

Industry Practitioners Involvement in Taiwan Vocational Education

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1. Background / Objectives and Goals

Today's rapid development of industrial pulsation, how to reduce the gap between the academics and industry need become an important issue in vocational education. Beginning in 2015, a two-year program for teaching excellence, funded by the Ministry of Education Taiwan, is implemented by Meiho University, with a total project funding of \$ 1.5 million USD. One of the innovated highlights of this program is to invite 188 industry practitioners to participate in collaborative teaching for 175 classes and 28 industry practitioners to be as mentors to. 56 industry practitioners are also invited to participate in curriculum planning and design. The objective of this paper is to analyze and discuss the effectiveness of the collaborative teaching by the industry practitioners and effectiveness of industry tutors system. Some feasible suggestions for the promotion of the industry practitioners are also put forward in this paper.

2. Methods

A case study approach is used with views gained from students, practitioners, and academic professors involved in this program. These views are collected by informal interviews and questionnaires to students and academic professors in the program. In addition to quantitative questionnaires, a lot of qualitative advices are provided as well.

3. Expected Results / Conclusion / Contribution

Students' overall satisfaction for the program was more than 4.5(out of 5.0). This paper aims to evaluate the effectiveness and discuss the limit of the practitioners program. This study has revealed and provided some valuable perspectives how to best ensure the ongoing involvement of industry practitioners in vocational education. The most contribution for practitioners is that their teaching reflects the latest needs of employers and industry. This may help students responding to market need. Practitioners share their own experience, provide real work example, and demonstrate applications of theory, which enables students to network and obtain useful contacts for future professional and career development. Practitioner involvement may enhance teaching and learning. Comments from students and academic indicate a high level of practitioners' enthusiasm for teaching in the program, which may also further affect the academic professor as well. The enthusiasm, engaging preparation, and presentation are the key factors for success of the practitioners program. Balance between academic and industry practitioner is a major challenge to ensure the success of this program, even all academic professors were asked to participate each classes, practitioner may not always aware of the timing of each topics and whole aspects of the course. Full communication regarding course content, teaching strategies, grading, and other details of the class for the practitioners program are very important.

The findings of this study are valuable to those involved in designing collaborative teaching curriculum and delivering course for vocational education. Practitioners' time: Most of the practitioners teaching in this program are active full time worker in other employment. Meiho University is located in remote areas of southern Taiwan; we found sometimes it is very challenging to recruit good practitioners from big city nearby. Bridging the academic/practitioner divide: Planning a practitioner involvement class is as important as the planning the class content. Effective industry knowledge transfer requires active student engagement, activation of favorable audience emotions, and an enjoyable learning process.

Key words: Collaborative teaching, Industry practitioners, Mentor, Vocational education

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Outline

- Background
- Objectives
- Methodology / Approach
- Literature Review
- Industry Practitioners Statistics
- Student Qualitative Opinions
- Conclusions and Challenges

Background 1/2

- Today's rapid development of industrial pulsation, how to reduce the gap between the academics and industry need become an important issue in vocational education.
- Industry practitioner is one of the key point to promote the vocational education and satisfy the latest needs for industry.
- Since 2010, the Ministry of Education of Taiwan has launched a program to sponsor vocation colleges and universities to recruit industry practitioners to join the collaborative teaching.

Background 2/2

- From 2015, a two-year program for teaching excellence, funded by MOE Taiwan, is implemented by Meihou University, with a total project funding of \$ 1.5 million USD.
- One of the innovated highlights of this project is to invite 199 industry practitioners to participate in collaborative teaching for 175 classes.
- 56 industry practitioners are also invited to participate in curriculum planning for 14 departments.

Objectives

- The objective of this paper is to analyze and discuss the effectiveness of the collaborative teaching by the industry practitioners and effectiveness of industry tutors system.
- Some feasible suggestions for the promotion of the industry practitioners are also put forward in this paper.

Methodology / Approach

- A case study approach is used with views gained from students, practitioners, and academic professors involved in this program.
- These views are collected by informal interviews and questionnaires to students and academic professors in the program. In addition to quantitative questionnaires, a lot of qualitative advices are provided as well.

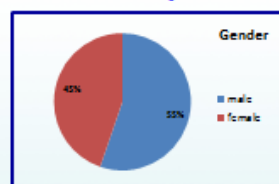
Literature Review 1/2

- Discuss several different models of lecturer / practitioner / student relationship; discusses the benefits and drawbacks of these models for students and lecturers; suggests some guidelines for managing and developing practitioner participation in undergraduate courses. (Anderson 1999)
- Collaborative teaching model with practitioners can help students to study the professional theory of design courses. (Lin 2008)
- A model of practitioner-based learning can meet student and employer needs in terms of the skills they require in their future roles. (Richardson 2010)

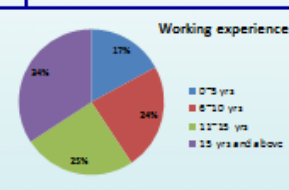
Literature Review 2/2

- Industry practitioners may help to shape the Higher Education contexts through which students engage with 'industry'. The personal and situated accounts of working in industry provided by teacher-practitioners can help students make sense of their emerging identities critically reflect on their future work environments. (Ashton 2013)
- Industry practitioners has significant advantage for Teaching materials R & D courses. (Yan and Wen 2016)

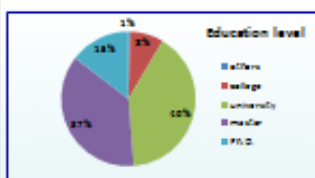
Industry Practitioners Statistics 1/2



59% of the Practitioners have more than 10 years working experience.

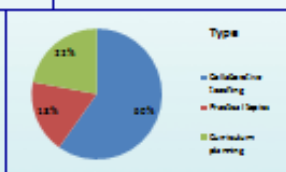


Industry Practitioners Statistics 2/2



✓ 52% of the Practitioners have Master degree or above

✓ Students' overall satisfaction for this Industry Practitioners program is 4.53 (5.0)



Student Qualitative Opinions 1/3

1. Reflecting needs of employers / industries

- ✓ 「We have more understanding for the industry and working environment, we also get many practical knowledge of the industry.」 [#2]
- ✓ 「The practitioner is very attentive, he clearly explain the practical problems raised by students in the class. We hope to have more opportunities to attend practitioner's course in the future.」 [#4]

Student Qualitative Opinions 2/3

2. Practitioner involvement- enhancing teaching /learning

- ✓ 「It may bring different aspects of the content from the original academic professor.」 [#63]
- ✓ 「The practitioner always helps to answer the practical questions from students, and has good interaction with students in the class.」 [#49]
- ✓ 「The practitioner utilizes many great industry examples to explain the course content, and the class is lively and interesting.」 [#19]

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Student Qualitative Opinions 3/3

3. Future career development

- ✓ 「The lesson gives me a better understanding of the work of public nutritionist, and I am not sure about to be a hospital nutritionist.」 [#22]
- ✓ 「The practitioner help us to know which goal to move forward after graduation.」 [#58]
- ✓ 「I feel great about his personal experience sharing in real working environment, I suppose it is very helpful for my future career.」 [#61]

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Conclusions and Challenges 1/3

- ✓ The most contribution for practitioners is that their teaching reflect the latest needs of employers and industry. This may help students responding to market need.
- ✓ Practitioners share their own experience, provide real work example, and demonstrate applications of theory, which enables students to network and obtain useful contacts for future professional and career development.
- ✓ Practitioner involvement may enhance teaching and learning. Comments from students and academic indicate a high level of practitioners enthusiasm for teaching in the program, which may also further affect the academic professor as well.

Conclusions and Challenges 2/3

- ✓ The enthusiasm, engaging preparation, and presentation are the key factors for success of the practitioners program.
- ✓ Balance between academic and industry practitioner is a major challenge to ensure the success of this program, even all academic professors were asked to participate each classes, practitioner may not always aware of the timing of each topics and whole aspects of the course.
- ✓ Full communication regarding course content, teaching strategies, grading, and other details of the class for the practitioners program are very important.

Conclusions and Challenges 3/3

- ✓ **Practitioners' time:** Most of the practitioners teaching in this program are active full time worker in other employment. Meiho University is located in remote areas of southern Taiwan, we found sometimes it is very challenging to recruit good practitioners from big city nearby.
- ✓ **Bridging the academic/practitioner divide:** Planning a practitioner involvement class is as important as the planning the class content. Effective industry knowledge transfer requires active student engagement, activation of favorable audience emotions, and an enjoyable learning process.

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THANK YOU

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