

SELF-INITIATED EVALUATION OF STATE PROGRAMS IN
VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION: SUPERVISOR AND
TEACHER EDUCATOR REACTIONS

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One of the pressing problems in vocational education and agricultural education is that of preparing and upgrading teachers. The significance of the task was emphasized as a part of a study¹ in which state directors of vocational education predicted an increase in the demand for instructors in all vocational and technical areas in 1968. More specifically, high school teachers of agricultural education would expand from 9,800 in 1965 to 10,320 in 1968, an increase of 5.3 percent.

State directors of vocational education also predicted that the number of post-high school agricultural education teachers would increase from 351 in 1965 to 748 in 1968. This constituted an increase of 113 percent.

With such demands evident, state supervisors and teacher educators in agricultural education need to reassess their state's program of vocational teacher education.² What are the "critical" elements of planning an expanded total state program of vocational teacher education? What coordination is necessary? How does a state program supply the overwhelming demand for vocational teachers and other vocational education personnel? Are occupational competencies important for vocational teaching? Should the state program of vocational teacher education include provisions for research, instructional materials, and evaluation?

¹James W. Hensel, The Demand for Teachers in Vocational and Technical Education, Columbus, Ohio, The Center for Vocational and Technical Education, 1967, pp. 29-31.

²A state's vocational teacher education program was defined in the study as all those activities in a given state designed to prepare and upgrade vocational teachers and other vocational education personnel in all vocational service areas.

In order to design a systematic approach to a self-initiated evaluation³ of a state's total program of vocational teacher education, a study⁴ was conducted to develop an instrument and analyze by occupational service area and position juror ratings given certain criterion statements and indicators. Included in the jurors were twenty-seven head state supervisors and thirty-three head teacher educators of agricultural education.

The instrument utilized in the study contained nine criterion statements and seventy-six associated indicators. The head state supervisors and head teacher educators rated the statements according to the following scale: 5=Excellent, 4=Good, 3=Average, 2=Fair, and 1=Poor.

For purposes of the study a mean rating of three or above validated the criterion or indicator. All criteria and indicators in the instrument achieved the necessary rating and therefore were validated by the jurors. The mean ratings of the group were also analyzed to identify areas of agreement and disagreement among the supervisors and teacher educators. In Table I, the nine criterion statements and the specific group ratings are presented.

Areas of Agreement

Referring to the table, head state supervisors and head teacher educators in agricultural education were in relatively close agreement on the following concepts:

³Self-initiated evaluation was defined in the study as the initiation of a comprehensive evaluation by State Vocational Education Leadership with the assistance and involvement of appropriate agencies, organizations, and academic disciplines.

⁴Robert V. Kerwood, "Self-Initiated Evaluation of State Teacher Education Programs in Vocational Education," (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, Columbus, 1967.)

TABLE I
 ASSESSMENTS OF CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING STATE
 PROGRAMS OF VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION BY HEAD
 STATE SUPERVISORS AND HEAD TEACHER EDUCATORS OF
 AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Criterion	Head State Supervisors	Head Teacher Educators
The state program of vocational teacher education is based upon <u>comprehensive*</u> planning.	4. 231	4. 061
The state program of vocational teacher education is <u>coordinated</u> among occupational service areas.	3. 556	4. 032
The state program of vocational teacher education is <u>coordinated</u> with the total state program of vocational education.	4. 333	4. 531
The state program of vocational teacher education provides for supplying the <u>demand</u> for vocational teachers, local directors, local supervisors, and guidance personnel.	4. 259	4. 303
The state program of vocational teacher education makes provisions for prospective and in-service vocational teachers to acquire needed <u>competencies</u> in the <u>occupa-</u> tion which they will be or are teaching.	4. 704	4. 562
Vocational teacher education is accessible to prospective and in-service vocational-teachers, local directors, local super- visors, and guidance personnel.	4. 037	3. 909
The state program of vocational teacher edu- cation makes provisions for conducting re- search and implementing research findings	3. 630	4. 531
The state program of vocational teacher education makes provision for developing and disseminating instructional materials.	4. 111	4. 719
The state program of vocational teacher education provides for systematic evalu- ation of vocational teacher education programs.	3. 889	4. 625

*Underlining is as presented in the data collecting instrument.
 Based on 5 point scale: 5 = Excellent . . . 1 = Poor.

The state program of vocational teacher education

- . is based upon comprehensive planning.
- . is coordinated with the total program of vocational education.
- . provides for supplying the demand for vocational personnel.
- . makes provisions for prospective and in-service vocational teachers to acquire needed competencies in the occupation which they will be or are teaching.
- . is accessible to vocational personnel.

The amount of agreement among head state supervisors and head teacher educators was significant. Comprehensive planning, coordination, supplying vocational personnel, providing for occupation competence, and accessibility are among the "key issues" currently facing agricultural educators. Unity of approach on these issues will become increasingly important for teachers, supervisors, and teacher educators of agricultural education.

Areas of Disagreement

Some differences in the agricultural educator's ratings were found concerning the second criterion statement (see Table I)--The state program of vocational teacher education is coordinated among occupational service areas. Head teacher educators rated this criterion statement somewhat higher than head state supervisors.

Head teacher educator ratings, when compared to head state supervisor ratings, were consistently higher in the following areas:

The state program of vocational teacher education

- . makes provisions for conducting research and implementing research findings.
- . makes provisions for developing and disseminating instructional materials.
- . provides for systematic evaluation of vocational teacher education programs.

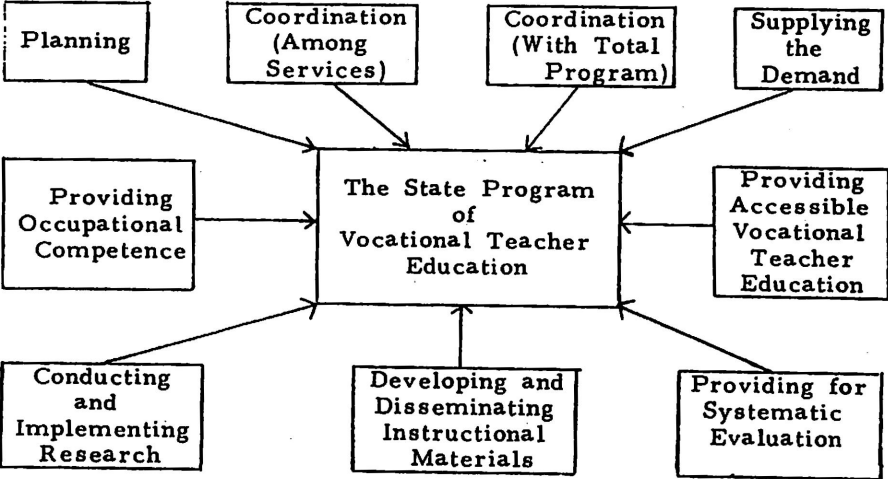
It would appear that head state supervisors do not share the degree of importance placed upon research, instructional materials, and evaluation by head teacher educators. The fact that conducting research, preparing instructional materials, and initiating evaluation studies are functions traditionally associated with teacher education departments seems to have influenced the ratings.

The differences of ratings occurring with the concept of coordination among service areas was particularly noteworthy. Head teacher educators seem to be more receptive to "across the boarding" than head state supervisors. Present thrusts in establishing new departments of vocational teacher education also lend credence to this contention.

Toward a Comprehensive Approach

Although the supervisors and teacher educators in the sample expressed a diversity of opinion in some areas, the validification of the evaluation instrument, coupled with the amount of agreement achieved in the study, reinforces the rationale for a comprehensive approach to assessing the context of vocational teacher education. Such a network is conceptualized in the following illustration:

Contextual Components for Evaluating a Comprehensive State Program of Vocational Teacher Education



Additional factors need to be considered in evaluating a comprehensive state program of vocational teacher education. For example, input data--federal, regional, state, and local resources--need to be collected and analyzed. The products (output data) of vocational teacher education--new personnel, research and developmental materials, consultative services, and innovative models--need to be assessed and integrated into an evaluation system.

Implications for Agricultural Educators

Several concepts and beliefs held in the field of agricultural education evolved from the evaluation study. Those which seemed to have specific implications for agricultural educators are as follows:

- . Agricultural educators--including supervisors, teacher educators, and teachers--should initiate a systematic evaluation of their state's program for preparing and upgrading agricultural education personnel. The criteria discussed in this article could form the basis of such an evaluation. The seventy-six associated indicators validated in the instrument would provide excellent supporting evidence for the evaluation.
- . Agricultural educators should encourage and support the development of instruments of measuring the input and output data of state teacher education programs in agricultural education. Instrumentation for the collection of "hard data" is a critical need in assessing state and local programs of agricultural education.
- . Agricultural educators should integrate the findings of evaluation studies into comprehensive planning, programming, and budgeting systems. The instrument discussed in this article provides data for planning future programs of vocational teacher education. Other evaluation instruments should be shared by agricultural educators for planning state programs of supervision, research, guidance, and other ancillary services.
- . Agricultural educators should stimulate the development of "local data banks" to provide a continuous assessment of the state's vocational teacher education program. Local departments of agricultural education and teacher education departments in colleges and universities could provide "instant feedback" to the state system for preparing and upgrading vocational personnel.

Summary

The rationale for developing a systematic approach to evaluating a state's total program of vocational teacher education stemmed largely from the overwhelming demand for new and upgraded vocational personnel. The instrument developed for use in the evaluation utilized a five-point scale: (1) to validate the statements included and (2) to analyze the ratings by occupational service area and position.

Twenty-seven head state supervisors and thirty-three head teacher educators of agricultural education validated criterion statements and associated indicators in the following areas: planning, coordination (among services), coordination (with the total program), supplying demand, providing occupational competence, providing accessible vocational teacher education, conducting and implementing research, developing and disseminating instructional materials, and providing for systematic evaluation.

The amount of agreement among the head state supervisors and head teacher educators in agricultural education was significant. It would appear that head state supervisors and head teacher educators in agricultural education are united in their perceptions of the "key issues" in evaluating a state's vocational teacher education program.

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