

## **A Preliminary Study for the DB Construction of Vocational Training Agencies and Training Programs**

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### **I. Introduction**

This study examines the experience of and the demand for information on vocational training agencies and training programs, with a view to planning a more appropriate database construction. The researchers reviewed domestic and foreign information systems and databases, and conducted a survey to find out the actual usage and the demand of users for the training information. The users of training information, who have been surveyed consist of staff members of companies in charge of education and training, and trainees(both employed and unemployed) enrolled in the programs of training agencies. On the basis of survey results, this study evokes the purpose to which the database of vocational training information serves, and depicts provisional designs for database structure and composition of contents. This study also proposes executive plans for the database construction process, from data collection to maintenance and control of the database system, and four-staged working plans.

### **II. Results of survey on the usage and demand for vocational training information**

The findings from the survey of the access behavior to information reveal that companies tend to assume the 'agency-dependent type' which relies highly on training or labor-related agencies to obtain information, while trainees tend to assume the 'active

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information-seeking type' which relies heavily on one's own vigorous effort.

The survey results of the use experiences and the degree of satisfaction indicate that both companies and workers, who are the primary demanders of vocational training information, show extremely high rates of experience in using the information, but generally express low degree of satisfaction. It suggests that the vocational training information need not only to expand in volume but also in quality.

When companies and trainees make choice of training programs, they consider the specialties and the training methods of those programs most important. As far as training agencies are concerned, they give priority to the qualification of training instructors, facilities and equipment.

According to the survey on the need for vocational training information, trainees are generally on a higher level of demand for vocational training information than companies, and among trainees the unemployed exceed the employed in the level of demand. This kind of pattern carries through all the surveyed categories of vocational training information.

The level of demand for sub-categorized information of vocational training is as follows. With respect to the 'information about training agencies(ITA),' the information on 'training capability of agencies' has higher rate than the information on 'specialties of training agencies.' In terms of the 'information about training programs(ITP),' the demand levels are alike among the sub-categories of information on 'specialties of programs', 'training methods' and 'expenses, effects, enrollment'. In terms of 'the assessment information on training agencies(AITA),' the highest rating is given to the information about 'assessment of management and trainee supervision', which is followed by 'assessment of training capability of programs' and 'assessment of training records and outcome.' In the 'assessment information on training programs(AITP),' the information on the 'assessment of training contents and learning process' is followed by 'assessment of program development and management' and 'assessment of records and outcome of programs.' (The items within the 'agency inspection results information(AIRI)' were not sub-categorized in this survey.)

The sub-categories of vocational training information which were indicated as most

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highly in demand has been analysed in terms of information users. The results of the analysis show that companies prefer above all the information about: (1) agency inspection results information(AIRI), (2) assessment of training contents and learning process of the AITP, (3) specialties of training programs of the ITP, (4) training capability of agencies of ITA, (5) 'expenses, effects, enrollment' of the ITP (6) training methods of the ITP, in that order. Trainees prefer information about: (1) assessment of training contents and learning process of AITP, (2) specialties of programs of ITP, (3) assessment of management and trainee supervision of AITA, (4) expenses, effects, enrollment of ITP, (5) training capability of agencies of ITA, (6) training methods of ITP, to any other information.

From the analysis of demand for vocational training information a number of conclusions were reached. First, the distinct structure of workers' demand for information need to be discerned, because they are major users demanding a lot of information. Second, the database of vocational training information should provide more detailed, accurate and unbiased information on the topics for which users show a high level of demand, such as 'agency inspection results', 'assessment of training contents,' 'specialties of training programs,' 'training capability of agencies,' 'expenses, effects, enrollment' of training programs.

In short, the insufficiency of ITA and the complete lack of provision of AITA and AITP by the established system of network for vocational training information, requires that those kinds of information lacking but in demand, should be supplemented.

### **III. The strategies for the database construction**

The database of vocational training agencies and training programs is one of the sub-databases of the NHRD-Net (National Human Resources Development Net). The objectives of the database are: "1) to systematically compile, classify, and process information on training agencies and training programs for vocational competence development; 2) to provide information for a variety of users, such as business firms, employed or unemployed workers, the government, and research institutes; and ultimately,

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3) to contribute to the sound operation of the training market, the development of human resources, and the well-balanced supply and demand of manpower at the national level."

In designing the database of vocational training agencies and training programs, the first consideration should be given to the clients, or the actual users who demand training information. A variety of information provided by the database should be satisfactory in the sense of comprehensiveness and brevity as well. It is important to make sure that the comparison among various training agencies and among training programs are possible. The database system need to be so flexible that linking with other network systems is available, and so practical that it can be used for the purposes of consultation and counseling services for training. Furthermore, its efficient connection to the other related projects should be taken into account.

The database of vocational training agencies and training programs can provide workers with the training information for the enhancement of job competence, employers with the information on customized training for leveling up employee's skill, researchers with basic statistical data and raw material of training, training agencies with the opportunity for advertising their own institutions and programs. By promoting the circulation of objective and precise training information, it will contribute to the smooth operation of the training market in the long run.

The database of vocational training agencies and training programs is going to cover all the training institutions or facilities, which are undertaking the vocational competence development project, and their training programs. The database, however, will exclude training facilities established and operated internally by companies. The formation of database consists of three large spheres, such as 'information about training agencies,' 'information about training programs,' and 'information about trainees.' The 'information about training agencies' contains the information on topics, such as 'specialties of training agencies,' 'training capability of agencies,' 'establishment process,' 'assessment results of training agencies,' and 'inspection results of training agencies.' The 'information about training programs' contains the sub-categorized information on 'specialties of training programs,' 'training methods,' 'the expenses, effects, enrollment,' 'results of program assessment.' In the 'information about trainees,' the sub-categories of information on

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'personal records,' 'training history,' 'job career' are included. More detailed items are supposed to be determined by referring to the survey results and the items of information HRD-net offers.

The following elements are essential in making sure the successful construction and stable operation of the database system. First, it is necessary to make specific plans for the efficient collection of information, the continuous update of data, and the maintenance and supplementation of database system. The organization and the budget to support those plans are also to be secured. Second, the analysis of the database should be paralleled with more systematic classification and codification of training agencies and training programs to produce basic statistics and data of training. Third, it is recommended that the database construction process be accomplished within a year or so, through the four stages of: (1) planning, (2) construction, (3) assesment and supplementation, and (4) maintenance and control. The executive task force and group of professionals are supposed to cooperate each other to monitor the progress at every stage. Problems may be found and solved through this close monitoring.

Finally, it is important to propel the project forward in cooperation with the authorities concerned, such as the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, the Ministry of Labor, and the Korea Manpower Agency Work Information Center. It is also necessary to have an efficient connection with other resources, not only the related projects of NHRD-Net construction, reconstruction of HRD-Net, and assesment on training agencies and programs, but also the relevant databases of the demand survey on training, the tracing survey on workers who have completed training programs, and the survey on the degree of satisfaction with training.