

Vocational Education and Socio-Economic Opportunities in the World and in Azerbaijan

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Abstract: When we look at the countries of the world, it is possible to see that vocational education is given great importance and quality education and training is given especially in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Vocational education is given "on the basis of both secondary and higher education", but there is a difference in the main purpose of educational institutions that provide education opportunities. In a universal sense, vocational training "provides employment-related skills for employment." Vocational education is of great importance in the formation of a competitive economy and a developed society. The vocational education system in certain countries of the world has been examined and it has been concluded that one of the requirements of modern times is the development of vocational education. Educated qualified personnel will be able to interpret, develop and apply this theoretical and technical knowledge and continue to work as productive individuals throughout their careers, in addition to mastering the theoretical knowledge. The article identifies the role and place of vocational education and training both in the world and in the Azerbaijani education system. It is stated that vocational education and training promises great opportunities not only to improve employment opportunities, but also in terms of social and economic opportunities.

Keywords: vocational education and training, technical vocational education, education model, socio-economic opportunities, employment.

Introduction

The liberalization of markets, globalization and technological changes have created a more competitive economic environment that has had a profound impact on labor and the nature of its organization. Radical changes in the global economy have forced governments and the private sector to analyze their development strategies and reconsider the existing vocational education system. For this reason, it is not surprising that there are significant changes in the education system, especially in vocational education. The essence of the change is to create an environment that provides education in accordance with the requirements of the labor market in the vocational education system of Azerbaijan, to modernize the occupational standards and to create a vocational education system that meets contemporary requirements.

Today, as a result of the dizzying developments in the field of information and communication technologies, qualified human capital is needed in the sector. Industry and service sectors are among the most important criteria that require skilled workers to closely follow the dynamics of technological development in parallel with their production, knowledge and professional skills. The needs of the labor market in various fields have also led to an increase in the importance of vocational education. One of the main purposes of vocational education is to train qualified personnel needed by the industry. Vocational education plays an important role in developing the skills of the individual and acquiring the skills of the qualified workforce.

When you look at the world, you can see that especially in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, vocational education is given great importance and quality education and training are given. Among EU member countries, Germany's "dual" vocational education model and the success of this model in vocational education in the country attracted the attention of countries such as India, China and Russia.

Over the years, new approaches and rules have been applied around the world in order to increase the quality of both management and education in vocational education and training, make it more attractive and contribute to the business world. The potential success of these reforms largely depends on developing the thinking and political views of those who will implement the policies, together with those responsible, managers and administrators. In this context, effective leadership is one of the most important factors in vocational training. At this point, we would like to mention a view of Agrawals: "Vocational and technical education is the passport to better employment opportunities" [1, 3]

Vocational education in the world is given "on the basis of both secondary and higher education". However, there may be differences between the aims of educational institutions that provide education opportunities. In a universal sense, the VET system "provides employment-related skills for employment." Vocational education and training are of great importance in the formation of a competitive economy and a developed society. Local and international organizations and authorities responsible for determining the direction of economic development of countries attach special importance to the establishment of a modern vocational education system to ensure economic development and social equality.

Vocational education and training has become an important tool in providing the workforce (the need for qualified personnel in the fields) and economic development. Vocational education and training mostly relates to post-secondary education. Vocational education and training is designed to train individuals in a profession or a particular occupation, and vocational education and training opportunities at this level are directly linked to a nation's productivity and competitiveness [1, 5].

Vocational education models

In vocational schools, theoretical knowledge integrates with "practice and experience" in the labor market, enabling experienced employees to take part in real life in the business world, as well as facilitating the transition of young individuals to the labor market. This union resembles a kind of dual vocational training model. It should not be forgotten that the interest in the dual vocational education model is more than ever. The practice-based VET system is an important model for countries in Europe and beyond.

Vocational education systems are often "mixed systems" that include both dual and school-based education. This model was developed in Germany and is used throughout the country. India, China, Russia and Vietnam are currently in contact with the German government to implement this training model. Germany, Austria and Switzerland are also countries with quality vocational education and training. All three countries are "known for their extensive dual apprenticeship at upper secondary level."

Dual apprenticeship distinguishes these countries' vocational education systems from European countries. This system integrates education with schools, institutions, government, employers and businesses, so that in a dual system, practice-based vocational education plays a more important role than academic education.

Care should be taken to transition to a modular system in vocational education and to organize an application-oriented training process in order to provide qualified workforce. It is possible to increase the quality of vocational education by ensuring the integration of stakeholders into the education system, exchanging information and ideas, exchanging views and developing special education programs in certain public spaces.

As a result of the delays in the teaching process due to the inadequate organization of the period, the graduates are deprived of the effective and efficient use of the tools (hardware and software) and equipment elements required by the developing technology and the acquisition of work-related skills. Vocational education teachers also play an important role in increasing the quality of vocational education. Vocational teachers have a very important position in modern society. The idea that "it is the devotee of education who establishes the link between the industrial society and the education system" can be reasonably said.

We see the way out of these problems in the development of a new complex model in order to eliminate the problem of the quality of vocational education in Azerbaijan and adapt to the changing dynamics of the labor market through the comparative analysis of vocational education models in the world.

In addition, the direct application of vocational education models that differ sharply from the models of other countries in Azerbaijan is wrong. It is not possible to get the expected results from the models applied without considering the environment, level and other important factors. On the contrary, in this case, there is a gap between both the educator and the educator.

It should be noted that Singapore, which stands out with its different approach to the teaching of natural sciences, also has its own vocational education model. Although the German vocational education model is taken as an ideal model, we think that this model can also be an ideal tool for the development of vocational education in Azerbaijan.

Singapore's education and training system has played an important role in its economic and scientific success. Singapore (and Korea) attaches special importance to the development of employees in the working environment. For example, education has introduced a tax policy to increase businesses' interest in employee training. Today, Singapore's VET system is considered a "worldwide model". In 1964, the Singapore government established a primary vocational school with 4,910 students. Those who studied here were students who did not get acceptable grades in the final exams of secondary schools. In the 1970s, several International Sales Centers and vocational schools became operational.

Ensuring the government had the skills necessary to combat unemployment, attract multinational companies, and develop a strong manufacturing sector was an important factor. The government has followed systematic policies and recommendations to improve education at various levels. For example, students with "low academic ability" were directed to vocational colleges in order to cope with the "dropout problem" and the difficulties faced by non-academic students.

The government has regularly implemented various reforms. The most notable of these reforms was the introduction of a voucher-like scheme in 1993 to provide more subsidies for education and training. According to this plan, the Ministry of National Education regularly made a certain payment to the EduSave account opened for each child between the ages of 6-16. Parents began using these resources to provide their children with the additional education they wanted.

Technical and polytechnic education in the country is seen not only as a last resort, an industry-ready specialty, but also as an alternative to college education for university entry. For example, many students and their parents choose to be admitted to polytechnic schools. Because here they preferred applied education instead of academic education in college. Others choose polytechnic schools because of the wide variety of programs and courses that lead directly to employment opportunities.

These courses and programs include new fields such as design, interactive and digital media, biomedical and life sciences, hospitality and tourism management. The government has maintained diversity between polytechnics and universities (higher education) as they combine different knowledge and skills. The most effective way to provide polytechnic knowledge and skills is to provide feedback to the government alongside employers' requests and suggestions. We can say that polytechnic education played

the role of "backbone" in Singapore's industrialization. The main mission of these institutions is to train and produce technology experts and mid-level experts who will support the economic, social and technological development of the country. The employment rate of graduates is constantly increasing. According to statistics, the employment rate in Singapore in 2005 was 90%. The rate of applicants to technical vocational education is higher than secondary education special education.

Singapore experience has shown how the world-renowned Institute of Technical Education (ITE) has become a world-class VET institution. Since gaining independence in 1965, the vocational education system has evolved in response to various stages of economic development.

As the economy was restructured and shifted from labor-intensive to capital-intensive and then knowledge-intensive, the vocational education system ensured that the workforce had appropriate knowledge, skills, and values. Education and training systems have been revised, developed and rebuilt to meet the needs of graduates, industry and society.

We can say that the vocational education institutions established by ITE are widely recognized at the local and global level for their importance, quality and value in the world economy.

Although the vocational education system has played an important role in the economic development of most developed countries in Asia and especially in developing countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan in the South Asian region, the vocational education system has not reached the required level. In these countries, the government has a continuous investment in the development of this sector. However, the results are still unsatisfactory. As in the Azerbaijan Vocational Education System, there are two main problems: the quality of VET institutions and the weak link between VET institutions and manufacturing enterprises.

Along with the South Asian countries, developing countries, including Azerbaijan, can benefit from the world's best practices in the development and redesign of the VET system, which has its own VET model like Singapore.

Socio-economic opportunities of vocational education and training

Throughout history, people have developed useful tools and equipment that will make life easier by using their knowledge and experience. Every innovation, which is expressed as technology in a primitive way and produced by people on the basis of knowledge, has been the most important factor in the realization of revolutions in the history of humanity such as "Agricultural Revolution" and "Industrial Revolution". It has led to a constant discussion of education systems that contribute to economic and social life by increasing productivity and income. In fact, the roots of entrusting the process of training the workforce needed for economic development to education go back to the Industrial Revolution. However, due to the developments in recent years and changes on a global scale, meeting the need for manpower in the new economic order comes to the fore as the only function of education. In this context, vocational education, especially at secondary level, plays a key role in providing basic skills and qualifications for people to enter the labor market, successfully managing career development, acquiring skills throughout life and retraining. Vocational education is as much a matter of education and training as it is of developing the country's skilled workforce and employment. These two aspects of vocational education are important as they play an accelerating role in the economic development of a country. For this reason, technical vocational education is one of the areas of intense discussion on a global scale, as it was in the past.

Vocational education is highly valued by all countries according to their economic development goals, and at the same time, academic education is an education level where expectations and criticisms are more focused than general high schools. The most important reason for this is the development of individual skills as well as the diversity of technical and vocational education in the social and economic development of society. From this point of view, technical vocational education can be considered not only as an educational activity for the acquisition of vocational and technical skills, but also as a broader concept that combines the individual, society and economic structure.

Of course, there is no single vocational education model that provides maximum benefit to social development at the universal level. However, for each country, the impact of the vocational education system on both the economic and social development of the society emerges at micro, medium and macro levels.

Whichever model is applied, vocational training provides social benefits in terms of career acquisition and career creation, income and employment opportunities, economic motivation and increasing life satisfaction. It increases the efficiency of its employees and companies at medium level, regionally and sectorally, and ensures the integration and cohesion of disadvantaged groups such as the disabled, asylum seekers, women and the poor. At the macro level, there are many social benefits in terms of reducing crime, increasing social solidarity, ensuring a healthy life and reducing intergenerational problems, while creating economic benefits such as economic growth and providing much-needed labor. As a result, technical vocational training is capable of making an impact at the individual, organizational and social level, which must be closely linked and managed comprehensively.

Result

Due to the different needs and requirements of human resources and sectors in the world, the establishment and implementation of technical vocational education differs from country to country. When we look at the applications in the field of technical vocational education in the world, it is seen that three different models come to the fore. These models are: "School-Centered Model" with full vocational education at school, "Work-Centered Model" with full vocational training in the field of business, that is, "Dual System" based on business-school cooperation.

The reason for this diversity is that countries have different economic and cultural needs as well as different education systems. In other words, each country has its own unique structure that stems from its own national culture. Countries are trying to develop a system that meets their own requirements in the context of both general education and vocational training. For this reason, the sociological and economic realities of countries and their future goals and visions are the main factors that shape the nature of vocational education.

Accordingly, the positive results obtained by a country in vocational education may not be seen in other countries, that is, similar results may not occur in another country even if the same methods are used.

One of the best examples of this situation is the vocational education and training system in Azerbaijan. Although each of the three vocational education models mentioned above are implemented in different dimensions in Azerbaijan, especially in developed countries, the situation of technical vocational education and training in our country, unfortunately, does not create a good picture.

It should be noted that applied courses in our country are not activity-oriented and purposeful. The adaptation of individuals to the developing technology and the existence of certain gaps in the mechanism of training individuals with the necessary professional skills in their fields cause delays in the formation of vocational education strategies in Azerbaijan.

The vocational education system in certain countries of the world has been examined and it has been concluded that one of the requirements of modern times is the development of vocational education. A comparative analysis of VET systems was made using such a model in India, Pakistan, Korea, Spain, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, Denmark, the United States and Turkey. Educated qualified personnel will be able to interpret, develop and apply this theoretical and technical knowledge and continue to work as productive individuals throughout their careers, in addition to mastering the theoretical knowledge. The focus of vocational education is to strengthen the relationship between employers and vocational education institutions, to design education programs taking into account the lifelong learning approach, thus increasing productivity at this education level.

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