



Assessment Methods of Skills Needed in Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Renewed Hope in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Technical, Vocational Education and Training has been recognized as a tool for poverty alleviation, youth empowerment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Hence, priority has been accorded to it globally and nationally. However, this type of training is not being properly assessed. This paper therefore, attempts to explain the assessment method of the skills needed in Technical, Vocational Education and Training for a renewed hope in Nigeria. In specific, the paper defined the concept of assessment in TVET, explained the need and types of assessment in TVET, the methods used in assessing TVET, the challenges for skills assessment in TVET, and at the end proffered some suggestions for a renewed hope in the system.

INTRODUCTION

Technical, Vocational Education and Training has been regarded as one of the solutions to youth empowerment. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is defined by UNESCO as "education, training and skills development relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods"(Tripney, et al, 2013). Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) intervene to improve the employability and employment of young people in low-and middle-income countries (Tripney, et al.2013). This type of education and training holds immense importance in Nigeria for several reasons. Firstly, it addresses the skills gap prevalent in the country by providing individuals with specialized knowledge and practical competencies required by industries. This form of education promotes career opportunities. Technical and vocational Education and training plays a crucial role in the development of Nigeria's workforce and economy. However, this type of education and training requires assessment methods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In view of the above, this paper defined the concept of assessment in TVET, needs for assessment in TVET, assessment methods in TVET, challenges in assessing skills and at the end suggested ways for improving assessment methods of skills in TVET for a renewed hope in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Concept of Assessment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The concept of assessment in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is a broad topic that covers different aspects, such as the purpose, methods, criteria, and outcomes of assessment. In specific, assessment in TVET is defined as a standard process for evaluating students' knowledge and competencies based on what they should have learned over a training period" (Henri, et al.2017). In other words, it refers to performance criteria, tasks, and techniques that training providers use to pass objective judgment and certify trainees fit for the workplace.

Need for Assessment of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

An assessment method is a standard process for evaluating students' knowledge and competencies based on what they should have learned over a training period. It refers to performance criteria, tasks, and techniques that training providers use to pass objective judgment and certify trainees fit for the workplace (Ahmed & Sayed, 2020).

Typically, Technical, Vocational Education and Training assessments are high-stakes tests and have a direct impact on learner advancement. For instance, they determine whether a student will graduate and get work or further their education. So, more than anything else, the methods for these assessments must be valid, reliable, authentic, sufficient, current, flexible and without bias to reflect the students' actual knowledge (Bello & Muhammad, 2021).

Training providers must comply with National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) as they design, develop and deploy assessment techniques. The concept of assessment in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is a broad topic that covers different aspects, such as the purpose, methods, criteria, and outcomes of assessment (Yusop, Rasul, & et al. 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Assessment Methods in Technical, Vocational Education and Training

Assessment methods can be classified into five groups, namely; Initial, formative, summative, diagnostic and holistic assessments. They are arranged in hierarchal order and are briefly explained below:

Initial assessment: This is used to ascertain information regarding the learners, such as their prior learning, learning preferences, current skills and knowledge, and any specific assessment requirements they may have. This information can be obtained in a range of ways, such as application forms, interviews, diagnostic tests, and discussions. This process helps teachers prepare learners for assessment and identify their potential Assessment Methods in Vocational Education and Training (Yusop, et al.2022).

Formative assessment: This is used during learning, to monitor students' progress and provide feedback. It helps teachers adjust their teaching and students improve their learning. Examples of formative assessment are quizzes, exit tickets, observations, discussions, etc.

Summative assessment: This is used after learning, to measure students' achievement and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. It helps teacher's grade students and report their outcomes. Examples of summative assessment are tests, exams, essays, projects, etc.

Diagnostic assessment: This is used before learning; to find out what students already know or don't know about a topic. It helps teachers plan their instruction and identify learning gaps. Examples of diagnostic assessment are pre-tests, surveys, checklists, etc.

Holistic assessment: This is an approach to evaluating student learning across a number of different parts of their course. It goes beyond assessing students solely based on a limited number of assessment criteria within a single piece of learning. Holistic assessment aims to address education in terms of the student as a whole, with individual needs and goals. It allows students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, such as projects, portfolios, self-assessment, and peer assessment. It also encourages students to reflect on their own learning process and progress, and to identify their strengths and weaknesses (Aravossis, et al.2019).

The Importance of Assessment Methods in TVET

The importance of assessment methods in TVET cannot be overstated. These methods ensure that trainees are acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge required for successful careers in their chosen fields. Effective assessment methods enable trainers to evaluate the trainees' progress, identify

areas for improvement, and provide feedback that aids in their development. Additionally, assessment methods allow for the standardization of evaluation criteria, ensuring fairness and consistency across different training programs (Massie & Ali,2016).

Methods of Assessment in TVET

There are certain methods used in determining, testing or measuring the skills acquired by individual trainee. These methods include: observations (OBS), product examination (WP), personal statement (PS), witness testimony (WT), interview/ questioning (QA) and recognition of prior learning (RPL), professional discussion or holding discussion with learner (PD).

Observations (OBS): It simply refers to an act of recognizing and noting of a fact or occurrence. Observation is used as method of assessment of skills. Observation enables an assessor to see the performance skill of a trainee. This method requires the assessor to look at trainee performing a task at the work environment and the assessor taking note of every detail of the performance on the given task with due consideration to health, safety and environment. The observation is carried out based on the planning, review and feedback between the learner and the assessor.

Product Examination (WP): This is a work product examination of the trainee that concern with performance. This is an assessment of product or result of performance of a trainee. This method of examination is carried out based on the laid down criteria or standard in grading of a product or evidence of performance.

Asking Questions (QA): This is a method of assessing trainee through questions and answers to determine the level of competency of an individual trainee. It is an evidence type that ascertain a performance in a given criterion. This method doesn't not recognize use of jargons and ambiguous terms to avoid confusing the learner/trainee.

Professional Discussion (PD): This method is used were professional discussion or experienced people discuss with a trainee around the criteria been assessed. This is usually done face-to-face, bear telephone or internet. This is more of interface, interaction and interview between the professional and a trainee.

Witness Testimony (WT): This is another method of supporting evidence by asking the witness to provide an account of what the trainee has done recently in their job role. It normally involves the use of trainee's supervisor who can give what is known as witness testimony on the competency of the learner or trainee. It is worthy to note that if witness is involved, they need to be brief as to what they are expected to do. They must be familiar with subject and the criteria being assessed.

Personal Statement (PS): This an evidence based on the learners written statement on how they performed certain task to meet a criterion.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): It is about assessing learners existing skills, knowledge and understand towards what they are hoping to achieve. This method can be time consuming to judge whether or not it meets the

criteria. Depending upon the evidence a learner can produce in support of prior learning. He might not repeat some or all of the learning again. An assessor needs to compare what an individual learner has already achieves against an assessment requirement. He can then compare and judge accordingly.

Challenges in Assessing Skills for TVET

Awonuga, (2020) noted the following as the challenges in assessing skills for Technical and Vocational Education and Training:

- Inadequate supply and quality of TVET teachers, who often lack the necessary pedagogical and technical skills, as well as the opportunities for continuous professional development and industry exposure.
- Lack of a common framework or standard for TVET programmes and qualifications, which makes it difficult to ensure quality, relevance, and comparability of TVET outcomes across different providers and sectors.
- Insufficient provision and maintenance of TVET facilities and equipment, which often do not meet the demands and expectations of the labour market and the technological advancements.
- Low funding and investment in TVET, which limits the capacity and sustainability of TVET institutions and programmes, as well as the access and affordability of TVET for learners, especially the disadvantaged groups.
- Poor perception and appreciation of TVET by the society, which often views TVET as a second-class option for low-achieving students, rather than a viable and attractive pathway for skills development and career advancement.
- Poor linkage and collaboration between TVET and the industry, which results in skills mismatches, low employability, and low returns to TVET investments.
- Limited use of information and communication technology (ICT) in TVET, which hampers the innovation, flexibility, and accessibility of TVET delivery and assessment.
- Insecurity and instability in some regions of Nigeria, which disrupts the provision and participation of TVET, as well as the safety and well-being of TVET stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper discussed assessment methods in relation to TVET. Also, certain challenges such; common framework or standard for TVET programme, inadequate supply of quality assessors and teachers/trainers, inadequate maintenance of TVET facilities, poor funding, poor perception and appreciation of people on TVET, weak linkages and collaboration between industries and institutions, limited use of ICT in TVET, and insecurity.

In order to iron out the challenges, certain suggestions put forward will improve the assessment practice for a renewed hope in Nigeria.

To improve the quality and effectiveness of TVET assessment in Nigeria, some suggestions are proffered as follows:

1. Federal Government through her relevant agencies should adopt a competency-based assessment in evaluating skills capabilities of individual learner/trainee.
2. TVET institutions should use variety of assessment methods and tools that are suitable for different types of learning outcomes and domains, such as practical, cognitive, affective, and social skills.
3. Federal Government through her relevant agencies should involve multiple stakeholders, such as teachers, trainers, employers, industry experts, and peers, in the design, implementation, and evaluation of assessment tasks and criteria, to ensure their validity, reliability, and fairness.
4. TVET institutions should provide timely and constructive feedback to learners on their progress and performance.
5. TVET institutions should encourage trainees/ learners to take an active role in their own assessment.
6. TVET trainers /accessors should align formative and summative assessments with the learning outcomes and ensure their transparency and consistency.
7. TVET instructors should use assessment data and evidence to inform and improve teaching and learning practices.
8. Federal Government should strengthen linkages between TVET institutions and industries through collaboration.
9. TVET instructions and curriculum reviewers should be reviewing and updating the TVET curricula and assessment standards to ensure that they reflect the current and future needs of the economy and the society.
10. Federal Government and TVET institutions should endeavor to recruit competent and qualified teachers/instructors to enhance the pedagogical practices.
11. Federal Government and TVET institutions should ensure that TVET facilities and ICT resources are supplied in large quantity.
12. Federal Government should increase the funding of TVET institutions to ensure their sustainability and quality assurance.
13. Federal Government should raise awareness and attractiveness of TVET to encourage more learners, especially girls and disadvantaged groups, to enroll and complete TVET programmes, to enhance the recognition of TVET qualifications and competences by employers and the society.
14. Federal Government should endeavor to provide adequate security to ensure that life and properties of TVET institutions are protected.

By adopting these suggestion, TVET assessment in Nigeria can become more effective and meaningful, and contribute to the development of skilled and competent human resources that can meet the needs and demands of the 21st century. This can also create a renewed hope and confidence in the TVET

sector, and enhance its attractiveness and recognition among learners, employers, and society.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so further research needs to be done on this topic "Assessment Methods of Skills Needed in Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Renewed Hope in Nigeria".

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