As articulated by Hill (2003), it “does not analyse the role of institutionalized power in causing or perpetuating inequalities in individual opportunities to achieve” (p.117). Feminist theorists have considered power relations to be at the core of analysis, anticipating that developing power within institutions, through strengthening the internal power of the marginalised will become an important resource and functioning for achieving empowerment and change (Kabeer, 1994,1999; Moser, 1991,1993; Mayoux, 2000,2006).

Kabeer (2015) has highlighted the importance of the use of gender theory to understand and analyse different inequalities:

At this juncture, when development policymakers and planners are turning more systematic attention to inequalities of various kinds, feminists in development have much to bring to the table. We have decades of experience in analysing class inequalities through the lens of gender analysis to reveal the social and political aspects of phenomena that first appear to be purely economic in nature (p.190).

Moreover, many feminist activists have criticised political economy approaches (Griffin, 2007; Peterson, 2005; Walby, 2007, 2009, 2011) on the basis that most of the analysis of globalisation and the political economy of nations has focused on capital, states and classes, somewhat neglecting other inequalities including gender, and considering these as outcomes rather than causes of these processes. Walby has further argued that when gender is more integrated into social theory, it should make a difference to the analysis of globalisation and inequalities, since changes in gender relations may be causes as well as outcomes of other social processes. She emphasised the need to reassess the gendering of regimes of inequality and of the major institutional domains, in order to investigate these processes. Various feminist economists' critiques of structures of inequalities can be found in the recent literature, indicating the importance of engendering structural and political economy discourse (Ferber & Nelson, 1993; Folbre, 1994; Himmelweit, 1995; Akram-Lodhi, 1996; Gideon, 1999; Power, 2004).

This critique highlights the importance of integrating inequality theories, such as gender theories, within PE theories in order to arrive at a full analysis of inequality and social justice. The following sub-sections therefore explore gender theories and the empowerment framework for addressing inequalities, followed by intersectionality as means of analysing inequalities. Finally, the use of gender theories to analyse the structures feeding into PE is also presented.

Gender Theories

Feminist theories of development started from Women in Development (WID) during the 1970s, which was concerned with putting more emphasis on women in development policy and practice, as well as the integration of women within the development process. Gender and Development (GAD) theory developed during the 1980s, shifted the focus from women to gender relations and power relations. Various feminist approaches and frameworks look at the class and race determinants of gender, and address the practical

and strategic needs for women within an empowerment framework, analysing the gender division of labour and work, and access to control over resources, and looking at the strategic interests and participation of men and women as agents of change in development. GAD investigates women's possessions and class position, in addition to the patriarchal structures and ideas that define and maintain women's subordination (Parpart, Connelly & Barriteau, 2000).

The early research was done by Boserup (1970), an economist analysing women in national statistics, who highlighted the productive role for women that was overlooked in economy, and issued a call for change that has been picked up by WID and started the move towards GAD. The critiques of the WID approach as being welfare and anti-poverty oriented (Buvinic, 1983), and the failure to put WID into practice (Maguire, 1984) also contributed to the shift towards GAD, while the addition by Moser (1989) of the concepts of efficiency and empowerment also contributed to the shift. The international agenda for development, the UN's Women Decade and the rise of various feminist accounts and the contribution of many practitioners has also contributed to the move.

GAD theory has moved the discourse and analysis away from the WID theory concerned with "individual attitudes to the larger economic, political and interpersonal power that men exercise over women" (Kabeer, 1994, p.38). Hence, GAD is concerned with power relations of gender and gender politics in the policy domain. GAD is also concerned with addressing the systematic nature of gender inequality and its connections to other inequalities.

Different feminist theorists have shed light on the marginalisation of women within development theories and concepts that have emphasised economic production as the route to development. Specifically, in so far as the focus in terms of development tends to be on formal economic activities, this tends to devalue and underrepresent women's contributions. In addition, women's role in reproductive work and their contribution in the informal economy are neglected.

GAD has made use of various feminist frameworks, with political economist and structuralist theorists stressing the impact of the international economic system as a constraint to economic growth in the South. The neoclassical school identifying the dominant constraint as being internal, rather than external, factors. Black, post-modernist and indigenous, or Third World, feminists showing how women in the South use indigenous institutions and practices as part of their survival strategies. While, socialist-feminist theories contributing to the assessment of the exploitation of women's labour in factories and export-processing zones (e.g., by noting the gender pay gap and the effect on status and wages of the "feminisation" of certain occupations. Feminist development critiques insist that a gender perspective be built into all development issues, seeing women's productive and reproductive work as the link between human and economic development. The different contributions of women feminists therefore combined to develop the GAD theory and its related approaches (Parpart, Connelly & Barriteau, 2000).

GAD theorists have distinguished between women's "practical gender needs" and their "strategic gender interests" (Molyneux, 1985; Moser, 1989; Kabeer, 1994). Practical gender needs are concerned with women's daily needs in caring for themselves and their children, while strategic gender interests are concerned with changing gender relations and challenging women's inequality. GAD highlighted the importance of analysing access to and control over resources, women's condition and position, their level of participation in development and the potential for transformation. The most significant contribution of GAD is to highlight the importance of analysing the socially constructed basis of inequalities and the need to challenge prevailing gender roles and relations, using various methods including the GAD empowerment framework for analysis.

Empowerment Framework Within GAD and Agency in HD

Empowerment is central to Gender and Development theory based on the analysis of roles, responsibilities, power relations and its effects along the lines of gender and age. Various feminist scholars have defined power and empowerment, and linked it to access to resources, the power to act and think freely and to choices (Kabeer, 1994, 1999; Moser, 1991, 2003; Mahout, 2000, 2006).

The notion of empowerment interrelates with the understanding of agency. Sen (1985) defined agency as “what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important” (p.206). He further considered agency to be a process. Sen (2002) emphasised that agency will be socially beneficial, it advances goals people value and have reason to value. The rich literature on agency and empowerment from human development, gender and social justice theorists has been listed in the paper by Ibrahim and Alkire (2007), listing (Alkire, 2005; Benet, 2002; Brown, 2003; Chambers, 1989; Jackson, 1994; Kabeer, 1999; Mayoux, 2000; Moser, 1991,2003, Rowlands, 1997 as cited in Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007). Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) adopted the definitions of empowerment as an extension of agency based on Sen definition and Rowlands’ typology.

Discussing agency and empowerment, Kabeer (1999) was able to distinguish between different kinds of goals and achievements that people might seek to pursue through the expansion of agency, in addition to valuing it, she defined agency as:

Agency is about more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or “the power within” (p.438) (D5)

Kabeer (2010) also noted different forms of agency including passive, active and transformative:

There is a distinction, therefore, between “passive” forms of agency (action taken when there is little choice), and “active” agency (purposeful behaviour). There is also a further important distinction between greater “effectiveness” of agency, and agency that is “transformative, (...) transformative forms of agency that do not simply address immediate inequalities but are used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structures of patriarchy. (pp.15-16 (D6)

She further argued that resources and achievements could be termed capability and functionings if utilising Sen’s definition “of being and doing”. Kabeer further argued that the achievement of capabilities and functions would not necessarily achieve empowerment. Instead, she added the concept of agency to emphasise the process of change needed to achieve empowerment. This means that Kabeer established

empowerment as being based on three interconnected dimensions: resources, agency and achievements.

Kabeer (1999) also saw the notion of “choice” as being central to the understanding of empowerment. Choice is related to conditions and consequences of the decisions the individual makes. Empowerment is about change in the structure of opportunities and the constraints in making choices; with such change being different according to context.

She has linked disempowerment with the denial of choice or the subordinate situation of one group to other powerful groups. She has indicated that power relations are manifested in the exercise of agency and choice, and in the types and varieties of choices, and that empowerment starts from conditions of disempowerment and the subsequent processes to achieve empowerment. Hence, I would build on Kabeer notions to define disempowerment as:

Disempowerment represents the “denial of choice” due to the “subordinate situation” of a group to other powerful groups, or confinement to the “cultural and social restrictions and norms” identified by an unjust society (Patriarchal in the case of gender). Such denial limits the ability to reach one’s goals, which leads to inequality in achievements and reflects deep-rooted constraints. (D7)

According to Kabeer (1999), processes of empowerment entail change at different levels and in different dimensions: change can occur at the level of the individual, in their inner sense of self or in their access to resources, it can occur in relationships within the family and household, or it can reflect alteration in position in the wider community, the economy and state.

I would therefore define empowerment based on Kabeer’s (1999) notion of “choice” and definition of empowerment as a process starting from disempowerment as a condition necessary in order to enable “strategic life choices and transformatory potential”:

The notion of empowerment is concerned with “the ability to make choices”, it refers to a process of change, that starts from the conditions of the “disempowered”, and would lead to an increased “sense of agency”, the capacity to define their own Life choices and to pursue their own goals, reaching to achieving the “Power Over” strategic life choices at the individual and community level, regardless of opposition faced, in order to reach the pursued transformatory change (p.437). (D8)

Kabeer (2005) has also noted that in order to be able to make choices, alternative choices must exist, and must be seen to exist. Moreover, choices differ: what matters are the strategic life choices that can transform inequality.

Kabeer (1999) emphasised the importance of measuring empowerment empirically using triangulated methods. Measures of empowerment will have to determine the “consequential significance in terms of women’s strategic life choices and the extent to which it had transformatory potential” (p.452). I will use Kabeer’s (1999) Empowerment Framework to measure empowerment by measuring the sense of agency “Power Within”, the capacity to pursue goals (Power to), and to achieve power over in a positive sense, (p.438). I will also build on Rowlands’ (1997) typology defining these powers (p.13), as well as Perezniето and Taylor’s (2014) definitions of these powers with regard to economic programmes. The related definitions and the matrix developed for empowerment measurements are illustrated in Box-4 in chapter seven.

Inequalities and Intersectionality

Feminist scholars have addressed gender inequality, as well as used gender analysis to explain poverty, class inequalities and social injustices (Kabeer, 1989,2003; Fergany, 1981; Chambers, 1989; Buvinic &Yousseff, 1978; Buvinic, 1993).

Within such processes, Kabeer (1994) has added the Social Relations Approach (SRA) to her GAD Approach. SRA is founded on three main concepts: development as increasing human well-being, social relations and institutional analysis. Human well-being is related to survival, security and autonomy, i.e., it is much more than economic growth or improved productivity, resembling in this respect CA. In the second concept, the term “social relations” is used to describe the structural relationships that create and reproduce systemic differences in the positioning of different groups of people. Social relations produce cross-cutting inequalities, which ascribe each individual a position in the structure and hierarchy of their society. Gender relations are one type of social relations (sometimes known as the social relations of gender). Others include those of class, race, ethnicity, age, religion, location and others. The third concept, meanwhile, is concerned with four main types of institutions; the state, the market, the community and family. Kabeer argues that institutions produce, reinforce and reproduce social differences and

inequalities, and further argues that all institutions possess five distinct, but interrelated dimensions of social relationships: rules, resources, people, activities and power.

In her explanation of social relations and inequalities, Kabeer (2015) used the concept of vertical and horizontal inequalities;

[W]e have drawn attention to how “intersection” between vertical inequality with the multiple and overlapping horizontal inequalities of gender, caste, race, and ethnicity helps to explain the persistence of poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion, over lifetimes and generations. (p.190)

The research will use this work and will complement it with the Intersectionality Approach (IA) that explains the multilayers of inequalities. IA finds its roots in the work of black feminists (Davis, 1983; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1989) who have highlighted the intersectional inequalities between race and gender, noting that gender inequality analysis alone is insufficient to analyse gender inequalities in a given society. They have pointed out that systems of inequality are affected by and reproduced by the marginalisation in society, and as noted by Collins (1989), a pattern of “interlocking oppression” is created by the relationship between culture and identity with the intersectional systems of society, such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity. (D10)

Chow, Segal and Lin (2011) highlighted the approach of “intersectionality” to understand multiple social inequalities and complex aspects of discrimination and exclusion in a society including racial, gender, and class interrelated inequalities. Intersectionality approaches the concepts of gender, race and class as social constructions that vary across geography and time, arguing that such markers of difference are not viewed as static traits, but as processes that are (re)produced in the daily actions of people. (D13)

Hence the work of the black feminists has contributed to the development of an “intersectionality” understanding of inequality, whereby forms of oppression are interwoven to produce multiple inequalities that differ within and between groups facing inequality. Such multiple inequalities are not static but are produced and reproduced through the actions of individuals, institutes and powers.

The analysis of inequalities and intersectional inequalities in this thesis will be based in general on the GAD-SRA approach highlighted by Kabeer (1994), complemented by the

intersectionality approach, thus relating inequalities to multiple layers. In this, the thesis builds on Acker's (2006) definition of "Inequality regimes": i.e., interrelated inequalities resulting in patterned discrepancies in privileges and rewards among people, that appear at both the structural and interpersonal levels, and that become conventional, such as gender, class, ethnicity, age, educational attainment and religion, meaning that people become stigmatised by their own identity. (D9)

At the structural level, inequality factors such as gender are characterised by power relations, through which certain groups are excluded from privileges and opportunities; exclusions that are reflected at the individual level. In this regard, McMullin (2011) has analysed gender and age inequalities in the world of work, on various levels and aspects, pointing out the non-static nature of inequality regimes in the workplace, and their transformation over time, in response to interactions between individuals, shifting social and economic circumstances, and thus human agency and interaction.

Since this research will analyse marginalisation in the oPt, it will capitalise on the previous discussion of the individuals and groups facing inequality and intersectional inequality and will draw on three theoretical pillars: GAD, as reflected in the definition of McMullin (2011) on inequality, i.e. "certain groups are excluded from privileges and opportunities", the intersectionality-based understanding of layers of marginalisation as expressed by Collins (1989); and Kabeer's (1999) link between disempowerment and the notion of "choice", a choice that is also restricted by inequalities:

One way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices: to be disempowered, therefore, implies to be denied choice. (...) There is a logical association between poverty and disempowerment because an insufficiency of the means for meeting one's basic needs often rules out the ability to exercise meaningful choice (pp.436-438) (D10)

Hence, I will draw on the previous accounts for understanding inequalities, intersectional inequality and the marginalised, linking my understanding to the empowerment framework and the definition of the disempowered. All definitions are listed in Box-2.

Structural Perspective of Inequality- Structure and Agency:

Feminist scholars have indicated the importance of structural perspective to gender inequality. As feminist scholars have identified the gap between rules and practices due

to the normative effect in a patriarchal society, which leads to inequality in power and agency, or the reproduction of inequalities. They highlighted the importance of understanding the gaps and obstacles to uncovering the blockages to change (Folber, 1994; Kabeer, 1994). They have argued that agency is more than an individual effect, seeing it instead in the context of structural constraints (Gammage, Kabeer & Rodgers, 2015). Moreover, the work of Argwel (1997) has shown the role of norms as constraining and enabling, while Hill (2003, p.117) has clearly argued that “institutionalised power is causing or perpetuating inequalities in individual opportunities to achieve”.

Giddens (1984) has pointed out to the dichotomy of structure and agency, both interrelated and work on each other, the individual's and groups' power and agency are affected by the social structures, yet the acts of individuals and groups can affect those structures. Structures are considered to be the distribution of rules and resources within a society. The work of Foucault (1989), Giddens (1994), Fraser (1989), Harding (1995) and Hartsock (1998) has pointed clearly to the institutional practices that reproduce and perpetuate systemic inequalities in power based on gender, class, race and other characteristics. (D11)

Building on this, Gammage, Kabeer and Rodgers (2015) have extended the notion of inequality in power to “inequalities in power and agency in relation to different institutional domains and socioeconomic processes” (p.2) (D11)

Kabeer (1994) has argued that the notion of empowerment goes beyond individual achievement to the structural roots of individual inequalities of power. Moreover, she has noted that the achievement of equity and empowerment within the social relations approach of the GAD theory is concerned with “institutional analysis of gender relations”:

[I]t attempts to rethink existing policy approaches, concepts and tools from a gender perspective in order to reveal the biases and limitations and to discard, modify and transform them in the interests of achieving development (...) [G]ender as a power relation derives from institutional arrangements that provide men of a given social group with greater capacity than women from the group to mobilise rules and resources to promote and defend their own interests (p.299)- (D12, D11)

Goetz (1995) has called for the “gendering” of institutions in terms of their culture, rules and outcomes, to overcome institutional bias, since in patriarchal societies this means that the organisations’ culture, rules and outcomes are based on male (the group in power) values and attitudes. Thus, they recreate and reproduce the gender hierarchies and inequalities within their institutions reflecting that of the outside world.

The definition of social structure used in this thesis draws on the above work of structuralists and Kabeer, as detailed in Box-2 in the theoretical framework section.

Furthermore, in GAD, the main distinction between “practical needs” and “strategic interests”, as emphasised by Molyneux (1985), and reemphasised by Kabeer (1994), helps to focus the attention of policymakers on critical areas and on shaping the delivery of services that have “transformatory or redistributive” potential, hence establishes the need to link to state policy.

Kabeer (1999) has noted that any failure in the functioning achievement of individuals and groups reflects structural constraints on their ability to choose and hence illustrates disempowerment, implying that without any recognition of the structural constraints, any deficits of achievement could only be linked to resources and poverty rather than the structural effects. Kabeer (2015) has also noted the effect of social and institutional barriers and challenges.

Conradie & Robeyns (2013) have also noted obstacles to functioning achievement and wellbeing, including inadequate income, lack of supportive organisations, an unhelpful state, conflict, cultural norms and education (p.570). Feeding into this, is the work of DeJaeghere (2016), as she has emphasised the structural constraints to aspirations and agency.

As Kabeer (1999) argued, the structural effects stretch beyond effects on the achieved functionings to the processes related to these achievements, as also noted by other scholars (Hill, 2003; Deneulin, Nebel & Sagovsky, 2006). Hence in the matter of achieved agency, Kabeer (2010) has distinguished between different types of agencies, as noted earlier, including the transformative agency that is used for longer-term processes

of change in structures, the achievement of which would require enabling factors that go beyond agency to structural related strategies, as she explained in her earlier work (1994):

Empowerment cannot be given, it must be self-generated. All that a gender transformatory policy can hope to do is to provide women with the enabling resources which will allow them to take greater control of their own lives, to determine what kinds of gender relations they would want to live within, and to devise the strategies and alliances to help them get there (p.97).

Hence any analysis of the structural challenges should also identify the different types of agency, and analyse the challenges faced in achieving the transformative agency. Indeed, structural challenges have been apparent in various studies as a significant hindrance to the achievement of well-being and empowerment.

This argument has clearly identified the importance of structural perspective to developed achievements and agency, feeding in to the PE analysis related to institutional and state roles and responsibilities towards VET. Therefore, I will analyse structural challenges to capabilities, the achievement of functionings, aspirations and developed agency for VET learners. I will highlight structural challenges and enabling factors of the institutional and state policies and measures related to VET learners and graduates and to the VET system as a whole.

VET and Inequality

Previous research on VET and inequality is limited to certain types of inequality, mainly poverty and gender, although other areas such as disabilities and race have also been presented. The research is also mainly concerned with one dimension of inequality, although in certain cases gender is combined with another inequality.

The work of King and Palmer (2006; Palmer & King, 2008, 2010) on VET and poverty has been central to illustrating the contribution of VET to poverty reduction. Other important contributions from different international contexts include the work of Cheng (2010) in Cambodia and Wallenborn (2009) in Tajikistan, who have each noted that NGOs are more successful in addressing the needs of the poor and the marginalised. I have also contributed to the analysis by investigating VET's role in poverty reduction for women and youth in Palestine (Hilal, 2012). In this regard, I seek to build on and apply to the Palestinian context Powell's (2014) findings that VET has been successful in

attracting the poor in South Africa. There, she found that most of the FET students in South Africa participating in her research were either poor or vulnerable to poverty, according to her identified dimensions of poverty.

In an editorial for a *Journal of Vocational Education and Training* special issue editorial on gender, Niemeyer and Colley (2015) pointed out the relative scarcity of literature on VET and gender. They note that the previous decade of the journal had seen gender addressed in less than 4% of articles. They called for further research in the area, specifically with regard to other intersectional inequalities such as race and class.

Research Gap

VET is under-researched within the marginalised Palestinian context, especially in respect to its contribution to development and equality. The recent shift in the international agenda makes it even more important to research the missing links in the debate and to provide empirical evidence for VET's contribution to development and equality.

The literature review has indicated a lack of current knowledge in a range of areas, including VET and multiple inequalities, VET and empowerment, and VET and HD, in general, and within adverse contexts. This research has an added value since it is in line with the recent shift in TVET and the interest in identifying ways of measuring progress that shows TVET's contribution to development and equality. The theoretical framework for the research, set out below, will be based on the need to provide empirical evidence for, and a conceptual discussion of, VET's contribution to human development and reducing inequality. Most importantly, it will bring together the different strands in the research so as to avoid restricting VET within a specific compartment.

Theoretical and Analytical Framework of the Research, and Research Question

Theoretical Framework

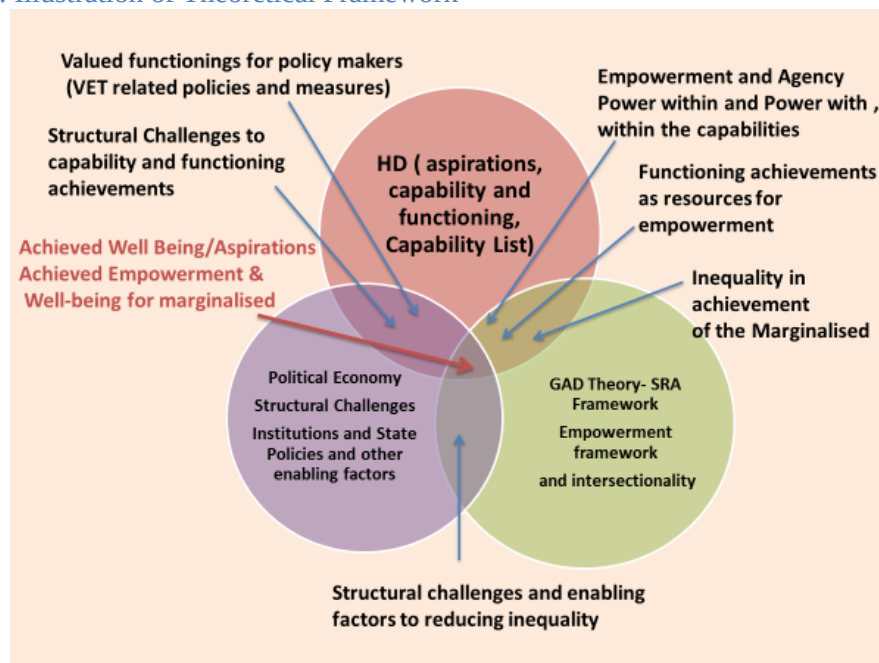
In striving to address the complicated Palestinian context, to add value to research into VET internationally, and to respond to the main research question "How can VET

contribute to human development and reducing inequality?”, this study will employ a holistic theoretical framework encompassing the three lenses of Human Development Capability Approach (HDCA), Gender and Development (GAD) and Political Economy (PE).

This theoretical framework moves away from the orthodox VET framework that is linked to concepts of productivism, focusing on individuals’ well-being, building on the capability approach within human development, and using an empowerment framework borrowed from GAD theory, while linking with the marginalised and those facing inequalities and intersectional inequalities. GAD and CA are linked through the analysis of capabilities and functionings according to marginalisation, and the interrelation between empowerment and agency. Furthermore, GAD and CA are linked with PE by analysing the institutional and state policies and measures that hinder the achievement of functionings and empowerment, and listing the factors (policies and measures) facilitating institutional and structural barriers and social norms.

The use of the three theories and approaches and their overlapping within the theoretical framework is illustrated in the block diagram below, drawing together the literatures discussed above.

Figure 3-1: Illustration of Theoretical Framework



Using these three approaches and theories was essential to relocate VET within development theories and approaches, placing the focus on HD. Yet, while the question of inequality required the addition of theories that tackle inequalities, such as the GAD and intersectionality, PE provides for the assessment of the structural analysis and enabling policies for achievements¹⁰.

Interlinkages between theories and approaches are apparent through overlaps in the theoretical framework diagram. For example, there is a clear interlinkage between HDCA and GAD, since HDCA will use the GAD and intersectionality part in identifying empowerment elements within the functioning achievements and will assess inequality in achievements, while GAD will use the analysis of achieved functionings as resources for empowerment.

The intersection of the three approaches (the central overlapped part in the diagram) answers the main question of the research with regard to VET's contribution to HD and reducing inequality. By measuring the achievement of aspiration and the achievement of empowerment, their interlinkage and gaps to achievement, the achieved aspirations, drawn from CA is defined as:

Self-measurement of VET graduates' achieved aspirations, is translated into the achieved (or non-achieved) functionings and capabilities and hence achieved Well-Being that VET learners have aspired to. (D15)

This work sits well within the global debate on TVET, development and inequality, identifying the links between TVET and its contribution to addressing inequality. It also draws from the national literature on VET and development, as well as VET and inequality, and development and inequality. These will be important in identifying different capabilities and functionings, as well as different empowerment categories.

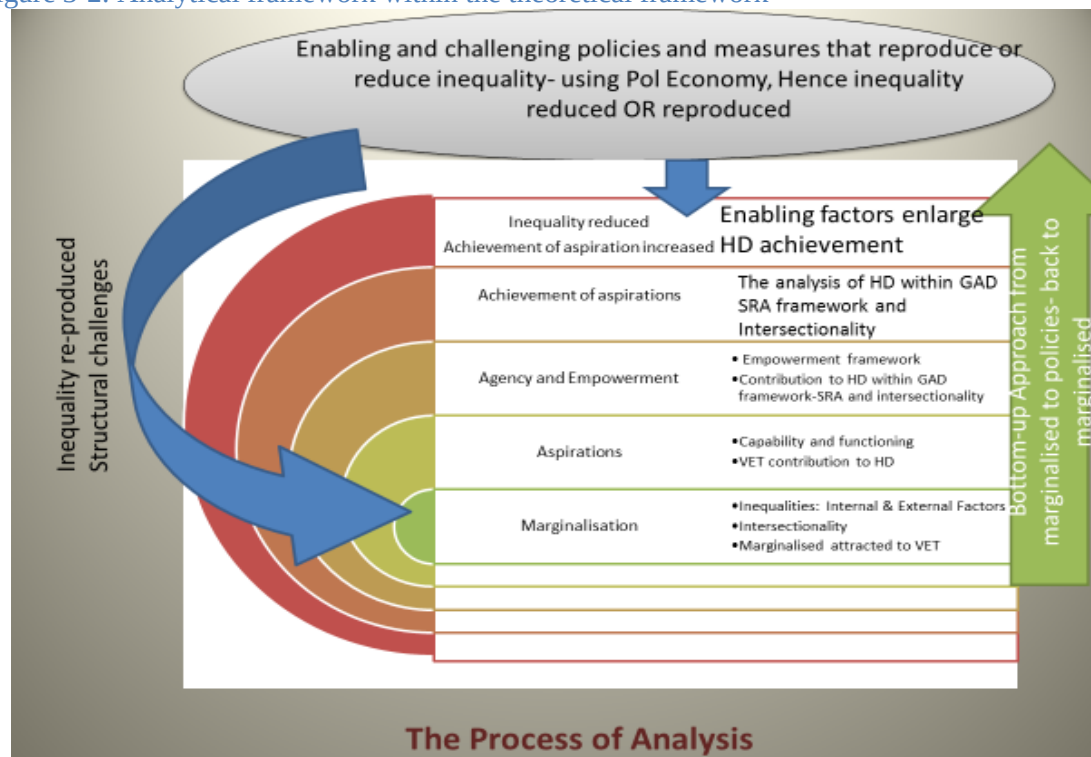
Analytical Framework

The analytical approach within the theoretical framework is a bottom-up approach that starts from analysing the social, economic and political inequalities of the VET learners, by listening to VET graduates' and learners' aspirations, assessing their status compared

¹⁰ The definitions for concepts used within the central arguments in the thesis are drawn from the literature review in this chapter. Box-2 at the end of the chapter sets out the definitions upon which the theoretical framework is built.

to aspirations, and assessing their achieved and valued functionings, as well as in reflecting on achieved aspirations and structural constraints. The framework also assesses the bottom-up change in empowerment from self and inner change to control over life choices and transformatory changes, it further analyses the enabling and challenging policies and measures and analyses whether this reduces or reproduces inequality. The diagram below illustrates this analytical approach.

Figure 3-2: Analytical framework within the theoretical framework



This approach draws on a more inclusive paradigm and multiple lenses that allow for new epistemologies to define processes that can enable VET learners to achieve equality within their local contexts.

Research Question

The Main Research Question:

- **How can VET contribute to the advancement of Human Development and to Reducing Inequalities of the marginalised?**

This leads to the following four Research Sub-Questions (RSQs):

RSQ 1. Is VET attracting the marginalised?

RSQ 2. What are the aspirations of youth joining VET? And what are their achieved and valued capabilities and functions?

RSQ 3. Does VET lead to increased empowerment, active and transformative agency? Does empowerment and achievements lead to achieving aspirations?

RSQ 4. What are the structural challenges and enabling factors in regard to the achieved aspirations and empowerment? What are the policies and practices that could expand human development and reduce inequality?

Each research sub-question will be answered through a separate findings chapter, while the main research question will be referred to in each chapter and in the overall conclusions.

My theoretical framework is an addition to the analysis of VET's contribution to HD started by McGrath 2012, and developed in the work of McGrath (2012c); Powell (2012, 2014); Powell and McGrath (2014); McGrath and Powell (2015a, 2015b, 2016); López-Fogués (2014, 2016); and DeJaeghere (2016). Specifically, the addition of the inequality element to this analysis adds value to my research and develops the tools and concepts used within the human development approach, it will also contribute to the analysis process. Another addition is in the link to political economy, and the integration of this link back into the tools and the analysis.

The use of the empowerment framework, going beyond gender to include the marginalised within a marginalised context, adds value to the GAD and the empowerment framework in general, and to the use of the GAD theory in studying inequality, in line with the calls from Kabeer (2015) and Kabeer and Sweetman (2015).

The integration of PE within the theoretical framework adds to the debate on structure and agency, starting from the individual to the policy level and back to the individual. The use of the multiple framework to answer the research question also adds value to the investigation of human development and inequality and the role of VET in these areas.

Box- 2: Definitions of Concepts Used in the Research

- **Human Development:** The human development concept serves to integrate a variety of concerns about the lives of people and their well-being and freedom. The capabilities of a human being are central to achieving their well-being and basic human freedoms. (D1)¹¹
- **Capabilities:** Capabilities are a set of vectors of functionings reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another, and to choose from possible livings. Capabilities extend beyond opportunities to include processes and agency, and lead to equality with human dignity at its core. (D2)
- **Functionings:** "Functionings" refer to all possible ways of "being and doing" which are valued, while "functioning achievements" refer to the particular ways of "being and doing" which are realised by different individual. (D2)
- **Capability List:** A list of valuable capabilities chosen by people through people's engagement in deciding upon the valued functionings they are aspiring to achieve. Capability lists should be responsive to different settings and groups on an equal basis. They are a normative political proposal that is a partial theory of justice. (D3)
- **Aspiration:** The capability to aspire what they conceive of and then create an imagined and hoped-for future that contains an array of opportunities currently or seemingly not available. Aspirations are related to hopes, preferences and choices; they are linked to cultural and social notions, influenced by social context and formed through interactions with others. (D4)
- **Decent Work:** Opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity (D14)
- **Achieved Aspirations:** Self-measurement of VET graduates' aspirations achieved, translated into the achieved (or non-achieved) functionings and capabilities and hence the achieved well-being to which VET learners have aspired. (D15)
- **Agency:** Agency is about more than observable action, it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or "the power within" (D5)
- **Transformative Agency:** Transformative forms of agency do not simply address immediate inequalities but are used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structures of patriarchy (D6)
- **Passive Agency:** Action taken when there is little choice, appearing as restricted choice by higher powers or structural barriers (D6)
- **Active Agency:** Purposeful behaviour in making their choices and decisions (D6)
- **Disempowered:** Disempowerment represents the "denial of choice" due to the "subordinate situation" of a group to other powerful groups, or confinement to "cultural and social restrictions and norms" identified by the unjust society (Patriarchal in the case of gender). Such denial limits the ability to reach one's goals, which leads to inequality in achievements and reflects deep-rooted constraints (D7)
- **Empowerment:** The notion of empowerment is concerned with "the ability to make choices", it refers to a process of change, that starts from the conditions of the "disempowered", and would lead to increased "sense of agency", the capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals, reaching to achieving the control of

¹¹ The (D#) at the end of the definition links with the location of the definition within the literature review part of the chapter.

“Power” over strategic life choices at the individual and community level, regardless of opposition faced, in order to reach the pursued transformatory change (D8)

- **Inequality:** Manifesting unequal social relations and economic conditions, are regimes defined as intersectional inequalities resulting in patterned discrepancies in privileges and rewards among people, that appear at both the structural and interpersonal levels, and that soon become conventional, such as gender, class, ethnicity, age, educational attainment and religion, meaning that people become stigmatised by their own identity. (D9)
- **Marginalised:** Groups and individuals that suffer inequality or intersectional inequalities and are disempowered. These are groups that are excluded from privileges, opportunities and choices. They suffer discrimination based on marginalised social identities, such as gender, race and class. (D10) The marginalised in Palestine are illustrated in Box-1.
- **Intersectionality:** Interconnected multi-layers of marginalisation and vulnerabilities that shapes the inequality of individuals, groups and communities. It was elaborated, that intersectionality with regard to gender, race and class as social constructions varies across geography and time, markers of difference are not viewed as static traits, but as processes that are (re)produced in the daily actions of people (D13)
- **Structural Challenges:** Institutional arrangements and socio-economic practices that provide the powerful greater capacities to mobilise rules and resources to promote and defend their own interests, so as to reproduce and perpetuate systemic inequalities in power and agency based on gender, class, race and other characteristics (D11)
- **Enabling Factors:** Policy approaches, measures, concepts and tools that reveal the inequalities, biases and limitations and to discard, modify and transform them in the interests of achieving development (D12)
- **VET related policies and measures:** Planned and practiced relevant policies and measures to overcome structural challenges that VET learners and graduates face, and which impede their aspirations and produce inequality. Policies that could move VET forward, including economic, social, educational and political policies based on its political economic system.

Notes to Box-2:

- The literature review is the source of the above-mentioned definitions
- The order of the definitions is based on how they were numbered in the literature review

The multiple lenses used within my theoretical framework and within the multiple analytical framework required the use of a mixed qualitative and quantitative methods of research, integrating the different definitions within the tools used to answer the research questions, as the next chapter will illustrate.

Chapter 4. **Methodology and Methods Used**

The research needs to measure the aspirations of the VET Learners, the achievement of graduates and their empowerment, along with marginalisation and its effects on the achievements, empowerment and achieved aspirations. Hence the choice of methodology, the methods used and the people consulted is of utmost importance to answer the research question. Furthermore, the process of analysing and linking the findings to theoretical framework, as well as linking themes and findings and theorising the results, is essential to the research.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to achieve these measurements and to address the research question and the research sub-questions. Tools were designed alongside the theoretical framework, and relate to my feminist/gender approach to analysing power relations and identifying structural challenges. The tools have integrated determinants of marginalisation, within the context of marginalisation.

Positioning

As an active member of the TVET family in the oPt, I have long been involved in leading TVET institutes, developing new models that were copied nationally, and have engaged in policy level debates, planning and strategy formulations. Hence, I am considered an insider to the sector, who has gained respect for my impartiality as a researcher and has already conducted various VET and labour market studies.

The experience of changing my career from a university lecturer to a TVET institute leader and director, then to a freelance consultant and recently to having my own consultancy firm that works with various donors, has provided me with a fluid relationship to entities in the sector, while keeping my name visible within the sector and among the TVET family, in which I have consistently called for the further development of TVET. Furthermore, as a woman engineer working in a predominantly male-oriented field and sector, I was the first female to head a male-oriented VET institute in Palestine. I introduced women into this non-conventional field which resulted in my name being linked with gender in VET with the reputation as a defender of the right of women to

access VET and to enter the job market. Nonetheless, my work as a lecturer and developer for male and female institutes has linked my name to the sector as a whole.

In addition, I worked with, led and represented NGOs working in VET. I led various church-related VET institutes and was a co-founder of the NGO VET League. Equally, my work as a consultant for various national projects and missions has provided me with career flexibility. Hence, my relationship to the sector has moved beyond the binary positioning of insider/outsider. I would borrow the definition used by Thomson and Gunter (2011) to describe my relationship as being in a “messy continuously shifting relationship”. I would add that respect and professionalism are also linked with my name. Here I would like to emphasise Thomson and Gunter’s point that “we are all outsiders of each other”. Such a position could, as they argue, allow me to obtain internal information about the sector with the trust that is afforded to an insider, while also allowing me to act as an external change-agent based on knowledge and evidence.

Being aware of my position to the sector as a safe outsider/trusted non-biased insider, while recognising that the relationship is continuously shifting, enabled me to design the methods of the research and constantly reflect on each step of the work. The aim of being aware of my position at the beginning of the research is to identify and eliminate any rising partiality, while using my positive position to act as an external agent of change.

The Methodology

As a rights-based feminist researcher, the choice of my methods revolves around listening to the voice of the right-holders, while addressing duty-bearers. The right-holders here are the VET learners, being graduates and students (the agency for change). The duty-bearers are the policymakers at national, regional and institute level (the structure). In addition, I have examined the policies and procedures challenging or supporting the advancement of human development and attainment of equality, as well as the ones advancing or perpetuating inequality (Kabeer, 2000).

The use of qualitative methods is therefore important in order to understand and analyse the deficits in, and the different layers of, existing inequalities and their underlying

challenges. This is done through in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

The process reflected the empowerment and participation of right-holders to ensure the reflection of their “voices”. It also reflected accountability and therefore the engagement of duty-bearers for future adaptation of relevant policies. Hence, the research methods included interviews with policymakers at all levels.

Exposing and analysing power relations and layers of inequalities, and identifying different limitations and challenging the norm required methodological rigour (Skeggs, 1992). This entailed the addition of quantitative methods since these are far more trusted by decision-makers in the Palestinian context than qualitative methods.¹² The notions and thoughts presented in the research are new, multifarious, and challenge the dominant VET orthodoxy. Hence, the use of quantitative methods, in the form of a detailed graduates’ survey, was also helpful in backing up the voice of respondents with a representative sample. Overall, the challenging argument was supported by relevant qualitative and quantitative evidence and by the introduction of case studies and best-practices that illustrated successful models appropriate to the theoretical framework and explained missing points.

Moreover, my position in relation to the study as a safe outsider/trusted insider, with continuously shifting relationships, enabled me to include extra sources and methods for data collection (Thomson & Gunter, 2011). Multiple qualitative and quantitative methods were therefore used in the research design and their results triangulated. Moreover, my position as an insider for a long period of time gave me close knowledge of cases and the context which contributed to the validity of the causal and descriptive inferences.

As a person known to have a moral stance in defending women’s and marginalised groups’ rights to education and work, and having been involved in shaping the directions for the two case studies, this could be understood as an “emotional research”.

¹² I have been involved in various studies that used different methods since 2009, and was able to observe that stakeholders and policymakers trusted the quantitative methods within mixed approaches more than the qualitative methods, questioning perceived bias in qualitative methods. Decision-makers also trusted larger representative samples with minimum error margins.

Accordingly, the research was planned rigorously so as to avoid findings being challenged (Thomson, 2013).

Hence, the design of the research methodology looked at how it can be acknowledged as a “scientifically-based research” by policymakers to achieve its objective as a valuable piece of education research, in addition to its contribution to knowledge and usability by practitioners (Yates, 2004). The acknowledgment of the research by policymakers will allow its future use to advocate for change. Hence the use of multiple methods provided the evidence, and reliability in the area of inquiry within the overall context, as well as ensuring that its findings can be justified rather than being dismissed as merely opinion, and as rights-based and gender-based analyst epistemology have to go beyond the notion of objective socially constructed reality (Schmidt, 1994).

The use of multiple theories within the theoretical framework to analyse and bring value to the research entailed the review of the relevant literatures, setting the conceptual ground and the definitions used, designing the indicators based on the theoretical framework and conceptual ground to address the research question in a comprehensive manner. Indicators were then used as the base to design the research tools.

The research used qualitative and quantitative methods that were carefully designed for the Palestinian context and for the suggested conceptual framework, providing in-depth analysis, causal relations and inferences to place the findings within the suggested framework. Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods and data sources were done. Triangulation in combined methods consolidated the findings across both methods of data sources for addressing the research questions (Brady & Collier 2010).

As a result, my approach has used diversified literatures to reflect the framework, as well as multiple qualitative and quantitative research methods, to reflect the voice of the right-holders and to engage duty-bearers. Which allowed for solid triangulated findings that can be trusted by policymakers in Palestine and around the world to develop TVET theories, systems and approaches.

Methods of Research, Tools Used and Conceptual Themes

The research aims to measure status, aspirations, achievements and empowerment, as well as structural barriers and enabling factors that are related to social attitudes. Measuring social attitudes will require the incorporation of affective behavioural and cognitive attitudes. Attitudes can be positive or negative and can vary substantially over time and across situations (Gibbs, Hyman & Bulmer, 2010, pp.215-216), hence methods for measuring social attitudes were applied in parallel through the quantitative survey and the qualitative method. Through the quantitative survey, therefore, responses to statements were measured according to the Likert scale with set variables. Statements were prepared according to relevant theoretical accounts and my experience in the field. The survey included an impact assessment part that measured the effect of VET on the graduates in order to determine the achieved functionings within the capability approach and the challenges faced.

The qualitative methods provided the opportunity to reflect on people's attitude and perceptions through the different methods of interaction which included in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and case-studies.

The semi-structured interviews enabled the research to obtain an authentic insight into people's experiences through the open part of the interviews. They also provided access to facts about the world through the structured part of the interviews. This required some probing and rapport with interviewees, as well as active listening and flexibility (Silverman, 2006). Here I capitalised on my experience in this regard. Semi-structured interviews enabled me to reach different groups of right-holders and duty-bearers, including the management of VET institutes, counsellors, employers and community level representatives, as well as policymakers at national, regional and institutional levels, including governmental and non-governmental ones.

Researchers have mentioned focus groups as a qualitative method within a multi-research design, often discussing them within the same frame as interviews (Silverman, 2006). Focus group discussion (FGD) methods deepen our understanding of the topics raised and are particularly useful when researching topics relating to different social groups' norms and understanding (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2002). FGD were

conducted with students, graduates, parents, teachers and staff of VET institutes to provide an insight into, and understanding of the aspirations, changes and achievements of learners through VET. FGD were also conducted with teachers and principals of general schools to provide an understanding of the access process to VET, and how it is perceived and valued. Researchers have emphasised that good organisation of the focus groups, experienced facilitation to encourage engagement and participation, and the selection of focus group members can add to their value. The selection of groups from pre-existing social groups adds to the commitment and interaction of the group (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2002).

Case studies are used by researchers to understand and have an influence on practice, and to refine the ways in which practice is theorised (Freebody, 2006). In this research, case studies highlighted two models of VET institutes that are adopting a holistic approach in serving the marginalised in comparison to other VET institutes. Some of the different best-practices in other institutes in terms of supporting VET learners were also identified through the investigation.

In addition, Heaton (2004) has highlighted the importance of a secondary analysis of quantitative and qualitative materials as a research strategy for investigating new questions or verifying previous studies. Furthermore, she argued that secondary analysis can also use the work of others or the researcher. In this research, I have reviewed various studies and documents including strategies, statistical national data and previous studies.

Therefore, the multiple quantitative and qualitative methods of study for data collection and tools used to address the research questions were:

- 1 A literature review to provide context for defining the marginalised in the oPt and the relevant national data and studies for comparative analysis and the arguments. In addition, the literature review established the theories and approaches for the theoretical framework, identified definitions indicators and tools, and assisted the discussion of the findings. The literature review included:
 - A literature review of international theories and approaches related to theoretical frameworks including HD, GAD, intersectionality and PE theories.

- A review of the global VET literature.
 - A review related to the status of the oPt status, and previous relevant studies.
 - A review of secondary resources consisting of relevant studies, reports and statistics for the oPt.
- 2 Quantitative methods for data collection comprised a questionnaire-based graduate survey. The questionnaire included a component on aspirations, reasons for joining, achieved functioning and empowerment. Each was based on set of indicators defined according to relevant literature and my previous experience. The survey included the self-assessment of achievement of aspirations and empowerment. The questionnaire also included qualitative fields and open questions.
- 3 Qualitative methods for data collection: used different tools and themes for discussions,
- In-depth semi-structured interviews with the management of VET institutes, counsellors, employers of VET graduates, government officials on the regional and national levels, as well as community representatives.
 - Focus group discussions with each of the groups of graduates, students, VET teachers, parents, and general school teachers.
 - Two case studies of successful models were documented, analysed and illustrated. The case-studies included, in addition to the data collection methods outlined above, observations, internal documents and records review, as well as interviewing relevant employers' and community representatives. Also, internal policy documents, strategies, and students' and graduates' records were reviewed and analysed, while ensuring confidentiality.

Hence, the graduates' survey, semi-structured interviews for the different groups and the FGD themes were all prepared based on the set indicators, and designed along the following conceptual themes:

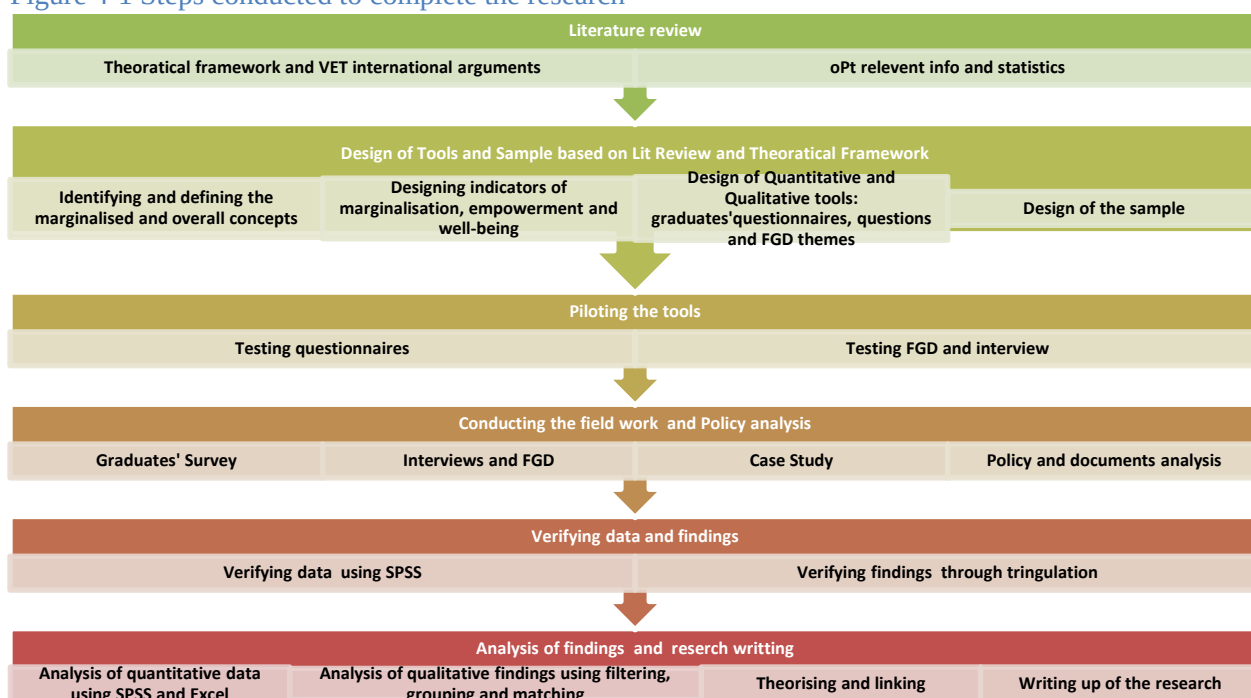
- Background information on the VET learner (along the marginalisation praxis)
- Impact and results of VET upon graduates (achievements and empowerment)
- Reasons for joining and values
- Support, policies, structure and regulations for VET
- Communication and interaction
- Hopes of the groups

Use of different methods allowed for triangulation of methods, which contributed to cross-checking information along the themes and enabled reliable responses to the research questions.

Steps conducted in the research

Steps conducted for carrying out the research included parallel steps within a serial process, both to ensure the order of work and to increase efficiency by carrying certain steps simultaneously. The figure below illustrates these steps.

Figure 4-1 Steps conducted to complete the research



Interaction with and feedback from my supervisors was essential at each milestone and step.

Sample design and case selection

The survey sample was designed to be representative of the population. This population was the graduates of the public TVET system in the oPt during the years 2010-2011. This cohort was selected as they had graduated four years previously when the field work started in 2015, allowing the study to measure the achieved functionings and impact of VET on achieving their aspiration and reducing their marginalisation.

The population was estimated at 7,000-10,000 annually according to previous studies (Gabrscek et al., 2015; Hilal, 2013b), as national figures are not available. The actual total population was collected from each system separately at the start of the field work. This number includes graduates from the private sector VET institutes, which were not selected for this study, to ensure meaningful selection based on research question. The effective population number was therefore calculated at 6401 across 62 institutes (Gabrscek et al., 2015).

Sampling was through a cluster sample approach since institutes were selected first on stratified basis to represent authority (UN, NGO, PA different ministries), gender, geographic locality (North, Centre and South of the WB, East Jerusalem and Gaza), the selection included the two case studies. The final step was selecting the graduates from these institutes to reflect the graduates' sample of the strata. In this case (cluster sampling), the analysis unit was the graduate, the observation unit was the institute and the sampling unit was the VET provider (Fuller, 2009).

The designed sample size took the following into consideration. First, the accuracy obtained through a larger number and the sensitivity to the required analysis (having enough cases for each category). Second, the possibility to obtain meaningful information with the available financial and time resources. Finally, design of the sample in such a way to reduce bias arising from the likelihood that many he graduates would not be contactable, in addition to the possibility of respondents not answering certain questions. Non-contactable graduates were to be expected due to old or inaccurate data in the VET institutes' lists and the change of status for some of the graduates. The sample was tested for its statistical significance (Abbott &McKinney, 2013).

The sample of graduates was selected based on two-stage sampling, involving three steps, so that graduates are selected to allow for representation of provider, and gender, as well as reflecting geographic distribution and marginalisation. Hence three steps were conducted: a) Sampling, b) Selection of Institutes and finally c) Selection of Graduates.

This method was used, rather than simple random sampling or multi-stage stratification, to overcome discrepancies in the size of institutes (number of graduates per institutes), and in the presence of female graduates per institute.

Moreover, and within certain institutes that have a large number of graduates, such as UNRWA-GTC in Gaza, the graduates were selected on a skewed basis to cater for differences in graduates' statistics (Abbott &McKinney, 2013; Bryman &Cramer, 1999).

Random selection was applied to graduates, therefore, but the institutes were selected on a purposive basis to cater for geographic distribution, operation in marginalised localities and gender.

Two-Stage Sampling:

In stage 1 of the sampling, VET institutes' graduates based on VET provider were stratified. It was decided to select one third of the graduates (column 3 of table below), to provide meaningful results. The formal and semi-formal institutes serving initial VET students were selected for the questionnaire.

In stage 2, the number of students per provider was selected following the selection of institutes. For the second stage sampling, 45% of the students were selected from the selected institutes, to reach a 15% sample of the population, this stage followed the initial selection of institutes in the first stage. Hence the primary sampling unit was one third from the first stage and the secondary sampling unit was 45% (the sub sample).

The equation used for the two-stage cluster sampling was:¹³(Fuller, 2009, p.29)

$$T_{2S} = \sum_{i \in A_i} \sum_{j \in B_j} \pi_{(ij)}^{-1} y_{ij} \dots \dots \dots (\text{equation 1})$$

- $\pi_{(ij)}$ is the probability that the second-stage units i j are selected in the sample,
- A_i is the set of indices for first-stage units in the sample,

¹³ The Fuller equation follows the definition described by Sarndal, Swensson, and Wretman (1992, p. 134 cited in Fuller, 2009). "If the sample is selected in two steps (stages), if units selected at the second step are selected independently in each first-step unit, and if the rules for selection within a first-step unit depend only on that unit and not on other first step units in the sample, the sample is called a two-stage sample".

- B_j is the set of second-stage units in the first-stage unit i that are in the sample

Table 4-1: The two-stage sampling

VET Provider	The Population			The selected sample		Gender representation within sample	
	Male Graduates	Female Graduates	Total Number of Graduates	First stage sampling	Second stage sampling	Gender representation within population	Gender representation of the sample
VE-MOE-(VSS)	839	166	1005	335	151	16.5%	25
VT-MOL (VTC)	1177	612	1789	596	268	34.2%	92
MOSA-VTC	334	182	516	172	77	35.3%	27
UNRWA-VTC	982	240	1222	407	183	19.6%	36
NGO-VET	831	518	1349	450	202	38.4%	78
Semi-Governmental	445	75	520	173	78	14.4%	11
TOTAL	4608	1793	6401	2134	960	28.0%	269
Percentage					15% of population		15% of the Female Population

The second sampling took into consideration gender representation as noted above. The second stage is only indicative since the number of students is not necessarily equal between institutes. Most important, however, is that the final selection was 15% of the total sample.

It has to be noted that the above figures are based on a 2014 BTC study, while the 2011 graduates' numbers are unattainable. It was expected that numbers were 5 to 10% below the above.

Selecting the VET Institutes

The VET institutes were selected purposively according to the following criteria:

1. Geographic locality (WB (North, Centre and South), EJ and Gaza): each provider representation
2. Gender representation
3. Marginalisation (refugees, PWD, and areas affected by Wall)

The table below indicates this selection.

Table 4-2: Selection of institutes based on purposive selection of the variables

Provider	# of institutes	Selected				
		Geographic			Gender/ marginalised	Selected #
		WB/Gaza	East-Jerusalem (EJ)	North/Centre /South WB		
VE-MOE-(VSS)	13	1Gaza	Do not function in Jerusalem	1 each	2 for F only, 2 have limited F, 1 M, but in marginalised locality	8
VT-MOL (VTC)	12	1Gaza		1 each	All co-ed	6
MOSA-VTC	16	1Gaza		1 each	2 F, 2 M 1 PWD	7
UNRWA-VTC	3	1Gaza*	WB VTC have Boarding section and students from Jerusalem and all over WB		1 Co-ed- Gaza, 1 female WB	3
NGO-VET	15	1Gaza	2	1 each and 2 have boarding, 1 operating in WB & EJ	1 for F 4 have M/F	6
Semi-Governmental	3		1	1 WB	1 co-ed and 1 M only Poverty rate and marginalised	2
Formal and semi-formal VET institutes with annual intakes	62					33

*UNRWA VTCs for refugees have a huge number of graduates (more than three times that of the others), but the difference between WB and Gaza requires selecting one from Gaza and one from the WB, and also one for males and the other for females in the WB, hence three were selected.

Selecting the Graduates for The Survey

The selection of the number of graduates within each institute, was done following the second stage selection and within the selected VET institutes so as to ensure the second stage overall sampling and gender sampling was conducted within the selected number of graduates. The overall number followed the two-stage sampling, but differed per provider due to the differences in numbers of graduates and gender representation.

The cluster method of sampling enabled graduates to be selected that represented the provider, thus overcoming the challenges of discrepancies in the number of graduate per institute and the discrepancy in the number of female graduates within the institute, as well as ensuring the coverage of the sample across the differently addressed geographic location.

The Qualitative Sample

For the qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups and case study) purposeful selection was undertaken. As clarified by Freebody (2006), these people are selected because they represent clusters of cases among other categories. In our case they represent the policymakers, VET institutes' principals, teachers, students, and graduates, parents and employers, social partners, community representatives and teachers and principals of general schools.

The VET institutes' staff and students were part of the selected sample above, while the community, employers and parents were dealt with through the case study. The policymakers and social partners were the relevant government and UNRWA officials, as well as relevant gender and market representatives. The regional officials, including school teachers and principals, were drawn from the different regions and marginalised localities.

Data Collection and the Field Work

Fieldwork for primary data collection was carried starting from November 2014 until August 2015, with the exception of the qualitative interviews and FGD in Gaza. These were conducted during September 2016, since I was only granted an access permit by the Israeli authorities in September 2016.

The questionnaire was piloted during the period from the end of November 2014 to January 2015. An independent SPSS analyst analysed the pilot and prepared a report, through which the questionnaire was confirmed. This report is annexed to the thesis.

80% of the selected graduates responded to the survey.¹⁴ The remaining graduates were either unreachable due to changed contact information, present in an unreachable location, travelled abroad, in jail, or deceased. Some refused to participate, or their families refused to provide new contact information for them, especially families in Gaza with respect to their daughters. The table below compares the planned sample for the survey versus the actual sample.

¹⁴ The percentage would be at most 80% as the actual numbers for 2011 is estimated at 5-10% below that of the listed sample, as explained earlier and in the challenges section.

One of the raised issues that had to be catered for was the refusal of two of the NGO female institutes to participate in the survey. As a result, the sample of females was less than planned (28%), hence the number of females from other providers was increased, as the table illustrates.

Table 4-3: Planned sample for the survey versus actual

	Designed Sample		Actual		Notes
	Total	Females	Total	Females	
VE-MOE-(VSS)	151	25	155	34	Number of interviewed females were added to cater for the deficits in obtaining female data below
VT-MOL (VTC)	268	92	188	110	
MOSA-VTC	77	27	93	11	Females unreachable
UNRWA-VTC	183	36	137	35	UNRWA Gaza provided data for males not for females
NGO-VET	202	78	159	29	2 female NGO institutes regretted the participation in survey, but participated in qualitative part
Semi-Governmental	78	11	32	0	2 institutes were reached, the third in Gaza stopped working
TOTAL	960	269	764	219	80% of the designed sample
Notes	Total is 15% of population	Females are 28% of total	80% filled the questionnaires	Females are 28.6% of total	

487 people participated in the qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, subdivided to 375 from 19 VET institutes among the different types operating in the oPt, including the governmental, Non-governmental and UN organisations offering VET, and model institutes. Respondents were management, teachers, students (male and female), graduates, communities and employers from the different institutes. Institutes were from different areas of the WB, serving different groups and following different authorities. 103 teachers and principals of general schools, as well as representatives of Directorates of Education, participated in the interviews and focus groups from eight out of 17 directorates in the WB. Nine policymakers were interviewed, including the Minister of Education and the Deputy Assistant at the MOL, the Acting General Directors for General Education, TVE and Counselling at the MOEHE, and the head of the Gender

Unit and National Committee for Women Employment. The table below illustrates the participants.

Table 4-4: People who participated in the research through the qualitative methods

Provider/Institute	# of selected institutes for qualitative interviews	Management (Principle/ director, deputy, counsellor)	Teachers	Students-M	Students-F	Graduates	Parents/ communities	Employers	Schools and principles of general schools	Director of directorates and deputies	Policymakers: VET and market representatives	Total Qualitative
VE-MOE	5	9	11	39	22							81
VT-MOL (VTC)	4	6	9	22	13	1						51
MOSA-VTC	-	1										1
UNRWA-VTC	2	8	8	0	11	11						38
NGO-VET Model 1- LWF	2	3	16	26	10	34	34	10				133
NGO-VET-Model 2-YMCA	1	4	5	9	5	9	3					35
Other NGO-VET institutes	2	2	5			8						15
Gaza	1	4		6	4							14
Semi-Governmental	2	3		4								7
School Teachers and Principals of general schools	within 8 directorates in WB								91			91
Directors and deputies of directorates										12		12
Policymakers (VET and Market representatives)											9	9
Formal and semi-formal VET institutes with annual intakes	19	40	54	106	65	63	37	10	91	12	9	487

This consisted of 98 interviews and FGDs covering 487 persons.

All in all, 1,240 persons were consulted through the research (eleven graduates were subtracted as they participated in both the survey and the FGD), 33 VET institutes participated, eight directorates, two ministries and two employers' representatives, as well as ten employers and several community representatives. The people who participated represented different right-holders and duty-bearers. The diversity and representation of different groups and localities provided meaningful information for the research and for triangulation of results.

Data Processing, Validation and Analysis

Data obtained from various qualitative and quantitative sources was processed, validated and analysed. The analysed data was presented in the research, while all raw, processed and analysed data were stored manually and electronically, part of the electronic data is attached in the annexed CD.

Translation for Data-Processing

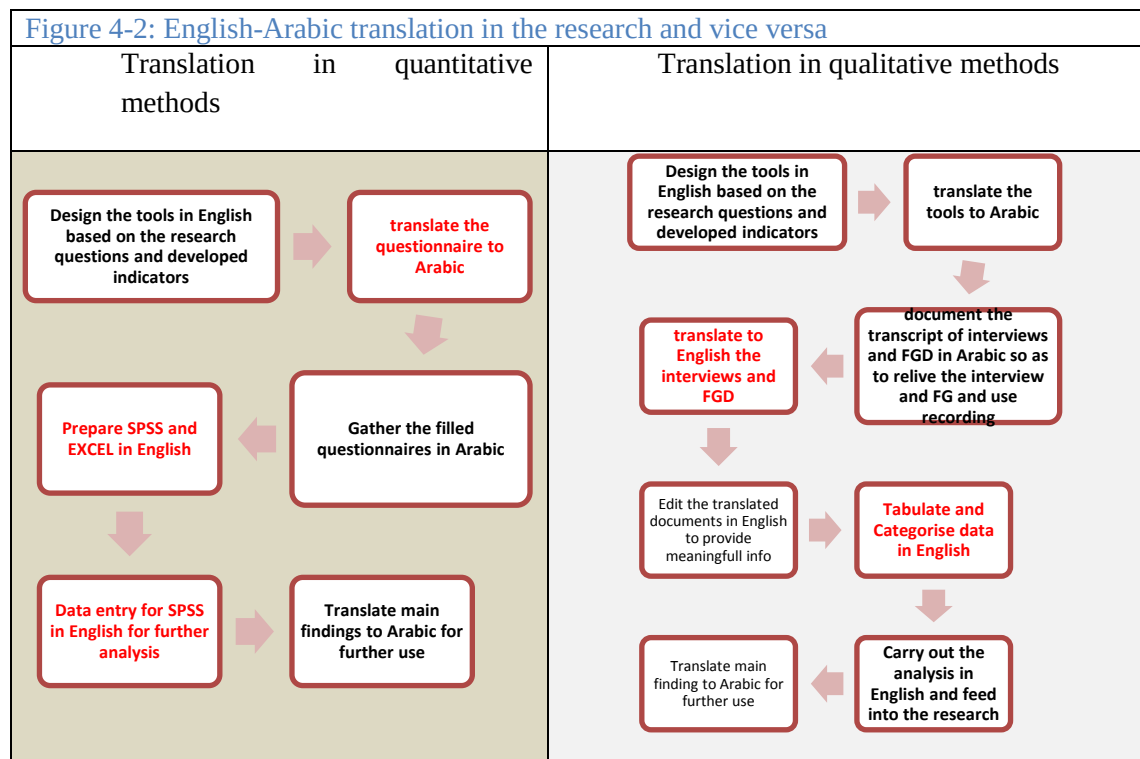
The main issue arising in the data processing was that of language. Hence, the challenge here was how to translate the questions in the research tools, which were based on a research question and literature review conducted in English, into the Arabic language used in the oPt, taking account also of culture and context. The reverse case was also valid, i.e., how to communicate the findings back to English without any loss of data or information.

The data collection was carried out in Arabic, while the analysis was done in English, and the literature review in both languages. Therefore, the link between the findings and the theoretical framework in English required care to ensure that the complexities of language translation and the socio-cultural lenses embedded therein, and which are reflected in the interviews and FGD, were captured in the analysis.

From previous experience, the sole use of a translator from outside the TVET sector has confused the data collected. To avoid this problem and any loss of ideas and information, and to harmonise the planned tools, the analysis was undertaken in English with the interviews and surveys conducted in Arabic. As I am bilingual, I have personally carefully reviewed the translation to ensure that it is a true reflection of the information

and attitudes portrayed by respondents. English-Arabic and vice-versa translation was carried according to a clear process as described in the figure below, where certain steps differed according to whether the process was being carried out for qualitative or quantitative data.

Meanwhile, to make best use of time, I used an assistant to document the scripts in Arabic and to conduct an initial translation into English, which I reviewed carefully against the recordings of the interviews and discussions. The survey was conducted by fieldworkers, who I trained to collect the data. I alone collected the data through the different qualitative methods.



Validation

Various steps were carried out to validate the instruments and the data. Piloting and preliminary testing of the tools was done for both the qualitative and quantitative methods, followed by other tests and steps to validate the results and minimise bias and random error.

The concept of “concurrent validity” was employed to provide a measure of validity for the survey, as a criterion relevant to the concept in question on which people are known to differ was employed (Bryman & Cramer, 1999, p.68). Accordingly, indicators were established that related to the research question and theoretical framework, and these were used as the measurement criteria, including the identification of the marginalised documented in Box-1, the empowerment indicators documented in Box-4, and the capability list presented in Box-3 in chapter 6.

The validity and reliability of the tool (the questionnaire) was tested through a pilot. Piloting was done with 31 graduates over a two-week period. Thereafter, the analysis of data and tests was carried out by applying validity tests, reliability tests and discrimination tests. Validation of data entry was done by checking the accuracy of data entry. Then the data was validated using a validity test of the questionnaire structure by factor analysis to find out the factors relevant to the research. A reliability test was done by applying Cronbach alpha to measure the internal reliability. Random error was tested using confidence interval and p-value tests (Bryman & Cramer, 1999). These tests were carried by an external SPSS analyst to ensure higher reliability and to reduce any bias. The results of the pilot confirmed the validity of the questions and the statements, and the reliability of the tool.

On an on-going basis, completion of the surveys was checked for every questionnaire before data entry. Validation of data entry was done through random selection of at least 5% of the entered questionnaires after the entry of a hundred questionnaires.

For the qualitative methods, the interviews and focus groups were also piloted. Cross checking of the recording and scripting of the interviews and focus groups ensured the non-biased interpretation of the respondents’ views. In addition, insights gained from the participant observation were checked against the other collected information to make valid inferences (Silverman, 2006).

Triangulation of the different methods and data sources was used to validate the findings. This allowed inconsistent data to be eliminated, helping to ensure the validity of the overall conclusions (Bryman, 1988).

Validation was also done by cross checking the findings with secondary sources such as national statistics and data, internal policies and regulations, previous studies, internal reports and data from the participating institutes, in addition to reviewing and further discussing any discrepancies that need to be understood further, as well as comparing across interviews.

Quantitative Data Processing and Analysis

For data processing, the questionnaires were checked, validated then coded, following which data entry was done in the SPSS software. The data was then cleaned and validated in SPSS.

The qualitative data arising from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire was categorised and grouped and some were quantified. All forms were grouped according to institutes and archived manually. All data processing and analysis was archived electronically.

The questionnaire quantitative data was analysed using SPSS and Excel. The analysis was done using various levels. The first analysis level was the use of descriptive analysis included frequency and percentages of students' characteristics, students' responses to questions, and means of research factors. Following which, all responses were analysed according to the set variable, and cross-tabbed using SPSS against the marginalisation dimensions, as listed in Box-1. All analysed data were presented on Excel. Based on this level of analysis and upon recognising certain trends, the data were further analysed using second, third and sometimes fourth levels of cross-tabbing to exhibit the multi-level of marginalisation. The huge number of completed questionnaires (764) enabled such analysis.

Further links between fields were also made according to the literature review, such as between achievements and empowerment, empowerment and aspirations, attitudes and reasons for joining. The final level of analysis was in grouping and presenting the findings in the research through further construction of grouped tables, summarised tables, and sometimes by means of visual representation through pie charts and histograms.

The aspiration fields were all cross-tabbed and linked to other fields according to concepts. The empowerment indicators were grouped based on the literature review, checked and averaged. Cross-tabulations and linked findings according to the theoretical framework were presented to illustrate the relationships to aspiration, empowerment indicators and achievements.

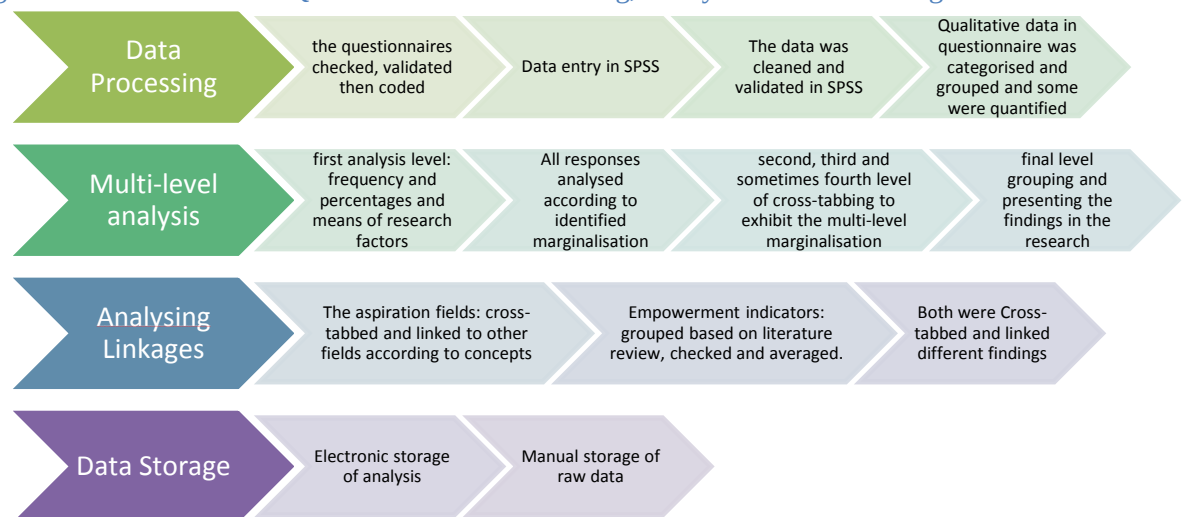
Hence, the analyses were multi-level descriptive analyses since the research produced a mass of in-depth qualitative analysis that required this method of electronic and human interaction, while triangulating the results with the quantitative findings. The analysis required understanding of the why and the how, hence capturing data and extracting information in this way supported the qualitative understanding of the trends and cases.

The qualitative data arising from the open-ended questions, such as free-text answers within the questionnaire, as well as suggestions and recommendations, were categorised and grouped. Some were quantified.

All filled questionnaires are stored taking account of ethical considerations. The SPSS files and analysed data are documented on my laptop and on a CD stored with the questionnaires, relevant data and analysis are presented within the thesis, while the general analysis is presented in annexes. Data-storage photos are in annexes.

The process of data processing and analysis is presented below:

Figure 4-3: The Process of Quantitative Data Processing, Analysis and Data Storage



Qualitative Data Processing and Analysis

All data gathered from the field was organised and archived. Original transcripts were stored, the documentation of transcripts and the data processing were archived automatically.

The data processing and analysis of the qualitative information gathered from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups were processed, as the transcripts were documented, translated and edited, codified, grouped by institute and further grouped by VET provider, or type of groups. These groups were: VET institutes of MOE, MOL, MOSA, NGO models, other NGOs, UNRWA and semi-governmental, educational directorates, policymakers and private sector representatives.

Following this, the transcribed text data discussions were analysed by manually tabulating the documentation against the set conceptual themes, cross-tabulated per group and quantified whenever possible and necessary. Authentic information from each interviewee/group was extracted based on the what, why and how questions (Silverman, 2006), noting that the conceptual themes and detailed indicators set at the beginning of the research, were based on the research questions and theoretical framework. Following which the different findings were tabulated for each VET provider according to their theme and group, and these findings were extracted, and quantified when needed.

Quotes from interviews and focus groups were extracted and tabulated against the set conceptual themes/categories. As well as success stories of graduates from the field, focus group discussion and interviews were categorised, codified and tabulated against the set conceptual categories.

The textual data, policies and regulations deducted from the gathered documents and reports was analysed and integrated within the findings. The textual data was treated through “their correspondence to the reality” rather than as being true or false (Silverman, 2006, p.157).

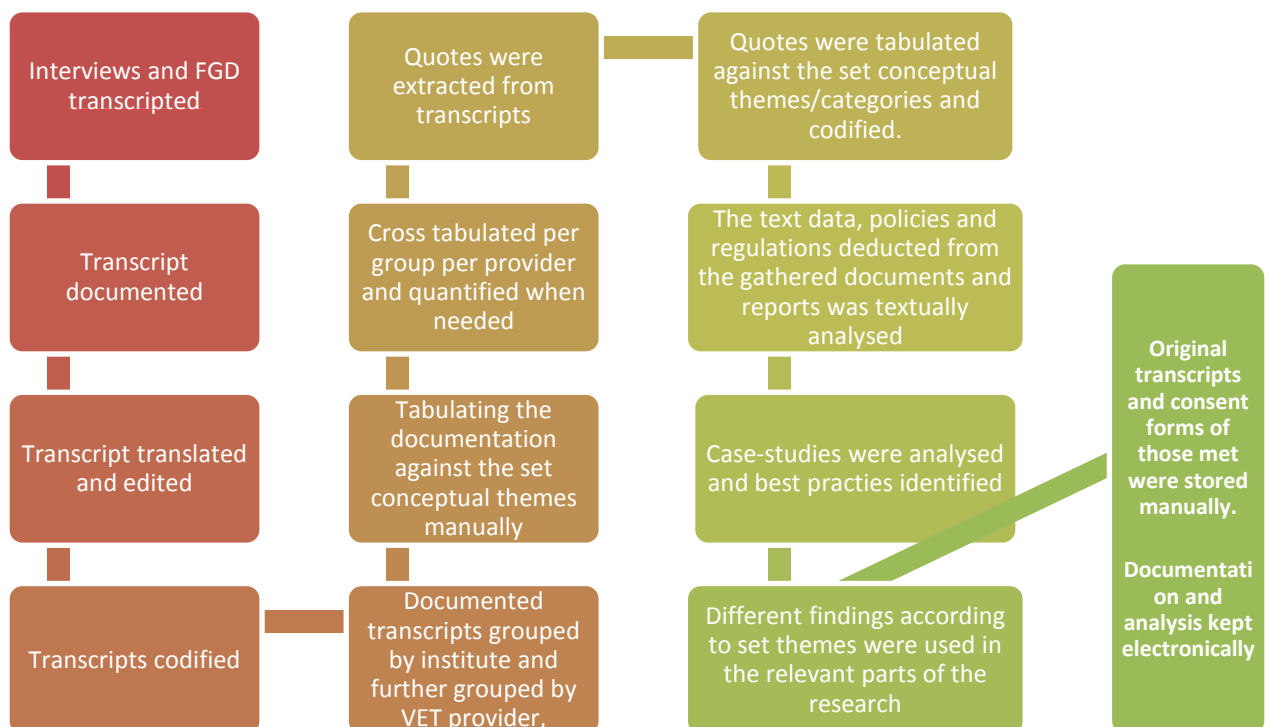
Filtering, cross-checking, finding interrelations and grouping of the data, quotes, success stories and documents were used to provide further analyses and tabulation according to

the set conceptual categories. In addition, charts and diagrams were constructed to show the relationships, causes, and to provide in-depth analysis.

Case-study findings related to interviews, focus groups, reports, and group discussions related to the cases were documented. These findings were also tabulated and cross-checked for each case to enable the analysis and deduction process for its documentation as a case study. Furthermore, best-practices in each case-study were documented and compared with the other cases along with the set conceptual categories. Moreover, and unintended, several best-practices were identified and deducted from different researched institutes.

A data file was completed with comprehensive treatment of the data, comprising all categorised texts, tabulated and grouped according to VET provider or category. The quotes were documented according to categories. The data-file was stored electronically and kept safely. A CD is attached of all the annexes, which are the documented and analysed qualitative and quantitative data. The figure below illustrates the process.

Figure 4-4: The Process of Qualitative Data Processing, Analysis and Data Storage



Triangulation

Triangulation was achieved by cross-checking the quantitative and qualitative primary data obtained through the research, and the secondary data obtained from the statistics and relevant studies. Triangulation indicated directions for further analysis of the available qualitative and quantitative data. It was also used to cross-check between the different qualitative methods used and the different data sources. It thus provided the basis for the analysis and deduction of findings with minimum bias, as well as a description of realities, providing the evidence for further discussion of and response to the research questions.

Ethical considerations

The research draws on the key ethical principles outlined in the BSA Statement of Ethical Practice (2009) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Ethic Framework (2009), as well as the Data Protection Act (1998).

The ethical principle of informed consent through being “both informed and voluntary” was upheld (Israel & Hay, 2006). The questionnaires contained an introductory part that provided an explanation of the research, describing its objectives and possible future uses. An information sheet was also prepared and distributed during each interview and focus group, and it was explained in the introduction of each session that participants had the choice to continue or decline. Furthermore, they had the choice to decline participation in or not to answer certain questions. The type of research did not impose any risks in terms of participants’ participation, particularly as the age of participants was above 16.

Confidentiality was upheld since the questionnaire was designed to provide anonymity for the participants. All data reporting of focus groups and interviews maintained participants’ confidentiality. Permission was sought for certain cases when data reporting required that a participants’ identity be revealed. Anonymity was the case for most interviews, however, except for the policymakers who are well-known. In such cases, permission was sought for use of their quotations. Data from the interviews and FGD were codified, and participants referred to anonymously in the research in-order to

protect the privacy for both individual and institutional participants. Annexes illustrate the coding used.

Participants were provided the opportunity to raise complaints by contacting the researcher at her email address, or the supervisor and School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator at the University of Nottingham. Data gathering activities concerning VET institutes and graduates was carried out only with the agreement of the head of school/organisation, or the authorised representative.

Security of data was upheld, as the data file, documented FGD and interview data are kept in a password secured file, while the completed questionnaires are kept in a locked cupboard, for the minimum required period of eight years according to ethical practice, after which they will be destroyed. The analysed data were only shared partly through the annexes. I would also protect the misuse of data by third parties, although findings and data might be published and circulated, which was made clear to participants.

Challenges in Data Collection and Analysis

Various risks and challenges were identified in planning the data collection. Adjustments to the design of the data collection methods were made to mitigate the effect of these risks on the research.

A major challenge faced in data collection was the inability to access the fieldwork sites due to the mobility restrictions imposed by the Israeli occupation and the permit regime, as detailed in the context chapter. Since the fieldwork was conducted in different areas of the oPt, access was an issue at various times and delayed some of the data collection. Although I was able to obtain a special permit from the Israeli authorities to access East Jerusalem as part of my consultancy work, obtaining a permit to access Gaza was not easy. This was only achieved through my work as a consultant for a specific mission in Gaza, one year after finalising collection of the data in Sept. 2016. Hence, I used this opportunity to conduct qualitative data collection. The Gaza surveys were carried out by local fieldworkers or by phone.

To overcome the risk of mobility restrictions between areas, fieldworkers were selected from the same areas. Where fieldworkers had an issue in reaching certain areas they

completed the surveys by phone. The selected fieldworkers were highly experienced ones, who had worked with me previously in TVET-related studies. The team were trained prior to data collection, remotely in the case of Gaza, and were sent related information after the pilot as well as being provided with on-going support during data collection.

Another challenge arose from the existence of the two Palestinian authorities in the WB and in Gaza. Official papers signed for the work in the WB were not accepted in Gaza. Fieldworkers in Gaza, therefore had to access officials to obtain their consent for participation and to access the required lists of graduates. The fact that I have been working for a long time in the field and am therefore well-known helped to facilitate their acceptance. Nevertheless, although I was able to obtain the lists of the selected VET institutes I did not have access to all the 2011 graduates from the ministries. Furthermore, when accessing the UNRWA in Gaza, which is operationally separate from the WB programme, I had to go through the process again and provide an official letter from the university.

The limited published official statistics and data, except for that of the MOE, was a further challenge in respect to obtaining the 2011 graduate data for the sampling. The data used was the 2014 national survey data conducted by the BTC (Gabrscek et al., 2015). As noted above, this was likely to deviate by which 5 to 10% from the relevant figures.

Another issue raised was that during the FGD students and graduates were sometimes reluctant to sign any papers, as living under military occupation makes youth suspicious of any signatures that could put them in trouble. The presence of teachers or management at the beginning of FGD provided the needed trust in this measure. The one-to-one filling of the survey provided ample time to explain and read the paper.

The limited time available to conduct the FGD in school settings presented a challenge. To cut down on paper and time in filling the consent form during FGD, I developed a single paper that all participants could sign. This was reviewed by the research supervisor and is in the annexes.

Audio-taping was not accepted during FGD and interviews since many respondents felt uncomfortable talking, or revealing their feelings, attitudes and thoughts while being taped. I therefore stopped using the audio-taping, and instead used manual transcripts. Since I had prior experience of this process, this was achieved quickly in tandem with the interviews / FDGs. All original transcripts are stored.

Although experienced in conducting surveys and management of data, the huge amount of data from the survey (10 pages with 19 questions and 219 fields), the different interviews and FGD, with over 1200 participants in total presented a real challenge, hence an SPSS specialist was used to process the raw SPSS data, according to the requirements I set, which is first level of analysis as per the block-diagram, after which I carried out the further analysis and linkages. I also reverted to minimising the complexity of the quantitative analysis, focusing on the different data sources of quantitative and qualitative ones.

Limitations of the Research

Although the research provides comprehensive information and data, it is limited in the following ways:

- Geographic: the research is limited to the oPt areas, namely the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza
- Time: The pilot was conducted between November 2014 and January 2015; the survey was continued until July 2015. The qualitative fieldwork was conducted during the period from December 2014 and August 2015, and then, due to mobility restrictions, interviews and FGD in Gaza were completed on 30th September 2016.
- Skills level: The research is limited to the first three levels of Vocational Education and Training and relevant work skills (limited, skilled and vocational).
- Institutional: VET Institutes: The research is limited to all Governmental and non-governmental public sectors' institutes; the research does not include private sector institutes.

Theorising the Findings

Handling the processed data according to the theoretical and conceptual framework was done at a later stage, as all data that were processed according to conceptual themes, and were only later presented according to the research sub-questions (RSQ) which adhere to different theories and approaches. The following was adopted:

- Valued and achieved functionings are presented as part of the capability list, listed in Box-3 situated in chapter 6. This is linked with the capability approach within human development, in response to RSQ2.
- Empowerment achievement was also linked to GAD and an empowerment framework, following Kabeer's (1999) call to measure empowerment and link the empowerment and agency discussions, in response to RSQ3. Empowerment indicators are presented in Box-4 in chapter 7.
- Structural challenges and enabling factors were analysed with links to policies and measures of different providers, as well as regional and national systems, linked to political economy and VET debates in response to RSQ4. All are summarised within Boxes 5-10 in chapter 8.
- Marginalisation and intersectional marginalisation were linked with the analysis of inequality and identifying marginalisation within the Palestinian context. These are defined in Box-1, chapter 2, in response to RSQ1.
- All concepts used were linked with the definitions extracted from the different theories and approaches as listed in Box-2, chapter 3.

Linking the conceptual themes was also done to answer the main research question as follows:

- Linking achievement of aspirations to achievement of empowerment and achievement of functionings.
- Linking empowerment to capabilities and functioning and vice-versa.
- Linking marginalisation to achievement of functionings, empowerment and aspirations.
- Linking aspirations with reasons for joining and attitudes of individuals and communities.

- Linking policies and measures to achieved and valued functionings and capabilities, while adding the obligations of the duty-bearers to the CL to ensure the achievement of the VET learners' wellbeing, based on structure and agency discussion as well as GAD theory.
- Linking VET with inequality and its implications for the global debate.

Reflection on the Process

The research used mixed qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the main question of: “***How can VET contribute to the advancement of Human Development and to Reducing Inequalities of the marginalised?***”, using *human development, GAD complemented by an intersectionality approach and political economy lenses*. The research is based on the theoretical framework that links these different theories and approaches, and relates to international debate about VET as well as Palestinian debates as detailed in the previous chapters.

The research is based on a feminist praxis where the emphasis is on the underlying power relations that generate and maintain inequalities. The purpose is to produce models and emancipation concepts that would advance the understanding and practice of VET within the oPt context, and also globally. The process involved analysing right-holders and institutions by providing the opportunity of listening to the “voice” of the right-holders and “advocating” for change among policymakers.

The research methodology relates to my insider/outsider positioning, as well as the expected role of the research as a tool that would be used to raise the voice of the VET learners' and advocate for change. Hence, I have used additional methods to provide reliable findings that can be used by policymakers for change, building on my previous experience of using mixed methods and triangulating the findings, as well as my time, resources, management skills and ability. The complexity of the research methodology is essential in order to contribute to emancipation and address the inequality deficits. My ability to deal with such complexity is grounded on my rich experience in VET and gender, and being a researcher, as illustrated in snapshot1, as well as in-depth understanding of political economy.

The research is analysed based on the theoretical framework and it is hoped that this will provide a new understanding of the role and value of VET that can contribute to advocacy at the policy level in oPt and internationally. The results of the research would be disseminated through academic papers and publications, workshops and participating in conferences.

In this last regard, the main findings were presented at the UKFIET 13th conference in 2015, an article was also presented at NORRAG (Hilal, 2015b), an academic paper with my main supervisor was published in Journal of International and Comparative Education (JICE) in 2016 (Hilal & McGrath, 2016), another paper has been submitted to be published in December 2017 in the Special Issue of the International Journal of Training Research (Hilal, in press), and a chapter is under preparation for the Springer International Handbook on Vocational Education and Training for the Changing World of Work. At the national level I have been invited to present the findings at a national conference in March 2018, and have been asked to participate in a policy paper on VET.

The following four chapters will present the theorised findings in response to each research question, presented in chronological order and followed by the overall conclusions.

Chapter 5. **Inequalities within a Context of Marginalisation**

This chapter will be answering the question: is VET attracting the marginalised? Here we have to also understand who are the vulnerable and marginalised in the context of Palestine. What are the factors adding to their marginalisation, the layers of marginalisation and their intersectional relations? Why is VET attracting the marginalised?

This chapter will relate to the part of the literature review on inequality, drawing from Gender and Development theory to further explain inequality in general. The specific focus on the Social Relations Approach within the GAD theory has also contributed. This approach was complemented by the intersectionality approach, which extends the understanding of inequalities to being interconnected multi-layers of marginalisation and vulnerabilities that shape the inequality of individuals and communities. Intersectionality with regards to gender, race and class as social constructions varies across geography and time, and that markers of difference are not viewed as static traits, but as processes that are (re)produced in the daily actions of people.

As defined in Box-1, marginalised groups in the oPt are the male and female youth, women, and those affected by the context related vulnerability, in addition to the economically vulnerable groups, as well as people with disability (PWD).

This chapter will analyse VET graduates according to identified marginalisation parameters within the Palestinian context, and will identify intersectional marginalisation as well. Quantitative findings are based on the graduates' survey, while quotes and qualitative findings are based on interviews with the management and staff of VET institutes, as well as the focus group discussions with VET students and parents.

VET Graduates and Students According to Context-Related Vulnerability

This part will illustrate findings in respect to students and graduates in context-related vulnerable localities, youth and their households directly affected by occupation measures, refugees and other context related vulnerabilities, all leading to disempowerment and impoverishment.

Context-Related Vulnerable Localities

The results indicated that 30% of the surveyed graduates live in vulnerable localities as detailed in the table below. Almost one in two graduates live in Areas B and C, and more than a quarter of graduates live in Area C, this is more than three times their representation in the population, and more than would be expected based on the location of the graduates' institutes, since only four out of 31 institutes were from these areas. The results also indicate that they enrolled mostly in WB VET institutes, indicating the importance of VET for this group.

Table 5-1: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by Residence Zone (according to vulnerability)			Table 5-2: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by Residence Area (Areas A,B,C)		
	Count	N %		Count	N %
Gaza	123	16.1%	Area A	336	49.6%
EJ inside the wall	31	4.1%	Area B	158	23.3%
Jerusalem outside the wall	15	2.0%	Area C	183	27.0%
Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	9	1.2%	Total	677	100.0%
Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	49	6.4%			
Remaining WB	535	70.2%			
Total	762	100.0%			

For Gaza, the sample chosen was skewed, hence has less representativeness. Students from Gaza cannot access any WB institute and discussion with the management of the VET institute in Gaza, Near-East Council of Churches (NECC) and their students highlighted that there was considerable excess demand for VT in Gaza. NECC accepts between 10-40% of those applying depending on the centre and the course provided, some of the students mentioned that they had to wait for years after applying to be accepted for enrolment, two of the students mentioned that they applied more than once, and they were accepted in the second year. They also mentioned:

In our groups there are many students who applied and were rejected and continued to apply, two students were accepted after five years of continuous application

Explaining the high enrolment of students from EJ and Area C, one of the EJ VET institute directors noted:

VET is very important in Jerusalem because it is the safest choice for many reasons; to provide a profession for drop-outs before joining the market and avoiding black jobs and exploitation, and due to the fact that university graduates have no chance of employment due to unequal competition, graduates can work in the vocation taught, they can open their own business and they have success stories. The cases of success stories are numerous and are distributed [geographically] across Palestine, and historically, and many social cases were able to become successful through provided training.

Moreover, this situation and marginalisation would affect the youth wellbeing and social status, one of the employers, who is a parent of a VET student, noted;

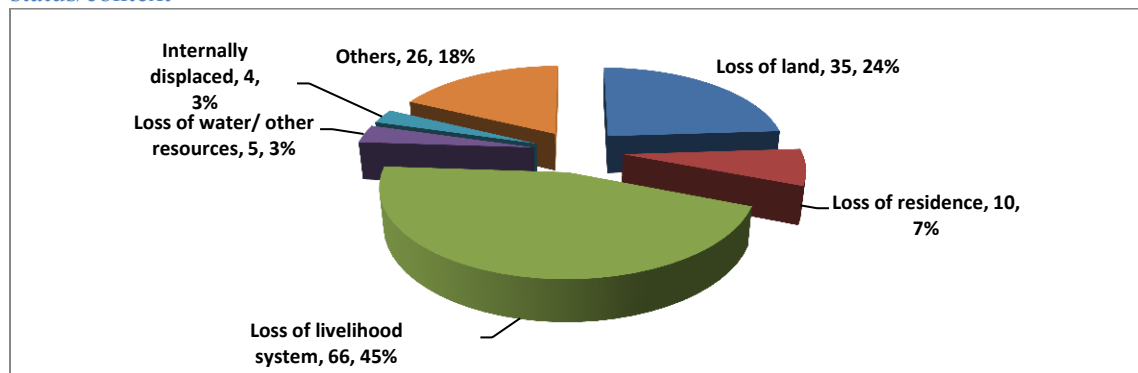
As a Palestinian in Jerusalem there are a lot of challenges in guiding youth (...). The political situation will lead us to collapse. I know what surrounds me and try to get to youth.

The attraction of VET in vulnerable localities was apparent in the percentages of applicants compared to capacity, in that this disparity becomes greater in these vulnerable localities and from youths living in vulnerable localities.

Directly Affected by the Israeli Occupation and Measures

One in five of the surveyed graduates mentioned that their household was affected by the context and occupation measures, and this became more than one in four for those living in Jerusalem outside the wall and one in three for those living adjacent to the wall. The graph illustrates how they were affected. In the figure “others” includes those affected by the siege (graduates from Gaza), the overall worsened economic situation affecting their work, no permits for work, the existence of a gate to their community, etc.

Figure 5-1: Distribution of graduated students by “How household was affected by the status/context”



As noted in chapter 2, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) account for more than 100,000 of the population of around 4.5 million. It is clear from the figures above, however, that the impact of the occupation is spread much more widely. Highest is in the loss of livelihood, whether due to loss of land for settlements, and hence loss of their agriculture opportunities, or since the breadwinner could not get a permit to work as a worker inside Israel as they had used to.

Those affected by this situation are impoverished and disempowered, in most cases affected by worsened economic situation, and thus are likely to intersect with poverty.

Refugees

Results indicated that almost half of the graduates are refugees (46.4%), this is higher than the national figures of refugees among the population (42.8%) (PCBS, 2015), while two out of three of the graduates in Gaza are refugees, resembling their percentage among the population in Gaza (65%). Refugee graduates are distributed among all institutes, but comprise 93% of the UNRWA graduates, 58% among MOSA graduates, and 41% of NGOs' graduates, reflecting the missions of these providers.

The intersectionality between poverty and refugee status was apparent in the graduates' stated reasons for undertaking VET. 77% of refugees compared to 63% of non-refugees agreed with the statement "VET expenses are affordable for me and my family". 87% refugees compared to 78% of non-refugees agreed with the statement "I want to join the labour market as quick as possible to support my family".

The intersectional relationship of refugee status with other inequalities is apparent through national statistics that indicate higher poverty and higher unemployment in the refugee camps (PCBS, 2011, 2016).

Meanwhile, 69% refugees compared to 61% of non-refugees agreed with the statement "Many people in my community join VET", indicating the long track of the provision of VET for refugees in Palestine.

Other Context Related Vulnerabilities:

There are other segments of the population and of youth that have been affected by the context, such as ex-prisoners. The MAJ has been providing VET for these groups to integrate them back into the community. As noted by MAJ management:

Since its founding in 1998, MAJ acted as a training institute serving ex-prisoners, plus families of martyrs and those affected by the occupation, and those with special needs and students who drop out of school or students who were not lucky enough to pass the Tawjihi¹⁵ in general.

MAJ had to open branches in different localities to absorb target groups. They are also cooperating with an NGO to provide training for ex-prisoners and victims of torture.

VET Graduates and Students According to Economic Vulnerability

Economic vulnerability was identified in relation to household poverty, vulnerable to poverty and the unemployed.

In-Poverty

Two out of three graduates' households had income that was below the national poverty line when they enrolled in the VET institute. Half of their households had income below the deep poverty line.¹⁶ This is above the national figures of 26% according to consumption and 48.6% according to income (36.2% in the WB and 69.3% in Gaza), and 37.6% of deep poverty according to income (24.6% in the WB and 59.2% in Gaza) in 2010. Thus, graduates were 1.5 times more likely to be in poverty than Palestinians overall (including WB and Gaza) according to income¹⁷. Moreover, most EJ graduates had a family income below the poverty line.¹⁸ The results indicated disparity according to gender, locality and VET provider, as the table below indicates. A higher percentage of female graduates' households had incomes below the poverty line (70% compared to

¹⁵ Twajihi is the national examination conducted at end of 12 years of schooling

¹⁶ The National Poverty line is calculated using the PCBS poverty line of 2,168NIS (553USD) for 2009 for a family of six (2 adults & 3 children) according to consumption over a one-year period, the deep poverty line is estimated at 1,719NIS (439 USD), for 2010, the poverty line and deep poverty line for the reference household (two adults and three children) stood at 2,237NIS (609USD) and 1,783NIS (478USD) respectively source: PCBS, Poverty in the Palestinian Territories, Palestinian Household Expenditure and Consumption Survey 2010 (PCBS, 2011, p.23).

¹⁷ The calculated poverty line and deep poverty lines of graduates' household were according to the number of family members and children in the family, along the tables of PCBS (PCBS, 2011, p.24), as poverty line was at 2700NIS, and the deep poverty line was 2160NIS, and the EJ Poverty Line was according to (NII, 2010).

¹⁸ The poverty line for EJ inside the Wall is linked with the Israeli poverty line; i.e. the poverty line in 2009 in Israel. The monthly poverty rate for a couple with two children was 5,807NIS, according to National Insurance Institute's Annual Poverty Report for 2009, while deep poverty is not defined. (NII, 2010)

65.6% for males). 93% of graduates' families from Gaza were below the poverty line when enrolled, 72% of the refugees and 76% of those living in refugee camps. This disparity indicates the intersectionality between poverty and the different inequalities.

These percentages were reflected in the distribution of graduates of institutes according to provider. Graduates with households under the poverty line were most prevalent among those graduating from MOSA and UNRWA.

Table 5-3 Percentage of graduates with a household income level below the poverty line or deep poverty line at the time of enrolment by gender, locality and VET Provider

	VET Graduates											
	Overall	Gender		Locality			VET Provider					
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ ¹⁹	WB	MOE	MOL	MOSA	Semi-Governmental	UNRWA	NGO
Deep poverty	50%	49%	52%	91%	NA	42%	39%	36%	80%	55%	63%	55%
poverty	66.9%	65.6%	70%	93%	97%	61%	59%	57%	89%	71%	73%	70%

For graduates living in East Jerusalem, the Israeli poverty line was considered. It was found that 97% of families were below the poverty line, higher than the 75.4% figure presented by Israeli Human Rights Organisation (ACRI, 2015).

Gaza graduates are among those facing the highest incidence of poverty, indicating the intersectionality between context-related marginalisation and poverty. This intersectionality reflects the high percentages of impoverished population as a result of the context, in this case the “prolonged occupation”, discussed earlier.

Confirming the graduates' survey results presented above, students enrolling in VET for economic reasons were apparent throughout the interviews and discussions with VET management and teachers in the group discussion with students in almost all institutes. One of the VET management noted:

Reasons for applying: Mainly financial conditions/poverty, or interest, or parents' pressure due to financial status,

¹⁹ Ibid

The effect of household poverty on enrolment in VET has differed according to gender as noted by another VTC management and teachers' discussion, as they mentioned:

Various reasons for student enrolment, either low grades at school or Tawjihi, or interest in vocation, as well as poverty, as some students especially girls could have high grade to enable them to enrol in universities [if they want to] but families can't afford their education.

Poor households' decisions about how to use their recourses in respect to education and training are also gender-relevant; this was noted by many VET institutes, who started to provide scholarships for the poor, especially for females.

When stating their reasons for joining VET, over two thirds of the graduates mentioned that VET expenses are affordable for them and their families, and 82% wanted to join the labour market as quickly as possible to support their families, indicating the economic status element. Female graduates indicated similar reasons with 6% more females than males citing the economic effect. This was also confirmed through the above table indicating highest rates of poverty among female graduates. Many also stated getting a scholarship as one of the reasons that encouraged them to join VET. Overall, 12.8% of the graduates mentioned this, with it being much more common amongst female graduates (17.4% compared to 10.9% for males).

Indeed, male youth from poor households would usually drop-out from academic schools, sometimes not reaching VET, to work as unskilled workers in order to support their families. One of the MOE Directors presented the numbers for his directorate:

Tawjihi students (12th grade) 1,800 are male and 2,700 girls, while the basic education from 1-10 there are (31,000) females and (33,000) males, but males [after the 10th grade] drop-out to work in the Israeli labour market and settlements.

Another manifestation of poverty's effect on choice to access VET is the presence of high achievers at vocational schools from poor families, who are competing for scholarships to go to university, as their families cannot afford their higher education. This was noted by one of the principals:

The first category [of students enrolling in VSS] is the smart and outstanding students, almost 10%. Most of them would like to earn a high average in order to get a scholarship to a university, they compete over the first rank in each Directorate

Conversely, some had started college or university but had had to drop out due to inability to meet the financial cost and the long period of time spent acquiring skills for work, something they consider luxury. They had then moved to VET.

Vulnerable to Poverty

The main drivers of poverty resulting from the context related factors were identified earlier, namely loss of land, resources, livelihood systems, losing a breadwinner, etc. There are also other drivers of poverty, however, that are related to social factors as will be seen later in the chapter. Moreover, there are other household related contributors of poverty, such as the number of members of the households and the number of independent members (children, students, elderly, family members with chronic illness or disability unable to work); these were also investigated through the graduates' survey. The PCBS had indicated that poverty increases with an increased number of family members and number of children in the household (PCBS, 2011).

The results indicated that 70% of graduates came from families with seven or more members at the time of enrolling. 63.6% of graduates' households included three children or more, as the tables indicate.

Table 5-4: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by number of household members

	Count	N %
1-2	5	.7%
3-4	31	4.1%
5-6	190	24.9%
7-8	332	43.5%
9-10	154	20.2%
More than 10	52	6.8%
Total	764	100.0%

Table 5-5: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by number of children (below 18) in the family including graduate when enrolling

	Count	N %
0	6	0.8%
1-2	271	35.6%
3-4	362	47.5%
5-6	98	12.9%
7-8	22	2.9%
9-10	3	0.4%
More than 10	0	0.0%
Total	762	100.0%
Missing Data	2	

The results also indicated that 96% of graduates' families had at least one dependent person other than children, and that 62% have three or more children in addition to at least one person unable to work, indicating the vulnerability of the graduates.

Table 5-6: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by number of people with disability, illness, students (above 18) and old people unable to work in their household when enrolling

	Count	N %
0	28	3.9%
1-2	511	70.7%
3-4	155	21.4%
5-6	18	2.5%
7-8	8	1.1%
9-10	3	.4%
More than 10	0	0.0%
Total	723	100.0%
Missing Data	23	

Table 5-7: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by gender of family head

	Count	N %
Male (father, uncle, grandfather)	707	94.3%
Female (Mother, grandmother, aunt)	43	5.7%
Total	750	100.0%

The results suggest that a high proportion of the graduates have a large family, when enrolling. In addition to 96% families have at least one family member with disability, illness, students (above 18) and old people unable to work in their household. All of which are determinants of poverty (PCBS, 2011).

The study results also indicated that 5.7% of graduates' households are headed by females. 80% of graduates' households with a female family head were under the poverty line and 60% under the deep poverty line, in line with PCBS poverty characteristics indicating that poverty is higher in families headed by females (PCBS, 2011).

The Unemployed

VET students and graduates comprise other economically disadvantaged groups including unemployed graduates from other educational systems, who joined in order to find a job opportunity in the future. It was noted through interviews and group discussions that many male and female students in various VTCs enrolled because they had finished college and had not found a job. One of the female students in a VTC mentioned that:

I am a graduate of Al-Quds University from 2007, specialised in teaching methods, I studied Secretary because there are no jobs. (..) I want to learn IT and Secretary to find job opportunities.

Many VET institutes directors noted that the university or college graduates are trying to enrol in VTCs or in upgrading courses to learn skills for employment, due to the high unemployment rates among them. 5%-10% of students in the MOL-VTC are unemployed higher education graduates, as noted by the management of institutes.

VET Graduates and Students According to Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability was identified in relation to gender, social status, social hardship cases and disability

Gender and Social Status

Discrepancies are apparent in the social status of VET graduates according to gender, with 90% of male graduates being single compared to 55% of females, a 35% gender gap. Furthermore, when looking at gender and age group, the 22-24 age group had more married females and the age group above 29 had more single females. Divorced and widowed women outnumbered divorced and widowed males. It was not clear if this was the case before graduating or after. The difference according to age and gender in marital status reflects the national figures for the median age for first marriage (24.7 years old for males, and 20.3 years old for females) (PCBS, 2015).

Table 5-8: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by Social Status, Gender and Age

Social Status		Age				Total
		19-21	22-24	25-29	Above 29	
Single	Male	94.4%	90.2%	59.1%	0.0%	89.8%
	Female	83.0%	44.7%	54.5%	25.0%	54.8%
Married	Male	5.6%	9.5%	40.9%	100.0%	10.0%
	Female	15.1%	53.7%	39.4%	62.5%	42.4%
Divorcee	Male	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Female	1.9%	0.8%	6.1%	12.5%	2.3%
Widowed	Male	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Female	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Total	Male	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Female	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

These findings show that VET is attractive or can support females regardless of their marital status, especially given the low age of marriage among females.

Some of the NGOs are enrolling women in general and women in difficult social conditions in particular, as one manager of a VET institute targeting females clarified:

When marginalised women get chance, they achieve more than the privileged. That's one reason we target marginalised women. (...) Our programmes target those who don't have a chance, women who have social situations, who are not registered in MOSA, divorced women, and from poor families

Graduates from another similar organisation noted:

Women attending the training are mostly those in need and need to work, some are working from home

Another NGO providing training for both male and female youths clarified how women from different social groups are attracted to VET. During group discussion management and male teachers noted:

The social factor [for enrolment] is clearer; we had five divorcees [out of around 30 in the current group], widows, social cases, women who want to work due to their social status

Married woman who want to work are usually the ones from poor families with many dependents or with husbands or fathers unable to work, who have limited opportunity to work or who have been long-term unemployed. This was noted through various discussions and was clarified by the management of a women's VET institute:

30% of our beneficiaries are mothers who want to support their households financially. Most of them have difficult social situations; they're married at a young age and got divorced at the age of 25-26. They take their kids and she's left without any support. She has no job or degree. Women's organisations refer them to us often (as part of the social safety net).

This was reflected in the age difference between male and female graduates, since 95% of male graduates were below 25 years old four years after graduation, compared to 81% of female graduates. This shows the effect of early marriage on moving women outside the education and training system, with VET offering a way back in to education, employment and income generation.

In addition, these cases clarify the intersectionality between gender, social status and economic vulnerability. This was reflected through the fact that 100% of divorced and widowed were under poverty line when enrolled. Also, females were more likely to cite economic reasons for joining VET: 74% for females, opposed to 68% for males, with

100% of divorced and widowed women compared to 67% of single women agreeing with the reason. Both percentages are high and indicate the vulnerability of VET graduates in general.

Moreover, in many of the group discussions with students and graduates, it was noted that female graduates mostly joined as tuition was free and they wanted to open a business from home, or get employed. As one teacher noted;

Some are married and others are unmarried, ages vary according to youth age. Some want to support their new family, others want to support themselves or their original family

The striving to support oneself and one's family is related to poverty in some cases, but in other cases it is related to social status and social attitude and interlinks social attitude with poverty, as Gaza female students noted during a focus groups discussion:

Society don't respect divorced women, she is subjected to more restrictions and her father or brother should support her, but if she can support herself then this will not make herself a burden upon her family and will change the attitude.

Professor Shakhsher, the MOEHE Minister, noted the restrictions families add to female students' choices:

Lots of times parents would prefer VE in such a case [poverty], especially for female students its more obvious that the social attitude affects their decision for their daughters, so instead of studying engineering if she has the interest and the ability, the family might send her for a sewing course, and they can send the son to study medicine. Parents' choices and effects on their children are also related to their communities, and available job opportunities, general schools have an effect as well.

Poverty, limited resources and social attitudes direct families' decisions regarding their daughters, since families would prioritise male education at university over that of females, which is also related to the expected roles of males and females, and the male role in supporting his family. This was reflected in economic reasons female graduates stated for joining VET and scholarships available compared to males.

Moreover, conservativeness is also one reason for parents' choices, as sometimes they prefer female-only education and female-only professions, as noted by one of the women-only VET institutes:

Parents push their daughters to get a Tawjihi certificate, after which they guide them to join the (...) [our] Centre because they do not want their daughters to mix with males and

because the centre has a boarding facility for females, and also for the centre being a Women Association

Hence the intersectionality between gender, poverty and social status is apparent. Through gender, another layer of obstacles related to social attitudes adds to the burden of intersectional inequalities.

Social Hardship Cases

Gender-related social cases were identified. It was noted that females facing social hardship joined VET, i.e., the divorced or widowed, or those who had to be the main breadwinner of the family, or who were catering for the sick and the disabled. VET learners from these families are also considered social hardship cases.

In addition, there are other social cases such as troubled youths, and juveniles. Teachers and principals noted that troubled students with unacceptable behaviour are pushed out towards VET, especially in male schools, as noted by one male principal;

We advise students depending on the average grade, and behaviour, and sometimes we threaten him if he does not succeed, we will let him pass but send him to vocational education.

Behaviour is also in many cases interrelated with low achievement and the education system, but this is beyond the scope of the current research.

These groups were noted in many group discussions with the students in various institutes. In one of the groups, three out of 14 students joined as they were having problems with teachers at their academic schools.

The intersectional relation of social hardship cases and other determinants of marginalisation were noted, as was the link between social reasons and poverty. The intersectional relationship between achievement, behaviour, social and economic status was noted by the MOSA representative:

Most of these students are drop-outs or potential drop-outs, or troubled children with families that are suffering difficult social and economic conditions.

Disability

People with Disability (PWD) are also among the students enrolled at VET institutes, at percentages ranging from 1% to 10%. Their acceptance is based on their disability, the

training available and the support services provided, as well as the institute's regulations and policies. As an example, in Dura VSS two girls were accepted with hearing impairment, they are supported by a teacher who knew sign language. Others have a few students with minor disabilities (1%-10%).

On the other hand, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) operates VTCs for PWD, as noted by the MOSA VET representative:

The Ministry also operates other centres for people with disabilities, similar to the Centre for Social Rehabilitation, and it is The Vocational Training Centres for People with Disabilities (VTC-PWD). People in charge of this centre are the PWD department at the Ministry. Centres are Sheikha Fatima (South) and Sheikh Khalifa (North). Our Social Rehabilitation Centre (SRC) of Hebron, has integrated people with special needs in the centre and in its vocational training programmes, but the vocations they can enrol in are limited to ceramics and shoe making since it is not dangerous (more of handwork than machinery compared to other sections).

Most institutes are providing opportunities for PWD, as a director of a MOL-VTC mentioned;

Our Centre have paid attention to people with special needs, we have a good percentage at the centre, as there are some deaf students and some with mobility disability moving on chairs, they study secretary.

Other VET institutes have also conducted tailor made courses for PWD students in cooperation with and based on requests from Civil Society Organisations working in this area, as noted by MAJ management:

With the (...) Rehabilitation of The Disabled program (...), we provide VET, but they have a full programme that prepares them for the VET and provides awareness and guidance. They provide counselling for the groups in preparation before sending them. (...) We held two sessions that were successful with the Red Crescent through the Disabled Person's Federation and with Abu- Raya Rehabilitation Centre, with the participation of 5-7 Associations, for people with disabilities (including movement, visual and hearing disabilities)

VET Graduates and Students According to Educational Vulnerability

Educational vulnerability was identified in relation to low achievers, drop-outs and potential drop-outs, as well as to parents' qualifications and skills.

Low Achievers, Drop-Outs or Potential Drop-Outs

Two thirds of the graduates had low marks at their school prior to their entry at the VET institute. As survey results indicate, these outcomes vary according to location, being lower in Gaza, where 46% of graduates had low marks before joining VET. It also varied according to gender, being higher for females, as 74% had low marks before joining VET.

Graduates that had low marks also varied according to VET provider. Officially, students are considered to have Low marks if they achieved less than 65%. Low grades were the most prevalent among MOSA graduates (89%), followed by MOL graduates (81.7%), and the lowest at MOE (45%), and UNRWA (55%). This is also linked with institutes' policies as will be discussed in chapter eight.

Table 5-9: Distribution of graduated students by grade in their last class at school before enrolling at VET, according to VET Provider

	MOE	MOL	MOSA	Other ministries	UNRWA	NGO	Total
Below 50	4.1%	10.8%	17.2%	25.8%	2.2%	5.9%	8.2%
50-55	17.1%	24.2%	43.0%	3.2%	20.0%	16.0%	21.8%
56-65	23.8%	46.8%	29.0%	38.7%	32.6%	39.5%	34.7%
Below 50-65	45.1%	81.7%	89.2%	67.7%	54.8%	61.3%	64.7%
66-80	42.5%	16.1%	10.8%	32.3%	42.2%	36.1%	30.6%
Above 80	12.4%	2.2%	.0%	.0%	3.0%	2.5%	4.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: the highlighted row is the sum of the above rows and indicates the low marks threshold

In stating their reasons for joining VET, over 80% of graduates preferred practical training over academic studies, while 42% of the graduates stated that “My grades do not allow me to join academic education”.

The management of all the VET institutes stated that low achievers are one of the main groups joining their institutes, and that these are joining because of their low grades and inability to continue their academic education. As such, one of the VSS directors mentioned:

Different categories of student enrol: the first category contains the smart and outstanding students, almost 10%. Most of them would like to earn a high average in order to get a scholarship to a university, they compete over the first rank in each Directorate. The second category (low averages), almost 50% (to gain a skill/profession),

the third category are the ones who are hesitant and do not know where to head and want to escape academic work, above 40%

VET providers working with marginalised students, such as UNRWA, MOSA and the NGOs, have noted that grades intersect with social and economic status, with the UNRWA KTC deputy and heads of departments noting:

A large proportion of the students are those with underachievement because of low social and economic status.

Almost half of the students in all the student group discussions mentioned that they enrolled because of their low grades, their inability to complete academic education, and their preference for practical oriented learning.

The Directorate has confirmed that students with lower averages will stream into vocational education, while principals and teachers have clearly stated how they would advise the low achievers, whom they consider potential drop-outs, to go to VET to avoid future drop-outs from the system. This drop-out rate of schools is high among male students, especially in EJ, hence for principals and teachers VET is seen as a valid option to reduce drop-out. As low achievement interrelated with poverty and the pull of the need for unskilled labour in the Israeli market and settlements were the main reasons for drop-outs, as well as negligence of schools, as noted by the director of the Jerusalem Directorate:

In Jerusalem, there is a large drop-out from schools, due to the lack of schools to accommodate and absorb them, and also because of the temptations of the Israeli labour market, despite the fact that work in some areas does not have a vocational character such as janitorial work, and do not have a functional stability since at any moment they can be laid off, so, the orientation to vocational education will protect potential drop-outs, and will give them skills in their hands.

As clearly noted above, orientation towards VET is a measure of protection for potential drop-outs, especially within a marginalised context.

In addition to the low achievers and potential drop-outs, actual drop-outs from the educational system join VET, as noted by one of the students who is 17 years old;

I love the vocation, I used to work in it before, I finished 9th grade one year ago

In many group discussions with students it was noted that 10-40% has worked before joining VET, some have dropped-out of schools then joined VET as in the case above, while others have worked during summer vacations to support their families.

In group discussions with students from one of the NGO-VETs, most students said that their reason for enrolment in vocational training is because they are unsuccessful in academic work and that the institute is well known by people around them. Many of those students are refugees.

One of the VET NGO's managers and teachers noted that:

Most [of the students enrolled] are the ones who have no other choice; who have academic, social or economic problems. They are [also] the ones that can't afford higher education for economic reason or grade achievement.

The intersectionality between academic achievement, poverty and social condition was clearly noted in various interviews and groups. These factors were seen as the main reasons for enrolment and in most cases, they are interrelated. The MOSA representative noted:

Most students come from poor families referred from various directorates of the Ministry. Most of these students are drop-outs or potential drop-outs, or troubled children with families that are suffering difficult social and economic conditions

Again, those students are the ones that think of VET as their first choice for enhancing their capacities in order to address their inequalities.

Parents' Qualifications and Skills

The survey results indicated that 86% of fathers (or male guardians) and 90% of mothers (or female guardians) have an academic level of 12th grade or below. These percentages are higher than the national figures of 82% of the population who have completed 12th grade or below, for males and females.

Table 5-10: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by Father and Mother or care taker qualification (years of schooling)

	Father (or male guardian)	Mother (or female guardian)
below 6th grade	12.1%	17.3%
7th to 9th grade	34.8%	34.5%
10th -12th Grade	39.1%	39.1%
Above 13 years of schooling	14.1%	9.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

The survey results have also indicated that 14% of fathers and 9% of mothers have above 13 years of schooling. Again, the academic achievement of fathers and mothers is linked with social and economic factors, as well as contextual in certain cases, and such factors have an effect on the decision-making process in respect to enrolling in VET.

The results indicated that 21% of fathers or male guardians are VET graduates, and 16% of the mothers or female guardians. 5.4% of fathers have technical level qualification and 3.4% of mothers.

Table 5-11 Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by Father and Mother or care taker qualification (VET graduate)

	Father (or male guardian)	Mother (or female guardian)
VTC graduate	4.0%	1.5%
VSS graduate	16.9%	14.4%
Technical college	5.4%	3.4%
Other: specify	73.7%	80.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Parents have been an obstacle to their sons' and daughters' enrolment in VET in many cases, as noted by basic school teachers and principals. Parents who have graduated from VET themselves are more likely to encourage their sons and daughters, as many cases illustrated.

In one of the group discussions with students, 11 out 14 students were encouraged by the parents to enrol. Five had one family member (parent or sibling) that were graduates and a further three had parents that knew other graduates.

The past VET history within the family of VET graduates certainly represented an enabling factor for enrolment. Hence among the households who experienced VET, as well among the communities, as seen earlier, a positive attitude is developed that encourages VET enrolment. A father of a VET student, who is a carpenter and VET graduate, explained in a group discussion how he encouraged the enrolment of his son:

I encouraged him, his school achievement was ok, but he won't make it to Tawjihi. He has the interest in VET. I suggested carpentry. I prefer he works in another shop to get proper training.

Intersectionality of Inequalities among VET Graduates

The intersectionality of inequalities among VET graduates has been highlighted already. Intersectionality was apparent between gender, social status and poverty, as well as between context and poverty, and between other social cases and low achievement, and

low achievement and poverty. Such intersectionality of inequalities can also be illustrated in the tables below, which presents the graduates' survey results with regard to reasons for joining VET. The first table indicates clearly the intersectionality between context-related vulnerable locality and poverty, since poverty-related reasons for joining VET were higher among graduates within these localities, illustrated in higher rates than the remaining WB rates in most of the cases.

Table 5-12: Intersectionality between context-related vulnerable locality and poverty

	Total	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	Remaining WB
I want to join the labour market as quick as possible to support my family	82.5%	94.3%	87.1%	80.0%	100.0%	85.7%	78.9%
VET expenses are affordable for me and my family	69.6%	88.6%	54.8%	73.3%	55.6%	67.3%	66.5%
To generate my own income as quick as possible	82.7%	93.5%	74.2%	80.0%	100.0%	98.0%	78.9%

The second table below illustrates the intersectionality between gender, refugees, low achievement and poverty.

Table 5-13: Intersectionality between gender, refugees, low achievement and poverty

	Reason Related to	Total	Gender		Refugee status		Below poverty line categories			Low Achievement	
			Male	Female	Refugees	Non-Refugees	Below 1000	1001-1783	1784-2000	Below 50	50-55
My grade does not allow me to join academic education	Low-Achievement	41.6%	41.2%	42.9%	43.5%	39.8%	47.4%	48.1%	42.7%	82.3%	70.3%
I want to join the labour market as quick as possible to support my family	Poverty	82.5%	83.3%	80.4%	87.2%	78.3%	89.5%	91.7%	87.2%	95.2%	88.4%
VET expenses are affordable for me and my family	Poverty	69.6%	67.8%	73.9%	77.5%	63.3%	82.5%	82.0%	65.5%	83.9%	77.6%
To generate my own income as quick as possible	Poverty	82.7%	82.3%	83.5%	86.9%	79.1%	86.8%	82.7%	80.2%	88.7%	86.6%
Many people in my community join VET	Marginalisation	65.2%	62.3%	72.0%	69.4%	61.6%	71.1%	71.4%	56.5%	79.0%	70.9%

It is clear from table above how low achievement intersects with poverty and vice-versa, illustrated in the light shaded cells in the table below. It is also clear how gender intersects with poverty, since more females enrol when VET expenses are affordable and more males enrol when the household is concerned with strategies to get out of poverty “to join the labour market and support my family”. Moreover, both low achievement and poverty clearly intersect with refugee status, illustrated by the darkest cells. VET is clearly serving the marginalised, with various levels of marginalisation and intersectionality. Not only that, VET is well-known within these communities, it is well known among the poor, the low achievers, the refugees and females in poverty and with low social status, as noted in the last row of the table above.

Moreover, 54% of graduates knew at least one person among their family or friends who had joined VET in 2009 or 2010. This percentage changed according to gender, refugee status and locality, as it was 56.4% for females compared to 53.2% for males, 57% among refugees and 50% for non-refugees, and 93.2% and 100% in areas adjacent to the wall and in the Jordan Valley, respectively.

The above two findings illustrate that VET is not only an individualised strategy to reduce inequality but reflects wider strategies among particular communities and groups experiencing inequalities. Hence VET is proved to be a source of potential address for marginalised individuals, groups and communities.

In Conclusion: VET is Attracting the Marginalised within a Context of Marginalisation

The results indicate that VET is attracting the marginalised within “a protracted protection crisis” context governed by military occupation and human rights violations. Specifically, VET is attracting the different marginalised individuals, groups and communities, with regard to the context-related marginalisation, poverty and economic status, gender and social conditions, as well as attracting the low achievers, potential drop-outs and drop-outs. The findings indicate that VET students when enrolled face multi-layered and intersectional marginalisation, confirming the theories of inequalities and intersectionality. Inequality, in terms of power relations and limited access to, and

control over resources, which is structured and intersectional, was the experience of most of the VET students when enrolled. On enrolment, students are often disempowered and impoverished.

Most VET students and graduates are subject to some form of inequality, and in most cases to intersectional inequalities. Students and graduates who were affected by context-related inequalities in the form of being from vulnerable localities, directly affected by the context, refugees or of experiencing other context-related inequalities, were attracted to VET. Evidently, this group intersected with poverty. Whereas, loss of land, resources, access and sometimes the very lives of family members, clearly affected their economic status and financial wellbeing.

Students and graduates affected by economic inequality, meanwhile, were also attracted to VET. Household poverty was presented in accordance with the national poverty line, but also through contributors to poverty such as being in large families with many dependents, or the presence of unemployed potential breadwinners, or where they themselves were unemployed. These groups also intersect with the remaining inequalities, and it was evidenced that poverty vertically intersected with all other inequalities in different forms.

Students and graduates affected by gender inequalities and social hardship cases were also affected by other sorts of inequality, including poverty. It was evident that most of the single females came from poor families, while those that were widowed or divorced were also affected by poverty. On the other hand, more male students and graduates were low achievers, and affected by economic or social hardships through this medium, while females faced an added level of inequality through social attitudes that underpinned their marginalisation. Students and graduates affected by educational vulnerability were also affected by poverty.

Evidently, horizontal inequalities intersect with vertical inequality, with poverty intersecting with all inequalities. Yet it is deeper than that, where multi-layers of intersecting inequalities were apparent, since poverty intersects with more than just one inequality, sometimes with two or three inequalities, as argued above.

It was also noted that parents' academic and skills levels were also related to marginalisation. This is also noted by the communities of the marginalised that include many graduates and know of many graduates who presented success stories or a role model. Therefore, parents and communities that faced inequality and experienced the effects of VET have a positive effect on student enrolment.

The importance of VET is noted by parents and communities within a Palestinian context that drives and further activates inequalities and marginalisation. Within such a context it was clear that the marginalised are attracted to VET, and find their refuge within it. For many it provides them with a hope for a better future, and as noted by the Head of Education at UNRWA:

VET is reversing the status for the poor and under-achieved to their benefit

Indeed, as will be seen in the next two chapters, it is reversing the effect of the inequality.

Chapter 6. Capabilities and Achievements of VET Graduates with a Focus on Marginalisation – Contribution of VET to Human Development

To explore the contribution of VET to human development, this chapter will strive to answer the questions: What are the aspirations of youth joining VET? What are the capabilities, the valued and achieved functions? How do these differ according to marginalisation? What addition does the capability list provide within an adverse status in terms of addressing inequality?

This second chapter of findings is grounded in the capability approach and starts from the idea of aspirations as capabilities, and listening to graduates' aspirations according to Powell (2012, 2014). These aspirations were pre-defined in the graduates' survey based on my previous research. The fields were complemented by a free-text section for additional aspirations, and by qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with graduates. The examined capabilities and functionings are based on the understanding of Sen's (1992) capabilities as real opportunities for acts of the "being and doing" of the valued functionings, extended to include processes and agency, based on the work of other scholars as I pointed out in Chapter Three and defined in Box-2.

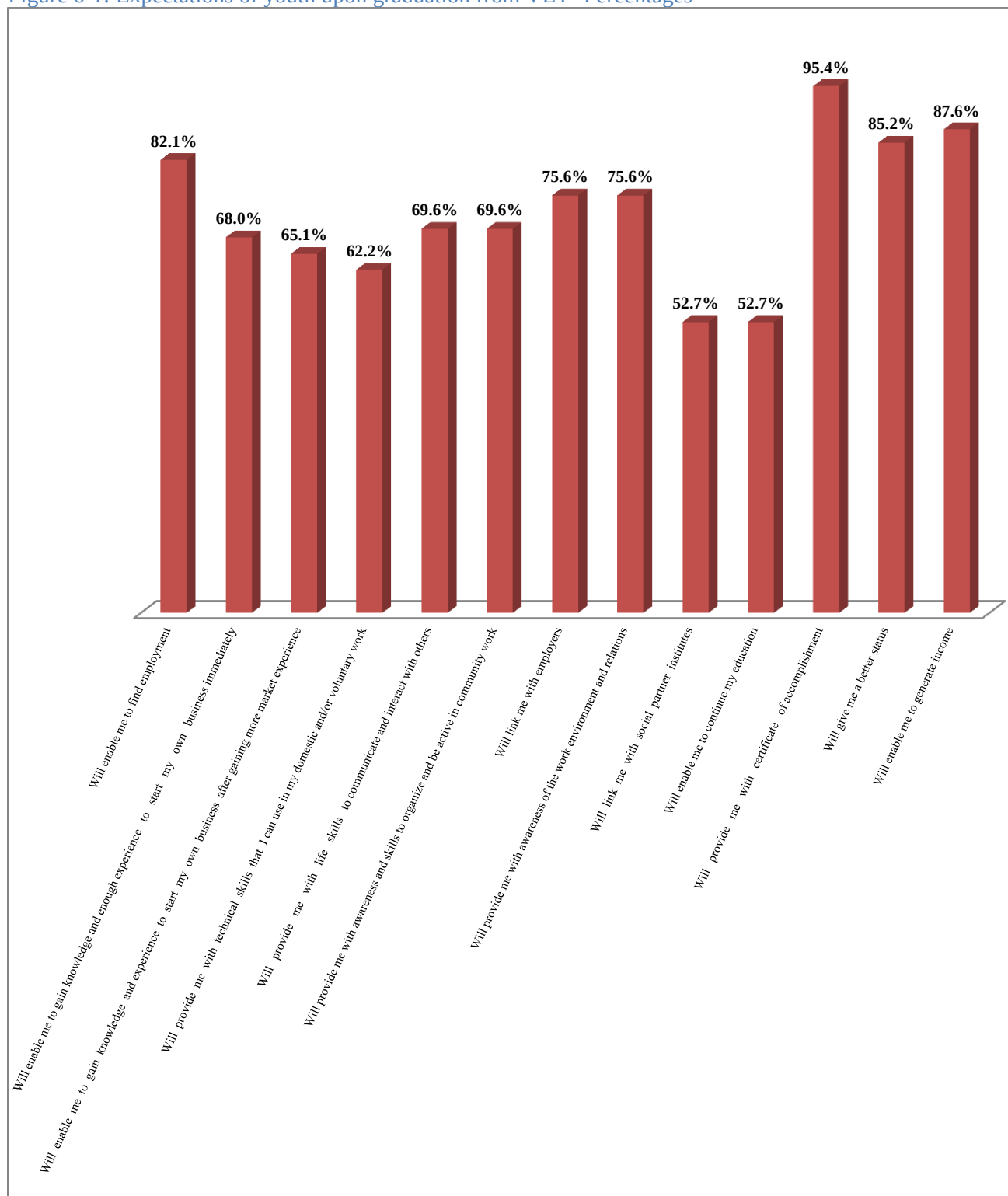
The chapter will list aspirations as valued functionings stated by the VET graduates themselves, and will then investigate capabilities, valued functions and achieved functionings. The chapter will further examine, validate and contribute to the discussion of capability lists in the human development literature, building on the work of Nussbaum (2003), Robeyns (2003) and Powell (2014), as already discussed in Chapter Three. Building particularly on Powell's approach, I will add gender, marginalisation and political economy lenses.

VET Graduates' Aspirations

Graduates were presented with 13 possible areas of capabilities that they might be expected to achieve upon graduation. These areas were developed based on my previous research work (Hilal, 2009b, 2011, 2012), my experience and the international VET and capability literature. Graduates indicated their level of agreement with the various statements, thus expressing their valued

functionings, as demonstrated below.

Figure 6-1: Expectations of youth upon graduation from VET- Percentages



The valued functionings expressed by graduates included income generation (87.6%) and employment (82.1%), as would be expected of youth who are impoverished and facing a situation of high youth unemployment, which is even higher among the marginalised youth. This is in line with the importance to the poor of human labour, skills, knowledge and abilities that Kabeer (2015) has noted in her work on poverty.

Graduates were also expecting that VET would provide them with better status and a certificate (85.2% and 95.4% respectively). This is surely connected to the disempowerment of youth and marginalisation, and aspirations to acquire better status to overcome their intersectional and multi-layered inequalities.

Their aspirations included self-awareness and assertiveness, as well as social engagement, in addition to gaining skills to continue their education. These aspirations are illustrated in the figure above. They varied according to the variables of marginalisation (gender, refugees' status, marginalised localities).

All the selected aspirations from the list are valued functionings for the graduates, more were also identified and are explored in the second part of this chapter. The highest proportion of graduates identified with aspirations related to status, income, employment and skills, although the level of agreement varied according to the type of inequality, intersectional inequality they are subjected to. These aspirations address the structural and intersected marginalisation of the VET learners.

Aspirations varied according to marginalisation, since graduates living in context-related vulnerable localities as those living adjacent to the Wall/ seam zone, and in Gaza, had the highest aspiration with regard to employment, and more females had expectations with regard to employment than males. While the desire to generate income was high among all groups, it was highest for those living adjacent to the Wall/ seam zone and in Jerusalem inside the Wall, as will be illustrated in chapters 6 and 7, and detailed in the annexes.

This chapter will illustrate achieved functionings with regard to work, income and transition to the world of work, including technical skills. Personal skills for

empowerment and community interaction, and “achieved aspirations”, as perceived by the graduates, will be explored in the next chapter.

VET Capability List

As already noted, my list builds on Powell’s. The process of developing it followed Robeyns’ five criteria of having an explicit formulation, methodological justification, sensitivity to context and different levels of generality. The last criterion is exhaustiveness and non-reduction, implying that listed capabilities should include all important elements (2003).

The list emphasises that the capabilities that matter for the poor (Kabeer, 2015) are employment, income and skills, hence income generation is added. This is especially important for the poor given the lack of a formal social security system in Palestine, as is the case in many Southern countries. It also adds other forms of unpaid work following feminist economists (Ferber & Nelson, 1993; Folbre, 1994; Himmelweit, 1995; Akram-Lodhi, 1996; Gideon, 1999; Power, 2004), and resonates with Robeyns’ (2003) list for gender inequality.

In addition, the list includes elements for transition to the world of work (WOW), and elements that are relevant to gender and poverty as indicated through my previous work (Hilal, 2011, 2013), and is in line with the UNESCO transformation vision (2012) and recommendations (2015a). Moreover, the list reflects the empowerment framework based on Kabeer (1999) and the developed social empowerment indicators, part of which resonate with Powell’s (2014) list. The issues related to empowerment, however, will be presented here only briefly, since they are the primary subject of the next chapter.

Finally, the list also adds the context relevant aspiration of mobility, recognising that mobility reflects the context-related mobility-restrictions, in addition to the social-related restrictions related to the decisions over mobility.

Hence, the developed list is gender-sensitive, and encompasses inequality and context-related elements. The list has ten dimensions of VET capabilities, as listed below. The listed functionings were extracted from key findings discussed in detail in the coming sections of this and the coming chapter. This chapter will discuss the first two

functionings related to work, followed by the functioning related to income and poverty reduction, the next chapter will discuss the empowerment indicators, while the remaining capabilities and functionings will be presented in this chapter.

The contribution of this new list lies in the addition of the gender and inequality elements, as well as inequality within a marginalisation context. The other contribution is the methodological approach in testing the achieved valued functionings and hence the enabling and disabling factors to those achievements, which adds to the valued functionings. Another addition is in the policymakers' valued functionings based on a review of strategies, the learners' valued functionings and the interviews with institutes and policymakers detailed in chapter eight.

Box-3: The Powell/Hilal Capability list: Powell 2014 VET Capability list and Hilal 2017 VET Capability list with focus on gender and inequality				
Dimensions of VET Capabilities and Valued Functionings that matter to FET college students in South Africa- Powell 2014		Dimensions of VET Capabilities and Valued Functionings that matter to VET students in Palestine, with a focus on gender and inequalities- Hilal 2017		
Dimensions of VET capabilities	Valued Functionings	Dimensions of VET capabilities	Valued Functionings for graduates	Valued functionings for policymakers (VET Related policies and measures)
1. Economic opportunities that matter	• Being fairly remunerated • Earning a living wage • Having employment stability and security • Having access to fair and equal opportunities to career progression • Able to make a valuable contribution in the workplace • Able to take pride in their work	1. Economic Opportunities that matter for all	• Able to find employment opportunity • Able to find employment opportunity that matches qualification • Able to start own work immediately or after gaining experience or opt for a flexible work mode • Earning a living wage • Positive working environment in the work place (space, relations, • Working regulations (outside the Labour Law)	• VET graduates' access to employment and self-employment rates compared to national youth figures • Decent Work Agenda implemented. • Economic policies that encourage entrepreneurship
	•	2. Domestic Work and non-market care by	• Skills enabling non-market work • Non-market work carried out by choice	Norms, rules and resources facilitating different choices of work

		choice; unpaid work (Home caring, voluntary)	Skills enabling a variety of work modes	
		3. Economic Resources for poverty reduction and wellbeing	- Generate income to support family-poverty reduction - Own income for independent choices and wellbeing - Enable creation of new family	- Access to finance and income generating activities - Social protection system
2. Active citizenship	- Inclusion in political and institutional decision-making - Knowledge and understanding of the problems of their community - Able to mobilise resources for change - Strong sense of their own effective agency	4. Active citizenship (Power with)	- Gain increased respect within own community - Become a resource for own community - Participate in public life - Organise in social group memberships, unions, chambers	Inclusive citizenship
3. Confidence and personal empowerment	- Being encouraged to live a full life - Being able to encourage others to live a full life. - Having a range of futures as possible aspirations	5. Confidence and Personal empowerment (Power Within- Sense of Agency)	- Gain confidence in technical and financial skills and know-how - Gain self-confidence in abilities and self - Improve communication skills - Having a range of futures as possible aspirations	Social skills and communication skills among employed and non-employed graduates Promote empowerment Facilitating positive social norms
4. Bodily integrity	- Being free from attack and physical harm, including sexual assault, and from the fear thereof - Being safe from the psychological trauma of attack on your person, or other members of the family or community or anyone else	6. Bodily Integrity	- Being free from attack and all sorts of violence, and from fear and psychological effects - Being free from violence and collective acts against their communities - Being able to have free mobility to education, training, work and services	Combating violence against women and the marginalised

5. Senses and imagination	- Developing an understanding and love of the creative arts - Participating in and enjoying in sport that promotes physical wellbeing	7. Senses and Imagination: Developing Creativity	- VET develops artistic talents - Appreciation for VET for developing creativity - Appreciation for VET for being practical oriented	Promoting creativity
6. Recognition and respect	- Being treated as a dignified human being - Having self-respect - Not being discriminated against for any reason including religion, gender, race, physical handicaps and age	8. Recognition and respect	- Being treated as a dignified human being - Having self-respect - To respect the choice of selecting VET - Not being discriminated against for being a VET graduate - Community recognition-steadfastness and identity recognition	Access to VET for all regardless of gender, physical handicaps, religion, marital status and age, or being a victim of status (political prisoner, refugees, IDP) Facilitating positive attitudes of learners and communities to VET
7. Upgrade skills and qualifications throughout the life course	- To have the opportunity to study and learn throughout their lifetime - Having the learning skills required for further study	9. Upgrade skills and qualifications throughout the life course,	- To have the opportunity to study and learn throughout their lifetime - Having the learning skills required for further study or continual upgrading	Access of VET graduates to further education and Lifelong Learning
8. Occupational Knowledge	- Having the qualifications needed for entry into the labour market - Having the skills to do a good job - Having the learning skills that allow for experiential learning in workplace	10.Enabled transition to WOW through Awareness, preparation and Connections for all	- Occupational knowledge and skills for employment - Occupational knowledge and skills for self-employment - Awareness and preparation for the WOW - Connection to employers and work-related actors	Youth transition period to employment is minimised Encouraging social partnerships and WBL modes

Capabilities 1 and 2: Work Opportunities Capabilities

This section will measure the capabilities related to work opportunities, i.e.:

- Capability 1: Economic opportunities that matter for all
- Capability 2: Domestic work and non-market care

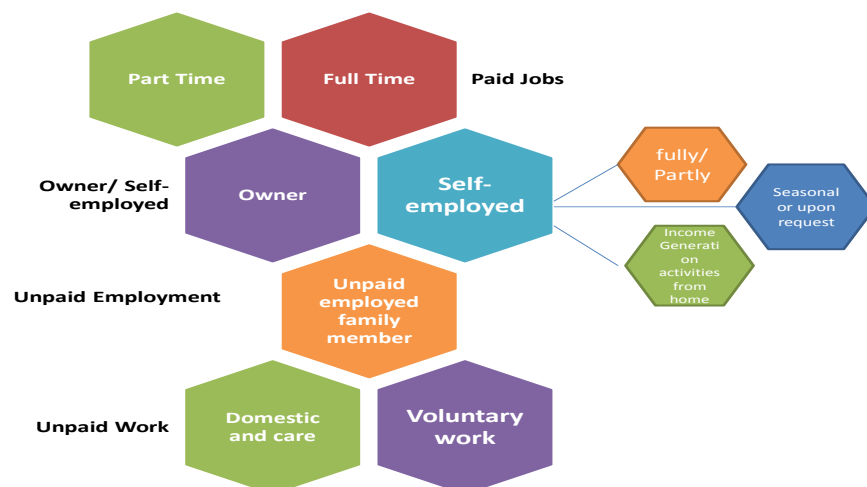
As an introduction to these capabilities, the following section will set the basis of work's contribution to human development.

VET Graduates' Work

Work is critical to the process of human development, as identified by the recent global Human Development Report (HDR, 2015). It contributes to enlarging human choices by contributing directly to human development and to conditions for enlarging human development, it releases human potential, human creativity and human spirit. In addition, HDR 2015 has identified different types of work, including different types of paid and unpaid work, further to identifying that work can both enable human potential and “thwart human potential”, stressing thereby the need for a global agenda and policies to enable positive human development. (Selim, 2015)

Based on my experience with VET graduates, as a practitioner, and researcher, as noted in snapshot1consolidated by local and international literature, I have envisaged the varieties of work opportunities for VET graduates, beyond the national classification for the labour force according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), as illustrated below.

Figure 6-2: Possible Work Opportunities for VET Graduates



This variety was reflected in the three questions posed in the VET graduates survey. The first question asked about employment status according to the classifications used in national statistics (paid employment, self-employment, employer, unpaid employed family member). A second question asking about the type of employment or self-employment, including fully, partly, seasonal work or production/service upon request from home and income generation. The third question was concerned with unpaid work. The work section included 16 questions covering participation, working conditions, ways of finding employment, challenges, reasons for unemployment and reasons for being outside the labour force.

Based on my previous research and tracking of VET graduates (Hilal, 2009b, 2011, 2012), and other relevant Palestinian studies of VET graduates (Alzaroo, 2009; Adwan, 2009; El-Haddad, 2009), I have shown that VET graduates have higher participation in the labour market, although employment rates depended on the political status at the time of the research and its effect on the economy, due to the fact that most VET graduates are employed in the relatively more fragile private sector (Niksic, Nasser-Eddin & Almubaied, 2015).

Method of Analysis

In the coming sections, findings and analysis in respect to the achieved functioning will be illustrated and discussed in relation to human development and inequalities. In each part, relevant aspiration will be presented first, achieved functionings will follow, then achieved functionings by the marginalised groups, and sometimes challenges to the specific achieved functionings are presented. The contribution to inequality will be checked by comparing the rates for VET graduates with national figures and by identifying gaps according to marginalisation for VET graduates and comparing these gaps with the parallel national gaps. Wherever possible, qualitative quotes and discussion are added.

Calculations used:

- Expansion in functioning achievement: rates/national rates, rates/youth rates
- Gender gap= male/female

- Marginalisation gap= non-marginalised group/marginalised group, e.g. non-refugee status/refugee status

Capability 1: Economic Opportunities that Matter

Economic Opportunities Aspirations

The findings have indicated that 82% of VET graduates aspired upon graduation that “VET will enable me to find employment”, while more than two thirds aspired that “VET will enable me to gain knowledge and enough experience to start my own business immediately”, and a little less than two thirds aspired that “VET will enable me to gain knowledge and enough experience to start my own business after gaining more market experience”. In their own words:

A male VET student from Jerusalem at the end of his studies foresaw his career immediately after graduation based on knowledge and skills gained from VET:

We keep developing; our education, our personality, and then we can start our career once we graduate

While a female VET student from Hebron in her final year at VSS linked her aspiration with the recognition that:

When I open my own shop, people will see the success of vocational training

There were largely similar aspirations among male and female graduates, except for the employment aspiration which was higher for females (87% compared to 80% males). VET graduates’ aspirations according to context-related vulnerable locality indicated higher expectations in respect to finding employment or self-employment, or both, compared to graduates from the rest of the WB, as the table below indicates.

Table 6-1: VET Graduates’ aspirations when graduated according to geographic locality-including marginalised due to context

	Context-related Vulnerable locality					Remaining WB	Total
	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar -Jordan Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/ seam zone		
Will enable me to find employment	84.6%	77.4%	80.0%	55.6%	95.9%	81.0%	82.1%
Will enable me to gain knowledge and	73.2%	71.0%	66.7%	77.8%	63.3%	66.8%	68.0%

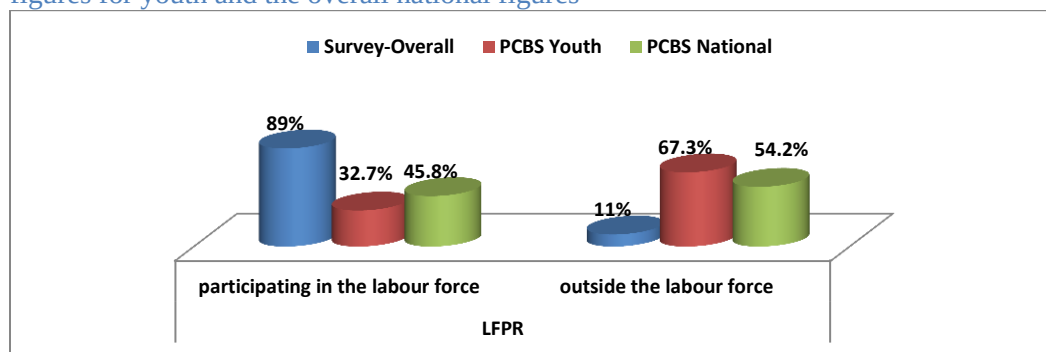
enough experience to start my own business immediately							
Will enable me to gain knowledge and experience to start my own business after gaining more market experience	60.2%	67.7%	53.3%	77.8%	71.4%	65.4%	65.1%

Achievement of Employment Opportunities

This section will look at two main indicators, participation and employment based on national definitions, and will compare the VET graduates' figures to national figures and national youth figures both in general and according to marginalised groups. The marginalisation gap among graduates is then compared with the overall marginalisation gap. The results are also compared with their aspirations.

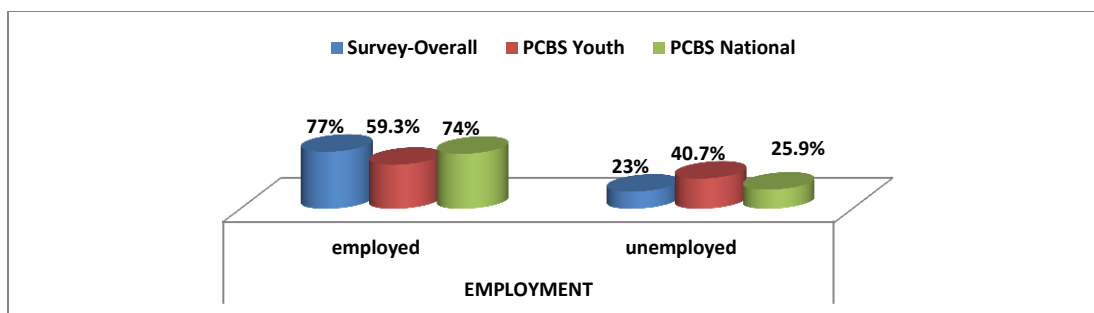
Most of the graduates have participated in the labour market and most of these have achieved their aspiration of employment, as the graphs indicate. Moreover, the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) was much higher than the overall national figures and national youth figures within same age group, while the proportion of VET graduates outside the labour force was much lower, indicating the enabling access of VET to employment

Figure 6-3: Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPR) of graduates in comparison with national figures for youth and the overall national figures



Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016

Figure 6-4: Employment and unemployment rates of graduates in comparison with national figures for youth and the overall national figures



Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016

Finding 1: The high figures for labour market participation and employment are in line with the aims and objectives of the national VET strategy (MOEHE&MOL 2010), and the National Development Plan in linking VET to a path for youth employment (PA, 2011). Moreover, the results show that 7% of VET graduates are employers compared to national figure 6.4% and that for youth of 2.3%. The confirmation that VET is a pathway for entrepreneurship reflects an important aspect of the PA's TVET system and is in line with international debates about VET's impact with and relationship to youth employment and entrepreneurship (UNESCO, 2010, 2015b; ILO, 2015a).

There was high agreement between different groups, indicating that the achievement of employment opportunities by VET graduates is both apparent and has particular value since it increases the ability of the graduates to find employment within the difficult socio-economic conditions and high unemployment rates that they face, as was mentioned during discussion:

Vocational training creates more opportunities to work and this is what we need, we should not rely on public sector employment

Achievement of Employment Opportunities for The Marginalised

Finding 2: The expansion in the achievement of employment opportunities was considered significant for gender and marginalised groups. Rates for participation and employment were high in comparison with national figures in general and specifically in comparison with national figures for youth within the same age group.

The survey results indicate better results for males and females compared to the national figures, with a significant increase in female participation rates to 6.7 times more than the

national female youth rates and 4 times more than the overall national female figures. The participation rates for males were 1.76 times above the youth and 1.3 above the national figures, as the table below indicates, while female and male employment rates were 1.69 and 1.26 above the respective youth rates. These results show that VET has a particularly positive effect on young females' participation in the labour market and in employment.

Table 6-2 LFPR and employment rates of graduates in comparison with national figures for youth and overall national figures according to gender

	Survey-Overall	Survey-Gender		PCBS-Gender			
		Male	Female	Youth Male	Youth Female	National Male	National Female
Employed	77%	80.2%	66.3%	63.6%	39.2%	77.5%	60.8%
Unemployed	23%	19.8%	33.7%	36.4%	60.8%	22.5%	39.2%
Participating in the labour force	89%	93.5%	77.9%	52.9%	11.6%	71.9%	19.1%
Outside the labour force	11%	6.5%	22.1%	47.1%	88.4%	28.1%	80.9%

Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016

Nonetheless, a “gender gap” is still apparent in the employment and participation data of VET graduates. Males are 1.2 more likely to participate and 1.21 times more likely to be employed. Nonetheless, female participation in VET significantly narrows this gender gap since the national figures show a four-fold difference in participation, rising to 4.5 times for youth. Similarly, the gender gap in respect to employment was narrower among VET graduates than the national figures, which show that males are almost 1.27 more likely to be employed than females, and young males 1.62 times more likely. Female graduates are overburdened by social constraints in their selection for jobs, and many times they reject certain jobs as the space is not appropriate, the business is too small in terms of number of employees and space, or the job location is too distant. Families and spouses decide on her job opportunity, under the notion of protecting her in a patriarchal society under colonial occupation. Hence opportunity for work has to be “appropriate” for females for their families to accept it. As a VTC director explained:

Girls are affected by the social challenges and family decisions which hamper the rate of enrolment in vocational education and training and work (...) some parents push their daughters to choose sewing specialty because they believe this skill will help them to cope in housekeeping. Also, the ratio of girls enrolling in the beautification field is very high because most of them like this field and there is a possibility of working either by opening a salon, or even working from home. For males, more job offers are available because the labour market and job opportunities are wider

Hence, family and gender roles have an effect on the choice of profession and status of work, in addition to the limited professions provided by institutes for females.

Employment and LFPR are also higher for graduates from “Context-Related Vulnerable Localities” compared to national figures and youth national figures, as the following tables indicate.

Table 6-3 LFPR and employment rates of graduates in comparison with national figures for youth and overall national figures according to area (WB/Gaza) and overall

	Survey-Overall	Survey-area		PCBS-Area					
		WB	Gaza	Youth WB	Youth Gaza	National WB	National Gaza	National Youth Palestine	National Palestine
Employed	77.0%	82.8%	43.3%	67.7%	39.0%	82.7%	59.0%	59.3%	74.1%
Unemployed	23.0%	17.2%	56.7%	28.7%	61.0%	17.3%	41.0%	40.7%	25.9%
Participating in the labour force	89.0%	89.9%	84.6%	33.6%	31.2%	46.1%	45.3%	32.7%	45.8%
Outside the labour force	11.0%	10.1%	15.4%	66.4%	68.8%	53.9%	54.7%	67.3%	54.2%

Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016.

It is apparent that VET graduates from Gaza had comparably higher LFPR than the national youth figures, although still lower than the overall national figures. More than one third of Gaza employment is dependent on the public sector: with the government and UNRWA being the biggest employers, while VET graduates are mainly working in the private sector, which has been highly affected by the siege (PCBS, 2006; Adwan, 2009; Hilal, 2009b).

When looking at the other marginalised areas and target groups, national data exists for East Jerusalem and refugees, but not specifically for youth in these two groups, moreover, there are no national figures for Area C. Nonetheless, VET graduate participation rates are much higher than the national figures, almost three times more for East Jerusalem and double the national rate for refugees. In addition, VET graduates in Area C figures are twice as likely to be participating in the labour force compared to the oPt population as a whole, despite the difficult status the population in these areas is exposed to.

Table 6-4 LFPR and employment rates of graduates in comparison with national figures according to East Jerusalem, Refugees and Area C and overall

	Survey-Overall	Survey-marginalised			PCBS		National Palestine
		EJ	Refugees	Area C	National EJ	National Refugees	
Employed	77%	89%	70.7%	80.5%	86.1%	67.7%	74.1%
Unemployed	23%	11%	29.3%	19.5%	13.9%	32.3%	25.9%
Participating in the labour force	89%	95.7%	90.1%	92.4%	29.2%	46.1%	45.8%
Outside the labour force	11%	4%	9.9%	7.6%	70.8%	53.9%	54.2%

Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016, Note: PCBS don't have desegregated data according to Area C

Although employment figures for VET graduates who are refugees were slightly better than the national ones, the “Marginalisation Gap” for VET graduate refugees resembled the national gap. Participation and employment rates in EJ were higher than the national average since residents have the chance to participate and work in the flourishing Israeli economy. Area C graduates have the chance to work in nearby Israeli settlements.

Poverty is also an important factor, with employment rates being highest in the two categories of family income that are above the poverty level, as the table below indicates,

Table 6-5 LFPR and employment rates of graduates according to Income Level of the household when enrolling

Family income when enrolling (NIS)	Employment and Participation rates			
	Employed	Un-employed	LFPR	Outside the LF
Below 1000	56%	44%	84%	16%
1001- 1783	67%	33%	88%	12%
1784-2000	83%	17%	90%	10%
2001- 2237	75%	25%	100%	0%
2238- 2700	83%	17%	92%	8%
2701- 3600	87%	13%	88%	12%
3601- 4500	89%	11%	93%	7%
Above 4500	83%	17%	93%	7%
Total	77%	23%	89%	11%

The results indicate that VET provided better access to participation and employment for graduates, than the national figures. This is the case for all marginalised groups, with better results than the national figures for youths from all groups and better results compared to adults and youths for most of the groups, as detailed in annexes.

Finding 3: Gender and marginalisation gaps persist in respect to females, the poor, graduates from Gaza (for both participation and employment) and in respect to refugees (for employment only), although the gaps are narrower than the national gaps. Hence, although capabilities were achieved for these groups, the gaps in achievement imply “inequalities in capabilities” as noted by Robeyns (2003, p.85).

This discrepancy in achievement due to marginalisation was explained by VSS director:

The potential of the family affects the success of the graduate: money and relationships

Available resources enlarge capability, as will be discussed further below.

Employment status also varies according to marginalisation. 78.9% of employed graduates were paid employees, 7% employers. These percentages are above the national figures for these two categories, at both overall and gender disaggregated levels. Meanwhile, VET graduates are less likely to be unpaid family members (one seventh of the national figure), or self-employed (about one third less): two categories that contribute to informal employment. A gender gap is apparent here between male and female graduates. Male graduates are more likely to be employers while female graduates are more likely to be in informal employment categories. The gender gap among graduates resembles the national gender gap.

Table 6-6: Employment status of employed graduates according to gender, and in comparison, with national figures

	Survey- Overall	Gender-Survey		PCBS Gender National		
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Overall
Employer	7.0%	7.9%	3.7%	7%	2%	6.4%
Self-employed	12.9%	13.0%	12.8%	19%	14%	18.6%
Paid Employee	78.9%	78.1%	81.7%	69%	67%	69.5%
Unpaid Family member	1.2%	1.0%	1.8%	5%	17%	5.5%

Source of the national data: PCBS, 2015 Labour Force Survey, 2016

Self-employment rates jumped to 17% and 25% for married and divorced women, however, which is in line with gender differences according to age and status that should be monitored, as noted by Kabeer (1994). These figures confirm that self-employment provides flexibility for women to earn income while carrying out their other domestic and care responsibilities, as noted by a student in her final year:

I am studying fashion design, and worked in it before. I want to get married immediately after graduation; I want to work in Fashion design from home (make designs and clothes). My mother is doing the same; she is a tailor.

Moreover, female graduates prefer to work part time, since one in three employed women work part-time compared to one in five male graduates, so as to carry the load of domestic work and care, which is perceived by the patriarchal society as the total responsibility of females.

Various studies and researches in Palestine have confirmed the above. A public opinion survey by the Palestinian Women Research Development Centre confirmed the prevalence of the belief that for women the world of work is secondary to the household, while her main role is family caring and rearing (Alpha-International, 2009).

Self-employment also provides an opportunity to overcome social constraints on the movement of girls and women imposed by the patriarchal society, especially in more conservative communities.

Being an employer opens the opportunity for work for other family members, as a counsellor in an NGO-VET institute mentioned:

Employment rates of females are high. We have many success stories. (...) [a graduate], from Silwad, [village near Ramallah] opened her shop with her husband,

Moreover, almost half of the graduates from households within the upper category of income are either employers or self-employed, strikingly higher than other categories, indicating the effect of family income on employment status, and hence the resource to enlarge capability. A VTC student from EJ mentioned:

My father helped me, [supported me financially] and I opened my own workshop before graduation.

Family capital and support presented an important resource for the graduate to start their own business, as confirmed by an UNRWA-VTC deputy and head of departments:

The majority of graduates aim to set up their own workshops due to the low wages in the labour market. But the success of graduates depends mainly on the

economic situation of the families and their ability to physically support their sons and daughters to set up their own business.

Finding 4: Lack of access to financial resources is identified as the main challenge encountered by the graduates to start their own business, either after graduation or within four years of graduation, although other challenges, such as skills weaknesses or feasibility of options could also be an obstacle to realise their capability. Resources are the capability inputs needed as a “means to realise certain capabilities” as noted by Conradie and Robeyns (2013, p.561), they further elaborated that “Capability obstacles are aspects that need to be removed, eliminated or combated in order to help the corresponding capability to be realized”, and surely there is a gap between capabilities and achievements where only one in nine graduates was able to realise their second aspiration: “Will enable me to gain knowledge and enough experience to start my own business immediately”. Findings indicated that graduates who are employers reported the highest level of realisation of aspiration.

The third aspiration: “will enable me to gain knowledge and experience to start my own business after gaining more market experience” indicates that graduates strive to start their own work in the future. The relatively high rates of male and female employers point out to one of the valued functionings of VET as reflected in their discussions, and conveyed by a female student from one of MOL-VTC:

I decided to join [VTC] because vocational graduates are able to work, I want to open my own Beauty Salon, I trained in the market before enrolling

The findings indicated that VET graduates were more likely to be employers than the national figures (7.9% and 3.6% for VET male and female graduates compared to 7% and 2% for males and females nationally) (PCBS, 2016). This finding was noted in the national census and earlier reports, as the percentage of employers among the TVET graduates was higher than the national figures of employers among other groups (PCBS, 2006; Hilal, 2009b; Adwan, 2009).

Self-employed and unpaid family member rates were higher among graduates from households that had income above poverty level, posing the question of choice, and the ability to choose flexible modes of when they can afford it.

Findings indicated that graduates from Gaza and EJ inside the Wall were the most likely to be employers; 11% compared to 6.4% in the rest of the WB, indicating that employer and self-employment status could be an option for employment in areas overburdened by socio-economic and political challenges.

VET, therefore, appears to play a role in enabling opportunities to adopt different modes of work, thus providing opportunities for the marginalised, and an option for the ones who can afford it for different reasons, as noted through focus group discussions with teachers of one of the VTCs:

The vocational graduates work with their hands, so when there isn't an employment opportunity, they will work as self-employed or open their own business

Such a finding links with the resilience of these communities, posing the ends and means discussion, whereas the achieved capability rather than being the end could be the means for another capability (Sen, 2013).

Moreover, many graduates are employed and self-employed at the same time or on seasonal basis, such arrangement provides them with opportunities for additional income.

Economic Opportunities that Matter: Decent Working Conditions

In respect to economic opportunities it is important to investigate the other part “that matters”, since it is not enough simply to find employment, but what sort of employment and under what conditions, and is it work that graduates will value, taking into account that capability refers to a person’s or a group’s ability to promote or achieve *valuable* functionings, as the definition in Box-2 illustrates.

In this regard, graduates’ satisfaction with employment was tested, as well as reasons for non-satisfaction and the conditions of employment according to the relevant ILO (2012) decent work agenda. The link to obstacles in achieving their aspirations was also made,

remembering the work of Conradie & Robeyns (2013, p.570) “Dealing with capability obstacles is central to the achievement of capabilities”, and as such valued functionings.

The results showed that only one in three of employed graduates were fully satisfied with their employment, while half of them are partially satisfied and the remainder are dissatisfied. The reasons for dissatisfaction are listed in the table, along with frequencies of the dissatisfied employed graduates.

Table 6-7 Percentage of employed VET graduates indicating reasons for dissatisfaction in employment

Low pay and/or benefits	55.1%
Working regulations-long hours, no flexibility	17.9%
Working environment in the work place- allocated space, relation with others	9.2%
Mobility problem in reaching, specify	5.0%
Work performed doesn't match my qualifications	12.6%
Others: specify	12.5%

Over half of the non-satisfied employed graduates are dissatisfied due to low pay or benefits. This issue was highlighted during interviews and focus group discussions, and has an effect on the economy as a whole since some graduates can leave their work to work in illegal Israeli settlements, or, if they have permits, to work inside Jerusalem and Israel. Indeed, some work without permits, risking imprisonment to overcome the scarcity of jobs and decent pay in the oPt. Graduates highlighted the obstacles posed by low pay in one of the focus groups:

One Auto-Mechanic graduate worked in his profession in Ramallah [away from his city], but had to leave due to high transportation costs with the minimal wage obtained. Now he is working in hospitality. One metalworker worked with brother but left him and is working in the settlement. Another metalworker worked with his uncle, didn't get paid and didn't learn anything. Now he is working inside Israel, he mentioned that others are working now in agricultural settlements [not in their vocation] for the pay.

This fact was pointed out in the ILO Director General's report to the ILO Conference 104th session, (2015b, p.24)

The average daily wage earned by West Bank workers in the Israeli economy [settlements and inside Israel] is 2.25 times the average private sector wage in the West Bank. This wage differential clearly explains the continued lure of employment in the Israeli economy, even under adverse circumstances for many workers

This is a natural result when half of an economy is informal. Even with the newly adopted minimum wage in 2012, many workers are remunerated less than this (1,450 New Israeli Shekels (NIS)), with the results of this survey indicating that the average and median salaries are 30% and 20% below the national ones respectively. In previous studies, employers of VET graduates indicated that one of the comparative advantages of employing VET graduates is their low salary (Hilal, 2011, 2013b).

A focus group discussion with teachers in a Jerusalem VET institute explained how the difference between the Palestinian minimum wage (at around 425 United States Dollar (USD)) and the Israeli minimum wage (at three times the Palestinian one) pushes many youths to leave their profession to gain better income in black jobs at the Israeli market. This is especially the case for graduates from Jerusalem, since they do not need permits to work, but is also apparent in the lure to work in settlements in the WB:

The students want to take a salary after graduation, they quit their work and go to the black work in order to get a complete salary, their work in their vocations gives 2000 NIS income [over 500 USD and above the minimum wage, but one third of what they get in black jobs]. We need to give them temptations to stay in their vocation, we suffer till students reach commitment; they get offers for higher salaries to work as unskilled labour in Israel, they say: I got a work opportunity 5000-6000 NIS, which is more than they get in the Palestinian market

The difference reflects the contrast in the economies, income and standard of living between developed and developing countries. As noted by International Monetary Fund (2014), Israeli per capita GDP was estimated to be nearly 13 times that of Palestine in 2014.

Moreover, some of the graduates, whom were working longer hours than the national average, complained about long working hours. The maximum working hours per week reached 96 hours per week, or 16 hours a day for six days a week. Results indicated that the average number of working hours per week were 41, which is the same as the national figure.

One in eight graduates mentioned that employment opportunities available to them did not match their qualifications. This was not due to failing to find work in their preferred occupation but was most prevalent amongst those who were working in their preferred

areas. This mismatch could lead some graduates to leave their employment, as the survey indicated that three out four unemployed graduates at the time of the survey were employed before, and one in five of the unemployed mentioned “limited opportunities in my specialisation” as one of the reasons for their unemployment.

When asked about other obtained benefits, one in four graduates got health insurance, one in seven paid sick leave and one in 14 female graduates paid maternity leave (although all three are legally binding according to the labour law). Other benefits are not binding since a social security act is still under discussion, but some graduates mentioned other benefits such as “insurance against work accidents”, “transport is secured” (through a work vehicle), “breakfast meal”, as detailed below.

Table 6-8: Percentage of VET Graduates granted benefits through employment

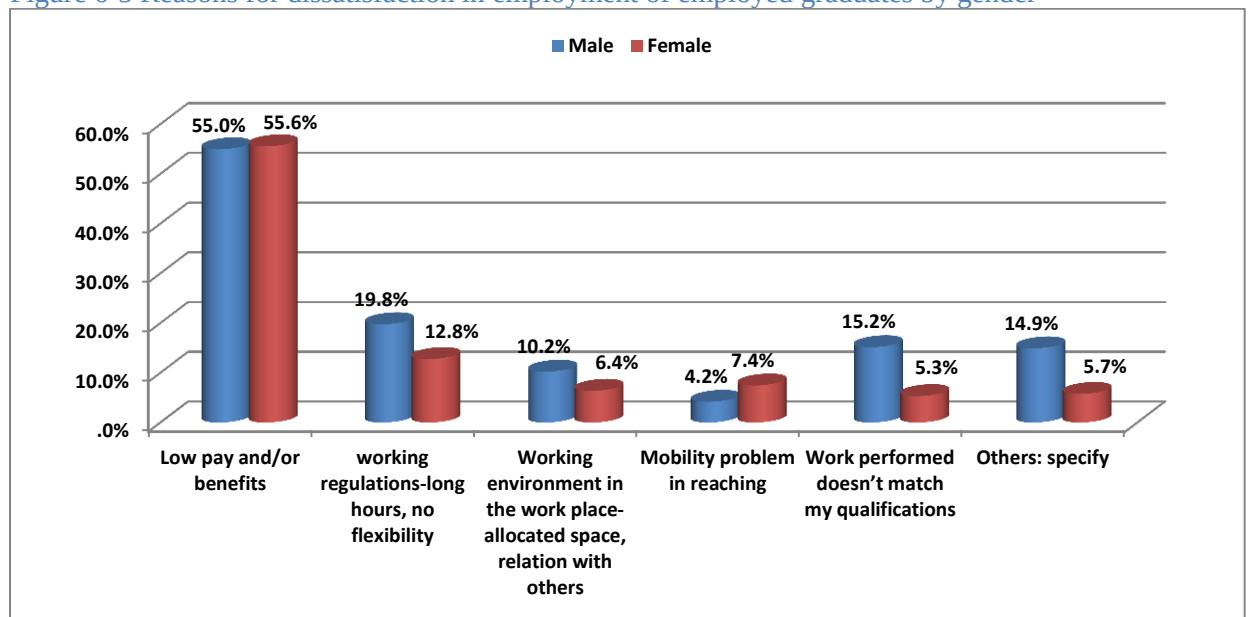
Health insurance coverage	25.5%
paid leaves (sick/annual)	13.6%
Paid Maternity leave	3.6%
Contribution to pension fund	1.2%
transport allowance	11.2%
Family allowances	3.6%
Others	39.8%

These figures differed according to employment status, as only paid employees enjoy most of these allowances.

Finding 5: the lack of decent working conditions and qualification mismatch are major obstacles to achieving capability.

Surprisingly, employers and the self-employed were the most satisfied compared with other groups of employment status, (respectively, twice and 1.5 times more satisfied than the paid employment group), while the paid employment group was the least satisfied group of workers. These two categories (employed and self-employed) did not have the same in-work benefits as the paid employment group, but they had better pay: the employers had a 25% higher mean and 50% higher median pay than paid employees, while the self-employed had 19% higher mean and 32% higher median pay than the paid employees.

Figure 6-5 Reasons for dissatisfaction in employment of employed graduates by gender



With regard to gender, it was found that female graduates were more partially satisfied than fully satisfied compared to male graduates. With this measure, the gender gap was 1.4 and 0.8 for fully and partial satisfaction respectively, while being almost similar for the dissatisfied option.

Reasons for dissatisfaction were similar according to gender, with low pay or benefits dominating. It is worth mentioning in this regard that previous labour market studies have indicated low pay as one the reasons for preferring female VET graduates (Hilal, 2011, 2013b).

The female median salary was 55% of the male salary for VET graduates, lower than the minimum wage by two thirds. Moreover, the female median salary nationally is 87% of the male salary (PCBS, 2016), indicating a higher gender pay gap for VET graduates. This finding reaffirms the multi-layered marginalisation of VET learners, as higher percentages of female VET learners consist of the poor as indicated in chapter five, hence gender and poverty intersects to reinforce the marginalisation of the group. This finding is in line with the global challenge of the gender pay gap. As many feminist economists have explained, gender relations, as well as racial and ethnic relations, have major effects on wages, especially if gender inequality intersects with other inequalities (Figart, Mutari, &Power, 2002).

On the other hand, males were more dissatisfied than females in respect to working regulations, working environment, and work that matches their qualifications, while females were more dissatisfied than males regarding mobility. The gender gap reflected the gender norms regarding work, “Male as breadwinner and female as care takers”. Females can work in specific jobs, but are not obliged to work, unless poverty is the case. Therefore, they will rarely work in jobs that do not suit their professions, or would leave a job with unsatisfactory conditions. Mobility restrictions are imposed by the colonial occupation, exacerbated by the social restrictions imposed on their movement, not to mention the low esteem of the families towards women’s work as mentioned earlier. A female graphic designer noted:

I trained and worked at the same place, training in the morning and work in the afternoon. At the beginning it was tough, but I managed and got the support of my family. Parents in general have negative views of work for women, especially if a job is not found

Other mentioned reasons for females included “parents refusing that I get a job”, as well as the family burdens and inability to find jobs that take into consideration her other roles. Other reasons for males were the inability to get a permit for work, or being injured or handicapped by Israeli shooting.

Finding 6: Gender relevant reasons, such as the social constraints, add to the reasons for dissatisfaction

The two highest household income groups reported the highest levels of job satisfaction at 59% for the highest group and 53% for the second highest, while the most dissatisfied group was the lowest income group. This indicates a link to resources and the ability to start one’s own business or find decent work. The proportion of the poor citing “low pay and minimum benefits” was 1.25 times higher than for those with household income above the poverty line.

The data for refugees indicates that one out of five refugees was not satisfied with employment conditions compared to one out of ten non-refugees. When stating reasons for their dissatisfaction, payment and regulations were 14% and 20% higher than non-refugees.

According to context-related vulnerable locations, one in three graduates from Gaza were dissatisfied with their employment, while one in five graduates from areas near the Wall and the Jordan Valley were dissatisfied, compared to one in nine from the rest of the WB. Remarkably, only one in 12 for EJ inside the wall, and one in 13 graduate outside the wall was dissatisfied. This reflects the difference in pay and benefits between Jerusalem (which has followed Israeli regulations and conditions since the 1983 annexation) and the rest of the WB.

Finding 7: context related issues and restricted resources are major obstacles to the achievements of the marginalised and hence contributors to inequality

Functionings of Economic Opportunities That Matter for All

In conclusion, the above section has revealed the success of VET graduates in employment and participation in comparison with their peers, yet this success has been challenged by various obstacles to the full realisation of their aspirations and their capabilities. Moreover, although the marginalised group still showed a high level of achievements, and despite evidence of a narrowing of the inequality gap in respect to various of the marginalised groups, that gap still exists and resonates across the inequalities in general.

The valued functioning for graduates in Capability 1: Economic opportunities that matter for all (listed in Box-3 above) resemble part of Powell's (2014) list but the context-related valued functionings are added, while the stability related functionings mentioned in her list were not noted by graduates, which could be understood within the context of the fragility of the private sector in the oPt. My list adds the marginalised dimension and hence "for all" was added to the functionings to reflect the need to address all marginalisation. Valued functionings for policymakers are added and presented in respect to the national strategies and international agenda.

Capability 2: Domestic Work and Non-Market Care by Choice

This capability was added to reflect the understanding of different work modes of VET graduates and, as explained in the introduction to the chapter, it also arises from the human development and gender debates on the value of non-market work. This capability

was added to the capability list following Robeyns' (2003) list of capabilities and functionings related to gender equality, since Robeyns claimed that previous lists that did not include gender-specific disparities, including domestic work and non-market care or time autonomy, were "gender-biased". This capability is highly gender-dependent, although it is relevant for different inequalities, hence the gender analysis of different aspects of it will be highlighted. The addition of domestic work and non-market care to economic activities is at the heart of the feminist economics literature (Ferber & Nelson, 1993; Folbre, 1994; Himmelweit, 1995; Akram-Lodhi, 1996; Gideon, 1999).

Domestic Work and Non-Market Care:

Care work carried by women around the world is overlooked by the market and economy, even though it is socially productive work. Nancy Folbre (2011) through her body of literature, has elaborated that care work is an input to human development and an output from it, being an essential capability for human well-being

Domestic, housekeeping and care work has been neglected from national economic statistics and its economic value has been ignored, as it was not viewed as a substitute for market oriented goods and services. The underestimation of women's work in labour statistics and national accounts has been pointed out by many scholars since 1970. Boserup (1970) was one of the first scholars to point out this neglect, and it was only the women's movement and international organisations that have called for the inclusion of women efforts in national accounting. Although some progress has been noted in identifying unpaid family members and informal work, the issue of the "domestic service of housewives" and their time contribution to voluntary work is still underestimated (Beneria, 2003).

A little less than two out of three of VET graduates (62.2%) expressed their aspiration that VET "Will provide me with technical skills that I can use in my domestic and/or voluntary work". Surprisingly, results were identical for male and female graduates.

The survey results indicated that over one in four VET graduates were involved in voluntary work, and around one in three graduates are involved in housekeeping/ domestic work, with higher involvement of those outside the labour force, indicating that

graduates are productive even if they were not participating in the formal labour force. Moreover, some may be out of the labour market through their own choice, 11% of VET graduates were outside the labour force (22% females and 6.5% males, i.e. ratio of more than 3:1). When indicating the reasons, most males were outside the labour force for study, while most of the females were carrying out housekeeping activities. These figures resemble the national figures (PCBS, 2016)

Overall, three out of four of the VET graduates accounted as being outside the labour force are actually working in non-market work, as the table below indicates. Results varied according to gender, since most of the graduates involved in voluntary work were male (91% to 9% females), and most of those involved in housekeeping and domestic work were female (77.5% to 22.5% males).

The results suggest that care work could be a reason for some of the graduates being outside the labour force, particularly women, while voluntary work was undertaken by the unemployed as a substitute for employment, when they were unable to find employment opportunities.

Table 6-9: Distribution of VET graduates with different work status related to employment according to involvement in other forms of work than employment

	Are you involved in other forms of work			Total
	I am involved in voluntary work	Yes, I am involved in housekeeping/ domestic work	No, I am not	
Employed	26%	27%	47%	100%
Outside the LF	20%	56%	24%	100%
Unemployed	28%	36%	36%	100%
Total	26%	32%	42%	100%

Almost half of the graduates were carrying out non-market work alongside their employment, mostly women. This percentage increased among unpaid family members, since one in two of the unpaid family members are carrying out domestic work, with a clear gender gap (1.8) in favour of women.

Finding 8: These results indicate that skills gained through VET enable non-market work and activities, and that non-market work is gender specific

Choosing to Do Domestic Work and Non-Market Care:

Almost one in four females staying outside the labour force mentioned the reason that they were: “Not allowed by parents or spouse”. Almost all this category was involved in housework, pointing to the social challenges and attitudes towards female work and gendered roles, and hence one quarter of those carrying out care work were doing so not by choice. The attitude of parts of the community towards women’s roles being limited to caring and domestic work was reflected in some of the female VET students and graduates quitting either their VET or work once they get engaged, this was confirmed through interviews and group discussions. Female teachers, administrators and counsellors in one of the VTCs mentioned:

It’s easier for a male student to convince his parents to enrol and train in VTC or market. For females, families usually have reservations; the type of training, the location where she is training, who’s training them, is it mixed genders, are there men in the class, until what hour is the training? (...) Three out of 19 quitted their education this year after getting engaged, sometimes the groom decides, other times her family or she decides that the groom arrived so that’s it for her. (...) Some graduates did not continue their training because of the interference of her fiancé or family, and sometimes she asks us to support her and we communicate with them.

The findings indicated that most of females were carrying out housekeeping and caring roles (84.4%) as opposed to 10% of males, i.e., an over eight-fold difference. The findings also confirm the difference in productive and reproductive roles based on gender, as societal expectations of women and girls in the Palestinian society associate their household role to housekeeping and care, which is linked to their reproductive role, imposing gender roles through cultural norms and traditions formed by the patriarchal society. As already noted, this is also found in public opinion survey data (Alpha-International, 2009).

Choices in this matter resemble Kabeer’s (2000) notion of “the power to choose” and its link to “agency”, as she argued that not all decisions are choices, and choices goes beyond internal reasoning to reach cultural values and structural power relations. She also emphasised that in survival women faced “Contraction in their choices”, while those motivated to fulfil aspiration, were acting as agents on their preferences.

Choices are also apparent since more of the employed graduates who were employers or self-employed were involved in voluntary work, since they could reallocate their time, while fewer of those who were employed, and none of the unpaid family members were involved in voluntary work, since they were constrained in their free time.

Constraints on graduates' choices negatively affected the realisation of graduates' capabilities, especially those of female graduates. More than one in three graduates facing challenges had faced social restrictions (38.2%), but females faced more social restrictions than male. The specific social restriction challenges faced by females were marriage, household work carried out by women according to patriarchal norms, family opposition to work or starting their own work (see Box-7 in chapter 8), social perceptions towards women and other social conditions were also stated by female graduates.

Finding 9: VET enabled market and non-market work through skills gained, yet social restrictions and choice limitation upon females restricted realisation of their capabilities

The social restrictions were also affected by gender and social status, since married, divorced and widowed women had different concerns than single women. This was related to marriage and children in respect to the former three categories, whereas single women faced restrictions related to the perception and acceptance of work. This was confirmed by a female graduate:

I used to work before marriage and after graduation. I wanted to work after marriage, but my husband does not agree, and even if I convinced him, my father will not agree, as I have to take care of the family and the children.

One of the MOL-VTC directors has noted the social restrictions facing females in enrolling for vocational training or in participation in work, which were different than the obstacles faced by male students in work:

Girls are affected by the social and family issues which hamper the rate of enrolment in vocational education and training and work. (...) male graduates with a difficult economic background are pressured to accept any work, even if he was not able to work in the field he graduated from or prefers. The obstacles related to the labour market status lies in the limited absorptive capacity of the market and low wages.

Since most VET graduates were from poor families it was noted that some of the families and spouses have accepted some flexibility to the defined gender roles and women's

work outside the house in order to generate the income needed for the family. As in the previous chapter, there were more poor females than poor males²⁰, and their rate of participation in the labour force was lower than that of males, although still much higher than the national figures, as illustrated previously.

Variety of Work Modes (Formal/Informal)

Informal paid work is considered in the two categories of “self-employed” and “unpaid family work”. The gender gap among the self-employed was minimal, while the gender gap for unpaid family members was 1.8 times in favour of females.

Moreover, one in four of the self-employed were working on an occasional/seasonal basis or per job. This is a characteristic of VET graduates, due to the nature of their skills and with their tool boxes they are able to work per jobs or seasonally. This is seen as advantageous due to its ability to generate income for the unemployed and to allow female graduates restricted by family burdens or societal attitudes to work from home, as explained by the teachers of the female VTC:

Many students come for work, even if they don't work in the market, they work from the home

One of the female students mentioned:

I am studying fashion design, and worked in it before. I want to get married immediately after graduation; I want to work in fashion design from home (make designs and clothes), my mother is doing the same; she is a tailor

While one in twenty graduates of those working as self-employed is working in income generating activities, this could also be seen in the various other employment statuses, as the table below illustrates:

²⁰ It is not assuming any degrading/ failing, but its describing their economic status as marginalisation factor

Table 6-10: Distribution of graduates according to employment status versus details of employment

	Details of employment for self-employed or paid employees				Total
	Full time	Part time	Occasional work (seasonal / per job)	Income-generating activities	
Employer	85%	0%	12%	3%	100%
Self-employed	52%	17%	26%	5%	100%
Paid Employee	59%	24%	16%	1%	100%
Unpaid Family member	50%	25%	25%	0%	100%
Total	60%	22%	17%	1%	100%

The table indicates that 85% of employers are working full-time, while half or more of the self-employed, employees and unpaid family members are working full time. There are also substantial amounts of part time or seasonal work.

Continuing the discussion of work, during the survey it was noted that many are working on more than one thing at a time, being partly or fully employed and self-employed on seasonal or a per job basis, or carrying out their own income generating activities at home. Unfortunately, the survey could not capture that in numbers.

Gender was also apparent as a factor in the time spent at work in that, the percentage of females working part time was 1.8 times that of males, yet the percentage of males working full time was 1.3 times that of females.

Working from home is particularly important within the Palestinian context. Kuttab (2006) described women's home production as "part of resistance in response to family impoverishment". Furthermore, she considered informal employment as part of the "coping strategies in the context of national crises such as the first and second intifada" (p.258). Within such a context, providing the skills to work within different modes would prepare the graduates for the different modes of economies that would contribute to the resilience of the communities.

Finding 10: These results indicate that skills gained through VET provide opportunities for different kinds of market and non-market formal and informal paid and unpaid work, and that almost all VET graduates (97.4%) are actively engaged in work, and sometimes in multiple paid or/and unpaid work.

Although females were restricted by various social constraints due to marginalisation, some gender roles were redefined, and women's work, once constrained to home caring and traditional related jobs became accepted by families and community and were extended to include different vocational fields. At the same time, results indicated that males are also engaged in house-keeping work. Redefining of gender roles as a result of the current context has been noted by various Palestinian feminist scholars (Johnson & Kuttat, 2001; Kuttat, 2006; Abu-Nahleh, 2006; Muhanna, 2016).

Overall, however, the achieved functionings by female graduates were higher than those of males, since (86.3%) of females confirmed achieving 50% or more of their aspirations compared to 77.1% for males, indicating the enabling effect of VET for females to achieve their valued functionings.

The engagement of females in care work opens up the discussion of raising the appreciation of care work as an important contributor to human development, and the suggestion by Nelson (1993, 2000), Jennings (1993), and other writers, that provisioning be used as a starting point. The inclusion of non-paid work in the economic analysis is of value for young men and women and meets their aspiration of work they value.

In such regard, I have considered, as noted in finding 10, care work and voluntary work as non-market work that contributed to the achievement of graduates' aspirations for most, although it was not chosen by some whom are challenged by social and economic constraints.

Capability 3: Economic Resources for Poverty Reduction and Wellbeing

Sen (1998) has emphasised that enlarging a person's "functionings and capabilities to function" is an essential element in human development and for expanding people's economic, social and political choices. Human development discourse has emphasised that using resources such as income, clothes, food or other goods is important to achieve the valued functionings and hence well-being. In our case, the poor and disempowered youth are longing for income to contribute to their family poverty alleviations, to pursue their own life and to achieve their plans and aspirations, such as starting a new family or

starting a new business. Hence income is not an end but rather a means to achieve the other valued functionings.

This section seeks to measure the effect of economic resources including income and other non-monetary resources that contribute to survival of the family and to reducing financial burdens. This is measured in terms of alleviating household poverty levels and wellbeing achievement. Improvements in poverty levels are measured according to the contribution of the VET graduates and the self-assessment of the graduates regarding the level of income improvement. Resources are added following Johnson's (1997, p.15) call for economic resources measures that go beyond income for poverty.

The results indicated that 87.6% of the graduates expected that, upon graduation, VET "Will enable me to generate income", which was the highest agreed expectation among graduates. The following sections will illustrate the achievement of the valued functionings as stated by the graduates through the multiple data types.

Generate Income for Poverty Reduction

Results indicated that over half of the graduates are contributing to their family income (two out of three male graduates and almost one out of three of female graduates).

The results also indicated that around half of the families have improved their status from enrolment until the point of the survey four years later, this percentage was higher among the categories of graduates who contributed to family income (except for those who were already contributing 100% to their family income).

Table 6-11: Distribution of graduated students by approximate percentage contribution to the income of the original family and gender

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Count	N %	Count	N %	Count	N %
Not contributing-0%	181	34.6%	127	62.0%	308	42.3%
Contributing to 25% or less	175	33%	52	25%	227	31%
contributing to 26%-50%	110	21%	15	7%	125	17%
contributing to 51%-74%	9	1.7%	1	.5%	10	1.4%
contributing to 75% -100%	48	9%	10	5%	58	8%
Total	523	100.0%	205	100.0%	728	100.0%
contributing 1-100%	342	65.4%	78	38.0%	420	57.7%

The graduates contributing their full income to their original households are mainly the very poor, as their contribution would have assisted in the survival of the household. Results indicated that their families were the most likely to report no change. The families of those not contributing to family income after graduation had the smallest improvement in income of other groups, as the table below indicates.

Table 6-12: Approximate percentage contribution to the income of the original family versus improvement of current income level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled)

		Has the current income Level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled) improve					Total
		Yes largely	Yes slightly	No change	No, it deteriorated slightly	No, it deteriorated largely	
Approximate percentage contribution to the income of the original family	0%	5%	33%	54%	6%	1%	100%
	1%-24%	5%	64%	29%	2%	0%	100%
	25%	8%	53%	37%	3%	0%	100%
	26-49%	6%	56%	38%	0%	0%	100%
	50%	5%	47%	45%	3%	0%	100%
	51%-74%	20%	50%	20%	10%	0%	100%
	75%	11%	54%	32%	4%	0%	100%
	76%-89%	0%	58%	25%	17%	0%	100%
	90%-	11%	44%	44%	0%	0%	100%
	100%	11%	22%	56%	11%	0%	100%
Total		6%	45%	44%	4%	1%	100%

Overall results indicated that half of the families had not improved their status since enrolment, especially the poor and those living in marginalised areas as the tables below indicate. This suggests that the enrolment is only part of story.

Finding 11: Two out of three male graduates and one out of three female graduates are contributing to family income, which in turn contributed (in addition to other factors) to improve the financial status of one in two of the households and sustain the financial status for 44% of them.

This finding is important within the context of the impoverishment of the Palestinian people due to the prolonged military occupation.

The table below illustrates that very poor families were the most affected during the years under study (2009/2010-2015), as almost one in three of the very poor families experienced a deterioration in income during these years compared to below 10% among

the other groups. The poor and those with medium status were the most stable or experienced a slight improvement. Again, these results reveal the vulnerability of the poorest, and the importance of the contribution of the graduates in stabilising the incomes and status of those above this level.

Table 6-13: The financial status of the graduate's family when enrolled (2009 or 2010) versus improvement of income level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled)

		Has the current income Level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled) improve					Total
		Yes largely	Yes slightly	No change	No, it deteriorated slightly	No, it deteriorated largely	
How do you assess the financial status of your family when enrolled (2009 or 2010)	Very Good	25%	33%	35%	6%	2%	100%
	Good	6%	57%	34%	3%	0%	100%
	Medium	4%	38%	52%	5%	1%	100%
	Poor	1%	37%	56%	6%	0%	100%
	Very poor	8%	15%	46%	31%	0%	100%
Total		6%	45%	44%	5%	1%	100%

Families in Gaza and Jerusalem outside the wall were the most likely to experience a deterioration in their status since enrolment. Gaza had more than double the average level of deterioration, and Jerusalem outside the wall had 1.5 times, both also had higher rates of unchanged situation and lower rates of improvements, as table below indicates.

Table 6-14: Count and Percentage distribution of graduated students by improvement of the current income level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled) and Residence Zone

	Has the current income level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled) improve					Total
	Yes largely	Yes slightly	No change	No, it deteriorated slightly	No, it deteriorated largely	
Gaza	.8%	24.6%	62.3%	11.5%	.8%	100.0%
EJ inside the wall	12.9%	41.9%	41.9%	3.2%	.0%	100.0%
Jerusalem outside the wall	.0%	40.0%	53.3%	6.7%	.0%	100.0%
Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	.0%	55.6%	44.4%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	10.2%	55.1%	30.6%	4.1%	.0%	100.0%
Remaining WB	6.4%	47.8%	41.7%	3.6%	.6%	100.0%
Total	5.8%	44.3%	44.5%	4.9%	.5%	100.0%

The deterioration in the income level of households from Gaza and Jerusalem outside the wall is a natural result of the siege and war in Gaza during the years under study, and the

fact that the wall also came into effect during this time. As UNOCHA (2015) noted one year after the war, 17,670 families, or about 100,000 persons in Gaza, were displaced due to the destruction of or severe damage to their homes. One year after the atrocity, none of these houses had been rebuilt. Moreover, according to the Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI, 2015) one in four Palestinians in EJ is disconnected from the rest of the city by the construction of the Separation Wall. These residences challenged by a severe lack of basic services and infrastructure, and more than three out of four Palestinian residents are living below the poverty line.

Faced by such conditions, individuals, families and whole households in Palestine are “coping”, “negotiating” their lives to achieve their personal and collective goals Taraki et al. (2006). In this context, VET graduates’ contributions to their households become an important coping strategy to at least sustain their survival against any reverse of their conditions due to the occupation.

Moreover, the graduates’ families living in the refugee camps had the least improvement and a higher rate of deterioration: 6.7% compared to 5.8% and 4.8% for rural and urban areas.

Finding 12: Within such a status, most VET graduates’ contribution to their family income has supported their families to improve or at least sustain themselves against deterioration, yet the effect was lower for those living in a marginalised locality that have faced political measures due to that context.

Generate Income to Enable Creation of a New Family or Start their Own Work

One fifth of the graduates had set up new families and over half of them are contributing to their income, (77% of males, compared to 36% of females).

Table 6-15: Distribution of VET graduates that started new families by approximate percentage contribution to the income of the new family and gender

	Male	Female	Total
Not contributing	22.8%	63.5%	47.2%
Contributing to 25% or less	5%	16%	12%
contributing to 26%-50%	12%	9%	11%
contributing to 51%-74%	3.5%	.0%	1.4%
contributing to 75% - 100%	56%	11%	29%
Total	100%	100%	100%
contributing 1-100%	77%	36%	53%

Contributions to the new family were also affected by the occupation measures, since almost two out of three VET graduates that started their own families and were living in Gaza or in Jerusalem near the separation wall were not contributing to their new families.

Finding 13: One fifth of the VET graduates were able to start new families upon graduation. More important is the fact that most of the male VET graduates were able to support their new families, and almost one in three female graduates was able to contribute to their newly started families, although their contribution was lower due to the status-related marginalisation.

The impact of VET is clear with regards to contribution to income, and is linked to the graduates' employment status, since almost all employed VET graduates were contributing to their original family income or their new families, or even both.

The gender gap in contribution to income is related to the employment status of female graduates, which is in turn linked to the societal attitude towards women's work. The gender gap increased according to marital status (72% male to 9% female), which is also related to the gender gap in employment among this group, and to the expected societal role of women as family carers.

Results also indicate that the poorer the graduate family was when enrolled, the higher the percentage of their contribution to the income of the family: 80% of the graduates from very poor families were contributing to 75% or more of family income, and 30% from the poor family as compared to 13% or less for the medium, good and very good status families when enrolled. Moreover, 90% of those who established new families were from medium or above family financial status when enrolled.

Finding 14: VET graduates were able to generate income that supported their families and supported the establishments of new families, yet this contribution has decreased with increased poverty, with those affected directly and indirectly by poverty living in marginalised areas, and obviously affected by gender, since the contribution was lower for females.

Own Income for Independent Choices and Wellbeing Valued Functioning

VET graduates were able to fulfil their aspirations through skills and income generation, as the following cases quoted from students, teachers and management illustrate:

The following case shows how the poor economic situation of the family did not stop the youth from thinking in alternative ways. He gained skills through VET, engaged in production and fulfilled his dreams, as mentioned by one VTC student, who is a student from same village:

I know a young man who went to work after Tawjihi (his family could not afford to pay for him), and then the young man studied here, later he opened his shop and I work with him now.

The MOSA representative responsible for VET noted the self-worth felt by the poor in the community through production, as follows:

We noticed that the vocational education and training has very positive results on poor families and marginalised groups, especially from a psychological aspect. These family members became productive and felt self-worth and how important they are in the community

Meanwhile, the Director of a female VT added:

The effect [of VET] is also related to graduates with social conditions being able to support themselves and their kids after divorce or adding income to the family, or opening a business that could benefit the community.

She highlighted the effect of skills and income generation on females with special social conditions being able to support their own children and family, which is important in a patriarchal society that can move her back from being dependent on the spouse to being dependent on her father or brother, especially with the lack of social protection systems.

Finding 15: It was evident from all cases mentioned that VET skills would lead to independent income and thus independent choices and wellbeing functioning.

Generate Resources for Poverty Reduction

This functioning is part of the opportunities VET provides and reinforces the argument that poverty is not simply about income but includes access to economic resources, through which women's wealth will increase (Johnson, 2002).

Many VET graduates were able to use their skills to produce items for home use, minimising the household cost of living and increasing its resources. A sewing graduate mentioned:

I am not working outside the home because of my children, but I sew all my kids' cloths and some of my cloths, which saves us lots of money.

A carpenter, who has also the skills to do other technical work, mentioned how his skills are serving his home and the extended family maintenance work.

Capability 4: Active citizenship

Active citizenship is identified by Powell as linked with inclusion in decision-making, a sense of agency and the mobilisation of resources for change. Here I draw on concepts of empowerment and achievements of graduates in these areas to identify the capability of active citizenship. The empowerment framework is used to define active citizenship within “Power-With” as illustrated in the next chapter, based on which capability and valued functionings are as listed in Box-3

For policymakers, facilitating inclusive citizenship is important for the different marginalised groups in participation and actions. The preparation of VET graduates for such participation is important if they are to meet their obligations.

Capability 5: Confidence and Personal Empowerment (Power Within)

The Power Within- Sense of Agency

Confidence and personal empowerment encompasses one of the main empowerment elements. This definition departs from Powell's definition, so that it is more concrete, and more linked to VET and empowerment. This is also discussed in detail in the next chapter where the “Power Within” notion is linked with a “Sense of Agency”.

Having A Range of Futures as Possible Aspirations

Choices are reasonable when you have resources to enable them. As Kabeer (1999) noted, choices are related to conditions and consequences the individual make. Through skills gained, certificates awarded, the availability of work opportunities and income, the flexible types of work that could be conducted through skills gained, as well as the

possibility to start their own work, VET provides graduates with better conditions for making choices and having alternatives among these choices.

Graduates indicated a range of options, including continuing their education, work, work during continuing education, have their own work, work from home, being self-employed, volunteering, doing unpaid caring and housework, or alternating between paid and unpaid work.

The students who came from poor backgrounds, however, have fewer options but are more determined to succeed as noted by VET staff from various institutes, although, for some of them, having a profession enables them to support the cost of further education. As noted by the KTC Deputy and heads of departments:

(...) the suffering of poor students becomes a self-motivation for them to develop themselves out of poverty

The high ability of graduates to work opens up various opportunities, as noted by KTC management and counsellors:

Many KTC graduates with age of 20-22 years old (after 2-4 years of graduation) are now getting salaries that a graduate engineer (of the same age) would not obtain, and [the latter] would still need from 3-6 months of training to enter the market. A few years after graduation, [VTC] students would accumulate experience and money (from salaries) to set up their own businesses.

Opening their own work is an aspiration of around two out of three graduates. Yet lots of them would like to have more work experience before setting up own work. This aspiration is feasible with the high number of success stories in this regard that goes beyond the percentage of graduates that have set up their own business within four years of graduation. It is a dream that some would implement after ten years or more, suggesting that VET enables students to have short-term and long-term choices, as noted by a director of a VET institute who was an administrator 25 years ago of another VTC, an NGO-VET institute:

I see graduates of vocational training from (...) [VTC], 1997, in the governorate and they are successful and have [their own] workshops. There are 25 graduates and their economic situation is better than an engineer. For example, (...) graduate of the year '97, he has a Carpentry workshop from ten years ago [a well-known carpenter in the governorate]

The ability to work from home enables poorer female graduates to cater for their own family and generate income through work from home, seasonally or per job. It was noted by many female students during focus groups that part of their plans was to work from home, and VTC management also mentioned:

Many times, the (...) [VTC] gives graduates sewing machines so they can work from home and have a source of income. Two divorced graduates were provided with support by (...) [donor], to open their own business, they are successful now and employers of others.

The ability of VET to open up the future and provide opportunities for youth is apparent here through opening up the range of futures as possible aspirations.

Capability 6: Bodily Integrity, Safety and Mobility

Nussbaum (2003) has identified bodily integrity as part of the central human capabilities, which is based on feminists' discourse on social justice, which requests that bodily integrity and being free from violence is considered as part of the discourse of rights. She has defined "Bodily Integrity" as:

Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence (p.40)

Robeyns (2003) has added safety, noting that international studies indicate that women are subjected more to sexual violence while men are more likely to experience physical violence. She has further suggested that "Mobility" is a central capability with a gender dimension. It will be shown how, in the Palestinian context, bodily integrity, safety and mobility are interrelated.

Palestinian children and youth are facing various forms of violence as a result of the military occupation, and as noted by the World Bank (2010) report on gender dimensions:

The violence resulting from the occupation has led to loss of life, land, property, and free movement of people, and has fragmented social space, a key source of material and moral support especially for women. With neither Israeli nor Palestinian legal systems able to provide defence or protection, these momentous changes in people's everyday lives created a sense of collapse of the public, social, and moral order (p.13)

Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2008) has noted the effect of violence on girls and women commuting to education, she noted:

The results show that the covert and overt acts of political violence against Palestinians has transformed Palestinian gender relations in complex, contradictory, and diverse ways while both militarising and violating their right to education (p.179)

Through her interviews, she unveiled the physical, psychological and sexual violence young women and girls are subjected to, especially in context-related vulnerable localities such as the areas near to the wall, where she documented various incidents based on women's voices. She concluded:

The militarisation of education was apparent in the creation of panic and an atmosphere of constant fear and uncertainty. Moreover, the sexualisation of such militarised acts turned girls' and women's daily transit to school, college, or university into a terrifying and traumatizing experience, but young women continued to search for methods of talking back to power while seeking out counter-discourses and actions with which to oppose the hegemonic militarised ones (p.192)

Moreover, various international reports have documented the violence children are subjected to when attempting to reach their schools within the marginalised localities (UNICEF, 2016) and in EJ, especially male children who are arrested, and subjected to multiple violations, including physical violence (UNICEF, 2015).

Attacks against communities in the form of closures, siege, isolation, curfews, zoning...etc. also violate the right to move freely and subject all members of the community to various sorts of violence and violations.

UNOCHA (2016a) has characterised the situation as “a protracted protection crisis with humanitarian consequences, where Palestinians face a range of threats that undermine their ability to live self-sustaining lives and prevent the enjoyment of their rights, including the right to self-determination” (p.1)

The national Violence Survey in the Palestinian Society conducted by PCBS in 2011 indicated that half of Palestinian families were subjected to direct violence from the occupation or settlers during the period preceding the survey. It found that males, were more subject to violence (13.4% of males, and 10% of male youths) and that the checkpoints are the main sites for psychological and physical violence. The study also indicated that four in 100 women were subjected to psychological, physical and sexual violence at these checkpoints. It also indicated that two and four in one hundred

Palestinian children were subjected to psychological and physical violence by the occupation respectively (PCBS, 2012b).

Domestic violence is also high in the community due to various factors including the effect of the military occupation, or as Abdo-Zubi put it the “external and internal”, the “militarisation and patriarchy” (Abdo-Zubi, 2005). This was documented by a national study conducted by the PCBS, with more than one in three women being found to have been subjected to domestic violence (37%), and as many as one in two in Gaza (PCBS, 2012b).

The National Violence Survey conducted by PCBS (2012b) indicated that academic institutions are another arena, where 9% of male and female youths were subjected to psychological and physical violence, while more than one in five children were subjected to psychological and physical violence.

As for mobility, various international reports including the World Bank (2010, 2011b, 2013a, 2016; Niksic, Nasser-Eddin & Almubaied, 2015) have reported on the mobility restrictions and their effects on the economy, unemployment and poverty, education, access to services and access to social networks. The World Bank has also reported on the negative effects on development of keeping Area C, which consists of 60% of the WB, off limits (Niksic, Cali & Nasser-Eddin, 2014). In her study, Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2008) has indicated how the closures, blockades and daily commuting have led to women being subjected to all sorts of violence. UNOCHA has reported over 550 physical impediments, including the separation wall, which is built on Palestinian land and separates Palestinian areas from each other (www.ochaopt.org).

As noted by Abu-Nahleh (2006, p.104), “Individuals, families and communities have experienced (...) and threats to personal safety and property through sets of policies designated to pauperise the Palestinians presence”. She further illustrates the measures taken by the military occupation and its effects on individuals and families, including loss of life, injuries and psychological effects, as well as loss of basic services and system fragmentation and the destruction of the social and cultural fabric of Palestinian society.

Within such a context, many parents will not allow their daughters, or sons in certain cases, to cross checkpoints for training or work. Moreover, as in the case of Salfeet vocational school, which is surrounded by Israeli settlements, the director has noted the threat to students and teachers:

We must help students and teachers (...) to get to school securely in the governorate; since the neighbouring areas are exposed to attacks from settlers and there were several incidents.

Hence, all these young males and females would value having their bodily integrity, being protected from violence, free from fear and violence and with the ability to move and commute to their VET institutes or work freely.

Capability 7: Senses and Imagination: Developing Creativity

Nussbaum (2003) has indicated “Senses, Imagination, and Thought” as part of her capability list:

Senses, Imagination, and Thought; (...) Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one’s own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. (p.40)

Powell (2014) has also identified “developing an understanding and love of the creative arts” and “Participating in and enjoying sport that promotes physical wellbeing” as capabilities. My findings add the VET contribution to developing senses and imagination and in promoting physical well-being to this list.

VET Developing Senses and Imagination

The findings showed how VET is promoting artistic senses and an understanding and love of the arts, specifically in relevant vocations such as handicrafts, carpentry and metalwork. A female graduate that studied handicrafts commented;

My dream is to become an artist and paint. I worked once in a shop where I painted on mirrors. Now I teach kids drawing.

The practically oriented vocational training promotes physical well-being, unlike academic education that includes minimal hours of practical work; VET is practically oriented with the weighting of practical elements reaching from 30% to 60% of the overall training programme.

Students and graduates have indicated enjoyment of the practically oriented VET, and the promotion of creativity and artistic appreciation for some professions. One of students during one of the focus groups mentioned, and many agreed;

I joined for practical part, (...) VE provides you with an industrial mind and industrial thinking.

The industrial thinking is explained by the group as being practically oriented and having the ability to find innovative solutions. Moreover, most of the VET graduates that had positive attitudes indicated that “VET provides opportunities for creativity” (82%)

Teachers and counsellors in various VET institutes mentioned the artistic sense or talents for some students enrolling in certain related vocations, such as beautician and ceramics. VET training would help them develop their appreciation for arts and related skills.

VET Developing Creativity

Creativity and innovation as an outcome of TVET is emphasised by the Palestinian TVET strategy as:

The overall objective of the National TVET strategy is to create knowledgeable, competent, motivated, entrepreneurial, adoptable, creative and innovative workforce in Palestine (...). (MOEHE & MOL, 2010, p.6)

Hence, valued functionings for graduates for capability 7 would be as listed in Box-3.

Capability 8: Recognition and Respect

Being Treated as a Dignified Human Being, Having Self-Respect and Not Being Discriminated Against

Nussbaum (2003, 2011) argues that capabilities can go beyond opportunities to represent opportunities and process. She argues for capabilities based on entitlements and rights that would lead to equality, with human dignity as core.

Being treated as a dignified human being, having self-respect and not being discriminated against for any reason, including religion, gender, race, physical handicaps and age, resembles the argument of Powell (2014) and Walker (2008) on educators and learners' rights and dignity.

To be treated with respect, dignity and without discrimination came out from various interviews and discussions with students, communities, parents and teachers, often in terms of granting graduates' rights in the labour market. Female students added granting equality in the household and the community.

Inequalities identified and reflected in discussions were threefold: the basic inequalities shared worldwide being that based on gender, physical handicap, religion, marital status and age. Second, related to political status within the oPt (such as political prisoners, refugees, Internally Displaced People (IDP)), or, as identified in the previous chapter, context-related vulnerability, which could be shared with other countries facing conflicts or political oppression. Thirdly, for being a VET graduate, which is related to VET graduates worldwide. Whereas the first resembled that of Powell (2014), the second and third were also stressed throughout the discussions. The second reflects the status in the oPt and resembles the UNESCO (2015a, p.5) TVET recommendations on equity and access to include “populations affected by conflict or disaster”.

Better Status to Achieve Equality

With regard to inequality due to being a VET graduate, graduates mentioned in various parts of the open questions their lack of access to some of the higher education institutes, they named at least one, and the lower salaries in the market, and some indicated that there was a negative perception towards them as VET graduates from the community.

Significantly, most VET graduates (85%) indicated that they aspired that VET would provide them with a “Better Status” and (95%) aspired to receive a certificate. These results were largely similar between the groups, indicating the role of VET aspired to by the graduates was to provide a certificate and a status in a Palestinian community that provides a lot of respect for education and certificates.

To Respect My Choice of Selecting VET

“To respect my choice of selecting VET” was also part of the discussions that came out from students and graduates, as noted by a female graduate:

We need to show how much we work and tire ourselves; we need to show that we love our vocation to our families to get their respect towards our choice, plans and accomplishment.

Vocational secondary schools' students in many focus groups mentioned that students with high grades are pressured against enrolling in VET by the directorate of education and their teachers and principals, and there were many cases where they were not allowed to enjoy their right to choose, one group of male students mentioned that:

The Directorate would tell you: "you have a high average, why not study scientific fields?" (...) we know of a student who had a 97% who was advised to switch to scientific studies.

One in four students has indicated that community perceive VET negatively, and some, during FGD, have indicated the change that they need to make through their work to convince parents and the community of their choice.

Community Recognition- Steadfastness and Identity Recognition

Community recognition came out clearly in the Palestinian case and the marginalised localities. This was noted for localities of EJ inside the Wall, where the presence of Palestinians and the Palestinian economy is threatened, and localities are contracting year after year, as reported by Richard Falk, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories, who stated that Israel carried out a "systematic and continued effort to change the ethnic composition of East Jerusalem" (2014). Discrimination against Palestinian workers and learners has also been documented by the ILO (2015b) and ACRI (2015). The percentage of drop-outs is higher than for either Israeli students in Jerusalem or Palestinians in the remaining WB (MOEHE, 2015).²¹ The status of Jerusalem and its implications for VET graduates, was explained by the following quote from a VTC Principal:

VET can be a solution for school dropouts, and we keep telling parents and the community that it's better to join VET than to join the market without preparation to avoid black jobs and exploitation. (...) VET is very important in Jerusalem because it is the safest choice for many reasons; education in Jerusalem is frustrating for Jerusalemite youth (university graduates have no chance of employment (...) they [VET graduates] work in the vocation taught, they can open their own business, they can be supervisors in the work location. (...) We support all those who advocate/ support VET to sustain youth in Jerusalem, to live with dignity and to help them enter the market.

²¹ East Jerusalem under International Law is an Occupied Territory since 1967, yet the unilateral annexation in 1983 and continual policies have affected the Palestinian existence in the city as UNOCHA fact sheet on East Jerusalem explains, can be found at <http://www.ochaopt.org/content/east-jerusalem-key-humanitarian-concerns-august-2014> , further information from UNOCHA can be found at: www.ochaopt.org

VTC Teachers and trainers in EJ has further elaborated the pressure upon youth to enter the black market is present even for graduates, yet training puts the graduates on the right track for work in their taught profession:

The students want to take a salary after graduation, they quit their work and go to the black work in order to get complete salary, their work in their vocations give 2000 NIS income, (which is one third of what they get in black jobs). We need to give them temptations to stay in their vocation, we suffer till students reach commitment [to their taught vocation]; they get offers for higher salaries to work as unskilled in Israel, they say: I got a work opportunity 5000-6000 NIS, which is more than they get in the Palestinian market. (...) The Israeli policies against Arabs in Jerusalem are discriminatory; one student who graduated four years ago has reported incidents. They deal with any Arab as their servant. We need our graduates to build the [Palestinian] economy in EJ.

The recognition from the community of the role of VET within such a context, in terms of supporting youth, providing them with a career, and preserving their existence and identity, was noted through the following quotes of an EJ employer:

You [the institute] are saving a whole generation from getting lost. (...) You help students to start their journey/career. The importance of what the [institute] does is that it closes the gap in Jerusalem “the gap in the education system”, families and students benefit, drop outs usually go to the black labour (they pay 4000 NIS/ months for drop out students), after 6-7 years when they 25 years old, they have nothing, can’t improve their life/job, no prospect.

Hence, as the case of VET in EJ explains, VET has been a saviour for youth, especially drop outs, due to its role in helping them to continue to exist as Palestinians in EJ, and to live and work with dignity, and provides for the need for the community to preserve its dignity and identity, to support its own economy and hence its resilience and steadfastness.

As a result, a valued functioning for these communities reaches beyond the individual recognition to the community recognition, steadfastness, resilience and identity recognition.

Capability 9: Upgrade Skills and Qualifications throughout the Life-Course, Including Continued Education and Continued Upgrading

The ability of students to continue their education and to have enabling skills for lifelong learning challenged the negative perception by some of the traditional educationalists and parts of the community that VET is a dead-end. The Director of VSS mentioned:

The parents and the Ministry of Education directorate have a negative role / they are not convinced that vocational education is also for smart students. This leads female students to head for other tracks, they also add pressure on smart students who are in vocational education to switch back to academics, like what happened with a female student who got an 89% average and switched during the second half of the year [to another academic stream]

While a VSS female student noted that continuing education is challenged by the policies, resources and attitudes, she could challenge the attitude, but challenges remained, she noted;

Teacher told me not to join VE, there are no open fields to complete education, also my family and my parents told me that they know more than me what best for me, but I insisted and convinced them

The negative attitudes were reflected during interviews with management staff at the directorate of education (heads and/or deputies) and during focus groups with general education teachers and principals, although most of those interviewed were positive and disagreed with these thoughts. Teachers and principals in one of the education directorates reflected these negative thoughts:

We don't advise students to go to industrial school as no university option is in front of them. (...) Parents do not accept VET we need more work [on changing attitudes]

While the Director of the Directorate is another one reflecting the positive attitudes as follows:

I advise all smart and excellent students to go for vocational education because he will learn a skill that he can develop with academic studying also, smart students can continue their studies in engineering.

To Have the Opportunity to Study and Learn throughout their Lifetime

Half of the graduates aspired to “continue their education” and expected that VET would enable them to do so. Almost one in four graduates who were outside the labour force was continuing their education during the survey period, which is four years after

graduation. This was also noted through the impact recorded by most of the principals of the vocational schools met, as they all agreed that graduates either go to the labour market or continue their education. Unpublished data of VE graduates has indicated that over quarter of the graduates continue their education, as confirmed through meeting with the acting DG of VE at MOE.

The other graduates still hold their aspiration for future opportunities, especially females and the poor, despite being overburdened with family and caring responsibilities in the case of females, and family support responsibility in the case of the poor. The results indicated that although half of the females aspired to continuing their education; which is similar to that of males, only 10% of those outside the labour force were doing so compared to almost half of the males outside the labour force, as more than half of females outside the labour force were mainly engaged in family caring and household activities. Yet principals have confirmed that many female graduates enrolled in engineering after accomplishing their vocational education.

Some teachers have noted that VET enables the poor student to work while enrolling at higher education, thus enabling them to support the cost of their education and contribute to their families in the meantime.

Having the Learning Skills Required for Further Study or Continual Upgrading

Nowadays with on-going technological changes, the requirement is higher for skilled workers that can continue to upgrade their skills, as clearly put by an employer in the field of home appliances:

Electronics and technology changes that develop every day, sometimes engineers refuse to look for updates or refuse improvements (...). These are more important than a degree.

Employers have noted that VET graduates have this ability over others to continue learning and developing, the technical skills obtained at VET enable the development of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. One employer, who is also a VET graduate, who continued his studies and opened his own business confirmed:

I always advocate for TVET, whether for friends or relatives. If they do science or arts Tawjihi, then what's next? They will continue in academic specialisations, while electricity or IT is up-to-date, fun and business.

The Jerusalem Directorate Director noted VET students' ability to develop:

There is room for the student to develop himself and achieve his social and economic desires.

One parent, himself a VET graduate, noted the process the graduated go through to continue upgrading and development:

As an industrial school-graduate when we go to the market, we have the practical training, [and] the theoretical education, (...) work after graduation is fundamental, I worked on myself, VET gives you confidence and you need to continue learning, school can only give you the basics.

Moreover, most of the VET graduates with a positive attitude towards VET (84%), think that "VET provides opportunities for self-development".

Based on the above, valued functionings of the graduates are listed in Box-3, while the access of VET graduates to further education and/or lifelong-learning would be the valued functioning for policymakers along the national and international strategies and directions.

Capability 10: Enabled Transition to WOW through Awareness, Preparation and Connections

This capability resembles Powell's (2014) eighth capability (Occupational Knowledge) with a marginalisation axis. The suggested capability adds other relevant resources to "occupational knowledge" for the poor and marginalised for entry into the labour market. It includes the linkages to the labour market that enhance connections for the poor and the marginalised as an important resource for entering the world of work. The capability was also rephrased to reflect the need of the marginalised youth for the quick transition into the world of work, in line with international VET literature and recent UNESCO policies.

Having the Occupational Qualifications for Entry into the Labour Market

Most graduates (81.3%) expressed "To gain skills that enable me to work" as one of the reasons for joining VET, indicating how graduates perceive VET as a tool for enabling transition. This was confirmed by graduates, as noted by a male and a female VTC graduate from different institutes during focus group discussions:

Male graduate: We can find a job easily in our field of training. We use technology much better than other workers. We benefited a lot from our TVET training and we see it and admit it.

Female graduate: I have worked in my profession since graduation; vocational training was very helpful.

Both quotes indicate the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for entering and progressing in the labour market. The use of technology is an important added value of VET graduates over informal apprentices, while being practically oriented is an added value over other academic streams' graduates. A VSS student has mentioned the added value of the occupational knowledge and skills in pursuing their aspirations in comparison with other tracks of education, as he mentioned:

Most, if not all, graduates of literary disciplines stay without work, while the graduate in the vocational stream is practically-oriented and can work in different facilities, or can open a shop or study engineering and open a company.

The practical skills gained through VET provide the opportunity for different options for work modes necessary for female students and graduates, as a teacher of female VET students in VTC says:

There are girls who graduated from fashion design who now work in factories or from home and some made fashion design shows and one works as teacher

Working from home is an important feature of VET for females, which allows them to overcome social challenges related to their caring role, or social and context related restrictions on mobility.

Employers emphasised the added value of the occupational knowledge and skills of the VET graduate, as noted by a business representative:

There is a high demand for VET graduates (...) Special attention is being paid to TVET graduates by businesses starting 10 years ago; they prefer them over university graduates, they are practical oriented.

Employers praised their theoretical background, practical skills and technology awareness. This reinforces findings from a previous national labour market study that indicated that these qualifications are reasons for employers preferring VET graduates over non-graduates or graduates of other educational systems (Hilal, 2011).

Most graduates interviewed were very appreciative of the qualification gained, and most of those employed have acknowledged its effect on helping them to enter the labour market.

Occupational Knowledge and Experience for Self-Employment or Opening a Business

Two out of three of the graduates expressed their aspiration to start their own work, either immediately or after gaining some experience of working after graduation.

The aspiration of “Will enable me to gain knowledge and enough experience to start my own business immediately” was more pronounced in marginalised localities with fewer opportunities for employment, such as Gaza and the Jordan Valley. This was explained by VTC teachers:

The vocational graduates work with their hands, so when there isn't an employment opportunity, they will work as self-employed or open their own business.

VET has provided the graduates with the occupational knowledge and skills to start immediately with their own business or a certain period after graduation, as graduates noted.

A female graduate indicated clearly that the training was the first step through which she gained the professional skills for having own work:

Training at (...) was the first step on the road; all my family members are hairdressers. Now I have my own shop, I love my profession, I achieved my ambition.

An employer who is ex-graduate talked about a longer career track, yet the opportunities were still available due to the type of preparation and experience obtained, which widened his horizon of choices:

I graduated from (...) in 97, worked for two years in garages (...) From 2000- 2005 worked in other fields. In 2005, I opened my own garage and I am committed to my profession.

Opening one's own business is not an easy task and requires additional resources as funds, business training and personality development especially for the marginalised.

Some VET institutes have provided access to these resources, as will be discussed in the empowerment and the institute finding chapters.

The skills gained through VET represent the opportunities that enable the graduates to be self-employed. Such an opportunity is pertinent within the contextual status of the oPt and its economic effects. Another business representative mentioned:

Roughly 20% of the workforce is self-employed. It varies per sector, (...) It is mainly linked with the high unemployment rates and steadfastness of the people (...) Being skilled [is] required in the private sector.

Clearly VET provided occupational knowledge and experience for graduates' self-employment and having own business, which is one of the aspirations of the graduates for various reasons including higher gains and progress in their work, but also, and as illustrated, to overcome unemployment status and mobility restrictions, and provide ability to work from home.

Awareness and Preparation for Transition to WOW:

More occupational knowledge and skills preparation is needed for the marginalised within a limited opportunity context. "Having the learning skills that allow for experiential learning in the workplace", as Powell noted, can be expanded to real-life on-the-job learning through training schemes such as apprenticeship training or work-based learning (WBL).

Some of the graduates had participated in WBL schemes through internships, traineeships and school-based apprenticeships. Such schemes enabled students' introduction into the world of work before graduation, so as to obtain on-the-job training in real-life situations while still under the supervision of the trainers and the VET institute. Such systems have provided them with technical skills within real-life situations which could lead to work, as noted by a female student from one of the VTCs:

My cousin graduated in Beauty Care and during the training the owner of the Saloon employed her.

WBL provided opportunities for employment for many graduates, as 8.1 % found employment in same place of training before graduation. These percentages were higher for females and those living in marginalised localities: results were doubled for females

and those living in Gaza and were also increased significantly in Seam Zones, as the table in next section indicates, indicating the importance of skills gained through on-the-job training in the workplace.

The benefits were explained by one employer:

Training before graduation is added value, it helps with their [student after graduation] employment, it provides knowledge of labour market, and the applied knowledge and skills of the profession. (...) Now we take 1-2 apprentices [from the VTC] since 2014. The maintenance director (engineer) employs according to the performance and not the degree. Performance includes practical experience, the ability to improve, availability to start working immediately, personality, ability to learn (electronics and technology changes that develop every day, sometimes engineers refuse to look for updates or refuse improvements). These are more important than a degree. The maintenance officer is the training officer. Maintenance is hard. It can only be learnt here in the workshop. After the training, the ability of the apprentice to learn is bigger. We prefer to work with (...) [the VTC] as they provide us with the required trainee, and we can provide them with our notes and they respond.

Some graduates trained after graduation through organised action by institutes, or as a first step after graduation and before conducting actual work. The skills gained due to the hands-on on-the-job training when practising work in the workplace either before or after graduation is essential for the employers, paving the way for graduates to extend their capabilities to enter the labour market and to have their own work in the future. This was reaffirmed by another employer:

The importance of training lies in its ability to introduce them to job opportunities. It is not easy to get funds/support to start your own business. Some young men love to learn, some don't; I kicked them out. If it's not for this training [in the garage] their certificate would be wasted. They can open their own shop, when they know how the car works.

These findings are in line with what graduates aspired to from VET upon graduation.

Connection to Employers and Work-Related Actors: Connections in Finding Employment

Most of the graduates aspired that VET “Will link me with employers”, and “will provide me with awareness of the work environment and relations”, (76%) in both cases. Over half of graduates aspired that VET “will link me with social partner institutes’, such as chambers of commerce and industry and unions.

Connections were identified as an important aspiration, and as a means of accessing the labour market, especially for those lacking connections or living in a context-related vulnerable locality and also affected by a negative economic status.

The most common ways of finding employment were through labour offices or the media. However, for those adjacent to the wall or in seam zones, there was a striking difference, with connections coming through training placements.

Table 6-16 Selected Ways of finding employment by gender and selected locality

	Total	Male	Female	Context-related Vulnerable Locality					Remaining WB
				Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	
Place of training before graduation	8.1%	6.4%	13.2%	11.0%	3.8%	.0%	.0%	39.0%	5.1%
Place of training after graduation	7.3%	5.5%	12.6%	7.0%	3.8%	.0%	.0%	43.9%	4.3%
Teachers/Principal/counsellor in VET institute	5.3%	4.0%	9.3%	3.0%	3.8%	.0%	11.1%	22.0%	4.3%
Labour offices	39.7%	43.7%	27.8%	48.0%	26.9%	50.0%	88.9%	31.7%	37.8%
LMIS	2.8%	3.1%	2.0%	1.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	12.2%	2.7%
Relatives and friends	4.8%	2.9%	10.5%	.0%	.0%	8.3%	.0%	4.9%	6.3%
Self-search	8.5%	6.9%	13.2%	1.0%	3.8%	.0%	.0%	7.3%	11.1%
Family business	8.6%	9.7%	5.3%	6.0%	11.5%	8.3%	.0%	7.3%	9.2%
Media or internet Job announcement	31.6%	34.8%	22.5%	27.8%	50.0%	33.3%	11.1%	36.6%	31.6%

Transition Period for Employment

When asked about reasons for joining, 82.5% of graduates indicated “I want to join the labour market as quick as possible to support my family”, this was higher for refugees, those below poverty line and those living in marginalised localities, pointing to the importance of quick transition for VET graduates and the more marginalised.

The need for a quick transition by the graduate and his/her family was explained by a VTC director:

The economic condition of the family affects the VET enrolment option: it is the first choice of the poor, especially for male youth: as expressed by parents: to learn a vocation so that he can benefit us.

The study has indicated that 15.3 % of male graduates, and 11% of female graduates, worked while they were enrolled in VET, and students confirmed these findings during focus group discussions. Females face lots of social challenges if they are to work, yet working females before and immediately after graduation were mainly from the marginalised localities of Gaza (33%) and those living adjacent to the Wall (40%). Female graduates from these two localities have intersectional marginalisation, living in context-related vulnerable locality and in poverty. The highest proportions of male graduates working before graduation were also from Gaza (39%) and from Jerusalem inside the wall (25%).

Other effects were also apparent, including the effect of poverty in respect to working before graduation, which was especially apparent for male graduates. Graduates working before graduation were also working in the family business before graduation and before enrolling, in addition, those working in the same place of training as before graduation tended to have worked before graduation.

The results indicated that most of the graduates found employment within one year of graduation (79%), and 62% within six months of graduation. This suggests an easier transition than other Palestinian youth, comparing favourably with national figures of 19.5 months (Sadeq & Elder, 2014) and 25.7 months (PCBS, 2015) respectively.

The aspiration of the young Palestinians who joined VET for an easy transition to the labour market was fulfilled for most, therefore, especially the marginalised, although some of those transitioned to work became unemployed for reasons related to the conditions of the work, as highlighted in the first capability.

Conclusions: VET Enabled Aspirations and Achieving Functionings

VET has provided the poor, those living in context-related vulnerable localities, and the socially and economically marginalised with the capability to aspire. These aspirations have been shown to be interrelated with their inequality, with most of the graduates aspiring to status, income, employment and skills. These aspirations address the structural and intersected marginalisation of the VET learners.

Within a context of marginalisation that has impoverished and disempowered youth, the achieved functionings were tangible, since VET graduates achieved more than their peers on the national level with regard to work, skills gained enabling transition, participation in paid and non-paid work, generation of income that contributed to well-being and poverty reduction, yet the issue of decent work is captive by the context. Achievements were mainly affected by gender and context-related vulnerable localities and to some degree by poverty and refugee status, thus indicating inequalities.

Amidst achievements, structural challenges to the achieved functionings were faced by the VET learners, which will be elaborated on in chapter eight. Moreover, the findings have indicated how some capabilities could become a resource for another capability; becoming a “means” for other functionings rather than only “ends” in themselves, this was noted specifically in respect to the work and income capabilities.

Graduates aspired to gaining respect and status, upgrading skills and qualifications and developing senses and creativity. All in all, ten capabilities were defined with their detailed functionings, building on Powell’s VET list and general lists from Nussbaum and Robeyns. It offers a stronger gender focus than Powell and is more concerned with marginalisation than any of these lists. The list has also contributed by including valued functionings for policymakers, which will be further elaborated in the following chapters. The ten capabilities and functionings are also in line with the national priorities set in national strategies and the international VET literature. My other contribution is the methodological approach in testing the achieved valued functionings and hence the enabling and disabling factors to those achievements, which adds to the valued functionings.

Chapter 7. **Agency, Empowerment and Achieved Aspirations**

In the effort to identify how VET can contribute to reducing inequality, this chapter will try to answer the questions: does VET lead to increased empowerment, active and transformative agency? Do empowerment and achievements lead to the achievement of aspirations? Answering the questions would entail looking at the agency and empowerment of the graduates, and assessing their achieved aspirations. This will be done according to the marginalisation variables and within the marginalised context of the oPt.

This chapter will therefore discuss the empowerment of the marginalised and the disempowered, and measure to achieve such empowerment. It will also measure the achieved aspirations and well-being of the graduates and assess those achieved aspirations according to achieved empowerment. Finally, it will address the empowerment of communities and marginalised groups as a result of VET.

Agency and Empowerment of the VET Graduates

Agency is central to the personal pursuit of the achievement of functionings and reducing inequality, as discussed in the literature review. Alkire and Ibrahim (2007) adopted the definitions of empowerment as an extension of agency. In addressing inequalities, attaining active and transformative agency is essential to achieving control over strategic life choices, and extending agency to empowerment over life choices in a positive sense becomes an important factor to address disempowerment and inequality.

In this chapter, I will draw on the GAD theory and power analysis, as noted in my theoretical framework. Specifically, I will draw on the work of Kabeer (1994, 1999, 2015), as I borrow the empowerment framework based on the GAD theory and the analysis tools for gender equality. I will particularly build on Kabeer (1999) notion of empowerment based on the idea of "power", in terms of "the ability to make choices" (p.436), and her analysis of empowerment as a process that will bring change to the disempowered. All definitions used were illustrated earlier in Box-2.

Kabeer (1999) emphasised the importance of measuring empowerment and providing the evidence needed through triangulated methods. Measuring empowerment will have to

find out the “consequential significance in terms of women’s strategic life choices and the extent to which it had transformatory potential” (p.452). In this regard, she suggested that processes of empowerment entail change at different levels and in different dimensions; change can occur at the level of the individual, in their inner sense of self or in their access to resources, it can occur in relationships within the family and household, or it can reflect alteration in position in the wider community, the economy and state.

Along those lines, and following Kabeer’s (1999) definition of the main elements of empowerment and the work of Rowlands (1997), and Perezniето and Taylor (2014), 21 different indicators were developed and examined through the VET graduates’ survey:

- **Power Within:** containing self-confidence, skills confidence and financial confidence;
- **Power To:** relationship with family members (parents, partner) and communication within the household, participation in decision-making regarding household or children, perceived contribution to the household and challenging gender norms;
- **Power With:** participation in public life, organisation in social group membership, unions, chambers, and participation in collective action;
- **Power Over:** containing freedom of decision-making in respect to life choices, decision-making in respect to employment, career and self-development, and decision-making in respect to type of work (informal, paid/unpaid productive).

Empowerment sub-indicators were presented as statements to be rated on a five-point Likert scale through the graduates’ survey. The statements were then turned into a percentage of what the total possible rating of highly satisfied or satisfied responses is to give us the rating of the indicator. The rated indicators within each aspect of power were, then, averaged to give us the perceived ratings of power, and all indicators were averaged to provide us with the overall empowerment used at the end of the chapter. The empowerment indicators are statements of change, hence achieved percentages measure empowerment achieved.

Parts of these elements are further integrated in the VET graduates valued functioning list while the analysis was also used to look at the inequalities in functioning achievements

carried out in the previous and the current chapter. All elements are presented here in detail. For each element of empowerment, the definition, findings and discussion are presented, and the overall graduates' empowerment will also follow. In addition, the effects of VET on the empowerment of families, communities and the economy are presented. Box-4 below lists the definition of empowerment elements and the indicators alongside these empowerment elements.

Box- 4: The list of empowerment indicators alongside the definition of empowerment elements		
Empowerment Elements	Definition	Empowerment Indicators
Power Within	“Their sense of agency”. This is more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, (E1) ²²	Gain confidence in my skills and know-how
		Gain self-confidence in my abilities and myself
		Gain confidence in financial capacities to organize my income and spending
		Improve my communication skills in general
Power To	“Creating new possibilities”. This refers to people’s capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others. The power needed within their own space to balance the power relations of the marginalised within the family, community and markets. (E2)	Improve my communication and problem resolution with my family
		Participate in family related decision-making (improving the house, schools for the kids)
		Participate in family financial-related decision-making (savings, spending...)
		Enabled me to move freely without family restrictions
		Enabled me to get married and separate from my family
		Enabled me to get help from my spouse on house chores and /or children/elderly caring
		Enabled me to gain family support
Power Over	This is the ability to resist manipulation, resembling the positive meaning of agency through a process to have control over strategic choices (E3)	Enabled me to gain increased family respect
		Decide about my career and future employment/work opportunities
		Decide about joining upgrading training or further study
		Decide about type of work to pursue (informal, paid/unpaid, productive)
Power With	“Acting in a group”. This is dependent on collective solidarity in the public arena (E4).	Decide about my other life choices (where to live, marriage, ...)
		Enabled me to gain increased respect from my community
		Enabled me to become a resource for my small community and/or the community
		Enabled me to participate in public life
		Enabled me to organize in Social group memberships, unions, chambers
		Enabled me to participate in collective action with others (workers, community...)

²² The (E#) at the end of the definition links with the location of the definition within the chapter.

Power Within

The “Power Within” is defined in the research as “their sense of agency” (Kabeer, 1999). Kabeer sees agency as “more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or “the power within”. (p.438). (E1)²³

Most graduates were motivated to join VET “To gain skills that enables me to work” (81.3%), and “To gain skills that can be used in my personal life” (82.5%). Motivation was higher for females and for those from marginalised localities. Most of the VET graduates (70%) aspired upon graduation that VET “will provide me with life skills to communicate and interact with others”, this aspiration was higher among graduates from marginalised localities, while it was similar with regard to gender.

The results indicate that 80% of the students had developed their “Sense of Agency” or “Power Within”, or developed their inner power. They developed more confidence in skills and know how, in abilities and own-self, followed by communication skills, and, to a lesser degree, in financial capacities, as the table below indicates.

The achieved agency was higher for females, those living in marginalised localities, specifically in Gaza and adjacent to the wall, and for refugees. This reveals the positive effect of VET on those who had lost their resources due to their context, with VET providing them with new resources through which they could achieve paid and unpaid work and income generation. This effect was lower for the poorest, however, indicating the need for further interventions.

²³ In the empowerment part of the chapter (E#) will appear at the end of certain paragraphs, this refers to the source from which definitions for the empowerment elements were drawn, and listed in Box-4 at the end of this chapter

Table 7-1 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power Within” indicators due to VET and work

	Total	Gender		Context-related Vulnerable locality						Refugee status	
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	Remaining WB	Refugees	Non-Refugees
Gain confidence in my skills and know-how	88.4%	86.0%	94.5%	92.7%	83.9%	73.3%	55.6%	93.9%	88.2%	89.8%	87.3%
Gain self-confidence in my abilities and myself	88.2%	85.6%	94.5%	92.7%	83.9%	80.0%	55.6%	89.8%	88.0%	89.8%	86.8%
Gain confidence in financial capacities to organize my income and spending	52.6%	49.8%	59.4%	52.8%	61.3%	46.7%	44.4%	79.6%	49.6%	56.5%	49.3%
Improve my communication skills in general	82.3%	80.9%	85.8%	89.4%	74.2%	66.7%	66.7%	95.9%	80.6%	85.2%	79.8%
Power Within	77.9%	75.6%	83.6%	81.9%	75.8%	66.7%	55.6%	89.8%	76.6%	80.3%	75.8%

Increased confidence in the skills gained is important for the achievements of their aspirations, i.e. for their agency. As explained by a parent who is a VET graduate:

VET gives you confidence [in skills gained] and you need to continue learning, [vocational] school can only give you the basics.

In his explanation, this parent has indicated the importance of confidence and social skills for lifelong learning. Female graduates on the other hand emphasised the importance of work in gaining self-confidence and improving their communication as a result of this work experience after graduating, as presented by a refugee woman graduate:

Work makes women stronger; she gets out and deals with people. She needs to defend herself and to be strong.

When looking at age and marital status according to gender, which are important factors in gender analysis, it was noted that “Power Within” was highest among the eldest group, “above 29”, and among the “divorced”.

Exploring the paid work factor on gender, the marginalised and refugees indicated that there were more females participating in the labour force than those who are not participating, and that those in paid work achieved (96%, 97%, 74%, 91%) respectively

for the above indicators, while those females participating in unpaid work reported slightly lower percentages than overall females, illustrated in the table above. This finding was resembled in Gaza, Jerusalem inside the Wall and the remaining WB, while in some localities, such as areas near the wall and Jerusalem outside the wall, those who are engaged in unpaid work scored higher. The difference between these marginalised localities could be attributed to different population densities and the range of work opportunities available in different settings, as well as to community actions.

It is obvious from the above that gaining some of these skills, such as the financial and communication skills, would need practice either in paid or unpaid work.

One of the discussions with VTC middle management indicated the effect of accumulating experience:

A few years after graduation, students would accumulate experience and money (from salaries) to set up their own businesses.

The whole process of accumulation enables the graduate to enhance their technical and financial skills, as well as to gain more confidence in themselves and their abilities. This was also noted when analysing the employment status of the working graduates in paid jobs, with the female self-employed scoring higher than the other groups, with all agreeing to the indicators except the financial indicators, where 79% agreed or highly agreed.

The achievement of “Power Within”, through the achievement of skills- and self-confidence and communication, was high and sets the basis for other empowerment indicators.

Power To

Rowlands (1997) has defined power to as “creating new possibilities” (p.13). Kabeer (1999) defined "Power To" as “it refers to people’s capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others” (p.438). Pereznieto and Taylor’s (2014) definition was with regard to economic programmes for identifying the indicators, which is “economic decision-making power within their household, community, and local economy (including markets), not just in

areas that are traditionally regarded as women’s realm, but extending to areas that are traditionally regarded as men’s realm)” (236). I draw on these definitions to define “Power To” (E2).

One in two graduates agreed with relevant statements of “Power To”, as the table below indicates, with variances according to gender and context-related vulnerable locality as well as refugees. Yet results indicate the higher achievement of “Power To” for females in most sub-indicators, and to those in marginalised localities, especially those living adjacent to the wall. Results were also higher for refugees.

Table 7-2 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power To” indicators due to VET and work, total, according to gender, according to marginalised locality and refugee status

	Total	Gender		Context-related Vulnerable locality						Refugee status	
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	Remaining WB	Refugees	Non-Refugees
1. Improve my communication and problem resolution with my family	53.8%	52.9%	56.0%	57.7%	38.7%	60.0%	55.6%	85.7%	50.2%	57.3%	50.9%
2. Participate in family related decision-making (improving the house, schools for the kids)	50.5%	50.1%	51.6%	44.7%	35.5%	73.3%	100.0%	79.6%	48.2%	52.8%	48.1%
3. Participate in family financial-related decision-making (savings, spending...)	47.3%	45.4%	52.1%	32.5%	35.5%	60.0%	66.7%	71.4%	48.1%	46.7%	47.4%
4. Enabled me to move freely without family restrictions	66.1%	70.1%	56.2%	84.6%	74.2%	40.0%	44.4%	65.3%	62.5%	71.6%	61.7%
5. Enabled me to get married and separate from my family*	51.0%	70.1%	38.9%	55.2%	40.0%	100.0%	25.0%	81.8%	46.0%	44.0%	56.6%
6. Enabled me to get help from my spouse on house chores and /or children/elderly caring*	49.7%	60.0%	43.5%	55.2%	40.0%	.0%	25.0%	90.9%	45.1%	45.5%	53.9%
7. Enabled me to gain family support	66.8%	65.6%	69.9%	65.9%	58.1%	53.3%	44.4%	89.8%	66.0%	65.6%	67.7%
8. Enabled me to gain increased family respect	72.6%	71.6%	74.9%	79.7%	60.0%	66.7%	44.4%	87.8%	70.9%	74.9%	70.7%
Power To (Overall)	57.2%	60.7%	55.4%	49.6%	40.2%	46.7%	47.2%	65.1%	46.9%	49.6%	47.3%

*Note: Sub-indicator numbers 5 and 6 are for the non-single graduates (married, divorced and widowed), as the questions relate to marriage and their relationship with their spouse

Although over half of the graduates had gained “Power to” as a result of VET and work, the outcomes were lower than that of “Power Within”. This is expected, since this area depends on forming and redefining relations with others starting from the household or

the family, which graduates have less influence over. And as Kabeer (1999) has noted some of the rules and social norms reproduce certain outcomes without any forms of agency. With regard to households, Kabeer (2000) elaborated that inequality in the household reflected the distribution of resources and responsibility within the family, while power and choice are not stable over time (p.336). Although choices are enlarged for male and female VET graduates, therefore, as reflected in their household roles and responsibilities, changes are still slower to materialise.

The results for the sub-indicators of “Power To” indicate that the area with the highest level of achievement was gaining family respect and support, which is important for their self-esteem and well-being; these outcomes were higher for females, those living in Gaza, or near the wall, and for refugees. The next highest area of achievement was “moving freely without family restrictions”, which is overcoming social restrictions and pressures. As expected, this sub-indicator was cited as being achieved more frequently by males than by females; the patriarchal and militarised context-related pressure clearly impedes this freedom, as discussed in capability six in the previous chapter.

Gaining family respect through VET, work and income was clearly stated by female graduates. One female graduate indicated the change in her family’s support for her study and work:

I trained and worked at the same place, training in the morning and working in the evening. At the beginning, it was tough [regarding long hours and family support], but I managed and got the support of my family. (...) Parents in general have negative views of work for women, especially if a proper job is not found.

The ability to produce change in family support for graduates was stated by another female graduate who enrolled in VET despite her family’s objection. She mentioned, “Now my family is proud of me”. The effect of the process of study and work on the redefining roles was stated by many, including the following female graduate:

Work makes women stronger; she gets out and deals with people. She needs to defend herself and to be strong. My family consult with me in everything now and not only in the financial matters. We discuss matters with my father.

At least half of the graduates reported improved communication with their family and participation in family-related decision-making. Less than half of the graduates were

participating in financial-related decision-making, however. Surprisingly, this was higher for single females (57%) than males but highest among married males (78%). This indicates that the decision-making pattern in the society is in favour of married males, yet graduating from VET and working afterwards enabled a significant minority of married women to participate in financial-related decision-making. Age also had an effect on participation in decision-making, since most male and all female graduates above 29 years of age participated in family-related and financial-related issues.

Participating in decision-making about family-related financial issues reflects the family structure, decision-making and social norms. If female graduates are in a position to support their families, however, they are provided with more opportunity to contribute to financial decision-making. This status flips when they get married; then men are given power over decision-making, and women have to negotiate their way through to a role in decision-making. Such results are reflected in the findings of the national survey on violence, since a higher percentage of unmarried males were subjected to economic violence than unmarried females within the household, and a much higher percentage of married females were subjected to economic violence (PCBS, 2012b)²⁴.

A female graduate recounted her experience after graduating from VET and its effects on her participation in decision-making:

I am working, and share economic burdens with my husband [with part of her salary]. Now I participate in family decisions and financial decisions. I was able to decide to educate my son in a private school, I added more contribution from my income towards this, my husband agreed.

The last two sub-indicators “Enabled me to get married and separate from my family” and “Enabled me to get help from my spouse on house chores and/or children/elderly caring” are relevant to those with marital status “married”, and are gender-related.

As illustrated in the previous table, 70% of the non-single males agreed that graduating from VET and working afterwards enabled them to get married and separate from their family, as opposed to 38.9% of non-single females, which is also relevant to the ascribed

²⁴ The study defined economic violence to include power over economic decisions in the negative sense, including the right to work or force resignation from work, control of financial decisions and control over their right to property

roles within the society. Females in certain cases of family poverty are able to support this process through their income, therefore changing their ascribed role. In such cases, “VET opened the chance for female graduates to fulfil their social hopes”, as noted by a female teacher in Gaza, especially in respect to the high marginalisation status in Gaza.

The results have indicated that 43.5% of married female graduates were enabled to get help from their spouse. This is an important finding since household chores and care is usually the responsibility of women in Palestine, as is the case in other patriarchal societies. The effect of VET and work afterwards in enabling this change in gender roles and relations is important. This change is also captured clearly by one of the women VET institute directors:

The impact of VET extends [from employment and income generation] to gender roles, where we have measured the effect of training on gender roles at home, and found that training and work afterwards have its positive effects. (...) Gender roles are changed due to skills obtained. 95% of women experienced change in their marital relations [implying the importance of empowerment for females]. This is in line with the mission of the organisation; empowering women in the society.

During focus group discussions, meanwhile, female graduates participating in paid work noted their experience of relations and decision-making when they worked;

Husband treating wife better since she has a source of income, he starts helping her [in household work], it organized his life [enabling payment for expenses], and now she participates in financial decisions [after being a main source of income for some time]

The above quotes clarified the change in norms and roles within the household due to female graduates’ work and income and the ability they have gained to communicate and negotiate this change.

Graduates also mentioned changing gender relations from feeling financially dependent to feeling financially independent and how they became actors in changing their husbands’ condition.

Because of my training I get a higher salary. My husband doesn’t spend on me. My parents work together. (...) The successful woman improves her husband’s conditions as well as hers.

Hence, gaining skills, work and earning an income allowed women to negotiate the division of labour of domestic work and care inside the household.

In addition to the above, 60% of married males have mentioned that training and work afterwards enabled them to get help from their spouse on house work and care. Surely, this is linked to additional support from the wife for the care of extended family and household work. As perceived by them, their training and work enabled their marriage and getting extra support for their original family.

The change in power relations and greater participation of women in decisions, as well as gaining the help of male members was also associated with the deteriorating economic status of the families; hence the work of the female members is appreciated. This change in power relations within the household of affected families has been noted by various Palestinian scholars and is related to the socio-economic status resulting from the adverse context linked to prolonged military occupation (Johnson & Kuttab, 2001; Muhana, 2016; Taraki, 2006)

The involvement of women in paid and unpaid work, as part of the functioning achievements, had its effect on the sub-indicators as quoted above and as the table below illustrates. The higher percentages of male and female graduates employed in paid work were able to improve their communication skills and participate in family-related decision-making, with an increase of more than 10% above those not participating in the labour force. More females who are not participating in the labour force (most of whom are involved in unpaid work) improved their communication skills and their participation in decision-making, than male graduates (most of whom are students), indicating the skills gained and effect of unpaid work on empowerment, which, although lower than paid work, was still apparent when compared to those studying.

Participation in financial decisions is clearly related to income, since almost twice the number of working males and females have the “Power To” participate in these decisions compared to other categories, although women outside the labour force are conducting unpaid work of care, as noted earlier. These results indicate higher achievements for employed females than other female groups and males with regard to communication and problem solving, as well as participation in decision-making, and gaining family support and respect. Surprisingly, moving freely was highest among the unemployed followed by

those outside the labour force for females, while mobility was highest among employed and unemployed male groups. This finding confirms the analysis and of gender and power inside the household, with less power available to unmarried males and female youths, while looking for a job allows higher movement, and the gaining of skills enables respect for females working in unpaid house chores and caring, and for males continuing their education.

Table 7-3 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power To” indicators due to VET and work according to gender and work status

	Total	Male			Female		
		Employed	Outside LF	Un-employed	Employed	Outside LF	Un-employed
Improve my communication and problem resolution with my family	53.8%	54.5%	38.2%	55.7%	61.5%	48.9%	51.8%
Participate in family related decision-making (improving the house, schools for the kids)	50.5%	53.7%	32.4%	45.4%	54.5%	44.7%	51.8%
Participate in family financial-related decision-making (savings, spending...)	47.3%	49.9%	29.4%	36.1%	64.5%	29.8%	48.2%
Enabled me to move freely without family restrictions	66.1%	70.5%	64.7%	71.1%	51.8%	59.6%	64.3%
Enabled me to get married and separate from my family*	51.0%	68.8%	0.0%	71.4%	35.3%	33.3%	54.5%
Enabled me to get help from my spouse on house chores and /or children/elderly caring*	49.7%	64.6%	0.0%	28.6%	45.7%	32.4%	59.1%
Enabled me to gain family support	66.8%	67.6%	52.9%	60.8%	77.3%	57.4%	69.6%
Enabled me to gain increased family respect	72.6%	72.4%	52.9%	74.0%	81.8%	68.1%	69.6%
Power To (Overall)	57.2%	62.75%	33.81%	55.39%	59.05%	46.78%	58.61%

*Note: Sub-indicator numbers 5 and 6 are for the non-single graduates (married, divorced and widowed), as the questions relate to marriage and their relationship with their spouse

Throughout the discussions, female graduates emphasised the importance of a paid job for gaining their family’s respect and support. This was also explained by a group of female students from the north of the WB, based on their experience with elder sisters, neighbours and relatives:

All negative attitudes and parents’ rejection will change if the girl is working and there is an income, the parents accept it and classify it as normal.

Other females, meanwhile, mentioned that even without working they can get their family’s respect, as noted by a female graduate who is using her skills to provide for the family while she is supported by her brothers:

I work for my family/friends/acquaintances for free [tailoring work]. My father passed away, my brothers are supporting me, and I have the respect of the whole family.

The results indicate the higher bargaining power the employed and unemployed have in achieving their agency. Yet those engaged in unpaid labour had achieved it to a less extent and both categories were limited by the patriarchal mechanisms of control, especially females and to lesser extent unmarried males within the household. Rosenfeld's (2002) work in the Palestinian refugee camps has pointed to the effect of work chains, which she explains as "providing family support for young family members to acquire resources". She noted the double nature of the effect of work chains, specifically on young women and to lesser extent for unmarried male members in realising their agency and aspiration, and in patriarchal mechanisms of control that limited unmarried women and men supporting the family from realising their dreams (p.541).

This fact is reflected in the lower realisation of powers within the poor, with the lowest family income categories achieving less than the remaining categories. Hence, they are confined to basic family needs and the need to act as family support, thus withholding their own agency. This means that the availability of choice is central to realising their powers, as noted by Kabeer (2000).

Table 7-4 Percentages of Female VET graduates, outside the labour force, in agreement or high agreement to "Power To" indicators

	Females Outside the LF	Outside LF due to	
		Family work and care	Not allowed by parents /spouse
Improve my communication and problem resolution with my family	48.9%	55.0%	44.4%
Participate in family related decision-making (improving the house, schools for the kids)	44.7%	47.5%	61.1%
Participate in family financial-related decision-making (savings, spending...)	29.8%	37.5%	50.0%
Enabled me to move freely without family restrictions	59.6%	60.0%	66.7%
Enabled me to get married and separate from my family*	33.3%	36.7%	46.2%
Enabled me to get help from my spouse on house chores and /or children/elderly caring*	32.4%	46.7%	53.8%
Enabled me to gain family support	57.4%	57.5%	72.2%
Enabled me to gain increased family respect	68.1%	70.0%	77.8%
Total	46.78%	51.36%	59.03%

*Note: Sub-indicator numbers 5 and 6 are for the non-single graduates (married, divorced and widowed), as the questions relate to their marriage and relationship with their spouse

Another finding was related to women who did not participate in the labour force, mostly due to unpaid work in the form of housework and caring. Yet one in four did not participate due to patriarchal control, “Not allowed by parents or spouse”, as the above table indicates. These findings indicate that the latter category was in a better bargaining position than the former. Clearly, they have formulated strategies to improve the realisation of their powers.

In conclusion, realising the graduate agency and powers by achieving the “Power To” indicators is achieved by almost half of the graduates, but achievement is restricted by marginalisation due to military occupation and the patriarchal society, manifested in the “work chain” effect and “economic violence”. Nevertheless, the achievement of Power To for half of the graduates who are marginalised is worthy of note. It was observed that achievements were realised more frequently by females and those living in marginalised areas, especially those employed or with income. Although the results indicated that some of those employed have limitations on their agency, together with some of those participating in unpaid work, even those who were restricted by patriarchal control and military occupation were able to realise their powers to some extent. Such realisation has changed some of the gender roles and expectations, provided more power to females and unmarried males, refugees and those living in marginalised localities.

Power Over

Rowlands (1997) has defined power over as the “ability to resist manipulation” (p.13). Kabeer (1999) has emphasized that empowerment starts from within and develops through a process to achieve “independence” rather than meeting survival needs, resembling the positive meaning of agency of having “the ability to define their own life-choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others” (p.438). Pereznieta and Taylor (2014) defined “Power Over” in economic programmes as “access to and control over financial, physical, and knowledge-based assets, including access to employment and income-generation activities” (p.236). I will draw on these definitions to define “Power Over” (E3).

Table 7-5 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power Over” indicators due to VET and work; total, according to gender, marginalised locality and refugee status.

	Total	Gender		Context-related Vulnerable locality						Refugee status	
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	Remaining WB	Refugees	Non-Refugees
Decide about my career and future employment/ work opportunities	72.5%	74.5%	67.3%	76.2%	77.4%	85.7%	88.9%	81.6%	69.8%	74.0%	71.0%
Decide about joining upgrading training or further study	72.2%	75.7%	63.6%	78.7%	76.7%	93.3%	77.8%	85.7%	68.5%	74.3%	70.3%
Decide about type of work to pursue (informal, paid/unpaid, productive)	57.7%	63.4%	43.8%	52.5%	71.0%	73.3%	100.0%	81.6%	54.6%	57.7%	57.7%
Decide about my other life choices (where to live, marriage, ...)	42.3%	44.6%	36.6%	34.2%	41.9%	80.0%	77.8%	63.3%	40.2%	43.3%	41.0%
Power Over (Overall)	61.2%	64.5%	52.8%	60.4%	66.7%	83.1%	86.1%	78.1%	58.3%	58.3%	58.3%

More than half the graduates agreed with relevant statements of “Power Over”, with variances according to gender and marginalised areas as well as refugee status. The results indicate that almost three out of four of graduates had more control over decisions regarding their career and work as well as further study. This was explained by one of the VET institutes counsellors:

Some girls change. They became more self-confident; they speak out and defend their rights, defend their choice in VET and right to choose vocation or work.

Graduates also gained control over decisions related to type of work (paid/unpaid), although to a lesser extent than the above two indicators. VET opens up the choices of work for its graduate as discussed in the previous chapter: enabling them to work from home, become self-employed, or take part in income generation activities, as well as the ability to have full-time or part-time paid work, start their own work or do unpaid work. As noted by one of the VET institute directors:

Our graduates never stay unemployed or without work, his skills in his hands, he does not need an office to perform, so they always work.

This choice was challenged by context-related vulnerable locality, as the options are limited in areas such as Gaza. Choosing the type of work is highly limited by gender, with a 20% difference in favour of males, as females are challenged by the patriarchal society shaping gender roles. The results indicated that one in eight females was not working in paid jobs as they were not allowed by their spouses/parents, a form of economic violence. Poverty has an effect on these choices since only one in four graduates from the poorest families stated their control over their choice of work, indicating that paid work is not a choice but a must out of necessity for many of the poor.

On the other hand, choices related to marriage and a place to live had the lowest level of agreement among graduates, almost 30% lower than control over work and study. The indicator also recorded even lower results for females and marginalised localities of Gaza and EJ. Females are restricted by the norms of the patriarchal society and the hierarchy of the kinship structure of decision-making with regard to marriage, the latter of which also affects male graduates. Males and females from Gaza and EJ inside the wall are challenged by the context, whereas the siege affects the decisions of youths to move or decide upon their locality: all male students and some female students during focus group discussions in Gaza mentioned their longing to travel, to work in different localities or even to see beyond Gaza, which is clearly restricted with the siege as they noted. Although graduates from EJ had a better movement status, they cannot decide on where to live, as occupation policies restrict them to EJ, otherwise they lose their right to their residency.

Control over choices was higher for those practising paid work, as noted by a female graduate who noted the steps towards gaining confidence and “Power Within”, and gaining the respect of family and community towards empowerment:

Work is important for a girl because she becomes independent. I want to provide my basic needs. Work also empowers woman’s personality, she gets to meet a lot of people. Get empowered, participate in decision-making, be consulted by the family and respected by the family and community.

This was confirmed by another female graduate:

When a woman gets her money with her own hand, she thinks independently. When I work I feel independent, I want my husband as a partner not a bank. I don't want to get married so that I get someone's money.

The stress on independent feeling is what Kabeer has noted as the positive power and empowerment that leads to “independence rather than needs”, and what Sen has referred to as positive freedoms. The two female graduates' quotes above clearly indicate the importance of work and income as resources for agency in their case. Similar results were reflected in the survey, as illustrated below.

Table 7-6 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power Over” indicators due to VET and work according to gender and work status.

	Total	Male			Female		
		Employed	Outside LF	Un-Employed	Employed	Outside LF	Un-Employed
Decide about my career and future employment/ work opportunities	72.5%	77.9%	41.2%	75.3%	81.8%	42.6%	63.0%
Decide about joining upgrading training or further study	72.2%	78.0%	50.0%	77.1%	72.5%	42.6%	65.5%
Decide about type of work to pursue (informal, paid/unpaid, productive)	57.7%	68.5%	41.2%	51.6%	49.5%	21.3%	52.7%
Decide about my other life choices (where to live, marriage, ...)	42.3%	49.4%	24.2%	33.7%	38.5%	34.0%	37.0%

The table indicates the higher level of agreement of employed male youths with all “Power Over” indicators, reaching almost double those outside the labour force. It is worth noting that most male graduates outside the labour force are continuing their education, hence pointing to the importance of paid work in enlarging the control over choices achieved through VET.

On the other hand, the same argument is valid for females with regard to the first two indicators of choosing work and education. Similar results are also noted for choosing the type of work; those employed have more than twice the level of agreement of those outside the labour force or unemployed in this regard. It has to be noted that most of the females outside the labour force are doing unpaid housework and caring. This result confirms the fact that many women did not choose to practise their unpaid work, but that

it is rather related to patriarchal attitudes towards women's role and work, as noted by 13% of graduates that are outside the labour force due to the choice of their families. Similarly, patriarchal attitudes negatively affect the control over other life choices, such as marriage and a place to live, as almost similar low results were achieved among the different groups.

A similar effect of paid work was noted on achieved empowerment in most marginalised areas. Graduates who are employed have a higher achievement of "Power Over" indicators in most of the areas. Working graduates from Gaza highly agreed with the indicators, at almost three times the level of those not participating in the labour force, except for the last indicator of marriage and a place to live, where graduates from Gaza cannot decide on where to live due to the siege, as noted in quotes from students and graduates. The same result was noted for all the indicators for those living in the WB marginalised areas, including Jerusalem, with much lower agreement among graduates regarding their ability to choose the type of work. This could be understood when almost one in two graduates not participating in the labour force from these areas were not participating due to the reason; "Not allowed by parent or Spouse".

Table 7-7 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement with "Power Over" indicators due to VET and work according to context-related vulnerable locality and work status.

	Gaza			WB marginalised locality including Jerusalem			Remaining WB		
	Employed	Outside LF	Un-Employed	Employed	Outside LF	Un-Employed	Employed	Outside LF	Un-Employed
Decide about my career and future employment/work opportunities	91.1%	21.1%	82.8%	83.7%	45.0%	70.0%	76.4%	45.5%	60.0%
Decide about joining upgrading training or further study	91.1%	26.3%	86.2%	84.5%	40.0%	72.5%	73.2%	50.9%	60.0%
Decide about type of work to pursue (informal, paid/unpaid, productive)	66.7%	15.8%	53.6%	84.2%	15.0%	61.7%	59.9%	32.7%	45.0%
Decide about my other life choices (where to live, marriage, ...)	29.5%	36.8%	36.8%	68.8%	20.0%	43.3%	45.0%	24.1%	30.8%

Controlling their lives and having independent choices was noted as an aspiration of a female student during a group discussion in Gaza, stating the importance of having the

ability to generate income through paid work or production from home in meeting their needs and pursuing their choices:

We need to live without being dependent on anybody; we want to have our own income

The achievement of “Power Over” indicators is significant when reviewing the national violence survey outcomes, which indicated that more than one in two married women were subjected to economic violence in the oPt within the twelve months preceding the PCBS (2012b) national study conducted in 2011; this figure jumped to 88% in the Gaza Strip. The results of that survey also indicated that one in two married women were subjected to social violence, including all actions practised against women that limit them from acquiring their rights and freedoms due to social and cultural paradigms (. The results also indicated that 11.5% of unmarried males and 7.7% of female youths were subjected to economic violence from family members during the same period.

Hence the empowerment effect is significant when a high percentage of young male and female graduates are able to earn their own income and have control over their own economic status and power over the decisions made for their future.

In conclusion, although VET provides graduates with opportunities for career, support and self-development, the marginalised are restricted in their choices due to that marginalisation and the related structural challenges. Given VET’s ability to provide a range of futures for its graduates, therefore, having these range of futures as possible aspirations (in Capability 5) is highly dependent on the ability to have the choice to do so. Although VET has played a positive role in enlarging this ability, structural challenges are still an important factor.

Power With

Rowlands (1997) has defined “power with” as “acting in a group” (p.13). Kabeer (1999) has noted that empowerment is “dependent on collective solidarity in the public arena as well as individual assertiveness in the private defined” (p.457), and according to Pereznieta and Taylor (2014) with regard to economic programmes; it is “the ability to organise with others to enhance economic activity and rights.” (p.236). I will draw on these definitions to define “Power Over” (E4). The survey results indicated that one in

two graduates agreed with relevant “Power With” statements, albeit with variances according to gender and marginalised areas. The results indicate higher achievement of “Power With” for females and those in marginalised localities, especially those living adjacent to the wall and Jerusalem outside the wall, across most sub-indicators.

Table 7-8 Percentages of VET graduates in agreement or high agreement to “Power With” indicators due to VET and work

	Total	Gender		Context-related Vulnerable locality					Remaining WB
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	
Enabled me to gain increased respect from my community	76.3%	76.1%	77.0%	83.6%	74.2%	66.7%	66.7%	87.8%	74.0%
Enabled me to become a resource for my small community and/or the community	83.1%	80.9%	88.5%	85.2%	80.0%	73.3%	66.7%	89.8%	82.7%
Enabled me to participate in public life	65.4%	63.7%	69.6%	45.0%	58.1%	86.7%	66.7%	83.7%	68.0%
Enabled me to organise in social group memberships, unions, chambers	23.4%	21.5%	28.1%	9.1%	32.3%	13.3%	22.2%	37.5%	25.2%
Enabled me to participate in collective action with others (workers, community...)	37.4%	38.0%	35.9%	9.9%	25.8%	60.0%	55.6%	57.1%	41.3%
Power With (Overall)	57.1%	56.0%	59.8%	46.6%	54.1%	60.0%	55.6%	71.2%	58.2%

Most graduates agreed that VET and work afterwards enabled them to be a resource for the community (83%) and to gain respect (76%). Percentages were high for most of the groups, indicating the importance of VET as a route to status and a way to gain respect from the community. This was expressed by the graduates, as noted by a male graduate who had not been in education for the year before enrolling:

People in my community started to respect me more after I graduated and have a good job at auto-mechanics workshop and sometimes fix their cars. (...) People respected me as I generate income now.

In the same way, a female graduate mentioned: “Neighbours respect you when you have work”. Another female graduate noted the change due to the skills she had gained:

After I started working, those who were opposing my decision [from the community] started looking for the centre to enrol their daughters.

Hence, graduates specified the use of skills gained, work and income as means to increase respect and being a resource for their community. Robeyns (2003) has also included respect as a main capability on her list; she defined it as “to be treated with dignity” (p.71). Being a resource to the community and gaining its respect is important for youth, with one in four perceiving negative attitudes from their community. Furthermore, as teachers and directors frequently stated, the more successful graduates are spread across society, the more the change will happen within those communities that retain negative attitudes.

Participation in public life was valued by graduates, with around two in three indicating this achievement. It was more important for male and female youths in marginalised localities, as percentages reached 87% in marginalised localities, with a 19% difference to the remaining WB areas. This result is reasonable within the context of these localities, since space is squeezed by the occupation measures and people are confined within their own space.

Only one in four and one in three graduates specified that VET and work enabled them to organise in social groups and participate in public action respectively. Participation in public action was higher among youths in marginalised localities, however, especially those near the wall, where in some areas there are weekly community actions against the appropriation of land and destruction of structures, or against settlers’ attacks.

The valued functioning of organising in groups such as unions and chambers was also in line with Nussbaum’s (2000) core capabilities of practical reason and affiliation. Half the graduates indicated that part of their aspiration is that VET “Will link me with social partner institutes’. This percentage was highest in EJ and adjacent to the wall. Most here are working inside Israel, hence the high percentage could be attributed to the assumption that union work is far more developed than the one in the oPt. Similarly, a higher percentage was recorded for females, which is attributed to the existence of women’s groups in various localities.

VET Graduates' Overall Empowerment Achievements and Transformatory Agency

The economic achievement of the graduates in accessing work and income is apparent in this thesis. The empowerment findings, meanwhile, indicate that skills, work and income presented resources to achieve graduate economic and social empowerment and hence agency, with more opportunities and possibilities for choices, and a better chance to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals, freedoms and independence. This indicates the ability of skills gained, the work opportunities after graduation and the transformation of capabilities into functionings resulted in control over life choices and a transformatory effect on the marginalised. Achievements were high but were challenged by various obstacles, including the context, patriarchal and negative social norms and economic status.

Achieving empowerment as a result of VET and work and having control over pursuing their choices was noted frequently by graduates and TVET staff. One illustrative example was that of a female graduate working in a big home appliance company. She decided to pursue her choice in choosing VET, working and achieving the independent choices in her life:

I came with 5-6 female students from the (...) [VTC Institute] to train [before graduation as part of WBL] but the company chose me to work. I wanted to prove myself. I have eight brothers who I used to escape from when I go to the VTC, as they were opposing my decision. I did what I wanted. I finished Tawjihi, I wanted to do VET since 10th grade. My family and close community tried to prevent me, but after 12th grade I decided that this is my career. My sister helped me. I challenged the financial problems, the high transportation cost. It is up to the girl; either she challenges or gives up. I used to run from my brothers, jump over the fence of my home. I liked the VTC. My self-confidence increased tremendously. It even advanced my relationships with my family and people surrounding me. They never paid attention to me before. Because of my study and job, I got engaged and married. Prior to that, I improved my financial conditions and my family financial conditions hugely. My salary is essential in the household. My mother suffered from difficult conditions [the graduate's empowerment asserted her mother empowerment]. Now my family is proud of me, my job is not traditional; they honoured me in the Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA). My life has definitely changed before and after joining VET. After I started working, those who were opposing my decision started looking for the VTC to enrol their daughters.

She summarised the change she went through from disempowerment to empowerment starting from the decision she took to study VET, based on her awareness of the opportunities, followed by the “Power Within” she developed with the support of the VET institute, the “Power to”, “Power With” and the independence and control over her life choices she achieved, even in the face of opposition from others.

VTC managers and counsellors also stressed the important role of the awareness and career guidance they offer for male and female students in the general school setting in terms of opening up the choice of VET in the first place. Hence, as Kabeer (2005) argued, “in order to be able to make choices, an alternative of choices must exist, and it must be seen to exist”. These staff, also emphasised the awareness and assertiveness sessions they do for female students, and the support they give in linking with the labour market.

A male final year student from Gaza also clearly illustrated the choices opened up through VET with respect to employment and self-employment, and related to a place to live or move around, although this was still challenged by the context, as the siege challenged his ability to pursue his other choice of travel:

I will graduate next month, I am already working in my profession as self-employed, in some jobs I employ others, when I graduate I will apply for a full-time job in addition to my work, and will try to travel abroad, which is a 2% chance but still is one of my dreams. (...) I finished Tawjihi and joined university and finished one year, but had to quit for financial reasons, now I am employing my brothers and relatives who are unemployed university graduates.

His case also illustrates his increased self-esteem in controlling most of his choices and being a resource for others. He had been able to use his training and work experience to mitigate the challenges he faced in his career before enrolling in VET.

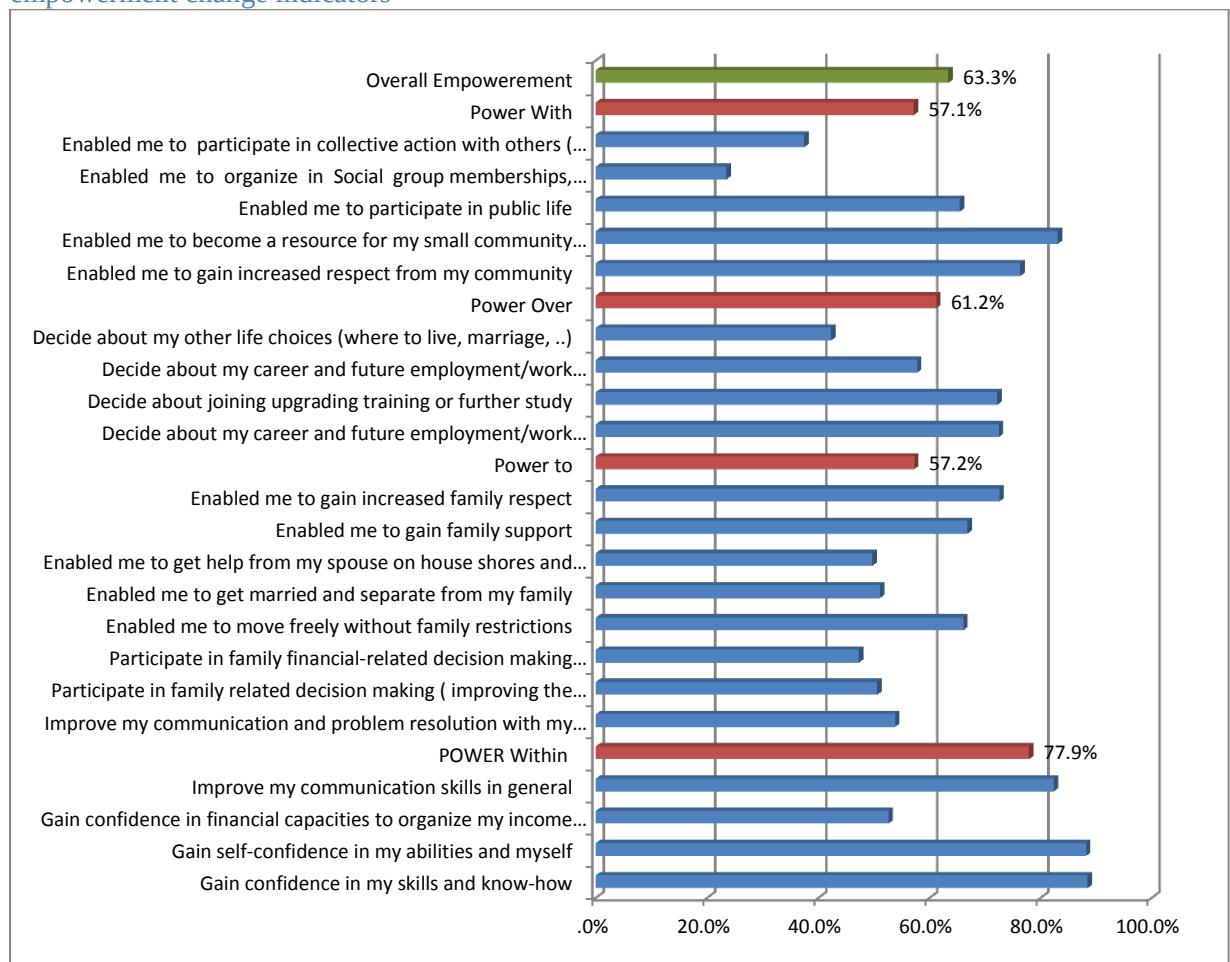
These two examples summarise the achievement of the sense of agency “Power Within”, the capacity to pursue goals “Power to” and to activate agency through pursuit of goals or values, as well as having control over choices and decisions, and overcoming or mitigating the effects of limitations and challenges. They were able to achieve the change they longed for, although still challenged by the context.

The female graduate contested norms in education and training and the division of labour in the market, enabled by the powers she gained. Other graduates entering the market in non-conventional fields since 1996 have been able to change the norms in the market place towards a division of labour, as noted by a female employer of VET graduates:

Females' presence in the field [mobile maintenance] is important. They need to trust the shop they are training or working in. My grandfather didn't agree, but things have changed. When girls seek my advice, I encourage them into the specialization. It has both technology know-how and provides job opportunity. (...) My shop's work policy is that women are different than men but equal.

Achieving "Power Over" was affected by the context and the social and economic barriers. "Power To" and "Power Over" are the highest level of empowerment of the disempowered since they contest "Power Relations" and lead to control over one's own life choices.

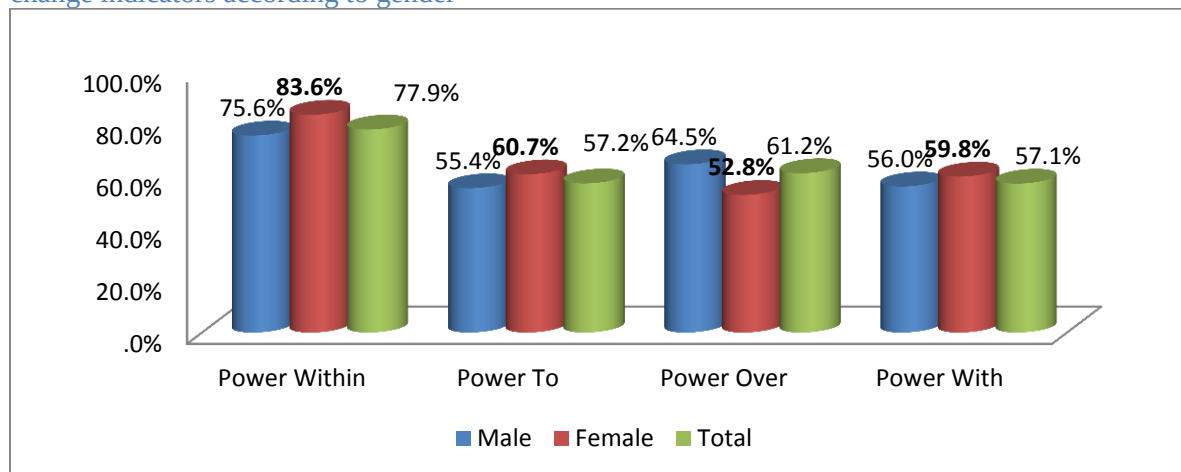
Figure 7-1: Percentages of total VET graduates highly agreeing or agreeing to social empowerment change indicators



The overall achievement of empowerment indicators reached 63.3%, with “Power Within” but the most and “Power To” the least widely achieved. The detailed indicators show the highest achievements in gaining internal powers and respect from surroundings, and hence gaining extra control over household decisions, freedom from family restrictions in terms of movement, and freedom to participate in public life: all mainly achieved due to the enabling resources of skills, paid and unpaid work and other achieved functionings.

Most empowerment indicators were higher for females and the marginalised, but males scored higher on “Power Over”. Empowerment achievement was restricted by various factors, including patriarchal control affecting females and unmarried males. Empowerment achievement was also restricted by the military occupation affecting all graduates, particularly those living in marginalised localities and refugees. Empowerment was also affected by poverty, indicating enlarged powers for lower income groups in various indicators, but limiting its realisation for the lowest ones. Empowerment is therefore better achieved for the marginalised, yet limitations and restrictions hold them back from a full realisation of their powers. This is illustrated below in the highest achievement of “Power Within” for females over males, and to a lesser extent “Power To” and “Power With”, with females achieving the least in “Power Over” sub-indicators. This indicates the social restrictions females are subjected to as a result of patriarchal society.

Figure 7-2: Percentages of VET graduates highly agreeing or agreeing to social empowerment change indicators according to gender



“Power Over” was clearly achieved by many graduates to varying degrees, although the effect was higher in marginalised localities, indicating the ability of VET and achieved functionings to enlarge the choices and extend the “Power Over” more choices. As summarised in one sentence by a MOSA student: “It is part of establishing your life”, when asked about “what is VET to its students”.

Empowerment of Communities and Marginalised Groups

Empowerment of Families and Communities for Resilience

Empowerment of Families

Johnson, in her study on kinship marriages in *living together in a nation of fragments*, (2006) has noted that the change in the Palestinian economy over the last fifty years, and after the occupation of Palestinian lands of the WB, EJ and Gaza in 1967, and the creation of status of economic-independence on the occupier, has affected most if not all Palestinian families. Change included its internal dynamics, processes and economy (p.60). She pointed out the importance of kinship in the economy and social relations to deal with the loss of the production economy to the symbolic economy, manifested on economy that is dependent on remittances of workers in others’ economies and on aid. As she noted:

Indeed, seeing the Palestinian symbolic economic and kin worlds responding to system of domination, lack of legitimate authority and profound insecurity, helps explain how local kin solidarities and identities (...) constitute a major component of national identity (p.61).

Further to the above, in her paper on Palestinian refugees’ agency, Rosenfeld (2002) indicated the “work-chain” as a resource for education practised by Palestinian families in refugee camps. She explained the system as “divisions of labour in which the skilled or professional labour of unmarried female and male members is harnessed to the reproduction of the schooling of younger family members” (p.521).

Throughout the history of catastrophes, displacement, fragmentation and continual attacks, Palestinian families have resorted to using their own resources within the household. The gained skills, the exerted work and the produced income are used by the

household as a main resource, not only for the individual functionings and agency, but for the household's aspiration for resilience and development.

In various studies on poverty in the oPt, including a Participatory Poverty Assessment conducted by UNDP, families identified VET as a main resource for driving them out of poverty (Hillal, 2002). The empirical evidence presented already indicates the importance of VET graduates' work and income generation for the poverty reduction of the original family.

Within such a context, the high enrolment of poor and marginalised youth in VET can be explained as part of the household's aspiration to rise out of poverty. This was also emphasised by VTC teachers:

The economic condition of the family affects the VET enrolment option; it is the first choice of the poor, especially for male youths, as expressed by parents: (to learn a vocation so that he can benefit us).

The management of a VET institute has noted the increased awareness of VET among families, and how they are using VET as a resource:

We note this increase in awareness among parents who encourage and help their sons and daughters in enrolling in professional fields. Families started to plan for their future development and jointly.

A parent and employer mentioned that his son studying vocational training is part of the task of securing the growth and sustainability of the family business:

I studied three years in [VET] and I worked in several carpentry workshops. When I was 23 years old, I opened my own workshop. In time, it developed to a high standard, organized and provides quality services. I have five employees and many customers including old customers, now my son is training as carpenter.

In a marginalised locality such as EJ, parents appreciate the opportunities offered by VET as a valid option for building family resources, as mentioned by a parent:

Building resources is important. Basel (my son) will have a vocation and a certificate. (...) I was a fan of academic schools; but as a Palestinian in Jerusalem there are a lot of challenges in guiding youth (...) I know what surrounds me and try to get to youth. I got my son in VET. My other son is in his 8th grade, I might send him as well.

This approach to family future planning was obvious in the case in East Jerusalem, the father and workshop owner had taken his benefits, opened his own workshop and

admitted his son to VTC, through joint discussion among the family. The mother was a teacher and saw VET as an opportunity based on the awareness sessions she attended.

The father said:

I worked for many years with the Israelis as worker. That was enough, I wanted my own shop. So, I resigned, and took my end of service and financial aid and started thinking with my son what to do with it. I registered my son in the (...). He has interest in the field. I wanted to understand the craft. I wanted to know where to go.

Joining VET to support their family was expressed by 82.5% of VET graduates, while one in six joined to be able to work in the family business, confirming the above.

VET, therefore, has helped to strengthen families' economic status in these two cases, and through its ability to continue generating income through the family business, it has helped to build the family's resources, making it a key element in families' strategies for survival and resilience. Hence VET graduates had enlarged families' human capacity and increased their resources and agency for realising the aspirations of their members, although it could have delayed realising the graduate's aspirations, as noted earlier.

Many families indicated that they had been the instigators of their son's/daughter's enrolment in VET, although some were convinced by their sons and daughters or by others as counsellors and teachers. Many stressed the challenging context and how important it is for their children to support themselves in the future possibly the family if any shocks happened. Over seven years Gaza has witnessed three wars and the WB has experienced on-going change and attacks on people, land and resources.

A VTC counsellor noted the psychological effect of VET on poor families:

We noticed that the vocational education and training has very positive results on poor families and marginalized groups, especially from a psychological aspect. These family members became productive and feeling self-worth and how important they are in the community.

The above indicates that, further to what has been noted as the strategies of families for survival and resilience, VET has empowered the disempowered poor families by increasing their sense of power "Power Within", and providing them with the power to act.

Empowerment of Communities

Although it was not deliberately investigated, throughout the interviews and group discussions, it was evident that VET has enabled the empowerment of communities, by empowering marginalised groups through integration and protection, and by contributing towards the resilience of context-related marginalised communities.

Empowering the marginalised groups

Empowering the marginalised groups within the community was seen by community members as an important element towards enabling their own resources, building their agency towards active and resilient communities. This was seen through allowing marginal groups to be reintegrated into the community, to be protected from risks and dangers and as a way to provide kin support and solidarity.

This could be seen through the vocational training provided for drop-outs and vulnerable youth as a way of protecting them from delinquency, violence, child labour and other issues. An official in the governorate noted:

The official institutions which operate on childhood protection and Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) protection should combine efforts to work against child labour and direct them to VET.

MOSA is providing training for these children, and an official noted:

Although our SRCs provides VET it is part of our mission in providing rehabilitation and protection for troubled children and youths from marginalised families, both males and females. In such a way, they are protected from being subjected to violence and abuse, and from possible delinquency. (...) The value of vocational education and training among our beneficiaries and families extends to the additional rehabilitation, social care and protection we provide through our centres. We note this high value through phrases used by parents when we visit families, and these phrases are: "I want a place to protect my son as he has dropped out of school"; "My son loved the need of the society for him, "I've seen graduates successful in the labour market." This positive perspective and value towards our centres was clear when parents protested against the closure of some of our centres.

VET was also intended to provide the reintegration of certain groups in society, as noted by MAJ official who focused on the Ministry's work with ex-political-prisoners from Israeli jails and their reintegration into the community as well as the provision of necessary psycho-social support:

The training we offer contributes to society by integrating the ex-prisoners in the community through productive work.

Other rehabilitation programmes also worked on rehabilitating youths injured or disabled as a result of the Israeli occupation, through which they provide counselling and support and train VET graduates for reintegration in the community.

VET was also seen to provide the chance to address inequalities and change prejudiced attitudes towards certain groups. During one of the group discussions, VTC female students indicated the importance of VET to women:

“Prove herself, develop new things”, “Independence and has vocation”, “She can open her own shop, so that people would believe in her and that she benefited from her education”, “If women are developed; the whole of society will develop too”, “She’ll offer job opportunities to other people”, “Broadens her mind-set/thinking process”, “She raises generations/ she works in the society”, “Challenge culture trends and mainstreams saying that women can only sit at home”, “Works with her hands for her future”, “The woman is half the society/ she must prove to the man that she’s capable of enhancing her community”

An employer of female graduates in a non-conventional field pointed out the importance of the integration of women in such fields, allowing for equal access:

Females’ presence in the field is important. They need to trust the shop they are training or working in. My grandfather didn’t agree, but things have changed. When girls seek my advice, I encourage them into the specialization. It has both technology know-how and provides job opportunities. (...) My shop’s work policy: women are different than men but equal. We need to follow up according to ethical standards; vocational, educational and ethical. Everyone counts; it is an important element to establish a good society. We need youths who are able to build the community by work and education. We don’t want them to quit their craft. I care about youths, they are my motive. Before thinking of financial gains, I think of social gains. Anyone would like to benefit his community. If I have the knowledge (certificate) and I don’t support my community morally and materially, it will hold me accountable later on.

He stressed the social value and social gains arising from the integration of females in the market and in non-traditional fields.

In conclusion, for the integration of groups of community members, providing them with protection and equal access is thought to have empowered these communities by empowering their disempowered members; kinship support is clear in the discussion.

Contributing towards the resilience of context-related marginalised communities

There are effects and impacts of VET beyond individual functionings, achievements and empowerment to “community empowerment” through its role in contributing towards the resilience of context-related marginalised communities. Resilience was found: “contributing to local economies” and “providing skills as resource for youth steadfastness in their communities”. The resilience of the Palestinian people has taken many shapes and developed over time, while kinship in fragmented communities has presented a strategy as noted below. The EJ case presented below will demonstrate the two identified forms.

As Johnson (2006) has identified, the “kin solidarity” practised by Palestinians is an act to contest military occupation and constitutes the Palestinian identity, which framed families’ actions and decisions and would affect various fragmented communities. Palestinian strategies in the past have used “survival” or “coping” strategies to overcome effect of the occupation and as part of the ethos of resistance and steadfastness (Taraki, 2006).

The East Jerusalem case²⁵

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel-ACRI (2015) has illustrated the conditional residency status of Palestinians in East Jerusalem (EJ) through illegal Israeli measures, including revoking the citizenship of more than 14,000 Palestinians since 1967 (p.3). The issue of residency and citizenship has been in the forefront of the lives of Palestinians living in EJ, putting their continued existence in their own houses and communities at risk. The issue of resilience appears in keeping their identity and continuing to live within their own communities. The issue of house demolition and isolation of neighbourhoods is practised against the Palestinians, as UNOCHA reports have noted (www.ochaopt.org).

Moreover, the economic status in EJ is affected by the permit regime, zoning and isolation. The ILO Director-General (2015b) has stated:

East Jerusalem is largely cut off from the other parts of the West Bank, and is undergoing changes that have an increasingly permanent effect on the Palestinian economic and

²⁵ The East Jerusalem case is presented here as an example of marginalised localities due to the military occupation practices against these communities, with specifics to each locality.

social fabric. (...) The lack of economic development and decent employment opportunities for Palestinians in East Jerusalem, particularly youth, contributes to heightened tensions and escalation of violence. The Palestinian Authority is still prevented from exercising its functions in East Jerusalem. Palestinian institutions, such as (...) and the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce, remain closed. The Separation Barrier has cut off from the city several Palestinian communities within the Israeli-defined municipality border, with serious consequences for access to public services. Tens of thousands of Palestinians of East Jerusalem are physically separated from the urban centre and must cross crowded checkpoints to access health- care, education and other services (p.22)

Restrictions, in addition to various policies exercised in EJ, have limited the number of establishments operating in Jerusalem, it has also limited the labour force availability and mobility, as well as prevented investment. Various statistics and reports have documented the annual decrease in the number of establishments during the last 20 years. The only Palestinian industrial zone (Wadi Al-Jose) is under continuous threat of being demolished (Abu-Soud, 2010; Palestinian Business Forum 2012). UNCTAD (2013) has noted the destructive effects of measures on the economy of EJ in various respects, including lowering its productivity and competitiveness.

Palestinians in East Jerusalem are relying on kinship relations to protect their existence and defend their houses, lands and economy. The resilience of Palestinians in East Jerusalem is of utmost importance to their existence. Hence it is apparent that VET's ability to produce youth with skills to construct, produce and service the people, as well as to be self-employed and build their own business is an important factor for sustaining the economy within the local communities, as part of building the resilience of those communities.

The various non-governmental organisations providing VET inside the zoned areas of EJ, and the ones working around it and in other parts of the WB who receive students from EJ, have recounted many success stories of graduates who have opened their own businesses and employed others, while others are working as the main technical assistance to existing businesses, and others are working as self-employed to cater for skills gaps in these communities. These stories have contributed to sustaining and developing the community's economy using its own resources.

It was noted that VET and the skills gained by graduates had their effect on the community's resilience in terms of "contributing to local economies" and "providing skills as a resource for youth steadfastness in their communities".

Providing skills as a resource for youth steadfastness in their communities was a main contribution to resilience, as youths are enabled through skills development to overcome the challenges facing youth in EJ. A teachers group from a VTC in EJ noted:

Students work after school, or when they drop-out of schools in the black-market jobs and its misery, VET is their last chance to get out of the black-market work. The Palestinian youth in Jerusalem is also challenged with many other issues; especially the drugs problem.

Teachers stressed the challenge of working in black market jobs that faces most youth in EJ, leaving youths dependent on this high salary but also vulnerable to low skills and precarious employment. Drug use is also highly prevalent amongst Palestinian youth in Jerusalem.

In this respect, the director of another VTC operating in EJ indicated how VET is important for EJ's youth and community:

VET can be a solution for school dropouts, and we keep telling parents and the community that it's better to join VET than to join the market without preparation to avoid black market jobs and exploitation. (...) VET is very important in Jerusalem because it is the safest choice for many reasons, education in Jerusalem is frustrating for Jerusalemite youth (university graduates have no chance of employment. (...) they work in the vocation taught, they can open their own business, they can be supervisors in the work location, (...) We support all those who advocate/ support VET to sustain youth in Jerusalem, to live with dignity and to help them enter the market.

He indicated that the challenges faced by youth and the community in East Jerusalem made it vitally important for youth to join VET to find employment and live with dignity.

The provision of skills as a resource for youth steadfastness in their communities was noted by employers:

You are saving a whole generation from getting lost. (...) You help students to start their journey/career. (...) It closes the gap in Jerusalem "the gap in education system"; families and students benefit; drop out usually go to the black-market labour (they pay 4000 NIS/ months for drop-out students), after six to seven years when they are 25 years old, they have nothing, can't improve their life/job, no prospects.

One summarised steadfastness for youths as “saving youth from being lost” by providing an alternative opportunity to the attraction of the black market and the different problems arising thereafter. Another explained how within such communities, trapped between the attraction of black market jobs and the high unemployment rates for university graduates, VET presents an important track for youth careers:

Youths are being abused by the [military] occupation. The black-market jobs, they only care about money. Vocations are important for youth in Jerusalem. If he can't pass in the academic discipline he won't get a life or money. So vocational training is an option for his career. University graduates don't have jobs. I think vocation education is more important than academic. (...) VET is important in Jerusalem, because degree holders work in cleaning services. Doctors and graduates find no jobs. There is no support from the PA or any Palestinian party/ organization. Nowadays everybody encourage VET. Graduates have interests and abilities, they know what they want and have the skills.

A third noted how families and the community were seeing VET as an option for youth careers, as follows:

There is encouragement [for VET]; families now are encouraging their sons. Academic education is not working. The father looks for a vocation for his son. It is hard to work with BA in the Israeli market

In terms of enhancing their resilience and steadfastness, communities have been identifying their own resources and capitalising on them. Professional jobs and building careers are not available for Palestinian Arabs in Jerusalem, only black-market jobs to serve the occupier in their market, and re-pump their earning into the Israeli economy, and keeping the subservient relationship of people and local economy. Hence, the importance of having their strategy of building skills for youth to start a career and build their own business. This strategy will eventually contribute to building a sustainable steadfast economy within their community. Empowering communities was therefore achieved by providing opportunities for choices, building resources and agency for the community for their steadfastness, resistance and resilience.

Empowerment of the Marginalised Economy in a Fragile Context

The Palestinian economy is fragile, as noted already. It is dependent on the Israeli economy; private investments are weak and the production base has weakened over the years, as World Bank (2016) noted:

Restrictions have been the main constraint to Palestinian economic competitiveness and have pushed private investment levels to amongst the lowest in the world. Restrictions on Area C are amongst the most detrimental to economic growth and World Bank analysis has reported that access to Area C could increase Palestinian GDP by 35 percent and would be expected to lead to a 35 percent increase in employment. The World Bank estimates that GDP losses in Gaza, since the blockade of 2007, are above 50 percent. (p.5)

With loss of investments and resources, a reduction in production activities and investment, the contribution of the VET graduates is important in terms of developing their own businesses, employing and working as self-employed within their fragmented economy, and producing skilled labour that could contribute to the economy. As such, VET's contribution adds resources and skills, and strengthens the economic base.

Palestinian small and micro businesses and income generation activities within its communities are contributing to the resilience of the Palestinian people and, as Samara (2005) showed, the development of popular protection, where investments to be oriented towards direct needs for self-preservation. These are the characteristics of the VET graduates' work activities and businesses.

Empowerment Indicators for Families, Communities and the Private Sector in a Fragile Context

Based on the above, the empowerment indicators for families, communities and the private sector in a fragile context are:

Category	Empowerment Indicators
Families	Income generation for survival, for getting out of poverty and for household agency
	Contribution to family businesses for resilience and sustaining family income in a fragile context
Communities	Empowerment of different marginalised groups
	Contributing towards the resilience of context-related marginalised communities
Private sector in fragile context	Contributing to strengthening the fragile economy and economic resilience

It is evident that the above indicators are valid as important measures for families, communities and economic development. Moreover, they explain the high appreciation of families and communities in marginalised localities regarding the functioning achievements of the graduates on the one hand, and the high appreciation of the graduates towards their achievements.

The Achieved Aspirations of Graduates

Skills gained by graduates, their ability to practice these skills through work and the different achieved functionings, including income and poverty reduction, as well as the empowerment gained, all became resources for achieving graduates' aspirations. Yet aspiration, as argued by Appadurai (2004), is a resource for change in itself. He has emphasised that the "Capacity to aspire" could provide the poor with the "resources required to contest and alter the conditions of their own poverty" (p.59).

Furthermore, empowerment is translated by Appadurai (2004) as the "increase in the capacity to aspire", especially for the poor (p.70). Based on this, empowerment becomes a means to achieve the aspiration of the graduates, although empowerment was achieved through the resources gained, it is thus both the ends and the means for fulfilling graduates' aspirations and for achieving transformatory change, as noted by Kabeer (1999).

The aspirations expressed by graduates have been listed already as have achieved functionings. This section will examine the achievement of these aspirations as assessed by the graduates themselves. The achievement of aspirations is linked with achieved functionings and empowerment, and is a measure of the graduates' satisfaction with their accomplishments with regard to achievements, well-being and empowerment.

To recall the aspirations of the graduates; these included income generation (87.6%) and employment (82.1%), enhancing status and certificates (85.2% and 95.4% respectively), self-awareness and assertiveness, as well as social engagement, in addition to gaining skills to continue their education. Aspirations varied according to the variables of marginalisation and they reflected the hopes and dreams of the graduates to overcome the structural discrimination and marginalisation against them by developing resources of skills, work, income and status.

Aspiration has been noted by teachers and management of VET institutes as a way of motivating students and graduates to achieve. Motivation was noted among the poor and the marginalised, as quoted by one of the VET teachers:

There are two cases [I knew in which graduates succeeded to achieve their aspirations]: one successful [male] graduate had poverty as the main motivation to work and succeed, and the second succeeded due to personal motivation [to prove to herself that she could do it].

In these two cases, poverty was the main driver for success and changing the male student's status, while the female student wanted to prove her ability, which is contested due to her gender or other factors of marginalisation factors. In a focus group discussion with middle management in a VET institute the importance of aspiration for success was noted, with an emphasis on poverty:

However, the suffering of poor students becomes a self-motivation for them to develop themselves out of poverty. The success factors also depend on the seriousness of the students and their desire to self-develop their talents and skills.

Female students noted the motivation they have to prove their equal capacities and abilities:

We need to show much we work and tire ourselves; we need to show that we love our vocation to our families to get their respect towards our choice, plans and accomplishment

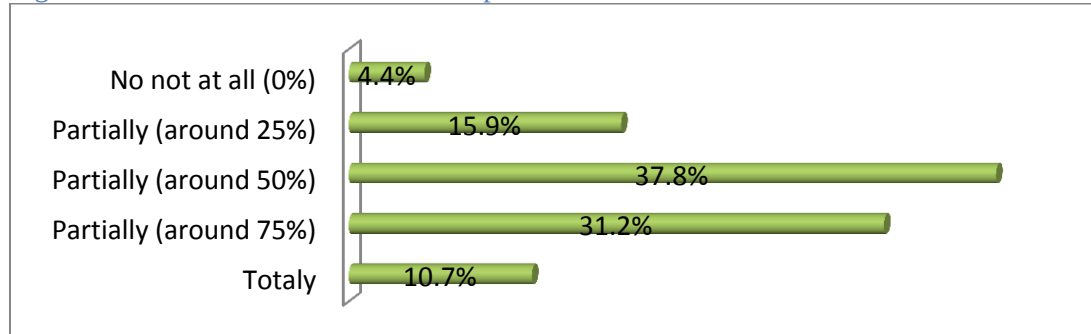
They linked their motivation to gain respect for their choice, and hence to assert their choices, which would link to the achievement of empowerment.

Therefore, graduates' aspiration, which is what they value accomplishing, was noted as a main driver for their achievement and for change, and it thus becomes an additional resource for the marginalised to perceive change. In other words, even if they have not actually achieved economic functional outcomes, such as employment, their perception of empowerment might still be socially significant.

Graduates' assessment of their achievement reflected the change achieved in their lives based on their aspirations. Whereas some (10%) have fully achieved their aspirations, others (84.9) had achieved them partially and are still working to achieve them, while a few (4.4%) did not achieve their aspirations. Graduates noted the structural challenges to their achievements.

With regard to the overall achievement of aspirations; more than one in three VET graduates (42%) reported that at least 75% of their aspirations had been realised since graduation. Most of the graduates (80%) reported that at least 50% of their aspirations had been realised since graduation.

Figure 7-3: VET Graduates Achieved aspirations



The following section illustrates the graduates' perception of the extent to which they have achieved valued functionings or the extent to which they perceived that they had been empowered by the VET experience. It also illustrates their perception of their achievement of their aspirations according to their levels of marginalisation over time.

Achievement of VET Graduates' Aspirations According to Work, Poverty Reduction and Empowerment

The actual achievement of functionings aspired to by the graduates, such as employment and income generation increased their self-assessment in respect to whether they had achieved their aspirations. Gaining empowerment increased the sense of achieved aspirations.

Table 7-9 Achievements of VET Graduates' aspirations according to work and employment status

Categories	Achieved Aspirations	
	Totally	50% or more
Total	11%	80%
Achieved Aspirations according to working status		
Employed	13%	81%
Outside the LF	8%	77%
Unemployed	7%	76%
Achieved Aspirations according to Employment status		
Employer	18%	97%
Self-employed	20%	83%
Paid Employee	11%	80%
Un-paid Family member	17%	67%

The achievement of employment, having their own business and income generation had its effect on the perception of achieving the aspirations. Higher percentages (13%) of those employed felt that they had totally achieved their aspirations, compared to 8% of those outside the labour force and 7% of those who were unemployed.

In respect to the partial achievement of aspirations, the results indicated that slightly more of those who were employed felt that they had achieved 50% or more of their expectations compared to the other two groups. Those who were already employers were more satisfied than those in other employment categories.

Lower achievements of aspirations among paid employees is probably due to the high level of dissatisfaction among paid employees regarding decent working conditions, as explained in detail in the previous chapter. The results indicated that 90% of graduates who were totally satisfied with their employment felt that they had achieved 50% or more of their aspirations, and 20% of them felt that they had totally achieved their aspirations. The results also indicated that those who are outside the labour force “due to choose” are more satisfied than those that were denied choice in this regard.

With respect to income and its effect on poverty reduction in the graduates’ families, it was noted that the total achievement of aspirations jumped from 10.7% to 19% for graduates with families that improved their income level significantly, and to 14% for those whose family income level improved slightly. These results increased to 24% when graduates are employed and income status improved greatly for the family largely or 15% when it improved slightly. Those who had married and started a family, and were working, also felt that they had achieved more aspirations, especially with graduates who had a very good financial status and were employed, as the table below indicates.

Table 7-10 Achievement of VET graduates’ aspirations according to generated income for poverty reduction and establishing a new family

Categories	Achieved Aspirations	
	Totally	50% or more
Total	11%	80%
Achieved Aspirations according to Improvement of the current income Level of the original household (compared to the income level when enrolled)		
Yes Largely	20%	85%
Yes Slightly	14%	83%
No Change	8%	77%

Categories	Achieved Aspirations	
	Totally	50% or more
No, Deteriorated Slightly	0%	64%
Achieved Aspirations according to Improvement of the current income Level of the original Achieved Aspirations and household (compared to the income level when enrolled) and employed		
Yes Largely	24%	88%
Yes Slightly	15%	85%
No Change	8%	76%
No, Deteriorated Slightly	0%	53%
Achieved Aspirations according to Assessment of the financial status of your newly established family now for those married		
Very Good	15%	91%
Good	9%	86%
Medium	0%	84%
Achieved Aspirations according to Assessment of the financial status of your newly established family now for those married and employed		
Very Good	29%	100%
Good	11%	96%
Medium	18%	77%
Total	15%	91%

These findings emphasise the importance of aspirations for the marginalised to lead their own change with available resources, as Appadurai stressed. The findings show that the tangible change achieved by these graduates in their lives is linked to the feeling of having fulfilled their aspirations.

Moreover, the effect of the empowerment gained by the VET graduates on their sense of achieved aspirations was also apparent, confirming Appadurai translation of empowerment as “increase the capacity to aspire” that was discussed earlier. The results indicated that the perception of achieved aspirations increased among graduates who highly agreed with empowerment indicators, as the table indicates.

The highest achievement of aspirations was when graduates achieved “Power To”, which is the change in power relations in the surroundings, followed by those who achieved the “Power Within”, or the sense of agency, indicating the confidence in self and skills, then the “Power Over” resembling the control over their decisions. These findings indicate how important the different empowerment domains are and their effects on achieving the aspirations.

Table 7-11 VET Graduates Achieved Aspirations according to Empowerment Indicators

	Totally	50% or more
Total	11%	80%
Overall empowerment	15%	85%
Power Within	17%	88%
Power To	19%	87%
Power Over	14%	82%
Power With	12%	80%

The above indicates that the perception of achieved aspirations increases with graduates' achievements and functionings in work and income, and with income generation for poverty reduction. It also indicates that achieved aspirations increased when graduates are empowered, which was demonstrated in all indicators, most specifically those related to agency and life choices. Other contributors to increased achieved aspirations of the graduates would be the additional different functioning and capabilities discussed in the previous chapter.

The total achievement of aspirations can be seen in the illustrative case of the female graduate in the appliance maintenance (p.187), while their partial achievement could be found in the quotes from the male student from Gaza, with contextual challenges. The following quote from a female refugee graduate summarises the partial achievement of her aspirations, referred to as the “dream” in her quote;

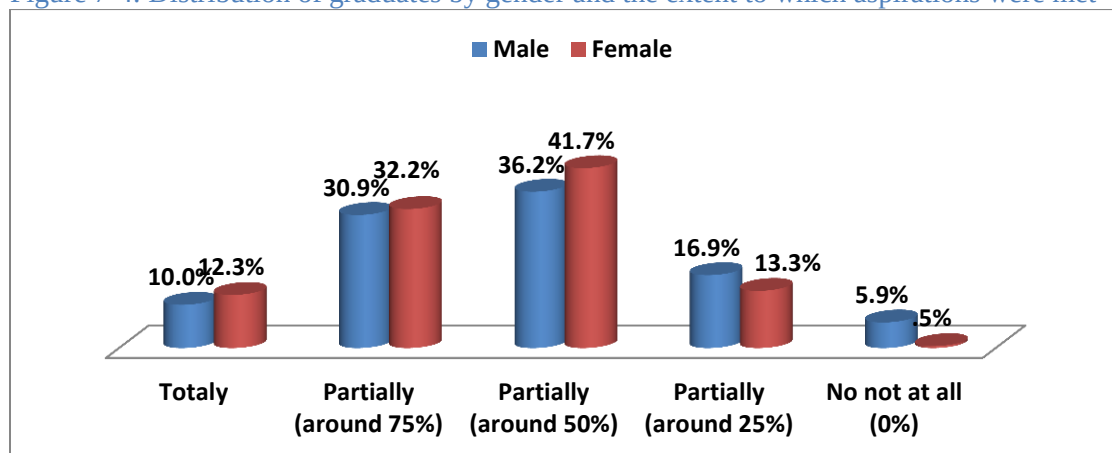
I work in my profession since graduation, VTC was very helpful. For the society, fashion designer is just a tailor. I am good at drawing but I didn't accomplish my dream yet. Design needs lot of money.

Achievement of Graduates' Aspirations According to Marginalisation

Categories

Achieved aspirations varied according to marginalisation variables being gender, marginalised locality, poverty and refugee status. For easier illustration of achievement of aspiration, empowerment and marginalisation, the empowerment indicated in this section is the overall empowerment, calculated as the average value, of all indicators.

Figure 7-4: Distribution of graduates by gender and the extent to which aspirations were met



Results varied slightly according to gender, indicating that females' aspirations were met more than those of males (86% of them had met over 50% of their aspirations compared to 77% of males). Aspirations were similar except for employment which was higher for females (87% compared to 80%).

The partial achievement of aspirations according to work status varied according to marginalisation factors, gender specifically. Whereas the difference between employed and outside the labour force for males was higher than the above in favour of the former, the results for females indicated that percentages were the same for employed and those outside the labour force at 86%, bringing up the discussion of the importance of unpaid work and its relation to the gender division of labour.

Males and females were similar in terms of the total aspirations met and there was also little difference for those with over 50% of their aspirations met (86% for female versus 84%).

Graduates' achievement of their aspirations increased significantly for those living in seam zones and Gaza, since around two thirds mentioned that 75% or more of their aspirations were met, as illustrated below. The high level of met aspirations is linked to their actual aspirations and the related achievements and functionings.

Table 7-12: Distribution of graduates by the extent of met aspirations and marginalised locality

	Totally	Partially			No not at all (0%)	TOTAL
		(75%)	(50%)	(25%)		
Gaza	10.7%	52.9%	30.6%	5.8%	.0%	100.0%
EJ inside the wall	16.1%	29.0%	41.9%	9.7%	3.2%	100.0%
Jerusalem outside the wall	14.3%	14.3%	50.0%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%
Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	0.0%	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%	.0%	100.0%
Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	30.6%	36.7%	18.4%	10.2%	4.1%	100.0%
Remaining WB	8.2%	26.1%	41.0%	19.2%	5.5%	100.0%
Total	10.4%	31.2%	37.9%	16.0%	4.4%	100.0%

The above results reflect the change in graduates' status with regard to employment and income generation compared to the worse context in their areas, as graduates in Gaza had higher employment rates and a higher proportion of graduates opening their own business

than the national figures for youth in Gaza. The graduates from EJ inside the wall, and those adjacent to the wall experienced an improvement in their families' financial status.

When looking at the effect of empowerment, the rate of achievement of all aspirations jumped to 23%, and 47% for those who felt empowered in Gaza, adjacent to the Wall and EJ inside the Wall, respectively.

Table 7-13: Distribution of empowered graduates by degree of met expectations and marginalised locality

	Totally	Partially			50% or more
		(75%)	(50%)	(25%)	
Gaza	22.5%	45.9%	23.5%	8.1%	91.9%
EJ inside the wall	47.2%	13.8%	31.1%	0.0%	92.1%
Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	22.7%	32.9%	18.5%	3.9%	74.1%
Remaining WB	9.7%	28.0%	43.1%	15.1%	80.8%
Total	14.6%	32.4%	37.8%	11.9%	84.8%

The results also showed that the graduates with the highest and lowest categories of family income had higher totals of achieved aspirations than the remaining groups. This result could be understood from change factors or achievements of graduates in work, opening their own business and income, as well as empowerment.

Table 7-14 VET graduates achieved aspirations according to income of the graduate family at the point of enrolment, employed and empowered

	Achieved Aspirations		Achieved Aspirations and employed		Achieved Aspirations and empowered	
	Totally	50% or more	Totally	50% or more	Totally	50% or more
Below 1000	8.0%	85.8%	9.3%	88.9%	27.6%	84.3%
1001- 1783	14.1%	80.5%	19.2%	79.5%	13.1%	95.4%
1784-2000	11.2%	78.4%	13.1%	82.1%	25.8%	89.8%
2001- 2237	.0%	66.7%	0%	66.70%	0.0%	11.9%
2238- 2700	5.7%	80.0%	6.40%	83.30%	7.5%	83.8%
2701- 3600	8.8%	76.9%	9.30%	75.70%	10.8%	81.0%
3601- 4500	7.1%	76.2%	8.80%	79.40%	3.2%	71.3%
Above 4500	23.3%	78.3%	27.30%	81.80%	24.5%	74.5%
Total	10.7%	79.5%	12.40%	80.70%	15%	85%

The last two columns indicate achieved aspiration of those employed and empowered within the different income categories, in comparison with first columns of achieved aspiration only. The achieved aspirations of those employed were higher among most

income categories, it was highest among the least family income group only. The achieved aspiration of those empowered was higher among the five least family income groups. The results indicate the effect of empowerment on the disempowered due to marginalisation, who hence had the highest achievements.

In respect to the refugee status of graduates there was a slight increase in graduate's perception that they had achieved their aspirations in refugees compared to non-refugees. This increase resembled the increase seen with employment, yet empowered graduates saw a more substantial increase compared to either of those previous two measures.

Table 7-15 VET graduates achieved aspirations according to refugee status, employed and empowered

	Achieved Aspirations		Achieved Aspirations and employed		Achieved Aspirations and empowered	
	Totally	50% or more	Totally	50% or more	Totally	50% or more
Refugee	11.3%	81.9%	12.9%	83.4%	17%	88%
None Refugee	10.3%	77.6%	12.1%	79%	14.7%	82%
Total	10.7%	79.5%	12.4%	80.7%	15%	85%

In conclusion, only one in ten graduates achieved their aspirations in full. This percentage increased, however, when the capabilities of graduates were turned into functionings, or the aspirations were realised in such a way as to lead to poverty reduction and empowerment. These results show that graduates from marginalised groups are more inclined to perceive that their aspirations have been met, supporting Kabeer's (1999) notion about "empowering the disempowered": the effects of VET are more appreciated by those who were previously disempowered.

This conclusion was partially reinforced by a VTC counsellor who saw a link between graduates' expectations and economic empowerment,

The value of vocational training becomes clearer when the expectations of graduates are met, i.e. when the result of the accumulated work experience and achieved income leads to enhanced economic status.

Achievement of Graduates' Aspirations Over Time

Graduates' ability to achieve their aspirations is affected by various structural challenges, as the next chapter will discuss in detail. Part of these challenges is related to the increasing effects of the military occupation.

In 2011, I conducted research on graduates from two VET institutes regarding their aspirations and their fulfilment. 70% of targeted VET graduates reported that at least 75% of their aspirations had been realised since graduation (Hilal, 2012). However, there has been a subsequent decline. Four years later, however, only 48% of the same institutes' graduates reported that at least 75% of their aspirations had been realised since graduation. These results reflect the increased structural barriers and obstacles faced due to the occupational measures and their effect on the overall context during those years, as explained in the context chapter, which was the major variable change during the period.

Conclusion: VET's Apparent Contribution to Reducing Inequalities

The results reveal the contribution of VET towards the empowerment of communities and groups. With regard to VET learners, the agency of graduates was witnessed through their enhanced ability to act in order to achieve their aspirations. It was evident that some (15%) graduates were able to expand their agency to be empowered and achieve their aspirations totally, and others (85%) partially. Empowerment was based on resources, agency and achievements. Moreover, those graduates who felt more empowered were those who were originally the most disempowered and marginalised.

The skills gained through VET, followed by achievements of functionings and, specifically, undertaking paid or unpaid work after graduation, were the main drivers for developing the specific "powers" that constitute the empowerment of male and female youth. Choice was also an important contributor to these developed powers. The results indicated that graduates were able to expand their empowerment whenever choices were available and whenever decisions were taken based on these choices, but that there was less sense of empowerment whenever choices were "passive", such as severe poverty pushing some graduates into paid work or social pressures that pushed some female graduates into unpaid work.

Empowerment was developed through developing the sense of agency “Power Within”, which most, if not all graduates, developed due to skills and work. This power became a resource with other resources of skills and work and contributed to the other powers of “Power To”, and “Power With”, both of which changed perceptions and power relations within family and community.

Again, all the developed powers became a resource for graduates to control their own life decisions. Although many graduates were able to control their career and life choices, others were not able to achieve different powers due to various challenges including context related, economic and social related challenges. The dichotomy of internal versus external structural challenges was apparent in gender-related empowerment indicators, where patriarchal systems affected female graduates’ own decisions and choices. Unmarried male graduates were also affected by the system, while the military occupation and its implications for people’s daily lives limited the choices and freedoms of both male and female youths. However, the findings also revealed cases of graduates affected by the patriarchal constraints using their developed powers to bargain more freedom for themselves. It was evident, for example, how female graduates were able to negotiate norms within the household for more freedoms, and how unmarried males and females were able to gain more freedom of movement when they were in unpaid work.

Social empowerment increased according to employment and income gained in most cases, but was affected by control over their gains and control over their choices; indicating that economic empowerment could contribute to, but did not necessarily lead to, social empowerment, and hence to human development.

Empowerment differed according to social differences, such as gender and marginalisation factors, yet VET overall contributed to the increased empowerment of the marginalised, with higher percentages of females, graduates from marginalised areas and refugees citing achievement of the empowerment indicators, even though graduates in poverty were challenged by their survival needs.

This analysis along the lines of intersectional marginalisation allowed an understanding of the different empowerment and disempowerment factors. It was apparent that

empowerment was higher with multiple marginalisation, for example, for females within the marginalised areas or refugees, or according to gender, age and social status.

The empowerment which enables graduates to make strategic life choices, allowing for transformation and change based on their aspirations, widened the choices and capacities to aspire for those who are most marginalised. Most of the VET graduates achieved active empowerment while some achieved transformative empowerment.

The power of VET and participation in paid work led to an increase in the resources of the graduate, greater control over their own resources, the possibility to renegotiate powers within the family, improving respect in the community, enjoying a sense of independence, and therefore fulfilling their own aspirations.

Yet those practising unpaid work in the household were also able, through their own improved skills and acquired “sense of agency”, to renegotiate powers within the family, and gain respect within the community. The ability of the VET graduate to practice different forms of work, even seasonally and from home, added a reserved resource that can be used in emergent situation for those decided not to participate in paid work. Those not given the choice to be employed or carry out house work bargained their way to achieve more powers.

Skills gained by graduates, the subsequent achieved functionings and the empowerment gained have all contributed to increase the resources of the VET graduates, especially for the more marginalised. Increased agency, resources and achievements enlarged their “capacity to aspire”.

Through empowerment and achievement of their aspired functionings, VET reduced inequalities in power and agency, totally for some and partially for many marginalised graduates. This change was reflected in their assessment of their “achievement of aspirations” and their stories of change. VET also reduced inequalities by increasing resources “the functioning achievements and the powers”, by enhancing the “people’s capacity to make choices”, noted by Kabeer (1999, p.439) as central to addressing inequalities through empowerment.

The two illustrated stories of change expressed by the respondents, and the many stories told in every VET institute I went to, reflect the transformation and change achieved. As a result of their functioning achievements and the practice of their empowerment powers, both of the illustrated cases of VET learners were able to achieve the status, self-respect, and respect of those around them, and they were able to contribute to their family income or their family members' employment. Through this, they were able to achieve recognition in their community, all of which provided them with transformative empowerment.

Achievement of aspiration was challenged by structural challenges, yet increased with achievements; with achieved functionings of practicing work, having own business or self-employed, and through income generation and contribution to poverty reduction. Conversely, achievement of aspirations increased through achievements of empowerment indicators. It was highest among marginalised groups, among females, graduates living in marginalised localities, refugees and the poor.

Overall, empowerment enlarged choices, providing graduates with power and control over their existence and resilience. Marginalised communities were also empowered by VET graduates, and this ability to contribute in turn reinforced the sense of achievement among the graduates. These findings explain the increase in the appreciation of VET among families and the community in the marginalised localities, as well as the increased appreciation of these achievements by the graduates themselves.

Chapter 8. Policies and Practices to Expand Human Development and Reduce Inequalities

This chapter answers the questions: What are the structural challenges to and factors enabling the achievement of aspirations and empowerment? What are the policies and practices that could expand human development and reduce inequality? Answering these questions will entail investigating the structural challenges to the achievement of functionings, empowerment and reducing inequality. It also entails investigating the policies, measures and approaches of VET institutes and favourable conditions that we can learn from. Finally, it involves looking at the policymaking process in the VET sector, and how it is responding to the strategic interests of VET graduates within a context of marginalisation.

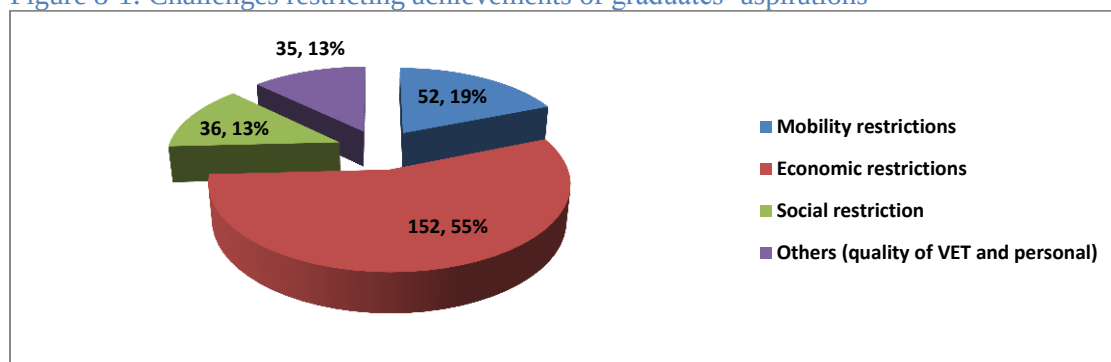
The previous chapters have concentrated on the impact of VET upon graduates in terms of the achievement of functionings, agency and empowerment. This chapter illustrates the processes through which achievements and agency may be enabled or hindered. It also extends the scope of the account of VET's contribution to human development by incorporating institutional and policy elements.

Structural challenges

Graduates identified structural challenges through the survey, and this data was supplemented by the interviews and focus group discussions. The survey collected graduates' structural challenges by means of open-ended questions in the four areas of: mobility, economic, social and others. Each of these areas were further grouped to understand how the obstacles identified in these areas challenged the achievements and aspirations of VET graduates, with additional findings and quotes being incorporated, as presented in this section. Moreover, institutional and attitude related challenges were also noted and added during the research work, and will be presented in the sections to follow.

The graph below indicates, that the challenges listed by the graduates in the survey, were economic restrictions, comprising more than half of the challenges.

Figure 8-1: Challenges restricting achievements of graduates' aspirations



Mobility Obstacles to Achieving Aspirations

One in five graduates was restricted from achieving their aspirations by mobility restriction. Mobility restrictions are related to the Israeli occupation, especially in the marginalised localities, as discussed previously.

80% of the mobility restrictions were related to the military occupation measures, which hinder graduates' mobility and access to different areas of the oPt through both physical impediments and the permit regime. As such, transportation into and out of certain areas is difficult, lengthy and costly, with the ever-present possibility of being subjected to violence. Additionally, mobility is restricted for other reasons, such as the distant locality, the cost of transportation in general and disability. The box below lists the grouped restrictions stated by the graduates.

Box-5: Mobility Obstacles to achieving aspirations as stated by graduates		
Obstacles		%
Israeli Occupation crossing points, blockades and check points		17%
Transportation is difficult, no direct transportation (especially those living in area C, seam zones or areas B with nearby Israeli Settlements or restricted movement roads)		63%
High cost of transportation, transportation is expensive, or transportation is expensive for my limited income		8%
The place I live in is distant Transportation is away from where I live, or after marriage I moved to new place that is away from education and work		10%
Physical disability- transportation and roads are not prepared		2%

These mobility restrictions and their effect on the mobility of students and graduates are a main structural challenge, as was explained through interviews with staff and students from Salfeet and Qalqilia VET institutes, each of which is situated in a marginalised locality.

Salfeet is surrounded by settlements with extensive access restrictions to roads and land.

Salfeet students noted:

The high price of transportation and barriers that surround the area from each side is a main obstacle [towards access to the ISS]. It forces us to waste a lot of time in moving around them, sometimes we are forced to go at 5 am and return 6 pm, wasting 3-4 extra hours on the road daily.

The vocational school principal gave an overview of the obstacles, their consequences, and the number of students facing such obstacles:

There are 40-50 students at the checkpoints daily, and sometimes the barriers are shut down without warning. (...) Barriers are on the path of settlements, and therefore, not only they are delayed but they are also trapped in dangerous movement.

Qalqilia is near the wall. The VTC director explained the effect on access to training and the continuation of students' education:

Qalqilya is the closest governorate to the Green Line, which makes the ratio of people working inside Israel high. It's also surrounded by the wall. Some students from areas inside the wall (Seam Zone) were not able to complete the training, because of the existence of obstacles and the closing of the checkpoint in many cases. Also, our Bedouin students from those areas were not able to complete the training

The Bedouin students affected by mobility restrictions and their enforced removal from certain areas due to the military occupation meant that they could not continue their VET.

These barriers were also faced by students at East Jerusalem VET institutes, or East Jerusalem students seeking jobs in nearby WB cities such as Ramallah, and vice-versa. They had to spend hours crossing the Qalandia checkpoint, an issue that the management of the VET institute in East Jerusalem noted as hindering some of the training in the market.

The siege imposed on Gaza and the dream of moving outside Gaza to gain additional experience and to be exposed to different methods and ways of working was also mentioned by Gaza students, who wanted to be exposed to different ways through travel, or to gain experience outside Gaza.

Some of the effects of the mobility restrictions were mitigated by the agency of the students to attend VET, or their work opportunity, even though they had to waste more time due to the blockades, be humiliated or pay more for transportation. For others,

however, it was impossible to get through such restrictions, such as the Gaza students who cannot pass through the imposed siege, or those in seam zones commuting outside the allowed times, when the gates are closed. The mobility restrictions were also a further reason within a patriarchal society to restrict women's movement for work and training, as discussed earlier.

Economic Obstacles to Achieving Aspirations

The underperforming economy has had a deep effect on the graduates, preventing them from achieving their aspirations. This was manifested in different ways.

More than half of the graduates are restricted by economic challenges. 38% of those graduates were challenged due to structural economic reasons, including those related to the economy and its effects in terms of the limited availability of jobs in certain localities.

The low wages resulting from the weak private sector and the informality of the economy, as well as the consequences of the parallel Israeli economy with a GDP nearly 13 times that of the Palestinian one, were among the main economic challenges faced by one in three of the graduates.

Other reasons cited included poverty, a lack of financial resources to open up their own business or continue their education, as well as working conditions, as the box below indicates. Some of these challenges pushed graduates out of their vocation and some were attracted to work in unskilled jobs for better pay in the Israeli market, where the minimum wage is more than three times that in the oPt.

Box-6: Economic Obstacles to achieving aspirations as stated by graduates (grouped), presented by number and percentage	
Obstacles	%
• Low Salary (sometimes not enough for personal income or to support the family)	34%
• Inability to start my own work for financial reasons	12%
• Inability to continue my education for economic reasons	3%
• I need to work quickly (unemployed) to support my family, to start gaining income,	5%
• No work available for employment or self-employment (in general, or in the specialisation, or in the specific locality)	15%
• High cost of living and expenses, Household income is low	3%
• The bad economy (in general, in my area)	23%
• Inability to work or develop within my specialisation	5%
• Work Conditions (hours and environment, suitability for disabled...)	1%

The economic challenges are mainly related to the military occupation measures. They are manifested in limited market opportunities, isolated localities with work only available away from home, and mobility restrictions.

Low pay in the Palestinian market has an effect on graduates achieving their aspirations through their capabilities, as some quit their jobs in trained vocations for other jobs, even if they do not contribute to their careers. Three graduates' work paths, presented during a focus group discussion, demonstrated such challenges:

An auto-mechanics graduate worked in his vocation in Ramallah, but had to leave due to the high transportation cost with the minimum wage obtained. Now he is working in hospitality. A metalwork graduate worked with his brother, left him and is working in the settlement, for better pay. Another metalworker worked with his uncle, didn't get paid and didn't learn anything. Now working inside Israel, he mentioned that others are working now in agricultural settlements (not in their vocation) for the pay.

The employers stressed the importance of keeping the graduates within their trade and building a career, instead of losing it for higher income by working in black market jobs in the Israeli market. Leaving trades for better pay work in black market jobs in settlements or Israel demonstrates the inability of a weak and subservient economy to compete with an advanced economy with ten times the GDP.

In such a case, the underperforming economy and the informality of business lead to low salaries, sometimes without benefits for the graduates. Salaries in many cases are below the minimum wage, contradicting the decent work agenda and challenging graduates' achievements. More than one in three of the graduates challenged by economic reason mentioned the low salary as the main issue.

Furthermore, female graduates were getting lower remuneration than males. Graduates and teachers of female students in a VET institute clarified the gender pay gap and limited rights for the women-related vocations, as noted previously.

During discussions in Gaza, graduates mentioned the economic difficulties due to the siege and the lack of electricity, a point reinforced by the World Bank (2016).

Almost one in six graduates challenged by the economic restrictions, mentioned poverty-related reasons for work as they needed to work to support their family, presenting

passive choice as discussed earlier. This resulted in their inability to continue education for financial reasons or to start their own work. This was also confirmed through focus group discussions with graduates. This explains how graduates could achieve their functionings but not necessarily achieve their full empowerment and their aspirations.

Social Obstacles to Achieving Aspirations

The structural social obstacles continue to challenge female graduates specifically since, once married, patriarchal conventions imply that household work is carried out by women only, and there is family opposition to work or starting their own work. As discussed earlier, social challenges in Palestine are structured within the patriarchal society and exacerbated by the military occupation. The box below indicates the social obstacles faced by graduates, with indication to gender when relevant.

Box-7: Social Obstacles to achieving aspirations as stated by graduates (grouped), presented by number and percentage	
Obstacles	Percentage
• Marriage and inability to work due to household responsibility-Female	8%
• Marriage and the need to get work to support the new family, hence delayed own work plans- Male	6%
• Social perception towards women and other social conditions	25%
• Family restrictions to work or own work	36%
• Work Conditions not accepted by the community	14%
• Work conditions and environment overburdening: problems with co-workers, no time to spend at home	6%
• Others: health conditions of other family members, need to work in family business,	6%

More than one in three female graduates challenged by social obstacles indicated that they were restricted by their family from working or to having own work, hence undermining their ability to choose the type of work to be engaged in. Again, this reflects societal attitudes towards women's work and responsibility within house chores in caring and rearing. One in four of women challenged by social obstacles mentioned the social perception challenge.

Restriction by the family was also confirmed during focus groups with female students and graduates. One group of graduates noted:

Family prefer that graduates work in big institute as (...), not in small businesses, specially husbands, which affects their [female graduates] employment ability.

The findings also indicated that 14% of graduates, mostly females, cited working conditions as not acceptable by the community. This was explained by some of the institutes who indicated the challenges faced in the employment of their female graduates. The most typical form of employment for VET graduates is in small enterprises with five or less workers. If there is only one woman in the midst of four male workers, families will not accept it. A VET counsellor noted:

It is easier for a male student to convince his parents to enrol and train in VTC or work in the market. For females, families usually have reservations regarding: the type of training or work, the location where she is training or working, whose training them or who are they working with, is it mixed genders, are there men in the class, the workplace, till what hour the training or work...etc.

An employer of female graduates, aware of this challenge, mentioned that he had allocated a separate space in his small workshop for a female worker, in order to gain the trust of her and her family.

Societal attitudes towards women's professions were also a reason for their enrolment in certain fields linked to their expected role in rearing and caring at the household as noted by a VTC director;

Some parents push their daughters to choose [or even choose for them] sewing specialty because they believe this skill will help them to cope in housekeeping

On the other hand, 6% of male graduates mentioned how "Marriage and the need to get work to support the new family delayed own work plans". Again, this is related to ascribed gender roles, suggesting the man as the provider for his family. In the same respect, some women also indicated that marriage, children and household responsibilities, linked with their ascribed role within a patriarchal society, also hindered pursuit of their aspirations.

Societal obstacles were noted in every aspect within the household and were translated into the community and different institutions. Female students argued that equality only existed in donors' projects or big institutes.

There are other social obstacles hindering the graduates from achieving their aspiration, such as having to care for sick family members, or to work in family business regardless of their vocation.

Other Obstacles to Achieving Aspirations – Restricted Abilities

Other obstacles were linked with external effects on restricting their abilities for achievements, as some were directly affected by the military occupation, some being injured and disabled. Others were imprisoned for some time which delayed their plans and achievements. Moreover, some experienced discrimination within Israeli society as stated by a female graduate:

I tried to work with an Israeli woman in Tel Aviv. I couldn't continue because they couldn't protect me as I wear Hijab.

Others were challenged by their disability. Although the government has adopted a law requiring that 5% of the workforce be PWD, neither the public nor the private sectors are complying.

Some mentioned a lack of skills due to the lack of equipment or material for training in their VET institutes which limited their acquired capabilities. Moreover, during focus group discussions graduates mentioned the issue of nepotism in getting jobs.

All these obstacles hinder graduates' abilities to achieve their aspirations. The later sections on VET institutes and policies will highlight the importance of policy in mitigating the effects of these structural obstacles.

Enabling Factors

According to Sen (1985), agency advances the goals people value and have reason to value. Agency can be developed in various ways and, as noted by Kabeer (1999), people might seek to pursue goals and achievements through the expansion of agency, in addition to valuing it. Hence, enabling factors, whether personal or structural, are factors expanding choices, expanding agencies and facilitating the achievement of human development and equality.

Enabling factors to enlarge graduates' agency for achievement and functioning, as well as empowerment, were apparent in the discussions with graduates, students and VET institute staff. Factors that can expand agency were mainly related to personal or structural factors, such as attitude, and the institutional and policy-related issues illustrated in the coming sections. Personal factors were either personal internal or

external factors. Personal internal factors were related to internal motivation when enrolling, agency demonstrated in the motivation to enrol, and the practice of the skills learned in fulfilling aspirations. Personal external factors are related to available personal resources that enlarge agency and the ability to reach their aspirations. The research identified the following enabling factors:

- Personal internal motivation due to marginalisation
- Personal internal motivation - interest in VET and/or the vocation
- Personal internal motivation- due to experience of others
- Personal internal motivation- important step for future plans
- Personal external factors- personal available resources.

Attitudes towards VET: Structural Challenges and Enabling Factors

This section presents two main findings: increased positive attitudes in context-related marginalised communities, markets and schools on the positive side, and the effect of negative attitudes on limiting learners' choices and achievement of their aspirations.

Increased Positive Attitudes of Communities, Markets and Schools among the Marginalised

The results indicated that most graduates thought that there were positive attitudes towards VET within their general schools before enrolling in VET. This was higher than their perceptions of VET's standing with communities and the labour market.

Table 8-1 Graduates' opinions on positive attitudes regarding VET in general schools, community and market according to gender and locality

	Total	Gender		Context-relevant vulnerable locality					Remaining WB
		Male	Female	Gaza	EJ inside the wall	Jerusalem outside the wall	Aghwar-Jordan-Valley	Adjacent to the Wall/seam zone	
General Schools (teachers and principals)	74.8%	71.8%	82.1%	94.3%	83.9%	60.0%	66.7%	71.4%	70.8%
Community (local community and society in general)	59.2%	58.7%	59.9%	63.4%	61.3%	73.3%	88.9%	79.6%	55.1%
Market (employers and social partners)	47.5%	41.9%	61.4%	45.8%	54.8%	26.7%	11.1%	58.3%	47.7%

These percentages were higher among marginalised groups and females. However, negative attitudes were reported more frequently by those in extreme deep poverty.

It was striking that the attitude of the community within the marginalised localities was much more positive than in the rest of the WB. This indicates how the marginalised perceive VET as a contributor to the development of youth and the community, as well as to reducing marginalisation. More students agreed that general schools in Gaza and East Jerusalem inside the wall had positive attitudes. This was also reflected by the Director of the MOE Jerusalem Directorate:

In Jerusalem, there is a large drop-out from schools, due to the lack of schools to accommodate and absorb them, also because of the temptations of the Israeli labour market, (...) so the orientation to vocational education will protect this category of this deviation, will give them skills in their hands.

This result matches the previous finding regarding the effect of VET on empowering communities and weak businesses in marginalised localities. This community attitude represents an enabling role in encouraging youth to enrol in VET, since the community respects VET and sees its value.

With regard to market perception, the difference among localities expressed by VET graduates reflects the differences in the markets the graduates work in. A higher percentage of graduates from East Jerusalem and the ones living adjacent to the wall experienced a positive market perception, linked to their access to the Israeli labour market.

Negative Attitudes Limiting VET Learners' Choices- Passive Agency

The findings have revealed cases where students were enrolled against their will based on parents' or school decisions, as noted by students in group discussions. It was explained by management, teachers and counsellors of VET institutes, that some were pushed towards VET due to the economic status of the family who could not pay for higher education, others by the general school on account of low grades, or by parents with restrictive social attitudes pushing women into VET rather than higher education, due to women-only VET institutes or to save resources for the male member of the family, especially if the family has limited resources.

The notion of choice was discussed by Kabeer (1999), as presented earlier, with passive agency defined in Box-2 as “action taken when there is little choice”. Here, the students’ agency is passive and this affects their motivation and attitude towards VET.

The restricted choice for those with low grades, those in deep poverty, females or others who enrolled against their will had its effect on their aspiration, as the results above indicate, affecting their attitude towards VET. Within such cases, students have a passive form of agency, which affects their motivation and attitude towards VET especially if they were not part of the decision-making process. These graduates had a negative attitude that decreased their ability to achieve their aspirations.

Whereas 60% perceived VET positively, 17% perceived it negatively. Some of those with negative attitude could be the ones with passive agency.

Institutes’ Policies and Measures as Enabling Factors and Challenges

Analysis of each institutes’ enabling factors has to consider rules, resources, the different tasks, activities and responsibilities, the distribution of skills and capabilities, the authority and control as well as divisions of claims among the different groups, so as to analyse if inequality is reduced or reproduced, as noted by Kabeer (1994) as part of institutional analysis. This provides an understanding of the work done towards reducing inequalities by these institutes through interventions.

The analysis links up with the political economy account and Brown, Green and Lauder’s (2001) call for additional policy measures on technical skills, for “Social Transformation” and an increased role for social partners and the government in both the demand and supply side of skills upgrading. The discussion will also be linked with the international debate on VET institutions and policy (McGrath & Lugg, 2012; Akoojee, 2012).

The section on institutes investigates ways of enabling institutes’ role in respect to VET students and graduates in general and for the marginalised in expanding choices, enhancing empowerment outcomes through diminishing the disempowerment effects, improving achievements and functioning and enlarging youth’s achievement of aspirations.

VET Institutes' Policies and Measures for Enabling Increased Access to VET

During interviews, management, directorates and policymakers reflected on policies and measures taken by their institutes to support the marginalised according to their interest and mandate. Moreover, students reflected on these measures during the group discussions and in the survey.

Policies and measures that had positive effects on access of students to VET and the accomplishment of education/training were sub-divided into a) the ones that encourage enrolment and b) ones encouraging awareness, counselling and additional support to facilitate enrolment and retention.

a) Policies and measures that encourage enrolment

Policies and measures that encourage enrolment were related to each VET provider and its target groups. Graduates perceived that providers serving marginalised groups offered relevant policies

Table 8-2 Distribution of VET graduates according to policies and measures for access and retention of students to VET and according to VET provider

	Total	MOE	MOL	MOSA	Semi-Governmental	UNRWA	NGO
Priority in enrolment- criteria	60.1%	67.7%	30.6%	86.0%	46.9%	75.0%	59.5%
Fees scholarships or dues exemption	34.6%	14.6%	14.5%	95.7%	3.1%	66.9%	22.3%
Payment of Transportation costs	14.6%	5.2%	2.2%	71.0%	3.1%	11.0%	12.4%
Assistance in obtaining access permits	4.3%	3.1%	.5%	6.5%	.0%	3.7%	11.6%
Providing non-financial assistance for enrolment (food, cloths, personal kits...)	33.7%	17.8%	8.6%	90.3%	.0%	71.3%	20.7%
Link to unions or associations to claim decent work conditions	17.1%	8.5%	32.3%	6.5%	6.3%	16.2%	19.0%
Link to Human rights institutes for claiming access	13.9%	6.3%	34.6%	1.1%	3.1%	8.8%	11.7%

For example, MOSA was targeting vulnerable families provided for through the social protection system, and the sons and daughters of these families through its centres. This included PWD, drop-outs and juveniles. Hence, most of its graduates mentioned priority in enrolment, fees exemption, payment of transportation costs and non-financial assistance as part of the measures that facilitated their enrolment. This was reflected in

the discussion with a MOSA official, who mentioned that MOSA provided a transportation allowance and a meal at the centres, and paid a symbolic allowance for student attendance. He also explained the policy for enrolment of the marginalised as:

Although our SRCs provides VTC, it's part of our mission in providing rehabilitation and protection for troubled children and youth from marginalised families, both males and females. In this way, they are protected from being subjected to violence and abuse, and from possible delinquency. (...) Admission criteria rely on two main ones: 1) the social and economic status of the student and the families/beneficiaries, we receive through referral from the directorates, 2) they undergo a test, we also accept other students with social and economic cases even if not referred through the directorates, and we accept drop-outs or potential drop outs, because the general direction of our centres is to serve the different marginalised groups requiring the service. Most of these students are drop-outs or potential drop-outs, or troubled children with families that are suffering difficult social and economic conditions.

Similar findings were illustrated by UNRWA graduates, most of whom mentioned priority in enrolment, fees exemption and non-financial assistance as part of the measures that facilitated their enrolment. Priority and scholarship percentages were further increased to 93% among Gaza graduates and to 86% and 75% respectively among women VTC graduates, while all Gaza VTC were provided with non-financial assistance for enrolment. This was reflected in the discussion with the UNRWA Head of Education in the WB:

UNRWA's trade vocation (VT) targets youth refugees, especially school drop-outs, or those who could not succeed in secondary school. Gender is divided for VT between KTC for males and the Ramallah Women Training Centre (RWTC) for females, although college level RWTC is mixed. UNRWA VT addresses the poor according to SHC data and criterion. (...) For refugees, we have boarding facilities and we offer free education. Justice and equality are the basis of the admission criteria. Percentages of intakes represent the refugees geographically, and distributed over the different specializations, we make sure not to have many students from the same place in one specialization, so that their employment is better. (...) From 2000-2008, the situation was very hard in the WB; 670 permanent checkpoints divided the WB. We had to increase intakes into accommodation for all levels, as part of the Policy to ensure access.

As for NGOs, 59.5% of graduates were given priority in enrolment, while this percentage jumped to 90% for graduates of NECC in Gaza and 76.4% in Jericho and Jordan Valley, and around one in three graduates from the same institutes were also provided with scholarships or given exemptions and 73% were provided with non-financial assistance by YMCA in Jericho.

NGOs also have the second highest results regarding “Link to unions or associations to claim decent work conditions” and “Link to human rights institutes for claiming access”. NGOs were the highest in getting permits, especially the ones operating in East Jerusalem. The LWF-Vocational Training Programme(VTP) director mentioned the provision of support measures to attract and support trainees while they are enrolled according to the group:

As we integrated women we have special measures and support to ensure attracting them, reducing any drop-outs (...). We integrate special needs and provide them with support to continue their VET. We also have a programme with juveniles to integrate them in VTC in cooperation with social affairs that they provide the extra support. We also provide full and partial scholarships for the poor, and address marginalised communities through our outreach programme.

As for the Semi-Governmental, 85.7% of IIO graduates indicated “priority in enrolment” as a measure that assisted them in enrolment. This is related to their role in working with drop-outs and potential drop-outs in Jerusalem.

Two thirds of MOE VET graduates were provided with priority in enrolment, which allowed them to get access to VET. Although the selection criteria of MOE students are concerned with the ability of the student to undergo VET, without giving official priority for the marginalised, there are certain measures and procedures that attract the poor and the marginalised, as noted by a VSS Director:

Procedures that we follow for the needy student: fees are 60 shekels [less than 17 USD] and whoever brings the paper from MOSA [specifying that they are needy] is exempted (approximately 5% of students). Our students who suffer from transportation or we know about his situation also we offer him an exemption. In difficult situations, we offer him financial support through our relationship. We provide an exemption from the premium for girls.

Priority in enrolment rate was reported by all graduates of Deir-El-Balah school in Gaza, and 90% for women graduates from Gaza VSS, as these areas are serving marginalised communities, where institutes try to further support the applicants from these communities, as noted by the Director of VSS for girls:

The school serves the south of Hebron, poor people, with little cash in the hand, they can't afford to pay transportation for girls, it affects enrolment. (...) If we are able to provide scholarships for the vocational students, in way where, for example, people can donate to cover up part of the transportations, 700 NIS [less than 200

USD], which in return gives parents and students an incentive, and we are working on it.

MOL does not collect any fees from students so financial support is irrelevant for its students. The Nablus VTC director noted:

There are several reasons for students enrolling in VTCs, such as the lack of restrictions on age and academic level that helps increase in enrolment. The education is free because we believe that education is a right for all. We give enrolment priority to marginalized groups and taking into account the geographical distribution of the places for the benefit of society

As expected, and in accordance with their mandate, the MOL is providing “Link to unions or associations to claim decent work conditions” as specified by one third of the graduates. MOL links its students before graduation with labour offices. Moreover, MOL provides “Link to Human rights institutes for claiming access”, especially for marginalised localities (98% of Qalqilia VTC students).

NGO graduates also agreed that their institute provided link to unions or associations to claim decent working conditions. NECC Gaza noted their agreements with workers’ unions to provide students with awareness sessions for their rights at work. LWF-VTC mentioned their effort in advocating for WB students to access the VTC in Jerusalem, and mentioned their link to human rights institutes for this issue.

It was obvious that institutes with special target groups as, MOSA, UNRWA, NGO and Semi-Governmental, had a clear message for the marginalised, giving priority in the selection, and providing financial and non-financial support. These measures were increased in institutes working in marginalised localities or addressing women, or provided for certain groups within an institute.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour considers part of their mandate as being to provide free accessible education to all students that want to enrol. The criteria do not have clear priority for the marginalised. However, institutes serving areas with a high prevalence of marginalised groups did seek to focus particularly on their needs. There is also growing attention to female enrolments. Indeed, the acting DG of VET in the MOE noted how increasing awareness, spaces and targeting females

would increase students at the VSS in general. As well as female-only institutes, other MOE institutes that include females have 10-30% female students.

MOLVET director explained that the Ministry's acceptance criteria were that students must complete tenth grade, be above sixteen years old, and be able to read and write. He further elaborated that some institutes did have particular concerns with enrolling other groups such as PWD and unemployed university graduates.

MOL managed to attract females, as they constituted almost half of its student body. Most MOL students were poor or enrolling for social reasons, in addition to having an interest in their vocation. Some were university graduates unable to find work.

It is important to keep a balance through clear targeting policies, so as those who took the opportunity earlier do not take the places of marginalised youth with no other opportunity or choice, as explained above by the director.

Another challenge in terms of providing access for females has been in the limited and engendered professions provided for females. Prior to 1995 females were only admitted to “feminine” professions, such as sewing and beautician, and subsequently secretary joined at later stage. In 1996 women were allowed access to Electronics in the YMCA for the first time and in the year 2000 to Telecommunications in the LWF for the first time.²⁶ The MOE upscaled the experience to its schools and now most of its schools are training in these two fields, and the MOL followed a few years later with the addition of IT (Hilal, 2009a, 2013b). Since the fieldwork, new vocations were added, and are planned to be added, and the number of females is increasing.

Female students highlighted the limited professions available for females. On the other hand, male students were not allowed in some of the female only professions. The QVTC director mentioned the importance of being a women director in attracting female students. I can confirm this from my leadership of two VET institutes that had been male-oriented.

²⁶ I am proud to have led the two institutes in this integration with my background in engineering in the field of Electronics with focus on Telecommunications; of course, both opportunities were based on needs assessments.

As for students with special needs, MOSA indicated that they were targeting this group, and others also had 3-5% of students who are PWD. Some were planning to increase their presence in their institutes.

b) Awareness, counselling and additional support to facilitate enrolment and retention, as assessed by the graduates

These policies and measures are illustrated in the table below. It can be noted that such measures are provided by various VET providers and, according to the graduates, this has facilitated access and retention.

Table 8-3 Distribution of VET graduates according to policies and measures on awareness, counselling and additional support according to VET provider

	Total	MOE	MOL	MOSA	Semi-Governmental	UNRWA	NGO
Providing additional targeted individual and group counselling	58.7%	45.5%	57.0%	87.1%	18.8%	68.4%	59.5%
Provide awareness and assertive sessions	67.8%	57.8%	76.2%	86.0%	31.3%	67.4%	66.1%
Provide awareness for the family and/or interaction to support student/trainee	43.8%	40.3%	55.4%	45.2%	25.0%	36.8%	43.0%
infrastructure rehabilitation	28.7%	16.8%	42.5%	22.6%	31.3%	29.4%	29.2%
Additional educational and training support	24.7%	17.3%	23.7%	25.8%	43.8%	27.9%	28.1%
Others	1.8%	2.4%	1.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.6%

Most MOSA graduates agreed that awareness, counselling and assertiveness facilitated their enrolment and retention. This is expected as MOSA sees its centres as rehabilitation centres, and employs a social worker and a psychologist in each centre.

Additionally, a little less than half of MOSA graduates agreed that there was provision of awareness for families to support trainees, and one in four agreed that they provide additional educational and training support. Second to MOSA in this regard, was UNRWA.

Again, as part of UNRWA's work with various departments that provide services to refugee families according to their mandate, they provided awareness, counselling and assertiveness. More than one in three graduates agreed that UNRWA provided awareness for families to support trainees, and more than one in four agreed that they provide additional educational and training support.

NGO graduates noted similar results to UNRWA. The YMCA counsellor emphasised the importance of providing systematic counselling and guidance to students. The LWF-VTP counsellor explained the special measures taken to attract and retain female students in terms of providing counselling, engaging with the families, providing scholarships, and carrying out awareness campaigns. The highest percentage receiving this support was noted by the Semi-Governmental” graduates, however. This is to be expected though, since they deal with special groups such as ex-detainees and drop-outs.

Most MOL graduates agreed that the awareness and assertiveness sessions provided assisted their enrolment and retention. In addition, more than one in two graduates agreed that counselling and interaction with families facilitated their enrolment and retention, thereby revealing an important measure that responds to one of the challenges faced by students in enrolling. A student in one of the focus groups mentioned that;

[In order to encourage students to enrol in VET, institutes need] To educate parents to help their children to their choice is important, and let them love their choice

More than 94% of students at Qalqilia VTC cited the institute’s awareness, counselling, assertiveness and family support. Moreover, 77% of Rafah VTC students in Gaza graduates reported being provided with additional counselling, and over 90% of graduates in Beit-Jala mentioned receiving awareness and assertiveness and family support. All these areas are marginalised localities, indicating the additional measures practiced by the VET provider when they are operating in marginalised localities. Similar results were also reported by MOE graduates, especially those from marginalised localities.

During discussion with students it was also noted that the vocational school environment is attractive to students in comparison with the general education environment, since the maximum in one class is 16 to 20, as opposed to over 35 in the general schools, together with the presence of workshops and laboratories. These were incentives for them to enter vocational education, a point that also emerged from the survey data.

In addition to the above policies, the director of a VTC in Jerusalem mentioned the importance of being lenient and flexible for youth in Jerusalem especially those most affected by the wider context:

We try to build-up their attendance commitment, but can understand the difficult situation they are in, if a delay happened due to circumstances. (E.g. a student once was absent because he could not leave the house, his mum wanted to go to hospital, and if there is no one in the house, settlers could squat in it).

It is apparent from data already presented that VET was able to attract and serve the marginalised. Nonetheless, the targeted approach of VET providers linked to their mandate and mission, certain providers served the marginalised more than others, as the table below indicates.

Table 8-4 Marginalised graduates according to VET provider

	Under poverty line	Refugees	Females	Area C	Below 50-65%
MOE	58%	25.0%	22.8%	16.5%	45.1%
MOL	57%	38.0%	58.8%	26.0%	81.7%
MOSA	89%	54.8%	11.8%	33.3%	89.2%
Semi-Governmental	68%	18.8%	.0%	35.0%	67.7%
UNRWA	73%	92.6%	25.7%	31.3%	54.8%
NGO	63%	41.2%	15.8%	34.0%	61.3%
overall	66%	46.2%	28.8%	26.9%	64.7%

Evidently, operating in a marginalised locality increased the ability of the VET provider to address the marginalised within that locality. Each is providing different sorts of support for students: access to permits, linking with Human Rights organisations for claiming access (Jerusalem and near the wall areas), distributing non-financial aid for youths and their families, as in Gaza, and finding ways to obtain scholarships and transport support. The directors of these institutes are always planning and acting to address the access and retention of the students in these areas, as planned by the Salfeet VSS director, and requested by the MOE:

We must help students and teachers with free transportation to get to school securely in the province since the neighbouring areas are exposed to attacks from settlers and there were several incidents (...). The supply of transportation has happened previously in the Ministry of Education where it provided free buses to Deir Al-Balah in Gaza [in other context related circumstances].

Another measure mentioned by institutes to increase access for the marginalised was outreach short courses in marginalised localities or for certain groups. This was noted by

various institutes. Some such courses were initiated by the institutes themselves, while others were externally supported. UNRWA is noted for targeting females and unreachable refugees in Area C, and PWD.

The YMCA mentioned courses targeted at the Bedouin communities, while the LWF-VTC mentioned targeting special groups in East Jerusalem such as juveniles and unemployed youth. The LWF-VTCR was established in 2003 to reach youth from marginalised localities through mobile training.

Results differed according to institutes, linked to their mission and vision and groups they are targeting. Those targeting the marginalised, working in marginalised localities or serving females were providing enabling policies for access and retention more than other institutes under the same ministry, realising that they had to take such measures to serve their target groups.

VET Institutes' Policies and Measures for Enabling Increased Access to Work after Graduation

During interviews, management, directorates and policymakers reflected on the policies and measures taken by institutes to allow graduates to access work and develop after graduation. Graduates also indicated through the survey their agreement with the support measures put in place for them both before and after graduation.

A higher percentage of graduates of MOL institutes reported that their institutes provided policies and measures to access the market, which is relevant to the Ministry of Labour's role as being responsible for employment. This was followed by NGOs serving the marginalised which were trying to support them to support themselves, followed by UNRWA who is also serving the refugees. Indeed, the highest percentage of graduates provided with first job experience was from UNRWA. Two thirds of MOSA graduates mentioned that their institutes were providing WBL, and one third mentioned that MOSA provided support in the form of a first job experience.

Table 8-5 Distribution of VET graduates according to policies and measures for access to the labour market and graduates' development after graduation, according to VET provider

	Total	MOE	MOL	MOSA	Semi-Governmental	UNRWA	NGO
Provide Work-Based Learning before graduation	61.7%	57.5%	57.5%	65.6%	25.0%	53.7%	90.1%
Provide graduates support to first job experience	26.0%	18.7%	11.8%	39.8%	3.1%	45.6%	33.1%
Link graduates to job opportunity	17.9%	6.8%	34.4%	7.6%	6.3%	16.3%	22.3%
Provide upgrading technical training for graduates	16.7%	9.4%	35.5%	2.2%	.0%	11.9%	19.8%
Provide link to Business development services for graduates	12.7%	5.7%	31.2%	1.1%	3.1%	5.9%	14.0%
Provide link to banks or Micro-finance institutes for graduates	9.6%	2.6%	29.0%	1.1%	3.1%	4.4%	5.0%
Provide awareness on Labour laws	30.7%	22.0%	59.1%	11.8%	15.6%	21.6%	28.1%
Provide links to LMIS and /or Labour offices	26.4%	15.1%	53.8%	5.4%	3.1%	21.5%	28.9%
Provide counselling prior to graduation	47.2%	36.8%	66.7%	35.5%	40.6%	44.1%	48.8%
Provide counselling after graduation	40.9%	32.8%	63.4%	24.7%	6.3%	39.0%	42.1%
Training students and/or graduates on employment skills and search for work	37.5%	28.5%	54.8%	21.5%	21.9%	41.2%	36.4%
Follow-up of graduates after graduation	19.4%	6.8%	39.8%	2.2%	15.6%	17.6%	24.8%
Conducting graduates tracking survey after graduation	11.4%	2.6%	24.2%	3.2%	.0%	9.6%	17.5%
Linking fresh graduates with Alumni Association/ or ex-graduates	8.4%	3.2%	14.0%	2.2%	.0%	10.3%	12.4%
Others	5.9%	1.4%	4.9%	.0%	.0%	16.7%	8.3%

With regard to WBL and first job experience, different systems were adopted by the VET institutes, but all trained within the market before graduation, with different institutionalisation levels and duration. For instance, UNRWA KTC and YMCA provided a second-year internship, while HISS and LWF provided school-based apprenticeships with dual-based training, and the remaining provide traineeships (Gabršček et al., 2015). Graduates noted the more systematic support provided by the NGOs such as HISS, and institutes in marginalised localities and serving the marginalised, such as MOSA, QVTC, Salfet VSS and Dura VSS.

Training within the market before graduation enabled a higher percentage of employment than school-based training, as shown by statistics prepared by the LWF (2015). HISS adopted the system following a funded initiative and found high student demand for WBL compared to the limited capacity within the centre. UNRWA and YMCA found

this internship approach to be an important solution since it both served to share the financial burden with the private sector, and opened spaces for more students in their centre.

The adoption of WBL was highly appreciated by graduates, parents and employers as it further enhanced the employment of graduates and the relevance of the provided training, as mentioned below by an employer;

Training in a company before graduation completes the picture; students are distinguished after graduation. (...) I respect the follow up LWF does. It supports youth so that they are able to prove themselves.

Some institutes mentioned the importance of such a system, especially for female graduates, allowing them to get good jobs with good salaries when they graduate. The YMCA-VTC indicated that this policy helped to overcome some of the social restrictions faced by females within employment, and change the attitude of the families towards women's work when in companies under the supervision of the VET institute.

The MOSA official elaborated on the traineeship format that they used, whereby they sent students for two months at the end of the training, for training within the marketplace. He noted that the majority were able to find jobs after graduation in the same place they had trained.

The WBL adopted by other institutes tended to be less systematic, although they were looking for a systematic approach to apprenticeship training, as noted by a VTC director;

Apprenticeship policy is an important policy. (...) We need to adopt it, (...) currently students are trained in the labour market for a period of just one month before graduation.

However, some MOL-VTCs provided a more systematic approach than the MOL policy of one month's training before graduation, as illustrated by a VTC director;

We have a good relationship with the Electricity Union, which helped a lot of students and graduates in the development of specializations and creating employment opportunities. The union also helps in providing field training for two months to strengthen their experience under their supervision, to address the fear of employer exploitation of the trainees, which still remains. (...) Field training in the marketplace before graduation helps graduates to find jobs.

Financing first-job experience for the graduates is usually funded by projects. It was noted to have assisted graduates, especially females, in finding employment within the

same place of first-job experience (LWF, 2016), the teachers explained its importance in setting graduates on their career path rather than being attracted to black-market jobs and their higher salaries.

More than a third of MOL and NGO graduates agreed that their institutes had a policy of linking graduates to job opportunities. Teachers played an important role in this measure, although this was not formalised. The YMCA-VTC management noted:

Employment rates are 85-90%, we help to employ graduates and motivate students: YMCA teaches, trains and finds employment for students. The percentage of graduates working is the highest among VET institutions.

MOSA also provided support in employment, and reflected this in its structure, as the MOSA official noted:

Each Social Rehabilitation Centre (SRC) contains four sections: Employment, Diagnostic (guidance) and Training, Social Research, and Production. There is a social worker in the centre and a psychologist to consider the social needs of the students and families. (...) One of the most important policies of the centre is to help graduates to find employment. This is done by the Employment Department at the Social Rehabilitation Centre. The Supervision and Employment department does the supervision of the field training conducted in the labour market in the different sites

The MOL-VTCs benefit from their relationship with local labour offices. This was confirmed by more than half of the MOL-VTC graduates interviewed.

One in three of the MOL-VTC graduates had also received upgraded technical training, and one in five of NGO graduates. 71% of those residing by the wall have been provided with this measure.

Graduates were also being assisted to start their own business by linking them to financial and non-financial institutes, and to business development services, banks or micro-finance institute. However, less than one third of MOL-VTC graduates agreed that their institute was providing these measures and 14% of the NGO graduates. Figures are lower in other institutes. The LWF-VTCR management and teachers elaborated on their measures to ensure graduates' access to their own work:

We provide technical support after graduation, we assist them in all info related to opening their own business, and we keep the relationship with the graduate. We provide

vocational counselling through a counsellor and the trainer and the management link with organizations and institutes to get funds for graduates to open their own business

These measures are important for enabling graduates who want to start own work, although under-provided. They were suggested by VET institutes' students, where in each group between one and two thirds wanted to set their own business but needed institutional support. YWCA-VTC management noted:

One success story is with a woman [graduate] who got in contact with our centre in Jalazoun [refugee camp]; we helped her to get a loan and open her own business. She opened her business and today she has 10 employees. She could do that because our training include gender, entrepreneurial and business management training, so she could open her own business and manage it.

As for pre-graduation preparation, awareness and counselling, Gaza-NGO NECC management detailed the measures they undertook to support students' preparation for the labour market. Some were done by the institute staff, others through cooperation with other institutes, or with staff from their organisation working in other programmes:

We provide life skills sessions through (...) [CSO organisation]. We provide awareness sessions on women's rights and gender for all male and female students, mothers are happy about it. We provide health awareness sessions through our health staff [the organisation operates in addition to the VTC], especially for females. We provide awareness on tolerance and acceptance of the other, as youth suffer from pressure of the context and poverty and are violent, such awareness is important for them. (...) We prepare students for the market: we provide them with employment skills.

Moreover, two out of three graduates from MOL-VTCs, to one in three graduates in some providers noted that their institutes provided career counselling prior to graduation.

An MOL-VTC director mentioned the role of labour offices in raising awareness with regard to labour laws:

Of the positive factors that help graduates are meetings for career awareness that is carried out by the MOL (...). In these meetings, the graduates are introduced to rights and duties at work and the importance of inspection of the wages

59% of the MOL-VTC graduates recognised this measure, double that of NGOs graduates, and around triple graduates from the other providers.

Most VET institutes have integrated an introduction to entrepreneurial training within their training by adopting the ILO Know About Business (KAB) programme. The Qalqilia VTC director noted the importance of such integration, as well as the integration of leadership skills:

The entrepreneurial education programme benefits girls more and the course helps girls who are training in secretarial and sewing. Leadership is given through the training program with duration of 100 hours of training.

Some VET institutes had started to provide post-graduation measures such as follow-up of graduates, counselling after graduation, alumni and a tracking survey. The frequency of these interventions varies from occasionally to annually, in the cases of UNRWA and LWF.

NECC management mentioned:

We have an interactive relation with stakeholders: chambers and PFI, and we follow-up our graduates for 3-4 years. We assist our students to find allocation for training before graduation and our graduates to find jobs (...). We provide graduates with upgrading courses. We have links with organisations providing projects for TVET in Gaza.

Such measures were mainly conducted by MOL, NGOs, UNRWA and those institutes working with marginalised locality or addressing some marginalised groups.

With regard to the relevance of VET programmes within the labour market, VET institutes indicated the measures taken in linking with the labour market, identifying skills gaps and developing their training programmes accordingly, so that students can benefit at the end.

With regard to communication and links with the community and labour market, many institutes highlighted their engagement with community-based organisations and CSOs to engage them in providing awareness sessions and life skills training, while others engaged governmental bodies such as the Civil Defence and police department (regarding the fight against drugs and cybercrime) as elaborated through interviews.

The MOL-VTCs and the acting TVET DG at the MOE explained cooperation at the regional level through the local employment and training councils (LETs), which includes MOL-VTCs, VSS and social partners as well as officials from the governorates.

With regard to participation, engagement of students and a culture of rights, VET institutes were active in developing the VET they provided, delivering access to students for VET and for work afterwards, and in developing the training and addressing skills gaps. Nonetheless, promoting the culture of rights within the institute and engaging students in decision-making is still missing among most, except for the NGOs, as the NECC management elaborated:

We have a Child Protection Policy: all staff sign to it, we announce it to students, and we have complaints system, with three boxes and access of students to it in the three centres.

The LWF-VTCR management and teachers have elaborated further on student and staff engagement:

We discuss concepts and policies. (...) Everybody participates in planning, staff, teachers and trainers; we prepared our strategic planning through participation in discussions that are reflected in the plan. We have meetings among the staff and we discuss all matters. We have a teachers committee that serves as a union; we were supported and welcomed by the management. (...) We need to provide better channels for complaints of students; we are working on a complaints system.

They adopted a complaints system in December 2015 and this is part of the strategic plan. NECC and the LWF-VTP have adopted measures related to listening to the voice of students. Other VET institutes have different ways of listening to students through teachers, but not yet in a systematic way. UNRWA highlighted engaging teachers in the process through various measures that help to enhance the environment, improve the quality of education and reflect back on supportive measures taken. With regard to differences in addressing the marginalised, when looking in detail into the institutes of each provider, the results indicated variances according to locality and target group marginalisation. All graduates of Dura Vocational School for Females indicated that they were provided with work-based learning before graduation and counselling prior to graduation, while most indicated that they were provided with support in the form of first-job experience, counselling after graduation and training on employment skills and searching for work. These results were much higher than the total and MOE figures. Similar programmes were also in evidence at Hebron and Salfet.

VET Models Linking Measures with Policies

As clearly noted above, UNRWA, MOSA and NGOs, and, to some extent, the Semi-Governmental, have clear target groups, and have developed policies, measures and processes around their vision and targeting. This was not the case for the MOEHE and the MOL, as ministries that are accountable to provide education and training generally, they believe that education and training is open to all, so it is left to the institute itself and the management to set its own criteria or measure, which could reflect negatively on access for the marginalised.

As was evident from chapter five, the marginalised found refuge and an opportunity for career development through VET, yet the MOE's intentional targeting of "smart" students (although they only make up 10% of their student body) could overtake the opportunities available for the poor and the marginalised. MOL was also proud of the university graduates that apply to their training. Although capacity in these centres is double or four times that of the other centres, still university graduates constitute around 10% of its students' body. This situation was not found in NGOs or UNRWA, however, since they sought to save space for those that did not have such an opportunity, for them this group can be served through tailor made short training courses, so as not to limit the opportunities or spaces for the marginalised youth.

Some of the ministries' VET institutes were working in context-affected localities or serving youths from these localities. It was evident that all such institutes had responded with varying degrees to this status by extra measures. Nevertheless, these measures were not necessarily translated into formal institutional policies.

In the next couple of pages, YMCA and the LWF are taken as case studies to understand how they attempt to address the strategic issues raised and how this is reflected within their own rules and system to become an embedded policy with responding measures that are monitored to be fulfilled. These findings resonate with the earlier discussion of gaps between rules and practices embedded in norms and attitudes. They also revisit earlier discussions regarding the importance of institutes giving a voice to and supporting the transformative empowerment of male and female youth. Here I build on Kabeer's (1995)

work on poverty in Asia, where she noted how some NGOs adopted a process-led approach to policy design through closer contact with “reality of poverty”.

YMCA and LWF started to provide vocational training following the plight of the Palestinian people in 1948 when hundreds of thousands became refugees. Since then, they have served tens of thousands of refugees and those in need, based on their Christian values of serving the poor and the needy. In 1967, following the occupation of the WB, they and other NGOs continued the work of service delivery in the absence of a state. Then in 1994, following the Oslo Accords and the PA resuming responsibility over education and training, they were both active in developing the TVET system, as part of their contribution to state building. The deterioration of the status after the year 2000, has created a new status, as explained earlier. Both organisations have responded by reaching out to new segments of the communities that are hit by the occupation measures. YMCA addressed the Bedouins through specific measures, and LWF started the VTC in Ramallah as an opportunity for WB youth unable to reach Jerusalem following its closure.

YMCA started integrating females for the first time in Palestine in Electronics in 1996, and the MOE followed by up-scaling this experience to all its schools. The same happened after LWF introduced Telecommunications for young women. Both were integrated into male-oriented VTC through certain processes of informing, coaching the trained girls and women, providing support measures including exemption from fees, scholarships, boarding and transportation in some cases, providing counselling and support for them and their families and accompaniment to the market as well as support in employment. The awareness of male trainees was of importance as well.

The most important part in this is the integration of this adaptation into their strategic plans and internal plans and structures. LWF began using strategic plans in 2000, and is now at the end of its fourth strategic plan. It has an internal monitoring and evaluation system and a Board that oversees its policies and ensures that it fulfils the strategic plan, the mandate and the vision. LWF went through phases of exploring new challenges and opportunities and then adjusting its provision. YMCA developed a strategic plan in the year 2010 focusing on serving the youth in Jericho and the Jordan Valley, as well as the

needy from all over the WB through its boarding section. It has increased its counselling and assistance portion of the programme, provided support for the needy, and conducted outreach courses. All were part of its plan and with main focus to reach the needy.

The LWF-VTP mission statement is:

Inspired by God's love for humanity, LWF World Service responds to and challenges the causes and consequences of human suffering and poverty. The LWF Jerusalem VTP empowers Palestinian youth through the provision of relevant vocational training aimed at gainful employment which corresponds to their aspirations and contributes to economic and social development in Palestine. (LWF,2012)

Although the LWF specified youth at large, a focus groups identified that:

The LWF-VTP priority Focus Group is young female and male Palestinians seeking skills for gainful employment with special regard for youth from marginalized and vulnerable poor families, young women, and refugees/IDPs.

Part of the East Jerusalem YMCA-VTC mission statement states:

(...) As a not-for-profit community-based centre, it aspires to develop youth with a healthy spirit, mind and body based on Christian values. The EJ YMCA-VTC mission is to serve the community by providing market relevant vocational training and life skills for the poor and marginalized youth- both males and females- to give them equal chances and access to the Palestinian labour market, to become active members in their communities and in the Palestinian society. (EJ-YMCA, 2009)

The human-centred mission statements and identification of target groups by both NGOs guided them to their strategic objectives, actions and measures taken. It has enabled their serving of the poor and marginalised male and female youth.

Flexibility in addressing context-related challenges, enabled both to integrate the measures taken within their own plans and policies, such as with the establishment of LWF-VTC in Ramallah in 2004, which was not a strategic plan objective but came as a response to the situation in Ramallah, and was later integrated in the plan, with increased resources and an enabled structure.

Flexibility enabled them to adopted different modes of training, reaching out for new marginalised youth. In this regard, up till the year 2000 LWF had a centre in Jerusalem providing two years of training for young men. In 2000 females were integrated, and in

2010 further groups were added by introducing new fields of training through one-year programmes to cater for female drop-out rates. This has helped, as internal reports and documents show. Moreover, the adoption of short courses has added new groups such as juveniles, unemployed youth, youths in marginalised localities. The adaptation of school-based apprenticeship and out-reach training has added new groups some of whom were traditional apprentices, and others were NEET.

The work-based learning mode successfully trialled in Ramallah was assessed and replicated in the two-year system in Jerusalem. Adding different modes allowed more comprehensive outreach to the marginalised. Nevertheless, they kept the quality of training as one target for their work, through skills-matching and technology upgrading. One graduate noted;

We can find a job easily in our field of training. We use technology, much better than other workers. We benefited a lot from our VET training and we see it and admit it.

Families also appreciated the training received and could identify the positive aspects of the work-based learning elements that would lead to employment:

LWF is different than other schools, they give education period for the basics then they send the students to the market before graduation. Other students don't know anything about the market. From the beginning, they should educate them and train them even for a short period then send them to the market (...) LWF should expand it [the VTC in Ramallah] to reach all the governorates, and repeat the model.

As for YMCA, the impact upon the refugee community felt within an area served for over 60 years was noted by representatives from the WB and Aqbat-Jaber Refugee Camps;

The YMCA is working since 1948 in vocational education and training, most dedicated professionals in Refugee camps trained there, and more than 70,000 have trained there till now. It had a big role in the absorption of refugees in the community through work.

Both institutes had added support services such as pre- and post-measures in addition to VET provision. YMCA started to provide vocational counselling and guidance in schools in the early nineties and to provide preparation for graduates to start their own business through financial and non-financial services, all while LWF is providing pre- and post-services within their VT programme.

The focus these institutes had around human-led mission and the flexibility they had working within the non-formal field of training enabled them to serve marginalised youth, and to redirect their focus if needed. Their ability to sustain their measures taken through a bottom-up approach was apparent as they reintegrated lessons learned and adopted measures into policies, and spread the effect, again by focusing on their target groups, beneficiaries or right-holders, who are the marginalised.

Challenges at The Institutional /Provider Levels

Assessing challenges to enabling institutes, challenges to rules, resources, policies and participation is important so as to assess institute's ability to transfer lessons learned from the measures adopted by the institutes back into the policies and the system.

Hence challenges to the enabling role of institutes are:

1. Clear targeting

The Ministry of Education, part of the educational system, has a parallel focus on higher education, while the Ministry of Labour is linked with work and MOSA with the rehabilitation of special groups. Other organisations, (UNRWA and NGOs) target the marginalised and aim to facilitate students to reach their aspirations and enhance their well-being, as clearly stated in LWF-VTP's mission statement.

Hence MOL has attracted all those that want to work regardless of their backgrounds, while MOE has three tracks, the tawjihi one that they want to attract the smart students and would lead to HE, the applied track and the school-based apprenticeships, attracting those that want to gain certificates and would go to work, or some who could not make it to tawjihi and had to take the applied approach. The current policies are all designed to support the tawjihi track, yet it is important to address the other tracks as they attract the marginalised. One of the VSS directors mentioned the importance of designing the policies for the system;

It is necessary for the Ministry to clarify what is the vision and the message about what we want from graduates (Should they have academic or vocational careers?). If it is vocational then they should have increased practical skills and not decrease them, and there is a contradiction between the vision of the Ministry and the concept of TVET and reality.

2. Resources

The limited resources of the PA affect the equipping and development of the VET institutes, as well as the provision of relevant human resources. This was specifically raised by the governmental institutes, as noted by a VTC teacher:

When the students graduate they should be confident of their qualifications. The minimal availability of raw materials and non-aligned curriculum materials affects that. The secretary curriculum is a Saudi one and it is a masculine curriculum, and needs alignment with our local market needs.

The lack of financial resources halted the plan for adding new specialisations and limited that to possible donors that could be interested, moreover, the employment of new staff by the PA has been frozen for a while. As one of the directors mentioned:

We had (...) [new specialisation] course and we brought a competent trainer who has the experience, he was not employed for over three years, and he left.

With regard to essential resources to achieve the quality of VET, a VSS director mentioned:

The curriculum is difficult and is not suitable: The curriculum is similar to scientific curriculum (the curriculum is not suitable with the time period and do not assist graduates in University). (...) Specialization is general and does not know what it wants and there is a problem in changing. The teacher is not trained for practical training, and the Ministry did not provide the equipment necessary to do so. Training students in the labour market is not enough. There are workshops to train students in the following vocations (...) and there is no place for remaining Specialties.

The competencies of staff needed further development as noted by one official:

There is weakness in implementation, in personnel. The mainstream mentality is missing. Part of the problems we face is how ministries understand their role in policymaking; we suffer on all levels, from implementation to policymaking.

3. Organisational relations: centralisation vs. decentralisation

The results in the previous section indicated that institutes working in marginalised localities or addressing females were able to provide more measures for their students and graduates. This indicates some level of authority delegated to institutes on the ground, away from the centralisation of the ministries. This was reflected by an MOL-VTC director:

Our success in our work is due to the fact that we are working in a semi-independent way, and that there is harmony among the VTC team.

Yet the level of decentralisation is not enough, as he noted. Another manager reflected:

The problem is bureaucracy, and non-rapid response to our demands; hence we have difficulty in responding to the labour market demands and gaps without delay: we need flexibility and decentralization, as well as getting our message through, addressing our needs and change in legislation.

Another director explained how such lack of autonomy affects the management role and systemisation:

There is no institutionalization of work done in Palestine, and if you find a good administration, bureaucracy and limited resources affect them. It is desired to have clear output and clear budget, as measured by the output and work, this is easier and a lighter burden.

The acting DG-VE MOE also noted the importance of increased level of authority and delegation for better achievement:

We have achieved a lot, a huge role, we need some kind of decentralization that will enable us to develop the institute and the system. It can enable:

- a. Adopting an integrated system has an effect. The school is a vocational institution; for all vocational levels;
- b. Covering our costs through production, courses;
- c. Running the system more efficiently.

Limited resources and centralised decisions therefore hamper the development of governmental VET institutes. They foresee, however, that a certain level of decentralisation could enable them to better utilise their resources, or reach out to the community or donors.

On the contrary, NGOs have a higher level of autonomy with regard to VET management and financial decisions. LWF was able to cover over 25% of its running costs through production, courses and other local income they could generate. They were also able to attract donors and community support. In 2003, the NGOs joined forces in a joint network called “The NGO VET League” to formalise their networking efforts and their ability to act jointly to attract funds or lobby for an important issue.

The higher level of autonomy exercised by NGOs was noted by officials in the Ministry, with one mentioning:

We need policies to encourage the private sector and civil society organizations/ NGOs. More than the government, they have flexibility, their ability to raise funds is better than the government's, and they are independent, their centres are more advanced than the governmental ones. We are stuck with old heritage, (...). We need to have decisions to reduce centralization.

4. Decision-making and Participation

During my interviews with the MOE, all respondents referred to a new decision by the minister to return authority over the vocational schools to the directorates, as with other academic schools. This decision was seen as a positive by the Minister and as supporting increasing enrolment in VET. Her plans were to engage the directorates in increasing enrolments and to enhance interaction with general schools at the directorate level. Nevertheless, the decision was made without the participation of the VE Directorate, and they noted it would have a negative implication, in various ways, as noted by the acting DG of VET at MOE:

The perception of VET remains inferior at the level of Directorates: there isn't much interest in VE, but it will be under their supervision. This is part of the challenges we face. Some districts are supportive to our point of view but they lack technical staff; their understanding of VET is not the same as the specialized ones.

For officials, being only one school in each directorate among hundreds of schools, without specialised staff to follow up would add more obstacles to vocational schools' work and add another layer of bureaucracy. Although at the time of writing, the DG VE had managed to convince the minister to change her decision, the risk of change remains at any time in the future, and the issue of decision-making without engaging the relevant department is also a challenge in any future policy.

Conclusion to Institutes' Enabling Policies and Practices

All the VET institutes studied were providing various measures and policies for access to and retention of marginalised students. These measures were enabling factors for students' enrolment and their ultimate accomplishment of training. Nevertheless, one in four institutes was providing less comprehensive measures and policies with regards to post-graduation access to work and graduate development.

The adopted measures varied according to several factors. First, it related to their mandate, vision and strategy, and specifically aspects related to student access. Second, differences were noted according to geographic locality where the measures adopted by those institutes serving marginalised groups differed from other institutes working under the same ministry. Third, there were differences in measures and policies with respect to different groups within the same institute. This was clear in co-educational institutes with regard to females, who were provided with extra supportive measures.

The ability of institutes operating in context-affected localities to respond to that situation and adopt additional measures to enable the access and retention of youth to VET, as well as to enable graduates' development and access to work was beyond expectations. This ability was also enhanced through the actions of the other CSOs and donor support to youths in these localities, as well as through a certain amount of decentralisation that enabled variety and diversity between the institutes such that each played a distinct role in learning and progressing and in the development of VET as a whole.

These enabling factors were reflected in the increased access and retention of the marginalised to VET, and increased access for work and graduates' development, especially within the affected localities. This was also reflected in the increased achievement of aspirations among graduates from these areas, reaching 58.9% of those who achieved 75% or more of their aspirations compared to 34.4% in the rest of the WB.

Hence the measures and policies adopted by the institutes addressing the marginalised, specifically the context-related marginalised, enabled the transformation to higher agency through VET, better achievement of their functionings and empowerment, and thus increased ability to achieve their own aspirations. Yet, the adoption of enabling measures and policies by VET institutes was challenged structurally, and such challenges were analysed and models of achievement were presented to foresee the ability of sustain these enabling factors.

One of the important findings in this regard was in the gap between policy and the measures taken by the MOL and MOE. Whereas some VET institutes were able to include measures to address the marginalised groups and be responsive to context effects

on the community and the target groups they are serving, these measures did not reflect back in improved national policies for targeting the marginalised. Other institutes have a clear commitment to a set target group, and have related structures, policies and clear targeting, as is the case for MOSA, UNRWA, NGOs, and Semi-Governmental. The brief cases of LWF and YMCA indicated the importance of clear targeting, flexibility in responding to context related emergencies, and the ability to reflect measures back into clear policies and directions, documented within their own strategic plans. The main driver for these institutes is organisational mandates and visions.

Institutes are challenged by limited resources, organisational challenges and the level of centralisation, especially for the governmental institutes. Such challenges were limiting their ability to affect policies and to integrate the measures taken in response to the marginalisation back into policies.

The model institutes, on the other hand, were able, through clear vision, flexible operation, a higher level of autonomy at their management level and, most importantly, a documented commitment to the marginalised, to reflect back measures taken into policies. Through a bottom-up approach, they sustained their enabling effect and underpinned higher agency for the youth they serve, leading to fuller achievement of their aspirations.

National Level Policies and Practices Responding or Challenging VET Graduates' Strategic Interests

Underlying structural challenges to reaching the aspirations of graduates and to enabling the roles of VET institutes pointed towards the importance of analysing policies that enable or obstruct graduates' enhanced agency and wellbeing. Analysing these challenges also uncovered the root causes of obstacles to empowerment, agency and achieved aspirations, some of which were related to external factors such as the military occupation, but others to internal factors such as the existence or non-existence of adopted policies, especially those generating and sustaining inequality. Highlighting policies that respond and others that fail to respond to state responsibilities, claims and obligations is of utmost importance, as well as highlighting policies that meet the

strategic interests of the marginalised youth in reducing inequality and achieving human development beyond service delivery.

This section addresses the relevant structural challenges identified thus far and analyses the relevant responses.

National Educational Policies

Education in Palestine have achieved its global indicators, since according to the EFA data and report (UNESCO, 2013) there has been remarkable success in rebuilding the neglected system left over from the period of full Israeli control over education. They have been distinguished in their planning and monitoring of their plans. The Ministry of Education is concerned about its own vocational schools, the evidence of which is that one of its six strategic objectives for education in Palestine within the national education plan (MOEHE,2014) is vocational education. What this section is concerned about, however, is the policies related to the VET sector as a whole and career guidance and counselling process at the general stage and the grade policies out of general education.

Grade Policies Out of General Education

One of the main policies that were seen as a challenge towards students practising their agency was the grade policy through which those achieving low grades went to vocational education in the MOE scheme, regardless of interest and choice. Hence students lacked a full choice of streaming based on information or testing of their abilities and aptitudes. The VET institutes have also highlighted this grade challenge.

In this regard, the lack of awareness among general school staff, in tandem with the grading policy, reinforced these attitudes. The acting GD of VE at MOE noted:

At school level, there is some staff who works against students' enrolment in VE, especially the good achievers. They use the mark policy in sending those with low marks to VE, there should be no marks set for choosing VE, it should be an open choice.

This was confirmed during group discussion with teachers and principals of general schools, as one male principal mentioned:

We advise students depending on the average grade, and behaviour, and sometimes we threaten him if he does not succeed, we will let him pass but send him to vocational education.

The grade policy has its effects in terms of adding challenges to already existing youth challenges, as noted by a non-government official;

There are no national directions to address the education and VT issues; as 60 thousand students apply Tawjihi every year; around 53% pass and 47% fail. Two thirds of those who pass leave education, one third joins university (the largest number go to the Open University). A big pool of unemployed university degree holders is part of the workforce. There are not enough spaces in TVET. Many university students study humanities and get unemployed.

Career Guidance and Counselling and Awareness Policies

Many of the directorate staff, as well as teachers and principals of general schools, suggested the need for an increased awareness and career guidance and counselling to open up choices of students and limit the effect of the grade policy on their future directions.

The issue of awareness and counselling was encouraged by the Ministry but this would need time and work with parents as noted by the Minister. She also suggested an early start for informed decisions;

To change the attitude of the parents we would need to work with students from early ages and to work with parents for a long period of time. The change will take time. (...) There are programmes and initiatives implemented by the Counselling DG, but change needs time. Trainers and counsellors need tools, manuals, and they need capacity building. (...) VET should be part of the curricula, students have to explore and know about VET at early childhood stage, so that they can make informed decision instead of grade-based decision.

The acting DG counselling illustrated their work in this regard that started since the resumption of the PA's authority over education:

We started working with students in high school since the establishment of the PA, through the guidance programme of the YMCA. Four years ago, we started implementing a more systematic method, with projects. (...) The projects enabled us to produce guidelines for grades (8th -10th grade) which were piloted and now used; and we have ready guidelines for 11th and 12th grades. We prepared a guideline for the 4th to 7th grades, and the educational counsellors were trained.

Yet he elaborated that they had only opened up the choices for his/her decision without guiding. Counsellors and teachers in many group discussions were not aware of VET and

its impact, they requested more information, as noted in a discussion with the Director of a directorate:

Guidance is not done enough inside the schools; we lack info about the graduate where do they go? What happen to them? What is the importance of the vocation? The graduate should be followed in the market, the successes they make should spread for people and schools to know

Many highlighted the importance of awareness and counselling, while indicating the challenges faced in awareness and capacity, as another Directorate deputy and staff noted:

Awareness and related activities drew the attention of the student to the achievements of graduates, and the orientations of the students are different now, and there have been statements from students saying they have the capabilities and interest to join VE. But the counsellor still does not know much about vocational schools, and the 8 and 9 grade classes do not know anything about vocational education, they start with them from the tenth grade only. Most schools have at least half a counsellor [each two schools share one].

The DG of VE at the MOE has also mentioned the efforts conducted by the vocational counsellors at the vocational schools to reach the general school students and community through open days, summer camps and awareness campaigns conducted through projects. Nevertheless, the integrated efforts within directorates and schools themselves are still missing.

To enhance enrolment in VET, directorates suggested the need to increase career guidance and counselling as well as awareness of VET, starting from early stages and including parents, counselling them to be fully aware of VE graduates and the impact of VE, and applying aptitude tests for students in streaming, in addition to the preparation of the student through earlier stages.

Hence the issue is to enable informed decisions by students and parents at earlier stages, and to open up the choices for all students. In 2016, the new minister adopted such a policy, whereby awareness of VET will be integrated within the lower secondary stage within the school. It is apparent, however, that more needs to be done with regards to career guidance and counselling, as well as changing the grade policy governing student choices.

It was also noted by many that the root cause for the lack of changing to practices on the ground was the lack of awareness and willingness at a policy level in ministries, directorates and schools. This hampered students' enrolment in VET based on their choices; as noted by one of the vocational schools' management:

Public policy at the Ministry and directorates does not encourage vocational education; awareness campaigns are conducted in the last month for students from the tenth grade, and the Ministry's policy does not encourage the systematic awareness for all or direct students to the vocational stream.

National VET Policies

Governance

The inability to implement the endorsed national TVET strategy, or monitor its implementation, or to assess its progress before reviewing it, and the inability to sustain some of the projects' outcomes and models presented to unify the policymaking of VET in a unified governance body has led to disappointment among the VET institute directors. They had seen the unifying efforts as the way forward to realise the national strategic plan and the reviewed one, where most of them have participated in the efforts to develop both or either. This was expressed during interviews conducted in 2015, one director is quoted as follows:

Our main problem is with the lack of TVET systemization, and a unified policymaking body. This is what we have asked for and worked for during the last 20 years. There must be a national structured system of vocational education and training institutionalized to serve the society.

This was also explained further through the discussion with another member of management staff from a VET institute:

The (...) [VET institute] cannot develop and evolve through its work with the two ministries, due to their non-application of the TVET National Strategy. Issues that the government actions suffer from are from the weak application of strategic directions, bad policies and a lack of clarity for any of the targets or future vision (...) and these directly affect the work of the institute.

The lack of an effective governance body to sustain and protect the achievements of VET institutes and the graduates and to act at a policy level to lobby for other related policies adds to the structural challenges, graduates and institutes are facing. In this regard, the following was noted by VET institute management:

There must be an independent body concerned with the affairs of all the vocational education and training at the national level. (...) If there is no rapid work done on the development of the vocational education and training, obstacles and shortcomings will remain and hinder the overall productivity of the community's development.

The representatives at both ministries were also disappointed with this situation, as noted by the acting Director General of VE at MOE:

We need an umbrella that covers all VET stakeholders; its title is not important, but it has to have clear financial system, administrative system, and a structure that contains all the issues, (...). We need a Governance system that contains all that is needed for VET.

Other VET providers also noted the challenge of VET functioning in-terms of addressing rising issues.

Hence, developing a strategic plan once every ten years, with no effective structured body to follow it, will not be sufficient to assess progress, or amend and align with changes, or even respond to arising issues affecting youth or the system.

A national proposal for developing a TVET agency was agreed by MOL and MOE and presented to cabinet in 2014. Cabinet endorsed the suggestion yet the decision has been put on hold. The setback affected those working in the sector, and the lack of a unified body has also affected the system as has been documented in various reports (Hilal, 2013a, 2015; Kuhail, 2015; Leney & Jweiles, 2014)

The donors within the sectors had formed a three-tiered structure with the different stakeholders, and given the lack of a national structure it is foreseen that this donor driven structure will persist. In 2016 new efforts were exerted to revive the agreed structure within the TVET strategy, which was active for short period, and activate it, and link all project related structures within the unified body.

Legislation, Regulations and Roles

There is no law governing TVET, and hence clear roles and responsibilities are not available with regard to the system and the regulatory function of the ministries with regard to TVET, although each ministry has its own law, regulations and policies for its own systems.

One of the main issues arising during interviews with officials, VET management and staff, was the lack of legislation and regulations. The lack of a governance body and legislations will hinder any attempts at systemisation or the widespread adoption of any pilots implemented on project basis.

One of the main challenges rising from the lack of clarity about the regulatory role of the VET authority is in the accreditation of non-governmental VET institutes. The acting DG of GE noted in this regard:

Vocational training used to be accredited as cultural centres, nowadays vocational centres should be with MOL, we recently agreed with MOL on this, as we used to accredit cultural centres which contain all the above [VTCs].

This was in the year 2015, 20 years after the PA took over responsibility for education and training. During the time when the NGOs had to be accredited by the MOE as cultural centres, this was an issue that had challenged the work of the NGOs providing Vocational Training. Hence, the lack of a responsible body for TVET delayed the adoption of related policies for institutes.

Although developing curricula was one of the challenges identified by the institutes, there were two big projects on curriculum development, where ministries had benefited partly from these curricula. However, some went back to the old curricula. This highlights the challenge of managing the resources and institutionalising pilot projects on the policy level, a status that would be dealt with differently if an effective unified authority was present with a clear mandate.

Again, ministries are participating in various activities and committees are working on NQF and POC, while others are working on unified sector working groups, yet all these committees are outside the formal system and could end once those particular projects end, if there is no proper unified body to sustain the developed products or pilots.

On the other hand, some of the accomplishments were achieved through the work done in the sector. For example, the increase in the number of females in the TVET sector was achieved by spreading successful models, by research and interaction among the groups after a needs assessment study conducted in 2010, which indicated the gap in female training in Nablus (Hilal, 2011), following which the MOE integrated female training in

the school. As already noted, the integration of females in electronics and telecommunications was done through learning from the YMCA initial implementation and up-scaling pilots. There were also other developments such as the VET career guidance and counselling that was integrated in the MOE through two projects. Yet, more is still needed, as the gender disparity in VET is apparent.

Ministries have been proud to show off a lot of their accomplishments since the establishment of the PA, including adding new buildings, equipment and specialisations, expanding to new locations, and adding women in most of the MOE's vocational schools, as well as adding vocational guidance departments and staff. This has been an important phase and a worthy set of accomplishments to overcome years of negligence under the Israeli authority, yet now is the time to step up the mainstreaming of measures and policies that would better enable access of students to VET and to the world of work.

Yet the need to expand VET is based on the high percentages of applicants versus the capacity of the VTCs, which is the non-formal part of VET, this is opposite to the case in vocational schools. In particular, VTCs are sometimes reaching two or three times the capacity, meaning that some students have to wait for two to three years to be accepted. The market representatives have also requested increased capacity in the VET sector to be able to meet the market need, as noted by a market representative:

We need a new system of VET training that links the training to the market and addresses a larger percentage of the population. We have seen the experience of places around the world, where education and VET is much respected and catered for at an early age. TVET institutes lack the ability to take in all applicants, hence people would join the market unskilled, we need to add the capacity and change the system.

Various modes of training and operation could be implemented once a unified system on the governance level is envisaged and VET institutes have some sort of decentralisation, as explained by acting DG of VE in MOE:

We have achieved a lot/ a huge role, we need some kind of decentralization that will enable us to develop the institute and the system. (...) Take Halhoul as an example; how it worked through the integrated system; we can use it; it's time saving, it's cost saving, use of available resources in the labour market.

An integrated approach with high flexibility and decentralisation can overcome the low applicant issue at most of the vocational schools and could meet the needs of the youth

and the market and be in-line with the vision of the TVET stakeholders. Yet there are no decision makers within the ministries on such issues and within the current structure each system is planning on its own for their overall vision that some could match with the TVET strategy, and some would not. VET is one of the issues on each ministry's agenda, and sometimes put back or ahead depending on the Minister and structures within the ministry, therefore to develop VET in line with youth aspirations and their strategic needs would require systemisation and effective organisation.

Funding

VET is funded through various sources, mainly through the VET provider themselves, and some external funding. The government funds the governmental ones, and partly the semi-governmental ones. NGOs and UNRWA have their own funding from their own institutes, partners and international donors.

The Government can barely pay for the employees, other funding for raw materials or equipment is hardly obtained, and payment for any additional issues would require long bureaucratic procedures which might not be fulfilled. Some of the NGOs have faced financial difficulty since the establishment of the PA, as their partners assumed that government should support them financially, as is done in other countries in the world, and as is witnessed in Israel. Various efforts were exerted to establish a training fund, but that is linked only to activating the governance and legislation.

Moreover, the budget allocated for VET is very minimal as noted by the officials from both ministries and as noted earlier in the non-funding or delayed funding of resources, the Minister of Education mentioned:

Our main need as a Ministry (...) is to increase the allocated budget for the Ministry. We only get 16% of the PA budget although we have the largest number of employees, the higher number of directorates and we serve over one million students.

In this regard, the deputy assistant at the MOL mentioned;

The MOL budget is less than 1%, and there are no development budgets

All in all, including the funding through MOSA and Semi-Governmental the budget allocated to VET reaches just 0.34% of the annual PA budget (Hilal, 2015a).

The funding of the PA's operation is still donor-driven which is understandable in a state that is operating under occupation. Yet the debate is brought to the public on the allocation of budget, and the need to increase the education and health budgets. This could be understood, but there are also ways to increase efficiency within limited resources, as noted by many of the interviewed directors of VET institutes and as explained by the acting DG VE MOE:

Funding is not an obstacle, but the financial and administrative system is an obstacle to our work; for its lack of flexibility and responsiveness. (...) If we can add production in our vocational schools (produce items) or provide services we can gain enough funds for self-sustainability, funds can be transferred to the financial department. We need to work on a training fund. (...) Solving the financial issue is through institutionalization and sustainability, through a national strategy; adopting WBL (...) and institutionalisation of the pilots. We added specialisations; we're working in this direction. (...) We depend for funding [of development initiatives] on donors; we need to use the optimal practice through using new inexpensive styles like WBL. We can operate in optimal use of time and tools.

The assistant deputy minister of MOL also mentioned another method that could generate income if a certain level of autonomy were delegated:

For Continuing VT [CVT], we have evening courses, the centres are open for specific services for different categories, this is supported (...). We put supplementary courses for VET in our budget. The MOL budget is less than 1%, and there are no development budgets. This needs national policies; we worked on CVT and opening the centres and we have approval, but this is still withheld.

One of the VET Directors mentioned other sources of income that would need clear policies:

There is much that we can do to bring funding, for example, the deduction of taxes towards training; we can encourage training and employment by a reduction of taxes on the private sector in return for graduate training.

In pinpointing reasons for the delay in implementing the strategy and the setbacks received in cabinet approval, two main issues were presented, first the power struggle between the main ministries in claiming the benefit of VET. As put by one of the interviewee:

Shares, (distribution of the cake) mentality

Second, the weak understanding of the role of VET and its importance, as noted by one of the interviewees:

Unfortunately, the weakness in the official staff's understanding of the development concept is a barrier to their understanding of the role of vocational training and linking them together.

National Employment and Market Policies

Decent Work Policies and Regulations

One of the main challenges faced by graduates in achieving their aspirations was to get decent work employment opportunities, as highlighted earlier, with long hours, low salary and inadequate working conditions for many graduates. Such a challenge hampered their ability to meet their aspirations, and in some cases regenerated inequality. In this regard, many of the interviewed management and staff of the VET institutes also indicated the need to tackle these issues.

It was noted that the endorsed Palestinian Labour Law (7 of 2000) provided various elements of the decent work agenda within its articles. The PA adopted a minimum wage policy in 2012, which became effective in 2013. The assistant deputy at the MOL indicated the work of the MOL in this regard:

With regard to labour force legislations and laws, we are working on two subjects; we're done with the minimum wage but we're still working on the social security one, raises and salaries. We need to review the labour law, with our social partners, we are working on that and ILO is part of it.

These laws are not fully implemented, however, due to the inability of the MOL to carry out its inspections in the face of limited resources, the informality of businesses and out-of-reach areas due to the military occupation.

Moreover, purchasing power had declined during the past five years (2011-2015). This has contributed to the drop in the achieved aspirations for graduates among some institutes over the years, as noted earlier.

Gender Employment Policies

Moreover, females are paid less, are less represented at the higher positions and are mainly concentrated within the agriculture and services sectors, with a very low participation rate in the labour force and higher unemployment rates (PCBS, 2016). The head of the Gender Unit at the MOL mentioned:

Most of the women are working in the informal sector, especially in the agriculture and services sectors, those are not part of the system, they don't benefit from the laws, and most are not working in decent work conditions.

The head of a women institute-VTC also stated in this regard:

There is no protection for women and women with social situations [divorced, widowed]. The norms, mainstream attitudes and traditional social behaviour towards women are negative. Hence government must enforce protection laws and we must enhance economic empowerment for women.

With regard to policies to enhance government and policy responsiveness to gender, and to improve women's participation in the labour market, the Head of the Gender Unit at MOL explained:

All Gender Units [in all ministries] were established in 2009 and their role is to mainstream gender into PA functions. (...) The Minister of Labour is the head of the National Committee for Women's Employment according to bylaws, but I represent the minister and the MOL leading this committee. It was established formally in 2012, its mandate is to work on a policy framework to ensure the increase of women's participation in the labour market. It's combined with the GU of Semi-Governmental, CSOs working on the issues of women and women's work and academic people and university researchers. Of course, they [VET authorities] can suggest to us and we are the body to adopt these policies. Some of the suggested policies or review of laws has to go to the cabinet. We as gender unit have our input in the labour related laws and regulations; we are part of the committee reviewing the Labour Law.

Two policy papers were published by ILO and present a gender and legal review of the labour law, as well as tackling gender-based violence in the work place (Al-Mou'aqat, 2010). However, the Head of the Gender-Unit mentioned that there were obstacles to mainstreaming gender and integrating their work:

We were not part of many of the established committees and bodies that were formed prior to our establishment as the Gender-Unit, but we asked to be represented. If we are not represented this would affect our role. Our problem is that gender is not institutionalised yet as a belief; and the policymakers have different views towards gender; each minister has a different view, and we have to start all over again in explaining, it's not systemised or institutionalised.

Employment and Self-Employment Policies

With regard to unemployment, the MOL Deputy Minister mentioned that there were 45,000 new labour market entrants annually. However, at best, the economy was able to integrate around 15,000 with 30,000 left to be unemployed. By 2016, the number of

unemployed was over 350,000 and was forecasted to reach 400,000 soon (Qattami, 2016).

As such, teachers and staff of VET institutes, as well as students and graduates, requested a more active role from the MOL and labour offices in facilitating job opportunities, as noted by MOL-VTC teachers:

The Ministry of Labour should work on facilitating job opportunities for graduates, integrating them into national employment programmes to develop the community

In the same regard, management and staff of VET institutes requested increased investment to open up opportunities for youth employment, especially in marginalised localities at the local level. VET directors also recommended facilitating supporting graduates to open up their own businesses, as most of the graduates' lack access to finance, and as their own business could be an opportunity in less economically vibrant areas, as experienced in some of the marginalised localities such as Salfeet.

However, as has already been shown, there were some institutes that provided support for graduates to start their own business, with equipment, grants or loans as noted earlier. Other institutes have integrated programmes for this, such as YMCA, which has had an Extension Service Unit since 1992 providing loans. MOL also had an employment fund for graduates, linked with the Local Employment and Training Councils.

The high youth unemployment rate in Palestine directed many students and their families towards VET, yet the lack of clear VET policies has hindered this change in attitudes

VET institutes and officials highlighted the importance of VET-market interaction for the benefit of the graduates. As noted by the acting DG of VE in MOE, VET had built relations with the labour market through local bodies:

There are established bodies on the governorate levels, that includes all social partners and the private sector, such as the local Employment and VET Council (the LET council), and the schools are represented in these bodies on the local level.

However, these bodies were not effective in all areas. In addition, many directors of VET institutes highlighted the need for systemised relations with market representatives and employers to be organised by legislation so as to ensure employment of the graduates

according to their aspirations. This was also stressed by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as one noted:

Structural relations are needed with regard to practical/theoretical aspects of vocational education. Gaps still exist between market and VET. (...) Government needs to do a whole lot more to develop the VET system. Especially in the administration of vocational and industrial schools and in curricula development, (...) Projects finish and that's it. We need institutionalization.

Teachers also requested licencing requirements for vocational workers in the market as well as for those opening their own business in vocational fields. The issue of government employment of VET graduates was also noted through various interviews and discussions. The Acting DG of VE in MOE noted that there is a need to work with the General Personnel Council to address this issue.

In identifying the root causes for the deficit in decent work employment conditions and in employment and self-employment policies, the MOL assistant deputy noted that the fact that the economy is operating under occupation is the main reason for its inability to pick-up, formalise, employ more people or provide them with their work rights:

We have no economy, no currency, and no financial, economic or monetary policies.

On the other hand, the refugees' council indicated that open market policies and favouring investors over the workers, and a lack of workers' protection policies had led to such policies. They also noted that reduced UNRWA budgets were putting extra pressure on poor families, mostly the refugees.

With regard to the lack of protection for workers in the labour market, including female workers, the following was noted in an interview with the MOL Gender Unit Head:

Our problem with regards to the protection of women in the labour market is two folds, one is the presence of the informal sector, and 60% of women are working in this sector, and second the free market policies that are increasing the informal sector. The role for protection is the government's role, when the government is privatising all services and only considering how to encourage the growth of the private sector to ensure employment then we have lost a lot.

While the lack of regulation of employers was catered for by the relevant ministries, it was also one of the main issues noted by one VET manager:

We need new laws regulating the vocational labour market and decent work, as we need new legislations which emphasize that all who practice the profession is qualified for it. And we need policies governing the relationship between the centres [VTCs] and both ministries; the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Economy, as well as the relationship with the various employers. By having these relationships, all official institutions and ministries can contribute to the vocational education work together in a complementary way rather than separately. We must treat all of these institutions with a common unified language and as a national unified body.

Gaps in the National and Global Statistics

In its efforts at state building, the PA has established the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). This body has been functioning for the last two decades, and represents a reliable source for national data and figures by many national and international organisations. It has conducted two population censuses, with a third happening in 2017, and it publishes quarterly and annual Labour Force Survey results, on which this research depends for obtaining national figures.

From examining the data and statistics, however, it is apparent that there is a big gap when it comes to presenting the VET data. While 82 institutes are providing VET at various levels, graduating over 10,000 graduates annually (Hilal, 2013b), the only data that is measured is the percentage of those going into vocational education, i.e., the formal education system, not necessarily the one targeting the marginalised. Hence, the national statistics ignore more than 70% of VET graduates, concentrating on less than 30%, and ignoring the impact of the work of these institutes and, most importantly, ignoring the graduates themselves and their accomplishments. The type of VET information generated is inadequate and this has a negative effect on policymaking for TVET.

The problem is not just with Palestinian government developed data. As part of the Torino Process, the ETF (2014) supported data collection on the sector. However, this only considered the Vocational School Students not the VTCs. Equally, current UNESCO data collection and analysis is not fit for the purpose of its own policy direction regarding the broader definition of VET. The Global Education Monitoring Report of 2016 statistical tables lists indicators and targets that do not capture VT (UNESCO, 2016a, p.396), suggesting the need for review and improvement.

In analysing the results of the 2015 ILO school-to-work transition survey, conducted every other year in Palestine by the ILO and PCBS, data according to VET graduates only considered those of vocational secondary schools, and data was not collected or analysed according to graduates of vocational, skilled and semi-skilled levels. These results, therefore, did not give the full picture of VET and could lead to incorrect conclusions, such as the percentage of females, employment rates and others (Sadeq, 2016).

The lack of a database for VET as a whole presents an obstacle to gathering the information, unlike the school related data which puts forward the issue of building data for VT. These issues need to be addressed at the policy level.

This finding resonates with the literature debating the use of data in policymaking, and what to measure for comparison on a regional and international level (Akoojee, 2012; McGrath & Lugg, 2012). Even when the national interest is to measure the VET as a whole, international data has failed in such attempts, as noted in the partial measure of VET by international reports and use of these data to generalise finding over different types of VET provision.

Furthermore, the definition of the graduates of the VTCs is contradictory to its actual role, since sometimes they are considered within adult education or continuous VET (CVET), which is not the case for many who come direct from schools, trained for the first time and are youths, indicating a definitional gap at the international level as well.

On another aspect, the national data is not analysed according to context-related marginalised locality, although these facts on the ground have been there for over a decade, data are only sub-categorised into governorate localities, and divided by Gaza/WB, rural, urban and Refugee camp. Data did not consider marginalised locality such as seam Zones, area C, Jordan Valley, near the Wall, unless it is an area such as Gaza or a governorate such as Jerusalem. These are only presented by UN and international organisations as UNOCHA. This was brought up by Qassis (2013) in his unpublished Master's thesis.

In Conclusion: National Level Policies and Practices Responding or Challenging VET Graduates' Strategic Interests

To conclude this section, it was noted that having resumed responsibility for education, training, services and the government, the PA has achieved some remarkable accomplishments in various fields and especially in education. This has not been the case for VET, hence the national policies that are enabling or obstructing VET institutes and youth achieving their aspirations were investigated.

The lack of certain measures and policies at the national level means that VET institutes and graduates are not getting the support they need. This includes the lack of an effective unified TVET body at the policy level, and of the required TVET legislation and regulations. In addition, the lack of funding policies and measures for VET and minimal funds allocated obstruct the work of the institutes.

There have been various initiatives, projects, pilots and models in TVET that have suggested potential policies and measures to support institutes and graduates, but the process of institutionalising these initiatives and lessons learned is weak, particularly due to the lack of an active and effective policymaking body.

In addition, the grade policy within general education of limiting students' access to VET to those with lower grades, and the low level of awareness of VET, and of effective career guidance and counselling within general schools are impeding youth's choices in their careers, and preventing students from arriving at informed decisions based on their aptitude and skills.

Moreover, youth are being let down by the lack of effective laws with regard to decent work and minimum wage, as well as the lack of effective policies in the marketplace for female workers and youths, added to the weak employment policies. Such challenges are impeding graduates from achieving their aspirations and hampering enhanced agency and wellbeing.

The employment related existing, non-existing and ineffective policies are contributing to sustaining and regenerating marginalisation for some marginalised youth.

It was recommended by VET institutes' staff, students, graduates, formal representatives of VET, market representatives and education specialists at the Ministry and directorate level, as well as by the community, to address these underlying structural challenges to strengthen the role of VET institutes.

As noted earlier there are structural challenges that are linked with the existence of the military occupation and beyond the control of the PA, such as the weak subservience economy that generate informality and limited opportunities for youth in certain localities. Nevertheless, there are many other protection and enabling policies that should be tackled.

Global challenges were also underlined when the data relevant to making informed decisions and policy about VET was investigated. These include acknowledging the long-term VTC graduates within the statistics of workers and population. The data related to VET qualifications is only dealt with partially through the vocational schools' statistics, which represent less than 30% of the VET beneficiaries. Moreover, although the national statistics body (PCBS) is a reliable source of information, it is not currently considering the marginalised localities within their data.

Chapter Conclusions

In the previous chapters, clear evidence was presented of VET's contribution to the achievement and functioning of youth, as well as clear evidence of its contribution to empowerment and agency, yet, for many VET graduates, their full aspirations and wellbeing were still not fulfilled. This pointed to the need to investigate the structural challenges that might be hindering, as well as enabling, these achievements.

The structural challenges affecting graduates are either external, related to the military occupation, or internal, related to attitude and policy direction embedded in the patriarchal society, and the political economy of the state in development. The following box summarises the main structural challenges facing the graduates and the personal enabling factors as identified by the graduates, students and VET institute staff.

Part of the external and internal structural challenges is a major contributor to causing or perpetuating inequalities. Enabling factors like the ones listed here and the institute and

policy enabling policies (Boxes 8 and 9 respectively) would overcome and enable agency to overcome such challenges in the strive to achieve their aspirations.

Box-8: Structural Challenges and Personal Enabling Factors Affecting Youth Achievements and Agency	
Structural Challenges	Enabling Factors
• Mobility Restrictions • Economic Obstacles • Social Obstacles • Other Obstacles (external effects on restricting their abilities) • Attitudes towards VET: • General Schools, Communities and Market Attitudes • Parents' Attitudes • Limitations on Students' and Graduates' Choices- Passive agency	• Personal Internal Motivation due to marginalisation • Personal Internal Motivation - interest in VET and/or vocation • Personal Internal Motivation- Due to experience of others • Personal Internal Motivation- Important step for future plans • Personal external factors- Personal available resources • Teachers and directors of general school for average and low achievers' inclination to VET • Communities attitude was high in marginalised localities • Market attitude for WBL modes in VET and in marginalised localities was high

The findings indicated higher achievements for the marginalised, especially those living in marginalised localities. The attitudes of marginalised communities and markets were also more positive towards VET, the motivation due to marginalisation was apparent as enabling factor although they were highly challenged by the military occupation measures and systems.

Meanwhile, institutes' enabling role was challenged by various obstacles as noted in the following box.

Box-9 Challenges and enabling factors affecting institutes enabling role:	
Challenges	Enabling Factors
Challenges with regard to: • Clear Targeting • Resources • Organisational relations: centralisation vs. decentralisation • Decision-making and Participation	• Policies and measures on access and retention of students to VET • Policies and measures on access of students to the labour market and graduates' development after graduation • Increased policies and measures for

	those targeting marginalized students or those working in marginalized localities

Institutes' policies and measures differed according to VET provider, including the mission statement and mandate of each institute, their target groups and how they see their role. Among the VET institutes, the NGOs, UNRWA, MOSA clearly indicated the aim of serving the marginalised. One important additional finding of the thesis relates to the wider range of policies and measures taken by those institutes compared to other VET providers. Moreover, it was noted that certain institutes within MOE and MOL provided additional policies and measures, and that these measures had led to higher achievement of aspiration among their graduates, indicating the importance of enabling institutes within a marginalised context. This result explains the higher achievement of aspirations of graduates from these localities that was highlighted in earlier chapters, hence confirming the finding by the models that it is not enough just to provide VET to achieve aspirations for the marginalised; enabling measures for their access, retention, post-graduation support and development are as important for the marginalised and when working in marginalised localities.

Unfortunately, these measures and policies were mostly provided by other projects and NGOs in the marginalised localities and are not integrated within their ministry's overall policies and measures, therefore, reducing the possibility of sustaining and spreading the learning.

On the other hand, YMCA and LWF, as well as other NGOs, and as also illustrated through best-practices adopted by UNRWA and other providers, have shown how institutes that design their interventions based on their target groups' situation and strategic needs, are able to provide different policies and measures and to learn from responding to emergencies by reflecting back into their institutes' policies and measures.

Some of the illustrated structural challenges facing the graduates are related to occupation measures but others relate to internal factors that could be addressed through appropriate policies. Moreover, some of the challenges of the institutes would require appropriate

policies and measures to enhance the institutes' enabling role in respect to the marginalised.

Hence, the national policies of education, employment and TVET were analysed to identify the challenging and enabling policies supporting and hindering graduates' achievement of wellbeing and reducing inequality. The following box illustrates the identified policy deficits. Some of these deficits lie in the presence or absence of these policies, others in the lack of related regulations, supervision and monitoring.

Box-10: National Policy Deficits

- National Educational Policies
 - Grade Policies at the end of general education
 - Career Guidance and Counselling and Awareness Policies
- National VET Policies
 - Governance
 - Legislation, Regulations and Roles
 - Funding
- National Employment and Market Policies
 - Decent Work Policies and Regulations
 - Gender Employment Policies
 - Employment and Self-employment Policies
- The Gaps in National and Global Statistics

Some of the listed policy deficits are sustaining and reproducing inequality, such as the employment related ones. Others are affecting institute's enabling function, which would in the long run affect graduates' achievement within a marginalised context.

One of the important findings is the exclusion of the vocational training graduates and achievement from the national and global figures and information, and the inability to set them within the international definitions. This exclusion could lead to incorrect analyses and finding, especially with the diversity that these institutes brings, since it excludes more than 70% of the VET graduates, hence questioning the viability of generated data nationally and globally and questioning in whose interest do we still want to hide the marginalised?

Root causes for some of these policies deficits laid in the true understanding of VET roles and its contribution to development and reducing inequality by non-VET policymakers,

in commitment to serve the marginalised, in the choice of education and economy the Palestinian State in formation wants, pointing out to the importance of future research in the area of VET and political economy.

This chapter has highlighted the importance of identifying structural challenges and enabling factors both externally and internally, in terms of how they would impede or facilitate the achievement of graduates' aspirations, noting that they would also impede or enhance individual opportunities, choices, agency and empowerment. Hence, it is not only on the individual or the service received alone to contribute to human development or reducing inequality, institutes' and state's policies and measures are the main determinants for mitigating the effects of structural challenges and enhancing enabling factors, although within a context of marginalisation, some of the structural challenges are beyond the state control, and in the Palestinian case, the PA is also challenged by structural challenges.

Chapter 9. Overall Conclusions

The Research Provided a Theoretical Framework:

One of the substantial contributions of this research is in the theoretical framework it adopted, especially in bringing in GAD to CA in an HD approach to VET, and in linking these concepts to political economy, thus providing a holistic model to examine VET's contribution to HD and reducing inequality in general and within adverse conditions. This goes hand-in-hand with the rigorous mixed methods methodology used to examine the research question and research sub-questions.

The work has presented a model for analysing the value of VET and its contribution to development, in new ways. By bringing in GAD and the political economy to HDCA the thesis was able to respond successfully to McGrath's (2012c) observation that VET is in need of a new theory, and to Kabeer's (2015) call for using GAD to assess inequality.

VET Addressed the Marginalised in Context of Marginalisation

The research findings have indicated that within "a protracted protection crisis" context governed by military occupation and human rights violations, VET is attracting different

marginalised individuals, groups and communities. VET learners and graduates were facing inequalities with regard to context-related, poverty and economic status, gender and social conditions as well as attracting the low achievers, potential drop-outs and drop-outs. The findings indicate that graduates and students experience multi-layered and intersectional marginalisation, confirming the theories of inequalities and intersectionality approaches. Inequality in terms of power relations and limited access to, and control over, resources, which is structured and intersectional, was the experience for most of the students and the graduates of VET, manifested in the unequal social relations and economic conditions, leaving them disempowered and impoverished. It was evident that VET was a key element in their life strategy as individuals, groups and communities to reduce their inequalities.

The significance of this research is the empirical evidence it provides illustrating that VET is considered a refuge for the marginalised and those experiencing multiple inequalities, even those that have been marginalised communities for a long time. Moreover, the research provides evidence that VET represents a choice for those living in adverse situations.

VET Capability List that is Sensitive to Inequality and Includes Accountability

In striving to address the research question of VET's contribution to HD, the thesis examined the valued and achieved capabilities and functionings, and developed the capability list for VET starting from Powell's list in 2014, so that it is gender sensitive, relevant to marginalised groups whom are impoverished, displaced and disempowered, and relevant to fragile contexts being under prolonged occupation. The thesis has also built a new list based on the HD literature, and the work of scholars that have contributed to capability lists of Nussbaum (2003, 2011; Robeyns, 2003, 2005; Walker, 2008; Conradie & Robeyns, 2013; Powell, 2014), in addition to the researcher's experience in the field and the VET international debate as well as the Palestinian literature. Hence the list in this research included ten capabilities with the addition of two capabilities to the Powell list: first the unpaid work that is gender relevant, second the inclusion of economic resources and income for poverty reduction and well-being as a result of work.

These were based on the work of Kabeer (2008, 2015) on poverty, since she stressed the importance of human labour, skills, knowledge and abilities for the poor. This capability has demonstrated how capabilities and functionings could be “means” and “ends”, as stressed by Sen (2004), whereas paid work was means for income generation, and income generation is a means for poverty reduction and VET learners’ well-being, although other forms of economic resources are included. The eighth capability in Powell’s list became the tenth in my list and has enlarged the “Occupational Knowledge” to “Enabled transition to the world of work through awareness, preparation and connections for all”, based on international literature on VET and my experience in the field. These categories encompass some of the previous valued functionings and add to the remaining elements for transition.

The importance of bringing GAD into the capability approach was illustrated within the CL through integrating the empowerment framework and the feminist discourse regarding work and economic resources. Since two of the capabilities are linked with empowerment, as in this case empowerment became the means to achieve the aspiration of the graduates. Empowerment, on the other hand, was achieved through the resources gained. Hence, empowerment and achievements are ends and means for fulfilling graduates’ aspiration and for achieving transformatory change as noted by Kabeer (1999). The remaining capabilities and functionings are along the same lines as Powell. All capabilities were validated and tested to confirm that they were valued, and some were tested for achievement, which is an addition to the methodology of the Capability List.

Another important addition made through this research has been in the linkages between HDCA and the political economy. As with the other additions to the capability list for VET, including the concept of “Valued functionings for policy-makers” emphasises the fact that structural challenges produce inequality in capabilities and functionings, as noted by the capability list scholars, which in turn would require increased responsibility on the part of the state and the social partners to enable VET learners to achieve their capabilities and valued functionings regardless of their marginalisation within different contexts including adverse situations.

VET Graduates Acquired Agency and Empowerment

Some of the capabilities are linked with empowerment. Empowerment is related to the “ability to make choices” as Kabeer (1999) has noted. The empowerment domain of “Power Within” – the sense of agency and “Power With”, were part of the capabilities. While the other domains of “Power To” and “Power Over” used the developed agency, resources and achievements to enable the achievement of empowerment.

It was shown how empowerment achievements were high for the marginalised, which makes sense, as they start from the condition of being disempowered to move towards inner agency and control over their strategic life choices, as the definition of empowerment clarifies. It is only when structural constraints are restricting their ability to choose that empowerment is not fully achieved.

Empowerment is based on the notion of choice, which indicates the importance of recognising that alternatives must exist, and must be seen to exist. VET has been proven to provide various choices through the different modes of work the graduates could practice through gained skills, and different ways for income generation, which is relevant to the marginalised, whether the marginalisation is due to gender, context related marginalisation, poverty or other forms. The different modes of work and income generation present alternatives of choices that enable the VET learner to achieve their aspirations, and overcome some of the challenges faced, such as poor female graduates²⁷ who were able to cater for their own family and generate income by working from home as seasonal or per job workers. When the choice is denied due, however, to patriarchal attitudes and power control over their decisions, then she is denied the choice, and she is disempowered, which is considered as a kind of economic violence. Another form of restriction in choices is that the poor need to work in unsatisfactory job, and what have been noted as “work chains” in refugee camps. This scenario is akin to what Kabeer (2000) has called “passive” forms of agency, but it has to be noted that such graduates were in a minority compared to all those graduates who had active and transformative agencies.

²⁷ It is not assuming any degrading or failing, but its describing their economic status as marginalisation factor

VET has been shown to enable most graduates to gain self and skills confidence. It enabled half of them to redefine or negotiate power relations within the household and create new possibilities. A little more than a half were able to achieve control over life choices, although they differed according to life choice. The other half was challenged by various structural challenges. It was noted that the marginalised have achieved higher percentages of empowerment, which indicates how important VET is to the marginalised, and to reducing their disempowerment and hence inequality.

VET Graduates Achieving Empowerment Reducing Inequality

The full realisation of the empowerment process would lead to achieving transformatory change, as noted by Kabeer (1999). The illustrations of the male and female graduates who achieved transformative agency (pp.187-188) were a clear demonstration of the process to reach the control over their life choices towards achieving transformatory change and hence realising full empowerment. Both had experienced transformatory change with regard to the disempowerment they faced and to power relations within their household and community. In their pursued transformatory change, both went through the process of change starting from an increased sense of agency to increased capacity to define their own lives to achieving power over strategic life choices. (Even though the male was still highly challenged by context-related challenges.) Similar experiences were repeated in each institute and came out through interviews and FGD with management, teachers and students, and some became models which attract other students and families.

Hence, since VET is serving the poor and the marginalised, as clearly demonstrated in this research and other studies around the world, reducing inequality and empowerment should be high on the international VET agenda together with human development and well-being. The link between VET and reducing inequality should be clarified in the global VET discourse.

Within a context of marginalisation, VET's contribution to the empowerment of communities and the marginalised groups was apparent. VET's contribution to context-affected marginalised communities was demonstrated through the case of East Jerusalem, since the challenges of education, the high drop-out rates and the attraction of joining the labour market at an early age is highest in EJ, leaving youth trapped in black jobs and

easily dispensable. In addition to many other challenges linked to being close to the Israeli communities, trying to preserve their culture and identity, and hence existence, reflecting what Collins (1989) has called as an “interlocking oppression” created by the relation between culture and identity with the intersectional systems of society, such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity. VET and the skills gained by graduates had its effect on the community resilience, in terms of “contributing to local economies” and “providing skills as resource for youth steadfastness in their communities”.

Moreover, it was noted how VET is contributing to the resilience of the economy that is trapped and underperformed, and how VET is acting as a resource for the Palestinian households throughout catastrophes and marginalisation policies. Community members noted how VET is empowering different marginalised groups, such as juveniles, drop-outs, ex-prisoners, social cases in addition to the poor, women and the refugees.

The research has illustrated how VET contributed to economic development, by contributing to employment and economic resources, transition to the world of work and to skills match and relevancy of the training. It has illustrated how VET contributed to social development through contributions to reducing inequality and increasing the empowerment of women and youth. Finally, it has clearly demonstrated how VET contributed to HD through increasing capabilities and realising the aspirations of youth, and most importantly how the economic and social achievements contributed to HD on the one hand and the challenges to such contributions on the other.

VET Graduates Achieved Aspirations that is Linked to Achieving Functioning and Empowerment

Graduates assessed their achievement of aspiration, representing a new method for increasing the participation of graduates in assessing their status and their level of satisfaction with their achieved aspiration. More than one in three VET graduates reported that most of their aspirations were realised since graduation. Most of the graduates reported that at least half of their aspirations were realised since graduation. The results indicated that the actual achievement of functionings aspired to by the graduates such as employment and income generations increased their self-assessment of

achieved aspirations. Results have also indicated that when empowerment was gained this increased the achieved aspirations. Achieved aspirations varied according to marginalisation variables such as gender, marginalised locality by the context, poverty and refugee status. It has increased for females, for those living in seam zones and Gaza, and those below poverty line, although not for those much below the deep poverty line at the survival mode.

The increase is linked to the achievement of functionings and empowerment determinants. It was found that functioning achievements for these groups explained this difference, specifically when comparing achievements to national figures, as these groups had higher employment related achievement compared to their peers, or had higher income achievement that supported their families. Females who chose to do unpaid work, meanwhile, had higher aspiration achievement than those with passive choice, comparable to females engaged in paid employment. It was noted that the achievement of aspiration rose among those groups with the highest achievement of empowerment. This difference could also be explained through Kabeer's (1999) notion of "empowering the disempowered" and hence the personal comparable achievement.

However, the results indicated a drop of satisfaction over the four years since my earlier study, reflecting the increased structural restrictions and barriers preventing graduates from realising their aspirations (Hilal, 2012). The findings indicate the importance of the Appadurai (2004) notion of "capacity to aspire" to address the change and its effect on realising the aspiration.

The research has highlighted the contribution of VET to the Palestinian strategic goals at the national level, specifically VET's role in reducing unemployment and providing protection to vulnerable Palestinians. It has also highlighted the role of VET in achieving the goals of the national TVET strategy in respect to high relevancy, effectiveness and impact, yet these areas will need further policy support. The research has also contributed to the debate on VET's role in economic development or the protection of marginalised groups that could undermine its quality. The best-practices of VET institutes offer models for achieving quality VET while addressing the marginalised and, most importantly, they

have illustrated VET's contribution beyond the economic and social development, with a clear indication of its contribution to HD.

The increase of satisfaction based on achieved functionings and empowerment is significant, and indicates how VET contributes to human development based on two pillars: functioning achievement and empowerment achievement. Both are illustrating economic, social and human development factors, with youth at their focus, thus going beyond the productivist approach of concentrating on economic productivity with businesses at its centre. This finding is in line with the emerging global agenda for TVET, manifested in UNESCO Recommendation (2015a).

The Marginalised Achieved Empowerment and Achieved Aspiration

Remarkably, the findings have indicated that empowerment has contributed towards the achievement of aspirations of the marginalised, showing that although the marginalised were not necessarily higher achievers in terms of functionings, they were in terms of empowerment and achievement of aspirations. This illustrates that in adverse circumstances although the marginalised achieve less within certain functionings, they have highly assessed their achievement of aspirations. The answer to this lies in the achievement of empowerment of the disempowered, and in their achievements compared to their peers. This shows the importance of considering empowerment not only in terms of functionings but in terms of its contribution to human development.

Hence, achieving well-being and empowerment is essential for the achievement of HD and reducing inequality. In other words, well-being and freedom for the marginalised cannot be obtained without reaching empowerment or reducing disempowerment: freedom is an abstract word for those experiencing lack of freedoms due to various marginalisation effects, and it is highly relative within a context of prolonged occupation.

Empowerment domains are part of the capabilities and valued functionings for the marginalised, which could mirror into outcomes, while the overall goal would be achieving full empowerment in the form of transformatory change. The results have indicated that VET enabled the partial achievement of empowerment for many, and the full achievement of some.

Such findings reemphasise the fact that the contribution of VET goes beyond the economic parameters, and should not be limited to these, social parameters and indicators are also important in assessing the contribution and monitoring the progress. Moreover, policies and practices to overcome structural challenges are important.

Structural Challenges and Enabling Factors to Achievements

Nonetheless, structural challenges were apparent as a major hindrance towards the achievement of functionings, empowerment and aspirations of the graduates. Nevertheless, it was evident that these achievements are challenged by structural obstacles beyond the personal human development.

Enabling factors to enlarge graduates' agency for achievement and functioning, as well as empowerment were apparent. These are mainly related to personal or structural factors such as attitude, institutional and policy-related factors. Personal factors are either personal internal or external factors, related to motivation or to available resources respectively.

With regard to motivation, reducing marginalisation was an important motive for many, in that they could see VET as providing them with extra choices for the life they want to live. This indicates that VET is a first choice for the marginalised enabling them to develop their agency and empowerment. Positive and negative attitudes have their effects on the choices of youth. Since choice is central to the achievement of empowerment, most students had positive or neutral attitude towards VET, confirmed by their active choice for VET and achievements after graduation. Only very minimal percentages had negative attitude linked to passive agency or challenges. Again, the value of VET as an equal or even a better option for many was clear, especially for the marginalised.

Enabling and Challenging Policies and Measures that Reduce or Reproduce Inequality

All the researched VET institutes offer various measures and policies for access and retention of marginalised students. These measures were enabling factors for students' enrolment and their accomplishment of the training. Fewer institutes are providing measures and policies with regard to access to work and graduate development. The

provision of supportive measures and policies was linked first to their mandate, vision and strategy, but then to where they are operating (especially context-affected localities) and whom they are targeting, especially the marginalised groups. Hence, additional supportive measures were provided when serving the marginalised.

One of the structural challenges to achievements, empowerment and the achievements of aspirations is the existence of the military occupation, nonetheless there were internal factors that could be reduced or perpetuated by the appropriate national policies and measures. Hence, the deficits within the national policies of education, employment and TVET are challenging graduates' achievement of wellbeing and reducing inequality. These deficits are listed in Box-10. Some of the deficits lie in the existence or non-existence of these policies, others in the non-existence of related regulations, supervision and monitoring. Deficits are challenging institutes' ability to play an enabling and supporting role, and are challenging students' achievements, and thus VET's ability to produce an array of choices for the VET learners and the marginalised, hence their empowerment and ability to reduce inequality.

The missing link between VET and reducing inequalities in the VET debate has devalued VET within the national and international policymaking arenas for many years. In various cases VET is dealt with as just another form of basic or secondary education, without highlighting its abilities to reduce inequalities for the marginalised, or its power in enlarging their achievement of aspiration, hence overlooking all those who are targeting the marginalised through VET. Focusing only on the formal system adds another layer of structural challenge and marginalisation of the sector. This was evident in the exclusion of the vocational training data and information from the national and global figures and information, and the inability to set them within the international definitions. My research has presented an example of the possibility to integrate all VET providers in statistics.

As a result, and in order to overcome the structural challenges through intended accountable actions, my capability list contained an additional column that included for each functioning, the "valued functionings for policymakers" in order to enable and enlarge graduates' well-being. In accordance with the political economy argument made

by Brown, Green and Lauder (2001), skills acquisition and utilisation are seen as social acts that represent more than the sum of individual action, and in this regard the acquisition of the high skills requires “social transformation”, point to the increased role and political will of the government and the increased role of the social partners and the government in both the demand and supply side of skills upgrading. Suggested valued functionings for policymakers lie alongside the international TVET arguments. It will confirm policy-level responsibilities towards VET learners’ well-being and reducing inequality.

Lists, Indicators and Tools Produced by the Research

Hence, in striving to answer the research question, I have constructed a capability list that would contribute to human development, including effectiveness, relevance, its contribution to employment and economic resources, as well as empowerment elements while taking inequality into consideration and demanding accountability. The list could be a proposal to ensure the achievement of VET goals, which is the wellbeing and the empowerment of the VET Learners towards a contribution to economic and social development for their own communities and countries, and, most importantly, towards the achievement of human development.

Putting this thesis into operation would enable the development of an overall monitoring framework that could be proposed to ensure how VET can contribute to the advancement of HD and how reducing inequalities would build on the CL (Box-3) and the empowerment indicators (Box-4) to include well-being and empowerment at its impact level, while the functionings and empowerment indicators are at the outcome level, policies and measures could be treated as assumptions. Nevertheless, VET’s contribution to advancing HD and reducing inequality is not only in the form of results but in the process of reaching those results. This could be a proposal that would need further development in the future, utilising my research work, and the work of other scholars in the field. Another dimension that would need further research is the contribution of VET to a Human-Rights-Based-Approach, an area that I intended to investigate but had to reduce so as not to add further complexity to the research.

In the Palestinian context, my research is the first research that links VET with HD, although work has been done linking VET with gender equality and poverty reduction, but linking VET with inequality in general is also an addition to the Palestinian literature. Moreover, it brings together two parallel perspectives of development and emergency by analysing VET's contribution to HD within a context of marginalisation, while testing relevant context-related marginalisation, an area that is addressed only weakly in the literature. On the Palestinian practical level, my research analyses gaps and deficits to present a future road map to sustain and enhance VET's role in contributing to advancing HD and reducing inequality for the Palestinians.

Research Demonstrated VET Contribution to HD and Reducing Inequality

In Conclusion, my thesis has illustrated how VET contributes to advancing HD and reducing inequality, by contributing to the global arguments, debates and the tools. My work has verified and developed the VET capability list of Powell (2014) to include inequality elements and to be linked with political economy arguments. My work has also highlighted the importance of empowerment when addressing VET learners and brought in the notion of choice and empowerment as a goal for reducing inequality. My work has contributed to the Palestinian debate and the global discussion on inequality, by illustrating how VET could be a tool to reduce inequality, and to VET's goals by indicating how important it is to include empowerment as part of VET's contribution for individuals in general and to marginalised communities in an adverse context. My research indicates further that enhanced accountability and policies can magnify the impact of VET on social and economic achieved capabilities, and on achieved aspirations and accordingly on VET's contribution to HD.

Therefore, my work has indicated the importance of marrying the two; VET in development and empowerment, not only to reduce inequalities, but also to advance human development. I was able to achieve this through my holistic theoretical framework that is based on three lenses, the CA, the GAD theory complemented by the intersectionality approach, and the political economy arguments. The research has

successfully presented a new theoretical framework for VET and development, and used GAD to assess inequality.

Again globally, my research illustrates that if VET could contribute to promoting human development and reducing inequality within one of the most oppressive contexts, Palestinian youth and communities in Palestine under military occupation, then it can surely contribute to promoting human development and reducing inequality globally.

Limitations

Although the analysis of the research and theorisation can be used globally, notably, the results of the research are limited to the VET Skills levels below the tertiary levels, institutional to public institutes, geographical to oPt areas, and is time bound, as field research was conducted during 2015, with exception of Gaza completed in 2016.

List of Resources

In the attached CD

Annexes

Annex 1. The Pilot Report

Annex 2. The Tools, Consent Forms and Information Sheet

Annex 3. The People Participated in the Research

Annex 4. General Analysis of the Survey- Excel Tables

Annex 5. Sample of Documented Interviews and FGD

Annex 6. Example of the work from the field from transcripts to categorisations and quotes

Annex 7. Coding of the Transcripts and Quotes

Annex 8. Photos of filled documents and data storage

Annexes in attached CD