STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE SKILLS GAP OF GRADUATES IN CTE/TVET

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“IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE THE LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY TO SEE REAL GROWTH IN THE ECONOMY, THIS [SKILL GAP] IS AN AREA THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED URGENTLY”

AUDREY HINCHCLIFFE, 2007
OUTLINE

- Previous Aver/Analytical Framework
- The Research Process
- Findings
- Implications
- Strategies for narrowing skills gap
- Recommendations
- Conclusions
- Think – Pair – Share
Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) also called Career and Technical Education (CTE): is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work

(UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2010)
Skills Gap

- A skills gap is a significant gap between an organization’s skill needs and the current capabilities of its workforce.

(ASTD, 2009)
INTRODUCTION

Skills Gap: A major concern

- Dynamic and convergent world, marked by technological innovations and pervasive competitions
- Countries seek to reduce unemployment ratio
- Industries seek competent workforce
- Regional integration through viable and transferable skills
The Socio-economic Milieu

Jamaica Unemployment Rate

(STATIN, 2011)
TRAINING RECEIVED BY LABOUR FORCE, 2008

1.5% Vocational – No Certificate
1.5% Vocational – No Certificate
0.4% Professional – No Deg/Dip
9.8% Professional – Deg/Dip
0.1% Apprenticeship
4.8% On-the-job Training
74.3% None

Reports suggest that skills gaps are increasing in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2009, for example, a regional survey of 192 senior executives in 22 countries in the region found that 85% of businesses do not believe their workforce has sufficient skills for their posts.

(Unit, 2009)
GUIDING QUESTIONS

- To what extent does a skills gap exist among CTE university graduates in Jamaica?
- Does the Jamaica’s university education system contribute to the CTE skills gap?
- Are selected universities equipping their CTE graduates with the skills commensurate with local labour-market demands?
- To what extent are the institutions equipped to effectively deliver CTE programmes for the modern work world?
ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Skills demand driven by emergent industries
Skills demand driven by deficiencies in CTE
Skills demand for livelihood due SES

Industry analysis
Education analysis
Community analysis

Labour market analysis
Focus group interviews and discussion

Skills demand driven by emergent industries
Skills demand driven by emergent industries

Policy Suggestions

ILO’s Skill Gap analysis project on Aceh.

Analytical Framework (Chatani, 2010, p.5)
A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted where 150 CTE university graduates were interviewed using the interviewer-assisted questionnaire, which contained twenty-five items.
Employers of six (6) randomly selected organizations were interviewed and this information was complemented by including the employees of the various organizations in focus group discussions.

Additionally three (3) administrators of CTE programmes in universities were interviewed.
FINDINGS

• 83% employers dissatisfied with the initial performance of the CTE graduates

• Newly-hired graduates lacked basic workplace skills (soft skills)

• Newly-hired graduates lacked specialized skills in their chosen field

• Employers reluctant to employ graduates without experience

• CTE graduates are better prepared to receive specialized training
COMMON SKILLS GAP FOUND

CTE University graduates

Skills gap

Competence with modern equipment
Soft-skills (Interpersonal)
Problem Solving skills

in-depth knowledge of their specialized area
Field specific technological skills
Work experience

Labour market (skills required regionally)
Although there is a dearth of studies investigating the impact of skills gaps in the region, recent international studies suggest:

+ Compromised Competitiveness
  - economies adopt a low quality, lower value added production when faced with a low supply of skills (Finegold, 1999).

+ Diminished Productivity, Profitability, and Growth
  - Firms with skills gaps were 50% less productive (Harris, Li et al. 2006).
STRATEGIES FOR NARROWING SKILLS GAP

- Employer/university alliance via:
  - technological resources
  - industrial attachment/apprenticeship
  - state must intervene to facilitate apprenticeship

- Employers’ needs forecasting based on trends

- Employer proactive recruitment/ provision of scholarships, etc.
STRATEGIES FOR NARROWING SKILLS GAP

- Entrepreneurial training and incubation periods
- Tracer studies for CTE university graduates
- CTE practitioners in-service training upgrade
- Universities help to cultivate the soft skills
STRATEGIES FOR NARROWING SKILLS GAP

- University assessment of CTE programmes based on competencies in the specialized skills training
- Stakeholders collaboration
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Broaden workforce development focus
- Impose accountability and coordination on a workforce system
- Align primary/secondary education with labour market needs
RECOMMENDATIONS

Highly-skilled workforce

Private Sector

Public Sector

CTE/TVET Practitioners

Community
IN SUMMARY

- Embrace and equip colleges/universities as platforms for mobility and give them the resources to succeed
- Facilitate more apprenticeship opportunities at the tertiary level
- Create supported transitional job programs for CTE university
- Support CTE as a viable pathway for development and improving SES
- Align tertiary education with the needs and priorities of the labour market
- Facilitate more apprenticeship opportunities at the tertiary level
- Embrace and equip colleges/universities as platforms for mobility and give them the resources to succeed
In reality, organizations will always experience skills gap if they are staying ahead of shifting conditions in their environment and changing expectations from stakeholders.

Once adequate training and experience is gained, CTE university graduate develop the required employability skills, and often evolve as good leaders in their fields.
REFERENCES


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Facts or Fiction?
Your Thoughts...

Thank you!

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