

**Analysis and Policy Tasks of Vocational Capability  
Development System for Women to Enhance a  
Competency-Based Society( I )**

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I. Research Questions and Methodology

□ This study was initially planned as a two-year general project with the first year(2016) project focusing on the job training system for middle-aged and older women, which has faced the most significant changes with the introduction of the National Competency Standards(NCS). Specific research questions and methodology are as follows:

- This research aims at discovering the identity of NCS-based job training for women in the middle of the changes in the vocational training system for middle-aged and older women along with the complaints from middle-aged and older female trainees about completing NCS-based programs and areas for its improvement.

●●● 2013 KWDI Abstract

- This study took a look at the outcome we might expect from the system in terms of the transition of middle-aged and older women to the labor market.
- To conduct this research, a number of research methods were utilized such as analysis of administrative DB for identifying the current state of “Vocational Skills Development Account,” questionnaires, and interviews for those related to vocational training institutions, questionnaires and interviews for those who completed training programs, and on-site visit to job training institutions.

II. Analysis of the operation of NCS and the participation of women through Tomorrow Learning Card training program

In this chapter, we used the HRD-Net materials to collect data on job training institutions and their trainees from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. The data was analyzed by region and gender and on the difference in training periods between the NCS-based trainees and non-NCS trainees, the difference in training cost and employment rate.

- Findings from the analysis of the training of the unemployed showed that NCS-based training took up a mere 21% in that area in 2015.

- Females accounted for 73% of “Vocational Capability Development Account” trainees and women showed higher participation rates than men in all types of occupation.

- The overall employment rate is 39%(men: 39.4%, women: 38.8%).

- Regarding the employment rate of those who completed the NCS-based training courses by gender, females posted a relatively higher rate than males with 37.4% while males recorded 36.7%. When it comes to those from non-NCS programs, men were 40.2% while women showed 39.7%, indicating that non-NCS courses were more helpful in getting a job for both genders in 2015.

Regarding NCS operation rates by the type of occupation, business

administration, accounting, and office jobs recorded the highest proportion for both NCS and non-NCS-based training. Those areas have most aggressively introduced and applied NCS from 2015, accounting for 40% of the overall NCS-based training programs. In addition, food service-related jobs take up a significant portion of both NCS and non-NCS. This demonstrates that female-friendly jobs account for a large proportion of the training programs for the unemployed, and these programs have already been in transition to NCS-based courses.

### III. Current state of participation in NCS-based programs from job training institutions and trainees

#### 1) Results from survey of training institutions

This study surveyed 242 general job training institutions and 47 official women's vocational training institutions called women resources development centers on the current state of the NCS-based job training programs, changes in and complaints and outcomes from the programs after the introduction of the NCS.

70.2% of the women resources development centers run NCS-based job training courses, and the remaining 29.8% have not applied the NCS. In terms of the type of occupation to which the NCS was applied by those centers, food-related areas recorded the highest rate with 44.7%, followed by business administration, accounting, office job(38.3%) and IT-related jobs(23.4%).

- Among the NCS-based training programs, 57.5% are integrated courses, 33.1% are for the unemployed, and 9.3% are for the employed. Also among the operated NCS-based courses, 47.7% are up and running, 25.2% are planned to be operated, and 1.3% are not operated. There is a clear difference between the general job training institutions and women resources development centers. While 43.5% of the programs of the centers are operated or planned to be

operated, the figure is 89.4% for the general job training institutions.

- About 30% of the national strategic industry training programs operate or plan to introduce the NCS. And regardless of the type of training, female participation rate is higher in non-NCS courses than in the NCS programs.

- While most of the Ministry of Employment and Labor's Vocational Skills Development Account and strategic industry training programs are based on NCS, a significantly lower portion of the local government-supported training programs was NCS-based.

As of 2016, 20 women resources development centers operate non-NCS training programs while 57 general training institutions run non-NCS courses. Out of the 47 women resources development centers surveyed, 43% ran non-NCS courses. On the other hand, only 24% of the surveyed general institutions(57 out of 242) operate non-NCS programs, indicating that the centers' adjustment rate to NCS was lower than that of general institutions.

When it comes to the need for the NCS-based training process, many institutions pointed to "government encouragement and a more favorable position to participate in government projects," and "higher evaluation scores" rather than bridging gaps between the changing needs of industry and training programs in terms of knowledge, technical skills, and attitudes. In this regard, private institutions agreed more strongly than women resources development centers.

The survey results showed that institutions have difficulties organizing programs based on the NCS, and particularly, those for middle-aged and older generations mentioned more difficulties.

- The biggest complaint about NCS-based courses among middle-aged and older women is that the course is difficult and too long, and women resources development centers have more statistically negative perceptions about the training period, content, and cost than general institutions.

Regarding the introduction of the NCS, women resources development

centers face more difficulties than general institutions for the following reasons:

- Teachers and instructors have a lower understanding of the NCS-based training programs. There is a low level of recruitment of competent teachers and instructors as regular workers. The centers provide less capacity-building education and training for teachers and instructors. They offer less opportunities for the NCS training. The NCS don't fit to meet the job requirements of middle-aged and older women. It requires too much training materials that are not required in the workplace.

- The point is that the treatment of teachers and instructors improved after the introduction of the NCS in general institutions while women resources development centers need more improvement in this area. In a way, this is because of the features of the type of training institutions, but we need to plan for improvement of treatment.

- Women resources development centers use less NCS-related consulting (education and counseling) than private career training centers.

- Women resources development centers show a significantly lower level of consulting experiences in the NCS-based training than private institutions. The gap is much wider among teachers and instructors and chiefs of institutions than among administrative staff.

- Private job training institutions showed more positive outcomes from the NCS than women resources development centers.

- Vocational training institutions expected that the introduction of the NCS would not make a significant impact on the hiring of trainees. For instance, 13.4% of the institutions mentioned those who completed the programs became more competent to apply to more companies, and only 6.3% of the surveyed institutions said the training courses were more systematic than an increasing number of employers look for those who completed the NCS programs. The remaining institutions(80.3%) thought that the NCS do not make a difference. This tendency is stronger in women resources development centers than in

private institutions. 41.9% of the surveyed institutions(women resources development centers: 31.3%, private institutions: 43.4%) expected that the introduction of the NCS would boost the hiring rate of the trainees.

## 2) Results from survey of trainees

This research surveyed 358 unemployed persons who are taking or completed the NCS-based courses in women resources development centers or private vocational institutions.

According to the self-reported survey on the understanding of the NCS, the surveyed trainees scored from 2.95 to 3.08 on average(on the scale of 0 to 4) on the purpose of training, elements of competency, performance standards, required knowledge, and technical attitude. There was no gender difference.

30% of the polled trainees had an experience in completing government-funded job training. And regarding the difference between trainings conducted in the past and the NCS-based programs, many respondents pointed to increased learning time, more qualified teachers and instructors, increased on-the-job training, and tests. There were no gender differences.

Trainees of the NCS-based job training programs were generally satisfied with the training conditions and job-seeking services provided by the institutions. When it comes to time slots of training, facilities and environment, educational materials, job-seeking support after completion and post management, employment services like resume-writing, job placement, satisfaction rate is from 2.91 to 3.36(on the scale of 0 to 4). There were no gender differences. In the aspect of the features of training courses(understanding of training course, proportion of on-the-job training, expertise of teachers and instructors, learning of the knowledge and skills required by businesses, improving professionalism, confidence in job-seeking ability), a higher rate of satisfaction is recorded from 3.17 to 3.48(on the scale of 0 to 4). However, 40% of the respondents agreed that training cost increased

compared to the past, recognizing the rise in training cost due to the introduction of the NCS.

□ The main reason why females participated in the NCS-based training programs is the development of long-term vocational capability(59.4%) rather than immediate job matching(16.7%) or short-term training(15.5%). Women have a stronger tendency to seek long-term development of vocational capability than men. However, regarding the training period, women choose short-term training programs for less than 3 months while men in their 20s choose long-term programs for more than 8 months. This is because middle-aged and older generations take up a higher portion of female trainees while younger generations (20s) account for a relatively large portion of male trainees.

□ Analysis of the jobs trainees seek by the area of training showed that 70-80% of the trainees wanted to get a related job. Most of the trainees responded optimistically: 61.0% of the trainees said the NCS-based training courses they take or completed would be very helpful in getting a job and 38.7% responded it would be helpful. Most female trainees also answered positively, but the rate of “very helpful(56.7%)” is lower than that of males.

### 3) Implications

□ Is it desirable to apply the NCS to vocational training for women? Women resources development centers, a leading vocational training facility for women, were found to face more difficulties in applying the NCS than private training institutions. However, given that the female trainees of the NCS-based programs were optimistic about the design and operation of the programs and post management, it seems to be desirable to introduce NCS to women’s vocational training to some extent.

- Female trainees were pretty much satisfied with the training course itself (understanding of curriculum, proportion of on-the-job training, expertise of teachers and instructors, learning of knowledge and skills required by

businesses, achievement of professionalism, confidence in job-seeking) and they have no differences with male counterparts.

- The level of satisfaction with the training conditions and support services by training facilities(time slots of training, facilities and environment, education materials, support for hiring after completion of training and post management, etc.) is very high and there were no gender differences.

□ However, the following challenges were pointed out in the course of introducing the NCS to female job training, thereby raising the need for policy efforts aimed at tackling them.

- A small portion of the surveyed facility staff answered the proportion of female trainees declined due to the introduction of the NCS(14.8%), but when the training programs(1,488) operated or to be operated in 2016 by the surveyed facilities(289) were divided into NCS-based and non-NCS-based programs, NCS-based courses had less female trainees. This is because women have higher demand for non-NCS programs or the NCS-based programs have strict conditions for participation. Thus, we need to take a closer look at the issue.

- Staff of training facilities mentioned that applying the NCS to middle-aged and older women would lengthen training period and training content would get more difficult.

- However, women's job training centers seem more passive in preparing for or making efforts in introducing the NCS(understanding of teachers and instructors about the NCS, recruitment of competent teachers and instructors, education for them), and they participate less in consulting. In addition, the centers viewed the NCS to yield less positive outcomes compared to private institutions and also expected the NCS-based programs have less positive impacts on employment.

- With regard to hiring achievement, there was the biggest demand for employment counseling(28.1%) and job matching(33.2%). In particular, younger generations showed higher demand for job matching while older generations put

a strong emphasis on employment counseling.

- Regarding the aforementioned satisfaction of learners, the older the trainees become, the more difficulties they have in completing training programs and understanding NCS-based curriculum.

- Therefore, training facilities need to check the performance of their trainees in order to build a systematic vocational training. When they find underperformers or those who need additional training to get the job they desire, counselors of training facilities need to share information with their counterparts in employment centers to match individual training portfolios to appropriate employment.

#### VI. Policy tasks for strengthening job training for middle-aged and older women

##### 1. Reinforcing flexibility of the job training programs for middle-aged and older women

■ Flexible application of the NCS to the vocational training for middle-aged and older women

■ Diversification of the channels of funding for the vocational training for middle-aged and older women

##### 2. Strengthening learning achievement through transition to NCS-based training

■ Modular design tailored to middle-aged and older women

□ [Figure 1] suggests a modular design of job training customized to the needs of middle-aged and older women.

- While the vocational training of the Ministry of Employment and Labor is directed to focusing on long-term and high-cost training centered around strategic industries for improvement of employment rate and quality, job training for local community should aim at developing stepping stone-to-employment program, which carves out niche marketing strategies,

thereby helping career-interrupted women have easy access to the labor market though it is not perfect. On the other hand, the program should also be utilized as a preliminary learning program for those who are not capable of entering the level of job commitment training.

□ What should be designed together with stepping stone-to-employment program is complementary training. This program needs to be designed when sufficient training is not offered through job commitment training and trainees fail to reach a certain achievement level or repetitive practice is required. The following figure is the phases of the program(plan).

□ Design and activation of training course tailored to job posting for middle-aged and older women

□ The above modular figure explains that middle-aged and older women need a set of training programs consisting of ‘stepping stone-to-employment program,’ ‘job commitment,’ and ‘complementary training.’ Because not all of these are required for every job seeker and females have a variety of life cycle career patterns, modular combination of the steps is necessary.

□ Small-scale and multi-item training programs customized to the needs of companies have been provided for women. There have been many account system programs that were also tailored to the needs of businesses. However, after the introduction of the NCS, small-to-medium-sized training institutes seem to focus more on transition to the NCS for standardized jobs than on identifying the needs of small businesses in the community. That’s because the main criteria of the screening process is how many elements of the NCS are included in training programs.

□ This study suggests that further research is required to examine the characteristics of the labor market for middle-aged and older women and types of jobs applicable to the NCS. At the same time, it is necessary to plan and operate ‘job training tailored to middle-aged and older women’ in order to identify the manpower structure for small enterprises in the community, thereby

applying account system to the job training.

First of all, in the initial counseling session, career path and capacity of job seekers should be accurately identified. In advanced countries in Europe, a detailed learning design for future career development is offered to job seekers as well as short-term training for employment.

‘The training needs assessment program’ of this research is designed to encourage counselors in employment centers to recommend a more personalized career design and appropriate training institutions and programs for each job seeker to accomplish his/her career development and training portfolio.

In particular, the training needs assessment system should be run smoothly in the area of assessment design related to complementary training, ultimately strengthening the efficiency of community training programs.

- The content and format of the complementary training should be customized to the needs of those who require ‘additional education’ after training at institutions. To do this, a system is needed to reasonably reflect their needs in the design of such programs. Job training process related to this can be currently planned under ‘Saeil job training process.’

- Job training institutions should open information on trainees’ academic achievement to the counselors of employment centers. This is a win-win strategy to raise the success rate of hiring through information sharing between employment staff and training staff.

3. Enhancing employment outcomes through a flexible link between ‘vocational capability development account system’ and ‘employment support service

■ Designing manual and training programs for capacity building of employment counselors

Training and manual for capacity building of counselors are necessary for them to develop a useful job-search career portfolio for trainees through counseling.

4. Plan for raising women's job training institutions' awareness of the NCS and expanding the use of the NCS

■ Building governance and diversifying consulting services for each type of local training centers to raise awareness of the NCS

□ The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the departments in charge of female workers, and women resources development institutes in the community need to build governance to regularize consulting until vocational development centers for women are able to share information on the NCS smoothly and raise awareness of the NCS.