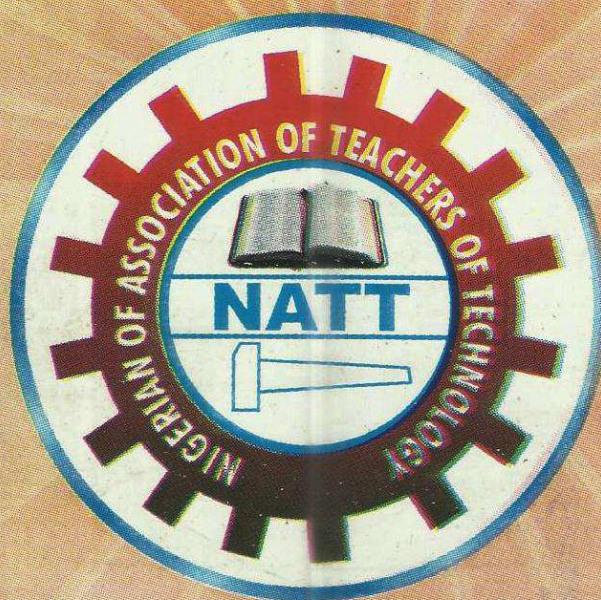


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## EDUCATING FOR AFFECT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

BY

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### Abstract

*Interest in affective skills development dates back to early nineteenth century. The reason for the interest of employers, educators and psychologists in this domain of work behaviour is its crucial influence on job success. Employers place premium on affective skills of workers because they lead to productivity. Most beginning workers lose jobs due to poor personality traits and not technical incompetence. Unfortunately affective skills development has received the least training attention in vocational education. Training emphasis has always been accorded cognitive skills to the detriment of affective skills training. Methods of affective skills development are suggested. Accrediting agents' minimum standards should provide guidelines for training youth in affective skills for quality assurance in task performance. Educating for affect should be included in the Nigerian educational curriculum for vocational students and teachers in training.*

### Introduction

The key concepts of this paper are "affect" and "quality assurance". The concept of vocational technical education has been exhaustively dealt by expert minds and through the media of National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), conferences, seminars, books, workshops and journal publications. It may not be economical in this situation to over labour the concept, but remind the leadership that vocational education is a workshop-based education; it is the objective of all education and it is for everybody as long as education prepares an individual for a given career. The intent of vocational education has emphatically been rooted in skills acquisition for work. However, the term "skills" refers to work behaviour which is four-dimensional: cognitive, affective, psychoproductive and perceptual (Bloom, Englehart, Furst and Hill, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, 1970; Simpson, 1966 and Moore, 1970).

The term "affect" refers to an emotion that changes or influences what one does or thinks (Rundell, 2010). Quality assurance is viewed by Gadsby (2008) and Rundell (2010) as the methods that a company or organization uses to check the quality of goods or services it produces, so as to ensure that the standard continues to be good or high enough.

### The Importance of Affect in Vocational Education

Affect, usually neglected, but a major component of work behaviour and a factor of job success caught the attention of educators and psychologists several decades ago. Precisely, the genesis of interest in affect dates back to early nineteenth century when Sigmund Freud sold to the civilized world, the idea that the human mind is made up of three selves namely; the Id, Ego, and Superego. The basest of the selves is Id while Superego is the ideal or best self likened to the Holy Spirit (seat of affect) (Lee, 1977). The improper

functioning of Superego (to the favour of the Id or lower self) has led to problems in human relations observed in the world of work and among nations in politics. Affect has been viewed as a solution to the problems of human relations (Kohlberg, 1975). The focus of attention on affect in educational training is therefore justified. The fact that the major reason given for lack of success in jobs is "failure to get along well with others", speaks strongly for the school to prepare potential workers with the proper and congruent affective skills (Erickson and Wentling, 1986; Petty and Morgan, 1980 and Kazanas, 1980). It is insufficient for vocational education programme to equip its learners with only cognitive psychoproductive and perceptual skills. Important to job success are such socio-psychological skills or affective work competencies (Kazanas, 1980) as good attitudes, interest, values, ambition and aspirations. Research evidence indicates that over 80% of beginning workers lose jobs not because they lack task skills or technical competence, but because they are deficient in affective skills or fail to get along well with others including fellow workers (Kimbrell and Vineyard, 1980). Many job failures are highly competent in the cognitive and psychoproductive skills. Traditionally also, educators have laid emphasis on cognitive and psychoproductive skills training to the detriment of affective skills development. Employers place premium

reasoned or rationalized that affective work skill is a component of no mean order in work behaviour even though in actual practice it has received the least attention as illustrated by Udo, (2010) in figure 1.

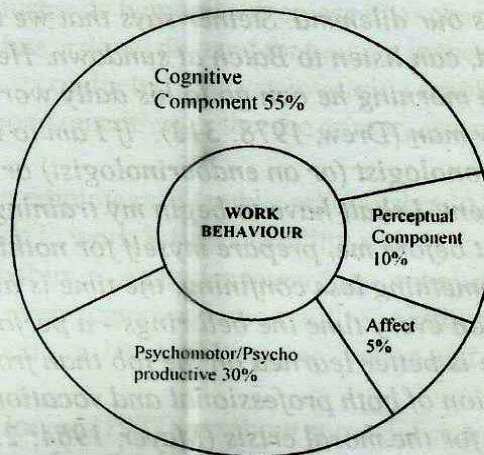


Figure 1: Proportions of Work Behaviour Domains in Vocational-Technical Education (A Rough Estimate).

The illustration in figure 1 is a rough estimate of the proportion of work behaviour components of vocational education administrative and supervisory practices in Nigeria. Udo (2010) based his analysis, on the responses obtained during an interview of over 15 Technical College Administrators and Supervisors in Akwa Ibom State on the issues of teaching effectiveness, promotions, demotions and nature of staff treatment. The analysis of responses on affective skills application indicated the allocation of least attention to human relations or affective matters in the world of work. The foregoing report is not only true of all opment in vocational education has been accorded the least attention or emphasis in the Nigerian school system.

### Implied and Explicit Complaints Against lack of Affective Skills Training in Vocational Education.

quality of work force. Lack of it is dangerous to both the individual and the national development (UNIDO, 2002). The individual who lacks affective work competencies loses his or her job while the national development is hindered as a consequence of ill-bred work force and wastage in human and material resources. Both the individual and the nation need balanced work behaviour which must reflect effectively, the cognitive, affective, psychoproductive and perceptual skills (Ntino and Usoro, 2006). Of all these behaviour domains, affective domain is a very crucial component.

Lack of training for the development of affective competencies is an age-old problem for vocational education and its service areas (Thompson, 1973; Kazanas and Wolf, 1980; Miller and Usoro, 1981). The cry against this unfortunate and undesirable treatment given to affective dimension of work behaviour has been expressed by advocates of affective education for improved quality of workforce and living in general. Let us ponder over the following quotations:

*even when a man is intellectually advanced he can be morally bankrupt at the same time. And this is our dilemma. Steiner says that we now know that such a man, well-educated, can listen to Bach at sundown. He can read Goethe in the evening, and the next morning he can go to his daily work at the concentration camp to kill his fellow man (Drew, 1978: 313). If I am to be trained professionally to be an electronologist (or an endocrinologist) or a desk man in the bowels of the State Department, I shall have to begin my training at birth and, in the avalanche of knowledge set before me, prepare myself for nothing else. If, on the other hand, I mean to do something less confining, the time is already upon us when I need only to push the button every time the bell rings - a performance which Pavlov's dog discovered long since is better learned on the job than from books. We may then, consider the elimination of both professional and vocational study from the preparation of modern man for the moral crisis (Mayer, 1964: 224).*

*Ask the average industrialist or business executive, "What do people want from our vocational education programmes?" The typical answer will be, "Just give me some people who are honest, reliable, punctual, dedicated, pleasant, responsive and free from all vices". And, as a subtle put-down the answer may include the "fact" that industry itself can do the job of providing employees with the skills needed for specific jobs, and, therefore, vocational education does not have to bother too much about emphasizing skills (Feiret, 1976: 4)*

In the recent past, some educators frowned upon emotionalism in education. To them intellectualism had little or nothing to do with the learner's interests, emotions or impulses. However, it has come to be recognized that the learner's feeling and emotions are important considerations in education. Thus one group of theorists upholds affective learning as the primary goal of education. Discipline centered curriculum projects have emphasized cognitive learning to the detriment of affective process. This is one of the problems of most schools in Africa today. Consequently, there has been a serious imbalance in the development of work behaviour of school products in Africa (Onwuka, 1985: 247).

(Stockel, 1978: 696) an industrial education consultant has this to say regarding the affective skills expected by potential employers in automobile occupation:

The top mechanic arrives at work on TIME and is absent for GOOD REASON. If absence is necessary, the mechanic will immediately NOTIFY the employer so that customer commitments and workloads may be adjusted. Good mechanics invariably are hard workers and during any periods when they may not have work assignments, they will busy themselves by cleaning tools, maintaining equipment, sweeping the work station, helping fellow mechanics etc. They take PRIDE IN THEIR WORK AND PRIDE IN THE BUSINESS. They know that by helping the business to prosper, they too will prosper. Top mechanics devote time and energy towards the betterment of the trade. They gladly share their knowledge with apprentices. They conduct themselves at all times, in a way that brings credit to the trade.

Thus good work habits or affective skills are expected by potential employers not only in automobile occupations, but also in other vocational occupations. The foregoing quotations (a few out of a whole lot) define the current national and global dilemma in educational endeavours towards affective skills development. The general education shop of Osgood (1963) referred to Socratic whole man. Osgood likens today's educational scene to a huge, crowded bazaar with a profusion of attractive wares, among which the shopper wanders bewildered. "We are compartmentalized". We are technologized. Each department trains its segment of the intellect, its portion of the psychomotor. We have no "whole person department".

Business, general public and industry do bemoan a decrease in or absence of work values on the part of the average employee. There is, thus, a direct demand for training in the development of desirable personality traits. Graven (1977: 32 - 33) conducted a survey involving employers of Texas State, U.S.A. The result of the survey indicated, among other things, that the primary reasons for terminating employees are

absenteeism. Other areas in which employers felt public schools should provide training include:

1. Concern for productivity
2. Pride in work
3. Responsibility and ability to follow through
4. Dependability
5. Good work habits
6. Attitudes towards company and employer (boss)
7. Ability to write and speak effectively (communication skill)
8. Ability to read and apply printed matter to the job
9. Ability to follow instructions
10. Ambition, motivation and desire to get ahead.

The findings of the research by Graven (1977) are about some dimensions of affective work competencies. To these affective dimensions of work behaviour, Kazanas (1980) and his group of researchers have added more (85) and organized them on semantic basis into the following 15 cluster of effective work competencies in vocational education:

- |                |                        |                  |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Ambitious   | 6. Accurate            | 11. Persevering  |
| 2. Cooperative | 7. Careful             | 12. Neat/Orderly |
| 3. Adaptable   | 8. Pleasant            | 13. Dependable   |
| 4. Considerate | 9. Follow Direction    | 14. Efficient    |
| 5. Independent | 10. Emotionally Stable | 15. Dedicated    |

### **The Teaching of Affective Work Competencies**

It is well known that the vast majority of people who leave jobs do so because of the shortcomings in personal attitudes, rather than for reasons of competence. The personal attributes that are vital to career success or entrepreneurial exploits include a sense of responsibility, a cooperative attitude, social skills, initiative, leadership and followership and efficient work habits (Bakar and Miller, 1976). So far, there are indications of a growing consensus of the need to include the teaching of affective work competencies along with the traditional skills in vocational education. In the light of the above, Kazanas and Wolff

(1980), Kazanas (1980), Kibler, Barker, and Miles (1980) have drawn attention to the fact that positive work attitudes can be taught through human relations courses and that the teaching of affective skills should begin at home, reinforced at school and polished at work place or world of work. Attempts have been made to teach at least some of the attitudinal aspects of the successful worker. Individuals have developed modules for teaching desirable worker traits to students without any advice on how educators might teach the hints to the students. Other attempts made were not supported by empirical evidence of their effectiveness (Kazanas, 1980). Some of the attempts of training for affect adopted experimental approach which never yielded significant results on attitudes toward employment, but rather indicated significantly higher cognitive skills test scores (Petty, 1979).

### **Methods of Educating for Affective Skills Development**

Several approaches can be adopted to assist vocational education students develop affective work skills. These approaches include:

1. Use of video and films showing the positive aspects of worker attitudes.
2. Actual instruction on the development of affective work competencies. Kibler, Barker, Miles (1980), Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia (1970) have provided the objectives and procedures for teaching affective skills. It is suggested herein that colourful cartoons be used in the teaching process, because they attract and hold the students' attention.
3. The presentation of materials should attract student's interest for no more than 10 - 15 minutes.
4. Appropriate instructional packages should be used with slide/tape. Educational technology, with its modern and sophisticated designs is a dependable tool for achieving success in teaching affect to students.
5. Use of disciplinary committees to train students in the development of good attitude is a negative approach to the whole business of affective education. It must be discouraged.
6. Assigning to the students, responsibilities that are likely to help them develop the affective qualities of concern.
7. Rewarding students who exhibit good attitudes is a measure of reinforcement which results in the achievement of affective skills development.

Training for affective skills development must certainly have a place in the syllabus to help students in this regard. However, the training of students in affective skills development should not be one-agent business, namely the school. This task should be shared between vocational education and other agents which have the potentials of inculcating affective qualities in the youth. Usoro and Udofia (2010) have developed instructional materials titled "Human and Public Relations for Undergraduates, Workers and Employers in Trade and Industrial Occupations". This is a ten-unit instructional material specially written to help vocational-technical education students develop affective work competencies for success in the world of work.

Vocational education is a workshop-based education designed to equip learners with affective work competencies and other skills for the world of work. This is a repetition for emphasis on the nature and function of vocational education. The term "Affective Work Competencies" refers to the work attitudes, habits and values characteristic of the "good worker" (Kazanas and Wolff, 1980). Two of these characteristics have been revealed: One aspect deals with the personal interrelationships involving the worker and the task or specific work function. The second aspect deals with personal interrelationships between the worker and his/her fellow workers and employers. However, the affective skills are not the only skills to be developed in vocational education. Other skills include cognitive, psychoproduative and perceptual as already men

tioned earlier in this paper.

The problem associated with the development of the aforementioned skills in education is that cognitive skills developments have been emphasized to the detriment of other skills with particular reference to affective skills. The value of affective skills in job success cannot be debated because its neglect in the training programme is the cause of worker problems in the world of work. The four components of work behaviour do not receive equal emphasis in their development process as illustrated by Udo (2010).

Quality assurance which has already been defined requires that the four dimensions of work skills be given equitable attention for the attainment balanced work behaviour. So far this requirement has not been met by vocational education programmes (Materu, 2007). There are three agents charged with the responsibility of ensuring the quality of vocational education programme products prepared for the world of work. These agents are the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Universities Commission (NUC). To ensure quality of educational products, each agent has produced a minimum guide which the training programme must follow in its training process. During accreditation exercise, each agent wants to see whether a training programme has provided all the facilities needed to implement the standards contained in its minimum guide. Any programme that fails to meet the standards set is denied accreditation.

However, it is common observation that the agents do not pay particular attention to the quality of work skills acquired by students. This explains why the dimensions of work behaviour do not receive equal attention or are haphazardly treated in the training process. For quality assurance, training in the four components of work behaviour must receive equal emphasis for fruitful practice in the world of work as illustrated in figure 2.

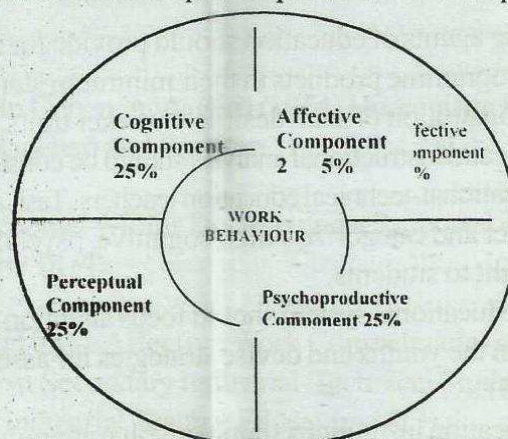


Figure 2: *Balanced Work Skill: All components receive equal training emphasis*

To ensure quality of occupational skills students acquire in the training programmes, the accrediting agents must emphasize detailed training for balanced skills development and demand evidence of accomplishment. This is the only strategy for ensuring emphasis on training for affective skills development. The concern of Quality Assurance is in producing individuals who can exhibit balanced work behaviour. To the extent that vocational education programme places equal emphasis (25%) on each skill dimension Quality Assurance is assured.

**Summary**

educators and employers in the domain of work behaviour is that, it is a crucial factor in job success.

Research evidence indicates that most beginning workers who lose their jobs do so not because they lack task skills, but because they lack desirable personality traits. Unfortunately, affective skills development, has received the least training attention in vocational education programmes. Other dimensions of work behaviour have always been accorded training emphasis to the detriment of affective skills development.

However, there is evidence of a growing consensus of the need to include the teaching of affective work competencies along with traditional skills in vocational education. The inclusion of training for affective work behaviour in vocational education programmes is a sure way of deemphasizing training in cognition and giving equitable attention to training in all components of work behaviour, then the quality of skills acquired by students is assured. Strategies suggested for affective skills training include use of videos and films, actual instruction using colourful presentations, rewarding learners who exhibit desirable affective

cern. Training for affective skills development should not be the concern of vocational educators only. It

the skills acquired by students is difficult to achieve because accrediting agents concentrate on provision of adequate facilities for the implementation of their minimum standards.

### Recommendations

In the light of the content of this paper, the following recommendations are proffered:

- i In the view of the value of affective work competencies in job success, educating for affect must have a place in vocational education curriculum at the secondary and tertiary levels of education.
- i The accrediting agents of education should provide for the assessment of quality of skills acquired by programme products in their minimum standards and demand evidence of students' demonstration of such desirable worker traits.
- iii. Training in task and instructional analysis should be consciously included in the programme for training vocational-technical education teachers. Task analysis approach helps the teacher to identify, order and categorize skills (cognitive, psychoproductive, affective and perceptual) to be taught to students.
- iv. The Nigerian educational system should focus attention on education for affective skills development in the youths and devise strategies for assessing such skills (Nwigwe and Nwigwe, 1985).
- iv. Vocational education institutions should involve appropriate agents in training the youth to *develop desirable worker traits needed by potential employers.*

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