

Thomas Schröder (TU Dortmund University, Germany), **Paryono Paryono** (SEAMEO VOCTECH, Brunei Darussalam), **Somma Pivsa-Art** (Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand), & **Rupert Maclean** (School of Education, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia and Education University of Hong Kong)

TVET@Asia Issue 20: Governance of TVET in the Era of Digitalization and Sustainable Development

Governance of TVET is a major issue and precondition for the ongoing development of TVET systems, especially in the era of digitalization and sustainable development. In the 2010 Guidelines for TVET Policy Review, UNESCO defines TVET Governance as being “*concerned with how the funding, provision, ownership and regulation of TVET systems are coordinated, which actors are involved, and what are their respective roles and responsibilities, and level of formal competence – at the local, regional, national and supranational level.*” The new UNESCO TVET Strategy 2022-2029 further names governance as a priority area for cross-cutting interventions in TVET by underlining governance needs to take an inclusive approach in order to achieve skills development for inclusive and peaceful societies. TVET systems and structures are constantly challenged to adapt to new legal norms, megatrends, and new technologies in order to maximise the quality of TVET provision. It has become evident that TVET governance cannot be adequately examined without considering the impact of digitalization on the labour market and work processes, on the education sector and on governance itself. As a consequence, UNESCO states that “*the ethical and effective use of data in the governance, management and delivery of education and skilling initiatives*” needs to be strengthened. Research on TVET is therefore a prerequisite for development – through good governance, the sharing of knowledge and the promotion of promising approaches.

The papers in this issue share views on TVET governance at different administrative levels (regional, national and institutional). They also examine how TVET governance and digitalization can go hand in hand in order to achieve sustainable quality assurance in TVET. The authors contribute to highlighting best practice examples from different countries and regions. They furthermore confirm the relevance of research on TVET governance for the development of sustainable and labour-market-relevant TVET systems.

NADYA SUBRAMANIAM (The Asia Foundation) and FAUWAZ ABDUL AZIZ (Penang Institute, Malaysia) have addressed TVET governance in **Malaysia**, by examining recent literature focusing on governance, quality assurance, industry, perception, and funding. The paper identifies the main research gaps and concerns, and suggests areas and directions of research that can drive and inform policy decisions at the national level and improve TVET in Malaysia. The authors noted several positive developments in TVET such as an increase of fund allocation, recognition that TVET as a game changer that could contribute to socio and economic development, and the formulation of National TVET Council. The authors argue

that the latter is a culmination of various efforts and offer some hope for the betterment of TVET in the country.

In their paper, SONGHEANG AI, VORN TIM and RAVY VOEUN (SEAMEO TED) shed light on ICT skills needs assessment for technical education teachers in **SEAMEO Member Countries**. The authors argue that the issue of capacities in ICT applications deserves more attention, especially in developing countries. With the help of a cross-sectional survey design, the authors assess ICT skills competency levels of technical education teachers in the region. According to the survey results, internet skills of technical education teachers are quite advanced, whereas Microsoft Excel is still a challenge for many teachers. In order to improve overall ICT skills of technical education teachers, the authors advise to rely on combined resources including ICT infrastructure as well as outsourcing and curriculum review.

ANNIKA BEHRENS (TU Dortmund University), THOMAS SCHRÖDER (TU Dortmund University) and KETEVAN NATRIASHVILI (Education expert and freelancer) have written a paper on governance of TVET teacher development and management based on the case study from TVET reforms in **Georgia**. The paper sheds light on the measures the country has taken in recent years to improve the quality of its TVET system through TVET teacher development and management by focusing on recent reform initiatives in the TVET system. The study also has a close look at the recently introduced TVET teacher standards, the recently defined concept of TVET teachers and the Code of Ethics for TVET teachers. The authors stress the importance of meeting preconditions, both working environment and working conditions for high-quality TVET teaching, especially through the development of TVET teacher development and management (TDM).

XUAN-TIEN VO (Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education, Vietnam) wrote a paper on TVET governance in **Vietnam** by exploring effective models of school-industry collaboration. The author believes that this is timely to address the skills mismatch when industry turns rapidly to adopting high technology. The author explores various models of cooperation both formal and informal and focuses on a case study from one of the TVET institutions in Vietnam for good practice models of cooperation. Finally, the author suggests some possible solutions such as collaboration that is long lasting including in curriculum development, coordinating in training, etc.

MALAKA SAMARA (TU Dortmund University, Germany) focuses her practice-based research on local governance practices of TVET institutes in **Palestine**. She emphasizes the Palestinian government's efforts to enhance, develop and increase the efficacy, responsiveness and inclusivity of national TVET institutes. As an example, she chooses the establishment of Local Employment and TVET councils (LET), whose aim is to support TVET and employment through strengthening cooperation between local TVET stakeholders and TVET providers. While pointing out the importance of the LETs, the author also highlights challenges with regard to the enhancement of quality TVET provision in Palestine. In order to ensure organised and committed institutional efforts in TVET, the author argues

that LETs need their own independent legal and organisational structure, and their own financial status.

SYED ABDUL AZIZ (Research Secretary, Centre for Occupational Education and Research (CORE), Bangladesh) wrote a paper about TVET governance in **Bangladesh** to address various challenges particularly due to the expansion of student enrolment. The author identifies challenges in all dimensions of TVET governance and the impacts on the TVET quality, products, and services. He examines the effectiveness of the existing Acts, frameworks, and strategic plans, which he finds that the government has difficulties in implementing them. He also suggests that expanding enrolment should be accompanied by providing suitable resources, including teachers, facilities, and career and job opportunities.

THOMAS SCHRÖDER (TU Dortmund University) has written a paper on TVET governance at the regional (ASEAN) level by focusing on stages and instruments of a supranational approach particularly in response to the establishment of **ASEAN Economic Community** and increasing challenges in society and the world of work due to digitalisation and unsustainable practices. The paper presents important milestones along the way for organisations and actors, as well as new initiatives and instruments, including the establishment of ASEAN-wide regulatory framework of TVET -the ASEAN TVET Council- in 2020. The paper concludes by arguing for an expansion of regional TVET research and development, which can support the necessary expansion and design processes effectively.

In her paper, SYUHADA YUNOS (University Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia) analyses the necessary strategic planning steps to achieve future ready TVET professionals in **Malaysia**. In her literature review, the author summarizes TVET transformation programmes both in Malaysia and internationally. By drawing on the economic development of the country, the author emphasizes the outstanding role the TVET sector plays in providing the country's growing economy with qualified employees. Additionally, the opportunity of equipping the country with talented self-employed individuals through TVET programmes is mentioned. The study proposes a strategic planning approach in order to address the challenges of training future-ready professionals.

In their article, GOUHAR PIRZADA and ISRA GULZAR stress the importance of TVET for a country's social, economic and human capital growth. However, achieving TVET graduates with the necessary industry-relevant skills set is not possible without fruitful cooperation with industry. To demonstrate to readers what this cooperation can look like, the paper provides a best practice example of the STEP Institute of Art Design & Management in **Pakistan**, where a study has been conducted to identify the needs and demands of the market. Consequently, the authors identify several dimensions TVET institutes should focus on in order to provide graduates with employability skills.

ABDULLAH HELMY, BRIAN FAIRMAN and ADAM VOAK reflect on teaching and learning-implications for post-pandemic TVET practice across the Further Education and Training sector in **Indonesia**. In times of rapid technological innovations, the authors

highlight the need for adult learners to take on a more active role in their own learning processes. More specifically, the paper examines the consequences of the rapid deployment of e-learning and the expansion of communities of practice in this context. The study sheds light on the role of institutions and identifies technical challenges faced by educators and learners when moving teaching and learning into the online context. Furthermore, the authors investigate the nature of the paradigm shift required, at an institutional level, to ensure appropriate future development of an agile and responsive Indonesian administrative management, and special technological support infrastructure requirements.

By drawing on an earlier article published by one of the authors in TVET@Asia, NUR 'ADNIN SYAMIL HALIK BASSAH and MOHD ASRI MOHD NOOR provide an insight into industry experts' perspectives on needed employability skills for TVET graduates in **Malaysia**. To identify relevant employability skills for TVET graduates, this qualitative study investigates the perspective of industry experts through semi-structured interviews. The paper further argues that it is the responsibility of TVET institutions, and the graduates themselves, to foster and prepare the employability requirements of industry in order to increase the likelihood of learners being employed once they graduate. The authors also highlight the importance of strategic planning between TVET institutions and industry when aiming to achieve the establishment of successful collaboration between both stakeholders.

ISRA GULZAR investigates the multi-layered benefits of research culture in the educational sector by conducting a qualitative study on the perspectives of educational institutes in **Pakistan** regarding the importance of a viable research culture. To gather her data, the author conducts interviews with both leaders and teaching staff of conventional, as well as technical and vocational educational institutes. Results of the research highlight the relevance of research for the continuous development of the educational sector as well as for the adoption of innovative teaching and learning practices. The author concludes that a viable and well defined search culture is imperative for the growth and development of Pakistani students, industry and country as a whole.

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Thomas Schröder, Paryono Paryono, Sommai Pivsa-Art, & Rupert Maclean

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