

The VET Curriculum: Reflections from Literature

Ramon Mangion

*Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, Education & Training Programmes Department, Faculty of
Education, University of Malta*

Abstract

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a vital socio-economic development tool in many countries. The general alignment of VET curricula with labour market needs is a topic that has attracted considerable critical interest from different scholars and stakeholders. Local policies, strategies, and initiatives emphasise the importance of the education system, particularly VET, in reacting to labour market needs. In contrast, such a stance can manifest as an overemphasis on addressing the immediate needs of industry while discarding the holistic needs of IVET students. The scope and purpose of the curriculum within a VET context are consequently questioned, as well as the different philosophies contrasting the VET curriculum from a utilitarian perspective against a more holistic developmental orientation. This paper reflects on these dynamics and the influence of different stakeholders on VET curriculum development whilst situating the discussion within broader educational debates about the role of curriculum.

This paper forms part of a wider study that looks at current practices of industry stakeholder collaboration in VET curriculum development in Malta. Still in its early stages, the study adopts a qualitative approach to understand better the dynamics of industry stakeholder collaboration in VET curriculum development. The study aims to provide insights that could influence government policy and strategic decisions at various levels. It seeks to enhance academic and curricular planning by understanding the synergies between industry expectations and stakeholder needs.

Keywords: curriculum; VET; industry; stakeholders; Malta