



Vocational College Students Career in Furniture Operation and Manufacturing Course

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ABSTRACT

Furniture is a must have product that everyone would have it. There are many types of furniture makes from various types of materials and need some working skills to produce them. Furniture industry is a well-known industry all over the world and contributes to the increasing of Malaysian economic growth. High workforce demand in furniture industry can give a future career option towards graduates' students of Vocational College in Furniture Operation and Manufacturing Course. By TVET, students can learn the proper skills in furniture industry so that they can adapt and getting involve with the industry.

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Introduction

Furniture industry is one of the well-known industries in Malaysia. According to Matrade (2012), Malaysia is ranked as the 10th world's largest furniture exporter. In 2011, with the exports value of USD 2.39 billion, Malaysia has become the second largest exporters of furniture in Asia after China. As a low tech, labor intensive and supplier-dominated industry, the pattern of innovation of furniture industry is become widely acknowledged as business driven (Ng, Thairuchelvam, 2012). The development and the flourishing of the furniture industry not only can provide the grounds for its targeted presence in international markets but also can serve as developing engine of a large part of the related and dependent industries in a country, which could remarkably influence job creation and enhancement of gross domestic production and earning non-petroleum revenues for that country according to Majid Azizi et al (2015) in CSIL, 2009/2010.

Malaysia is now getting closer to in its journey towards Vision 2020 and is transforming to become a developed nation. Nowadays, in terms of technological development, we can see that it has change tremendously and most of the works needs to operate globally in orders to compete with other developing countries. Jailani et al (2005) has stated that with this change has created and impact on the nature of work where high levels use of technology is a necessity to compete in the global arena. According to Rashid (2006), education system in Malaysia is divided into several types which including technicK and vocational.

TVET is a term that usually used in Malaysia is synonym with the technical and vocational education term that often used by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The definition of TVET is still similar with TVE that used by the UNESCO which refers to those aspects of the educational process that involved, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related science and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding which is relating to the occupations in various sectors of economic and social life

as stated by Ahmad and Juhaisa (2014) based from UNESCO (2005).

Ahmad Esa and Mohd Zaid Mustafa (2010) stated that if during the industrial training students of vocational college understands the concept of soft skills and know where and when to apply it, thus it not impossible in the future they will implement it during their working time which is now soft skills is very important that can affect the progress and development of the country. According to Yek Lang Yieng and Rohana Hamzah (2012) in Mohamed Sharif and Roslee (2006), during the career selection, other than wage or salary issue, the attractive working environment, a halal work and have a potential to be developed as well as an individual that have the advantages or qualifications can choose their particular field according to their interest.

Furniture Operation and Manufacturing Course

According to *The Free Dictionary.com* (2017), a carpenter is referring to the skilled worker who makes finishes and repair wooden objects and structures. Thus, students with the furniture operation and manufacturing course are learning on how to prepare the materials, the use of tools and machines, furniture fittings and furniture finishing (Suzailye, 2013). Subject in vocational programmed is a group of skill-based subjects which offered at secondary academic schools for Form Four and Form Five students. The program is offering 22 subjects which grouped into five business skills; construction, manufacturing, technics, household economics and computer applications. The offer of subjects is done in stages starting from 2002 until 2005. For the first phase, 8 subjects is being offering (Abdul Malek, 2004): i) Domestic construction, ii) Furniture Manufacturing, iii) Sign design, iv) Servicing domestic electrical appliances, v) Design and stitching of clothing, vi) Catering and presentation vii) Landscape and nursery, viii) Food crops Furniture Operation and Manufacturing course is offered to the students that have taken their Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) for the past or nowadays known as Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3) examination which is interested to

learn furniture making in selected Vocational College in Malaysia. For the time being, only five Vocational Colleges are offering this course which are KV Muar, KV Taiping, KV Muadzam Shah, KV Sarawak and KV Pengkalan Chepa.

Students who are taking this course will be provided with skill-focused training by the hands-on teaching. The learning standard is based on NOSS (*National Occupational Skill Standard*) which managed by JPK (*Jabatan Pembangunan Kemahiran*). Students who successfully complete this course will be awarded with Malaysia Skill's Certificate (SKM) that is recognized by the industry. Students who are eligible to apply for this course must be Malaysian citizens. In addition, the applicant must be in Form 3 and will be seated for Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) or have occupied for PT3. The specific conditions to apply in this course are the students must obtain at least D grade in their Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) in the subject Bahasa Melayu, English, Mathematics, Science and Kemahiran Hidup.

Through Problem Based Learning (PBL), students get the opportunity to experience the work on real life or simulated the real life problems by making the learning of experience more meaningful (Hussain, Ahmad, Abdullah, Hasyamudin, 2007). During the improvement of develop country, training systems have an effective functions whereas the systems are based on "appropriate profession selection" principle which are supplying productive training and enabling individuals to identify their skills and interest. But, the individual profession selection resolution is not being made immediately and need to be realized by the professional development studies which starting from the basic training level (Uzun & Cinar, 2009).

Furniture Industry

Needs is defined as something deficient that required by an individual to function effectively. Abraham Maslow divided needs into two categories which is psychological needs and physiology needs. The characteristics of needs includes: i) not in natural state, ii) exist because there is a lack of fulfillment, iii) lack of psychology needs or physiology needs. iv) Impermanent. After completion will be reduced or erased (Baharom Mohamad, Ahmad Esa, Husin Junoh, 2008)

One of the areas of expertise that contributes to the Malaysia's economy is from the furniture industry. It becomes one of the main priorities for not only to the needs of labor supply but also to maintain Malaysia as one of the main furniture exporters in the world. As mentioned by Ahasanul et. Al (2014) through Borneo Post Online, April 6, 2012 stated that we are still lack of workforce in furniture industry sector which has forced the government to allow 16,000 of foreign labors into Malaysia especially to Muar and Batu Pahat in order to fulfill the workforce demand in industry. Ministry of Trade and Industry, Datuk seri Mustapha Mohamed asserted that the entry period of foreign workers from Nepal, Indonesia and Bangladesh could be accelerated which is within two weeks compared to the previous system which taking one year period. It is clearly shows that how much important the man workforce especially in the furniture making to fulfill the job vacancy that becomes the main sources of generator of economic growth of the country.

Ratnasingam (2002) asserted that the level of technology employed by the furniture industry in Malaysia is on par with other furniture manufacturing countries. Furniture industry has been started in Muar and has been around for more than three decades. Across the 30 years, it has witness the rise of

furniture manufactures and also the upstream and downstream industries as well (Ng and Thiruchelvam, 2011). The value of the furniture is being determined based on the quality of their aesthetic appeal and the craftsmanship of the furniture makers (Ng and Thiruchelvam, 2011).

Most of the training in the furniture industry in Malaysia is by in-house on the job training as knowledge is gained by the experience from the everyday work in the industry. According to Boon Kwee and Thiruchelvam (2011), furniture fairs are the best channel to promote and market the furniture products in industry. The exhibitor can keep up to date with the latest trends in the industry.

Conclusion

As a conclusion can be made, learning theory alone is not enough for students to become compatriot or proficient in hands-on skills. In other words, what is learning practically during the real working life is so much different with what the students are learning in theory class. The industrial demands towards skilled manpower nowadays are not only on the students that are mastering the theory alone but also for the students who are practical in the works. This will make a person to be seen as a leader when they can shape with the people who are skilled in his work.

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