Practitioner System in Vocational Education: Perspectives of Academics and Industry Practitioners

Hsiao-Tseng Lin[a], Nguyen Ngoc Dat[b], Szu-Mei Hsiao[c], R. J. Hernández-Díaz[d]

[a] Department of Information Management, Meiho University, Taiwan, R.O.C.
Email address:x00002108@meiho.edu.tw

[b] Foreign Trade University, Hanoi, Vietnam
Email address: nguyenngocdat@ftu.edu.vn

[c] Department of Nursing, Meiho University, Taiwan, R.O.C.
Email address:x00010692@meiho.edu.tw

[d] Department of Hospitality Management, Meiho University, Taiwan, R.O.C.
Email address: rjhernandezdiaz@meiho.edu.tw

***Abstract*—**The practitioner system has become an important tool for universities working to shrink the gap between industry and vocational education. Beginning in 2015, Meiho University conducted a consecutive three-year program for teaching excellence, funded in part by Taiwan's Ministry of Education, with a total project funding of over $2.5 million USD. One of the highlights of this program is the recruitment of 300 industry practitioners to participate in collaborative teaching, a dual-mentor system, and curriculum planning. More than 60% of the practitioners boast more than 10 years of practical industry experience, and 52% of them have earned master's degree or higher. Students rated their overall program satisfaction over 4.5(out of 5.0) on average. This study explores the perspectives of academics and industry practitioners using in-depth interviews and surveys, along with an examination of the challenges of the practitioner system. The paper enables the framing of practitioner system policies by vocational education institutions and industry to facilitate more effective and efficient transfer of knowledge between academics and practitioners, leading to enhanced university competitive advantage, which would ultimately benefit society.

***Keywords*—**Collaborative teaching, Industry practitioners, Vocational education,

1. Background / Objectives and Goals

Today's rapid development of industrial pulsation, how to reduce the gap between the academics and industry need become an important issue in vocational education. Beginning in 2015, Meiho University conducted a consecutive three-year program for teaching excellence, funded in part by Taiwan's Ministry of Education, with a total project funding of over $2.5 million USD. One of the highlights of this program is the recruitment of 300 industry practitioners to participate in collaborative teaching, a dual-mentor system, and curriculum planning. More than 60% of the practitioners boast more than 10 years of practical industry experience, and 52% of them have earned master's degree or higher. Students rated their overall program satisfaction over 4.5(out of 5.0) on average. This study explores the perspectives of academics and industry practitioners using in-depth interviews and surveys, along with an examination of the challenges of the practitioner system. The paper enables the framing of practitioner system policies by vocational education institutions and industry to facilitate more effective and efficient transfer of knowledge between academics and practitioners, leading to enhanced university competitive advantage, which would ultimately benefit society.

2. Methods

This study explores the perspectives of academics and industry practitioners using in-depth interviews and surveys, along with an examination of the challenges of the practitioner system.

3. Expected Results / Conclusion / Contribution

It is expected, through in-depth interviews with industry practitioners and academics, that we may find out opinions and suggestions from them for the Practitioner System.

Perspectives of industry practitioners are as following:

- 「Through the cooperation of industry practitioners, *school and industry are more closely integrated*. The *suggestions provided last year have almost all been resolved*, and I believe the development of this system will become much better..」[#79]
- 「 There is *not enough time for industry practitioners to teach*, and it is impossible to fully cover relevant content. In addition, *some students have insufficient basic knowledge* and it is difficult to absorb the teaching content of a professional teacher. 」 [#26]
- 「A well-designed system, however, *it may take 3-5 years of continuous investment to show stable results*, especially the professional integration across the department.」[#89]
- 「The success of this system requires *the assistance of instructors and teachers who are familiar with the industry to assist in the coordination*. 」 [#55]
- 「*Teaching schedule should be more flexible* to effectively attract more outstanding practitioners to participate in school teaching. . 」 [#37]

Perspectives of academics are as following:

- 「This is a good opportunity to get in touch with employment, and you can understand how companies choose talents.」[#68]
- 「Through contact with professionals in the workplace, students can learn about different situations in the workplace, and let them recognize the importance of correct attitude and professional knowledge. In addition, students gain a lot of benefits through the combination of theory and practical content.」 [#190]
- 「*Industrial teachers and instructors must fully communicate* before classes, and teachers should strengthen their basic knowledge of students in order to facilitate the convergence of the courses before they are taught.」[#191]
- 「This system can help students *lay the foundation for entering the workplace in the future*. *Teachers in the industry should communicate closely with mentors and instructors* so that students can fully understand workplace information and employment opportunities.」 [#168]

Win-win situation: Practitioner involvement can enhance teaching and learning: The most contribution for practitioners system is that their teaching reflects the latest needs of employers and industry. This may help students responding to market need. On the other hand, practitioners can also experiment and learn to apply theoretical knowledge.

Many communications need to be strengthened: More close communication regarding course content, teaching strategies, grading etc. between academics, mentors, and practitioners are the key point for a successful practitioners system.

Some important conclusions can be drawn from this work:

(1). The right person to do the right thing: The enthusiasm, engaging preparation, and presentation are among the key factors for success of the practitioners program. Balance between academic and industry practitioner is a major challenge to ensure the success of this program, even all academic professors were asked to participate each classes, practitioner may not always aware of the timing of each topics and whole aspects of the course.

(2). Practitioners' investment: Most of the practitioners are active full time worker in other employment. Meiho University is located in remote areas of southern Taiwan, we found sometimes it is very challenging to recruit good practitioners with limited pay.

(3). Bridging the academic/practitioner divide: Planning a practitioner involvement class is as important as the planning the class content. Effective industry knowledge transfer requires active student engagement, activation of favorable audience emotions, and an enjoyable learning process.

Key words: Collaborative teaching, Industry practitioners, Mentor, Vocational education

Practitioner System in Vocational Education: Perspectives of Academics and Industry Practitioners

Hsiao-Tseng Lin [1]
Nguyen Ngoc Dat [2]
Szu-Mei Hsiao [3]
R. J. Hernández-Díaz [4]

1 Department of Information Management, Meiho University, Taiwan, R.O.C.
2 Foreign Trade University, Hanoi, Vietnam
3 Department of Nursing, Meiho University , Taiwan, R.O.C.
4 Department of Hospitality Management, Meiho University, Taiwan, R.O.C.

美和科技大學 MEIHO UNIVERSITY

Outline

Background 1/2

- Today's rapid development of industrial pulsation, how to reduce the gap between the academics and industry need become an important issue in vocational education.
- The practitioner system has become an important tool for universities working to shrink the gap between industry and vocational education.
- Beginning in 2015, Meiho University conducted a consecutive three-year program for teaching excellence, funded in part by Taiwan's Ministry of Education, with a total project funding of over **$2.5 million USD**.

Background 2/2

- One of the highlights of this program is the recruitment of **300 industry practitioners** to participate in collaborative teaching, a dual-mentor system, and curriculum planning.
- More than **60% of the practitioners** boast more than **10 years of practical industry experience**, and **52%** of them have earned **master's degree or higher**.
- Students rated their overall program satisfaction over **4.5**(out of 5.0) on average.

Objectives

- This study explores the perspectives of academics and industry practitioners using in-depth interviews and surveys, along with an examination of the challenges of the practitioner system.
- The paper enables the framing of practitioner system policies by vocational education institutions and industry to facilitate more effective and efficient transfer of knowledge between academics and practitioners, leading to enhanced university competitive advantage, which would ultimately benefit society.

Methodology / Approach

- In-depth interviews are used to collect views of practitioners and academic professors involved in this program.
- An examination of the challenges of the practitioner system are conducted and some feasible advices are provided for practitioner system in vocational education.

Literature Review 1/3

- Collaborative teaching model with practitioners can *help students to study the professional theory of design courses*.
  (Lin 2008)
- A model of practitioner-based learning can *meet student and employer needs in terms of the skills* they require in their future roles. **(Richardson 2010)**
- By enhancing the industry orientation of academicians and adopting systematic processes of review and dissemination, *practitioners can experiment and learn to apply theoretical knowledge*.
  (Gera 2011)

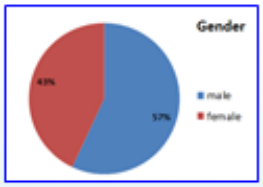
Literature Review 2/3

- Industry practitioners may *help to shape the Higher Education contexts* through which students engage with 'industry'. The personal and situated accounts of working in industry provided by teacher-practitioners can *help students make sense of their emerging identities critically reflect on their future work environments*. **(Ashton 2013)**
- Industry practitioners has *significant advantage for Teaching materials R & D courses*. **(Yan and Wen 2016)**

Literature Review 3/3

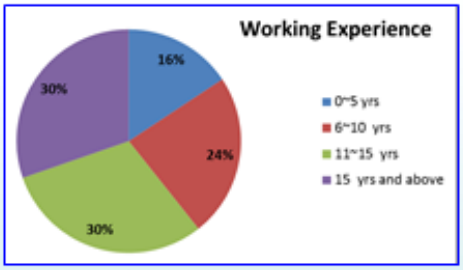
- Top university management has institutionalized an established practice of appointing adjunct professors, but *the appointments still rely on personal networks at local level. …benefits generally applied to university–industry engagement*, such as learning, access to in-kind resources and access to funding.
  (Henningsson & Geschwind 2017).
- The *academia-industry relationship in technical communication should be stronger than jobs and placement*.
  (Bridgeford and Amant 2017)
- It is *important for industry and academia to work collaboratively to educate the general public on the rewards and benefits of working* in the Canadian hotel industry.
  (Willie 2017)

Industry Practitioners Statistics 1/3



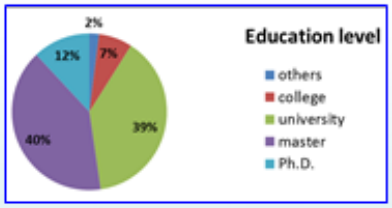
- ✓ 60% of the practitioners participates collaborative teaching.
- ✓ 22% for curriculum planning, 18% for practical topics.

Industry Practitioners Statistics 2/3



✓ 60% of the Practitioners have more than 10 years working experience.

Industry Practitioners Statistics 3/3



✓ 52% of the Practitioners have Master degree or above

✓ Students' overall satisfaction for this program is 4.53 (out of 5)

Perspectives of industry practitioners 1/2

✓ 「Through the cooperation of industry practitioners, *school and industry are more closely integrated*. The *suggestions provided last year have almost all been resolved*, and I believe the development of this system will become much better..」 [#79]

✓ 「 There is *not enough time for industry practitioners to teach*, and it is impossible to fully cover relevant content. In addition, *some students have insufficient basic knowledge* and it is difficult to absorb the teaching content of a professional teacher. 」 [#26]

Perspectives of industry practitioners 2/2

✓ 「A well-designed system, however, *it may take 3-5 years of continuous investment to show stable results*, especially the professional integration across the department.」 [#89]

✓ 「The success of this system requires *the assistance of instructors and teachers who are familiar with the industry to assist in the coordination*. 」 [#55]

✓ 「*Teaching schedule should be more flexible* to effectively attract more outstanding practitioners to participate in school teaching. . 」 [#37]

Perspectives of Academics 1/2

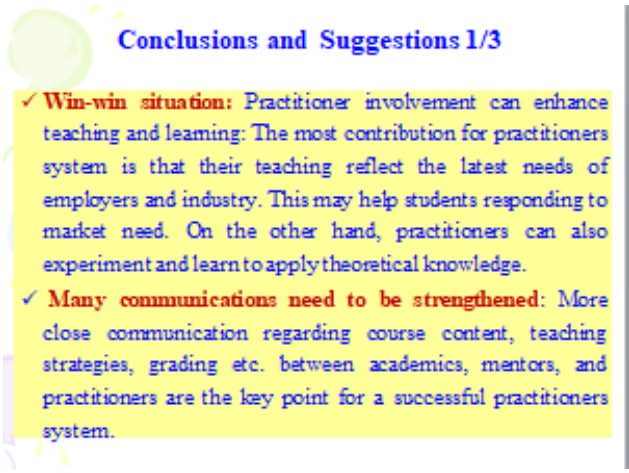
✓ 「This is a *good opportunity to get in touch with employment*, and you can *understand how companies choose talents*.」 [#68]

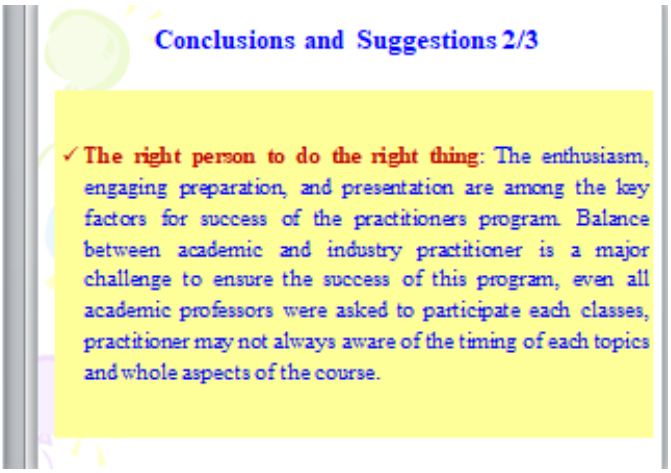
✓ 「Through contact with professionals in the workplace, students can *learn about different situations in the workplace*, and let them *recognize the importance of correct attitude and professional knowledge*. In addition, students gain a lot of benefits through the combination of theory and practical content.」 [#190]

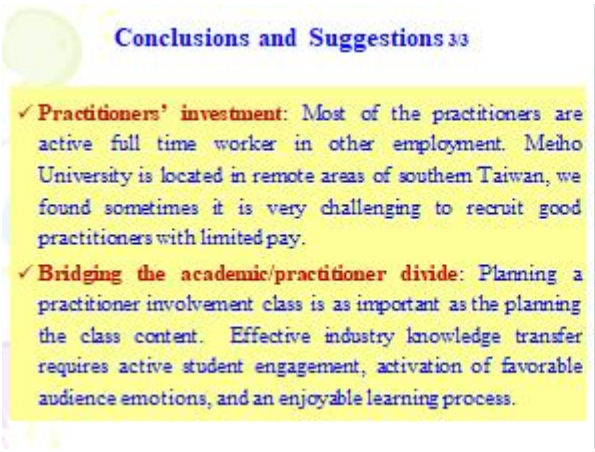
Perspectives of Academics 2/2

✓ 「*Industrial teachers and instructors must fully communicate* before classes, and teachers should strengthen their basic knowledge of students in order to facilitate the convergence of the courses before they are taught.」 [#191]

✓ 「This system can help students *lay the foundation for entering the workplace in the future. Teachers in the industry should communicate closely with mentors and instructors* so that students can fully understand workplace information and employment opportunities.」 [#168]







參考文獻（ references)

- **Anderson, C. L. (1999). Learning partnerships: involving practitioners in public relations education. Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 4(1), 30-36.**
- **Ashton, D. (2013). Industry practitioners in higher education: Values, identities and cultural work. In Cultural Work and Higher Education (pp. 172-192). Palgrave Macmillan UK.**
- **Bliuc, A. M., Casey, G., Bachfischer, A., Goodyear, P., & Ellis, R. A. (2012). Blended learning in vocational education: teachers' conceptions of blended learning and their approaches to teaching and design. The Australian Educational Researcher, 39(2), 237-257.**
- **Bridgeford, T., & Amant, K. S. (2017). Academy-industry relationships and partnerships: Perspectives for technical communicators. Taylor & Francis.**
- **Burritt, R., Guthrie, J., Evans, E., & Christ, K. (2017). Expanding collaboration between industry and business faculties in Australia. IMPROVING COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA.**
- **Chang, T. Y., & Hsu, J. M. (2010). Development framework for tourism and hospitality in higher vocational education in Taiwan. Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism Education (Pre-2012), 9(1), 101.**
- **Chen, Wan-Yu. (2014). The Influence of Team-Teaching Program to Student' Practical Learning Efficiency at Technological College. Journal of Science and Technology and Humanities of Transworld Institute of Technology, (18), 35-47.**
- **Daly, A., Baron, S., J. Dorsch, M., P. Fisk, R., J. Grove, S., Harris, K., & Harris, R. (2014). Bridging the academia-practitioner divide: the case of "service theater". Journal of Services Marketing, 28(7), 580-594.**
- **D'este, P., & Perkmann, M. (2011). Why do academics engage with industry? The**

entrepreneurial university and individual motivations. The Journal of Technology Transfer, 36(3), 316-339.

- **Harris, P., Snell, L., Talbot, M., & Harden, R. M. (2010). Competency-based medical education: implications for undergraduate programs. Medical Teacher, 32(8), 646-650.**
- **Henningsson, M., & Geschwind, L. (2017). Senior Industry Practitioners as Part-Time Visiting Professors: The Various Benefits of Collaboration. Higher Education Policy, 1-20.**
- **Hsu, Chang-Hui etc., (2016). A Study on the Effect and the Related Factors of Academia-Industry Cooperative Teaching in Hospitality Education, 10(1), 30-59.**
- **Lester, S., & Costley, C. (2010). Work-based learning at higher education level: Value, practice and critique. Studies in Higher Education, 35(5), 561-575.**
- **Passow, H. J. (2012). Which ABET competencies do engineering graduates find most important in their work?. Journal of Engineering Education, 101(1), 95-118.**
- **Remko van Hoek, Beverly Wagner, (2013) "Supply chain management (SCM): current education provision and practitioner future needs", Supply Chain Management: An International Journal, Vol. 18 Issue:4.**
- **Richardson, A. (2010). Practitioner involvement in teaching LIS at UWE. In P. Matthews (Ed.), Aslib Proceedings (Vol. 62, No. 6, pp. 605-614). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.**
- **Şahin, M. (2010). Blended learning in vocational education: An experimental study. International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education, 2(6), 95-101.**
- **Schon, D. A. (2010). Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions. Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 50(2), 448-451.**
- **Shuchao, M., Wei, F., & Yang, G. (2011). The Policy Thinking on the Construction of Modern Vocational Education System [J]. Research in Educational Development, 21, 004.**
- **Willie, P. A., Connor, D., Sole, J., Forgacs, G., Grieve, R., & Mueller, J. (2017). Human capital challenges in the hotel industry of Canada: finding innovative solutions. Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 9(4), 402-410.**
- **Williams, S., & Schubert, P. (2017). Connecting Industry: Building and Sustaining a Practice-based Research Community.**