

Transforming Industry Practitioners into Vocational Teachers: New Teacher Training in Vocational Education and Training

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Given that the teacher training programmes (e.g. Certificate of Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Education, etc.) provided by local universities and higher education institutes have a long history in preparing professional teachers for primary and secondary schools sectors, their teacher training programmes have not focused on the needs of the higher education and vocational education and training (VET) sectors (Misko et al., 2002). As there are many differences in the training needs and the teaching and learning strategies adopted among these sectors, teacher training especially for VET sector has become a burning issue (Attwell, 1999; Alvalos, 2011). This study is concerned with the development and effectiveness of a structured new teacher training programme for newly recruited vocational teachers in one of Hong Kong's largest vocational education and training programme providers. This study also examines the participants' perceptions for a better understanding of their views on transforming themselves from industry practitioners into professional VET teachers. By adopting a mixed method approach that combines quantitative and qualitative methods, this longitudinal research approach is aimed at examining the needs, development, design, implementation and evaluation of the new teacher training programme from the perspectives of the participants and the programme facilitators in order to shed light on the design of a new teacher training programme for VET teachers. The four-level framework suggested by Kirkpatrick was adopted for the analysis of the training effectiveness (Kirkpatrick, 1994; Alliger & Janak, 1989). The findings show that new teacher training plays a significant role in preparing new VET teachers. It is also revealed that psychological support from colleagues is essential for new teachers to regulate emotions, to ease anxieties, and to build confidence. Learning community and culture for sharing of good teaching practices are also essential needs for new teachers. Findings further show that the effectiveness of the programme rests on staff development policy and the administration of the programme. Last, but not least, mindset changes are needed to transform industry practitioners

into VET teachers. Implications are drawn for future research directions. Firstly, it is suggested to examine whether there are correlations between the new teacher training programme and the new teachers' retention rate. Secondly, further study on the needs and articulation pathways of the new teacher programme to other advanced training programmes may shed light on sustainable teacher development in the VET sector. Lastly, a close look into the extent of the teacher learning community on the nurturing of a collaborative culture of continuous learning would also be useful.

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