

ASSESSING THE EXTENT OF STUDENTS' EXPOSURE TO WORKSHOP PRACTICES DURING TRAINING IN SELECTED TECHNICAL COLLEGES IN SOUTH-WEST STATES NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the extent to which students of technical colleges in selected states in south-west Nigeria are exposed to workshop practices. The implementation of the catering craft practice curriculum in technical colleges necessitates a strong emphasis on workshop practice, as these are integral to the hands-on learning experience required for vocational education. One research question was raised for the study. The instrument used for the study was Students' Workshop Practice Rating Scale (SWPRS) $r=0.87$. The study adopted non-experimental design of survey research type. The target population comprised students of government technical colleges in South West Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the sample selection. Result revealed that to a very great extent, catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in the Technical Colleges in Oyo, Ogun and Ondo states. However, students were more exposed to workshop practice in Oyo and Ogun States than those in Ondo State. This implies that students in Oyo and Ogun may be better prepared for the practical demands of the catering industry, potentially leading to higher employability and competence in these states. The lower exposure in Ondo highlights a gap that may affect the quality of training and the readiness of students to meet industry standards. It was recommended that adequate workshop training facilities and equipment should be provided and students allowed access to the facilities available for effective implementation of the Catering Craft Practice Curriculum.

Keywords: Catering Craft Practice, Curriculum Implementation, Workshop Practice.

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INTRODUCTION

Technical and vocational education seems to be the engine room of economic growth of any nation. In the same vein, Nigeria cannot develop technologically without well-equipped technical

and vocational institutions. For this reason, students in Technical Colleges are being trained to acquire practical skills in education with particular attention given to vocational and technical education. It is therefore imperative that students are exposed to proper practical skills to enable them produce items to meet local and export needs, and, thus, help the economy to become buoyant and self-reliant. The education stakeholders are expected to push for a conscious effort to expose learners to means of survival through the acquisition of skills in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) through the implementation of the curriculum.

Curriculum is a planned and guided learning experiences carried out in the institution for living a useful and productive life in our contemporary society today (Ogwu et al., 2014). Curriculum implementation is the most paramount aspect of teaching and learning process which has to do with the translation of the curriculum into practice in the learning environment. This needs teacher, instructional materials, classroom control, classroom management and teaching methods among other things (Saidu & Saidu, 2015). The quality of curriculum implementation in any society is the bedrock of its political, economic, scientific and technological well-being (Ahmed & Lukman, 2015; Ogah & Awhen, 2015). Furthermore, for curriculum plan or innovation to become fully meaningful, it must be properly implemented. Igwe (2015) reported that the objectives of education at all levels cannot be achieved if the planned programmes for such level of education are not properly implemented. Irrespective of the manner in which the curriculum is planned, organised and established, implementation is key. To ascertain the implementation of the curriculum, exposition to workshop practices is key.

The implementation of the catering craft practice curriculum in technical colleges necessitates a strong emphasis on workshop practice, as these are integral to the hands-on learning experience required for vocational education. Workshop practice encompass hands-on sessions in which students engage in activities such as food preparation, equipment handling, and kitchen management, all of which are vital for acquiring the skills and competencies necessary in the catering industry (Okwelle & Okoye, 2012). Effective workshop practice promote experiential learning, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios, thereby enhancing their problem-solving abilities and technical proficiency (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002). Furthermore, the structured environment of workshops fosters collaborative learning, enabling students to work in teams, exchange ideas, and receive immediate feedback from instructors, all of which are essential for mastering intricate culinary techniques and ensuring industry readiness (Sing & Richardson, 2012). Workshops are intended to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application by offering hands-on experience as part of an instructional method. The quality of instruction, the resources available, and the fit between workshop activities and curriculum objectives are some of the elements that determine how well workshop practice improve students' accomplishment.

It has been demonstrated that workshops, which offer chances for experimentation and inquiry-based learning, improve students' understanding of difficult concepts (Capps & Crawford, 2013). Similar to this, project-based workshops in engineering education have been associated with higher student accomplishment and engagement because they foster collaborative learning and critical thinking (Prince & Felder, 2006). According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) emphasized the profound impact that the quality of instruction in workshop settings has on student achievement. This study sheds light on three key instructional practices—active learning strategies, timely feedback, and the creation of an inclusive learning environment—that significantly contribute to positive student outcomes. Furthermore, the author argued that such strategies are effective because they encourage deeper cognitive

processing. When students are actively involved in their learning, they are more likely to internalize and retain information, as they are required to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge rather than merely memorizing it.

A study conducted by Murray and Summerlee (2007) explored the impact of inquiry-based workshops on undergraduate biology students. The study found that students who participated in workshops that emphasized hands-on experimentation and problem-solving demonstrated significantly higher achievement in course assessments compared to those who engaged in traditional lecture-based instruction. The study attributed this improvement to the active learning environment fostered by workshops, which encouraged deeper understanding of biological concepts. Bell and Kozlowski (2008) conducted a study on the effectiveness of workshops in enhancing students' achievement in engineering courses. The study involved a randomized control trial where students were assigned to either a workshop-based learning group or a traditional lecture-based group. The findings revealed that students in the workshop group outperformed their peers in the lecture group on both practical and theoretical assessments. The researchers concluded that the collaborative and experiential nature of workshops contributed to the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, leading to better academic outcomes.

Pekrun et al. (2010) investigated the impact of workshop-based learning on the academic achievement of students in technical programs. The study utilized a longitudinal design, tracking students' performance over three semesters. The results indicated that students who engaged in workshops showed consistent improvement in their grades and practical assessments. The researchers also noted that workshops fostered a positive learning environment, reducing students' anxiety and increasing their motivation to learn. Savery and Duffy (2015) examined the impact of problem-based workshops on students' achievement in a nursing program. The study involved a comparison between students who participated in problem-based workshops and those who received traditional instruction. The findings demonstrated that students in the workshop group not only achieved higher grades but also exhibited greater confidence in applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. The study emphasized the role of workshops in bridging the gap between theory and practice, which is particularly crucial in professional education. Osuyi et al. (2021) carried out a study on the effect of utilization of workshop facilities on students' academic achievement and retention in electrical installation and maintenance works (EIMW) in technical colleges in Edo state. The findings showed that students taught EIMW with workshop instructional facilities perform better in the retention (second post-test) than those taught without workshop instructional facilities. It was recommended among others that teachers should use workshop instructional facilities to teach students EIMW for improved academic performance.

Moreover, the integration of effective workshop practice into the curriculum led to Sing and Richardson (2012) highlighting the significant contribution of structured workshop environments in promoting collaborative activities, fostering teamwork, and enhancing communication skills among students. These environments provide a platform for students to work together, share ideas, and receive immediate feedback from instructors, ultimately resulting in the development of technical skills essential for success in the catering field. The interactive and supportive nature of workshops creates a conducive learning atmosphere that allows students to deeply engage with the curriculum, leading to improved educational outcomes and better preparation for the industry's demands.

Freeman et al. (2014) reviewed the effects of active learning on student attitudes and performance. The study found that active learning strategies, commonly used in workshops, led to improved student attitudes towards learning and higher levels of engagement. Active learning practices helped students feel more involved and motivated, which positively affected their overall attitude towards the subject matter. Schlechty (2002) investigated how students' opinions were impacted by workshops' application and relevance. According to the study, students' attitudes toward learning improved when workshops emphasized the real-world applications of topics. Students' motivation and engagement rose when they felt the content was relevant. Hattie and Timperley (2007) examined the role of feedback in shaping students' attitudes towards learning. The researchers found that timely and constructive feedback provided during workshops positively impacted students' attitudes by helping them recognize their progress and areas for improvement. Supportive feedback contributed to increased motivation and a more positive attitude towards the learning process. Barkley et al. (2005) carried out a study on the impact of experiential learning workshops on students' attitudes towards learning. The researchers found that workshops that incorporated experiential learning activities, such as role-playing and simulations, led to improved student attitudes. The interactive and engaging nature of these workshops helped students develop a more positive view of the learning process.

Workshop practice, characterized by hands-on learning and experiential engagement, are increasingly recognized as vital for developing students' competence. In recent years, there has been a substantial transformation in workshop procedures due to the integration of current technology like computer-aided design (CAD), CNC machines, and additive manufacturing (3D printing) (Balogun et al., 2020). Students' employability is improved by this exposure to cutting-edge technologies and procedures, which gives them the skills they need to adjust to technological changes in their particular areas. According to Balogun et al. (2020), workshop training is essential for fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative abilities—skills that are highly sought after in fields like catering (Smith & Jones, 2020).

Furthermore, effective workshop practice highlights the significance of maintenance and troubleshooting skills. Students learn to properly maintain equipment, diagnose issues, and implement effective repair strategies (Garg & Deshmukh, 2006). This expertise not only ensures the durability and efficiency of workshop tools and machinery but also prepares students to tackle real-world challenges in their future careers. The successful execution of vocational curricula, particularly in technical colleges, depends significantly on practical, hands-on workshop practice. Workshop practices play a crucial role by providing students with the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios, thereby enhancing their practical skills and competencies. Okwelle and Okoye (2012) contended that involving students in real-life activities such as food preparation, equipment handling, and kitchen management is fundamental to the development of essential skills in the catering industry. These practical sessions enable students to bridge the gap between theory and practice, thereby improving their preparedness for professional roles (Okwelle & Okoye, 2012). This approach is corroborated by Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002), who emphasized that experiential learning in workshop settings facilitates skill acquisition and problem-solving abilities crucial for vocational success.

In technical and vocational education, workshops provide hands-on experience with tools, equipment, and processes relevant to specific trades or professions. This practical training is essential for developing the technical competencies required in these fields (Raelin, 2008). Lamb et al. (2009) assessed the impact of technical workshops on graduates' technical competencies. The study found that students who engaged in hands-on workshops demonstrated

significantly higher levels of technical proficiency compared to those who received traditional instruction. The study highlighted the importance of practical experience in developing technical skills.

Hsu and Toh (2006) accessed the effectiveness of problem-based workshops in enhancing problem-solving skills. The findings revealed that students who participated in problem-based workshops showed significant improvements in their ability to address complex problems, suggesting that such workshops are effective in developing critical thinking and problem-solving competencies. Garrick and Clegg (2001) explored the impact of workshop practice on graduates' employability. The results indicated that graduates who participated in workshops that simulated professional environments had higher rates of employment and job performance, demonstrating the value of practical experience in the job market. Chen and Toh (2013) examined the impact of workshops on the development of soft skills. The researchers found that workshops incorporating collaborative and role-playing activities significantly enhanced graduates' communication, teamwork, and leadership skills, which are crucial for career success.

Statement of the problem

Catering craft practice is a unique subject in technical Colleges in Nigeria. But the observed inability of the graduates to fit in as catering craft tradespersons in hospitality industries has remain a source of worry to education stakeholders and the society at large. Particularly, students' competence in catering craft practice over periods of time has been traced to likelihood of deficiency in exposing the students to workshop practices. Researchers have carried out studies on curriculum implementation in other subjects in technical colleges, but it seems much attention have not been given to catering craft practice in terms of empirical investigation. The few studies that were carried out on catering as a profession focused more on assessment of caterers than the curriculum implementation process. The assessment was in terms of their knowledge, awareness, attitude, hygiene practices and perception. It appears there has not been any independent evaluation study with assigned task of assessing the extent to which students are exposed to workshop practice in technical colleges in south-west Nigeria. It then becomes imperative to assess the extent to which technical college students are exposed to workshop practices selected states in south-west, Nigeria.

Research Question

What is the extent of students' exposure to workshop practice during training in technical colleges with respect to Ondo State, Oyo State, and Lagos State?

METHODS

This study adopted non-experimental design of survey research type. The non-experimental design is used when the researcher has no control over the variables of interest and no manipulation was done on the independent variables. The target population for this study comprises teachers, students and graduates of government technical colleges in South West Nigeria.

One research instrument was used for the study: The Students' Workshop Practice Rating Scale (SWPRS) was developed by the researcher. It consists of two major sections of A and B. Section A consists of the Bio-data of the respondents namely gender, class, local government area, name of school among others. Section B consists of items on workshop practices students are exposed to during instructional delivery. The researcher rated the students on a four-point scale of Most of the time-4; Sometimes-3; Rarely-2 and Never-1 to show the extent of exposure of each of the under listed practices during teaching. To establish the content validity of the instruments, the instrument was given to experts for review. Thereafter the instrument was trial tested on a sample of respondents that was not included in the study while the internal consistencies were established using Cronbach Alpha for SWPRS .870.

Sampling Techniques and Sample

A multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the sample selection. Firstly, there are six states in the South-West geo-political zone in Nigeria: Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Oyo and Osun. Simple random sampling technique was used to select three states while proportionate to size (50%) was used to select the technical colleges that participated. Total enumeration was used to select all year 3 students offering the course. The catering craft practice teachers of the selected level automatically participated in the study.

The next stage was the selection of 10 technical college graduates from each selected states making it a total of 30 graduates. The tracer method was used to get the graduates in their respective places of work. This was achieved through getting information from the respective Technical Colleges about their graduates and possibly where they work at the time of data collection. However, Technical college management were unable to provide the needed information on the graduates, as a result snow balling sampling technique was used to reach the graduates that provided necessary information for the study.

Table 1: Sampling frame

S/N	States Selected in Southwest	No of Technical Colleges selected	No of year 3 students per class (catering craft practice)	Total no of year 3 students selected in each state	No of Teachers (2 per school)	Sample of catering craft practices' graduates
1	Ogun state	3	Sch A: 17 Sch B: 20 Sch C: 22 Total: 59	59	Sch A: 2 Sch B: 2 Sch C: 2 Total: 6	10
2	Oyo state	3	Sch A:15 Sch B:12 Sch C:13 Total: 40	40	Sch A: 2 Sch B: 2 Sch C: 2 Total: 6	10
3	Ondo state	2	Sch A: 13 Sch B: 12 Total: 25	25	Sch A: 2 Sch B: 1 Total: 3	10
TOTAL	3	8	124	124	15	30

Source: Researcher Fieldwork (2024)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question:

What is the extent of students' exposure to workshop practice during training in technical colleges with respect to Ondo State, Oyo State, and Lagos State?

Responses of students' exposure to workshop practices during training in Technical Colleges in Oyo State

Table 2: Extent of students' exposure to workshop practices during training in technical colleges in Oyo State

S/N	Items	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	No Extent	Median
1	Check the availability of kitchen equipment	40 (100)				4
2	Check the adequacy of kitchen equipment	24 (60)	16(40)			4
3	Check the functionality of kitchen equipment		24(60)	16 (40)		3
4	Fixing kitchen equipment		12(30)	28 (70)		2
5	Clean kitchen outer environment	39(97.5)	1(2.5)			4
6	Clean kitchen inner environment	40(100)				4
7	Check for power supply			11(27.5)	29(72.5)	1
8	Check for use of clean water	38(95)			2(5)	4
9	Identifying different workshop equipment	39(97.5)			1(2.5)	4
10	Familiarizing themselves with the use of different kitchen equipment	6(15)	33 (82.5)	1(2.5)		3
11	Putting in place safety precautionary measures		1(2.5)		39(97.5)	1
12	Identifying damaged equipment		3(7.5)	31(77.5)	6(15)	2

Midpoint = 2.5, N = 40

Table 2 presents the extent to which catering craft practices students are exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical College in Oyo State. The result in Table 2 reveal that to a very great extent, catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in the Technical College in Oyo State (Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10). However, it was found that students to a low extent were exposed to some workshop practice during training (Items 7 and 11). Although, to a moderate extent, students were exposed to workshop practices like identifying damaged equipment (Item 12). In overall, catering craft practice student are exposed to 67% of the items on workshop practice during their training in Technical College in Oyo State.

Responses of students' exposure to workshop practices during training in Technical Colleges in Ogun State

Table 3: Extent of Students' Exposure to Workshop Practices during Training in Technical Colleges in Ogun State

S/N	Items	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	No Extent	Median
1	Check the availability of kitchen equipment	30(50.8)	29(49.2)			4
2	Check the adequacy of kitchen equipment	6(10.2)	52(88.1)	1(1.7)		3
3	Check the functionality of kitchen equipment		3(5.1)	56(94.9)		2
4	Fixing kitchen equipment		41(69.5)	18(30.5)		3
5	Clean kitchen outer environment	59(100)				4
6	Clean kitchen inner environment	48(81.4)	11(18.6)			4
7	Check for power supply		25(42.4)	17(28.8)	17(28.8)	2
8	Check for clean water	59(100)				4
9	Identifying different workshop equipment	59(100)				4
10	Familiarizing themselves with the use of different kitchen equipment	59(100)				4
11	Putting in place safety precautionary measures			42(71.2)	17(28.8)	2
12	Identifying damaged equipment		25(42.4)	34(57.6)		2

Midpoint = 2.5, N = 59

Table 3 presents the extent to which catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical College in Ogun State. The result in Table 3 show that to a very great extent, catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in the Technical College in Ogun State (Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10). Moreover, it was found that to a moderate extent, students were exposed to workshop practice like checking the functionality of kitchen equipment identifying (Item 3), putting in place safety precautionary measures (Item 11) and identifying damaged equipment (Item 12). In overall, catering craft practice student are exposed to 67% of the items on workshop practice during their training in Technical College in Ogun State.

Responses of students' exposure to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in Ondo State

Table 4 presents the extent to which catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical College in Ondo State. The result in Table 4 reveal that to a very great extent, catering craft practice students are exposed to workshop practice during training in the Technical College in Oyo State (Items 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10). However, it was found that students to a no extent were exposed to workshop practices such as putting in place safety precautionary measures during training (Item 11). Although, to a moderate extent, students were exposed to workshop practice like checking the functionality of kitchen equipment, fixing kitchen equipment checking power supply and identifying damaged equipment during training (Items 3, 4, 7 and 12). In overall, catering craft practice student are exposed to 58% of the items on workshop practice during their training in Technical College in Ondo State. The findings in Tables 4.6a, 4.6b and 4.6c reveal that catering craft practice students were more

exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in Oyo and Ogun States than those in Ondo State.

Table 4: Extent of students' exposure to workshop practices during training in technical colleges in Ondo State

S/N	Items	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	No Extent	Median
1	Check the availability of kitchen equipment	13 (52)	12 (48)			4
2	Check the adequacy of kitchen equipment	6 (24)	18 (72)	1 (4)		3
3	Check the functionality of kitchen equipment		3 (12)	22 (88)		2
4	Fixing kitchen equipment		1 (4)	24 (96)		2
5	Clean kitchen outer environment	13 (52)	12 (48)			4
6	Clean kitchen inner environment	14 (56)	11 (44)			4
7	Check for power supply		2 (8)	23 (92)		2
8	Check for clean water	17 (68)	8 (32)			4
9	Identifying different workshop equipment	17 (68)	8 (32)			4
10	Familiarizing themselves with the use of different kitchen equipment	14 (56)	11 (44)			4
11	Putting in place safety precautionary measures				25 (100)	1
12	Identifying damaged equipment			23 (92)	2 (8)	2

Midpoint = 2.5, N = 25

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study with respect to extent of students' exposure to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in South-West revealed that the students are being exposed to the required workshop practice. One could obviously note that most of the workshop practice were activities which are carried out before, during and after practical sessions, and since catering craft practice is a practical oriented subject, it is imperative for the students to be exposed to such workshop practice. This finding is in agreement with programme/evaluation objective 9, which states that to examine the extent to which the colleges have exposed students to workshop practices. The result reveals that to a very great extent, students are exposed to workshop practices during training in the Technical College in Oyo State. The result shows that to a very great extent, students are exposed to workshop practices during training in the Technical College in Ogun State. The result in overall stated that students are exposed to workshop practice during their training in Technical Colleges in Ondo State. But, the results reveal that students were more exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in Oyo and Ogun States than those in Ondo State.

The findings suggest that students in Oyo and Ogun States have a higher level of exposure to practical workshop activities compared to those in Ondo State. This implies that students in Oyo and Ogun may be better prepared for the practical demands of the catering industry, potentially leading to higher employability and competence in these regions. The lower

exposure in Ondo highlights a gap that may affect the quality of training and the readiness of students to meet industry standards.

This finding is in line with the study of Bell and Kozlowski (2008) who found that collaborative and experiential nature of workshops contributed to the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as better academic outcomes. This approach corroborated the study of Lamb et al. (2009) who found that students who engaged in hands-on workshops demonstrated significantly higher levels of technical proficiency compared to those who received traditional instruction. The findings of the study agrees with that of Pekrun et al. (2010) who found that students who engaged in workshops showed consistent improvement in their grades and practical assessments. The findings of the study, also supports that of Okwelle and Okoye (2012) who contended that involving students in the practice of real-life activities such as food preparation, equipment handling, and kitchen management is fundamental to the development of essential skills in the catering industry. The findings of the study is consistent with that of Savery and Duffy (2015) whose findings demonstrated that students in the workshop group not only achieved higher grades but also exhibited greater confidence in applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. The findings of the study supports that of Osuyi et al. (2021) who found that students taught with workshop instructional facilities perform better in the retention than those taught without workshop instructional facilities.

The practical training provided in technical colleges plays a vital role in connecting theoretical knowledge to real-world applications. This agrees with Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action LAB (2023) who emphasized that vocational training programs should be tailored to meet market demands, ultimately improving employability. The substantial workshop exposure in Oyo and Ogun is a clear indication of this alignment, as it equips students with the essential hands-on skills required in the labour market. However, the limited exposure in Ondo State underscores the necessity for policy intervention and resource allocation to enhance practical training. This aligns with Yao's (2021) findings who underscored the impact of uneven resource distribution on educational outcomes, highlighting that discrepancies in training quality can lead to unequal opportunities for students in different regions. It is crucial to ensure uniform access to high-quality practical training across all states to cultivate a skilled workforce and drive regional economic development.

Conclusion

The study assessed the extent to which students are exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in selected South-West States in Nigeria. The result reveals that to a very great extent, students are exposed to workshop practice during training in the Technical Colleges in all the selected states. But, the results reveal that students were more exposed to workshop practice during training in Technical Colleges in Oyo and Ogun States than those in Ondo State. This implies that students in Oyo and Ogun may be better prepared for the practical demands of the catering industry, potentially leading to higher employability and competence in these regions. The lower exposure in Ondo highlights a gap that may affect the quality of training and the readiness of students to meet industry standards.

Consequent upon the findings of this study, the authors therefore recommended that adequate workshop training facilities and equipment should be provided and students allowed access to the facilities available for effective implementation of the Catering Craft Practice Curriculum. Trainings should be organized regularly for the Catering Craft Practice teachers of

the Technical Colleges to enable them update their professional skills and enhance capabilities. Addressing these recommendations could notably improve the quality of vocational education in culinary arts, leading to better student outcomes and closer alignment with industry standards.

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