Factors enabling engagement with VET for young early school leavers

Towards a new framework of VET engagement

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Aims
What approaches would maximize successful entry into and engagement with VET for disadvantaged young people?

Scope and approach
Staged consultations
Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland
A framework for VET engagement
Context

• Global transformation and uncertainty
  Loss of entry level jobs, digitization, robotics, manufacturing, service sector, polarization, the ‘hustler environment’...the young hit hardest.

• NEET levels
  314,000 15-24 yo; 7% 15-19; unemployment 13.4%; underemployment 17.3% AIHW 2015

• Reliance on VET
  741,700 15-24 yo; 306,600 no-year 12 NCVER 2015

• VET system in constant state of change
  In perpetual review: its role, marketization, funding, quality, standards, jurisdictional conflict, role of TAFEs, training packages, entitlements, unpaid debt, Skills Councils’ role, apprenticeships

• Poor completion rates
  40.9% -25 yo NCVER 2015
The existing toolbox

• Viewing participation and outcomes
  Morgan, Chiem & Ambaye 2004 ‘The equity edge…’
  NVEAC Equity Outcomes Framework (Rothman et al) 2013
  NCVER Student Outcomes Survey

• Variables and responses
  McVicar & Tabasso 2016 ‘The impact of disadvantage…’
  Semo & Karmel 2011 ‘Social capital and youth transitions…’
  Bowman & Callan 2012 ‘A pedagogic framework for socially inclusive VET…’
  Davies, Lamb, & Doecke 2011 ‘Strategic review of re-engagement models…’

• …and limitations
  Static, point of time, causes are implied, youth (and youth voice) absent

An alternative approach

A focus on engagement that views it – or its absence – as part of a *dynamic process*, and that explores factors across multiple levels: micro → macro.
Insights from the family support literature

Adapted from McCurdy, K & Daro, D 2001, p. 115
(the ‘McCurdy and Daro framework’)
Key insights

- The importance of intention in producing behaviour
- Different factors are important at different stages
- A broad range of contributing factors that interact with each other

Shortcomings

- Does not adequately acknowledge the complex and dynamic nature of the engagement process
- Overlooks higher level factors (e.g. economic trends, policy, service systems)
- No detailed account of individual decision making processes

We need a framework that...

- Takes the ecological approach further
- Provides a dynamic model of engagement
- Rests upon a robust model of individual decision making
Young person’s decision making processes

Adapted from social cognitive theory (Bandura 1986) and the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975).
New framework of VET engagement

Factors impacting on engagement
- Young person and their family, social networks and community
- Provider
- Program
- Policy and service systems
- Macro-systemic

Young person’s decision making processes

Stages of the overall engagement process
- Intent to enrol
  - Precontemplation
  - Contemplation
  - Preparation
- Enrolment (from enrolment to commencement)
- Retention
  - Action
  - Maintenance
  - Further cycles of contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance

Factors impacting on engagement
- Self-efficacy beliefs and perceptions
- Cost-benefit assessments based on anticipated outcomes

INTENTIONS

BEHAVIOURS
### Exploring the factors...

#### Factors impacting on engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of the overall VET engagement process</th>
<th>Young person and their family, social networks and community</th>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Policy and service systems</th>
<th>Macrosystems</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to enrol</td>
<td>Place &amp; housing</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Accredited &amp; non-accredited learning</td>
<td>The purpose ascribed to VET</td>
<td>Globalisation &amp; neoliberalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; wellbeing</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>Competency based learning</td>
<td>National &amp; state governance arrangements</td>
<td>Technological change</td>
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<td>Beliefs, attitudes &amp; norms</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Training packages</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Assumption of perpetual growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peers &amp; role models</td>
<td>Scope &amp; modes of delivery</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>Foundation level skills</td>
<td>Marketization &amp; deregulation</td>
<td>Unemployment &amp; underemployment</td>
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<td>Skill levels &amp; experience</td>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>Student supports</td>
<td>Non-VET components</td>
<td>Educational attainments</td>
<td>Inequity &amp; polarization</td>
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<td>Social capital &amp; resources</td>
<td>Student supports</td>
<td>Resources &amp; staffing</td>
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<td>Policies for young people &amp; education</td>
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Next steps

Fieldwork informed by our framework of VET engagement

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<tr>
<th>STAGE 2</th>
<th>INTERMEDIARIES ➔</th>
<th>Tele-conferences</th>
<th>Statistical data on focus areas</th>
<th>One-on-one interviews</th>
<th>Focus groups</th>
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<td>(Apr - Jun)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE 3</th>
<th>YOUNG PEOPLE ➔</th>
<th>Survey of early school leavers</th>
<th>Statistical data on focus areas</th>
<th>One-on-one interviews</th>
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Summary
References

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2015


2015, The likelihood of completing a government-funded VET program 2009-13, 27 August


