



ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF OJT TRAINING QUALITY FACTORS ON TVET STUDENTS' SATISFACTION IN PREPARING FOR EMPLOYMENT IN OMAN

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Abstract:

The Job Training has been utilised to provide work skills to TVET students in order to meet the labour market in Oman. It is important to determine whether the quality of the training is meeting to what TVET students' needs. Therefore, this study examines the effect of the On-the Job-Training (OJT) quality factors on TVET students' satisfaction. The internship is financed by Ministry of Manpower for TVET candidates in Oman and is meant to obtain employability skills. The study looked at the OJT training quality factors in relation to Trainer Quality, Effective assessment, Clear expectation, Learning Stimulation, Training Relevancy, Competence Development, Training Resources, Effective Support and Active Learning as found to have a direct link to students' satisfaction. The pilot study of 30 samples was carried out and a random sampling method was used. Nevertheless, this study used a quantitative method of research. In addition, a descriptive method was used to analyse the data and the study results are provided in the form of explanatory notes. However, the reliability test was done i.e. Alpha Cronbach's shows the range between 0.80 to 0.9 and this confirms the study results. The instrument of the survey of this study used the Coates (2009) AQTF quality indicator; using a five-point Likert scale. The literature review focused on Total Quality Management (TQM model) associated with 5-C TQM Model of Academic Excellence and Service Quality (SERVQUAL Model). Finally, the OJT training quality was measured against students' satisfaction and the P-value was found to be statistically highly significant.

Keywords: On the Job Training (OJT), TVET, OJT training quality factors

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to assess the effect of the On-the-Job Training (OJT) quality towards TVET students' satisfaction in preparing for employment in Oman. The participants are mainly studying at the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in different areas of Oman under the supervision of MoMP.

Oman is a considerably young country in TVET compared to other Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, Morocco, and Algeria, whereas education in Oman started in 1970. Forty-eight years ago, there were only three official primary schools with 900 students in the whole country and is increased to 1,125 public schools with a population total of 579,024 students, while the private schools are 636 and catering to 105,680 students ([UNESCO, 1972](#); [Al Najjar, 2016](#); [Al-Mujaini, 2018](#)).

Promising the quality of learning is mainly essential given the increase of TVET development, the shifting nature of work, and the worldwide movement of workforces ([UNESCO, 2017](#); [Coates, 2018](#)). According to Jallah (2004, as cited in [Mohammed, 2020](#)), TVET plays a master key in education for sustainable development in the 21st century.

As Third International Congress on TVET ([UNESCO, 2012](#)) noted in "Building Skills for Work and Life" the Arab region is lacking quality and skills improvement which weakens the opportunities of employment in the labour market and yet the problem still exists ([Belwal et al., 2017](#); [Maclean, 2017](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#), [Oman Observer, 2021](#)). In addition, quality improvement is considered as a higher priority for long-term improvement of sector status ([Oladokun & Ayodele, 2015](#)). Furthermore, the Technical and Education training programmes in the Gulf countries show poor results in graduate unemployment and present great challenges to their Governments ([Belwal et al., 2015](#); [Belwal et al., 2017](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#); [Al Hinai, 2021](#)) and is due to lack of quality of regional education systems, adequate investment to meet new requirements and provide appropriate training programmes to young graduates ([Forstenlechner & Rutledge, 2010](#); [Barnett, 2015](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#); [Schnitzler, 2021](#)). Hence, the gap between the needs and wants of the private sector in Oman and the abilities of training facilitators is compounded by the lack of VET system development in general ([Al Kindi, 2007](#); [Belwal et al., 2015](#); [Belwal et al., 2017](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#); [Pirzada, 2022](#)). Although the infrastructure and facilities are claimed to be aligned with most of the developed countries, however, a professional approach to their to best use is lacking and so the learning engagement ([Baporikar, 2012](#); [Hewett & Bish, 2019](#); [Shrestha, 2021](#); [Pirzada, 2022](#)).

The Ministry of Labour in Oman provides facilities to the TVET students to perform On-the-Job-Training (OJT) and prepare them for employment as part of TVET in Oman aims ([Oman, 2021](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#)). Despite all effort done by the government of Oman and Higher Education Institutional (HEI) to enhance the quality of education in Oman, the HEIs have been criticized for producing graduates having low skill and knowledge ([Baporikar, 2012](#); [UN-ESCWA, 2020](#); [Al-Azri et al., 2021](#)). In addition, the HEIs resources are not sufficient to achieve the primary objectives ([Al Mamari, 2020](#)).

Therefore, there is a clear indication that the quality of education, training condition and learner's engagement in both TVET and HEIs are not received adequately. Hence, there is a need of study and carry out further investigation and focus on the quality factors of OJT training and to find out if customers are satisfied or not. This should include the training environment for these TVET trainees who are likely to be lacking of resources and material, work readiness or work competence to find out how effective it is and learner's engagement in the work placement. Therefore, it is important to assess these individual trainees and measure their satisfaction of the On-the-Job-Training (OJT) quality which is done during their internship period.

2. Literature Review

This study is based on several theories related to quality and has a direct link to the research and is under the term of quality, by means of an accomplishment to standards as defined by [Awadh et al. \(2016\)](#). The theories in which the research discusses in this paper are basically the Service Quality by [Parasuraman et al. \(1985\)](#) and provides a SERVQUAL model, Total Quality Management (TQM) which is well recognised by the industrial organisation and found by [Deming \(1986\)](#), however, [Sakthivel et al. \(2005\)](#) suggested a TQM for the academic research called 5-C TQM Model of Academic Excellence which this research has considered. The other theory is Quality Assurance theory based on [Coates \(2009\)](#).

The management philosophy that improves customer satisfaction and organizational performance is known as TQM ([Sfakianaki et al., 2021](#)). In this way, all members of an organization are fully engaged to improve processes, services and products, as well as its culture. The success of TQM in the industrial organisation captivated to academics and practitioners, as a result, TQM was contained in various service organizations ([Bouranta et al., 2019](#); [Farrington et al., 2018](#); [Lam et al., 2011](#)) as well as educational institutions ([Manatos et al., 2017](#); [Singh, 2021](#)). Furthermore, TQM in education emphasises on customer satisfaction through the continuous improvement of services or products; it concerns more on people and incorporates employees at all levels of relationship ([Evans and Lindsay, 2017](#)). Nevertheless, quality assurance is directly involved in the process and Tuck (2007) concentrated on quality assurance in education as a process and procedures to confirm qualifications, course delivery and assessment to achieve the standards. Similarly, [Sakthivel et al. \(2005\)](#) established a TQM for the academic research called 5-C TQM Model of Academic Excellence. This model establishes a relationship between the five TQM variables specifically Commitment of Top Management, Course Delivery, Courtesy, Customer Feedback, Campus Facilities and Improvement and students' satisfaction of academic performance ([Hornstein, 2017](#)).

[Parasuraman et al. \(1985\)](#) offers a SERVQUAL model which includes ten dimensions to be precise Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Competence, Communication, Access, Credibility, Understanding and Security. Several researches have been carried to find out if satisfaction has directly affected service quality or vice

versa. [Athyaman \(1997\)](#) noted that there is a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. He reflected that all service encounters must be controlled to elevate customer satisfaction. Similarly, the results of the research model developed by [Cronin and Taylor \(1992\)](#) showed that perceived service quality leads to satisfaction as suggested by the [Parasuraman et al. \(1985, 1988\)](#). Moreover, the research looked at the quality assurance model, [Coates \(2009\)](#) provides quality indicators entailed of ten dimensions that is Trainer Quality, Effective Assessment, Clear Expectation, Learning Stimulation, Competence Development, Training Resources, Training Relevance, Effective Support, Active Learning and Students' Satisfaction. Likewise, evidence can be seen in the higher education literature and demonstrates that learner's appreciate service quality and lead to student satisfaction ([Ahmad, 2015](#); [Ali et al., 2016](#); [Alam et al., 2021](#)). Apparently, that there is acceptance among the researchers in respect of the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

3. Methods

3.1 Study Design

An adopted questionnaire ([Coates, 2009](#)) was used to assess the effect of OJT Training Quality on TVET Students' Satisfaction in Oman. The colleges involved in the study are from rural and urban area. Two colleges from urban area are Higher College of Technology (HCT) and the Royal Guard of Oman Technical College (RGOTC). The remaining six colleges are from rural areas which are located to different region in Oman. As example, in the Dhofar region there is Salalah College of Technology, Shinas College of Technology is located in Al Batnah region, Ibri College of Technology is located in Al Dhahira region, Ibra College of Technology is located in Al Sharqiya region and Nizwa College of Technology is located in Al Dakhiliyah region and is about 150km from Muscat capital ([Educational Council, 2020](#)).

The students were selected by random sampling technique and an appointed person was supervising the study survey. Students of TVET colleges were gathered and explained the purpose of the research. 40 questionnaires were posted to participants and 30 questionnaires were responded and completed online, as a pilot study.

3.2 Questionnaire Design

An adopted questionnaire ([Coates, 2009](#)) was used in this study. The data was collected and used a five-point Likert scale questionnaire which is divided into two parts. The first section of questionnaire was about students' demographic profile included age, marital status, educational level, area of institute and education sector. The second section was to measure the OJT training quality factors.

3.3 Data Analysis

The initial step of data analysis process is to classify the data into two main categories, namely categorical data and quantifiable data ([Gray, 2009](#); [De Silva, 2018](#)). Quantitative

research method was carried out and data was analysed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. The data from 40 students were sent to TVET students and 30 data received. Then, the data were screened to eliminate incomplete and keep the desired data. As a result, only 30 data have been received for further analysis and 35 questions were constructed using 5-points Likert scale with the range from 1 (strongly disagreed) to 5 (strongly agreed) to assess the effect of OJT training quality factors. The descriptive analysis was done to analyse the student's demographic characteristic, in addition, percentage and frequency were tabulated as categorical variables.

4. Result

Questionnaire was completed by 30 TVET students out of an initial sample of 40 participants, as a pilot study. Table 1 provides the demographic details of the study; the respondents were comprised into two categories, namely male and female. The male respondents were twenty (20) presents 63% and female were only (10) which present 34%. This shows that male responds much higher than female respondents by 73% and all of them came from Mechanical Engineering faculty. This gives some initial indication that male had more opportunity in the work placement than female. The age of participants varies from 20 to 24. Majority of the students' age were between 20 to 24 and presents 50%. However, the large portion is above 24 of age and presents 43% and the lowest is under 20 and presents 7% only. The details of Marital Status are showing that majority of respondents were married which presents 27% and single presents 73% only. The Education Background of the participants is coming from different level of qualifications and majority of the respondents are from Diploma level which presents 70% and follows with Certificate respondents which presents 30%. Therefore, the majority of participants managed to receive the On-the-Job training were male, single and their age is between 20 to 24 years.

Table 1: Descriptive Table of Demographic

Description	Percentage
Gender	
Male	63%
Female	34%
Status	
Married	27%
Single	73%
Age	
18-20	7%
21-24	50%
24>	43%
Education	
Cert	30%
Diploma	70%
Bsc Deg	0

The reliability analysis results are shown in Table 2 and provides Cronbach's alpha for all OJT Training Quality factors against number of items of each factor in the study. The alpha scale ranges between 0.794 to 0.829 and these results showed that most of the factors scored above the value of 0.7. By interpreting these results, it can be noted that the Effective Assessment managed to score 0.829 as the highest alpha scale in the reliability test and followed by Clear Expectation and Active Learning, both factors scored 0.825. However, Competence Development has also scored high alpha scale which is 0.825 and followed by Trainer Quality factor which scored 0.820. Nevertheless, Learning Stimulation scored 0.816 considerably high; in addition, Training Resources scored 0.811 and followed by Effective support which is scored 0.802. The last two factors namely Training Relevance and Students' Satisfaction scored below 0.8 and not less than 0.7.

Therefore, this demonstrates the scales are consistent and reliable as suggested by (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Furthermore, the effect of OJT training quality on TVET students' satisfaction was measured and P value found to be statistically high significant as $P < 0.001$.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis Results

S/no	Scales	Alpha scale	No. of Items
1	Trainer Quality	0.820	4
2	Effective Assessment	0.829	4
3	Clear Expectation	0.828	3
4	Learning Simulation	0.816	3
5	Training Relevance	0.794	3
6	Competence Development	0.825	5
7	Training Resources	0.811	3
8	Effective Support	0.802	3
9	Active Learning	0.828	4
10	Student Satisfaction	0.797	3
	Total		35

5. Discussion

Hill (1998) suggested that 10 to 30 participants for pilots use in survey study is good enough and likewise was suggested by Hertzog (2008), as cited in Viechtbauer *et al.* (2015). Hence, this study is using 30 TVET participants for piloting purpose only. The internship is done under umbrella of MoMP and is lacking of training quality which weakens the opportunities of employment in the labour market and the problem is evident (Maclean, 2017; UN-ESCWA, 2020, Oman Observer, 2021). Trainer is one of the OJT training quality factors which has been neglected and has impact on trainee satisfaction in both rural and urban area in Oman (Belwal *et al.*, 2017; Maclean, 2017; UN-ESCWA, 2020). The nature of workplace and training condition defer from one place to another and some criticisms were raised due to adequacy of training facilities and conditions as not in line to accommodate trainees to acquire the desired skills for employment (Baporikar, 2012; UN-ESCWA, 2020; Al-Azri *et al.*, 2021). In addition, the

trainee's engagement in the process of learning and acquire the skills are not sufficient to determine the level of satisfaction ([Al Mamari, 2020](#); [Baporikar, 2012](#); UN-ESCWA, 2020; [Al-Azri et al., 2021](#)).

In accordance with the study findings the high quality of TVET on the job training could be achieved by linking between training institutions and workplaces ([UNESCO & ILO, 2002](#); UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2013). However, it is not an easy way to determine whether the trainee has received an ideal training or not and only by taking learners' response which plays an essential key in providing high quality in educational institutions to measure the learners' satisfaction ([Leckey & Neill, 2001](#)). In addition, previous studies have also shown that trainer, effective assessment and clarity have a direct effect on learner's satisfaction ([Richardson, 2005](#); [Williams & Cappuccini-Ansfield, 2007](#)). Another study has shown that there is a strong relationship between learner engagement and students' satisfaction ([Harteis & Billet, 2008](#); [Robertson, 1998](#); [Abdala 2000](#); [Aarkrog, 2003](#); [John, 2019](#)). Furthermore, this has been supported by number of empirical research ([Pascarella and Terenzini 2005](#); [Kuh, 2008](#)) and have fully affirmed that the learners' engagement in an effective training plays a critical role in producing high quality of the product which satisfying the customer. In this study, the author is assessing the effect of On-the-Job Training Quality on Students Satisfaction in preparing for employment in Oman. The results of reliability test confirm that OJT training quality factors are meeting the Cronbach's alpha scale which is above 0.7. This demonstrates that the scales are consistent and reliable as suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Furthermore, the relationship between the correspondent OJT training quality factors and students' satisfaction shows a strong relationship and P value found to be statistically high significant as $P < 0.001$.

6. Conclusion

The main objective for this pilot study is to assess the effectiveness of OJT training quality factors towards TVET students' satisfaction in preparing for employment in Oman. The study adopted the [Coates \(2009\)](#) survey instrument to evaluate the gathered data with the assistance of software such as SPSS & AMOS and managed to analyse the data effectively. The survey instrument used five-point Likert scale questionnaire to measure the OJT training quality factors. Several theories and models were applied in this research such as SERVQUAL and TQM in order to form conceptual framework of the research. The evidence presented in the study is confirming the output results and the study objective. The demographic test obtains the comparison results between male and female participants in the OJT training, as found to be male are more participants than female. Majority of participants are single between the age of 20 to 24. The relationships among the variables are strong and the value of P is considered to be statistically high. The reliability test confirms the research variables set within the Cronbach's Alpha scale. In conclusion, the OJT training factors have significant effect on TVET student's satisfaction.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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