

Original Paper

Uncovering the Challenge of Vocational Education Policy

Yasdin¹, Amirullah Abduh¹, Bakhrani Abdul Rauf¹, Edi Suhardi Rahman¹, & Mithen Lullulangi^{1*}

¹ Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar Sul-Sel, Indonesia

* Mithen Lullulangi, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar Sul-Sel, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the challenges faced by educational actors in developing vocational education mainly in the political perspective of vocational education. This research is a qualitative research. Data were collected using open interviews with 16 participants. Participants in this study came from the government, schools, industry, professional associations, media, the community, and non-governmental organizations. The results showed that the interest groups in vocational education faced four challenges in the development of vocational education. The challenges are in the form of bureaucratic challenges, management challenges, collaborative challenges, and trust challenges. This challenge arises because the development of vocational education is closely related to the allocation of resources including, human resources, budget, and facilities. The implications of this research can be used to improve communication between interest groups in the development of vocational education that can be used at the national and global levels.

Keywords

uncovering, challenge, vocational education, policy

1. Introduction

The development of education especially technical and vocational education (TVET) became an interesting discussion in the 21st century. In various countries, the development of education including TVET was faced with various and varied challenges. Vocational education must be a personal, local, national and global victory (White, Bruce, & Ritchie, 2000). At the global level, discussions of TVET are still often separate.

A number of opposites that show fundamental contradictions. Discussion of TVET at the national or international level is not finished because it only involves a number of interest groups (Grollman & Rauner, 2007). While TVET is very vulnerable to group interests (Ozurumba & Ebuara, 2014), it

cannot be separated from the interests of the community (Shan, Liu, & Li, 2015; Shavit & Müller, 2000).

The goals are various goals for person development, sociopolitical goals, and economic goals (Lauglo & McLean, 2005) and give value to the skills provided (Clarke & Winch, 2007; Murgor, 2013). The exclusion of interest groups in education which tends to often damage the organizational structure (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Ideally, all groups are involved in the development of TVET. This engagement is assumed to be the politics of TVET and plays a role in shaping educational policy (Zajda & Jaja, 2010) and resolving TVET problems (Porter & Hicks, 1997; Kingdon, 2003; Richardson, 2008). Problem solving and TVET policy making are expected to include all interested and competent TVET actors so that they can respond to challenges in TVET (Chan & Emzir, 2010). Some of the intended actors are the private sector, community or public, and the government including the regional government (Galey, 2015).

It is this group that is expected to answer the challenges facing TVET at the national and global levels. The challenges of developing TVET are felt by many stakeholders. However, challenges in developing TVET still pay more attention to external factors than internal factors, namely the challenges faced by actors and stakeholders of TVET. For example, Chapman (2004) states that the challenges facing education are contributions from external environmental factors. The intended environment is not derived from the TVET subsystem. This study does not in detail look at the challenges and obstacles experienced by TVET.

The same thing happened in Indonesia. Research on the challenges of educational development including TVET is rarely seen from within. Like the research conducted by Rosmaladewi and Abduh (2017) who explored external factors in educational challenges. Investigations carried out more on cultural aspects. Dollah, Abduh, and Talib (2017) also examined the same aspect of intercultural study. From various existing studies, the focus is illustrated on the external aspects that become challenges and obstacles in the development of education. This is the basis of this research to see clearly the challenges experienced by interest groups in the development of TVET related to patterns of interaction between factors. This research further explores the challenges facing vocational education in its involvement in the politics of education.

2. Methods

2.1 Research Goal

This research encourages qualitative research developed by Denzin and Lincoln (2008) which aims to describe the challenges of actors and the development of TVET. This research was carried out for seven months. This research was carried out in South Sulawesi Province as one of the provinces which had a bias towards the development of vocational education. In the development of vocational education in South Sulawesi Province, several actors were involved. This actor experienced different challenges in the development of vocational education in South Sulawesi Province.

2.2 Participant

Participants in this study came from these interest groups. The number of participants in this study were 16 participants as below.

Table 1. Research Participants Detail

Participant (Pseudonyms)	Age ranges	Educational background	Current positions
Sra	50s	Bachelor Degree	Head of Social Services Agency
Bep	50s	Masters Degree	Head of Regional Planning
Eka	40s	Masters Degree	Head of Human Resources Planning Agency
Ipa	50s	Masters Degree	Head of Vocational Education Section
Ike	40s	Bachelor Degree	Head of Planning for Labour placement
Ipe	40s	Bachelor Degree	Head of Small Medium Enterprises Agency
Ama	50s	Doctorate	Mayor
Eja	50s	Masters	School Principal
Dep	40s	Bachelor	Member of Legislative Assembly
Ewa	50s	Doctorate	Head of Educational Council
Iwt	60s	Doctorate	President of Teacher Association
Lsm	40s	Bachelor	Head of Community Association
Zkd	50s	Master	Head of Industry Council
Mpr	50s	Bachelor	Industry
Ecl	40s	Masters	Legislative Officers
Art	30s	Bachelor	Mass Media Reporter

2.3 Analyzing of Data

Data collection in this study using open interviews. Open interviews are used to map the challenges faced by interest groups in developing vocational education in South Sulawesi Province. Data analysis techniques used in this study follow the principles of data analysis developed by Corbin and Strauss (1990). The data coding structure is used to describe relationships between categories so that it can help researchers think systematically. Corbin and Strauss (1990) describe five things and conditions that can describe the relationship of phenomena namely causality, strategy, contextual, intervention, and consequences. Research data analysis is done by producing and listening to audio, producing and reading interview transcripts, identifying concepts and relationships, and developing categories and

concepts based on nature and dimensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher also compared the incidents in the data with the existing research literature.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study show some of the challenges faced by interest groups by stakeholders in developing vocational education. The challenges faced in the development of vocational education are as follows:

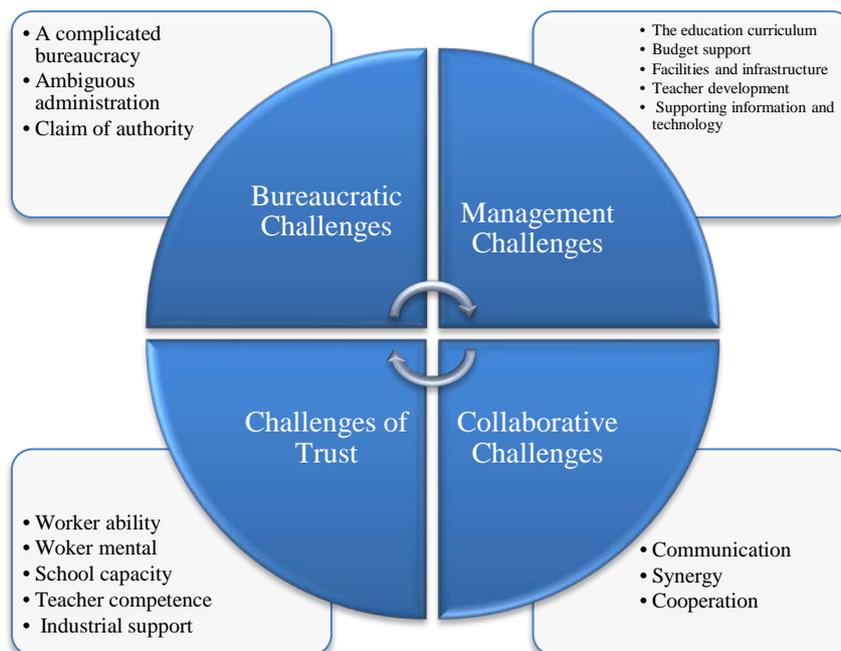


Figure 1. The Challenges of TVET Development

The findings show four challenges faced by actors or groups of interests in the development of vocational education, namely administrative challenges, management challenges, collaboration challenges, and trust challenges.

Firstly, administrative challenges. Administrative challenges faced by interest groups in the development of vocational education in South Sulawesi Province are in the form of complicated bureaucracy, weak administration, and inter-group authority claims. Some opinions are conveyed as follows:

For example, for human resource recruitment policies. The Provincial Government only proposes. But the one who did and issued the employee recruitment formation was the National Civil Service Agency or higher authority. So we below only follow the provisions (Eka, 2018).

Some interest groups rarely sit together to plan together. The average road alone. So that planning administration is sometimes not connected. Planning administration is owned by each interest group (Ike, 2018).

Bureaucracy is constrained due to lack of support of the law. For example, to help small industries in recruiting workers from vocational education. The provincial government is still hit by the lack of regulations. Although the administration supports to be assisted, but if there is no regulation, it is still not assisted (Ipe, 2018).

Now that the era has been digitalized, all forms related to planning should be opened. Administration can no longer be kept closed. So, if there are deficiencies, other groups can give advice administratively also to the government (Ama, 2018).

Planning documents that should have been socialized to schools sometimes do not arrive. So weak socialization, finally only known by a small group of people. Finally, administration is rarely even owned by schools (Eja, 2018).

The transfer of management of secondary education from the district government to the provincial government is still lacking with the transfer of assets. Some assets are still administered at the district level, even though the management of vocational education has been taken over by the provincial government (Dep, 2018).

We can see, for business help. So far, it is said that the management is easy. But it turns out that to get the people's business credit is very complicated and tends to be complicated management of administration (Zkd, 2018).

From the description of the interview above, it can be explained that the bureaucracy has a role in advancing and developing TVET. Supporting administration, easy bureaucracy, greatly supports the sustainability of TVET. Bureaucracy will guide the process of managing policies. Bureaucratic challenges are closely related to the government system.

Secondly, management challenges. Some management challenges faced by several actors in the development of vocational education include; budgeting, infrastructure management, curriculum management, teacher capacity building, and information technology management. Management challenges are expressed by several interest groups in vocational education as follows:

The development of vocational education depends on the budget. For the welfare sector, this is a problem. Because here our budget is different between technical and non-technical (Sra, 2018).

The challenge is the budget problem. This must be rationalized. What is the realization plan? Support or not? Especially the development of vocational education (Bep, 2018).

Increasing the capacity of human resources for the development of vocational education requires a large budget. The challenge, the budget is limited. We sort it out in the form of activities. That's a technical step (Eka, 2018).

We strive to develop a curriculum based on local excellence. So far, we have a lot of information technology majors, but they do not help curriculum development. For example for curriculum promotion activities so that people are interested in the local curriculum. The problem is that information technology management has not been very effective for the development of vocational education (Ipa, 2018). Management becomes weak because it does not touch all levels of education.

Does not involve all teachers. Only a small part. Tend to be the only one involved. Finally, management is not effective. The problem again is because of the budget he said (Eja, 2018).

Vocational education facilities and infrastructure are underdeveloped. Tend not to follow the speed of the times. This is the challenge of our future vocational education (Ewa, 2018). Another challenge that we see is the teacher gap. There is a difference between civil servants and temporary workers. Though they are the spearhead of vocational education. There should be no distinguishing status among them (Iwt, 2018).

From the interviews extract above, shows that the TVET development management challenges are related to resource allocation. Allocation of facilities and infrastructure, allocation, human resources, and budget allocation. This indicates that, the challenges of developing TVET related to resource allocation have to do with the politics of education. The linkages are mainly aimed at aspects of political will to manage resources. Existing management functions in the development of TVET have not been optimal because of political will.

Thirdly, the challenges facing the development of vocational education are the challenges of collaboration. Part of the collaboration intended by the vocational education interest groups namely, communication, coöperation, and work together. This view is conveyed by several interest groups in vocational education as follows.

Like there is an institutional ego. Each works alone. They should communicate to work together to develop vocational education. Here, creativity is needed in accordance with existing rules. Education management especially vocational education will not be effective and efficient if there is no work together between interest groups. Including us, the legislature. We are ready to support (Ecl, 2018).

Sometimes the workforce produced by vocational education does not match the work requirements. Do not connect. This is because communication is not working. Never a table. Each way. Finally, it becomes a problem. This is a challenge. Must be a vision. The solution is to optimize communication (Ike, 2018).

The conclusion from the interview above shows that the challenge of collaboration in the development of TVET arises because of the lack of communication and coöperation between interest groups. So far, the interest groups still carry out their own duties without communicating with related elements. This challenge indicates the existence of an ego of interest groups.

Finally, the challenges facing vocational education are the challenges of trust. The challenge of trust is in the form of workers "abilities, workers" mentality, school capacity, teacher competence, and industry support. The opinion was conveyed by several interest groups in vocational education as below.

Very rarely reports on vocational education from a development perspective. Even though the media can build public trust. Vocational education has been underestimated (Art, 2018).

The mentality of our vocational education graduates is questionable. If they want to work, what is discussed first is asking for salary. Even though we don't know their abilities and competencies (Zkd, 2018).

Companies need workers who are ready to use. What is available so far from vocational education graduates still needs development. Still not skilled in skills to be employed (Mpr, 2018).

The public has never listened to the legislature recess the development of vocational education. They finally did not know the problem of vocational education graduates. Teacher competency issues are not addressed. This ultimately weakens mutual trust between interest groups in vocational education (Lsm, 2018).

The results of the interview summary show that the lack of collaboration between interest groups in the development of TVET is due to distrust. Each actor became doubtful about other interest groups because of the motive for the difference in vision in developing TVET. Each actor is interested in discussing their respective interests and tends to forget the goal of TVET.

4. Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the challenges of managing and developing TVET stem from more internal factors. Challenges generally consist of allocating resources in the form of human, budget and facilities. If seen in more detail, the challenges of TVET stem from bureaucratic challenges, management challenges, collaboration challenges, and challenges of trust. To answer the challenges in TVET, ideal patterns of partnership and collaboration between groups in TVET are needed.

Based on the conclusions, suggestions for future research include: (i), partnership and collaboration patterns between vocational education interest groups, (ii) interest management models in the development of vocational education, (iii) optimizing the role of vocational education resources, and (iv) models interest group communication in vocational education.

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