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# A REFLECTION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN JAPAN

Motosuke MUNAKATA

Public vocational training system was developed by the government during the period of high economic growth in order to meet the needs of industry for skilled manpower. It used to train some 30,000 youths annually who were to start work in industry. However, number of applicants has been declining in recent years and some 20% of the training places have been left unfilled. Under these circumstances, the government has reorganised the system in 1978 and reconfirmed that the initial responsibility for vocational training rested with industry itself.

Looking back over the past 100 years, Japan's school education has always emphasised general cultural aspects rather than vocational orientation. This perhaps stemmed from the needs for absorbing foreign technology required for the modernisation of the nation. Industry has also preferred young school leavers with "cognitive" ability to whom specific occupational training was given within the undertakings, and this combination of general cultural education in schools and vocational training in industry has undoubtedly contributed to the country's economic development.

This historical fact seems to imply that, from economic point of view, declining tendency has been inherent in the public system of vocation-oriented education or training itself. The author is of the opinion that vocational training in public institutions in Japan can best perform its function in the training of the adults who have clear vocational orientation themselves.

# A STUDY ON IN-PLANT TRAINING CURRICULA FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Kazutoshi TANAKA

Industry has relied for the recruitment of its key labour force mainly on middle school graduates (age 15) who were to undergo 3-year craft training in the undertaking. In recent years, however, recruitment source has shifted to high school graduates (age 18) and the period of in-plant training was in most cases reduced to 1 year. The author analysed the in-plant training curricula for electrical and electronic trades in 11 undertakings and tried to find some characteristic features.

The author has set two criteria for the analysis, i. e. proportion of time assigned for on-the-job training and that for training common to training in other trade. From this viewpoint the 11 curricula were diversified and any common characteristics as were observed in the previous 3-year training were difficult to find.

It seems that some of the curricula were no longer designed for the training of key labour force while in some other intensive off-the-job trade training were given so that the trainees could acquire specific job skills. It is difficult to identify factors affecting the changes in the curricula from limited information, but recent technological changes and resulting changes in industry's recruitment policy may be among the factors.

## DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF A NEW TRAINING SYSTEM FOR CAR-DRIVING

Masami NAGATA, Yukihsa KATO & Hiroshi KURIYAMA

The training for car-driving skills given in training schools relies in most cases on individual instruction by the trainers and although some kind of audio-visual aids are employed in part these do not seem very effective. The authors have developed a new training system using a mechanism which can simulate the movement of a real car most closely together with a learning programme based on a modular approach. This system is designed for training for starting and speed control skills.

A preliminary test was administered to female trainees between 30 and 40 years of age. These trainees were grouped into three, and the first group was given training of a conventional type, the second group 3-hour training by the new system followed by conventional training and the third group received the same training as the second but individual instruction was given by the staff concerned with the development of the new system. The result showed that considerable reduction of training time was observed for the latter two groups compared with the first group. For the second group reduction of training time was most apparent during the early stage of conventional type of instruction and for the third through all stages of learning.

This system was put into actual operation in autumn 1977 and its effectiveness was further confirmed, especially for trainees whose learning abilities are lower compared with young male trainees.

# A STUDY ON THE REPORT ON SECONDARY EDUCATION BY THE KYŌIKU-SHINGIKAI 1939

Teruo SASAKI

In December 1937, Kyōiku-shingikai (the Advisory Council for Education) was appointed for the purpose of reporting to the government on the overall reform of the educational system in Japan. The Council submitted one of its reports entitled "the Report on Secondary Education" on 14 September, 1939.

At that time, secondary school system which followed 6 years' compulsory education, was triparted, consisting of boys' general school, girls' general school and vocational school. This system had originated in 1899 and the boys and girls who entered the vocational stream had no chance to proceed to higher education in universities or colleges.

The report took account of the needs of many young people who should be accorded "an equal opportunity in higher education" and recommended a new type of secondary school, "Chutō Gakko", which integrated the triparted streams. Chuto-gakko is not a comprehensive school, but it was better suited to the varying needs of the younger people.

# LEARNING (DENSHU) AND EMPLOYMENT PROVISION (JUSAN)

Mitsuru TOBAYAMA

The Japanese word "Denshu" implies learning for new technology and the word "Jusan" provisions for employment in the traditional sector. In this article, the author tries to apply the theory of thermodynamics to social changes in industrial structure caused by technological innovation. Assuming that innovation in technology gives rise to a new industry, there will be conflict between the new and traditional industries. If the new industry is so powerful as to get rid of the traditional one, it will deprive the workers in the traditional sector of their job opportunities (and this will lead to social instability. And when the social instability is serious it would deter the development of the new industry. Therefore, if the new industry is to take root smoothly it would be necessary to protect the traditional one and accommodate the inertia in the industrial structure.

The situation is analogous to the thermodynamic field where spontaneity depends on the compatibility of energy with entropy.

The innovation in technology which gives rise to a new industry may be regarded as increase in power and this corresponds to the promotion of energy. Hence a new industry has the character of energy. The protection of traditional industry and accommodation of inertia result in increase in diversity and this corresponds to increase in entropy, and traditional industry has the character of entropy.

From this we can conclude that if a new industry is to take root it must be compatible with the traditional one and employment provision is needed for this purpose.

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCATIONAL “INTEREST” AND “DESIRE”

Katsuya TODA

“Vocational Interest” (like—dislike) test is normally used for vocational guidance and counselling purposes. The author questioned the validity of this test and tried to clarify the relationship between “vocational desire” (desire—do-not-desire). Two tests were administered to 532 young male trainees following a 2-year craft training courses in public vocational training centres. The result showed that in the case of trainees at the beginning stage (age 15) no significant difference was observed between vocational “interest” scores and vocational “desire” scores, while in the case of the second year trainees (age 16) vocational “desire” scores were not parallel with but lower than the “interest” scores in the “mechanical” area in which the training was given.

This seems to indicate that “vocational desire” test would better be used together with “vocational interest” test for the purpose of guidance and counselling.

# A NOTE ON THE AMENDMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING LAW 1978

Satsuo NAGATA

Amendment of Vocational Training Law of 1969 was approved by the Parliament and became effective as of October 1978. And while the intention of the legislature has been clarified by a number of government documents, the author wishes to draw the attention of those concerned to the financial aspect of vocational training.

To show an example the amendment confirmed that the initial responsibility for vocational training rested with the employers against a widely held notion among some circles of employers that, in organising group training, they are acting on behalf of the government who is to assume the initial responsibility. This misconception is perhaps due to the fact that increasing amount of subsidy has been given to these employers. However, the subsidy is paid out of the Employment Insurance Fund which, in addition to the payment of unemployment benefit, may be used for the promotion of the welfare of the insured workers. Therefore, indication of employers' responsibility is not inconsistent with the subsidy policy.

This is just one example, but one will have to be aware of the implications which the financial institution will have on the system of vocational training in a given society.