

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Department of Applied Social Sciences

Professional Attachment I

Fullness Vocational Rehabilitation Program Effectiveness Survey

Report

Students: Leung Wing Han, Suen Ka Ngai

Program of Study: Bachelor of Arts in Social Policy and Administration (Full-time)

Year of Study: 2008-2009 Semester 2

Name of Consultative Tutor: Raymond Tam Kin Yuen

Name of Organization: Fullness Christian Vocational Training Centre

BACKGROUND

Fullness Christian Vocational Training Centre (FCVTC) was set up by a group of voluntary Christians who sought to provide employment opportunities to deviant youth in 1987. According to the Director, Mr. KEE Chi Hing, the mission of this training centre is to “help the deviant youths to reintegrate into the society through Christian faith and vocational training.” As one of the earliest social enterprises in Hong Kong, the centre has set up diversified businesses to help the deviant youth reintegrate into society by providing vocational training and later giving career referral services to other organizations. To enhance its service quality, Fullness Vocational Training Centre has developed social network and cooperation with various not-for-profit or profit-making organizations in the society.

Apart from trainings and cooperation with other NGOs, the centre also provides counseling services and promotes Christian faith to apprentices as ways of getting psychological consolation. Unlike most of the social enterprises, Fullness Vocational Training Centre has long been a financial self-sufficient organization with no government subsidy. Thus, in 2008, Fullness Christian Social Enterprise was set up as a limited-by-share company to attract social venture capital, knowledgeable volunteers and to expand social network as well as social impact. Yet, despite the diversified services it provides, it is found that the turnover rate of apprentices has constantly been high. Many of them just stayed in the centre for a rather short period of time from a few days to 1 or 2 years at which they had not finished the training programs. In light of this high turnover rate, it is hoped that the survey will help get a better understanding on the programs offered by FCVTC.

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Goal

To evaluate the overall effectiveness and success rate of the rehabilitation programs offered by Fullness Vocational Training Centre so that the agent can make better and more appropriate improvement

Objectives

1. In what ways do the rehabilitation programs of FCVTC help the apprentices technically?

The rehabilitation programs provided by FCVTC aim at helping the youth at-risk develop practical and professional skills so as to equip them for integrating into the society. Through the survey with the ex-apprentices, it is hoped that feedbacks can be collected to evaluate whether the programs can adequately equip the youth for their future career.

2. Apart from the practical techniques, how effective is FCVTC in building up the psychological development of apprentices?

FCVTC has put quite a large emphasis on the psychological development of apprentices in order to build up their confidence, thus one of its objectives is to provide psychological support to apprentices. The project aims to find out the extent of the effectiveness of psychological assistance that FCVTC offers.

3. How successful is FCVTC in helping the apprentices build up a new way of life?

It is hoped that this survey can evaluate the overall effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs in helping the youth at-risk reintegrate back to the society. Thus, the recent status of ex-apprentices was examined to see whether they had abstained from the past way of lives.

METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

1. Data Screening

Data about the ex-apprentices were collected during the first 3 weeks, which were 7th January, 14th January and 21st January. Those data were documents such as application forms, contracts and letters filed by FCVTC. Some of the data were extracted to be formulated into a data base. 301 cases in total were recorded in it including the ex-trainees from the Auto Service sector, Air Conditioning sector and Hair Salon sector. Items including name, sex, year of birth, education level, address, contact numbers, email address, date-in Fullness, date-out Fullness, working period, reasons of leaving, offense committed, recent status and referee were included in the data base. The data serve as references for our further selection of interviewees and basic information for our interviews.

2. Phone Interview with ex-apprentices

Phone interviews were taken place throughout the 7th to 13th weeks. Out of the 301 cases, 23 of them were selected as our target interviewees. The selection criteria were based on their working period and the accessibility of contacting them. The longer time they worked in FCVTC and the more accessible they could be contacted, the higher the possibility that they were selected. Out of these 23 cases, 8 of them were successfully phone interviewed. The interviews were conducted based on the questionnaires concerning the services provided by FCVTC.

3. Face to face Interview with ex-apprentices

There were in total 4 cases of face to face interviews. They were conducted on 11th March, 18th March, 1st April and 8th April respectively. The interviews were carried out with the format of daily conversation in order to get a more comprehensive and in-depth information. At the end of the interviews, the ex-apprentices were also asked to complete the questionnaires so that we could collect sufficient data.

4. Face to face interview with existing apprentices

3 of the existing trainees from the Auto Service Centre were invited to have face to face interviews with us because we wanted to get extra and up-to-date information concerning FCVTC. The interviews were carried out separately on 8th April and 15th April. Similarly, the trainees were asked to complete the questionnaires at the end of the interviews.

LIMITATIONS

1. Limited information in contacting the ex-apprentices

When organizing the documents, we found that many of the contact numbers of the ex-apprentices were missing. Therefore, this limited the number of ex-trainees we could trace back and thus most of the selected cases were ex-trainees who had constant contact with the existing staff in FCVTC. Even out of the 23 selected cases, 8 of them could not be successfully contacted because of error numbers or difficulty in reaching them. Because of the difficulty in contacting the ex-apprentices, the number of successful interview relatively reduced.

2. Limited time for interviews

There were altogether around 301 cases in our hands. To have a better trace back result, more cases should be selected to examine the effectiveness of the programs of FCVTC. But because of time limit, only 23 cases out of 301 cases were selected. And out of these 23 cases, only 12 cases were successfully interviewed. So, if more time is allowed, more cases can be traced back and thus the result will be more representative.

DATA DESCRIPTION

Question 1: When did you join FCVTC?

Question 3: When did you leave FCVTC?

Working Period	Number
Less than half year	2
Half year	0
1 year	5
1½ years	1
2 years	1
More than 2 years	2
Unknown	4
Total	15

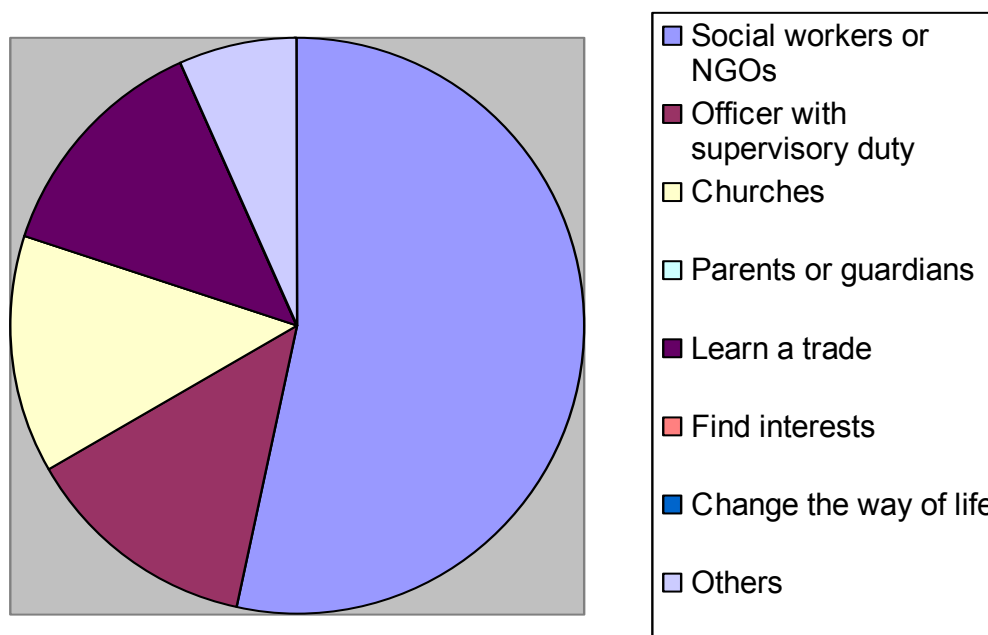
Table 1

The above table shows that 5 of the ex-apprentices had stayed in FCVTC for 1 year while 2 of the ex-apprentices had stayed in FCVTC for less than half year and 2 of them had stayed in FCVTC for more than 2 years. In short, many of them did not stay in the FCVTC for long. Only 2 ex-apprentices stayed in the FCVTC for more than two years, this is in line with the high turnover rate of the apprentices in the organization.

Question 2: Why did you join FCVTC?

Reasons	Numbers
Social workers or NGOs	8
Officer with supervisory duty	2
Churches	2
Parents or guardians	0
Learn a trade	2
Find interests	0
Change the way of life	0
Others	1
Total	15

Table 2



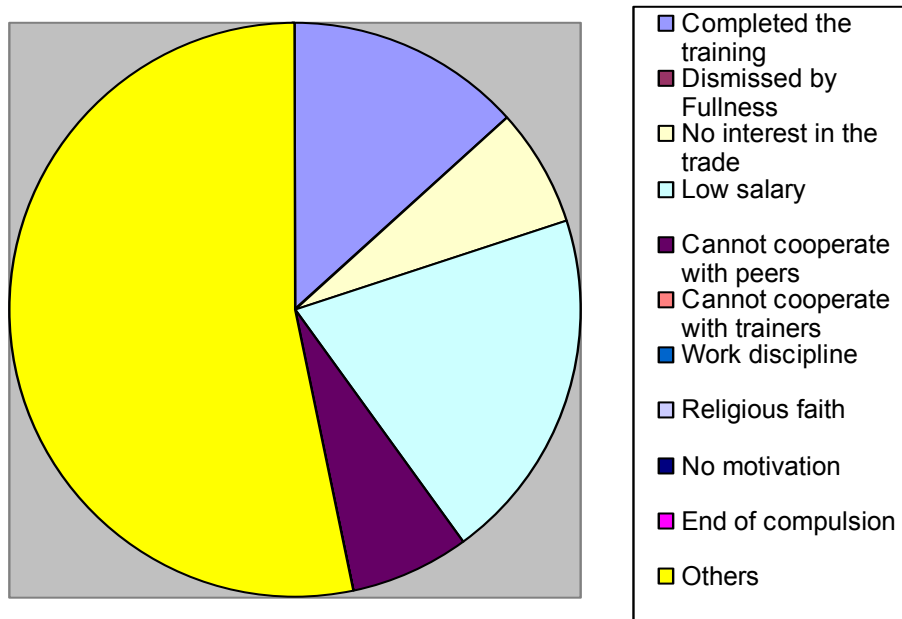
Graph 1

From the above graph, 8 of them were referred by social workers or youth centers to FCVTC. 2 of them were sent by supervisory bodies, 2 of them were sent by churches and 2 of them would like to learn a trade. Only 1 of them joined FCVTC through other means.

Question 4: Why did you leave FCVTC?

Reasons	Number
Completed the training	2
Dismissed by Fullness	0
No interest in the trade	1
Low salary	3
Cannot cooperate with peers	1
Cannot cooperate with trainers	0
Work discipline	0
Religious faith	0
No motivation	0
End of compulsion	0
Others	8
Total	15

Table 3



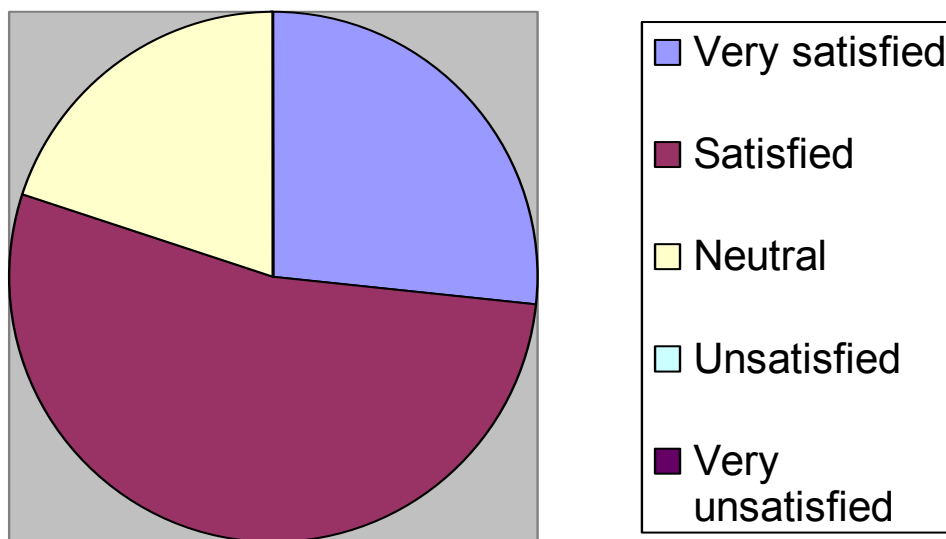
Graph 2

The above graph shows that 3 of the ex-apprentices left FCVTC because of low salary. 1 of them was not interested in the training while another 1 of them left because he did not get along well with other trainees. 8 of them left due to other reasons and 2 of them left because they had finished the training programs. It would be better if we could explore their other reasons for leaving FCVTC.

Question 5: How will you rate the overall environment of FCVTC?

Rating	Numbers
Very satisfied	4
Satisfied	8
Neutral	3
Unsatisfied	0
Very unsatisfied	0
Total	15

Table 4



Graph 3

The above graph shows that 8 of the ex-trainees were satisfied with the overall environment of FCVTC. 4 of them were even very satisfied with it while 3 of them were neutral to the environment.

Question 6: How far did the training programs of FCVTC help you in the following aspects?

	Very satisfy	Satisfy	Neutral	Not satisfy	Not Very satisfy
Vocational skills	7	6	1	1	0
Service attitude	4	7	4	0	0
Discipline	5	6	3	1	0
Learning attitude	4	6	5	0	0
Cooperation	2	8	3	2	0
Emotional control	5	6	2	2	0
Peer relationship	4	6	3	2	0
Religious faith	4	2	3	2	4
Others	0	0	0	0	0
Total	35	47	24	10	4

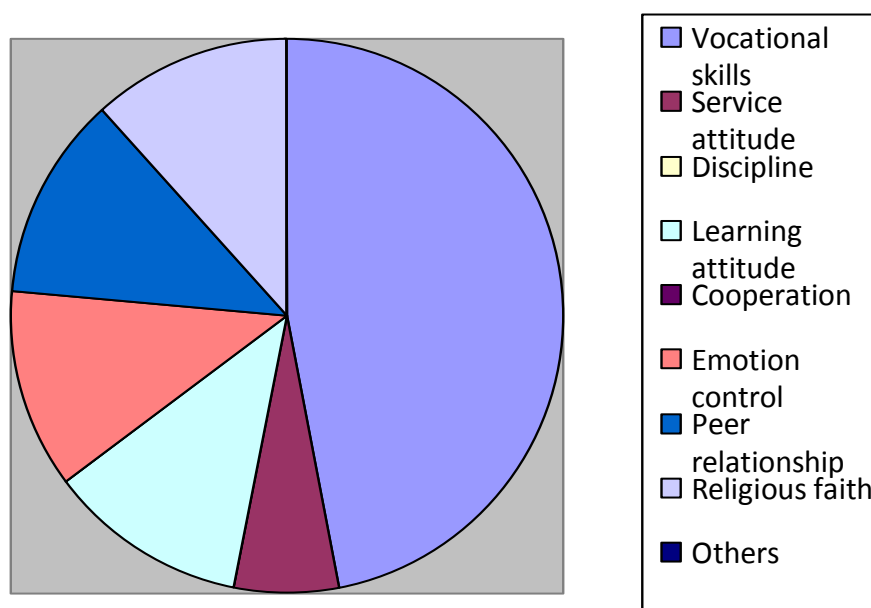
Table 5

According to the above table, most of them believed that the trainings of FCVTC were useful to them. Among all the aspects, vocational skills gained the highest rating, followed by discipline, emotional control and service attitude. Religious faith gained the lowest rating among all.

Question 7: Which one of the above aspects do you treasure the most?

	Number
Vocational skills	8
Service attitude	1
Discipline	0
Learning attitude	2
Cooperation	0
Emotional control	2
Peer relationship	2
Religious faith	2
Others	0
Total	17

Table 6



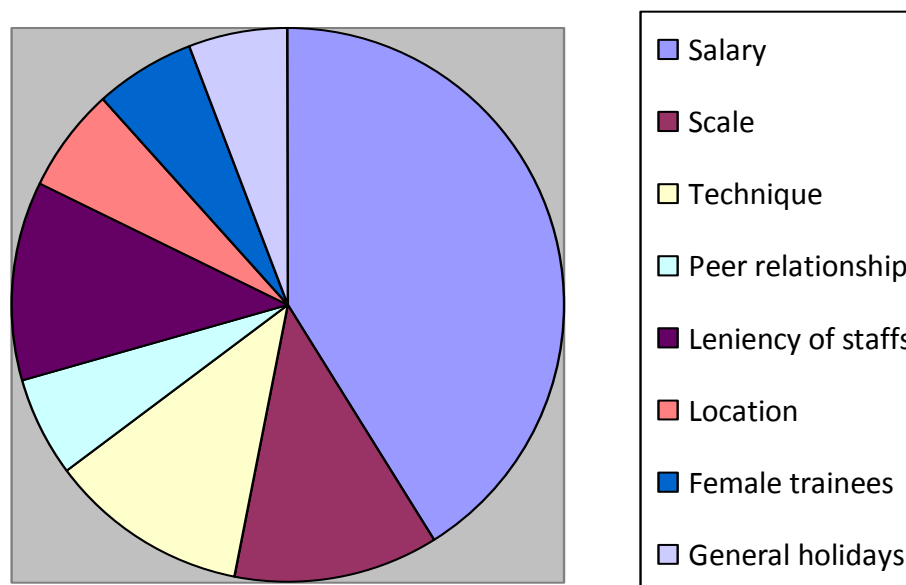
Graph 4

The above graph shows that 8 of them treasured vocational skills the most while learning attitude, emotional control, peer relationship and religious faith were treasured by 2 of the ex-trainees respectively. 1 of them treasured service attitude.

Question 8: What are the improvements that FCVTC needs to make?

	Number
Salary	7
Scale	2
Technique	2
Peer relationship	1
Leniency of staffs	2
Location	1
Female trainees	1
General holidays	1
Total	17

Table 7



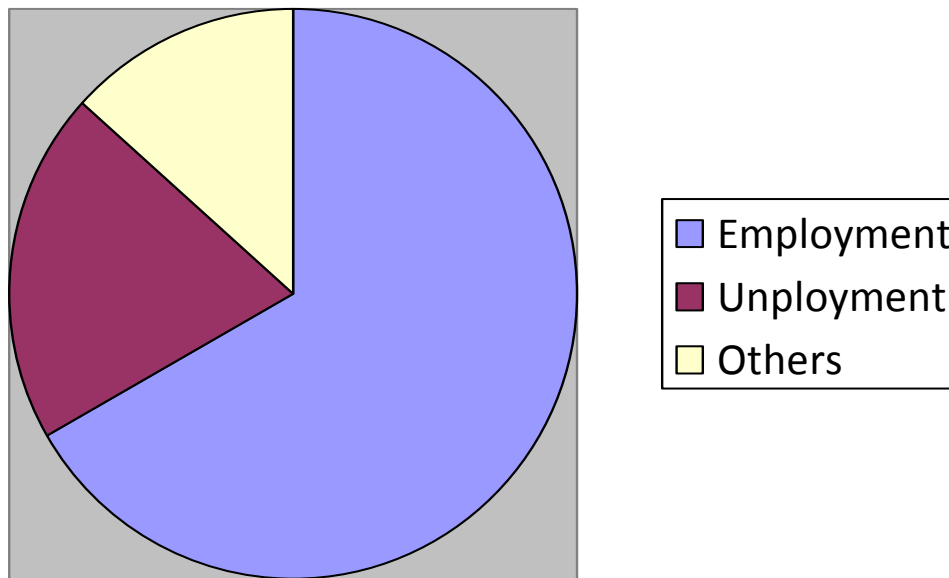
Graph 5

This is an open-ended question. 7 of the interviewees believed that the salary should be improved. Others believed that the scale of FCVTC and the techniques it taught could be improved.

Question 9: What is your current employment situation?

	Numbers
Employment	10
Unemployment	3
Others	2
Total	15

Table 8



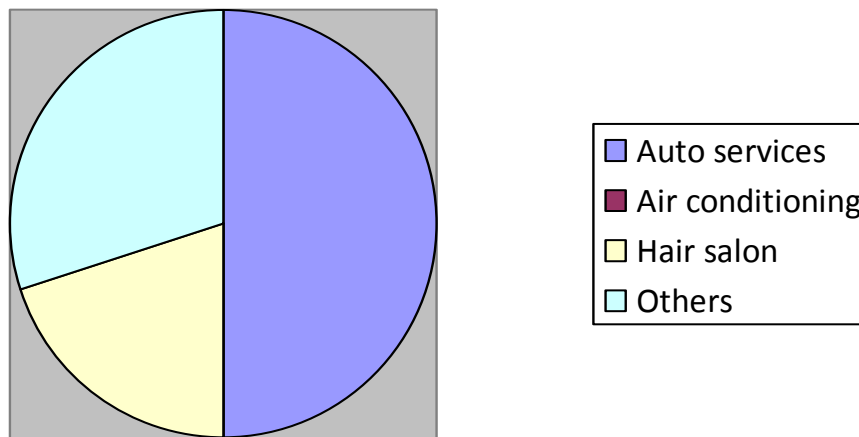
Graph 6

10 of the ex-trainees are now working while 3 of them are unemployed. 2 of them are now studying. Of the jobs the ex-trainees are working, most of them are working in occupations that are related to their trainings in FCVTC. Hence, they do choose to work in salon and auto repair services. For the break down, please refer to the following findings.

Question 10: If you are now working, what is your occupation?

	Numbers
Auto services	5
Air conditioning	0
Hair Salon	2
Others	3
Total	10

Table 9



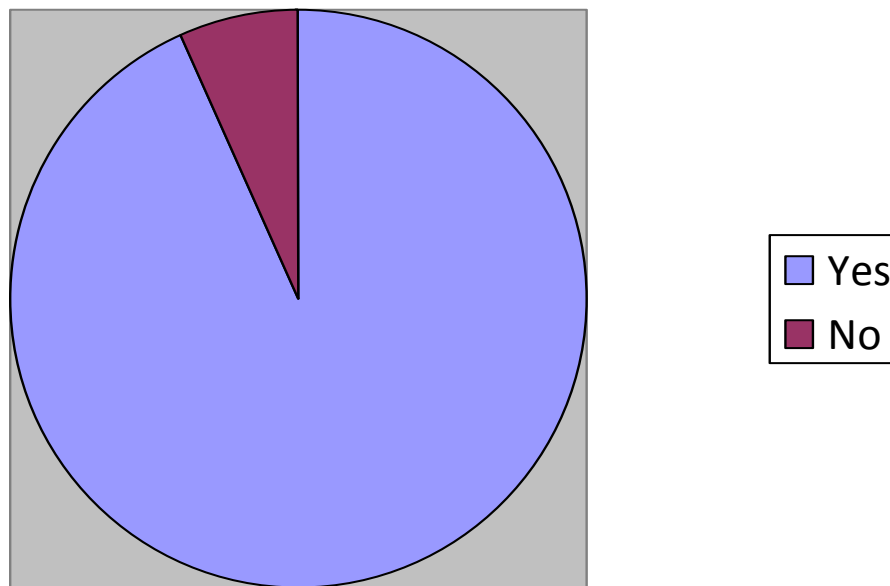
Graph 7

Among the employed ex-trainees, 5 of them are now working in auto service-related work while 2 of them are working in hair salon. 3 of them are working in areas that are not provided in FCVTC.

Question 13: Will you be interested to join events held by FCVTC in the future?

	Numbers
Yes	14
No	1
Total	15

Table 10



Graph 8

14 of them would join the events held by FCVTC while only 1 of them would not. Some interviewees tell that they still have contacts with other trainees.

DATA ANALYSIS

Effectiveness in Changing their Way of Lives

As shown in table 8, the current employment situation of ex-trainees is quite positive. 10 out of 15 of them are now working while only 3 of them are unemployed. Among those 10 employed ex-trainees, 6 of them have worked in the current position for at least 1 year. 2 of them even have significant changes. One of them has opened an auto service company in To Kwa Wan and another becomes the junior stylist in the Supporter Hair Salon. The rather high employment rate of the ex-apprentices shows that FCVTC is quite effective in helping youth at-risk to change their former way of lives. Many of them are able to develop a new direction in their lives instead of going back to their original way of lives.

Another interesting finding is that some of the ex-trainees choose to study again. 2 of the interviewees are now studying. This shows that FCVTC somehow helps the youth to clarify and identify their aspiration. Even one of the currently employed ex-trainees is now studying in Project Yi Jin and has the goal of studying a bachelor degree in the future. To a certain extent, FCVTC does help trainees to identify the most suitable way of lives for them.

Useful Vocational Training

According to table 5, among the different aspects that the ex-apprentices had to rate, vocational skill gains the highest number of “very satisfy”. The number of “satisfy” is also quite high. Therefore, vocational skill is the element that is most useful and helpful in the eyes of ex-apprentices. In particular, many of the interviewees have mentioned that vocational skill taught in FCVTC is comprehensive and that the mentors in FCVTC are willing to teach them. This is shown by table 6 in which vocational skill gain the highest rating among all. They believed that vocational skill was the best job FCVTC has done.

During the face to face interviews with the ex-trainees, many of them emphasized that they were very impressed by the courses FCVTC subsidized them to study. They found that those courses were extremely important and helpful for their training. Since other companies do not provide study opportunity for their employees, vocational skills are only learnt during work. No study opportunity is provided to the staff. Therefore, the ex-trainees, especially those from the auto service, treasured this study opportunity very much.

Apart from that, as shown in table 9, among the 10 employed interviewees, 7 of them are now working jobs related to the training received in FCVTC. This shows that the vocational training in FCVTC is useful in developing and enriching the skills and knowledge of apprentices. They are able to apply the skills learnt from FCVTC in their work.

Time of Staying in FCVTC

Table 1 reveals that many of the ex-apprentices did not finish the whole training program. Only 2 of them had finished the training before they left FCVTC. Thus, the turnover rate is rather high in FCVTC. Interestingly, though the trainees do not stay long, they indeed continue to work. 10 out of 15 of them are working currently. Therefore, from another perspective, the high turnover rate does not necessarily mean that the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programs in FCVTC is low. Rather, FCVTC helps youth at-risk to develop a sense of belongings and confidence such that they are interested in exploring and integrating back into the society.

Weak Emphasis on Religious Faith

Survey result shows that quite a high number of ex-trainees do not find FCVTC helps to change their religious faith. They believed that religious faith is not significant in FCVTC. This is shown in table 5 in which religious faith gains the highest number of “not very satisfy”. Though change in religious faith is a matter of personal belief, after all, FCVTC is a social enterprise with religious background. Improvement can be made on the religious faith issue. And, it should be considered that the ex-trainees did treasure the opportunity to learn in the organization, and this might be their first priority.

Lack of Opportunities to train up Cooperation Skills

As suggested by one of the ex-apprentices, there are few chances for trainees to train up cooperation skill. Since the job nature of either hair salon or auto service does not require strong cooperation with other colleagues, few opportunities are given to apprentices to train up their cooperation skills. Interactions may only take place after work such as tea time or after work gatherings. This, in fact, may also affect their development in interpersonal skills.

Lack of Interactions with Families

From our experiences with ex-trainees, many of their families did not know much about FCVTC. Sometimes their parents might answer the call when we tried to reach them. But often, they seemed to be quite unfamiliar with FCVTC where their sons and

daughters worked. After all, family support is one of the elements for a successful rehabilitation program. So, effort can be made to build up a closer relation with the families of apprentices.

Unattractive Salary

From the interviews, some ex-trainees did tell that they were not satisfied with the range of salary that FCVTC were giving. Though most of the interviewees are still living with their families, the trainees tell that the salary has hindered their social life.

SUGGESTIONS

Better Communication with Families of Apprentices

FCVTC has to communicate with the parents of trainees. From the survey results and our observation, parents do not understand FCVTC clearly. No trainees are transferred by parents or guardians. Most of them are transferred by social workers or NGOs. It complicates that the relationship between trainees and their parents are not good. It may cause that parents do not understand their children's current situation and not understand what Fullness is clearly. Fullness should communicate to the parents that can increase the success rate of the rehabilitation programs. Although Fullness plays an important role in the rehabilitation, parents' support is more important than Fullness. Their support is essential to success. It can motivate trainees to be willing to re-integrate into the society. It is a psychological support that Fullness is difficult to instead of. In a certain extent, Fullness just plays an assistant role in the rehabilitation programs. It can provide opportunities for deviant youths, but cannot provide domestic support for them. Therefore, Fullness must communicate to the parents through different ways. It can hold some activities or meetings to increase the communication between youths, parents and Fullness. It will let everyone be more understanding that can reduce the misunderstanding. It is helpful for Fullness to achieve the goal easily.

Better Cooperation with Colleagues

Fullness should increase the opportunities for trainees to cooperate and communicate with their peers. According to the results of questionnaires, no one choose cooperation that is the valuable for them in the Fullness. It shows that the opportunities may be not enough for them. As our observation, trainees always work alone or work with the guides. They are lack of chance to work with their peers. Although the workers in the auto services and hair salon always work alone, they still need to have a

communication with others. Communication is a common social intercourse. It can let them re-integrate into the society easily. In fact, Fullness can increase the opportunities for them to work together. For example, the trainees can cooperate to repair a car. They can learn the team spirit during the working process. It is useful for their growth and future development. Fullness can also hold some activities to provide a platform for them to understand their peers. Although learning the vocational skills and knowledge is very important, learning the communication skills is also important for them that cannot be overlooked.

Structuralize / Formalize the Training

Although the trainings are comprehensive and can let the trainees acquire the basic skills needed in their career. It is considered that if the trainings can be structuralized or formalized, it may even help the trainees to develop their identity with FCVTC. FCVTC can consider issuing certificates to the trainees upon their graduation. FCVTC may also consider organizing an alumnus, hence, to help the trainees to develop their identity with FCVTC.