

Philipp Grollmann
Felix Rauner
Editors

TECHNICAL AND
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING SERIES

7

International Perspectives on Teachers and Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education



Springer

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHERS
AND LECTURERS IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION

UNESCO-UNEVOC Book Series
Technical and Vocational Education and Training:
Issues, Concerns and Prospects

Volume 7

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International Perspectives on Teachers and Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education

Edited by

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A C.I.P. Catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-4020-5703-8 (HB)
ISBN 978-1-4020-5704-5 (e-book)

Published by Springer,
P.O. Box 17, 3300 AA Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

www.springer.com

Printed on acid-free paper

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Introduction by the Series Editors

The qualification of skilled workers is a key issue for the competitiveness of companies and economies all over the world. The skills and knowledge of the workforce are a result of learning processes, taking place in formal and non-formal settings. Those processes involve a variety of teachers, trainers and instructors whose task it is to support and direct individuals in the vocational learning process.

Even though the share of the workforce drawing on this support can be estimated as being about two-thirds, worldwide it is regrettable that there is still a lack of recognition and status of this significant work. The staff in TVET not only directly influence the quality of the workforce but also take over additional societal functions, such as the support of regional learning and innovation processes and the social integration of disadvantaged groups into work and the labour market. Despite this importance, knowledge about this key occupational group, on an international accessible and comparable basis, is extremely scarce. The last comparative study on profiles and education of TVET teachers dates back some 30 years (UNESCO, 1973: Bristol, John Wiley and Sons). As a result, this volume on ‘International Perspectives on Teachers and Lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education’ is long overdue, and a very timely addition to the UNEVOC Book Series on TVET.

This volume provides insights into the great variety of ways in which three tasks – supporting innovation, learning and social integration – are distributed over different institutions and different profiles of teaching and learning support, across a well-selected range of countries, and this study also illustrates that the problems teachers and trainers have in solving their everyday-work problems, and difficulties are very similar across nations and between different learning traditions and environments.

As much as this variety provides a rich pool of experiences, with different configurations of mechanisms to support integration into the workforce and the acquisition of skills and knowledge, it also challenges the international exchange and transfer of those experiences. From this perspective, the richness turns into a hindrance for trans-national discourse and transfer.

In order to address such difficulties, UNESCO–UNEVOC has initiated a range of activities to overcome the fragmentation resulting from this process. The co-operation between TVET teacher educators from different regions on the world, within the United Network on Innovation and Professional Development in TVET (UNIP) which the UNESCO–UNEVOC International helped to establish, is only one such support, albeit an important one. Within the UNIP activity, TVET teacher educators are working on a joint international framework for master’s degree in TVET.

As joint-editors of this UNESCO–UNEVOC International Book Series on TVET, we very much hope that the books published in this series (and this volume in particular) will prove to be helpful in assisting researches, policy makers and practitioners to obtain an insight into the dialectic between the global and the local as regards to vocational teachers’ education and practice. In addition it is our fervent wish that these volumes will contribute to the establishment of a fruitful, reflective and professional international discourse on the challenges faced by TVET educators in research, policy and practice.

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UNEVOC/5 September 2006

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Preface

This book provides an insight into the history and current professional situation as well as the practice of vocational teaching across a number of selected countries.

As often occurs in comparative studies, there is no ultimate wisdom behind the selection of countries, but we hope that we have achieved the gathering of a critical mass of countries, which build a contrastive sample for what currently happens in the field.

Despite the fact that a more problem-based approach to the comparison of various aspects of vocational teachers' professional situation would be more exciting to the reader at the first glance, we decided to take this country-based descriptive approach when making this book. The reason for that is that there is still a fundamental lack of information when it comes to vocational teachers on an international scale. So any more in-depth study into one of the sub-aspects of vocational teaching is not really possible at the moment, since the contextual information is missing.

The more substantial volumes on the topic on the international level date back 30 years or more (see also Tables 13.1 and 13.2 in the Appendix, International Labour Organisation, 1964; UNESCO, 1973; Vivian and Hoffman, 1967).

For that, we highly appreciate the opportunity to co-operate with UNESCO-UNEVOC, which hopefully will contribute to fill this huge gap we are facing at the moment in the mid-term. We want to express our gratitude to Rupert Maclean, Director of the Unesco-Unevoc Center in Bonn, without whom this volume as well as the Hangzhou conference would never have been possible: The joint UNESCO-UNEVOC Conference in Hangzhou in November 2004 was seen as a crucial step towards filling the

gaps in information and international cooperation which are also showcased throughout this book. At this conference, experts discussed what the expectations for a good TVET teacher/ trainer are, how university courses should be structured and how an international standard could be developed and implemented. Another strand of the conference discussed which additional strategies should be pursued in order to increase professionalism of teachers in developed and developing contexts.

An international framework curriculum for a masters' degree for the education of TVET teachers and lecturers was adopted by over 60 profiled experts and decision makers on TVET teacher education. In addition a network of TVET teacher/ trainer educators was founded (UNIP, United network on innovation and professional development in TVET), which will serve as an agency for the development of TVET teacher education and research. Many of the contributors to this book have attended this conference and used the opportunity to discuss the issues raised in this volume. In the meantime two regional conferences have followed in order to put the decisions made in Hangzhou in place in different contexts of the world (Tianjin in December 2005 and Oslo in February 2006).

We also want to express our deep thanks to those individuals who spent their valuable time and thought for this book. Without their valuable work this book would not have been possible.

We hope that we have achieved putting together an interesting and informative book on the theme which can serve as an introduction to readers from different target groups such as students, researchers or policy makers in the field of technical and vocational education and training.

Philipp Grollmann and Felix Rauner,
Bremen, February 2006

Acknowledgments

Layout and Editorial Assistance: Corinna Balkow

Language proof: Anne Kirkham and Charlotte Milstein

TVET Teachers: An Endangered Species or Professional Innovation Agents?

Philipp Grollmann and Felix Rauner

This chapter introduces this book by compiling some comparative results across the individual chapters in this book. First the context is introduced by underlining the significance of teachers for the future workforce and secondly by reducing the variety of existing TVET-systems technical and vocational education and training to four ideal-typical ways of organising the school-to-work transition. In the third step, some findings from the individual chapters are highlighted and some comparisons are drawn and embedded with results of other transnational research projects. In the fourth step the main findings are summarised and some prospective conclusions are drawn.

1.1 The Significance of Technical Vocational Education and the Status of Its Teachers: An Astounding Paradox

One of the core problems of vocational educators' search for professional recognition is based on a paradox: while vocational teachers and trainers are essential to supporting skill development in the workforce, they are not of high status for this role. Worldwide, some two-thirds of the workforce, which constitute the backbone of each economy, are skilled workers, who have learned a substantial part of their occupational skills and knowledge through the support of teachers and trainers from the domains of Vocational Education and Human Resources Development. Given the basic importance of vocational training for economic success, it is remarkable that in many