



An Assessment of Competency Framework Identified by TVET Lecturers in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, Bauchi State in Perspective

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Abstract: *The paper assessed the competency framework perceived by technical and vocational education and training (TVET) lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions of Bauchi State. The inevitable needs to investigate the lack of competent TVET lecturers resulted in the production of quack TEVT graduates in Nigerian educational system. The paper reviewed existing literature on competency models with a view to proposing a resilient competency framework for TVET lecturers in Bauchi State Nigeria. The material and methods were carried out using secondary data and were precisely and critically analysed to come up with reliable results. From the foregoing, a conceptual framework had been proposed which will be tested in the study area in order to determine the suitable items of the competency framework for TVET lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Four major group of competency have been identified to be relevant in measuring TVET lecturers' competency which are organisational competency, thinking competency, application competency and TVET lecturer competency.*

Key words: *Competency, TVET Lecturers, Tertiary Institutions, Framework*

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a developing country needs to know the importance of competency framework in order to ensure that effective education, training and preparation are in place which cannot be over-emphasised. In order to be among the best world players, institutions need to provide competent TVET lecturers with some new advanced skills so as to meet the challenges of real-time in tertiary institutions or workplace. A lot of challenges have been identified in the tertiary institutions, which resulted in the need for continuous learning and updating of employees' competencies across all ages (Paloniemi S, 2006). It is more valuable for workers to develop and improve their workability or capability and skills thoroughly, especially for TVET lecturers (Billett S, 2001). Lack of competency in the institutions brings more challenges (Sulaiman NL, 2015). In order to minimize these challenges, the competency model needs to be analysed.

A competency model is a demonstrative instrument or tool that identifies the needed competencies in order to minimize the challenges that are existing in the tertiary institutions (Fogg CD, 1999). Therefore, many institutions are adapting and adopting the competency-based model in order to achieve their objectives (Berge Z et al, 2002)

This study investigates the TVET lecturers' perceptions on competency needs in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Based on Malaysian human resource development practitioners (MHRDP) competency model for workplace learning and performance (WLP) was developed by Salleh (Salleh KM, 2012). The model has 25 different indicators of competencies and it has been used and tested in organisations and tertiary institutions of Malaysia. The study will determine the competencies needed for TVET lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions of Bauchi State. The challenges of TVET lecturer programmes are usual in developing countries because it affects the successful delivery as well as their future plans, vocational career and competencies of TVET lecturers.

TVET is an aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge for the development of the nation. It was introduced with the aims of meeting the nation's need for skilled and semi-skilled manpower and reinforcing the economic state of people and the country in general (NPE, 2013). The TVET lecturers programme is designed to empower lecturers through the development of their skills, knowledge, abilities, cognitive understanding, attitudes, work habits and competence (Oni CS, 2007) Therefore, this is expected to prepare them practically for self-employment and to graduate competent lecturers from institutions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data used in this paper were purely qualitative and were extracted from secondary sources which comprised of textbooks, journal articles, thesis and statutory documents. The methodology conducted on this study is the critical analysis of existing literature for an accurate understanding of the existing situation of competency framework of TVET lecturers in Nigeria. Therefore, 129 documented materials were consulted. However, the most critically analysed journal articles were 28, which were consulted in order to come up with the conceptual framework of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Different definitions of competency

The word competency comes from Latin word *competere* which literally means competent, competence or expertise that means individual to have quality or physical and intellectual qualification in carrying out specific task or job (Salleh KM et al, 2015) However, competency is more of ability, skills, knowledge, capability, attitude or behaviour. Therefore, competency is the ability and capability of TVET lecturers to possess required knowledge, skills and attitude in order to perform the assigned task. Competency was popularized first by Hamel and Prahalad in (Hamel G et al, 1990) at Harvard business review and it was adopted by different

researchers in different fields of studies giving it different perceptions or meanings in their fields based on the context in which it was applied (Salleh KM et al, 2015)

For more than three decades, the term 'Competency' is defined by different researchers with different perceptions and perspectives and in different ways. Based on the definitions given by different researchers, this will help the reader to comprehend and also to see the perception of the researcher in similarly way with that of other researchers. They defined competency in their own research. According to McLagan (McLagan P, 2002), competency is a centre for knowledge or skills that is so vital in producing key outputs. Boyatzis, (Boyatzis RE, 2008) viewed competency as the capability and ability of individual skills, knowledge and behaviour to complete the task assigned to them. While Rycus and Hughes, (Rycus J et al, 2000) defined competency as a combination of skills and knowledge required by workers in order to perform their job effectively and efficiently.

According to Salleh, (Salleh KM, 2012) it is a combination of skills, knowledge and behaviour which can be described as the best performance in every aspect of an individual. Tripathi and Agrawal, (Tripathi K et al, 2014) on the other hand, posit that competency comprises a collection of skills, knowledge and behaviour that are practice for self-development. Therefore, competency is the ability of TVET lecturer to be capable, competent and adequately in possession of required skills and knowledge, behaviour and abilities that can successfully perform serious task or job as required in the defined setting.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Lecturer

TVET is an integral aspect of general education that meant to provides skilful, capable and competent lecturers with technical and vocational expertise in the labour market (Sulaiman NL et al, 2015). However, it is an aspect of education that leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge for the development of the nation with the aim to provide trained manpower in science, technology and business and also to give training and impart the necessary skills and knowledge to an individual in order to be self-reliant (NPE, 2013). Therefore, no nation can rise above the competency of its lecturers or teachers which is similarly the same that no education will rise above the competency of its lecturers.

The word lecturer or teacher both in general education and in TVET are the backbones of education and training system. Therefore, TVET lecturers can be considered as the tool or instrument of preparing citizen to be responsible in life. The TVET lecturer programme is offered in tertiary institutions. Students who enrolled in this programme are prepared in different areas of studies in TVET which is aimed at producing competent TVET lecturers in the schools after graduation from their respective institutions (Spöttll G, 2009)

The curriculum of TVET is based on a career title which plays a significant role in producing skilled and semi-skilled manpower in the world of work (Hanimastura H et al, 2016). Therefore, TVET lecturers play a critical role in the development of the nation because they are committed toward the development of people by orientating individuals into the world of work, helping them acquire employable skills, encouraging them not to remain idle in order to reduce the volume of poverty in the society. It also involves training of people to possess skilled and entrepreneurial workforce which can be delivered both in workplace and classroom. Therefore, the needs for the Government to invest in education by providing all the necessary needs of TVET

lecturers and to ensure students learn when they go to school in order to achieve the desired objective of producing well competent and motivated lecturers.

Indeed, the prospect of competent TVET lecturers will bring about the needed manpower development in the related field of science and technology and it will advance the career opportunities by producing competent lecturers who will develop great dynamic economic growth and development (Njati C, 2016) Therefore, it could then be argued that the competent TVET lecturer means a TVET lecturer with the sufficiency of skills, knowledge, attitude or behaviour. By extension, these attributes can be regarded as competency.

An Overview on Competency Model Perceived from Workplace

The word competency was first discussed and assessed by David McClelland, a Professor of Harvard University in the early 1970s, as significant forecasters of employee performance and success which is relatively important as a person's academic ability and knowledge as indicated by examination or test results or scores (McClelland DC, 1998) The person that conducted the first research on competency and came out with the HRD model for ASTD opined that competency is an area of skills and knowledge that is so vital for making or producing key output (Mclagan P, 2002). Although, ASTD argued that Walker and Pinto were the first to conduct HRD competency study in 1978. Similarly, Bernthal, (Bernthal PR, 2004) posited that Walker and Pinto carried out a study called "A study of professional training and development roles and competencies" that was first sponsored and published by ASTD in 1978 from then competencies became one of the main apparatus applied in measuring, examining or evaluating workers' performance in the real world of work situations or environments especially in HRD (Njati C, 2016) However, HRD is the way forward to organisations in order to address the development of workplace competencies (Conlon TJ, 2004)

Recently, competencies have become the primary source of organisations in terms of evaluating the employee's skills and abilities. It has become one of the review instrument for measuring and evaluating proficiency in soft and hard skills of workers (Conlon TJ, 2004). However, competencies of workers are the very vital instrument in determining the organisational development and it has been proven to be an instrument to improve HRD and organisational performance that concentrate on individual's performance (Salleh KM et al, 2013) Moreover, the performance of persons, individuals or workers are more related to the workplace performance while doing job or task assign to them (Salleh KM et al, 2015). Nevertheless, competency needs to look into as something that represents the entire performance of the organisation and it not only concentrates on the organisational performance but also on the individual performance (Morningstar ME et al, 2008) However, the individuals or organisations need to be evaluated and modified (Salleh KM et al, 2015). Therefore, organisations can be a workplace or tertiary institutions where the individuals or TVET lecturers work in order to earn their living. Generally, there are two types of competencies, individual and organisational competencies.

Individual competencies

Individual competency basically is more related to the features of an individual which she or he can be trained, instructed, conditioned, indoctrinated, taught and contribute to workplace activities (Garavan TN et al, 2001). Therefore, it is important to know that some of the aspects of competency are knowledge, attitude and skills

that are matched to solve certain assignment for TVET lecturers in the institutions. Similarly, Rodriguez, Patel, Bright, Gregory, and Gowing, (Rodriguez D et al, 2002) demonstrate that competencies show person's occupational or professional competence. According to Rothwell (Rothwell WJ, 2002) Buntat, Saleh, Musban, Jamal, Saud and Nor (Buntat Y et al, 2013), there are competencies that are required for all workers or individuals which include knowledge, ability and skills as well as core skills. Therefore, any individual that possess the aforementioned competencies may definitely end up applying such competencies in the workplace, institutions or organisations. However, this review will only concentrate or emphasize on organisational competencies.

Organisational Competencies

Organisational competencies are those features of organisations that bring about the quality in the world of work (Garavan TN et al, 2001). The main aim of competencies in organisations is to authenticate the skills levels of workers in order to recognize the new combination of skills and knowledge that need to be transferred to the workplace. Hence organisations necessitate higher competency levels of skills and knowledge that can easily respond to the specific requirements of the professional practices (Sauber MH et al, 2008) Therefore, the purpose of organisation or institution is to apply competency in order to facilitate the process of assessing the suitability and expertise of its employees or lecturers in completing the task assigned to them. However, organisational competency can be categorized into three namely: organisational competencies, thinking competencies and application competencies (Salleh KM, 2012).

Organisational Competencies as main competencies

Organisational Competencies can be categorized into ten such as identification of Critical Business Issues, Communication, Group Dynamics, Work Environment Analysis, Goal Implementation, Buy-in/ Advocacy, Consulting, Negotiating/ Contracting, Systems Thinking, Visioning.

Thinking Competencies

Thinking competencies are also more related to knowledge and skills (Rycus J et al, 2000) They still maintained that it is the combination of skills and knowledge that help workers to perform their duties effectively and efficiently in the organisation. Therefore, thinking competencies are the most effective in terms of supporting long-term plans with regards to the worker's career development process and professionalism in an organisation. Thinking competencies can also help workers to create, develop, initiate, process and generate good ideas or approach that can shape the organisation (Salleh KM, 2012). Thinking competencies can be categorized as Workplace performance, learning strategies and intervention evaluation, Competency identification Facilitation, Standard identification, Questioning, Model building, Analytical thinking and Leadership (Salleh KM, 2012).

Application Competencies

Application competencies as the name implies is more or less about behaviours and attitudes of individual workers that can be applied in the workplace. These competencies will help the individual workers to realize and understand the needed attitude, values, morale and behaviour required by them to apply in the

organisation (Salleh KM, 2012). Similarly, Suhairom, Musta'amal, Amin, and Johari, (Suhairom N et al, 2014) posited that a set of competencies which are more related to behaviour and attitude of workers can easily influence the main aspect of the job in an organisation by applying such competencies. The application competencies can be categorized as staff selection, theory and application, training theory and application, feedback, reward system theory and application, organisational development theory and application, career development theory and application and process consultation (Salleh KM, 2012).

Application of MHRDP competency model for workplace learning and performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions

Nigeria as a developing country, needs to improve the strength of TVET lecturer's competencies. This can be accomplished by adopting and adapting the MHRDP competency model developed by Salleh (Salleh KM, 2012). The MHRDP competency model for workplace learning and performance (WPL) is a product of ASTD for WPL that has been in existence for so many years and it has fifty-two (52) different elements of competencies developed by Rothwell, Saunders and Soper, (Rothwell WJ et al, 1999). The competency model has been shown to undergo several reviews over the years since its development (Dubois D et al, 2004)

There are many competency models that can be used to study TVET lecturer competency in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Some of these models include Iceberg competency model, Dreyfus competency model, COMET competency model and ASTD competency model, but the aforementioned models were tested only on industries and organisations. Therefore, the researcher chooses the MHRDP competency model for WPL for this study because the model is suitable for the area of research since both Nigeria and Malaysia are developing countries. The MHRDP model has been used and tested several times in industries, colleges and skill institutes (Salleh KM, 2012). Therefore, this model will be used to test TVET lecturers' competency in Nigeria. Many institutions are adopting and adapting competency model in order to develop and achieve their needs and goals (Berge Z, 2002) therefore, the model also needs to work in line with the tertiary institutions policies and vision because it will test the TVET lecturers' competencies and it will be used as the platform for the institutions to realize the best plan for current and future development of the TVET lecturers. Devoting to improve the competency level is one of the most powerful ways to prove to the lecturers that they are honourably valued, respected and trusted (Black DA, 2001)

Conceptual Framework

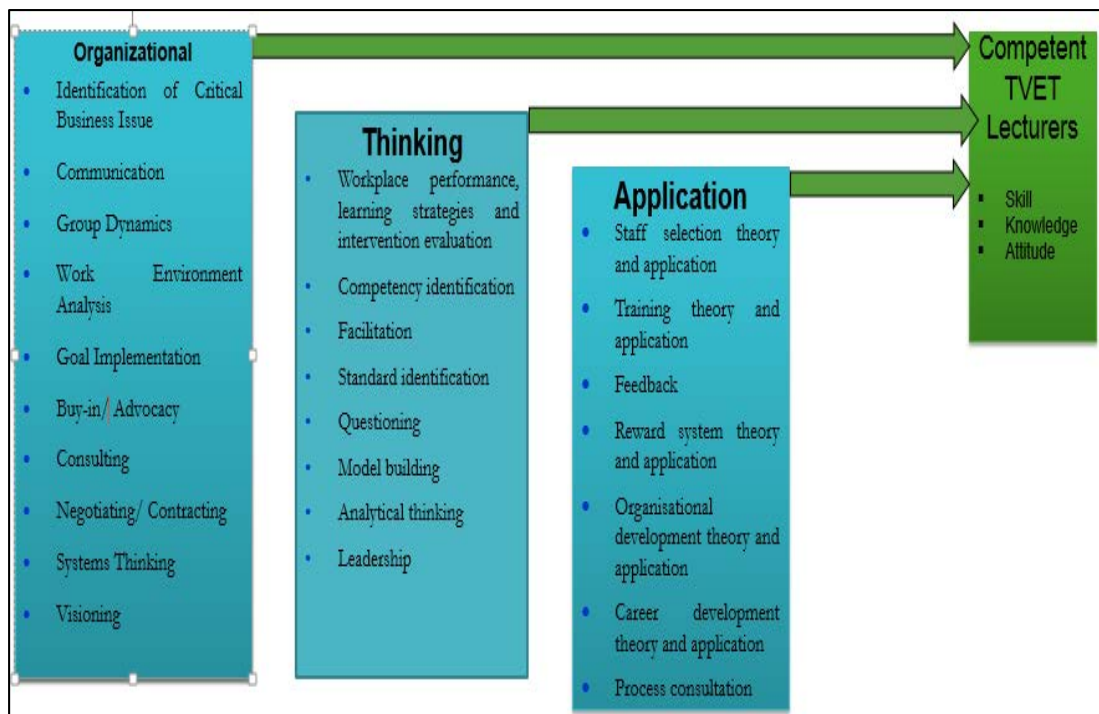
Conceptual framework refers to the application of concepts or combination of theories which the researcher chooses to guide him during the research circle based on the explanation of particular phenomenon toward achieving research aim and objective. Therefore, the Conceptual framework helps the reader to understand the relationship between all variables and theorized the relationship between them. However, the researcher can combine the existing literature concerning a given phenomenon from empirical or conceptual findings. Therefore, this synthesis can also be regarded as a conceptual framework.

Table: 1.1 Four Competency Groups and Associated competencies

Competency Group	Competency Description	Source
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<p>Organisational Competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of Critical Business Issue • Communication • Group Dynamics • Work Environment Analysis • Goal Implementation • Buy-in/ Advocacy • Consulting • Negotiating/ Contracting • Systems Thinking • Visioning 	<p>(Rothwell WJ et al, 1999). avan & McGuire, (Garavan TN et al, 2001). Conlon (Conlon TJ, 2004). (Morningstar ME et al, 2008). (Salleh KM, 2012).</p>
<p>Thinking Competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace performance, learning strategies and intervention evaluation • Competency identification • Facilitation • Standard identification • Questioning • Model building • Analytical thinking • Leadership 	<p>(Rothwell WJ et al, 1999). (Rycus J et al, 2000). (Sauber MH et al, 2008). (Salleh KM, 2012).</p>
<p>Application Competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff selection theory and application • Training theory and application • Feedback • Reward system theory and application • Organisational development theory and application • Career development theory and application • Process consultation 	<p>(Rothwell WJ et al, 1999). (Salleh KM, 2012). (Suhairom N et al, 2014).</p>
<p>TVET Lecturer Competency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill • Knowledge • Attitude 	<p>(Ali, 2015) (Arifin & Rasdi, 2017)</p>

Figure: 1.1 Propose Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from Salleh, (Salleh KM, 2012)

The proposed conceptual framework of this study shows the relationship between the main competencies group and sub-competencies groups; thus, organisational competencies as main, thinking competencies and application competencies as sub-competencies 1 and 2. Therefore, the researcher added one construct which is the dependent variable of the study thus, TVET lecturer competency with three measurement items. This conceptual framework highlights the four research constructs as shown in table 1.1. The four groups of competencies can be regarded as the combination of skills, knowledge and attitude or behaviour to be acquired by TVET lecturers in order to produce competent TVET lecturers in Nigerian TVET tertiary institutions.

CONCLUSION

The proposed conceptual framework for TVET lecturers of this study is now presented. This has been achieved by identifying the various competency models for workplace based on the literature review, this paper concludes that there are four constructs of the competency framework for TVET lecturers which can be tested in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Therefore, further investigations will show that whether all these constructs contribute to the competency needs of Nigerian TVET lecturers in tertiary institutions. This paper is limited to only publish articles that were accessible during this work. However, this established the limitation of this work and therefore the interpretation of this framework.

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