

The Effects of Working Experience Practicum to Strengthen Students' Self-determination Behaviors in Practicum Subject of Business and Computer Education Major, Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University

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The research purpose was to study the effects of working experience practicum to strengthen students' self-determination behaviours. Research population were 23 students in 3rd year in Business and Computer in Vocational Education Department, Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University who registered to study in Practicum Subject in 2016 academic year. Three research instruments were conducted, including, (1) Practicum Manual, (2) Interview Form, and (3) Focus Group Discussion Sheet. Research instruments were verified by four experts who were in four academic areas, including (1) humanity, (2) psychology, (3) business, and (4) human resource by using content validity method. Interview session was divided by 10 groups of companies in which students did their work for 10 weeks. Focus group was administered to discuss with 23 students and share about working problems and solutions. Qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis method, including data analysing, ordering and grouping, and data linking of working practicum. The research results were shown that students learned to understand benefits and limitations of self-determination behaviors and awareness in the essentials of self-determination in four aspects, including (1) attention and responsibility in working achievements, (2) working diligent and tolerance, (3) self-determination with learning motivation, and (4) self-development. The guidelines to encourage students' self-determination behaviors suggested that students should apply Buddha's teaching (four-step secret of successful working achievements) to achieve their work and adjust students' real life behaviors. Furthermore, researcher presented the best practice guidelines to promote students' self-determination behaviors, including (1) students should think positively to spend time on hardworking and tolerance, (2) students should develop their work through PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action) techniques to adjust their work to do better, (3) students should be promoted with skills of 21st century that are necessary to raise students' self-development through teaching and learning in and out of classroom.

Keywords: working experience practicum, self-determination, practicum subject

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Introduction

Ministry of Education in Thailand focuses on promoting students' self-disciplines, self-responsibilities, and self-determinations through teaching and learning process in all education levels, including, primary, secondary, vocational, and higher education levels. It is relevant with National Education Plan, which was conducted to develop Thai students to be good human with mindfulness, be healthy, and live with others with happiness (Office of Education Council, 2017; Rumpagaporn, 2014).

Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University in Thailand has developed students' self-learning and motivated their students to have self-determination behaviour through students' learning concepts, theories, and practices in and out of classroom through working practicum. Therefore, Bachelor of Business and Computer Education Curriculum set the practicum subject (01179499) for 3rd year students to register in summer semester. These students had opportunities to apply to be staffs and work in several and variety companies such as private, government, state enterprise companies for 10 weeks' working. The goals of practicum subject were comprised of supporting students to develop themselves in working with others, developing students' self-development behaviours, such as students' self-disciplines, self-responsibilities, self-determinations, and promoting students' open-minds to support students' potential in knowledge, competencies, and skills through working practice (Education Service Division, Kasetsart University, 2015).

Therefore, researcher was one of two teachers in the practicum subject that is interested in studying the effects of working experience practicum to promote students' self-determination behaviours and to present the best practice guidelines to promote students' self-determination behaviours for students, teachers, educators, educational institution administrators, or policy maker to prepare and educate students to be professional workers in the future in labour force (Education Service Division, Kasetsart University, 2015)

Research Objective

The effects of working experience practicum to strengthen students' self-determination behaviours were studied in four aspects, including (1) attention and responsibility in working achievements, (2) working diligent and tolerance, (3) self-determination with learning motivation, and (4) self-development.

Research Benefits

Teachers in practicum subject could apply the students' guidelines to promote students' self-determination behaviours through students' practicum working experiences.

Subject teachers, students, and interested persons could integrate and apply research results to strengthen students' self-determination behaviours in and out of classroom.

Research Scopes

Research populations were 23 bachelor degree students who studied in 3rd year in Business and Computer Education major, Vocational Education Department under Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University, in academic year 2016. These 23 students registered to study and work for 10 weeks through Practicum Subject (01179499). According to practicum companies, these were comprised of 10 companies such as Bangkok Metropolitan (for two students), TISCO Finance and Security Company (for one student), Siam Commercial Bank (for one student), CIMB Bank (for three students), BEC TERO Public Company Limited (for two students), Asia Pacific Petro Chemical Public Company Limited (one student), Thai Lion Air (five students),

Central Tara Plaza Hotel (for four students), Siam Cement Group (for one student), Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperative (for three students).

Students worked in several departments such as Sale Supporting Department, PR Department, IT Department, Planning and Policy Department, Official Director Department, Region Branch Office Department, Credit, Debit, and ATM Card Department, Flight Department, Product and Purchasing Department, Accounting Department, and Human Resource Department.

This research study focused on students' self-determination behaviours in four aspects, including (1) attention and responsibility in working achievements, (2) working diligent and tolerance, (3) self-determination with learning motivation to face with obstacles and problems, and (4) self-development.

Definitions

Students' self-determination behaviours are characteristics that students behave and concentrate on working goal through working hard, working with diligent and tolerance, self-determinations with learning motivation to face obstacles and problems and self-development.

Research Methodology

This research was survey research to study the effects of working experience practicum to strengthen students' self-determination behaviours in four aspects, including (1) attention and responsibility in working achievements, (2) working diligent and tolerance, (3) self-determination and learning motivation to face with obstacles and problems, and (4) self-development. Research populations were 23 bachelor degree students who studied in 3rd Year in Business and Computer Education major, Vocational Education Department under Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University, in academic year 2016. These students registered and studied for 10 weeks through Practicum Subject (01179499) in summer semester. Research instruments were comprised of (1) practicum manual, (2) interview form, and (3) focus group discussion sheet. Practicum manual included (1) students' backgrounds, (2) job descriptions for 10 weeks of working experiences, (3) practicum learning experiences, and (4) problems and solutions in working. Interview form was divided into two parts that included working actual status and working problems and solutions. Researcher interviewed students in each company and discussed and shared in the whole group, later. Furthermore, focus group was administered to discuss with 23 students to share working problems and find out the appropriate problem solutions. Qualitative data were analysed by content analysis method, including data analysing, ordering and grouping, and data linking of working practicum. Research instruments were verified by four specializes who were in (1) humanity, (2) psychology, (3) business, and (4) human resource by using content validity method.

Research Findings

Research results found that students awarded and appreciated in working attention with high responsibility that were reflected and explained in below details (Rumpagaporn & Vejjajiva, 2017, p. 58):

"I spent time to do work with high attention and concentration, then, I would get trust from other colleges, and would support us to do harder work than the previous time."

"We needed to pay attention for all jobs both hard and easy works. However, we did the best."

"I loved to do routine work with high passions and be happy during working time. Then, I would get warm and friendships from my colleges. They did not act with me like boss (employer) that acted to worker (Employee)."

“We did work with high responsibility. Sometimes, we did work out of time or weekend or Saturday or Sunday that was not in office date.”

“I did work on time not be late, follow working law and official rules and keep work disciplines strictly.”

Research findings showed that students worked with diligence and tolerance to achieve their working goal with happiness. Students’ learning reflections were clarified in details (Rumpagaporn & Vejjajiva, 2017, p. 58):

“I endure and work hard under stress and pressure in limited time to complete my work, or unpredicted weathers or tried to find the suitable ways to solve the working solutions. Sometimes, I got several jobs at the same time.”

“We needed to adjust ourselves and keep opened- mind, if worked with different team working styles, unfriendly teams, unfamiliar places under several different pressure. We needed to keep silent and simply emotions to control and claim in emotional pressure.”

“I must do work in details with carefully and cautiously to decrease the problems or increase high efficacy and effectiveness.”

Findings demonstrated that students did work with self-determination and positive learning motivation to face obstacles and problems to achieve their working goal with happiness. Students’ learning reflections were clarified in details (Rumpagaporn & Vejjajiva, 2017, p. 58):

“We allocated time to conduct our work with priority, first come first serve, with systematically and strictly in disciplines and did it fast.”

“I did not take accountability for doing my work and felt happy to learn and get experiences from working process and learn to select suitable ways or making step to solve any problems. Moreover, I needed to integrated knowledge and experiences to apply.”

“We must do working under limited time or stressful of pressure, needed to followed, checked, and evaluated our work to do our succeed in working goal.”

Findings indicated that students focused on self-values to develop themselves continuously to achieve their working goal with happiness. Students’ learning reflections were clarified in details (Rumpagaporn & Vejjajiva, 2017, p. 59):

“Working with happiness, we might understand in working norm or organization cultures such as office hour schedule, follow organization rules or official law, adjusted and reformed ourselves, with different styles of peers and college.”

“I learned with organization norms and working cultures that would prepare students to feel good or feel happy to do our work success.”

“In real lives under real world, all companies needed office workers who had positive views to develop ourselves in intelligent and self-emotion and paid attention and concentrated on working process to run a good and better work..”

“All we needed to learn in professional practices, such as servant leaderships, strong teamwork, effective communication, positive thinking skills in problem solving and solutions, and so on.”

“Learn through doing and practices by ourselves, get learning potential and direct working experiences from working practicum in the real world, out of classroom.”

Discussions and Conclusions

Researcher discussed about effects of working experience practicum to strengthen students’ self-determination behaviours. The research results showed that students learned to understand benefits and limitations of self-determination behaviors and awareness in the essentials of self-determination in four aspects, including (1) attention and responsibility in working achievements, (2) working diligent and tolerance, (3) self-determination with learning motivation, and (4) self-development. That would be shown in details.

Attention and Responsibility in Working Achievements

Students who have strong love in working passion, keep self-learning awareness, and appreciate their working with concentrating attention and focused on high responsibilities in their work could lead to successfulness of students or achieve their working goals, relevant to Jim Rohn, who said that “Discipline with high responsibility is the bridge between goals and accomplishment” (Dhammaruk, 2016, p. 15). Furthermore, Wachirameete (2012) explained that art of real life living relied on the balancing between work and real life. Being relevant to Rawin Intarawirut’s study in 2010, to clarify the supporting details that working problems and obstacles were real life testing that could make us proud and strong in successful work with power, it could get real life rewards rather than tangible benefits and returns in terms of money.

In contrast, Patricia G. Horan (2008) presented the concept of Napoleon Hill who was a writer and inspiration creator to office staffs, he said that unsuccessful people might come from people who are lack of self-responsibility in working, shortage in self-discipline, inadequate in tolerance, absence in work challenging, deficiency in life and working goal, did not have good and positive personality and characteristics, without working honesty, and so on. This views related to book of Leo Babauta (2009) in the book’s title *The Power of Less* that was launched in “Factors to Support Effective Work” that was concluded in details:

- Organization worker should pay attention and concentrate on working goal and try to achieve the working goal, if you face obstacles or problems, you might overcome the difficulties and solve problems by themselves.
- Office staffs should understand and feel happy to run your job and focus on working content and working target to achieve the working goals.
- Worker should pinpoint positive thinking that would motivate staff’s self-determination behaviours and bring in excellent works.

Working Diligent and Tolerance

Students who did work hard work regularly with diligent, even though, they received a lot of working assignments to achieve under stress and pressure of working limitations. Relevant with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulydej (King Rama IX of Thailand)’s speeches that was addressed to teachers and graduate students at graduate ceremony on October 27th, 1999, “...Diligent means not only diligent in work but also diligent to tolerate to achieve life and working goal...” (King Rama IX, 2008, p. 57), therefore, these suggestions could be associated with the writing of T. Dhammaruk (2016) which deeply mentioned and explained that tolerance and diligence in work of staffs were one of several instruments to achieve their staffs’ working goals and organization goal, simultaneously. Interestingly, these ideas were supported by the studies of Orawongsupatut (2015) and Becker, Huslid, and Beatty (2009) that explained deeply in working diligence and tolerance needed to balance life and working that was called “work-life balance” and diligence and tolerance to find out new information and knowledge to increase the self-development values of difference and new working experiences. It was true to say that working hard and working smart might raise self-development value added to work and increase work’s efficiency and effectiveness through professional working standards processes.

Self-determination With Learning Motivation to Face With Obstacles and Problems

Several students worked with self-determination and positive motivation to achieve their working goal with happiness. Moreover, they learned from working experiences and mistakes to protect any new problems or to decrease working obstacles, which may happen in the future. Relevant with Jack Ma’s opinions (Ministry of

Education, 2015, p. 35), he gave his views and said that “Nobody can guarantee that you will succeed. Of course, nobody can guarantee that you’ll fail. But once in your life, try something, work hard at something. Try to change, nothing bad can happen”. That related to Mark Twain’s ideas that “Twenty Years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do” (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 25).

Furthermore, Rawin Intarawirut (2010) presented that working obstacles were test of life to prove working self-development value, we could change our thoughts from “Obstacles” to “Opportunity” to challenge, to improve, and to develop working self-determination behaviors with learning motivation, which lead to working with happiness and being proud to achieve and overcome with them. In addition, Brain Tracy’s study (2011) and Lattakrit Na Songklar’s (2009) investigation that viewed on working obstacles and problems’ details, examined that organization workers needed to concentrate on working passion, attention, and try to find out the appropriate ways to solve problems to achieve working goal rather than self-discourage. Moreover, organization workers must analyze the causes of working problems and obstacles, search for factors to decrease or protect working obstacles, add positive attitudes to face obstacles and problems, and find out new learning and working techniques to increase high self-development values, self-determination behaviors, and positive learning motivations.

Self-development in Working

Students focused on self-development values to develop themselves continuously to achieve their working goal with balancing in work and life happiness. They admired themselves and were proud to do the best thing for their organization. In addition, they gave their opinions about students’ self-development values and always were ready to improve and develop themselves for their work. This issue related to T. Dhammaruk’s (2016) study which concluded that everyone could learn more and develop themselves in getting new knowledge, practicing in necessary skills, creating their opportunities to get new working experiences to apply and integrate their efficiency and effectiveness of their work. They felt good and happy to develop themselves and knew that this way might support them to increase higher potential working advance in professional styles.

In associated to Orawongsupatut’s (2015) ideas and Kelley’s (1998) study, they gave several interesting ideas to guide offices staffs to be professional staffs in their work. They suggested that staffs need to learn more and learn by themselves through doing and getting new knowledge and skills through attending training courses to motivate themselves to be professional worker. They purposed three key successful ways to guide them to achieve working goals, including:

(1) performing in ourselves self-motivation, such as learn more to develop ourselves, get new knowledge and necessary skills in 21st century (such as leaderships skills, communication skills, personality development skills, and so on) through participating in training courses or working new experiences.

(2) creating good relationship with others such as good thinking, good speaking, good acting to act with others among friendly atmospheres, caring others and support each other, and making others feel happy during working together.

(3) challenging in doing work, such as working with attention and high responsibility in working achievements, doing with diligent and tolerance in work, creating self-determination behaviors with learning motivation that face with working’s obstacles and problems, and self-development working.

Research Suggestions

The behaviour guidelines to encourage students' self-determination behaviours suggested that students should apply Buddha's teaching (four-step secret of successful working achievements), including (1) passion in work, (2) working diligence, (3) paying attention and concentrate to work, (4) self-development to achieve their working goal (Dhamma and Law, 2011; Rumpagaporn, 2016) and should apply and integrate these behaviour guidelines to develop students' real life behaviours to live and work with happiness in real world (Rumpagaporn, 2015; 2016).

Furthermore, researcher presented the best practice guidelines to promote students' self-determination behaviours, including (1) students should think of challenging positively to devote themselves to hardworking and tolerance in their work; (2) students should develop their work through PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action) techniques to adjust their works and do it better with systematic working process and to be professional styles; (3) students should be promoted with necessary skills of 21st Century through teaching and learning in and out of classroom (such as life and career skill, critical thinking skills, communication skills, problem solving skills, leadership skills, ICT and digital skills, and so on) to increase students' self-development values and self-determination behaviours.

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