

# A Study of Needs of Enhancing Vocational Teachers' Professional Competencies in Thailand

<sup>[1]</sup> Tongluck Boontham

Faculty of Technical Education Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand

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**Abstract-** The objectives of this research were to study the needs and guidelines on enhancing vocational teacher's professional competencies. The sample was 400 vocational teachers in vocational schools in Thailand using multi-stage random sampling. Research instruments were dual-response form questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Priority Needs Index (PNI) and content analysis. The research findings were as follows; 1. The current state of enhancing to vocational teachers' professional competencies was at a high level and the expected state of enhancing to vocational teachers' professional competencies was at the highest level as follows; instruction aspect, self-development aspect and teaching professional ethics aspect. That means the needs of enhancing vocational teacher's professional competencies in all aspects. 2. The most critical needs were self-development Aspect, followed by instruction aspect, and teaching professional ethics aspect as follows; The most critical needs in self-development were research and development. The most critical needs in instruction aspect were instruction planning preparation. The most critical needs in teaching professional ethics were living the good life.

**Key words:** Needs Assessment / Teachers' Professional Competencies / Vocational Teacher.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the competition is very high. To support the labor market needs of competent human resources. "Vocational Education" is one of the mechanism that has developed manpower to meet the labor market needs, economics, sustainable society, and modern technology. [1] Every country has focused on vocational education reform; Thailand has reformed its education policies in terms of technical or vocational teacher production systematically in both of quantity and quality to support the increase ratio of number of vocational students[2]. According to the vocational education production cycle, a continuously lack of skilled labor has impacted the business and industry sectors. Thus, the enhance of vocational teachers' professional competencies is necessary to foster lifelong learning and teaching quality improvement in vocational teachers as they have affected a student learning achievement. Stated in UNESCO – UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training [3] [4] [5] there are 7 vocational teacher's competencies; 1) Core Competency, 2) Learning Competency, 3) Assessment Competency, 4) Integration of KSA, 5) Self – Responsibility, 6) Balancing the expert + Coaching Role, and 7) Lifelong Learning. At the present, the problems and obstacles to develop the sufficient quality vocational and technical teachers in Thailand were; most of industrial teachers lacked of continuous training, some schools had insufficient teachers, teachers had low communication skills, and they were unable to utilize the educational media. The mentioned problems impact education quality; hence the education administrators should

initiate a strategic operational planning with the indicators [6] that would possible to reach and suitable for environment and local needs. The strategic operational planning should start from an organization context evaluation[7]; this is to understand an organization's current situation and the organization needs that should be provided by education administrators in several aspects. It was necessary for the process to have an operation instrument by conducting needs assessment to identify the difference between the expected environment and current environment, to prioritize the importance of differences, and to select the most important needs to find out the root cause for solution specification. The results from the needs assessment are necessary as they reflect the organization's status. The mentioned results are the important fundamental and a benchmark for the strategic planning process to specify an organization roadmap and the organization development guidelines; this would help the organization to decide the operation objectives and therefore to enhance the vocational teachers' professional competencies. It was important to understand and identify the current and desired situation to analyze and prioritize the critical issues to develop the vocational teachers' professional competencies in conformity with local condition to enhance the vocational teachers' professional competencies development in Thailand.

### Objective

To study the needs and guidelines on enhancing vocational teacher's professional competencies.

## II. DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

### 2.1 Population and Sample

The population of this research was 26,241 teachers from 421 schools. The samples were selected by using statistical table. To reinforce the research data and to reduce a statistical error, the researcher used Multi – Stage Random Sampling method, which consisted of 1) The sample areas were divided into 5 areas then the sample institutions were selected by using Stratified Random Sampling method to have 20 institutions for each geographic area; 2) Simple Random Sampling method were used to select 4 sample vocational teachers from each selected institution. The researcher obtained 400 sample vocational teachers in total.

### 2.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument was Dual-Response Format Likert Scales survey questionnaire. The research questionnaires were sent to 30 samples for questionnaire reliability evaluation. The reliability of the current situation on enhancing vocational teachers' professional competencies was 0.975 and the reliability on the expected situation on enhancing of vocational teachers' professional competencies was 0.953.

### 2.3 Data Collection

The data were collected by the researcher and by post.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, and Standard Deviation. The results of the current and expected situation on enhancing vocational teachers' professional competencies were used for needs prioritization by Priority Needs Index (PNI).

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### CONCLUSIONS

The needs of enhancing professional competencies as follow;

1. Self-Development Aspect; from the results of the needs of enhancing professional competencies. It was found that overall teachers wanted to be enhanced in order to develop themselves from the greatest needs as follow; Research and Development (PNI 0.19 – 0.36); to publicize their research in different means of media and to apply their research in the real world.

Learning needs (PNI 0.16 – 0.23); to attend vocational education administration training or seminar besides the

training or seminar listed by the organization, to attend the conferences, and to discuss with colleagues or vocational

education professional to find the method of teaching development. Teamwork (PNI 0.13 – 0.25); to have new ideas by attending group work, and to be stimulated to express the new ideas, and to be part of group in order to establish objectives and planning.

2. Instruction aspect; teachers wanted to be fostered in terms of instruction administration from the greatest needs as follow; Instruction planning preparation (PNI 0.41 – 0.30); to have learning contexts analysis ability for the behavioral objectives writing. Learning support activities (PNI 0.38 – 0.45); to be able to conduct the supplement learning activities for smart and slow learners. Learning design (PNI 0.38 – 0.32); to have an interactive and collaborative learning design ability to promote students' interactive to collaborative learning. Education media utilization, development and production (PNI 0.45 – 0.33); to be able to utilize knowledge from local area e.g. folk wisdom and knowledge from local entrepreneur to promote student's learning.

3. Teaching professional ethics aspect; teachers wanted to be enhanced their competencies in terms of professional ethics from the greatest needs as follow; Living the good life (PNI 0.1 – 0.19); to be able to apply self-sufficiency living on their lives, and manage their expense to match their financial status. Professional discipline and responsibility (PNI 0.11 – 0.19); to be able to strictly comply with an organization's code of conduct, and manage work – life balance. Role model (PNI 0.12 – 0.19); to have a responsibility to develop institutions by developing teacher's academic knowledge; this is to continuously increase academic and instruction quality, and to increase teacher's responsibility in public sector, respective institutions and organization e.g. community, parents, government and private sector. Professional passion (PNI 0.18 – 0.19); to have a professional dedication, public mind, social contribution, and to support and attend profession ethics development.

## IV. DISCUSSION

1. Self- Development aspect; it was found that vocational education teachers needed to develop their teaching professional competencies, self-development, research and development ability as teachers' research did not match the products, innovation and technology projects that served industries. Including vocational teachers lacked of confidence to initiate or conduct research as they did not have sufficient research knowledge and skills to conduct the research or develop the innovation to serve the industries. Regarding teamwork, community and social collaboration, the research results also showed that vocational teachers did not have enough parents and community collaboration in order to help teachers understand the needs of current competencies specified by labor market, industry sector, and enterprise as

they were the information to promote teachers' knowledge and development.

2. Instruction aspect; regarding teachers and instruction development in dynamic social. It was found that vocational teachers needed to develop their professional competencies in instruction as the society has been moving forward to 21st century. Lacking of instruction skills might lead to instruction administration problems for different types of students. Therefore, teachers need to develop their competencies, understand how to administrate the instruction that suitable for different type of students and students' needs.

3. Teaching Professional Ethics aspect; it was found that vocational teachers wanted to develop their professional competencies in living the good life as teachers must be the intellectual persons and be able to adapt themselves to the digital world; hence it is important for teachers to be able to have a critical thinking based on rational. It was also found that some teachers did not apply the sufficient economy philosophy to their life, this might lead to insufficient income and debt, low quality of life, low morale and low teaching efficiency.

Guidelines to enhancing the vocational teachers' professional competencies

1. Teachers' self-development; the management should support teachers to conduct the research and development together with enterprise, emerging in entrepreneur by supporting facilities and conducting meetings to barter the innovation knowledge; this is to broaden the teachers' opportunity to learn from colleagues through reflective thinking. The management should develop a policy to promote innovation research and development, and to open the channels for teachers to interchange their research with colleagues.

2. Instruction administration; an original affiliation should conduct the training session to develop teachers' knowledge regarding teaching curriculum, learning design, educational media development and utilization, to make teachers understand student's basic knowledge, and to establish an education supervisory system for teachers to continuously supervise the operation. This will develop teacher's competencies to comply with the needs and suitable for institution geographic. The management should use the information from the evaluation to analyst and establish a strategic plan. The evaluation data are the feedbacks for successful instruction process.

3. Teaching professional ethics: The management should encourage teachers to understand the sufficiency economy philosophy, financial planning, improve teacher's salary and compensation system to solve debt problems. The management should also promote the training to ensure

teachers understand the professional code of conduct and ethnics as they are the student's role models, to motivate morale, to give reward and punishment fairly, and to create teachers' inspiration to build the creative work piece, enjoy working, dedicate and devote to their works.

#### 4. Purposed Policy

The research results can be a guideline to establish a policy and strategy to enhance vocational teachers' professional competencies in terms of self-development, instruction administration, and professional ethics. Therefore, the institution administrator should immediately see the important of enhancing vocation teachers' professional competencies..

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