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Investigation on possible mismatch between TVET skills acquired in high school and workplace skills needed by Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana: a case study of Botswana's South East District

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ABSTRACT

Technical skills are those specialized hands-on skills and competences needed to perform specific tasks. The study investigated the potential mismatch between Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skills acquired in high school and workplace skills needed by Zimbabwean school-leaver migrants in Botswana. A mixed method research design was used for the triangulation of data collection and analysis. Systematic sampling was used in the research. Questionnaires were administered to 60 school-leaver migrants and 19 responded to the semi-structured interviews. Quantitative results were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to handle large statistical information with minimum errors. Qualitative results were summarized under each research question. The study established that most Zimbabwean school-leaver migrants had done a TVET subjects at school and were working in sectors related to the TVET subjects they had done at school, showing a relationship of TVET skills acquired in high school and the needed workplace skills in Botswana. This is supported by a positive significant Pearson correlation of 0.01. School TVET must orient learners to the use of tools and equipment and, equip learners with technical skills that can be adapted in the workplace to mitigate a possible learner skills-job mismatch. Study findings created a feedback loop for policymakers and teachers to improve the TVET system and make it more relevant to the changing skills needed in the workplace.

Introduction

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skills are those specialized hands-on skills and competences needed to perform specific tasks (Bahl & Dietzen, 2019; Geresu, 2017). This study investigated the possible mismatch between TVET skills acquired in school and those skills needed by migrants to do jobs in Botswana. The nature of work is constantly changing due to technological advancement effecting possible labor-job skills mismatch and affecting how people operate in the workplaces (World Development Report [WDR], 2019). It is acknowledged that developing countries like Zimbabwe included TVET curricula in general education in schools as one way to teach learners the use of tools and equipments in different trades and, to equip learners with technical skills for work to reduce the learner skills-job mismatch (Mambo, 2010; Maunganidze et al., 2016). In a study by Mandebvu (1996), findings suggest that high school TVET in Zimbabwe is also meant to inculcate positive attitudes in learners toward manual jobs. In this view, TVET is therefore meant to build capacity for a future workforce with the right work attitudes, responsive and relevant skills to meet the needs of changing workplaces. Brunello and Rocco (2017) point out that, the various types of jobs

undertaken by high-school leavers over the short and long term, both in the home and destination country after migrating, may serve as an indicator of the relationship of high school TVET skills and those skills needed in the workplaces.

Despite Zimbabwe's TVET curricula aiming to equip learners with relevant technical skills for work, the country is experiencing a high unemployment rate of school-leavers and some of them end up migrating to neighboring countries in search of economic opportunities (Munetsi, 1996). The rising youth unemployment in the country is partly blamed on curricula irrelevance and a low domestic job market in the country (Coltart, 2012). For instance, the 2012 population census in Zimbabwe revealed a population consisting of 36% youths aged between 15 and 24 years making up 84% of the unemployed population (ZimStat, 2012).

While this study was primarily designed to examine the relationship of TVET skills acquired in high school and the type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants, it was also a key test of learner skills-labor market relevance. The role of TVET in mitigating post-school youth unemployment is acknowledged in several countries. For example, Dorasamy and Rampersand (2018) and Ogwo (2019) assert that countries like Germany and Switzerland that have robust high school TVET systems produce learners with relevant work-related skills and equally, these countries have low youth unemployment rates. Learners are taught different technical skills to the extent that upon leaving school, they can either go directly into employment or further training in areas related to the TVET skills they acquired in school. Therefore, this study investigated the possible mismatch between TVET skills acquired in school and workplace competencies needed by Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana.

Migrants often face a challenge of possible skills mismatch in the labor market of a host country with different work practices together with structural differences in jobs (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2018). However, Zimbabwe school-leavers migrate to neighboring countries including Botswana because of proximity, social and family networks for easy arrival reception (Mlambo, 2017). On the other hand, Kopinsk and Polus (2004) suggest that Botswana adopted relative sympathy toward migrant labor due the lack of manpower in a country with a population of 2.3 million people. Migration of job seekers with only TVET skills from high school in Zimbabwe is also exacerbated by low post-school domestic job market in the country (Anatol et al., 2013, p. 24; Murphy, 2017, p. 1; Mlambo, 2017, p. 3). Although people migrate with the hope to find jobs in the host country, the question is, what is the potential mismatch between TVET skills acquired in high school and the workplace skills needed by migrants in Botswana where the study was conducted?

Theoretical framework

The study is grounded in the relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1981). The theory asserts that relevance is interpreted from social context, communication and abstract cognitive and reflective thinking processes which are enhanced by educational intervention. The theory was chosen because the examination of the relationship of technical skills and type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants is a key test of technical skills-labor market relevance. The theory acknowledges that humans have prospective intuitions of relevance in general. The theory suggests that, after a teaching and learning intervention, learners expect skills learnt to be relevant in their lives and these expectations can be personal or functional. Curriculum relevance can be functional when employers get graduates with the right skills from it, and personal when qualifying trainees get employment and increased income.

High school TVET in Zimbabwe

High school TVET in Zimbabwe is available for the 6 years of high school from Forms 1 to 6, and it is embedded in general school curricula. During Forms 1 to 4, students must choose at least two TVET subjects alongside other academic and commercial subjects (Munetsi, 1996). However, not all schools offer all the TVET subjects in school curricula due to resources (Mupinga et al., 2005, p. 12). A student

can exit at Form 4 (Ordinary level) after four years of high school or at Form 6 (Advanced level) two years after Ordinary level. The Ordinary level TVET subjects include: Building Studies, Woodwork, Metalwork, Technical Graphics, Home Economics and Agriculture, Music Art, and Computer Studies, among others. Learners are taught both theory and practical skills at the same time inculcating the right work attitudes of the trade in learners. High school-leavers are expected to carry out activities effectively and appreciate the dignity of labor in different jobs they may undertake after school (Coltart, 2012, p. 8; Munetsi, 1996, p. 13). Some students proceed to do TVET subjects at Advanced level, the upper high school exit level.

At the Advanced level, learners are taught the application of practical, theoretical, research and problem-solving approaches to acquire competency-based skills, knowledge, and attitudes. TVET subjects offered at Advanced level include: Agriculture, Textiles Clothing Technology, Building Technology, Food Science, Design and Technology, and Computer Science, among others. Therefore, learners can exit Form 4 at the age of 16 years and proceed to find employment or further training whilst others can complete Form 6 at the age of 18 years and proceed to university. Alongside the TVET subjects offered in the general school curricula, some schools offer the National Foundation Certificate (NFC) after the first two years of high school (Coltart, 2012, p. 23).

The National Foundation Certificate (NFC) is a single subject course which is more trade-specific than the related TVET subjects offered in the general high school curricula. NFCs are examined by the Higher Examination Council (HEXCO) responsible for industrial trades. The courses are offered over a year duration and the entry level is basically 2 years of secondary education for those learners willing to pursue trade courses. NFCs are more oriented toward skills training and have more time allocated for practicals than the general TVET subjects (Chinyamunzore, 1995). The delivery and assessment components are weighed 60% for practical and 40% for associated theory. Students who take up NFC are required to go for work-based learning (WBL) or industrial placements to acquire on-the-job skills. On leaving school with an NFC qualification, one can directly go into employment in a related trade or occupation as a semi-skilled worker and upgrade through trade tests from NFC to journeyman status. NFC learners are taught entrepreneurship skills as well so that school-leavers who fail to obtain employment in the formal sector can set up small businesses in the informal sector. Table 1 shows the general practical subjects in the school curriculum and the matching NFC subjects.

The purpose of NFCs is that Ordinary level practical subjects are not doing enough to equip students with skills for employment and a more serious thrust in skills training is necessary (Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999). It is argued by Mandebvu (1994) that specialized skills training at school has been the dimension taken by most developing nations in a move to meet employment and labor needs. With trade-specific skills, learners on leaving school are likely to take up jobs or go for further training in areas related to the vocational subjects they did at school (Woyo, 2013). There are several examples of trade-specific skills training programmes in other countries referred to as pre-vocational (United States of America, USA) and pre-apprenticeships

Table 1. General practical subjects and their matching National Foundation Certificate qualifications.

General (Form 1–4)	National Foundation Certificate (NFC)
Agriculture	Horticulture
Building Studies	Brick and Block laying
Fashion and Fabrics	Tailoring, Clothing and Textiles
Metalwork	Machine shop Engineering
Technical Graphics	Technical Graphics
Woodwork	Carpentry and Joinery
Food and Nutrition	Catering

(England, Germany, Austria, France, and Switzerland) just to name a few, to give learners work oriented technical skills (Woessmann, 2018).

Despite challenges of implementing NFC at school level, studies found that there was an improved participation of school-leavers in the informal sector of the local economy (Chinyamunzore, 1995; CIET, 1999; Hondonga, 2006). Findings in a study on the migration of Zimbabweans by Mlambo (2017, p. 3) suggest that even those school-leavers with NFC are among people migrating from the country however, the relationship of the skills to the jobs in the host country has not been determined through research. The questions are as follows: what type of jobs do migrants take up in the destination country, and whether the skills acquired in school are related to those skills needed to perform the jobs they get in the host country?

Migrant jobs

Migrants' jobs in a host country are often determined by the level of migrants' skills, type, and level of jobs (Chiswick & Miller, 2011). In this context, low-skilled migrants with limited qualifications, and no specialized training in any trade, find work in low-wage jobs. In another study of migration and type of jobs for low-skilled workers, Benach et al. (2011) found that low-skilled migrant laborers find jobs more easily in sectors which require abundant manual labor like agriculture, food processing and construction because of their low human capital. The jobs are mostly of temporary short contracts and part-time that are not taxed. Other studies by Sanz (2018, p. 21) and Segatti (2017, p. 23) suggest that the level of education and migration are intertwined and impact on migrants' placement in the labor market in a host country with debatable effects to the economy. Dadush (2014) found that regulations of the host country's labor markets generally push people with low human capital to low-wage jobs and, on the other hand, skilled technology jobs attract more skilled migrants and native people. Hence, this study investigated the type of jobs taken up by migrants with only high school TVET skills in Botswana, whether migrants take up jobs related to the TVET subjects they studied at school.

Despite the quality of jobs, Dadush (2014) reveals that migration of low-skilled migrants remains a contentious issue even though they are also needed to perform certain functions especially those shunned by citizens in a host country. For example, Andersson et al. (2019) in a study of refugees' jobs in Europe found that the migration of low-skilled refugees contributed to the growth of low paid jobs. Migrants in this category of low skills have limited job mobility despite continuously gaining experience. However, Sanz (2018, p. 21) found that to a lesser extent, improved personal, job and informal social networks over time make low-skilled migrants to learn new skills and occupy new jobs.

Some studies including those by Segatti (2017) and Giovanni (2010) found that low-skilled migrants take up even those jobs not related to their past experiences in countries with a long tradition of labor migration such as Canada and USA. A fact file sheet compiled on foreign workers in South Africa by the African Center for Migration and Society (ACMS, 2017) reveals that foreign-born migrants who accept such odd jobs as a stepping stone into the formal labor market are more likely to be employed in precarious jobs in the informal sector, on short contracts and low-paying jobs than citizens. Influence of peers, ethnic niches, lack of social networks on arrival are powerful centers of non-formal on-the-job skills development for low-skilled migrants (Hagan et al., 2013; Lowe et al., 2010). Studies in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries by Segatti (2017, p. 84) and Konle-Seidl (2018, p. 23) revealed that low-skilled migrants depend on each other to get jobs on arrival and may not break away from such working cohorts and ethnic groupings despite the working conditions. This study investigated the relationship of TVET skills acquired in school and workplace skills needed by Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana.

Relationship of TVET subjects and skills acquired in School and type of work migrants assumed in Botswana

Several studies found that there is a relationship between technical skills acquired in TVET and those skills needed in the workplace (Allais, 2012; Garwe, 2014; Lauglo, 2006, p. 11; Mbongwe, 2018). This is supported by some proponents of the vocationalist perspective of education including Munetsi (2016, p. 13), Coltart (2012, p. 8) and Lauglo (2006) who argue that the role of school TVET is to orient learners toward specific jobs so that they can proceed to employment, further training, self-employment or use the skills in their productive lives after school. For example, in Switzerland, school vocational education and training (VET) provides students with basic foundational trade skills to proceed directly into apprenticeships related to their school VET subjects (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation [SERI], 2014). Munetsi (2016) and Coltart (2012) concur that school TVET in Zimbabwe is meant to equip learners with elementary technical skills for further training, possible employment opportunities in the formal or informal sectors and for livelihood sustenance after school. Therefore, various types of jobs taken up by school-leavers over the short and long term in the destination country can serve as an indicator of the relationship of school technical skills and those skills needed to perform the available jobs (Mbongwe, 2018).

Although UNESCO (2012) reported that an estimate of 115 million people in the 9–17-year age groups did not have any foundational skills in the jobs they engaged in, studies on migrant labor found a relationship of migrant skills and the jobs they take up. In a study by the Center for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP, 2011), findings suggest that even the trained migrants initially settle in jobs not aligned to their previous skills because they lack the information about employment opportunities in a host country and how to search for jobs. This suggests that technical skills acquired in school prepare learners for socio-economic roles in later lives through the acquisition of basic work skills and attitudes (Coltart, 2012, p. 8; Lofgren et al., 2019; Lauglo, 2006, p. 11). This functionalist perspective assumes that technical skills learnt in school can later in life, be used in real work situations for survival. Where there is a relationship of skills and work, it means that migrants can use their skills to adapt and do jobs successfully.

Global unemployment is on the increase because of labor-job skills mismatch whereby there is little if not, no relationship of skills learnt and those skills needed in the workplace (Lofgren et al., 2019; Mbongwe, 2018; Murinda, 2014). Findings by the Zimbabwe Labor Force and Child Labor Survey, LFCS (2011, p. 62) suggested that school-leaver unemployment continued to rise due to mismatch of learner-skills and those skills needed in the changing world of work and shrinking labor market in the country. Similar findings came up in Botswana in an evaluation report on the reorganization of TVET programmes (Ministry of Education and Skills Development, [MoESD], 2015). The report findings indicated that both students and lecturers concurred that there is a limited relationship of TVET programmes in Botswana and the actual labor market due to limited links to actual work-practice during training. Despite the limited learner skills-job situation in Botswana, high school-leavers from Zimbabwe migrate to Botswana to look for employment opportunities in a country where native school-leavers struggle to get jobs. This study determined the relationship between two variables, TVET skills and type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants in Botswana. Bonett (2008) explains that in cases where two variables tend to increase at the same time, it indicates a positive relationship between the two variables.

Research methodology

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection and analysis (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 124). The research elements included viewpoints, data collection and presentation methods, and inference techniques for the broad purposes of breadth of understanding and corroboration. The mixed method research design was used in the research because it provided for triangulation of data collection and analysis methods (Tashakkori et al., 2013, p. 11). The research

design is a pragmatic methodology which accepted the compatibility of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data gathering and analysis in one study. It allowed inference of meanings from data collected from respondents, about their views on the relationship of technical skills and their relevance to the type of jobs they are doing in Botswana.

This study was conducted in the South East district of Botswana because it is the main economic hub and destination for many migrants from Zimbabwe. The other districts in Botswana have limited economic activities due to the country's dry climate. The researcher used a systematic sampling design to select research participants from a target population of migrant Zimbabweans working in sectors related to TVET subject areas which are taught in Zimbabwe schools. These sectors include the construction sector, where TVET subjects such as *Building Studies*, *Technical Graphics* and *Woodwork* are aligned; the agricultural sector; and the domestic sector where those who had followed *Home Economics* or *Home Management* may be working. The research participants were identified at construction sites, farms, and domestic houses. These respondents did not receive specialized trade training after high school.

Probability sampling was used for cluster sampling of the areas where the participants were to be drawn from, random sampling and snowballing was done to get the exact respondents for the study. Probability sampling was chosen as it afforded an equal and independent chance for all Zimbabwean migrant school-leavers in the chosen clusters to be picked for the research (Kothari, 2014; Kumar, 2011).

Quantitative data was obtained using semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews collected qualitative data to allow narrative accounts to be heard and probing for further clarifications was made possible (Creswell, 2007; Johnson et al., 2007). Questionnaires were administered to 60 migrants and 19 responded to the semi-structured interviews during data collection. The questionnaire had both closed and open-ended items to invite the respondent to clarify experiences. The questionnaire had three sections and thirty items. Section A had items asking for respondents' biographical data and Section B asked about jobs they were doing and their relationship to the TVET skills studied in high school, while Section C covered respondent challenges. The questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha for stability and homogeneity to ensure its reliability. The questionnaire was re-administered with same participants on whom piloting was done with the instrument as they were accessible to the researcher.

To ensure validity of instruments, each research question was treated separately and the type of data the research question solicited for, whether qualitative or quantitative was first established (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 133). A matrix was produced to guide on generating items of each instrument based on the research questions. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS since it was a large amount of data that needed an accurate tool to handle and analyze accurately. The interviewees were coded M1-M19, and the same codes were used to present the interview data results. Coding was done for ethical reasons as a way of protecting interviewees' anonymity and confidentiality.

Results and discussion

Migrants' biographical data

In the South East district of Botswana, $n = 49$ (81.7%) respondents were males and $n = 11$ (18.3%) were females. Most of the school-leaver migrants were 18 years of age by the time they migrated which is consistent with the exit ages from the Zimbabwe high school education cycle (Coltart, 2012). The migrants did not receive further training after school. Among the respondents, $n = 38$ (63.3%) completed the Ordinary Level which is the lower high school exit point in Zimbabwe, while $N = 4$ (6.7%) had National Foundation Certificate (NFC) qualification together with the general TVET subject. Out of the total respondents, $N = 5$ (8.33%) had Advanced level high school qualifications. Therefore, most respondents had Ordinary levels and did a TVET subject, but those with Advanced

level were fewer. Probably, school-leavers with Advanced level get post-school opportunities in the home country and are less likely to migrate. Since $N = 4$ (6.7%) had Ordinary level plus NFC, it suggests that not many schools offered NFC qualifications.

TVET subjects done by migrants

Determining the TVET subject(s) done by school-leaver migrants was done to establish the relationship between TVET skills acquired in high school and jobs being done by migrants in Botswana. TVET subjects studied by respondents are shown in Figure 1.

Majority of migrants had completed a TVET subject in school. *Building Studies* was the most popular having been done by $n = 27$ (45%), followed by *Agriculture* $n = 16$ (26.7%), *Woodwork* and *Fashion and Fabrics* $n = 6$ (10%) alike. Other subjects done by migrants were *Metalwork* $n = 1$ (1.7%), *Computer Studies* $n = 1$ (1.7%), and *Technical Graphics* $n = 1$ (1.7%). Therefore, most school-leavers had done *Building Studies* followed by *Agriculture*. This could be because these subjects can be institutionalized in many high schools in Zimbabwe even in remote rural settings without electricity as compared to other TVET subjects, and they do not require expensive training consumables (Misozi et al., 2013, p. 895). However, those migrants who did NFC did not indicate the area of their specialization which opens a gap for further research as to whether they were working in job sectors related to their NFC qualifications.

Type of work migrants assumed in Botswana

Figure 2 illustrates the data collected to establish if the TVET skills learnt by migrants were related to the type of work they were doing in Botswana.

The majority of respondents, $n = 48$ (80%) worked in the construction sector, followed by $n = 8$ (13.3%) in the domestic jobs, while $n = 3$ (3.33%) worked in the manufacturing sector and $n = 2$ (3.4%) in agriculture-related jobs. Therefore, the results suggest that most of the migrants were working in the construction sector and did construction related TVET subjects as shown in Figure 1. Table 2 went further to check if there was a correlation between the TVET subject done at school and the sectors where migrants were working.

SPSS was used to measure the Pearson correlation coefficient between TVET subjects studied in Zimbabwe high schools and type of jobs taken up by school-leaver migrants in Botswana. Table 2 revealed a significant positive correlation of 0.01 implying that migrants worked in sectors related to the subjects they had done at high school (Bhebhe et al., 2014, p. 447). However, further research may

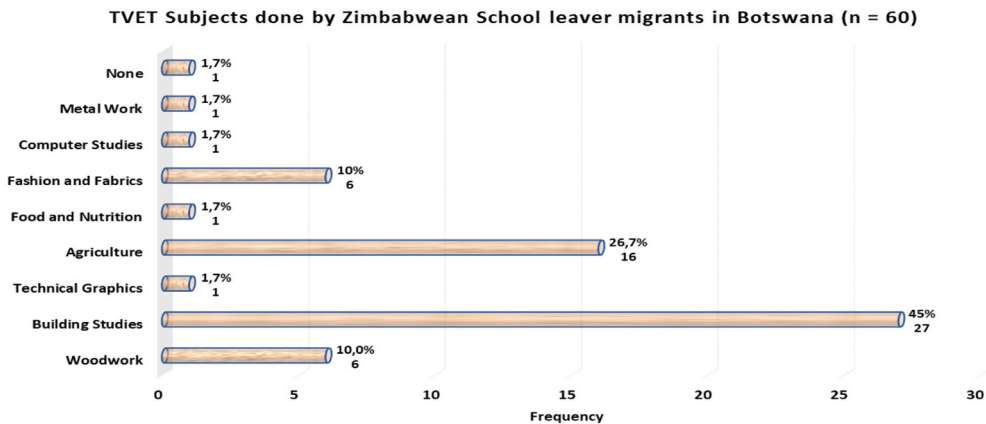


Figure 1. TVET subjects done by school-leaver migrants to Botswana.

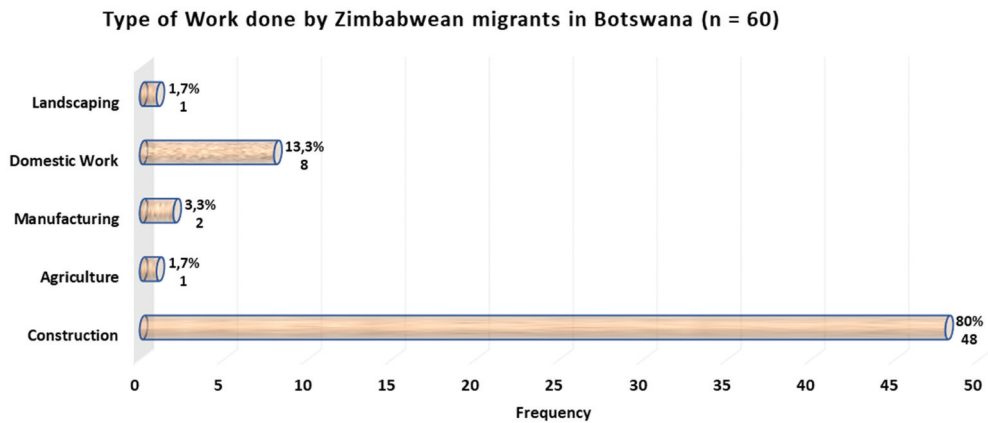


Figure 2. Type of work migrants assumed in Botswana.

Table 2. Correlation of TVET subjects done at high school and sectors where migrants were working.

	Correlation	TVET Subjects Done	Sectors where Migrants Work
TVET Subject Done	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**
	Significance (2-tailed)		.001
	N	60	60
Sectors where Migrants Work	Pearson Correlation	1	.430**
	Significance (2-tailed)		.001
	N	60	60
**. Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)			

need to be done to determine if this relationship can be attributed to availability of jobs in related industry, directed job search, referrals, or other factors.

Perception on relationship of TVET skills learnt in school and workplace skills needed

Perceptions of school-leaver migrants on the relationship between TVET skills learnt in high school and the skills needed in the workplace, based on their experience, were solicited. Respondents were asked to choose between three options: “*Strong Relationship*,” “*No Relationship*” or “*Not Sure*” and the responses are depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows that, out of sixty respondents, n = 49 (81.7%) indicated that there was a “strong relationship” between TVET skills learnt in school and the skills required in the workplaces. However, n = 4 (6.7%) indicated “no relationship,” suggesting that they did not find a correlation between skills from school and those skills needed in the type of jobs they were doing. This could be because some people were working in sectors not aligned to the TVET subjects they had done at school and had to learn new skills on the job. Some respondents, n = 7 (11.7%) were “not sure” of the relationship of skills learnt in school and those needed in the workplace. In summary, the results suggest that most school-

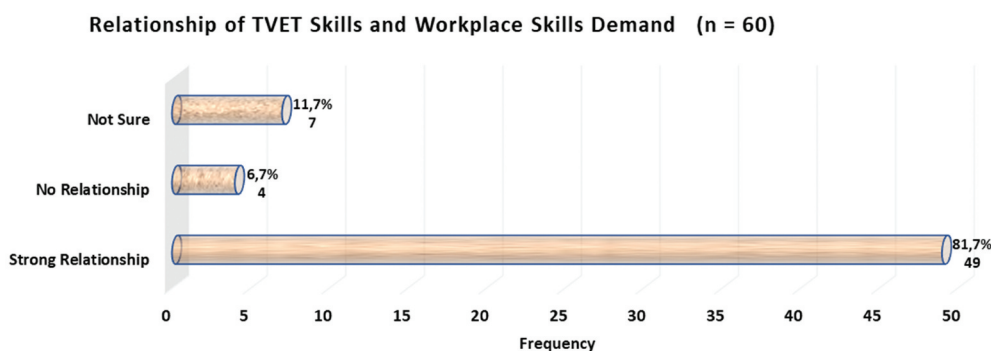


Figure 3. Perception on relationship between TVET skills and workplace skills needed.

leaver migrants could apply their school TVET skills in the workplaces implying their skills were useful in jobs they were doing in Botswana (Lauglo, 2006, p. 11).

Findings from the interviews also suggested similar results in that most of the migrant workers were working in sectors related to the TVET subjects they had done at school. For instance:

M1 (Construction worker): “I did Building Studies and National Foundation Certificate and the skills I learnt enable me to do many jobs in construction.”

M9 (Carpentry worker): “ – I call myself a carpenter in Botswana since I have learnt a lot in Woodwork at school, but I also do other related jobs like bricklaying, plumbing and painting after learning from colleagues.

M17 (Gardener): “Knowledge of plants and how to care for them makes me to get jobs, and I get referral jobs from where I worked; it’s paying well for me, . . . this is what make me survive here.”

M19 (Domestic worker): “It’s difficult to get a full time job but at times I get hired in some restaurants during busy times since I did Home Economics, the problem is I didn’t specialise, but they appreciate my skills.”

Narratives from respondents suggest that migrants learn new skills on the job that build on their basic skills. Some of the migrants were learning new skills from counterparts on the job (Hagan et al., 2013; Lowe et al., 2010).

Conclusion

The findings from this study suggest that most high school-leavers from Zimbabwe had done a TVET subject at school and had basic technical skills in different trade areas. The study established that migrants were working in jobs related to the TVET subjects they had done at school showing a correlation between TVET skills acquired in school and those skills needed in the workplaces in Botswana. This was statistically proven by a positive significant Pearson correlation of 0.01. For example, migrants who had done *Building Studies*, *Woodwork and Metalwork* were more likely to find work in the construction industry. Those who had done *Fashion and Fabrics*, and *Food and Nutrition* would work in the domestic jobs and hospitality industries. Respondents agreed that the technical skills they had acquired at school were functionally relevant and enabled them to adapt to the new work demands they were encountering. This is well supported by the relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson (1981) which purports that curriculum content and learning experiences will be considered relevant if they can meet expectations of the learner and their interests. Some of the school-leavers had completed National Foundation Certificates that may have helped them to adapt to the jobs they were doing. The limitation of this study is that the findings of this study cannot be

generalized about migrants staying in Botswana due to the limited number of respondents and geographic coverage of the study.

Recommendations

High-school TVET must build capacity of the future workforce with relevant and renewable skills to meet the needs of future workplaces and the demands of technological innovations. High schools' TVET must orient learners to the use of tools and equipment and, equip learners with internationally benchmarked skills to reduce the potential mismatch between TVET skills acquired in high school and those skills needed in the workplace. To achieve this, there must be strengthened collaborations from policy to implementation levels between all important partners in a social dialogue concerned with human capital development to socio-economic country needs. Regular review of high-school TVET curricula is essential and will enhance school-leavers' transition into the changing world of work in the home country while also mitigating their migration.

In terms of further research, a more comprehensive study could be carried out in other districts of Botswana, and countries close to Zimbabwe where high-school leavers commonly migrate to, such as South Africa, Namibia, and Zambia, to determine the type of jobs taken up by migrants with no other skills than the technical skills acquired from school. This could lead to more comprehensive conclusions that could be generalized about the relationship of TVET skills from Zimbabwean high school to the skills needed for the jobs migrants do in neighboring countries. It is also suggested to evaluate the impact of the National Foundation Certificate qualification on high-school leavers' employment prospects to inform policy decisions as to whether this certificate should be rolled out across all schools or not. Further studies could also be carried out on further skills development opportunities for by migrants in host countries. A purely qualitative study to corroborate the above findings may prove useful as qualitative research supports the notion of multiple realities to explain social reality (Creswell, 2007). Such an endeavor will increase the trustworthiness of results and enable valid generalization.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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