

# Vocational education and training



The main courses offered by the universities today are more often related to theoretical education and learning. However, some educators and even job employers see that the knowledge given through the universities is not sufficient enough to equip the students with the necessary skills needed for becoming a reliable worker after they attend school. Why is supplementary education often necessary? First, a large number of jobs today require a higher level of skill. “ The bank teller who just took deposits has been eliminated by the money machine,” says a U. S. Labor Department representative.

“ Now [the teller] has to advise me on three types of money market deposits and explain to me why I want this one rather than that one. ” William D. Ford, chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, says: “ The simple jobs are gone. ” (as quoted by Lauglo, 2005) Second, some feel that schools are not giving students an adequate education. They say that the focus on such issues as drug abuse, AIDS, and birth control overshadow the teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Dr.

Robert Appleton, a teacher for 27 years, laments that the school system seems to have become a “ social service institution” that is under the burden of “ dealing with problems that were not considered to be a part of the school. ” (as quoted by Lauglo, 2005) VET (vocational education and training) Page 2 As a result of the failure of some schools to teach students’ needed skills, many high school graduates are unable to support themselves. “ They haven’t been taught to work,” says Joseph W. Schroeder, manager of an office of Florida’s Job Service.” In dealing with young people the problem

that employers tell me about constantly is that they can't read or write very well.

They can't fill out a job application. " A third reason supplementary education may be needed is that in numerous lands there is a surplus of college graduates flooding the job market. " College graduates outstrip the demand for their skills," says The New York Times. " Given this oversupply," the report adds, " employers are reluctant to gamble on high school graduates. " (as quoted by Finlay, 1998)To qualify for the type of employment needed to support themselves adequately, many are going back to school. In the United States, 59 percent continue their education beyond high school.

This represents a significant increase over the 50-percent figure that lingered for decades. Similar trends are noted in other countries as well. For example, since the 1960's, Britain has experienced a significant increase in the proportion of students who receive schooling beyond the compulsory limit. In one recent year, Australia saw 85 percent of those finishing high school apply for various universities and colleges.

About 95 percent of Japan's students take exams to receive an extra three years of education, where they are prepared either for a job or for college. In relation to this, worldwide reports regarding vocational schooling and training gain so much popularity in the field of education. As a proof, it has been reported that • enrollment in major U. S. four-year, state-supported colleges is dropping.

Usually when spring enters, applications for the fall semester are over 4 percent lower than there were enrollees in the year 1980. Why the drop? One reason is money. Middle-income families cannot afford the increasing tuitions. The colleges themselves are in financial trouble.

A new report by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education says that financially they are "living on borrowed time." Changing attitudes toward education are a major reason for the decline in applications. More than two thirds of college seniors recently interviewed agree: "Much of what is taught at colleges is irrelevant to what is going on in the outside world." Many youngsters are turning to vocational and technical skills.

Some believe that colleges actually help produce society's problems. P. Lesley, speaking to the Public Relations Society of America, observed: "Colleges offer degrees as freedom from routine roles and marks of leadership. Yet only a few find they can attain their dreamed-of influence, and disillusion sets in.

Those who have been led to expect great things then seek to justify themselves. They have the time, the inclination and the opportunity to attack the structure that does not recognize their superiority." (as reported by Nijhof, 2001) Yes, this is the usual trend in the field of educating the young people today. In Australia, vocational courses are offered by almost 80% (percent) of the universities in the said country.

The training programs established in Australia are not only appreciated by the youth but also by the working sector of the entire Australian population. Through the years of the application of the said trend of education,

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vocational training has been able to produce competent employers and thus gain better results from the Australian economy. Meanwhile, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Vocational training is simply applied for the benefit of the current employers whose skills needed to be enhanced for the benefit of the companies they are working for. The main educational tradition of UAE is still based upon the old-school ways. As a fact, most of the universities in the countries within the said continent stay so long within their classrooms to learn their lessons.

This is the main reason why there is a certain need of evaluating and enhancing the Vocational training systems of UAE. In this regard, it is indeed helpful to compare the Australian VET system with that of the educational structure of UAE. Background UAE is a country that prides itself in its industrial manufacturing primarily in the oil and gas sector. The country is gifted with natural resources and a workforce that is well-educated. The economic growth of the country, though highly dependent on oil production, is the result of the emergence of other non-oil sectors that the government is trying to push. Developing new industries requires training the workforce in new ways and the country's educational system is the key to such goal.

As mentioned earlier, The UAE educational system has been normally based upon the traditional school setting. This system used by UAE is composed of several years of staying in school. Primary and secondary schooling is compulsory in the country. A child begins to study at the age of 4 and ends secondary schooling at the age of 18. The said system takes 14 years to complete is a composed of a four-stage process.

Higher education in UAE has been well established for several years now. Government-based institutions offer citizens various courses free-of-charge. Students also have the option of attending private institutions that are accredited internationally. In this regard, numerous educational establishments are built in most locations of the continent.

However, it is quite disturbing that there exists no national grading system for the education of the students of UAE. In this way, each institution in the said continent has its own standardized grading system. Grades are very important in determining a student's capability and skills, thus gauging how much they have learned from the educational institutions they are attending. Most of the courses offered in the institutions in UAE are related with the theoretical. On the other hand, the establishment of Higher College of Technologies paved way to a more skill-focused education.

The sub-degree level programs have been opened to the UAE students. On the other hand, the difference of the requirements for the education levels has not so much difference. Both certificate and degree programs require a certain pre-study attendance for most of the students in UAE. The certificate programs have requirements of two years of full time study. Aside from this, the said programs also require several practical training schedules during the course proper. Another feature of the certificate programs include added education with regards to English proficiency and mathematical computations.

However, when the year 2004 came in, the certificate programs suddenly ended, while today, there are new certificate programs being developed in

the said continent for further implementation in the future. As a student graduates from certain certificate programs, there may be some point when how would like to pursue their studies on higher levels. In this regard, they are allowed to do so, provided that they are able to pass a certain level of grade that would qualify them to becoming reliable of taking the responsibility of studying for a higher degree. As reported through the history of Arabian education, the culture of learning in UAE is characterized by several years of training as well as a numerous hours of staying at school. This fact drives the idea to the conclusion that the UAE students are used to being forced to stay in school as they study in their own country. This has mainly created issues in making Vocational Education and Training a possible source of needed skills for many UAE students as well as the labor force.

**Australian Education System** The Australian education system is organized into three levels, primary, secondary, and tertiary. The primary level consists of grades 1-6 while the secondary level consists of levels 7-12. For the tertiary level, the students are presented with a variety of options. There are universities that offer foundation courses, undergraduate and post graduate degrees, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, as well as private vocational education providers. TAFE colleges are publicly funded colleges that provide training to those that have finished at least 10th grade in the secondary level. Primarily, TAFE colleges are the first choice for training and practically have monopolized the training market.

(Anderson, 1994) It has several advantages over private training institutions. For one, the TAFE system operates as a consortium. Thus, “ They are able to <https://assignbuster.com/vocational-education-and-training/>

exert considerable influence on and control of the market, due to their sheer weight of numbers, breadth of products and services, their geographical reach and coverage and their historical control of the market. ” (Anderson, 1994) Also, the TAFE colleges have a wide range of curriculum resources. This, in turn, allows them to offer lower prices compared to private training institutions that need to develop their own curriculum and find their own resources.

Finally, with the help of the government and the backing of industries, TAFE colleges are better promoted.(Anderson, 1994) However, TAFE colleges encounter certain restrictions. For instance, according to Anderson, “ the capacity of their colleges to compete on the open market in a flexible and cost-effective manner is severely restricted by the ‘ bureaucratic straightjacket’ which they are forced to wear as public sector providers. ” (Anderson, 1994) Such standing has several disadvantages.

These include lesser flexibility and control of resources, restrictions on fee charging, less flexible cost structures.(Anderson, 1994) TAFE colleges are required to follow certain standards that may inhibit them from providing the same benefits that private training institutions offer. History The current VET systems used by Australia compared to the systems, which used to evolve in the UAE educational traditions, are indeed very different. In Australia, the vocational trainings are given as a basis of skill enhancement for those who are under privileged and are less capable of getting a college degree education at that. In the Australian society, Vocational education is considered as a social equalizer. It naturally helps in achieving a certain level



of equality in the said community, as it has long been a way in which many under privileged Australians benefit from these programs.

The raw talent and skills of the lower sector of the Australian society are furnished to becoming useful assets for the country's economy. Through reports, it has been noted that Australian VET systems are designed in a flexible way. This is in aim of reaching the far horizons of the country, thus providing the best and most practical way of learning for those who could not afford to take their talents and be enhanced in the universities of the country. Usually, the training programs provided to the current employers of different business organizations in Australia are also held in a VET setting, wherein the trainees are encouraged to join a certain training program at a specific time.

Through this, the employees are further equipped with the necessary skills they need to upgrade their performance within their own respective organizations. There are also a distinctive number of choices for students to choose from. There are several training packages offered to those who are interested to take training courses. Each package is designed to meet whatever the needs of the applying trainee are. The packages are also designed to meet their capabilities when it comes to the paying transactions between the trainee and the institution as well. Through the application of the things learned from the training, Australian educators believe that the knowledge gained from learning could be enhanced.

This is the reason behind the implication of the mixing of the on-the-job trainings as well as off-the-job trainings within the modular system of several

vocational courses. Through this, the lessons that were learned from classrooms through lectures and the classroom type of discussion, application of the learned lessons immediately follows through. Indeed, this process results to the ability of the student to apply well what he has learned in an effective way since the span of time between the off-site training and the on-site application is minimized, thus making it easier for the students to retain in their minds most of the things that they have just previously learned. Another vital component of Australia's VET is competency-based training (CBT). This was introduced into the VET program in 1990 and substantial implementation was expected in 1993. The CBT serves as the foundation of the training reform initiated in Australia.

(Smith, 1998) Smith (1998) points out the three key principles of CBT: ? the focus of the training is on the outcome of the training; ? the outcome is measured against specified standards, not against other students; the standards relate to industry The primary aim of CBT is to develop employees who can perform in the industry. The industry is thus, a vital component of CBT. Its role is to develop the competency standards and to monitor the CBT courses. According to Smith (1998), " In an ideal CBT situation, at least some of the training is delivered in the workplace on the job, and some of the assessment takes place in the workplace under ' real life' conditions. " Moreover, the CBT is not concerned with the inputs in training.

Rather, its main concern is the outcome. The CBT disregards where an individual acquires his training. What is important is what his competency and his ability to perform. This is the reason why the CBT program has what is termed as Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL).

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According to Smith (1998), “ This form of RPL is different from the credit transfer which TAFE and other training providers have always given, where trainees are exempted for certificated academic study they have previously undertaken. RPL is also used in industry to help place people on appropriate pay levels. ” Finally, the CBT is known for providing flexible delivery. This means that training can be delivered through various ways to meet the needs of the clients.(Smith, 1998) Aside from all the systems mentioned in here, it has also been Australia’s aim to innovate the way they are providing their students with the needed skill that they have to have to be able to gain a reputable name in the jobs they are employed at or the ones that are still preparing to employ them after the training. In this way, they tried to incorporate the systematic approach of working within the useful attitudes of the students that are already considered essential for the jobs available in the market.

Among the most effective ways of meeting the said need that was used by the educators of vocational training in Australia is the cyber world. Within the boundary-less provisions of the Internet, vocational training has also been successfully implemented in the said country, thus making it more possible for the educators to reach more and more students at a random manner. Comparison Clearly, the systems used by both continents are completely different. Considering the fact that the approach of both countries towards education is different, it could be fairly concluded that they both have different views on how vocational education could be provided to the students. As mainly seen, since the Australian community is more focused upon the economic status and the practicality of the education, they were

able to implicate a systematic approach towards vocational teaching. Whilst, on the other way around, UAE views education as a matter of social degree.

In this regard, vocational training which are still re-developed to be offered in the said continent has less chances of being appreciated by the community than it is appreciated in Australia. In addition to this, the importance of education to Australians as a source of possible income is indeed a challenge for UAE to take pattern from. Certainly, if UAE would try to pattern their educational organization with regards to vocational training, with that of the Australian systems, they would gain better results from the said ' practical education', thus making their continent a more reliable source of labor. This could naturally boost up the national economy of UAE.

On the other hand, if UAE continuous to focus simply upon the degree courses offered in the universities, many among the lower sector of UAE's population would gain lesser ability of learning and applying the things they learned from the trainings in the future. Discussion Knowing that most of the industries found in the territories of UAE are more inclined on employing labor workers, there is a certain need for the said countries to adapt to vocational educational training. This is mainly because of the fact that the more skilled laborers there are in the continent, the more national profit could be gained form the international trade, thus making the UAE territories to progress further in connection with economical advancement. Aside from this, the shifting of educational priorities in UAE may as well result to better and more practical processes of learning with regards to employee training. As mentioned earlier, vocational courses indeed help in enhancing the necessary skills of an employee for certain jobs. Through the continuous <https://assignbuster.com/vocational-education-and-training/>

patronage of UAE students of VET, it would naturally be more possible that the said continent would fare considerably successful in the global economy.

Surely, if the Australian community is to be examined, it is naturally much inclined in employing people in the labor force. From this, the economy of Australia continues to grow and level up with the economic status of the bigger continents, which are believed to have full control of the global economy. Indeed, VET systems in the said continents are more often referred to be among the best VET system there is. The system used by the Australian educational coordinators could also be used by the UAE educational set up. Being able to implement the same systems in UAE could help the countries in the said continent to shift their priorities towards a more practically centered education towards the forte of their economic status which is laboring.

To be able to do so, there are necessary steps needed to be taken into consideration before a considerably successful result could be expected. Recommendation Having to shift educational priorities as well as changing the traditional ways of educating the young generation in the said continent would indeed result to several challenges for the curriculum already prepared as the basis of the education in UAE. One of the challenges to be expected from such a shift of priorities would be the creation of new curriculum sets. Earlier, it has been mentioned that the UAE educational institutions have already been developing new programs based from the old certificate curriculums they once had before.

These curriculum preferences are expected to bring fine results to the educational progress of the entire UAE countries. In this regard, here are some pointers and systematic changes that could help AE in developing more competent certificate of vocational courses, which could be used to train the UAE students as well as employees in becoming more reliable persons at work. Systematic Approach • First approach could be rooted out from the old curriculums already used for training students in the college universities. As said earlier, vocational courses have a different scope of education in college courses. However, there are some sectors of the college curriculum offerings, which may in many way help in the development of vocational courses.

Some essential subjects are still needed for students to become more equipped with the needed skills for work. UAE, as continent having countries that are considered as ESL (English as a Second Language) sectors in the society, the curriculum offered in vocational set up should have major subjects focused upon the English proficiency. Aside from this, the technicalities of the said language should also be considered when implicating vocational trainings in universities. • Second, consider the location of the vocational course establishments.

Aside from being offered in the universities, the vocational offerings should be located where most of the students expected to attend vocational classes are situated. It should be considered that in many ways, the students are more often coming from the lower level of the social sector. This means that they are the ones who have less opportunity in attending university courses. The fact that the vocational offerings should have a differential factor against <https://assignbuster.com/vocational-education-and-training/>

the university courses as the said courses are expected to be of a minimal amount of financial payment for the students. In this regard, the location of the establishments should be placed near the houses of the middle-level sectors of the UAE population.

- Third, the establishment structure should be designed in a practical way. The establishments are not expected to be big buildings. Instead, as long as it can host minimal attendance of students from at least 20-25 people per class the establishment would be capable of handling vocational courses. It should also occur to the building designers that most of the sections of the building should be designed for laboratory classes. As pointed out in the entire paper, VET systems is more focused upon the application of the subjects rather than the lecture parts of the course.
- Fourth, the curriculum and grading systems should be shifted.

Considering that vocational courses are focused upon the importance of the ability of the students in applying their lessons to actual work, the priority of the grading system should be focused upon laboratory activities. A heavy point of consideration should be given to the skillful student than it is to the student who can easily grasp theories. The more important thing in this set up is the ability of the student to effectively use his skills in the real work industries.

- Fifth, the last one, the vocational courses should be designed to last for at least four to six months. This is in an aim for the students to apply what they have learned in the real jobs at once when they finish attending the courses. (Basis: Nijhof, 2001) Implementation

The application of the suggestions listed above requires the ability of the educators in UAE to be

capable of facing the necessary changes needed for improving their old traditions of educating the young generation.

This goes well with the grading system that they use. It must be remembered by educators that the priority set through these training programs is the application part of the education and not simply the theoretical basis of the ideas and principles learned in school. To be able to implement the necessary changes, it should be considered that changes upon the teaching strategies should also be made. It could also be made possible if the educators are able to acquire the necessary skills needed for them to teach the students in becoming skillfully reliable at work.

Here are some guidelines to consider:

- Equip the educators with the knowledge they need. The appointment of educators for this kind of vocational set up should be chosen well depending upon their skills of teaching and practicing some skillful works related to the subjects they are supposed to teach.
- Educators must be capable enough to demonstrate the needed skills required within the curriculum.
- The coordinators of the program should have a ' practicality-focused-mind which would enable them of creating a curriculum which is designed for short term learning and long term application.

(basis: Lauglo, 2005) Summary and Conclusion The whole idea of the development of VET systems in the UAE territories is mainly based upon the need of the said continent in producing highly skillful employees who are capable of handling labor responsibilities. Being an industrialized continent, it is a must that the countries within the said continent should become highly



reliable when it comes to industrial jobs. To be able to attain this goal, the VET system, which is used by the Australian educational board, could be strongly suggested for UAE to follow through, thus making it more possible for the continent to face the challenges of the new set up of education.

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