

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCIES POSSESSED AND DEMONSTRATED BY TECHNICAL
COLLEGE CRAFTSMEN EMPLOYED IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

The study focused on the assessment of communicative competencies acquired and demonstrated by the technical college Auto-Mechanics craftsmen employed in tertiary institution in Anambra state, Nigeria. One research question and one null hypothesis each was used for the study. Survey research design was employed for its relevance in descriptive study and audience research. There was no sample because the population was considered manageable. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents and was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and the hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 degree of confidence. The study revealed that the technical college products, possessed and demonstrated 8 out of the nine communicative competencies traits studied. It is recommended that government should continue to provide and improve on the provision of the necessary resources input to sustain the programme among others.

Background of the Study

Every educational programme has specific goals and objectives which if actualized will result to changes in behaviours of the beneficiaries of the programme. Technical college programmes are offered at the upper secondary education to provide the recipients with appropriate communicative competency and attitude to meet job requirements in deferent occupational areas. The programme train the bulk of craftsmen and women needed in industries, commerce and other social circumstances and thus meets the manpower requirements needed for national technological development, personal emancipation and self-reliance. Technical college programmes are education given at the upper secondary schools (FRN, 2004). If the technical college programmes are satisfactorily implemented, it will impart certain competencies in the beneficiaries of the training programme or the products. Products of the technical college programmes are the craftsmen and women. The terms craftsmen, technical college products and

the beneficiaries of the programme will be used interchangeably in this study. Craftsmen are the graduates of the training programme are the work force to ensure rapid technological, economic and social development of the states and the nation at large (Momoh.2010). It is necessary to assess and ascertain the extent the craftsmen, acquired the required communicative competencies required for employment and growth in the world of work while undergoing training as required in the goals and objectives of the national policy on education and the job specifications of the Federal Ministry of education.

The goals and objectives of the technical and vocational education are:

- a. to provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technicians levels;
- b. to provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development;
- c. to give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically (FRN, 2004).

The craftsmen are required by the programme to have adequate communicative competency to enable them relate with one another in their place of work. The policy further stated that "Trainees completing technical college programmes (the craftsmen) shall have three options:-

1. Secure employment either at the end of the whole course or after
Completing one or more modules of employable skills;
2. Set up their own business and become self-employed and be able to employ others;
3. Pursue further education in advance craft/technical programme in post-secondary (tertiary) technical institutions such as science and technical colleges, polytechnics or colleges of education (Technical), and the Universities".

Ulinfun (1988) stated that whatever the trade areas of specialization of the technical college products may be, they should be able to:-

1. Develop and manufacture simple (easy to use) technologies which majority of Nigerians can afford.
2. Produce spare parts for industries, offices, equipment and effect repairs on basic house hold utilities, on mechanical and electrical components and equipment as the case may be. The study noted with interest that despite over 37 trade areas of specialization, the goals and objectives are the same. This means that the products (craftsmen and technicians) perform similar operations but in different occupational areas of specialization. The Scheme of Service of the Federal Ministry of Education for the Federal Colleges of Education and the Federal Polytechnics (1989) specified the job roles of the craftsmen to include:
 - Perform lead hand duties that requires fabrication, processing, installation, maintenance or repairs of buildings, furniture, electrical –mechanical system, vehicles, mobile and stationery machines, and materials and equipment on a specific task and procedure basis.
 - Checking and allocating materials for work to assistant craftsmen and preparing simple job reports.
 - Performing routine individual trades jobs.
 - Performing any other job as may be assigned.

The expected outcome of the training programme and the expected job roles specifications of the Federal Ministry of Education for the craftsmen implicate the need for enhanced Communicative competency to be effective and productive in their duties.

Assessment of communicative competencies demonstrated by the craftsmen is a process of getting an opinion for judgment, or ascertaining the worth or level of communicative by the products

while they were undergoing training. In asserting that assessment is a pre-requisite to evaluation, Orji (2005) stated that assessment involves the process of investigating the status of an individual or group, usually with reference to expected outcome. Expected outcomes in this study are the goals and objectives of the technical college programme as stated in the National policy on Education and consequently the job role specifications of the Federal Ministry of Education conditions of service for the tertiary institutions. Ascertaining the level or of communicative competencies is very necessary to determine the extent of the achievement of the goals and objectives of the technical and vocational education programmes at the technical colleges which will serve as an up-to-date feedback to the stake holders.

Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (FRN, 2004; UNESCO, 2010). Okoro (1999) refers to technical/vocational education as a form of education which aims at preparing learners for employment in various recognized occupations. Technical college programmes produce the workforce with the appropriate understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes for self-reliance and technological development (Momoh, 2010; Ezeabikwa, 2011). Technical college products (craftsmen and technicians), equipped with the appropriate occupational and communicative competencies have the answers to the national technological, economic and social underdevelopment; unemployment and poverty alleviation (Orji, 2005).

FRN (2009) expresses the fear that the performance of the technical college products in the world of work might not measure up with the requirements of the Millennium Development Goals and Vision 20:2020 dreams, which would want Nigeria to be ranked with the first 20 developed nations of the world,

thus the need to assess the communicative competency demonstrated by those products employed with the tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Communicative competency refers to the skills or ability required by employees for optimal performance in the given occupation, which enable one to express oneself in a given situation. It is the skill needed to pass information vertically and horizontally within and outside on organization and timely too. The goal of occupational competency is to optimize performance by having the technical skills to perform the job within a stipulated time or within a reduced stipulated time frame.

Competency is the characteristics of an individual that lead to the demonstration of skills and abilities which result in effective performance within an occupation or organizational area. Spencer Jr., McClelland, & Spencer, (1964) refer to competencies as skills or knowledge that lead to superior performance. From the contents of the goals and objectives of the technical college programmes and the Federal Ministry of Education job role, the products should of necessity, possess and demonstrate enough level of communicative competency to enable the products relate effectively with other workers. Possession of a trait and demonstration of a trait are related but definitely not the same. This is because one might have a skill but might not have the ability to demonstrate it. Possession of a competency comes first and it is followed by the ability to demonstrate it. One cannot definitely demonstrate a competency one does not possess.

Assessment of possession and demonstration of these competencies by the craftsmen will best be done by heads of academic and non-academic departments of tertiary institutions who are the immediate supervisors of the products under their employment. In tertiary institutions, heads of academic and non-academic departments are the supervisors of the technical support staff and other staff under them on daily basis; they complete their Annual Performance Evaluation (APE) Forms, and are in the best position to ascertain the level of adequacy of the competencies demonstrated by the craftsmen

and women who are the graduates of the programmes on their day-to-day performances of their duties (Okoro, 2005). Also by the positions they occupy in the society, feedbacks from supervisors in tertiary institutions on the performances of the craftsmen and women will be valued and respected by all concerned.

Assessment of communicative competencies possessed and demonstrated by technical college products employed in tertiary institution in Anambra State is imperative to give the required feedback to the Government and other stake holders in technical education on the state of the art of technical education programmes. The feedback resulting from the study will help the Government and the stakeholders to take appropriate remedial actions to bridge the gap between the competencies possessed and demonstrated by the graduates of the programme and the demands of the labour market to ensure rapid technological, economic and social development of the nation and economic emancipation of the people.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to ascertain the level of communicative competencies possessed and demonstrated by the craftsmen.

Research Question

The following research question was put forward to help to find solutions to the research problem.

What is the level of communicative competencies possessed and demonstrated by the craftsmen employed in the tertiary institutions in Anambra State?

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the academic and non-academic supervisors on the level of communicative competencies demonstrated by the craftsmen products employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Methodology

The researcher used survey research design. The appropriateness of this method is based on the fact that survey research design is a descriptive study which has the nature of collecting data and describing same in a systematic manner; finding out the conditions and relationships that exist; opinions that are held and features and facts about a given population (Akuezuito and Agu, 2003). Survey research design is a very good technique of audience research and programme monitoring (Calhoun, 1976; Hillestead, 1977).

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in all the tertiary institutions in Anambra State namely; Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Awka, Anambra State University of Science and Technology (ASUTECH), Uli; Madonna University, Okija; Federal Polytechnic, Oko; Federal College of Education (Technical), (FCET), Umuze; and Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is 110 made up of 80 heads of academic departments and 30 heads of non-academic departments who are immediate supervisors of the craftsmen who serve as technical support staff in the departments. The records of the departments was obtained from ITF area office Awka.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data used for the study was collected by means of structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled *Competency Questionnaire*.

Section A of the questionnaire sought and obtained a confirmation from the departments that each has a craftsmen employed as a technical support staff as mandatorily required by the supervising authorities: Nigeria University Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). All the craftsmen studied has the prescribed qualifications. None has the Nigerian National Diploma (NND) and they have the Federal Craft Certificate (FCC) in addition. This indicated they are products of technical colleges. The second section of the questionnaire was developed to reflect the communicative competencies which if possessed and demonstrated by the craftsmen as rated by the supervisors will mean that the goals and objectives of the technical college programme is being actualized in the graduates. The second section of the questionnaire has 8 items constructed to reveal the effectiveness of the craftsmen in communication in the place of work as rated by their supervisors.

The 8 items were given to the respondent to indicate their opinions on a three point scale of Very Satisfactorily Demonstrated (VSD), Satisfactorily Demonstrated (SD), and Unsatisfactorily Demonstrated (UD). The scale ranged from 1-3 with 3 as the highest value and 1 as the lowest value. The respondents were requested to check (✓) in the appropriate column for their ratings in each item.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts of the department of Vocational Teacher Education of University of Nigeria Nsukka. Suggestions and corrections made by the experts were included to produce the final copy of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

Data collected during pilot test were used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The responses from 10 respondents from Enugu state college of science and technology were subjected to Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient of internal reliability (CA) which is best because of the number of data and nature of the variables.

The reliability coefficient of 0.81 calculated after the analysis of the pilot test gave the researcher the confidence that the method of data analysis used were suitable for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher engaged the services of 5 research assistants who distributed the questionnaire directly to the offices of the heads of departments who were the supervisors that worked on daily basis with the products (craftsmen).

The research assistants were selected based on their knowledge of the areas of the tertiary institutions. This strategy ensured that the 110 questionnaire distributed were completed and returned. Some of the respondents completed and returned the questionnaire on the spot.

Method of data Analysis

All the respondents ticked (✓) yes in section A(1) which indicated that all the departments studied have craftsmen in their employment. Over 80% of the respondents indicated that the craftsmen had either the National Technical Certificate (NTC) or the National Business Certificate (NBC). The other

additional certificate as specified by the respondents is the Federal Craft Certificate (FCC) awarded to all graduands at the end of the programme. There was no indication of any one having the Advanced National Technical Certificate (ANTC), the Advanced National Business Certificate (ANBL) or the Nigerian National Diploma (NND). This showed that none of the products went back to the technical college for advanced course after graduation.

Data collected from the respondents, were analysed using mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD) computed for each item.

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Data collected from sections B were analysed using mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD) computed for each item.

The null hypotheses (H_0) is tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses is rejected if the calculated t-value is equal to or greater than ($>$) the table value (t-crit) of t at 0.05 level of significance, other wise the null hypotheses is accepted if the t-cal is less than t-crit.

RESULTS

The analyzed data below were used for answering the research questions drawn from the study.

Research Question 1

What are the communicative competencies possessed and demonstrated by the craftsmen employed in the tertiary institutions in Anambra State

Table 1
Mean Responses of the Respondents on the Communicative Competencies Possessed and Demonstrated by the Craftsmen Employed in Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State
N = 110

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Written expression	1.97	0.49	Not possessed and demonstrated
2	Oral expression	2.03	0.51	Possessed and demonstrated
3	Listening ability	2.06	0.49	Possessed and demonstrated
4	Team work in terms of willingness to work with other	2.04	0.57	Possessed and demonstrated
5	Relationship with students as staff of tertiary institution	2.10	0.55	Possessed and demonstrated
6	Relationship with boss	1.08	0.59	Not possessed and demonstrated
7	Relationship with the public	2.05	0.52	Possessed and demonstrated
8	Manners in use of phones	2.06	0.53	Possessed and demonstrated
9	Ability to seek necessary information	2.01	0.56	Possessed and demonstrated

Data in Table 2 above revealed that seven out of nine items have their mean values ranged from 2.01 to 2.10. This showed that the mean value of each item was above the cut-off point of 2.00, indicating that the technical college graduates only possessed and demonstrated seven communicative competencies in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The Table also showed that the standard deviations (SD) of the items are within the range of 0.49 to 0.59 and are positive. This indicated that the respondents were not very far from the Mean or from one another in their responses.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the academic and non-academic supervisors on the effectiveness of the communicative competencies demonstrated by the technical college graduates employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

Table 2

The t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Academic and Non-Academic Supervisors on the Effectiveness of the Communicative Competencies Demonstrated by the Technical College

Products Employed in Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State

S/N	Communication Competencies	X ₁	S ² ₁	X ₂	S ² ₂	t- cal	Remarks
1	Written expression	1.93	0.48	2.06	0.36	1.32	NS
2	Oral expression	2.00	0.53	2.12	0.43	1.21	NS
3	Listening ability	2.04	0.44	2.13	0.42	0.98	NS
4	Team work in terms of willingness to work with other	2.05	0.35	2.03	0.41	0.23	NS
5	Relationship with students as staff of tertiary institution	2.09	0.46	2.12	0.42	0.42	NS
6	Relationship with boss	2.08	0.50	2.09	0.47	0.19	NS
7	Relationship with other/public	2.05	0.42	2.06	0.44	0.15	NS
8	Manners in use of phones	2.05	0.45	2.09	0.39	0.50	NS
9	Ability to seek necessary information	1.98	0.34	2.09	0.39	1.45	NS

Data presented in Table 7 revealed that each of the nine communication competencies had their calculated t- values ranged from 0.25 to 1.45 which were less than t-table value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance and at 108 degree of freedom (df). This indicated that there was no significant difference between the mean responses of academic and non-academic supervisors on the communicative competencies demonstrated by the technical college graduates employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean responses of academic and non-academic supervisors on the communicative competencies demonstrated by the technical college graduates employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State was upheld.

Finding of the Study

The following findings emerged from the study based on the research questions and hypotheses:

A. These are the Communication Competencies Possessed and Demonstrated by the Craftsmen Employed in the Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State

1. Oral expression
2. Listening ability
3. Team work in terms of willingness to work with other
4. Ability to seek necessary information
5. Relationship with other/public
6. Manners in use of phones
7. Relationship with students as staff of tertiary institution

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that seven communication competencies were possessed and demonstrated by the craftsmen employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. These competencies include oral expression, listening ability, team work in terms of willingness to work with other, ability to seek necessary information, relationship with the public and manners in use of phones. These findings are in line with opinion of Igweh (1992) that oral expression, listening ability and team work in terms of willingness to work with other are important for work performance of technical college graduates.

There was no significant difference between the mean responses of the academic and non-academic supervisors on the effectiveness of the communicative competencies demonstrated by the technical college graduates employed in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The implication of this finding is that the graduates actually demonstrated the required communication competencies enlisted in the questionnaire.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

This study was carried out in order to know the performance of technical college graduates employed by training institutions in Anambra State. No assessment has been carried out to get the status quo of the competencies possessed and demonstrated by these products, more especially,

those employed by the tertiary institutions in Anambra State. In other words, there are no empirical studies that detailed the extent the goals and objectives of the technical colleges programmes are achieved in the craftsmen and technicians. The study was then setup to determine the graduates' competencies in technical/occupational, communication, attitudinal and managerial areas. The study now found out that the graduates possessed and demonstrated enough of aforementioned competencies in the place of job.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions made, the following recommendations were made:

1. Relevant resource inputs for teaching technical courses should be provided by government, employers of technical college graduates and philanthropists in the society to sustain the programme.
2. Workshop, seminars and short time training should be organized for technical teachers in technical colleges by school administrators and government in order to improve their competencies for effective teaching.
3. Qualified and well grounded technical teachers should be recruited and encouraged to stay by government to teach in the technical colleges in Anambra State

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