

Research Article,

Effectiveness of Hospitality Programme Design in Developing Skills among the Graduates from Vocational Education and Training in Arusha Region, Tanzania

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Abstract:

Tourism and hospitality sector in Tanzania contributes to 18 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and about 10 percent employment rate in the country. However, industry professionals are complaining about the quality of human resource from training institutions. While some authors have addressed the quality of human resources in relation to graduates' skills possession using the managers, trainers and the nature of services they render, the researcher could not find a study that has addressed the issue in relation to programme design from the trainers, heads of department and hotel managers. This study was set to answer the main research question: How is VET hospitality programme designed to contribute to skills development among the graduates in Arusha region? The study employed convergent design to assess VET hospitality programme design in developing skills among the graduates. Participants were obtained through simple random sampling of training institutions and purposive sampling of hotels belonging to HAT in Arusha region. Data were collected through semi structured interview with the hotel managers and heads of department, structured interview with the trainers and content analysis of programme document. Data were analyzed by transcription of data from the interviews. Programme activities were used to analyze the collected data and used for data interpretation. Interpretation and discussion of data analysis results were summarized and compared with the reviewed literature and theories. The findings for this study indicated that VET programme for Food and Beverages Service and Sales and Front Office Operations are well designed to enhance skills development among the graduates and if well implemented should lead to the acquisition of hospitality knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. English and communication skills, as a supporting course needs to be structured for implementers to understand designated learning outcomes, learning activities, teaching and training methods and assessment activities.

Keywords: hospitality, vocational education and training, Front Office Operations, Food and Beverages Services and Sales, programme design.

Introduction:

Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) was established under the 1994 VET act No. 1 with the overall responsibility for ensuring the provision of required skills for effective socio-economic development in the formal and informal sectors. It trains Ordinary level graduates in vocational skills under the Vocational Education and Training (VET) covering the initial three levels (Level I –III) of the 8 levels in the TVET qualification framework. The entry requirements for Level I is a completion of Ordinary level education

with credits in English and Mathematics. A competency certificate - National Vocational Award (NVA) is awarded after successful completion of NVA Level I or Level II which are voluntary exit points or Level III, a compulsory exit where one is regarded to have completed vocational education and training (VETA, 2013). Vocational tourism training is aimed at producing qualified people who can competently work in the lower level (operational) jobs such as receptionists, waitresses/waiters, bartenders, chefs/cooks, housekeepers and gardeners (Anderson, 2015).

However, the industry is not satisfied with the skills possessed by the graduates from training institutions.

Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) which is an autonomous agency under Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) has been mandated to regulate education and training for Vocational Education Training (VET). It has developed a Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) and mandated all vocational training institutions to implement this curriculum as from 2013. This curriculum for hospitality programme is aimed at developing professional skills, knowledge and attitude in people who aspire to work in the hospitality industry (VETA, 2013). The curriculum for Food and Beverage Sales and Services (FBSS) and Front Office Operations (FOO) are divided into modules for Level I, II, and III arranged in two semesters for each level. The duration for the course is two (2) years. There are supporting subjects which include related and cross cutting skills. The modules and supporting subjects arranged in semesters for Level I, II and III. The study examined the programme for vocational education responsible for developing operational employees as it has been previously reported to have serious gaps in generic skills among others (Anderson, 2015). As the industry continues growing, the need for graduates with employable skills increases. Studies on hospitality education and training have identified serious skill gaps on industry experience (Min, Swanger & Gursoy, 2016; Gursoy, Imran & Swanger, 2012), professional management skills (Wang & Tsai, 2014), communication skills, team work, time management and critical thinking (Alhelalat, 2015; Spowart, 2015) and lack of practical skills (Sarkodie & Adom, 2015; Mayaka & Akama, 2007). Similarly, it has been revealed that tourism and hospitality industry in Tanzania is challenged by lack of appropriate skilled labour (URT, 1999; 2002; Luvanda & Shitundu, 2003). Anderson study (2015) on human resources needs and skills gaps in the tourism and hospitality sector identifies deficiency in soft skills such as communication (multilingual and interpersonal), customer care, marketing and sales skills, innovation and creativity skills, leadership and management skills and basic knowledge in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These studies have criticized training institutions for not adequately preparing the graduates for the industry. Although these studies are mainly based on the views of the employers,

how the programme is designed should as well be examined. Similarly, how do the programme objectives aligned with the contents, teaching and training methods and assessment activities? This paper is intended to assess hospitality programme by examining programme design among others in developing skills required by hospitality industry.

Statement of the Problem:

Tourism and hospitality as a labour-intensive industry is forecasted to continue growing despite turbulent in global economic. In Tanzania, the sector contributed up to USD 2.6 billion by 2019 and responsible for 11percent of the total employment in the country (URT, 2020; MNRT, 2014). As the sector continue to evolve, the need for skilled human resources increases. This is in line with Tanzania vision 2025 on the need for skilled human resources sufficiently equipped with knowledge, skills values and attitudes to solve societal challenges. Similarly ESDP (2016/17-2020/21), NTP (1999), TTSS (2012) have capitalized on skills development and the role of TVET as the avenue for the provision of skilled human capital required in the labour market. A one-sided employers' perspective has been on hospitality institutions producing graduates with inadequate skills and do not match with labour market needs (ATE, 2011; VETA, 2012; Anderson, 2015).

Availability of skilled personnel to meet revolving needs in the hospitality industry has been the major hindrance to the success of the sector (Anderson, 2015; Mkumbo, 2010; Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003). Studies on hospitality industry have reported a shortage of qualified human resources resulting from inadequate training and lack of practical experiences (ATE, 2011; Anderson, 2015), skills mismatch between the industry and training institution (ATE, 2011; ILO, 2016) and poor customer service and standards (URT, 1999; 2002; Mbise, 2015). Their views are based on the employers and not the views of implementers, and more so how the programme itself is designed to develop the needed knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in the industry. This paper examined VET hospitality programme design among others for the purpose of determining how this design could have contributed to the existing problem and what could be done to make it produce graduates with the required knowledge, skills, values and attitudes by industry.

Research Question:

This paper was guided by one research question as follows:

1. How is the hospitality programme designed to enhance skills development among college trainees in Arusha region?

Theoretical Framework :

The study employed objective model by Ralph Tyler (1949) to assess the effectiveness of VET hospitality programme in developing skills among the graduates in Arusha region. Tylerian model guides the researcher in evaluating the extent to which VET programme objectives are integrated into learning content, teaching and training methods and assessment procedures. Tyler urges that educational objectives form the criteria by which materials are selected, content outlined, instructional procedures are developed and tests and examinations are prepared. If we are to study an educational programme systematically and intelligently we must first be sure of the educational objectives aimed at (Tyler, 1949:3).

Similarly, in line with the stated objectives, programme contents should effectively be organized to enable the learner to acquire and develop the desired learning outcomes. The following principles of organization of learning contents as developed by Tyler (1949) were used to analyze VET hospitality programme.

Scope refers to a range of educational experiences that learners should be exposed. Relating to the study, the researcher examined the extent to which teaching and learning activities are adequately addressing the demand of hospitality industry.

Continuity refers to a vertical recurrence of curriculum contents, the reinforcing contents at a subsequent level. As related in this study, the researcher examined the extent to which teaching activities are vertically connected across levels to produce the desired learning outcomes. **Sequence** refers to the order in which contents are systematically arranged and presented according to different levels. **Integration** refers to the relationships between curriculum contents to provide balance in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. **Balance** of curriculum contents to provide learners with the opportunities to reflect on a wide range of ordered and common experiences.

Literature Review

The Design of VET hospitality programme
Competence Based Curriculum

Hospitality programme is intended to equip the graduates with knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the industry. Competence Based Education (CBE) in vocational education and training (VET) is expected to better equip the students to enter the world of work, as it aims at fostering students' knowledge, skills, values and attitude development through learning in authentic workplace contexts (Biemans, 2004; Biemans, Wesselink, Gulikers, Schaafsma, Verstegen, & Mulder, 2009). According to Kouwenhoven (2003) competence-based curriculum aims at making learners competent through the acquisition of competences (domain specific and generic) and through further development of newly acquired competences. Important feature in this conception is the specification of learning outcomes to be acquired and developed by the students so that their attainment can be seen in the form of specific learning behaviours in an established condition (Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010). That being the case, the question is: how is VET hospitality programme reflecting an outcome-based training? How do teaching and learning activities and assessment procedures match the outcome-based training?

Teaching and learning approaches relevant to CBC are that of learner centered where teaching role is for facilitating student learning (Solomon, 2016). The teacher as a facilitator provide opportunities for individual student to acquire knowledge and construct meaning through their own activities, discussions, reflections and sharing ideas with other students (Nzima, 2016). Learner centered methods that foster competence development includes: discussion, observation, problem solving, study visits, exploring nature, discovery methods, project works and practicum (Konwenhoven, 2003; Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010).

Learning and assessment are integral components in the context of CBC. The purpose of assessment is to gather information on what the students know and can do with their knowledge as a result of educational experiences. Methods such as portfolios, rating scales and rubrics, checklists, oral presentations, project works, practical tasks that demonstrate performance skills can be used to stimulate reflection by the students.

There have been observations that graduates do not possess the skills required by the industry (Asirifi, 2013; Mkumbo, 2010; ATE, 2011; Munishi, 2016; Sardokie, 2013; 2018; Yang & Cheung, 2014; Anderson, 2015). These studies have criticized training institutions for not adequately preparing the

students to meet the needs of hospitality industry thus impeding graduates' productivity and employment opportunities. It is not evident from these studies how the required hospitality skills are reflected in the programme design and how the training process is conducted to effectively produce these skills.

A study by Sardokie (2018) in Ghana was set to examine the current skills provided by hospitality trainers and those demanded by hospitality practitioners. The findings from questionnaires as the main instrument reveal a gap existing between hospitality providers and the expectations of practitioners. Sardokie study enlightened further on the existence of gaps between the industry and training institutions and provides avenues for further inquiry on the nature of the problem. Furthermore, the study findings do not provide evidences on how the programme is addressing the expectations of the employers. Programme design and how it is effectively implemented can as well provide evidences on how the programme is developing the skills required by the industry. This paper expanded the scope by examining how the programme design is contributing to acquisition and development of hospitality knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

Anderson (2015) examines human resource needs and skills gaps in the tourism and hospitality industry in Tanzania. The study reports serious gaps in generic skills for operational level employees in communication skills, customer care, marketing and sales skills, innovation and creativity skills, leadership and managerial skills and basic knowledge in ICT. Echoing Anderson study, Alhelalat (2015) study that examines the skills needed for hospitality graduates in the hotel industry in Jordan points out further that hospitality graduates are not meeting the needs of industry employers in key areas. These studies are based on the views of the employers and trainers and not evident how these skills are addressed in the design of the programme.

Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) (2011) surveyed skills development for tourism in Tanzania through a comparative framework that benchmarked Tanzania technical and vocational education system against other countries models. The study reported poor skills delivery system for both VETA and NACTE institutions as these institutions are providing courses based on knowledge, and not skills acquisition. This system ill prepares the graduates to enter the world of work

resulting in poor quality services provision in the hospitality industry. This study analyzed the vision and strategy for TVET, employment market information and the demand for skills, availability of job classifications, rigor and recognition of certifications, diplomas qualifications, quality assurance process, TVET decision making process. This study narrowly compared TET system against other country's model to establish skills gaps in the tourism and hospitality industry. Further, the study was on general tourism and hospitality training system and not the programme design. This paper specifically examined how VET hospitality programme is designed to contribute to skills development in Arusha region.

Research Methodology:

The study employed convergent design to compare whether qualitative and quantitative data confirm or disconfirm each other. The purpose was to obtain different but complementary data on the same research to best understand the research problem (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

The study targeted all private Vocational Education and Training (VET) hospitality training institutions and members of Hotels Association of Tanzania (HAT) in Arusha region. The sample for the study was six (6) training institution which were randomly selected. The 18 hotels were selected by purposive sampling technique. A total sample of 42 respondents was included in this study. These included 18 trainers, 6 heads of department, 18 hotel managers. Random sampling, purposive sampling techniques were used to select sample for the study. Data was collected using document analysis guide, classroom observation schedule, interview schedule for trainers, and interview guide for heads of department and hotel managers. Validity of the instruments was determined by research experts. Trustworthiness of qualitative data was ensured by triangulation. Qualitative data were analyzed by transcription of data from interviews. Programme activities were used to analyze the collected data and used for data interpretation.

Findings and Discussion

This paper aimed at examining the design of VET hospitality programme. The aim was to determine the extent to which curriculum activities align with the occupational standards (hospitality industry) and the requirements of Competence Based Education and Training (CBET). Data for this question were obtained from content analysis of VET hospitality

programme, structured interview with the trainers and in-depth interview with the heads of departments and hotel managers. The researcher analyzed the curriculum for Food and Beverage Sales and Services (FBSS) and Front Office Operations (FOO). English and Communication Skills course being one of the supporting subjects that provide a complementary role in teaching and learning of the major courses was also analyzed. The analysis indicated that the two curricular (Food and Beverage Sales and Services (FBSS) and Front Office Operations (FOO)) had common structure related to teaching and training methods and assessment procedures, therefore the discussion on the two elements are based on FBSS and FOO course. Programme objectives and teaching and learning activities are separately discussed.

The Programme Design

The modules contain the following structure: programme objectives, performance criteria indicating the expected end results or outcome in form of evaluative statements, element referring to a sub unit (step), which reflects learning sequence with the aim of achieving broad learning objectives of a unit, competence assessment criteria as specific requirements of performance of prescribed outcomes, underpinning knowledge assessment as the assessment of essential knowledge needed in order to demonstrate competences that are associated in performing a given task and training requirements for accomplishing the module. The following guides as interpreted from the programme document were used in analyzing the curriculum: programme objectives, teaching and learning activities (elements), teaching and learning methods, assessment procedures and recommended resources (training requirements).

Programme Objectives

In a Competency Based Education and Training system, the programme document should guide trainers (facilitators) on the competence to be achieved, that is: what trainees should achieve at the end of the course or an education programme. They clarify the desired learning outcomes, expected behaviour, condition for the behaviour to occur and acceptable level of performance (ABCD model). Food and Beverage Sales and Services (FBSS) course has been designed to meet the following objectives:

At the end of the course, the trainee should be able to:

- a. Maintain a safe and healthy working environment.
- b. Maintain kitchen and restaurant tools and equipment.
- c. Exercise customer care
- d. Prepare gears for service.
- e. Provide basic food and beverage services.
- f. Handle room service.
- g. Operate bar.
- h. Budget and cost food and beverage materials.
- i. Establish food and beverage control system.

The objectives indicated are clearly stated in behavioural terms each specifying learning outcomes to be achieved by the trainees, as put by Tyler (1949) objectives define the statement of changes to take place in learners. They form a basis through which module contents and assessment activities are formed. They are operational in nature emphasizing what trainees should be able to do (at the end of the course, the trainees should be able to provide basic food and beverage service). The researcher inquired from the trainers on the extent to which programme objectives mirror hospitality industry. One of the trainers commented; ‘as with this curriculum, if you study carefully you can easily pick what the trainees should achieve. So I can say here that objectives relate very much to industry’ (25/5/2021).

As for hotel managers when asked whether the graduates are equipped with the required skills in the industry, one of them said; ‘Well with my experience in the industry, I think on the basics, I can say it is satisfactory for entry level employees’ (30/5/2021).

From the interviewed respondents the objectives set are relating to what trainees will do in their future occupations. Therefore, programme objectives reflect future occupational standards and their integration into learning contents will facilitate the acquisition of hospitality skills.

Teaching and Learning Content

All teaching and learning activities are outcome based reflecting Food and Beverage Sales and Service industry. Each module and its subsequent element and unit clearly guides what is expected in the industry. Teaching and learning activities are designed based on occupational standards for which the trainees will be working in future. The core modules are systematically and sequentially arranged where acquisition of one module leads to the acquisition of the other. The modules are sub

divided into elements (steps) reflecting learning sequence which are aimed at achieving broad learning objectives of the unit. Unit as a statement of broad learning objectives prescribe the requirements of a standard in form of practical skills, knowledge and attitudes. The learning units (elements) are written in form of competences reflecting broad learning objectives of a unit and planned objectives. Therefore, the teaching and learning activities relate to the learning objectives and the breadth and depth of contents in each level are appropriate. There is vertical integration between modules such as in Life Skills for Level I there is a unit for interpersonal relationship and for Level III in English and Communication module, there are communication concepts. Horizontal integration for Level I, a customer care unit is integrated with a unit on Life Skills (good interpersonal relationship and effective communication).

Teaching and learning activities are designed based on occupational standards for which the trainees will be working in future. They relate to the learning objectives and the breadth and depth of contents in each level are appropriate. A follow up interview made with trainers confirmed that the contents mirror the industry. Furthermore during classroom observation, trainees were equipped with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes related to hospitality industry. Similarly, interviews conducted with the heads of department commended VETA for a well-structured programme. They further commented on the step by step arrangement of the core courses that effectively prepared trainees for the industry. One of head of department said; 'As opposed to the previous programme, the current programme provides entrepreneurship knowledge where trainees could prepare business ideas for future self-employment' (25/5/2021). The inclusions of supporting subjects were meant to provide a balance in the provision of hospitality training. The purpose was to prepare trainees for both wage and self-employment. Therefore, from the programme document analyzed and interviewed respondents, teaching and learning content designed in the programme document reflect graduates future occupational tasks.

Teaching and Training Methodology

Teaching and Training in Competency Based Education and Training is based on constructivism approach and that the learner must be actively involved in the construction of knowledge, skills,

values and attitudes. In constructivism approach the learning process is central and the learners are actively engaged in the process of constructing and reconstructing knowledge in a stimulating environment. The teacher's role is that of cognitive guide facilitating the acquisition of the required competencies (Boahin, 2018). According to programme document, teaching-learning methodology is based on learning through application and learner's competent performance is based on three main domains of learning (cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills). Although the document has not specified instructional procedures to guide trainers in teaching, the analysis of learning activities reflect practical oriented activities. This indicates that learning and teaching is based on the application to develop the required competence. A follow up interview with the trainers was conducted to clarify on the concept of learner centered methods. Trainers mentioned role play, demonstrations and practical oriented activities as the common methods used to engage trainees in learning. Therefore, teaching and training methods involve active learner participation in knowledge and skills construction.

Modes of Assessment

The programme document provides guides for assessing learners' competent performance in three domains, namely; cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills. According to VETA (2013) testing and assessment shall be conducted in two ways; internal and external assessment. Internal assessment is formative in nature and conducted by vocational teacher. The aim is to collect sufficient evidence that the learners can perform to a specified standard in a specific role. Each unit has to be assessed and trainee to meet the required standard before proceeding to the next unit. In each unit there are recommended forms of assessment titled process, product and service assessments. This analysis focuses on the internal assessments as they guided the researcher to examine how VET hospitality programme is assessed to develop the required skills.

Learning activities and assessment need to be well connected in a well-designed programme. Assessment for learning provides information to improve teaching and learning process. It is clearly stated from the programme document that internal assessment is formative and continuous in nature. While the programme insists on assessing each unit and that the trainee should meet the required

standard before she/he can proceed to the next unit, recommended methods have not been provided. CBC should be descriptive enough to guide teachers in identifying learning outcomes, teaching-learning methods and how assessments should be conducted and used. A follow up interview conducted to examine assessment methods in the respective courses revealed that quizzes tests and practical were the dominant methods. This reveals that assessments were used to measure the level of student achievement, as opposed to be used to determine student progress (how well they can perform a specific learning task). In one of the lessons observed a practical part was done by a trainer demonstrating a table set up, and trainees later turn taking to practice. Trainer did not record how each student was performing a task, instead a general comment was given that they need to follow the procedures for setting up the table. If the purpose of assessment is to improve learning, how will a student know whether she/he has done to the required standard and what specific areas should be improved? Interview with one of the head of department said, 'you see the programme requires trainees to get many practical assessment activities and with our few resources, it is not possible. Therefore we get them do weekly tests and quizzes then complement with study tours at least twice in a semester' (24/5/2021).

This statement confirms with classroom observation data where most of the lesson time was spent by trainers explaining concepts and trainees copying notes from the board. Since assessments were not aligned with teaching, trainees could not construct meaning through tasks given. It therefore impeded the acquisition of practical skills.

Field Attachment

Teaching and training include institutional and industrial based learning (field attachment) (VETA, 2013). The programme document describes that trainees will go for 12 weeks field attachment. There will be a logbook for each trainee suggesting areas to be covered and the actual area covered. Further, the industry to which a trainee is attached will provide a supervisor to guide and assess the trainee in the day to day activities. The guides provided mainly focus on the duration, time for field attachment and who to do assessment. Field attachment is intended for trainees to get practical industry experiences after they have covered the theoretical parts in the area of specialization. All

interviewed respondents have agreed on duration of field attachment that it is sufficient to expose trainees with industrial experiences.

The researcher also analyzed trainees' field attachment forms to assess the extent to which it holistically assesses the trainees in their occupational areas. The guides for field attachment are developed by the training institutions for a supervisor to use to assess the trainees. The findings indicated that assessment form mainly covered generic attributes in a likert scale and there is no space for supervisor to comment on the nature of trainees' skills acquisition and utilization. There was an indication that during 12 weeks field attachment, trainees are not assessed in their occupational areas and assessment is not holistic thus no feedback report on the nature of programme improvement. Shariff (2013) urges that assessment for learning should be carried out in conjunction with insights from industry professionals. There was an indication that during 12 weeks field attachment, trainees are not assessed in their occupational areas and assessment is not holistic thus hampering feedback report on trainees' skills possession and acquisition.

Recommended Resources

There are recommended resources for each unit to guide in the teaching and training. The resources are well described to guide the trainers in their use. The number of recommended resources is adequate for facilitating the teaching and learning process.

English and Communication Skills Course

English and communication skills as one of related subject is divided into three (3) parts. There is neither objective set for this course nor guiding elements identified for this course. Since course objectives form the basis for structuring contents and assessment procedures, by not including the desired objectives, the implementers will not be clearly guided on what the course aim to achieve. Tyler (1949) emphasizes that any statement of objectives should be the statement of changes to take place in learners. Thus, if the objectives are not included in the programme document, there are no desired changes to be expected in learners. The absence of intended objectives creates a gap in the selection of contents, teaching methods, assessment activities and more so affect skills acquisition in graduates.

Course Contents

According to Konwenhoven (2003) a competence-based curriculum should describe what a learner is

expected to learn and achieve in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding. The contents for this course are neither described nor did the elements to be covered. Having no course contents identified create ambiguity on the desired competencies to be acquired and developed. The breadth and depth of the content at a particular level are probably not going to be up to the required standard, and hence affecting graduates' skills acquisition. During the interview session, one of the course trainers commented: 'You see this course is not specific on what to be taught. For example, how can I teach reading, writing, speaking and listening to the hoteliers while there are no guides given? I only have two hours in a week to teach all these, how will that be possible?' (10/5/2012). As viewed by the course trainers, lack of clear guidelines do not support effective implementation, and hence graduates skills acquisition. Similar findings were observed in the classroom where teaching and assessment activities were not integrated with hospitality knowledge, skills and understanding. One important issue worth noting here is this course cater for all hospitality trainees (Food Production, House Keeping, Food and Beverage Sales and Services and Front Office Operations) but satisfy none. For instance; Level III trainees for Food and Beverage Sales and Services should be able to take food and beverage orders from the guests, while Front Office Operations should be able to fill in reservation form. Since they are all learning in one classroom, there is no indication that these two groups will have acquired the required writing skills. English and communication skills course form a foundation through which transferable skills such as oral and written communication skills, interpersonal skills are developed. Despite the fact that effective communication skills is a highly required skill in hospitality industry (Anderson, 2015; Theron, et al, 2018), the findings from this study reveal that the course is less emphasized in the training institution. One of the reason could be not providing enough guide in the programme document. In absence of clear guide on designated objectives and teaching methods, trainers are likely to return to lecture methods. This will further affect on the acquisition of practical skills required by the industry. English and communication skills module trainer expressed their dissatisfaction on how the course is given less priority in the institutions. They further mentioned that there were no supporting materials for teaching and learning compared to core modules and there is no specific time allocated

for trainees to practice language skills. Relating to how the course is meeting the objectives, one of the trainers commented:

'You know English language is a challenging language to both students and teachers. For example, here in our college we receive students from different backgrounds and it's a requirement to train them all within limited resources and time. The same students that you would like them to do lots of practice, are the same that they are mostly needed in their specializations. Time here for English is tight' (inadequate) (22/5/2021).

This illustration implies that the course suffers from supporting resources and little time allocated for practice. Thus, the course is neither fulfilling students' linguistic demands nor developing their communication skills. Bertalanffy (1968) insists that the components of a total system and how they complementarily work together contribute to its performance. English and communication skills as part of a total system in hospitality training support the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. It is also anticipated that the course would make up for trainees' linguistic deficiencies and develop effective communication skills if given the attention it deserves. Although effective communication skills was rated 'excellent' by the trainees in their questionnaire, hotel managers and supervisors reported that to be the most lacking skills among fresh graduates. However, the problem is traced from programme document by not specifically describing learning contents, assessment methods and the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings, this study concluded that: Therefore, it can be concluded that VET programme for Food and Beverages Service and Sales and Front Office Operations are well designed to enhance skills development among the graduates and if well implemented will lead to the acquisition of hospitality knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. English and communication skills course is not well designed in terms of designated learning outcomes, learning content, teaching and training methods and assessment activities. The current variation of field assessment form does not holistically assess trainees on the required occupations. Field attachment expose the trainees to their future job experiences and an avenue to apply theory learnt, therefore assessment should be designed to capture both technical and generic skills.

Recommendations

The researcher would like to recommend the following:

VETA should develop clear structure to guide in teaching and training methods, assessment procedures for each course. The guides should be aligned with the learning outcomes so that training and assessment are as per the requirements of Competence Based Education and Training (CBET). Field attachment offers to trainees opportunities to experience the industry. Apart from informing the institutions on the duration of the field, VETA should develop assessment form for field attachment to ensure uniformity on assessment, same as they are using centralized curriculum. Training institutions should provide regular seminar/workshops, as part of in-service professional development on the Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) as opposed to depend on trainer's personal initiatives.

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