



The Role of Basic Vocational Education Towards Students Employability

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Abstract: This study aims to identify the role of the curriculum of the Basic Vocational Education (BVE) to the employability of pupils in selected secondary schools in Sabah. A total of 100 respondents involved in this study with a focus on preparation for further study at the Institute of Public Skills Training (IPST) and Private Skills Training Institutes (PSTI) or preparation for entering the workforce. In addition, the objective of this study was to identify differences employability among students and identify the direction of the transformation of the relationship with the employability of vocational education and vocational skills to identify the relationship with the employability of basic education students in vocational secondary schools selected. The findings show that there are significant differences in terms of gender, nationality and course of employability. While in terms of the transformation of vocational education and vocational skills showed a significant relationship with the employability of BVE pupils in secondary schools selected. Some proposals put forward to increase its employability among students BVE at the same time ensuring appropriate courses offered by IPST and improve the level of English proficiency as well as information and communication technology literacy of students.

Keywords: Employability, Basic Vocational Education, Vocational Skills

1. Introduction

For human capital is referred to as a process that involves training, education and professional initiatives that seek to improve the level of knowledge and in turn leads to job satisfaction and improve company performance (Marimuthu, Arokiasamy and Ismail, 2009). Fitriyehara (2008) states in the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011-2015), the government will implement major changes at every level of human capital development in transforming Malaysia. Thus, the provision of human capital is crucial for achieving a knowledge-based economy, known as the k-economy. This statement was also supported by Kamaruddin (2010) which states that an organization that has human resources (human capital) can handle environmental changes such as globalization and the knowledge economy that will facilitate the goal of an organization is achieved.

Accordingly, the system of Education and Training Technical and Vocational otherwise known as TVET is one trend that is recognized as a system whose role is to form

individuals who have high technical skills as desired by the industry. Technical and vocational education is also an education system which provides specialized training for technical skills and some other skills as dealt with by Lis Christopher, Rohana and Amirmuddin (2011) that adequate education should be given especially to the young to generate skilled human resources and knowledge, particularly in engineering.

Various efforts have been made by the Ministry of Education (MOE), particularly Section of Education Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) to attract students into the field of TVET and this has contributed to an increase in students with MCE accompanying this field, ie by 36% in 2013 compared with 25% in 2010. in the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (RMK-11) from 2016 to 2020, transforming TVET efforts were undertaken to meet the demands of the industry and this has also contributed to economic growth, in line with globalization, knowledge-based economy, progress

technology and global labor mobility (EPU JPM, 2015).

2. Back Ground Research

Transformation of Vocational Education (TPV) can produce a skilled workforce and competitive entrepreneurs, have recognized qualifications and skills, professional character and accepted by the job market (Asnul, Nor Fadila and Ruhizan, 2012). Therefore, through this transformation certainly can mobilize human resources to be responsive to the many initiatives provided by the government as well as to establish cooperation with the industry. MOE (2011) also support the state can contribute to the transformation of Malaysia's transformation agenda as a high-income nation.

According to Mohd Rizal (2011) transformation of vocational education has the potential to attract more outstanding students entering this flow if vocational education can promise good jobs and high incomes to students. Parents must also encourage their children to take the opportunity that has been provided for this education will produce global class human capital that have high competitiveness and skills.

Thus, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has opened opportunities for students interested in tending and vocational education through the Vocational Basic Education program (BVE). According to Ahmad Tajuddin (2012) that the implementation of BVE coincide with the government's desire to produce more highly skilled young workers since not all students tend towards a more academic-oriented examination alone.

Thus, the MOE has decided that BVE is introduced to students as early as level 1(form 1), to replace Subjects Vocational (MPV) which is being implemented in stages 4 and 5 in secondary schools. BVE program has been implemented in the pilot began in 2012 for students from Form 1 in 15 secondary schools were selected based on certain criteria. In 2013, a total of 135 secondary schools have been selected by the MOE to implement BVE (MOE, 2012).

3. Statement of Problem

The study was conducted by Mohd Yusof, Ramlee, and Syed A. Malik (2013) to determine the factors that affect the employability of engineering students in technical institutions. A total of 252 final year students were involved in this study. The independent variables studied is the lecturer interaction, student interactions, contextual learning, curriculum management and infrastructure facilities. Their findings showed that the management of the curriculum, and the teaching contextual interaction partners influence the employability mastery among students in technical institutions. The conclusion, employability plays a very important role in students to be applied especially in the working world.

Mohd Yusof, Seri Bunian and Asro (2010) in their study, the level of employability has been found to be at medium-low among students of electrical engineering at the Polytechnic. This statement was also supported by the deeply regrets Meor

Shaiful (2006) who pointed out that employers in the industry take the polytechnic graduates to work in the engineering field worker found the status of generic skills are at a moderate level. Jailani, Wan Mohd Rashid and Noraini (2007) also states that workers who technically skilled, flexible and high employability such as creative thinking, problem solving and analytical skills will have a place in the industry to meet the challenges in the business world. From these studies prove that the degree of employability to be addressed by each individual whether to study or work.

Based on the findings above, prove that the employability among students in post-secondary education is still at a moderate level, while employers are very concerned about the matter. Necessarily in terms of technical and vocational skills among the students cannot be disputed and denied. But in terms of employability is one of the non-technical skills such as communication, thinking skills and solving problem is something that is very necessary in the individual self. Thus, the role of the curriculum of Basic Education Vocational (BVE) in the lower secondary level is very important to ensure the employability of the students especially in secondary schools selected in Sabah which offering BVE can be realized because the curriculum is a continuation when the pupils were studying at vocational institutions to or even the next level when they enter the workforce.

4. Research Objective

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To identify the differences of employability among BVE students in secondary schools.
- ii. To identify the relationship transformation of vocational education with the employability among BVE students in secondary schools.
- iii. To identify the relationship vocational skills with the employability among BVE students in secondary schools.

5. Literature Review

The study was conducted by Gordon, Rebecca and J Duncan (2015) related extra-curricular activities of students and uniqueness, as well as the impact of short-term and long-term upward employability. The results showed the effect of various co-curricular activities that encourage the development of skills and personal qualities. Skills and personal qualities can be shown at the beginning of the next work and career. In conclusion, in addition to a curriculum that is usually done in the classroom, extra-curricular activities are also directly play a very effective role in shaping employability of students.

Parasuraman and Hari Prasad (2015) in their study said the combination of soft skills and core skills can shape the skills of individuals to seek employment. This is based on studies conducted by NASSCOM on skills that have been identified. Its focus on nine important factor in getting a job skills such as training requirements, personal qualities, academic skills,

communication skills, soft skills, corporate skills, vocational skills, technical skills, job search skills and schooling. So here, it can be noted that this employability plays a very important role, especially the individual in finding a job in the future as emphasized by them.

Mohamad Sattar, Rose Aminah and Azlin Rohaini (2012) conducted a study on generic skills among the graduates of technical and vocational education. The findings show that many of the graduates do not have the employability while employers place great importance on interpersonal skills, thinking skills and personal qualities that students should emphasize when they are employed in the manufacturing industry because employers strongly emphasized employability when an individual's work, especially in the industry.

According to Rahmah, Ishak and Lai (2011) graduated from institutions of higher learning should be enhanced in terms of ability and employability to meet the demands of the job market. They added that educational institutions should have to work harder to improve the quality of graduates compared to the total number of graduates. The employer suggested that enhanced the quality of graduates in terms of student involvement in activities to enhance the internationalization of English language skills. This study was supported by Latisha and Surina (2010) have made a study to determine whether the employability can be enhanced through learning English for the purpose of employment among students in Malaysia. The results of their study found that the employability can be enhanced through the teaching of English for employment purposes. This proves that mastery in communication, especially in English directly to establish the employability of the student and indirectly personal qualities, interpersonal skills, decision making skills, problem solving and thinking skills can be disclosed.

Finland and Germany are the two countries that provide opportunities for students, especially in the field of vocational education. In Germany alone, the system of vocational education emphasizes learning while working or in terms of English learning on-the-job-training. In terms of curriculum, containing elements to meet the needs of the individual to acquire knowledge, vocational skills and competencies that can highlight various professional character of the individual either as an employee or as an entrepreneur (MOE, 2011). For Finland, almost 50 per cent of upper secondary education students studying at vocational colleges. The content of the curriculum targets 75 percent of the curriculum is training in vocational skills and employment, known as the On the Job Training (OJT). In terms of curriculum, emphasizing the skills to work and pursue a higher degree in vocational or technology department. For vocational education teachers must have at least three years of industry experience and pedagogical training intensively for at least a year (MOE, 2011). Thus, based on a scenario of vocational education in Finland, teachers who teach subjects related to education and technical and vocational training (TVET) in Malaysia should have industry experience to enhance vocational skills and indirectly shaping employability.

Bailey (2009) has reviewed the work-based learning.

Results findings indicate employers and students agree to work-based learning is useful. But for employability category, there are differences between students and employers for thinking skills and personal qualities. The findings also showed his employer and student mastery of the view employability is important when students enter the workforce. This was also supported by Poh, Shamsul Kamariah and Hwa (2009) who has made a study of employers to obtain feedback regarding mastery of employability. The study found that the employability of the graduates are at moderately high level. The study also shows that employers are not satisfied with the skills of critical thinking, problem solving and skills to solve problems in the workplace are held by graduates. Based on the findings of this study indicate that employers place great emphasis on the mastery of employability among graduates.

Burgaz (2008) also conducted a qualitative study to assess the importance of the employability of the principals, unemployed graduates, graduate work, teachers and employers technical and vocational education in Turkey found their communication skills and interpersonal skills is a top choice by all respondents. Whereas communication skills, interpersonal skills, honesty and reliability and master a foreign language of choice principals, unemployed graduates, graduate work, teachers and employers. This proves that the employability is very important from the perspective of the principals, graduates, teachers and employers. This study was supported by Mitchell (2008), using items such as communication skills, ethics, diversity, teamwork, time management, problem solving, customer service, leadership and business ethics which shows trainers put the interests skill soft skills are very important.

Based on the review of the literature and abroad related employability, it can be concluded that the employability plays a very important role in shaping the personality of a particular student either in terms of curriculum or co-curriculum activities as well as soft skills and technical and vocational skills. Thus, the existing curriculum BVE need to emphasize the continuity of continuous employability that can be seen when these students to continue their careers.

Based on the conceptual research framework of this study (Figure: 1), it can be concluded that the emphasis in the independent variables are related to the direction of the transformation of vocational education and vocational skills, while the dependent variable that is geared to the employability of BVE students in secondary schools selected.

6. Research Findings

This section shows the results of the study were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS version 22 of the questionnaire. The study is to identify the difference employability, identify the relationship between the direction of the transformation of vocational education with the employability and identify the relationship between vocational skills with pupils employability Basic Vocational Education (BVE) in secondary schools.

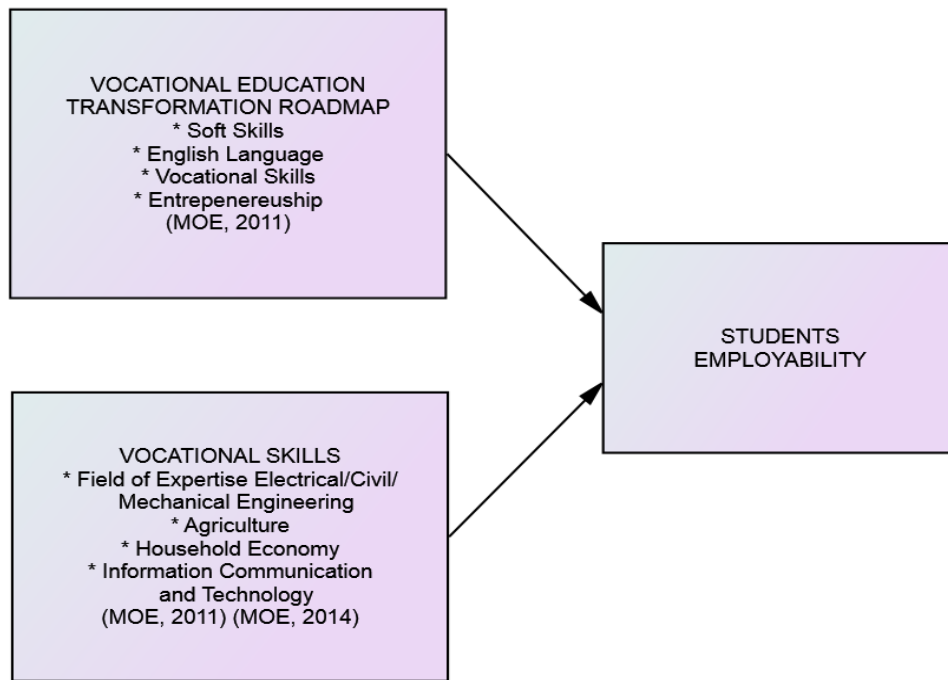


Figure 1. Conceptual Research Framework.

Table 1. Gender.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Gender	100	1.20	0.40	29.85	0.00

Based on the table above are the number of samples is about 100 people. The number of boys was 80 and the number of girls is as much as 20 people. Mean was 1.20 and standard deviation was 0.40.

Table 2. Race.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.960	3	.653	2.009	.118
Within Groups	31.220	96	.325		
Total	33.180	99			

Based on Table 2 shows the significant difference $p < .05$. Test $F = 2.009$, $p < .05$ one way is between Malays, Chinese, Indians and others. The findings showed that there were significant differences among the employability BVE students in secondary schools selected.

Table 3. Courses.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	30.475	29	1.051	.924	.582
Within Groups	79.635	70	1.138		
Total	110.110	99			

Based on Table 3 shows the significant difference $p < .05$. Test $F = .924$, $p < .05$ one way is between making clothes, aquaculture, food preparation and electrical wiring. The results showed a significant difference between the course followed the employability BVE students in secondary schools selected.

Table 4. Correlation between Vocational Education Transformation Roadmap with Employability.

		Vocational Educational Transformation Roadmap	Employability
Vocational Educational Transformation Roadmap	Pearson Correlations	1	.525**
Employability	Pearson Correlations	.525**	1

The direction of the transformation of vocational education

Based on Table 4 shows the correlation test was significant at $p < .05$. There is a relationship between the direction of the transformation of vocational education with student employability BVE positively. The relationship between the direction of the transformation of vocational education with the employability is also strong ($r = .525$).

Table 5. Correlation Between Vocational Skills With Employability.

		Vocational Skills	Employability
Vocational Skills	Pearson Correlations	1	.526**
Employability	Pearson Correlations	.526**	1

Based on the Vocational skills Table 5 shows the correlation test was significant at $p < .05$. There is a relationship between vocational skills and the employability BVE students positively. Relations between vocational skills and the employability is also strong ($r = .526$).

7. Summary and Recommendations

The transformation of vocational education launched by the government, especially the Ministry of Education (MOE) to get a positive reaction from various parties, especially teachers and students who are involved in Basic Vocational Education (BVE). Thus, teachers involved in the BVE must always ensure employability that every child can realize such as communication, opinion, and thinking skills to transform not only produce students who are skilled in the field of vocational training for the purpose of contributing to high-income countries and even employability also highlighted among pupils BVE. Therefore, based on the findings, the researchers would like to give a few suggestions that may be considered include:

i. Employability controlling interest in students involved in BVE later either boys or girls (from various nations) is urgently needed by employers nowadays. Employers are basically not only want to see the skills in technical and vocational fields owned by an individual but also the employability is emphasized. This shows mastery employability among students BVE itself needs to be improved because the employability is needed in all areas of work. Employers put the interest of the employability due to their mastery of employability this will have a positive impact especially on the individuals themselves to compete not only the domestic market but also abroad.

ii. BVE for courses offered such as making clothes, aquaculture and so on to secondary schools that offer by BVE, the parties concerned need to ensure that courses offered in parallel with Institute of Public Skills Training (IPST) that is in place with respect to the next MSC continued to be applied. Normally, these students will acquire Malaysian Skill Certificate (MSC) level 1 and 2 (based on certain criteria) in secondary schools selected lower secondary level (from level 1 to 3) and so they will connect to the MSC level 3 and 4 through IPST.

iii. The study found a significant relationship between the transformation of vocational education with student employability BVE. Transformation element of this study is that

soft skills, English language, vocational and entrepreneurial skills. Of the four elements of transformation English only element that shows slightly less correlation with student employability BVE. This is because pupils less proficient in the subjects of English, particularly in writing and speech. Therefore, the emphasis on the mastery of English is important and should be given particular attention by the authorities, particularly the Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) and the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) as a provider of curriculum and the school as the executor of the curriculum BVE.

iv. The study also found a significant relationship between students' vocational skills with the employability of BVE. This is an element of vocational skills such as skills in electrical engineering / civil engineering / mechanical engineering, agriculture, home economics and information technology and communications. Of the four elements, only the information technology and communications showed fewer relationships with students BVE employability. This is due to lack of knowledge and skills in the field of information and communication technologies. Thus, interested parties must redouble their efforts continuously so that pupils are more technology exposed for BVE students in the future.

In summary, this study has been conducted to provide an overview regarding the employability of BVE students from the perspective of the students themselves. This study also led to the implication that the employability BVE students in secondary schools in need of improvement and purification to be planned and implemented. This means employability students BVE in secondary schools were selected still requires attention from the curriculum, especially Technical and Vocational Education Department (TVE) and Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) in implementing the curriculum, such as schools and stakeholders other to immediately act in the aspects or elements that still need to be improved, especially in English and information and communication technology.

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