

A Case Study on Teaching-Learning Status of Vocational Education and Training

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The purpose of this research is to assess the teaching – learning environment in vocational education and training programs for the unemployed. A great deal of research has been done in this area, however there has been a notable lack of research on the teaching – learning environment. Especially conspicuous in its absence is qualitative research examining in detail the mechanisms of the teaching – learning environment in the actual field.

We therefore conducted case studies on 13 vocational education and training institutes that had been praised for the competitiveness of their operating programs over the past few years. The institutes were categorized into 4 sectors: mechanical(3 institutes), office management(2 institutes), information technology (3 institutes), and beauty treatment/medical treatment/cooking(5 institutes). The institutes were selected according to the standards and procedures devised by a panel of experts.

To devise a framework for the analysis, we undertook literature reviews, analyzed data from the institutes, and held discussions with experts. In this process, concept, characteristics and recent trends of the teaching – learning environment in vocational education and training were ascertained and confirmed. In this study, related factors, including processes that influence the teaching – learning environment were analyzed, and a narrative of the history and direction of government policies concerning vocational education and training were presented. Throughout this process, the direction of this research was established, and research variables, tools and frameworks were delineated. Evaluation on the management status of domestic vocational education and training institutes was also conducted. As the main research method, in-depth interviews were conducted and certain responses of the trainees were analyzed statistically.

The framework of this research was as follows. The two key points of analysis were the teaching – learning input factors and the teaching – learning process. As environmental factors, industries, institutes, and government policies were analyzed; essential factors, programs, trainees, and trainers were analyzed; and implementation factors, the teaching – learning method and teaching – learning media were analyzed. Next, we examined the contents with focus on the teaching – learning process and performed a systematic analysis. The teaching – learning process is classified into three parts of “before class”(analysis, design, development), “in class”(implementation), and “after class”(evaluation).

This research was correlated with this year’s newly changed policies. We anticipate that this study would be important in illuminating the specific influences of the policy change. The results of the research reveal the distinct characteristics and problems of this teaching – learning environment, particularly in terms of the trainee recruitment, trainers, facilities, program information and the field’s intrinsic characteristics. Based on this study, we suggested teaching – learning improvements that vocational education and training institutes themselves can carry out, and policy improvements the government should initiate.

The suggestions arising from this research are as follows. First, the institutes should be specialized, and should make concentrated investment in their programs. It is also important to recruit trainers who have practical qualifications, support continuous training and improve labor conditions. Second, the institutes should make use of demand analysis results and apply these to the teaching – learning process. To narrow the gap among trainees, it is necessary to increase interaction between trainers and trainees, and to support supplementary or enrichment programs. In addition, management experiences and know-how should be accumulated systematically and directly shared with the institutes to enhance their capabilities.

The role of government should include strengthening career counseling and information infrastructures to assist trainees and others in need of support to assist them make better choices with more information. Lastly, it is necessary to improve policies to attract qualified institutes to the industry, and to prevent untrustworthy institutes from entering it. Moreover, the number of programs should be limited to a more reasonable level.