

The Need In Training And Retraining For TVET Teachers In Malaysia

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Abstract

Malaysia is a fast developing country and to support the growth of Malaysia industrial sector Malaysia needs highly skilled workforce. To fulfill this needs Malaysia has developed many vocational and technical training institutes. Currently there are approximately 194 technical-vocational institutions and there is a plan to increase this number during five next year plan. They are 90 technical schools which provide the vocational course in secondary school level. The Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) in Malaysia started with the enforcement of Razak Report 1956 and Education Ordinance 1957. Other education reports and education memorandum such as Rahman Talib Report and Education Act 1961, Mahathir Report 1979, Cabinet Memorandum 1995, 1998 and 1999 had further sustained the policies, system, curriculum and direction of technical and vocational education. Although the theoretical debate continues, it has been generally that curriculum should be seen as an overall plan for instruction. It consists of a statement of aims and objectives of content in terms of theoretical knowledge, practical skills to be required, attitude towards work and necessary support materials to be used in its presentation. Improving curriculum content has long been regarded as a core-component of TVET. To produce the good quality of TVET in the school level the focus is the teachers those who specialized in their field. Many of teaching staff who were employed possessed necessary technical skills but no had more opportunity to undertake professional training. TVE in Malaysia, there is a shortage of qualified technical and vocational teachers. Most teachers are recruited directly after they graduated from universities and collages based on their academic qualifications and do not have industrial work experience. At the same time qualified personnel with work experience are not willing to become teachers due to the unattractive salary scheme. This paper is a review of the structure and performance of the TVE teachers in Malaysia. It consists in development of curriculum, program design, the nature of learning materials and stakeholders involvement. Teacher training in TVE can be defined is the main role in providing the skill to fulfill the school level TVE needs. Retraining is defined as upgrading of existing skill or acquiring a new one. Upgrading skills can be by accelerating – by doing and joining program in other TVET institution or center. The performance of teacher in TVE is important to make the Technical School in Malaysia is the selected school for parents to send their children and choose the TVE field as a carrier path. This paper is a discussion the issues in training and retraining needs, strategies introduced to overcome the teaching staff as well as curriculum relevancy. Improving the quality of teachers in TVET is related to raising the quality of technical and vocational education.

Keywords: Training, Retraining.

Introduction

Schools offer teachers a good deal more than only the task of preparing students for the world of work. The attention being given to the teacher quality by media, policymakers and researchers is high and debates about teachers have been intense, creating numerous policy decisions at local, state and national levels. However, improving teacher quality and teacher preparation is no simple task. In Malaysia teachers was trained in universities and teacher's training institutions. For TVE teachers a few universities and teacher's training institutions provided the courses which can fulfil the schools needs. At 1990's had one of the teacher's training institutions was the specialist training centres for TVE teachers offered the vocational courses purposely to fulfil the vocational school needs. A few universities provide the courses for technical teachers in terms of technical schools needs. All the graduates either from the teacher training institutions or universities they have qualification and abilities to teach in the technical & vocational schools in Malaysia. The discussion in this paper is that the training that they have did will provide the best performance for TVE in school system in Malaysia? Is that the Curriculum development, program design, the nature of learning materials and stakeholders involvement are the another factors should teachers know and improve. For teachers who had five, ten or more experience in teaching need the retraining to make their knowledge relevance in what market needs? General or vocational education? This is a "tough choice" in many developing countries (Yang, 1998). In the human capital framework, general education creates 'general human capital' and vocational and technical education 'specific human capital' (Becker, 1964). The former is portable across one's life and from job to job, while the later one is not and hence many advocate general education, as more suitable to the flexible labour force that can change task and even the type of work; but the later one has an advantage, imbibing specific job-relevant skills, that can make the worker more readily suitable for a given job and would make him/her thus more productive. Hence both are important, and education systems in many countries therefore include both general and vocational streams of education in varying proportions.

Training for TVE Teachers

Teacher training in TVE can be defined is the main role in providing the skill. Training is concerned with the development of knowledge and skills to be used immediately or in the very near future and deals with developing people who already have or who are just about to enter a job (Micheal D.T & Diane R.L.,2008). Carter and Gribble (1994) said in a nutshell, vocational education and training is learning activity which can contributes to successful economic performance and tangible economic and social gains. It is this focus on tangible outcomes an accountability which broadly distinguishes them from general vocational and education system and services. As stated, in Malaysia teachers training was conducted by a few universities and teacher's training institutions. 1980s and 1990s Technical Teacher's Training College was one of the training centres provide the vocational courses for vocational schools in Malaysia. The courses offered such as Automotive, Building Constructions, Welding and Electric & Electronics. Each of the trainees should complete their training within one and half years to three years it is depends

on their basic qualification. Within the training duration they should attend the industrial training for 6 month to have knowledge and skills in their fields. The strength of this experience or we can call situated learning in a particular setting such as the workplace is that learning occurs where the problems to be solved are real or live. They were located in selected industries and will supervise by the person in charge there. Lecturers will come to observe two or three time to make sure trainees will follow the college and industries rules. Trainees learned a lot in this training. They will have extra knowledge and skills for the preparation when they will be a teacher soon. After they finished their training in colleges the will award the certificate and diploma as a teaching license. But when the government policy had changed and a few improvements have done to have more high quality of teachers especially in TVE. The focus to produce teachers are more to technical field which is not skill oriented. Universities provide the degree course for TVE teachers. When they complete their study they will graduate as another student in other courses but they will teach technical & vocational subject in technical or academic schools. The different of two types of training, teachers graduated from training colleges are more focus in their skills. Teachers from universities are more knowledge in terms of science & technology. What all the teachers needs in retraining which can improve their quality, curriculum content, approach of teaching & learning to make TVE is the main choice of parents to send their children to technical & vocational schools in Malaysia.

A. Curriculum Development of Training

The word curriculum means educational path and describes the learning process in much more comprehensive and complex fashion than is possible with plans learning content or learning material. These days curriculum development is oriented towards the learner it means to the students or trainee and the learning process than towards the content of learning. A curriculum in contrast provides information on the following aspects of learning:

- At whom is the educational process aimed?
- What goals and qualifications are to be achieved?
- What contents are to be learned?
- What teaching methods and aids are to be used?
- How is the result to be tested?

The effectiveness of training system dependant on a well developed curriculum must be measured by the extent to which:

- It is able to attract then young generation into the occupation of the future and skills which employers need
- It is able to deliver not only technical contents (technical skills) but also help students to learn how to cope with new challenges and prepare them for the long life learning
- It is able to provide people with the basic set of skills it takes to transfer from one job or area of work to another, once they have entered the workforce and it offers access to all without the constraints of entry requirement.

Retraining for TVE Teachers

What is the retraining need? Retraining is defined as upgrading of existing skill or acquiring a new one. Upgrading skills can be by accelerating – by doing and joining program in other TVET institution or centres. The performance of teacher in TVE is important to make the Technical School in Malaysia is the selected school for parents to send their children and choose the TVE field as a carrier path. Teachers should attend retraining to improve their performance and knowledge especially to make students more in teaching and learning session. They can have short or long term of retraining depends on the needs. Figure 1 show why retraining need.

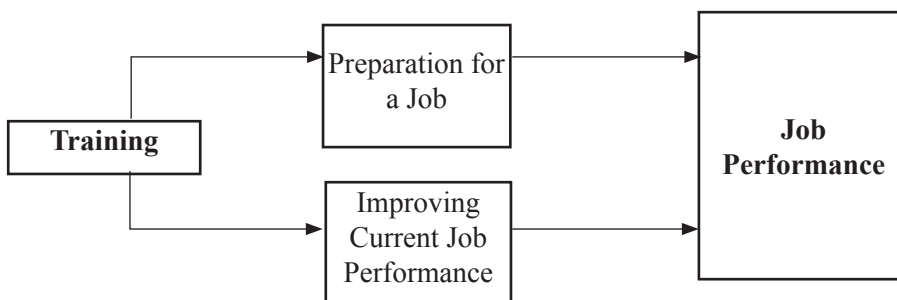


Figure 1: Short-term focus of training

The need of retraining for TVE teachers in Malaysia will begin when the new of assessment introduced for vocational students in 2006. The new approach of assessment for vocational students is competency-based education and modular system was implemented. Back to the basis objectives of vocational education to prepare students gain job-oriented education, clear career pathways and opportunities to gain access to higher education. The challenges of this situation are (Yusof Harun, 2008) ; retraining of teachers to enable them to teach any vocational subjects, getting industries to be mentors to enable the department to train students who are suitably skilled for the work place, developing multi-skill students and gaining international accreditation for the courses offered. This paper is to discuss and analyze the element of retraining needs for TVE teachers in terms of development of curriculum, program design, the nature of learning materials and stakeholder's involvement.

A. Retraining Program Design

The program should design towards adult learning characteristic. The characteristic of training is similar of characteristic of learning which will prepare how people learn and develop competency and expertise in the subject. Teachers will involve in this program will adapt lifelong learning experience in their carrier. The program should be designed with corporation in companies and industries involved. In designing training program, the specific outcomes are requiring to prove the competencies. Competency is one ability to perform tasks based on specific criteria; knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes. It is observable, measurable and practicable. Each individual can acquire competency if given the appropriate instructions, guidance, teachings, opportunities and time. The training

need analysis should be identified including a job or skills analysis to develop retraining course for teachers. This analysis will allow identifying what is required of individuals performing. Figure 2 shows that the suggestion analysis phases of program design.

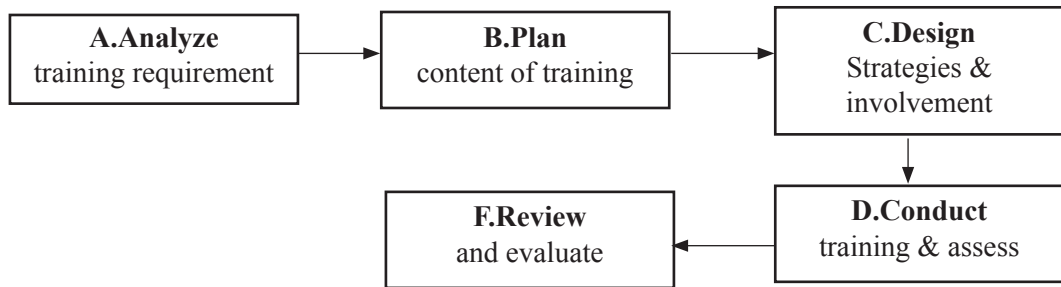


Figure 2: Analysis Phase

Department of Technical Education, Malaysia Ministry of Education was planned the quality of retraining for TVE teachers to fulfil the requirement of new environment of vocational system for school level. These programs enable vocational teachers gain recognition from training agencies for acquiring competencies which are recognized at national and international level. It will comprise accreditation of teacher's skills by Skills Development Department and international recognition in the implementation of competency-based education and training by international agencies. The corporation between industries will enrich teacher's knowledge and skills. Teachers should attend the training in certain period and they will gain latest knowledge and technology in industries. The purposes of this special program are to exposure to the real work environment, knowledge on workshop management, exposure to machinery maintenance and practicing teamwork as done in industries. All these factors will contribute continues knowledge and teachers will know what had happened in industries it will help delivery of knowledge to their students.

B. Learning Method and Materials

The changing of pedagogy is important to more learners cantered. In classroom or workshop teachers should plan and implement new approach of teaching and learning. Teachers still use the traditional method because they did not exposed with the new trend of teaching especially for experienced teachers. Nowadays there various types of method and materials can be used in teaching. The suitable method in vocational education can use such as problem based learning (PBL), work- based learning, project -based learning and blended learning. Students can use the various source of materials from internet or discussion besides the text books provided.

i. Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

The process of PBL (Galgher, Resenthal & Stephen, 2004) can help students become better at problem-solving. The process of solving problems encourages students working together; learn critical thing skills and they will become self-directed learners.

ii. Work-Based Learning

The approach of work-based learning is an application in industrial work setting where schools and colleges are placing students to learn skills in workplace environment. It

is an alternative to classroom training; action learning has been adopted by business schools and corporation as work-based experimental. Teachers should be able to know how to implement this method to prepare students in work-based experience. The characteristics of the method are knowledge and skills relevant for an occupation that contain essential elements of work identified by actual work.

iii. Project-based learning

Project-based learning offers quite a different take on the relationship between working and learning and between being a worker and learner. Teachers will give students the task integrate previous learning to using their experience in ‘real’ workplace and try to solve the ‘real’ work problem. It will help students more expose to real world of work and can be understood as the kind of thing that real workers do.

iv. Blended learning

Globalization and technology are altering our views on education and educational offerings. Technology has given to many new avenues for learning. To name a few, online learning, teleconferencing, the Internet, computer assisted learning (CAL), web-based distance learning (WBDL) and other technologies currently exist. In turn, they have helped to coin the term “blended learning” (BL), and although the term is still ill-defined, BL has entered into the training and education scene and is gaining popularity. BL is no longer a fad but is now expanding and getting established, although rapidly changing.

Stakeholders Involvement

To achieve the level of vocational education to higher level the participation of other stakeholders is needed. Parents and industries should know their role to more upgrading the vocational schools. The program for teachers training with industries attachment will contribute the new standard of TVE teachers. The industries will be mentors to enable the department to train students who are suitable skill for work place. Teachers can be highly skilled worker with relevant competencies in vocational course in schools. To develop the qualification of teachers the embedded of actual theoretical knowledge and practical experience on the specific vocational subject they teach.

Conclusion

The need of training and retraining is importance in order to develop innovative TVE teachers. Implement of a coherent but flexible structure of teacher training programs on different level based on the high standard of teachers. Malaysia should have the new National TVET-Teacher Qualification Standards as criteria against which somebody will be assessed for entering or exiting a specific teacher-training program as an element of lifelong professional development. These standards should be developing as a first step when modernizing the existing teacher training system. Skills accreditation programs for vocational teachers should be more which can collaborate with Skills Development Department in Ministry of Human Resource. To overcome the lack of skills among teachers, they are required to attend to short-term courses to improve their skills.

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