

Stakeholders Perception and Loyalty towards the Quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria

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Abstract

It is a well-known fact that the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) depends largely on how well its programmes aligns with the values and interests of its Stakeholders. Stakeholders' perceptions towards a career in TVET in Nigeria negate the government's commitment towards this form of education. However, Parents and their Children still pursue the goal of higher education via the mainstream rather than a career pathway using TVET system. The main purpose of the study was to determine Stakeholders perception and loyalty towards the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to determine: Stakeholders perception of the quality of TVET, the extent of Stakeholders' loyalty towards TVET programme, and where students' loyalties towards TVET programme originated. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data and mean analysis conducted to explore the data. This study examines the perception of stakeholders on the quality of and their loyalty towards TVET. The five Stakeholders are Parents, Students, Teachers, Employers, and Policy makers. A sample of 75 Students, 45 Teachers, 45 Parents, 9 Employers, and 12 Policy makers participated in the study in Plateau State. The findings indicated that agreement with statements about entry requirements, teachers' competence, facilities and equipment, recognition of TVET qualifications are the indicators of enhanced perceptions about the quality of TVET. The revealing was that of employers not appreciating the TVET graduates. It was finally concluded and recommended that TVET should be reshaped to make it more attractive and effective:

Keywords: *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Stakeholders, Quality, Loyalty and Perception.*

Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has many Stakeholders, each with their own perception and interests. While the role of each of these Stakeholders for the quality of TVET is unquestionable, their perceptions and interests are likely to be distinct, and sometimes at conflict (Leney and Green 2005; Clarke and Winch 2007; Taylor 2009; cadefop 2010). This can cause tension and imbalances that ultimately hamper the quality of education (Margniet, Grerry and Lex 2014).

As part of adding value to TVET, Abban and Quarshie (1996) pointed out that the paradigm shift towards practical skills training with TVET in Africa is increasingly being reshaped to make it more attractive and effective. They stated further that one of the most important features of TVET, as recognized by African governments, is its orientation towards the world of work with the curriculum emphasizing the acquisition of employable skills.

To achieve this goal of practical skills acquisition, Roeske (2003) explained that the government has made tremendous effort towards producing skillfully personnel. Ngome (1992) noted that TVET in sub-Saharan Africa attracted increasing attention during the 1970s, because of the expectations that practical skills training as offered by TVET institutions would address the need for skilled labour. As a result of these developments, many African governments started technical and vocational institutions modeled after those of their former colonial powers. The technical skills acquired were supposed to raise individuals' job prospects and productivity. As a result, enterprises are expected to become more competitive and make a greater contribution to economic growth, on condition that those trained in these institutions actually matched the requirements of the labour market.

TVET encompasses on the job- training, apprenticeships, Vocational Enterprise institutions (VEIs), National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF), and Technical Colleges Training (FGN, 2013). Rogers and Boyer (2006) established that TVET graduates with job-specific skills have a potential of being more productive and more equipped to execute tasks for which they have been trained. In other to fully achieve this, TVET institutions in Nigeria need adequate information about the values and interests of their stakeholders. The plurality of needs and goals is reflected also by the plurality of Stakeholders (Westerhuis, 2007). In view of this, the TVET institutions become a ground where conflicting interests come to bare and as such, they must define their modus operandi in order to accommodate the variety of stakeholders and their various interests.

The standpoint and perception of different Stakeholders can vary greatly between countries. Some countries, students are trained locally within companies (e.g. in the USA, UK, Australia) and in other countries is based on a mixed model (e.g. Netherlands and Nigeria), the African union (2007) report stressed that the vision of African countries in developing a new strategy to revitalize TVET in Africa is by promoting skill acquisition through competency-based training. Specifically, Nigeria adopts the mixed model which is college training and Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)

In Nigeria, the establishment of a nationwide network of TVET institutions demonstrates significant government effort in promoting skilled education to Nigeria's future generation. Evident of this fact is the recent statistic by National Board for Technical Education (NBTE 2015) showing the approval of 135 Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) nationwide. This step and many others are clear evidence of the perception government is having towards TVET programme in Nigeria.

Perception is the process of receiving information about and making sense of the world around us. It involves deciding what to notice, how to categorize it and how to interpret it within the framework of existing knowledge (Steven & Mary 2003). Perception is an overall learned core disposition that guides a person's thoughts, feelings, and action towards an object. Perception plays an important role in guiding and predicting future actions concerning a programme. Most times our perceptions are sieved and present/ current experiences interpreted based on past experiences and the values and beliefs that present our cultural norms (Vi and Tanya, 2014). They contend that Stakeholders should see that participation in TVET appears to contribute to the development of greater self-confidence in students, an improved ability to work and get along with others, a clear sense of career direction and greater feeling of success and belonging. Perception in the context of this study is the feeling, or thinking Stakeholders have towards the quality of TVET, particularly their attitudes, notion, influences and preconception about the quality of TVET programme in Nigeria.

Literature abound that some stakeholders perceived TVET negatively while others positively. At the macro level, positive proponents of TVET perceive it as significant to reducing the rate of unemployment and meeting the needs of industries (Euro barometer, 2011). From a negative perspective others perceive TVET as a second rate education and an easy way to discriminate between students based on academic ability (Margniet, Gerry and Lex, 2014). The TVET sector is viewed across Nigeria as a sinkhole for those who are not able to function within the academic environment. Stakeholders' perception of TVET can be in the form of social, economic, and national development context and different groups can influence the perception Stakeholders make about the quality of TVET in Nigeria.

Changing the public perception towards the quality of TVET is vital. Nguyen in Vi and Tanya (2014) suggests that perceptions can be improved by: government promotion of TVET as an alternative educational route for school leavers; media promotion of the role of TVET in wealth creation; the provision of awareness weeks, exhibitions and open days by TVET institutions; and improved salaries for TVET graduates. The author also recommends a sustain campaign by policy makers, educationists, civil society groups and other interested parties to alter perceptions: Nguyen suggested further that finding ways to facilitate co-operation between industries and TVET institutions to improve employment outcomes or quality of human resources would be one important approach to shifting perceptions.

The paper contributes to the existing literature on the perception of Stakeholders in TVET quality. In his framework for the evaluation of TVET, Fretwell (2003) discuss various aspects that play a role in TVET quality. He mentions a wide range of aspects that contributes to TVET quality and distinguishes aspects concerning the economic impact, international standards, social outcomes and educational inputs of TVET. However, he also indicates that the goals and objectives of different stakeholders vary and that their needs can therefore diverse. Loyalty in the context of this study is the total commitment, agreement, encouragement, and appreciation given TVET by the various Stakeholders towards skills acquisition, youth empowerment and reduction in unemployment in Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Despite the various interventions by government and non-governmental organizations to ensure that TVET graduates are well equipped with the requisite practical skills for the job market and the advocacies about the benefits of TVET, it has not attracted the various Stakeholders in Nigeria. This leads us to questions whether Stakeholders understand the TVET system enough to appreciate the benefits of training and to question how this may influence their opinions about the quality and value of TVET in Nigeria. This study explores the reasons for this lack of awareness and disengagements with TVET from the perspective of the different stakeholders-parents, students, teachers, employers, and policy makers. The purpose of this study is to determine the perception of stakeholders on the quality of TVET with the interest of understanding their influence on stakeholders' loyalty to the quality of TVET. This study aims to answer the following questions:

- What are Stakeholders perception of the quality of TVET?
- What is the extent of stakeholders' loyalty towards TVET programme?
- Where do students loyalties towards the TVET programme originate?

Methodology

This study uses a survey questionnaire to collect data and to determine the stakeholders' perception towards the quality of TVET, and loyalty towards the programme. The area of this

study was Plateau State, Nigeria. The participants in the study were parents, students, teachers, employers and policy makers.

The researchers gathered data at three TVET institutions one each from the three senatorial zones of the State where 25 National Technical Certificate (NTC) III students per school were systematically selected, 15 teachers and 15 parents from each of the schools randomly selected. Employers and policy makers were approached separately. In total, 75 students, 45 teachers, 45 parents, 9 employers and 12 policy makers participated in this study.

A questionnaire was devised utilizing a five point Likert type scale measuring the quality of TVET and Stakeholders' perception towards TVET based on responses to five categories Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Undecided (UD) = 3, Disagree (DA) =2, Strongly Disagree (SDA) =1. Participants were asked to provide the most appropriate answer to a set of 47 statements. A mean analysis technique was used to determine what the stakeholders thought, evaluated or perceived about the quality of TVET and loyalty towards TVET. The mean score from 1.00-1.80 was strongly disagree, 1.81-2.60 disagree, 2.61-3.40 undecided, 3.41-4.20 agree and 4.21-5.00 strongly agree.

Findings and Discussions

How do TVETs Stakeholders perceive the programme quality?

Table 1: Displays the results of the study per participant group. The mean analysis score values represent the importance or quality of TVET to each group. The table shows that there are in the values that the groups assign to the various TVET attributes.

Table 1: Stakeholders perception of the quality of TVET

A	Admission Requirement	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
		\bar{X} Parents	\bar{X} Students	\bar{X} Teachers	\bar{X} Employers	\bar{X} Policy makers
1	Entry into TVET institutions is open to all interested persons	3.83	3.51	3.21	3.21	3.64
2	TVET is meant for those that have low intelligent quotient	2.01	3.38	3.11	3.19	3.79
3	TVET students are problematic	2.78	3.67	3.65	3.58	4.01
4	Requirements for TVET entrance are high and rigid	1.79	3.51	3.38	3.56	3.91
5	TVET has no provision for special need learner	2.31	3.62	3.68	3.68	3.74
6	TVET is for persons who do not aspire to higher education	1.64	3.63	3.59	3.67	3.72
B	Teacher's Competence					
7	TVET teachers are vast in ICT	3.90	3.36	3.63	3.71	3.98
8	TVET teachers can operate modern equipment well	2.12	3.32	3.06	3.25	2.92
9	TVET teachers can modify curriculum to meet needs of special learners	1.93	3.02	3.68	3.68	2.99
10	TVET teachers are humane and helpful	2.81	3.17	3.73	3.51	3.64

11	TVET teachers are well experience	1.93	3.15	3.21	3.73	3.63
12	TVET teachers possess the needed teaching qualification	2.46	3.42	3.73	3.66	3.71
13	TVET Teachers regularly attend seminars and workshops	2.71	3.39	3.78	3.81	3.49
14	TVET teachers do follow-up their ex-students to see how they are performing at their places of work.	1.70	3.28	3.43	3.51	3.71
C	Facilities and Equipment					
15	TVET laboratory/workshop are suitable for skill acquisition	2.72	3.60	3.58	2.51	3.92
16	The laboratory/workshop is advance	1.80	3.71	3.26	2.28	3.68
17	Modern equipment are very much available	2.03	3.66	3.19	3.68	3.25
18	Equipment are sufficient and functional	4.05	3.99	3.46	3.36	3.21
19	The classes have sufficient space to enhance quality	3.51	4.07	3.53	3.32	3.74
20	TVET providers offer sports and recreational facilities	3.68	3.81	3.73	3.17	3.63
21	NGO/industries do donate equipment to TVET institutions	3.67	3.86	3.67	3.15	3.67
22	There is a generating plant to power all machines	3.51	3.84	3.74	3.42	3.73
D	Recognition of TVET Qualification					
23	TVET degrees are less than other degrees	2.62	3.31	3.25	3.51	3.71
24	TVET certificate is recognized by both government and private organizations	3.63	3.53	3.75	3.23	3.68
25	TVET qualifications provides opportunities for further education	3.36	3.43	3.64	3.24	3.53
26	TVET graduates are easily employed than their mainstream counterparts	3.64	3.50	3.75	3.73	3.43
27	TVET certificate is accepted by universities in Nigeria & overseas.	3.68	3.25	3.74	3.61	3.46
28	Holders of TVET certificate are always place ahead of their contemporaries	2.51	3.38	3.38	3.71	3.65
E	Curriculum					
29	Integrate academics and skills acquisition	3.42	3.19	2.99	3.67	3.19
30	Trades offered are relevant and interesting	3.81	3.11	3.51	3.93	3.26
31	Provide for a very specific career field	3.73	3.65	3.49	4.09	3.38
32	A hands-on simple education and training	3.55	3.43	3.63	4.36	3.21
33	Has provisions for trainees who are planning to attend further study	3.71	3.67	3.64	4.01	3.54

34	Have good connection between TVET institutions and industries	3.39	3.63	2.92	3.81	3.06
35	Have good linkage with community	3.55	3.51	3.68	2.46	3.70
36	Has provisions for vocational special needs	3.73	3.68	3.68	1.93	3.72
37	Have an excellent remedial programme for academically low achieving students	3.81	3.67	3.15	2.81	3.80
38	The structure of TVET programme is very challenging	3.42	3.51	3.51	1.93	3.63
39	TVET pays attention to civic education	2.51	2.62	3.14	2.12	4.63
F	Students Career and Job Potential					
40	TVET produces highly skilled graduates	3.68	3.63	3.04	3.90	3.21
41	TVET produces graduates with wide range of job opportunities	3.64	3.36	3.63	3.83	3.11
42	TVET work is at a high level of risk	3.46	3.43	3.66	2.01	3.65
43	TVET graduates are highly motivated	3.63	3.17	3.67	1.79	3.38
44	Opportunities for professional growth is very high	2.28	3.72	3.24	2.78	3.68
45	TVET adequately meet the national industrial workforce need	3.38	3.28	3.39	1.64	3.59
46	Employers do appreciate TVET graduates	3.69	3.73	3.02	2.31	3.63
47	TVET graduates are skillful enough to set up their enterprises	3.66	3.71	3.32	2.71	3.06

Cluster A describes the mean scores of the first dimension of TVET quality, admission requirement. All stakeholders recognized that TVET is accessible to all interested students except parents who disagree and strongly disagree on some admission. item statements. Again in cluster B which is on teachers' competence most parents disagree or have negative perceptions in the teachers' competence dimensions as show in cluster B in Table 1. While the other groups do have a positive perception in the teachers' competence dimension, except that their perceptions are not very strong.

Clusters C overall, stakeholders expressed positive perceptions in the facility and equipment dimension as shown in Table 1 cluster C, except parents on some few items. All Stakeholders in cluster D expressed positive perception on the recognition of TVET qualification in Nigeria, but parents were undecided on item 23 and disagree on item 28 that holders of TVET certificate are always place ahead of their academic counterparts.

Cluster E which is on TVET curriculum, most of the Stakeholders like parents, students and employers of labour expressed a negative perception on the content of TVET curriculum, policy makers had a positive perception of TVET, while teachers are neutral on some items on curriculum. From the Table and cluster E, it therefore revealed that the curriculum of TVET in Nigeria need a total overhaul so as to meet to the need of current challenges, cluster F that talks about students career and job potential revealed current challenges. Cluster F that talks about students' career and job potential revealed that almost all the groups are within the range of undecided but employers of labour have a very high and negative perception on students' career

and job potential. The implication of this result shows that employers do not appreciate the graduates of TVET.

How loyal are stakeholders towards TVET programme?

The total mean score for Stakeholders' loyalty towards TVET programme was obtained from the summation of responses based on the 5 item statements shown in Table 2. A lower mean score indicates a lower level of Stakeholders' loyalty and inversely, a higher mean indicates a higher level of Stakeholders' loyalty.

Table 2: Stakeholder's loyalty towards TVET programme

S/n	Item	Mean parents	Mean students	Mean teachers	Mean employers	Mean policy makers
1	Further study	3.4350	3.5644	3.6056	3.6076	3.4744
2	Field of interest	3.4980	3.4833	3.4763	3.5089	3.4980
3	Career choice	3.5900	3.7067	3.5235	3.8033	3.6873
4	Governmental encouragement	3.0492	3.0996	3.2023	3.0243	3.2781
5	Employers appreciation of graduates	2.0143	2.0567	2.1046	2.0492	2.5633

The items with the highest mean of stakeholders' loyalty, expressed as agreed were career choice (m=3.59, 3.70, 3.52, 3.80 and 3.68), further study (m=3.43, 3.56, 3.60, 3.60 and 3.47), field of interest (m=3.49, 3.48, 3.47, 3.50 and 3.49). However, Table 2 shows governmental encouragement had slightly low mean scores (3.04, 3.09, 3.20 and 3.27) indicating an overall neutral response. While employers appreciation had the lowest means (m=2.01, 2.05, 2.10, 2.04 and 2.56) indicating an overall disagree response. In conclusion, Stakeholders almost universally demonstrated loyalty towards TVET in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study sought to examine what Stakeholders perceive with respect to the quality of TVET in Nigeria and their engagement with the concept. The findings and discussions above lead to the conclusion that in general Stakeholders have positive perception and loyalty towards the quality of TVET in Nigeria. Furthermore, stakeholders' loyalty to TVET revealed that employers' appreciation of TVET should be in consultation with the relevant industries so that the skills acquired from TVET institutions should be relevant to the demands of the employers of labour. The findings also suggest that there should be a synergy between the various Stakeholders towards a common ground on the needed skills.

Recommendations

1. TVET perception and loyalty can be altered by informed publicity highlighting the career success of the skilled workforce through documentary or other media.
2. There should be exhibition annually by TVET providers to disseminate information to all Stakeholders.
3. Stories depicting successful skilled workers may have greater impact if brought directly into school classrooms.
4. Quality of facilities and equipment, teachers' competence, and curriculum should be advocated widely through the available media.

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