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Cross-sectoral leaders of partnerships in reforming Senior L/earning in Queensland: Implications for the professional learning of education and training leaders

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Abstract

This working paper *investigates* the role of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) in providing leaders with a driver for reforming Senior L/earning (Years 10, 11 and 12). Using a *case study methodology,* this paper explores the collaboration and cooperation across different borders and sectors among leaders in the reform to Senior L/earning in Queensland (Australia) related to teacher resources and funding. Given that this Senior L/earning reform is multi-layer and cross-sectoral reform, *interviews* have been conducted with educational and training leaders at the school, regional and State levels, as well as leaders of registered training organisations and technical colleges. *Data from interviews* with 21 leaders in Queensland has been analysed, initially by using NVivo and conceptually by exploring Sergiovanni's (2005) argument concerning the place of hope in leadership. The *analysis of evidence indicates* that leaders play a decisive role in the success of Queensland's Senior L/earning reforms, in particular in dealing with the difficulties in the implementation process. This paper reports on how and what these leaders do and collaborate in the reforms they are pursuing and leading.

Key words: leadership, senior l/earning, vocational education and training, collaboration

1. Introduction

This working paper attempts to find out the multi-level, cross- sectoral and inter-systemic partnership in senior learning reform in Queensland in the efforts of education and training leaders to secure sustainability in the reforms they are pursuing. It provides an initial analysis of emerging findings from the first stage of a three-year (2007-2010) Australian Research Council project *investigating* the role of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) in providing leaders with a driver for reforming Senior L/earning (Years 10, 11 and 12) (Harreveld & Singh, 2009). Focusing on the issue of partnership, it explores the issues faced by leaders reforming Senior L/earning in Queensland (Australia). The reforms to Senior L/earning are multi-layered and cross-sectoral. For this reason we conducted *interviews* with educational and training leaders at the school, regional and State levels, as well as leaders of registered training organisations and technical colleges.

2. The Senior phase of L/earning, leadership and hope

Harreveld (2007) argues that the "robust hope" could usefully inform the education practice in Queensland's Senior phase of L/earning. She offers four key resources as constituents of robust hope: "the overarching resource of hope itself and its combination of values, sustainability and resilience which give hope its robustness" (Harreveld, 2007: 281). Halpin (cited in Harreveld, 2007: 282) defining three signposts of robust hope: 1. taking the experience of hopelessness seriously; 2. taking the moral virtues of teaching seriously, and 3. taking optimistic illusions seriously. Harreveld (2007) argues that democracy, agency, a futures orientation and research are

integral to robust hope. Resilience is required for sustainable leadership. However, robust hope could inform the vision of policy makers and educators.

In their study of Queensland's education and training reforms for the future (ETRF), Singh and Sawyer (2008) examined the relationship between democracy and hope. They observe that the literature on hope insists on "contrasting naïve versions of hope with those rooted in a sense of reality" (Singh & Sawyer, 2008: 225). The latter means transforming hopes for the future into realistic actions the push against the limit of possibility. They define *robust hope* as seeking

> "to investigate ways in which utopian possibilities can be expressed in the face of the structural pressures of marketization, particularly in education" (Singh & Sawyer, 2008: 226).

This paper extends our theorisation of three different but related perspectives on leadership and hope, and their place in VETiS.

2.1 Young adults, VETiS and hope

Te Riele and Crump (2002) argue that hope and education are necessary to re-engaging marginalised young adults in a "diverse, equitable and inclusive" way. They point to the importance of hope to getting young adults involved in education, contending that VET offers them a varied, fair and comprehensive education:

> "VET can restore some hope for young people in education if VET policy and practice takes into account curricular complexity, multiple literacies, disparate contexts and emerging pedagogical demands that tend to be specific and situated" (Te Riele & Crump, 2002: 264).

To be achieved, this hope-restoring function of VET has to take into consideration the complexity, diversity and situated context of young people. It is, however, not clear from Te Riele and Crump (2002) what hope really means or how it might function in VET. Zourzani (cited in (Te Riele, 2006: 62) argues that "hope is the difference between *probability* and *possibility*… It doesn't mean hope for one or another thing or as a calculated attitude, but to try and feel and put into words a possibility for becoming". This notion of hope is used to speak to the emotional aspects of schooling and care in school practices. Te Riele's (2006) findings contribute to redirecting of education to "recognise "teaching a caring vocation" in which teachers would teach to marginalised students with hope.

2.2 Lashaw's reliable hope

Educational leaders need to create "reliable hope" (Lashaw, 2008: 110) in the community they lead in educational reform. Lashaw (2008) examine the ascent of the small-schools movement in Oakland, USA to explore the hopes and aspirations of its most ardent advocates. He contrasted the movement's assertion of its equity-centered mission with the complex race and class hierarchies that grounded power relations within the movement. This contrast and discontinuity raised a question to him, "how reformers come to experience the movement as equitable and unequivocally progressive" (p. 110). He found that

> "the gap between reformers' ideals and their material circumstances is bridged by the movement's ample production of hope. Articulations of hope through the life of the movement help make reformers' ideals feel closer to realization than they are" (Lashaw, 2008: 110).

Lashaw (2008) commented on production of hope and cultivating hopeful communities as follows:

In exploring the political potential of hope, many scholars have been clear in distinguishing a focus on the content of what is hoped for—some sort of future ideal—from the quality of the act of living. Thus, strong claims are made for the ethical difference between optimism and hope (Lashaw, 2008: 111).

There is difference between pure optimism and hope. Pure optimism is wishful thinking while hope engages reality: "It was okay to do reform after reform, because these reforms reflect the hopes and aspirations of each generation" (Lashaw, 2008: 110).

2.3 Sergiovanni's concept of hope

Leadership may be analysed in terms of the concept of hope. Sergiovanni (2005: 77), for example, contends that "the most important and perhaps the most neglected leadership virtue is hope [because] hope can change events for the better." It is "hopeful leaders [who] recognize potentials in persons and in situations" (Sergiovanni, 2005: 82). Sergiovanni's (2005: 77) hope is the most powerful virtues of leadership:

"One reason why hope is neglected is because of management theories that tell us to look at the evidence, to be tough as nails, to be objective, and in other ways to blindly face reality. But facing reality rather than relying on hope means accepting reality as it is. Relying on hope rather than facing reality means working to change reality—hopefully. Leaders can be both hopeful and realistic as long as the possibilities for change remain open … Being realistic means calculating the odds with an eye to optimism, aware of the consequences of fate without being resigned to the inevitability of a situation or circumstance."

There is a need to distinguish between hope and wishful thinking. Sergiovanni (2005: 76) warns that "hope is often confused with wishing. But hope is grounded in reality, not wishful thinking". Realistic hope

"is based on the attempt to understand the concrete conditions of reality, to see one's own role in it realistically, and to engage in such efforts of thoughtful action as might be expected to bring about the hoped-for change" (Menninger, Mayman, & Pruyser, 1963: 385-386 as cited in Sergiovanni, 2006: 78).

Hope could help leaders to clarify their commitment to a cause, forming strong beliefs based on significant ideas, and from other convictions. It is necessary to avoid wishful thinking. The idea is to

"provide the basis for a school to become a community of hope, and these ideas can fuel the school's efforts to turn this hope into reality. Developing a community of hope elevated the work of leadership to the level of moral action. Leadership as moral action is a struggle to do the right thing according to some sense of values, according to some sense of what it means to be a human being. Leaders need to be concerned with what is good as well as what is effective" (Sergiovanni, 2005: 80-81).

There is no hope without taking action. Sergiovanni (2005) argues for practical hope which can be turned into reality through effort, action and developmental pathways. This may be the kind of hope needed in dealing with the challenges schools face when reforming the Senior Phase of L/earning.

2.4 Lear's "radical hope" as a concept for rethinking educational leadership

Lear's (2006:95) raises the concept of radical hope as an important quality of leadership. Lear's (2006) hero is a leader who can "witness to the death of traditional way of life and commit himself to a good that transcends these finite ethical forms." Radical hope is "a peculiar form of hopefulness. It is basically the hope for *revival*: for coming back to life in a form that is not yet intelligible" (Lear, 2006: 95). This hope is radical because it arises

> "at one of the limits of human existence … What makes this hope radical is that it is directed toward a future goodness that transcends the current ability to understand what it is. Radical hope anticipates a good for which those who have the hope as yet lack the appropriate concepts with which to understand it" (Lear, 2006: 103).

Today's education and training leaders meet similar situations; this is a critical moment in the redevelopment of the relationship between education, training and work. Among the qualities of a leader with radical hope, courage was especially important. Courage is "a state of character that is manifested in a committed form of living," that is "the ability to live well with the risks that inevitably attend human existence" (Lear, 2006: 65, 123). It is important for education and training leaders operating at different levels and across different agencies to ascertain what it is they anticipate will constitute a good life for today's young adults even though they may lack appropriate concepts for understanding current socio-economic changes and likely futures.

As mentioned above, Lear (2006) proposes the concept of radical hope. Through his study of "radical hope", Lear (2006) presents new insights into leadership, manifested in the story of Plenty Coups, leader of American indigenous nation the Crow during the end of 19th and early 20th century. Lear's (2006) concept of radical hope is mobilised at a time of cultural devastation or in extreme circumstances. The main quality of the radical hope is courage.

Lear (2006: 103) considers hope "as it might arise at one of the limits of human existence". Radical hope plays an important role in rethinking of the traditional understanding of courage which was made impossible: "Courage had to undergo a transformation" (Lear, 2006: 108). For Plenty Coups, hope is the manifestation of courage. There is a need to understand what courage is in extreme times.

Courage is an attribute of the excellence of character. But courage is a generic concept. Its content will change with the time and differ in different time. At the extreme of cultural change, it has to be transformed into a new type with new meaning. Radical hope indicates as part of its content the concept of courage. Radical hope, which comprises courage and engagement with reality, equips leader for making successful decision. In the following sections we will look at leaders' work of partnership in the school/industry engagement and find out how leaders with hope engage school/industry partnership, but first we discus the research method.

3. Research Method

The research strategy for this study involves in-depth empirical investigation of the leadership and partnership in reforming 'Senior L/earning' in order to explore the contemporary leadership. With the progress of Queensland's ETRF reforms, the meaning of Senior L/earning has been broadened. In this study, students participating in Senior Learning refer to Year 10-12 students. 'Senior L/earning' can be described as an industry-higher-education-school engagement reform strategy. It is not a job specific intervention. Rather it provides young adults with opportunities to explore possible career pathways by acquiring information about work and workplace practices in safe, secure learning environments. Queensland's ETRF reforms promote partnerships between schools,

industries and higher education organisations that consolidate and extend the collaborative work of schools, community organisations, universities, TAFE colleges, small/medium/large businesses, and Government agencies. Delimited in this way, Senior L/earning names senior secondary schooling in a way that is different from that in which this phase of learning it typically taken for granted.

Using qualitative research method, interviews are used for the collection of data. These interviews were conducted in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Redcliffe and Mackay in January, February, August, September and October, 2008. 40 interviewees were recruited for the 29 interviews.

The number of interviewees in each interview ranges from 1-3. The 40 interviewees are all leaders from different levels of educational and industrial leadership across the above-mentioned eight areas in Queensland's ETRF reform to the Senior phase of L/earning, especially in the VET in School (VETiS) programmes. Figure 1 displays composition of 40 interviewees showing the multi-tier leadership in engaging young people in Senior Learning. The recruitment of these interviewees and their composition correspond to the aim and objectives of the project.

Figure 1
Multi-level, cross-sectoral interviewees
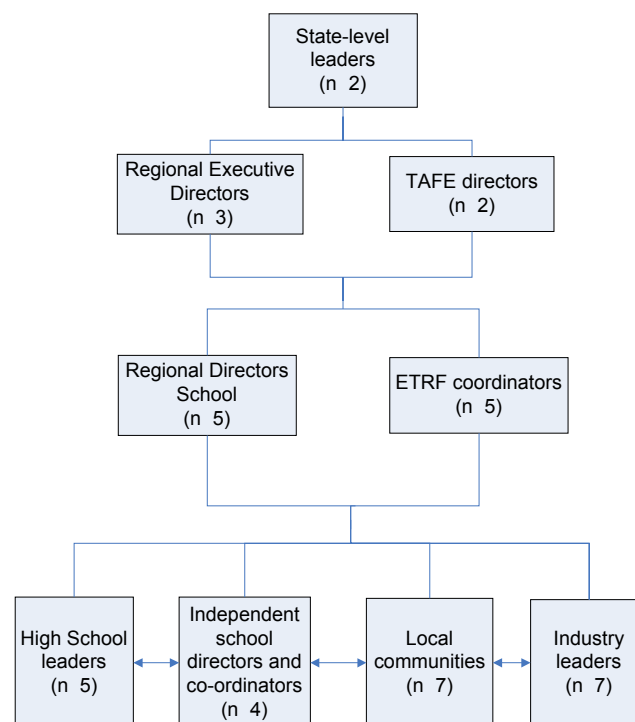
The interviews were analysed initially using NVivo. For the purpose of this paper we focus on partnerships between schools, industries, TAFE and universities.

4. Findings and Discussion

Queensland's Senior L/earning reform VETiS involves cooperation and partnerships between schools and industrial partners. Leaders in VETiS are seeking to secure the sustainability of VETiS which varies from one institution to another. This study is to find out the multi-level, cross-sectoral and inter-systemic partnership in Senior Learning reform of Year 10-12 in Queensland.

We try to find out through interviews what are happening in the schools in VETiS reform; what different ways of partnership are happening at local, state and federal governments.

4.1 Multi-level partnerships

When the data were collected in 2008, Queensland Department of Education, Training and Arts (DETA) [1] (now renamed as Department of Education and Training) has 1300 principals, 26 Education Director Schools, 10 regional executive directors and 11 Assistant Director-General, 4 Deputy Director General and one Director General.

4.1.1 Top level partnership

The analysis of interview data shows that partnerships occur at multi levels: state-level, regional level, district level and school level. At the top state level, leaders more focus on strategic partnerships. Top leaders of VETiS endeavours to plan and create partnerships in an innovative way. They initiate the partnerships and create opportunities for lower level leaders to get started.

> "All of this … I got asked to meet with Boeing … so the wine industry came to us, the mining industry came through the Premier, and [for] the ICTs, we were already in partnership with Microsoft … 120 industry partner's joined us… and we ran a program, ran a process around their desire to want to be involved …. participating and producing the best and that they wanted to partner us (Interviewee 7).

When the top leaders introduce Queensland senior learning reform to big main industries, the initial relationships were established and embryonic partnership was formed. It lays the foundation for the school/industries partnerships and provides convenience for the leaders of next levels to brokering schools with industries and other sectors. The state-level leaders also predict those possible issues and problems that lower level leaders might meet in partnerships. They try to find ways to facilitate solving those possible problems.

4.1.2 Middle level partnership

Regional Executive Directors and Executive Directors (Schools) are at the middle level of leadership in VETiS reforms. As leaders, they need to have a clear mind of what the focus of the VET in Schools is. There are two focuses of VETiS according to one regional executive director:

> "When you look at the senior schooling agenda, it was a dual focus as far as I was concerned. One focus was about re-engaging with the disengaged, and the second was in creating opportunities through partnership, business, and industry vocational opportunities. And I think that we've been pretty much at the fore of innovation in re-engaging the disengaged. There are a number of programs here" (Interviewee 9).

For this regional executive director, re-engaging with the disengaged and creating opportunities through partnership for kids are the focuses of senior learning reform.

Regional Executive Directors and Executive Directors Schools also work hard to establish relationships with industries and other sectors. They are thinking to create possibilities of training qualifications in partnership. For example, one Executive Director Schools tries to develop a

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[1] Queensland DETA was restructured to be Queensland Department of Education and Training. There is one Director-General, nine Deputy Director- General (Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2009).

program called Outback Tourism for the students and tries to set up partnership by holding a forum and see

> "the potential is that they wanted to use a lot of voluntary personnel in the community for education as well as training purposes. So I'm working with these guys [B C] now on the education advisory board to actually look at to see if we can get things like Cert III in Tourism going with these guys with using this as a training area" (Interviewee 14).

Leaders at higher level stand higher than the lower level ones. So they usually see farther. When leaders see one partnership is doing well in one area, they would think about using it to operate in another area. Leaders use their imagination to adapt one form of partnership to another area.

4.1.3 Grass-root Partnership

The grassroots partnership is directly between schools and industries. As leaders of VETiS, schools principals and coordinators play an important role in brokering learning and earning for the young people. They hold close and frequent relationship with local industries. The partnership at this level is concrete, implemental and real to be seen. As one principle:

> "we had a thing called Group Partnerships up there which was just a collection of education, employment sectors, private sectors, industry, community people got together and it was initially centred around students doing work or industry experience, I should say work placement … as we moved into the VET area we had huge numbers of students, and I used the word unreservedly there, we had huge numbers of students going into industry" (Interviewee 20).

Besides partnership with industries, principals also need to partner with parents as to the time of leaving school or staying at school. Traditional school timetable are between 9:00am to 3:00pm. But for some VETiS courses, students need to undertake them outside schools after 2:00 pm. So the principal has to partner with parents to negotiate on the time of their kids to stay at school or sign out at 2 o'clock:

> "In most cases the parents work in town so they stop work at 2:00 o'clock and take the child home. They make the arrangement to pick up at 3:00 o'clock or go home on the bus, we have the provision at the school if any student wants to stay at the school we have a place they can go … It's back-up all the way. If a student wants to leave they have to sign out. And if a parent says no I don't want my sixteen year old signing out at two o'clock and walking around the streets we acknowledge that and say now your timetable is that you are going to that room. Now they are not under tuition or supervision and the Librarian says you can sit there and do research … If you asked me that ten years ago I would have said I never dreamed of it. EQ would never have accepted it…Well the bulk of the parents….pick up engineer on the pre-trade students so they know exactly why we offer so we've got a waiting list" (Interviewee 20).

Principles have to use their imagination to think out ways to solve those arising issues during implementation of VETiS. Principals have to do parent partnership to make it work in the rural areas. This is quite massive. Parents have got to work and their kids have got to work. There is distances issue and there are also issues for small town policeman and shopping centres when they see kids walk on the streets at 2:00 o'clock. Principles need to partner with local police and local community. The grass-root leaders have more practical problems and issues to face regarding to timetabling, subjects, communication with local communities, etc. in the school/industry engagement partnerships.

4.2 Different models of partnerships

Leaders of VETiS need to plan and create partnership in an innovative way. VET courses have been in Australian schools for a long time. How to engage students effectively and provide employment skills for students in new situation is a challenge for any leader. Leaders have used their courage, talents and resources to create different types of partnerships. These three kinds of partnerships are related to schools, industries, academies; TAFE, universities and local communities. From the data analysis we find that there are mainly three types of partnerships: hub and spoke model; contract/agency model; direct engagement model.

4.2.1 Hub and spoke model

For the school/industry engagement, the typical model is the hub and spoke model, such as Queensland College of Wine Tourism (QCWT), the Queensland Energy and Minerals Academy (QEMA) and Queensland Aviation High.

The QCWT was built on the campus of Stanthorp State Highschool. Government put initially $400,000 to put a tin shed. The campus land belongs to Education Queensland. QCWT is a partnership of Education Queensland, the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE, Queensland Wine Industry Association (QWIA), the industry body. QCWT was created through the combination of these partners.

> "it has a stand alone chief executive and it now provides to school students, to TAFE students, university students and to industry makers who are all in a form of education and training" (Interviewee 7).

Stanthorpe State High school becomes the hub of group. QCWT facilitates education and training at secondary, TAFE and tertiary levels through its partners, including13 Gateway Schools to the Wine Tourism industry, Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE and USQ, Faculty of Sciences.

Another hub and spoke model partnership in school/industry engagement is The Queensland Energy and Minerals Academy (QEMA) is a virtual college. The QMEA is a joint venture between the Queensland Resources Council and the Queensland State Government, and gets much financial, material and in-kind support from both Government and industry sources.

From the web site of QMEA, we can know that the QMEA register students in Years 10, 11 and 12 from 18 schools, teachers from those schools and industry mentors from the huge range of work sites our sponsor companies operate across Queensland.

4.2.2 Contractor/agency model through group training organisations

In many cases, partnership of the school/industry engagement is through agencies and the agency itself is part of the partnership. The agency has a broad connection with the industries. It is easy for schools to get apprentice and traineeship opportunities for their students.

If it is apprenticeship and traineeship, the agencies pay the students and charges to the industries who recruit the students for that cost. One such example is G. Apprentices and Trainees, Gladstone.

After being accepted by an industry under the agency of G., the students have to prepare their necessary tools, superannuation, WorkCover, uniforms before they start work as apprentice. They can work 38 weeks. The responsibility of G. are as follows as described by one of our interviewees.

> "We're responsible for the group certificates, we're responsible for keeping current. We're responsible for keeping up with all the legislation, we're responsible for managing the training and employment, so making sure that they are booked into college, that they're actually undertaking the right sort of work experience to get their competencies, to get their qualification" (Interviewee 31).

The contractor works with wide industries and employs staff to run that. The company has to bear this cost. The contractor needs to build relationships with both the industries and schools.

Another example of this contractor/agency model in school/industry engagement is T. T. is a group training organisation. The industrial partner T. invests and designs programs and buy tools such as computer-driven lathe … The school call for applicants. The industry company select from applicants. The students spend some time in Trade Taster programs in the B. Institute of TAFE. Then go into industry to put into schools. Another partnership is the form of Mentor Me, where students have an apprentice designated to mentor and look after them in each place while the students are in industry practice. So this case of partnership is across system between industry, school, TAFE, University and Ed Queensland. That's cross-sectoral partnership form.

4.2.3 Direct engagement model

Many schools build up direct engagement with industries. The schools put more time and efforts in building the relationship with industries under the assistance of Local Community Partnerships. One typical example is the Australian Technical Colleges (ATC).

The ATC is federally funded. It has federal fund to build a facility, hire staff and develop curriculum. It focuses on traditional trades in the following skills shortage vocations: automotive, building and construction, electrotechnology, commercial cookery and metals and engineering (http://www.deewr.gov.au/, 2008). It offers Certificate III courses.

ATC North Brisbane has school/industry engagement in two ways, industry placements and on site training on ATC site. It set up a governing body which have 14 people. In this governing body there are more industry partners than education ones. Nine of those people are from industry and five are from education.

Many high schools have direct engagement with industry. In many cases, high schools get engaged with industry through the coordination of Local Community Partnerships (LCPs).

Some schools have direct partnership with university. Leaders of VETiS need to plan and create partnership in an innovative way. Academies are a good case of partnership of schools and universities. In Queensland, there are three Academies, "specialist state high schools for Queensland's high performers". They are Creative Industries Academy, Science, Mathematics & Technology Academy and Health Sciences Academy. These academies have students in Years 10 to 12. They offer educational program characterised by accelerated studies, extension and enrichment work with universities, industry experience and personal and social development. The curriculum framework is the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program.

Although there are many successful stories in VETiS reforms, there are still some challenges and barriers that leaders are facing.

4.3 Partnership challenges and barriers

Leaders could not do VETiS reform on their own. The VETiS needs partnership to make it happen. They need people supporting them. They also meet some challenges, such as council amalgamation.

It is important to have a consistent system to continue to develop partnership for the sustainability of VET in Schools programs. Different areas have different situations and conditions in industries. So the partnerships with industries would be different. Some places have strong industry base. Some place does not have main industry, which provokes the question of what industrial partnership is to be developed. When educational leaders have to engage schools with industries in an area where there is not main industry, it is like in an abysmal situation for leaders. Leaders need to have courage, the particular quality of radical hope to face the challenge. One Regional Executive Director is using strategic collaborative partnership in the face of this challenge of not having a dominant industry in X.

ETRF coordinator is at the middle level of leadership in coordinating VETiS programs. One ETRF coordinator mentioned one challenge he met:

> We've actually got a responsibility we've got a lot of funding out there with those programs. Our challenge is to make sure that those programs are still happening, and that they don't lose all the enthusiasm in the context that things will continue to be used (Interviewee 11).

Another issue that influence the sustainability of partnership is the period of funding. Some funding is only for a period of three years. No fund follows after that. This is a challenging issue. For example, the Australian Technical Colleges were a Federal (Howard) Government initiative in reforming Australia's Senior Secondary Schooling, specialising in vocational education and training in school (VETiS). That the ATCs do not get their fund from the State but from the Commonwealth but only for three year poses its own challenges for education and training leaders, especially if they want to maintain their independent school status.

The college has been set up with the federal fund, but the federal fund support is only for three years. Schools are not like a perishable commodity which only last for a short period of years. Schools need time to produce students in a relatively long period. The only-three-year federal funding poses huge sustainability difficulty for ATCs. Some ATCs has come to the situation of closing down.

Every reform bears the hope of the reform leaders, their ideal and beliefs. Hope has been used to instil people's strong belief and will power. Hope becomes the testimony of the success of leaders in educational reforms in Queensland. In difficult situation, the role of a leader and leadership quality is the decisively important. This situation is like what Lear (2006) described as devastating situation. Radical hope might help leaders to get out of the near-death situation. Radical hope is the hope for *revival*, for coming back to life in a form that is not yet known. Radical hope engages with reality with courage with new meaning under new situation.

Here we would like to take ATC North Brisbane as an example. ATC North Brisbane has the same condition as the other 23 ATCs across Australia at the beginning of launching. However at the end of the three year funding period, ATC North Brisbane survives and is developing very well and is evolving into a new form in engaging students in VETiS. Same situation under a different leader

leads to different outcomes. The leader of ATC North Brisbane knows the challenge of the stop of funding. The leader builds it up into a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) gradually within the three years. So when federal government stops its funding, it could survive as a RTO.

Once it survives, it has chances for development. Now the federal government announced that:

> The ATC North Brisbane will expand its services and cater for up to 470 students in 2009. And it will be known as the Australian Trade College – North Brisbane Ltd and will remain a non-government independent school, Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and Supervising Registered Training Organisation (SRTO) (http://www.deewr.gov.au/, 2008).

The leader of ATC North Brisbane vindicates radical hope as a leadership quality in a time of critical moment. Leaders play an important role in the schools/industries engagement.

4.4 Implications for teacher education

From the interview data analysis, we find one protruding issue is the shortage of manual arts teachers. Top state-level leaders noticed this problem that the education sector is loosing some manual arts teachers to industry. We need manual arts teachers for our kids to get work readiness after leaning school. So it is now time for us to pay attention to the shortage of manual arts teachers. We need to compete in the open market to gain manual arts teachers back.

Some leaders notice this problem when they implement VETiS. They find some ways to solve it. One leader says,

> "the fundamental thing all VET can reasonably handle is a 1 to 14 ratio. We get staffed on 1 to 25. So that's taken resources out of mainstream schools and put it into special programs. And that's what's going to kill us, and now we've got various people saying in our department for example you rate manual arts teachers, Year 8 classes need to be taught by manual arts teachers. Now are they aware that there is a skill shortage around manual arts teachers, so we've got other teachers in there teaching the junior grades who are perfectly competent" (Interviewee 12).

We need to let the teachers and educators know the importance of VETiS for preparing students for their employment after leaving school and it is important for the teachers to up skill themselves. Some teachers do not know this point. As one leader point out that "But really teachers didn't know [ETRF] a lot and I don't think they did a lot to up skill them, you tell me if you disagree" (Interviewee 19)

If teachers know more about VET, there might know more about their students. One student might feel painful in traditional classroom but may feel joyful in VET courses. Teachers need to go out and their perspective might be changed.

The skills shortage issue is an issue for both education and training leaders. To solve this issue it is advisable for leaders to have radical hope with engagement of reality and to use their imagination to solve this problems under this globalized "flattening" world (Friedman, 2006).

5. Conclusion

From the analysis of the interview data we have, at present there are multi levels of partnerships in the efforts made by leaders in the schools/industry engagement. For these different levels of

partnerships, there are three models of partnerships, namely hub and spoke model, contract/agency model and direct engagement model. Each model has its advantages.

During the implementation of VETiS, leaders will meet different kinds of challenges and barriers. Education and training leaders need to cooperate in the school/industry engagement to meet the conditions required for sustainability. The findings from the data analysis show us the radical hope might be useful in solving problems arising during VETiS reforms. Manual arts teacher shortage is a very important issue affecting the healthy development of VET in Schools. This requires leaders in changing the operational conditions of possibilities for vocational education and training; providing for, and learning from ongoing evidence of other innovatory practices; engaging in local-level participatory and State-level representative democracy, and pursuing holistic engagement strategies with key communities of interest.

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