

Section 11.1 The Technical, Vocational Education and Training Profession

The teaching profession within the broader sector of Technical, Vocational Education and Training is differentiated by the way in which this educational provision is manifested in a particular country, the institutions within that country, and what purposes it seeks to serve at a particular moment in that country's social and economic development. As a sector of education that is often seen as needing to be highly responsive to changes in the kinds of skills and knowledge that countries require to develop, it has particular cultural impetuses and forms. Not the least of these is the degree to which its purposes are aligned with developing directly the skills required for work by the community or some other educational goal, such as more general competencies associated with the quality of working life. For instance, a longstanding debate within Western countries, but evident in practice elsewhere (e.g., Brazil, China and Russia) is the degree to which vocational education should be focused on developing specific vocational knowledge and skills, or comprise a form of education that has an orientation towards paid vocations. That is, whether workplace competence or general education is its primary educational goal. In other countries, this division of purposes takes particular forms. For instance, as contributors in this collection propose, the emphasis on particular values or ideologies or moral education are to be developed alongside workplace competence in China and Russia, whereas there are requests from Brazilian contributors for a reinstatement of values associated with collective and individual needs.

However, the emphases on occupational specific outcomes will likely fluctuate over time as circumstances change. As global economic competition has increased, many Western style countries have intensified the focus on workplace competence within vocational education provisions at a cost of more general educational outcomes. Where they exist, these more general purposes are sometimes manifested as the development of generic workplace competencies. Similarly, such emphases are also being realized in countries such as Russia and China as they compete within a globalised and expanded economic system, yet from a different developmental basis and societal and institutional foundation that is distinct from that in Germany and Australia, for instance. Yet, trends associated with meeting the requirements of a globalised economic system should not be seen as leading towards a set of common educational goals and provisions. This is because across these countries the manifestations of TVET and its professional practice remain quite distinct in reflecting the current imperative, societal needs and institutional structures.

For instance, in many northern European countries and Australia there is a vocational educational sector whose main purpose is focused on developing the skills required for specific occupational roles. It is in these countries that there are strong traditions and provisions of apprenticeship learning, and the vocational education institutions often reflect the key

trade callings. Often, these apprenticeship type provisions have mandated or legislated arrangements combining experiences in workplaces and educational institutions. These arrangements tend to see the institutional base include the interests of employers and employees in the particular occupational sector. However, in Britain, and more so in the United States, the provision of vocational education might be intermingled with adult, general and preparatory education provisions, and the institutional arrangements are less regulated. Then, in many Asian countries, the provision of vocational education is that of technology education undertaken within schools, by school teachers with limited integration with experiences outside of the school. Here, the educational processes and goals are developed through and enacted within the educational sector that is primarily about general education. Yet, in a different way, in Russia and China there are levels of vocational education, that are masked by activities across educational sectors that are more institutionally distinct than in other countries (e.g., colleges, polytechnics, universities). All this leads to provisions of TVET and professional practices that are in some ways distinct and hybrid.

The important point here is that the kinds of roles that TVET professionals will undertake are likely to be quite varied given the different educational purposes, institutions and sectors in which they practise. Moreover, the particular trajectories of the educational systems in which they practise will likely shape the way in which their professional roles and activities will be transformed. These shape not only the conduct of professional practice, but also programs that prepare individuals for the profession and ongoing professional development. Yet, within all of this difference and across these distinct provisions, that are likely to be at least two elements of commonality: constant change and relatively lowly standing. These also impact upon professional preparation and development.

Firstly, the roles that TVET professionals enact will be subject to particular requirements during their initial preparation, which may well reflect current imperatives (e.g., as shaped by government policy or professional requirements) and then be subject to constant change throughout professional life. The degree and focus of this change will vary, but likely the activities of most education professionals will be subject to change. Given the particular economic imperatives that are attempted to be realized through technical and vocational education, these changes are likely to be ongoing, more frequent and often initiated and influenced outside of the TVET teaching profession. Therefore, it is important to understand the bases for initial preparation for professional practice and the processes by which TVET professionals are able to maintain the currency of their practice through a career characterized by changing demands and goals. Hence, in this section attention is given to both the approaches to initial teacher education and also ongoing development throughout professional life.

However, and secondly, the teaching profession per se, but particularly the field of technical and vocational education, often suffers from lowly standing. Contributors within this section frequently refer to

the poor standing of vocational education and implications this has for both preparing teachers and for their ongoing development throughout professional life. The sense is of a sector whose contributions are not fully appreciated or understood, and whose standing is shaped by societal views and sentiments about learning vocational knowledge. To those are working in the sector, this standing influences issues associated with securing community, government and institutional support for initial preparation of teachers and their ongoing development. It also comprises a contrary discourse: that is, on the one hand, highly valued in securing national social and economic goals and, on the other, seemingly not mature enough to organize its own practices and futures.

This section comprises sets of contributions that examine the preparation and ongoing development of those who practise as teachers within technical, vocational education and training. These contributions are divided into two subsections. The first *The TVET profession and its preparation* and the second *TVET Professional Development* that focus on changing roles and further development for TVET professionals.

The TVET Profession and its preparations

In different ways, the first set of contributions largely discusses the current and emerging societal requirements for TVET teachers and their preparation from a range of perspectives from different countries. These requirements are often premised on particular imperatives that the contributors clearly identify. For instance, both the Russian and Chinese contributions discuss the crises being faced in each of these countries in securing suitably qualified teachers who have both technical capacities and those required to teach effectively. There are also concerns about the level of both pertinent and current vocational/technical knowledge as well as teaching competence. Moreover, this imperative is shaped by changing societal requirements.

Grollmann argues in his chapter that, globally, the TVET teaching profession faces both the challenge of its low status and the emphasis on factors that serve to maintain this low level. He proposes that the key to enhancing the status of the TVET profession is through a process of professionalisation that needs to be enacted by individuals and supported by TVET institutions which provide the TVET provisions as well as those in the community whose interests are served well by it. That is, the very institutions that utilize and benefit from the activities of TVET teachers' work need to afford them opportunities to exercise the professional practice and enjoy the benefits of professional autonomy. These institutions need to support the TVET profession and grant an appropriate level of status and freedom for those in the profession.

Smith also takes up the theme of professionalism in her chapter when reporting on the Australian vocational education and training context, including the preparation of teachers and trainers. In this contribution however, the emphasis is less on institutions, than on the individuals themselves. She suggests that ultimately, the responsibility for maintaining instructional and technical capacities resides with the individual TVET professional. In this way, she embraces the notion of the

professional as an autonomous and self-directed worker and includes within this, the central role for the vocational education professionals to maintain their teaching competence through the inevitable periods of change that will comprise their working life.

Kosyrev, Kubrushko and Kouznetsov in their chapter suggests that, in Russia, there are different requirements for professional practice according to the level at which the TVET provision is practiced. Yet, across these there is a concern to improve the educational component of TVET professionals' work. This is central to the modernization of the Russian provision of TVET.

Zhao and Lu also note that, in China, while there has been a long tradition of craft, it is only in relatively recent times that vocational education has become a key educational sector. There is a growing demand for vocational education, and yet even in a command economies such as China, there are difficulties in securing sufficient numbers of suitable teachers. Here, inducements are being made available. Moreover, there are imperatives to develop vocational specialisms, but from a very different skill base than in Germany, for instance. So, this means that the role of the vocational teacher can extend beyond the provisions of technical capacities. These have included a role of contributing to China's social systems in the form of considerations of labouring people's needs, and as builders and maintainers of socialist values. Currently, those concerns extend to moral behaviours. Therefore, the teacher education program in China is shaped to address this dynamic complex of societal factors. Nevertheless, there are barriers that inhibit elevating the standing of vocational education and educators, including its traditional lowly standing, lack of stability in policy-making and failure of vocational educators to be politically organized.

Certainly, a contentious issue is who are the curriculum makers and to what degree are TVET professionals empowered not only to enact what others have decided should be taught, but also to design and develop further the goals for students' learning and the means by which that learning is supported. Beven, in his chapter, argues for an expansive role to be taken by TVET educators. Their role, he proposes, cannot be restricted to being implementers of curriculum developed elsewhere. Rather, TVET professionals have a key role in applying their pedagogic and curriculum knowledge in designing learning experiences for students not only based on government and industry imperatives, but also upon the situational factors that shape the enactment of any curriculum. These need to include the kinds of issues and practices that the students are engaging with and need to be prepared for. Therefore, he proposes that curriculum process needs to take into account the importance of the student, who ultimately experiences the curriculum. Beven uses the example of the development of modularised curriculum to make this point.

Central to such a role are the stated purposes of the TVET provision and the degree by which these needs are those needs that teachers and others find as appropriate. Alexim and Barato propose that professional education in Brazil necessarily has to assist overcome social exclusion and discrimination. A key goal for TVET in such a context is to realize

inclusion. They propose that the provision of TVET needs to be guided by and promoted through a national policy that has as its core goal greater inclusion through participation in such provisions. Moreover, the goals for TVET need to be explicitly directed towards meeting these important social objectives.

In her chapter, and using the example of assisting literacy development, Searle argues that there is a complex pedagogical role to be carried out by TVET professionals that includes understanding not only the nature of literacy knowledge as a general attribute, but also its situational qualities and pluralities of meaning and impact for learners. This includes assisting students to understand the ways in which power and control are enacted through knowledge of this kind. Hence, she argues for a broad and expansive professional role for TVET teachers which includes making judgements about how and when to intervene in the teaching process. That is, when is it appropriate, for example, to be a facilitator of students' learning, and when is an instructional approach most appropriate. What she argues suggests a need for a thorough and critical approach to TVET teacher education.

In their chapter Leite, Mello and Chieco also propose that the role of the TVET professional needs to go beyond just that of being a teacher of vocational practice. Instead, a broader role of engaging in social as well as economic development is required to be enacted within the TVET sector. However, they refer to the extent by which particular groups of individuals who are the most needy should be able to benefit from a TVET provision enacted through private institutions and enterprises. The authors refer to the intensification of disadvantage and economic progress for some under such a scheme. In this way, they identify structural factors that are often beyond the scope of TVET professionals to significantly influence the outcome.

Lima and Lopez also argue that, given the failure of TVET to overcome social disadvantage in developing countries, there has to be a central role for trade unions as negotiating forums to ensure that the interests and perspectives of those were subject to TVET provisions are able to be represented and reflected in these provisions. They claim that both government policies and private enterprise interest, as articulated through the organization of TVET, work against the interests of workers and those who are socially disadvantaged. Consequently, the authors argue that TVET will never achieve its legitimate role and important educational purposes unless it addresses the needs of those who are most disadvantaged and potentially further marginalized through existing provisions.

Frigotto, Ciavatta and Ramos similarly propose that in Brazil, TVET provisions focused on occupational training and development often fail to educate students in the kind of relations that sit behind the occupations and practices they learn. Consequently, they argue for an expansive concept of TVET which explicitly focuses on the socially excluded in order to transform their prospects for participation in society. Consequently, they propose that TVET needs to expose the structural factors that provide asymmetrical outcomes among social groups,

particularly across developing countries. So, in this subsection, a range of perspectives about TVET provisions in different countries, settings and their implications for the role of the TVET professional is advanced.

Finally, Kerre offers an approach to the preparation of TVET educators that is suited to African countries. The author holds that the educational provision of TVET is most likely to be effectively delivered through the schooling system, given the strengths of the existing educational institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare specialist teachers to deliver quality TVET through the schooling system.

TVET Professional development

The ongoing development of the TVET professional arises as an imperative from the kinds of demands which are described above. Clearly, initial teacher education will not be sufficient to meet the kinds of changing demands placed upon TVET professionals, and across their teaching life. Moreover, there are clear limits and particular emphases within initial teacher preparation that are not able to extend to particular kinds of TVET practice. For instance, Billett describes how vocational educators in Australia are prepared to become the industry training consultants through an action learning-based process that aims at building the range of capacities required for independent consultancy work. Here, it seems that institutional support, the development processes themselves and also individual teachers' capacities are essential in developing these particular kinds of professional capacities. As is often referred to in the professional development literature, unless individuals develop their capacities to perform professional tasks effectively (i.e., with success) it is unlikely that they will adopt these tasks as part of their ongoing practice. Hence, the provision of support, practice and guidance that comprises professional development seems essential for developing TVET teachers' professional capacities as new demands arise and the professional role changes. Harteis makes a similar point in his chapter where he argues that a combination of practice-based and academic-institution-based experiences are most likely those required to develop expert capacities within teachers. It is through these contributions that the integration of both of these kinds of experiences can provide the kinds of teacher professional development processes that Harteis promotes as being essential for effective professional development.

Choy and Haukka propose a similar set of concerns about the opportunities for professional development that can be provided through the use of industry placements by TVET professionals. These placements can have particular value in terms of updating, further developing or even assisting the content development of TVET professionals. However, these opportunities have not always been effectively engaged. Therefore, in their chapter they describe a number of schemes for utilizing industry placements and propose how these might best be organized to secure effective professional development outcomes.

Similarly, Gagnon uses the example of occupational health and safety to argue that it is important for TVET provisions generally, whether those associated with initial development or ongoing professional development,

to be organized in ways that seek to secure a balance among the interests of sponsors, institutions and participants. At the heart of this is securing agreement through negotiation. Without such processes and attempts at consensus, Gagnon suggests that all interests' needs may well be frustrated. That is, the needs of all individuals who participate in TVET may not be fulfilled, yet in failing to engage in understanding the needs of participants, other goals, such as those of sponsoring institutions and agencies, will unlikely be realized.

So, collectively, the contributions to this section provide helpful and diverse perspectives on the role of the TVET professional, programs associated with their initial development and processes and secure ongoing development throughout professional life.