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A STUDY ON THE CURRICULUM RELATED PROBLEMS OF TEXTILE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

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Studies were conducted on the Curriculum related Problems of Textile Vocational Education in Bangladesh with the major objectives of knowing the curricular status and its operational limitations. The research works were conducted through a questionnaire involving stakeholders including instructors, students and managers. The results obtained from the studies indicated that curricular status of the education in terms of index was about 30 percent, while the Asian standard 53 percent. The causes for such a poor situation were mostly related to the non-modular curriculum development and monitoring process. The major recommendations suggested by the respondents were to strengthen teaching, language course, laboratories and workshops. The Theory and Practical class ratios should be formulated and maintained. The syllabus of the core subject credits should be revised immediately. The curriculum should be in module system as per needed competency for respective employers. There should be one Curriculum Director controlling curricular operations and audio-visual teaching aids, monitoring, evaluation and job placement activities.

Key words: *textile vocational education, theory practical ratios, modular curricular systems*

INTRODUCTION

Vocational Education and Training describes combined process of education and training and recognizes the common objectives of employment as their immediate goal. It is an integral component of lifelong learning and as such plays a crucial role in helping individuals and countries to achieve a culture of peace environmentally sound sustainable development, social cohesion and international citizenship. The education is stated to be (Shields 1989; Sharpe 1993; Silberman 1996; OECD 2009) so much entangled with livelihood profession that frequently asked questions about it include: Is it Education? Is it Training? Is it Inferior? Is it a Second Choice?

As per records and research reports by Buzzell (1987) and Brodhead (1991) Textile Education and Training were started in 1910 at Bankura in India and 9 Districts weaving school and 25 peripatetic weaving school were established within 1929 in this sub continent. Name of the course was textile artisan of 6 months duration. Another Technical Schools were started in the year 1927 to train in the electrical and mechanical engineering skills. The Dayalbagh Technical College as historically analyzed and projected outcomes by O'Connor and Trussell (1987); and OECD (2006) has the potentiality of becoming a unique institution in the province being an institution where all students can live and learn together under ideal conditions and become skilled workmen of high caliber. Dayalbagh Technical College, is presently running a number of one-year Certificate Programs for boys and girls which include- Dress Making & Tailoring, Electrician, Fitter, Interior and Exterior Designing and Decoration, Modern Office Management and Secretarial Practice, Motor Vehicle Mechanic Textile Dyeing and Printing, Textile Technology, Turner, Wireman. In these programs, students learn by working with their own hands and in the process become competent to avail the employment opportunities.

At present vocational courses available abroad specially in countries similar to Bangladesh are conducted by Vocational Schools, University Training and Retraining for widening participation. The courses include: Agricultural Education, Apprenticeship, Community College, Employability, and Environmental Education. The current trend courses consist of Family and Consumer Science, Finishing School, Further Education, Life Skills, and Renewable Energy. It is found that all these activities are formulated and implemented following at least through a outlined curriculum in most countries (Wolf 2002).

The curriculum is prepared considering that the sectors of vocational education are related to the age-old apprenticeship system of learning. Apprenticeships are designed for many levels of work from manual trades to high knowledge work. However, as the job market becomes more specialized and economies demand higher levels of skill, governments and businesses are increasingly investing in the future of vocational education through publicly funded training organizations and subsidized apprenticeship or traineeship initiatives for businesses.

At the post-secondary level vocational education is typically provided by an Institute of Technology, or by a local Community College.

Curricular base foundation for the Vocational Education in Technical Sector initiated before independence but it was strengthened during 80's, which is still under improvement and diversification. But the disciplines of the sectors including Textiles has emerged and developed only recently. Vocational education and training has been linked to diploma course as future prospect. In that sense it is now occupying the entry position in technical education. It is to be said that the quality of the vocational graduates significantly depends on the open-to-all

curriculum and syllabus they follow and thus the skill they achieve. In the context of the above discussion the present research program was formulated with the following major objectives, such as: i. to know the status of textile vocational education in Bangladesh, ii. to assess the curricular features of textile vocational education, and iii. to identify the problems of textile vocational education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Methods and Materials followed in the studies were formulated as per applied education research outlines suggested by Anon. (1997) and Australian OECD (2002). Thus questionnaires were developed and pre-tested and the works done were: direct survey through a questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and conducted case studies making profiles individual institutes. 20 Textile Vocational Institutes (TVI) and 130 respondents were interviewed in detail. The respondent groups were teachers/instructors-80, academic managers-20, and students-30.

Questionnaire Guideline included A. Characteristics of the respondent. Persons having experience of >1 courses from certificate to post graduation (teacher) were given preference. The parameters included name, courses passed, designation, age, qualification and experiences on curriculum etc.

The Vocational Program Courses included in the questions were dress making & tailoring pre-school teacher's training textile dyeing and printing welder weaving and knitting turner wireman electrician modern office management motor vehicle mechanic. The specific Q 1. What is the current status of curriculum in Bangladesh? Q 2. Which of the following curriculum is comparatively better? Q 3. Which syllabus is comparatively better? Give tick mark to any two as first and second choice. Q 4. Which of the following courses have laboratories/workshops? The responses when qualitative were converted to quantitative forms using 10-baes specific score and priority scales and then analyzed and presented in tabular and graphical formats.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the studies as per objectives are presented and discussed in this chapter under the objectively selected following three major headlines: Vocational Level Education as Curricular Status and major problems and recommendations.

Curricular Status

The main curriculum and syllabus of the Textile Vocational Education are studied and reported in the forms of: Terms: of varied duration: TERMINAL: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII+. The courses were categorized as Core Courses, Optional Courses, Basic Science Courses, Language Courses, and Supplementary Courses.

Vocational-Terms/Months/Quarters Years –T1-T8

The results given in the Table 1 and Fig. 1 show the differences among the courses and its parallel distributions and deviations.

Table 1. Vertical distribution of the courses

Items	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T 7	T 8	Cumulative responses
Core	63	44	59	37	71	82	60	58	474
Optional	32	17	49	46	58	62	57	48	369
Basic Science	27	31	24	26	20	55	25	21	229
Language	29	49	63	42	28	72	24	51	358
Supplementary	18	13	62	74	41	52	63	48	371
Total- cumulative responses	169	154	257	225	218	323	229	226	

Curricular deviations as per course distribution

The results obtained on the issues of knowing the Curricular Status show that the parallel distribution of the courses throughout the duration of the study was not well-adjusted being highly zigzag in nature indicating that the curricular status is not academically integrated. It means very fewer interaction were made during preparation of the curriculum in a non-modular approach system.

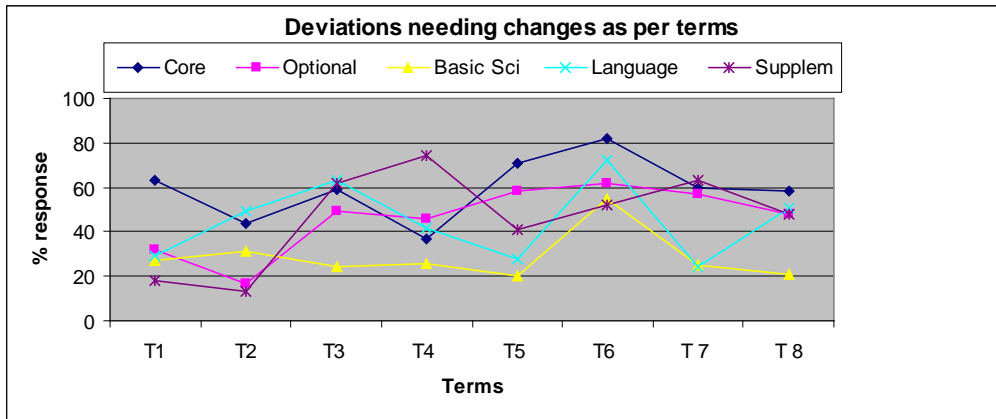


Fig. 1. Curricular deviations as per course distribution

Curricular deviations needing changes

The results obtained on the graphs Curricular features given in Fig. 2 show that the course wise distribution at different terms varied significantly. Among the courses the basic and language subjects were found to be more weak as regards student’s competency is concerned. More over the preliminary courses need immediate evaluation considering the weakness of the students.

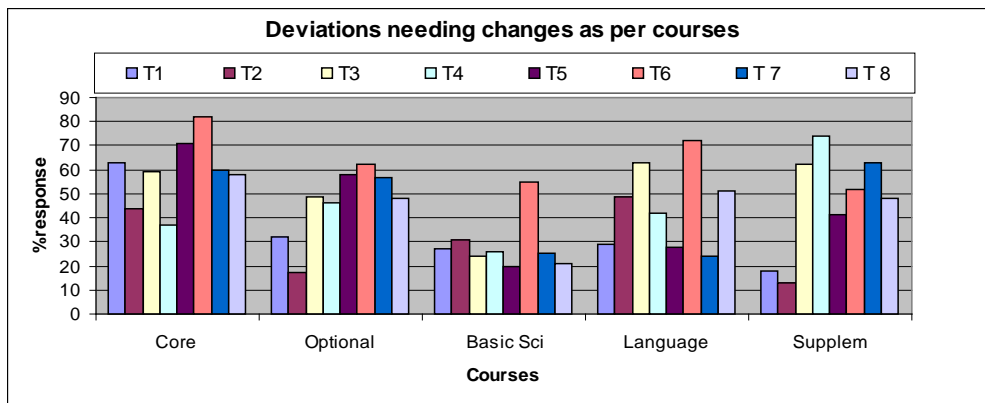


Fig. 2. Course curriculum deviations requiring revisions

Response on the specific courses

The Response of the interviewee on different courses was found to be different. According to the results maximum concerns were shown (Fig. 3) on core subjects being 474 person questions, the basic science being minimum as 229.

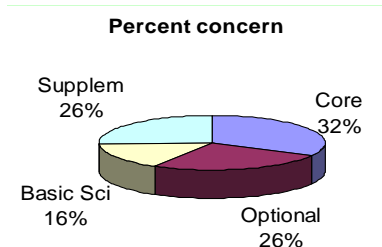


Fig. 3. Respondents concern on core subjects for course moderation

The results show that (Fig. 3) all respondents were aware of the deficiencies of the curriculum and syllabus both on written papers and its implementation status.

There were so many anomalies were also found in the optional and follow up supplementary courses at the later and early semesters respectively as induced by the individual teachers.

Suggestions for Curriculum changes

The responses given in terms of suggestions for curriculum changes as given here (Fig. 4) show that 26% change of the overall curriculum of core subjects is needed. The other subjects should be adjusted as per revision of the core subjects. Physics, computer and math syllabus should be integrated considering its syllabus set for Diploma courses, so that they can qualify for directly entering in to these degrees.

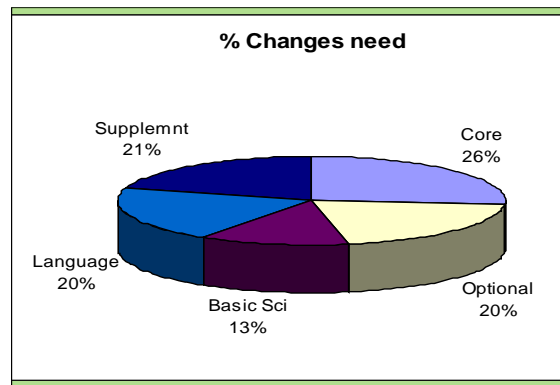


Fig. 4. Suggested curriculum changes as per courses

The courses needing revision were found to be 13-26% for additional courses as highest. But the deviations of the courses in the core subjects were found to be more important for quality education. The mean results given here (Fig. 3 and 4) on the course status in percentage form show that about 30% were in the satisfactory grade which is inadequate according to even Asian standards (NZ- >50%). It should be treated as major sector for improvement in our newly emerging Textile Education. Similar results (Mexico OECD 2005) were obtained by different countries during 50's when the recommended for curriculum revision and positive results on technical results were obtained.

CONCLUSION

The major to be made from these studies on Textile Vocational Education in Bangladesh that the written and spoken language specially technical terminologies in English should be strengthened creating adequate laboratories and workshops. Number of appropriate teachers with training background needed to be increased. Examination items should be specifically spelled out. The Theory and Practical class/credits/periods must be specified in the credit courses and should be examined in practical work based format including conversations in English. Participation of all the actors of the curriculum including Instructors and employers with abroad professional must be ensured making it in-built in the curriculum and syllabus must be ensured. The syllabus of the core subject credits must be revised for increasing credibility of the graduates to the employers and also making them competent for diploma studies. The whole curriculum should be in a modular format as per competency based training (CBT) based on skills standards development and endorsed by industry and approved by the Bangladesh Technical education Board (BTEB). There should be one Curriculum Director closely attached to the Examination affairs. Class rooms, laboratories/workshop, teaching aids (Audio-Visual Aids, raw-material, etc. should be well equipped with standard demand for the selected program.

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