



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS: A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING QUALITY TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on innovative research and assessment process: A strategy for improving quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes in Rivers State. Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted survey research design and was carried out in Rivers State. The population for the study was 130 TVET educators in the Department of Technology Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rummolemni Port Harcourt and Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain from the population of TVET educators a sample of 100 TVET educators. A twenty eight item questionnaire was developed and utilized to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts from Department of Technology Education, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State. Cronbach alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability test on the items revealed a coefficient of 0.80. The study found out that effective innovative research and assessment process in TVET programmed is a good strategy to improve the quality of TVET for sustainable national development. TVET educators' interest in conducting innovative research and assessment is low due to lack of fund, industry-school partnership is a strategy that must be adopted to improve innovative research and assessment process in TVET institutions in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should ensure that adequate fund is made available for research and assessment process in all the technical training institutions, industry-school partnership should be encouraged at all levels of TVET programmes in Nigeria.

Keywords: Innovative, research, assessment, strategy, quality, technical education.

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INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an aspect of education that involves the use of modern equipment, tools and machines to train the recipients in technical related skills at specific levels with the aim of preparing the youth for meaningful participation in the world of work. TVET programmes is aimed at inculcating entrepreneurial and technical skills in the youth and school leavers as a way of providing adequate skilled manpower that is required in the society for effective service delivery towards national and global change.

The significance of TVET as a change specialist for social, financial, innovative and national improvement has been a subject of talk at summits, scholarly meetings and policy circles in Nigeria and other developing countries (Buchi, 2021, Bawa, 2019; Odunze, 2022). There is an assertion among analysis and experts that TVET is the mystery behind national and global improvement in many sectors such as in Agriculture, Banking, Health, Science, Medicine, Engineering among others (Rosiky, 2018, Egejuru, 2022, Igwela, 2018). According to Hassan and Abubaka, (2019) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has attracted different names because of its important to national and global change.

Despite several dissuasions on TVET at summits, scholarly gatherings and policy circles in Nigeria, the aim of TVET is yet to be achieved in the country probably due to numerous challenges. Some of these challenges according to Okonkwo and Amadi (2021) include: poor quality research and assessment process in TVET programmes, lack of fund to carryout quality research and assessment process, lack of qualified technical education educators, poor quality instructional materials, poor learning environment and others, effective innovative research and assessment process could be a better strategy for improving quality TVET programme in Nigeria for national and global change as observed in most developed countries such as Japan, China, America, India, Turkey among others.

Innovative as a concept is not just science and technology or research and development, although there are obviously critical components of a modern innovative economy. Innovative is doing something new or differently which adds value or is useful. This definition according to Okwelle (2019) provides an insight into the key elements of innovations. Not all innovative ideas are necessary new ideas, but can in fact be old ideas applied differently. Research and development is a major contribution to innovation generating a flow of technical ideas and continually renewing the pool of technical skills. In most technically advanced nations a high level of investment in research and development, by both public and private sources, has been an important feature of global change. According to Granvil cited in Anyalele (2020) innovative research process requires a system of skill formation which includes providing basic skills as well as developing additional specialized skills for those already processing high level technical skills.



According to Jeremiah and Kufor (2023), educational programme such as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) that is designed to assist individuals to possess all the required technical skills and knowledge that will enable them to live a successful life in this changing world requires a constant innovative research and assessment process in different area of the programme such as in SIWES, funding, management, training and re-training of TVET educators among others.

In the same view, Achononu and Ibara (2023) stated that to improve the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Nigeria, that regular, innovative research and assessment process should always be conducted by scholars for quality improvement. The authors further stated that different areas of TVET programmes that innovative research and assessment process should be carried out for quality improvement of TVET programmes include, teaching and learning process, funding, planning, management, supervision, administration teaching methods, facility planning among others.

Ikpeazu and Apuega (2023) stated that the reason for innovative research and assessment in different areas in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes is to initiate new ideas, techniques and developments in TVET curriculum and delivery approach geared towards providing basic skills to those who do not have them; developing core skills which encourage creativity and critical thinking for problem-solving for those with technical skills as well as developing additional specialized skills for those already possessing high-level technical skills to enable them remain relevant and sustainable in the ever evolving and rapid changing world of work.

Ogadimma and Uzorkwe (2021) posited that innovative educational research leads to better and improved practices and education. According to Ekwem and Taiwo (2020) results of educational research and assessment reveals those instructional materials, techniques and methods that prove to be more effective and the same time indict those materials and techniques that seem to be ineffective. Odigwe (2019) noted that educational research if well conducted in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) will help to bring about overall development and progress in the programmes of TVET.

Past research works (Chukwumma, 2018; Danladi, 2017; Folake, 2021) have shown that innovative research and assessment process is essential to the continued development and improvement of educational practice. In most developed countries like Japan, America, India, China and others the much remarkable development that these countries has achieved especially in the area of technological development is traceable to the huge amount of resources that these countries usually map out annually for innovative research and assessment in education (Adamu, 2019). According to Bagale and Dakuru (2017) innovative educational research enables us to assess programmes, practices and materials so as to indicate what educational results are being attained thus providing increasing understanding of educational phenomena.



Akachukwu (2022) posited that society is characterized by change, not only that the society is dynamic, it continuously requires fundamental innovation in educational programmes to meet the needs of change. Aguma and Owuga (2024) maintained that without research in education, the education industry will remain obsolete in the business of learning and teaching, applying outdated methods of instruction that are not in line with contemporary thinking. Uchegbu and Ibemere (2023) in a similar view stated that without research in educational programme problems in educational programmes cannot be solved. Problems generally inhibit progress and retard the efficiency and effectiveness of human actions. The elimination of these problems will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of educational endeavors. To achieve this goal, an effective innovative research and assessment process became the only option as to achieve the desired goal of TVET in Nigeria.

Maduakolam and Uwem (2025) noted that despite the importance of innovative research in promoting quality educational programmes, those scholars in education in most developing countries Nigeria inclusive have been facing different problems in conducting quality research work in education. According to Alawo end Bello (2022) several problems faced by TVET educators in conducting quality research work in TVET programme includes; inadequate funding of research projects, lack of necessary equipment, facilities and materials to conduct quality research work. In the same vein, Izuchukwu (2024) noted that problems such as poor communication network, unattractive working conditions and lack of record-keeping culture has contributed to lack of TVET educator's interest in carrying out quality research work.

Ikpeazu and Apuega (2023) noted that the government and society in general seem to have a poor attitude towards research. Commenting further the authors stated that the government and society usually castigates research workers who are operating under the hash and hard conditions for not producing immediate results. The government and society seem not to realize that research is a painstaking exercise, which requires relatively long period of time before its results could produce practical effects. The authors further suggested the adoption of some effective strategies such as adequate funding, adequate provision of learning materials and provision of necessary equipments in all the tertiary institution in Nigeria in order to motivate scholars in education to effectively involve themselves in conducting quality research work.

In a similar perspective vein, Ugwumadu & Ekeagwu (2024) suggested that strategies to be adopted that will improve educators interest in conducting quality educational research projects includes; reorganizing outstanding research projects through rewards and commendation by the governments, governments taking part in sponsoring educational research work that are to be conducted by scholars in education. Kio and Amakiri (2023) maintained that adequate provision of necessary equipment, facilities and materials, upgrading of ICT centers in all the higher institutions across the country and business sector participation in research projects are good strategies that if effectively adopted will motivate



scholars in education to actively conduct quality educational research work that will produce better results.

Okwuanso and Igwela (2025) posited that scholars in education will not effectively be involved in conducting quality innovative research and assessment project in education if effective strategies such as improving working conditions of TVET educators, organizing regular workshop/seminars for TVET educators and provision of adequate funds are not being put in place. However, the strategies to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of quality innovative research and assessment process for improving quality TVET in Rivers State have not been assessed. This study therefore, determines the strategies to be adopted for innovative research and assessment process that will improve quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes in Rivers State.

The quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Programmes in Rivers State faces challenges that have impacted on the preparedness of graduates for the workforce and their contribution to economic development. Despite the recognized importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in skill development and employment generation Kio and Amakiri (2023) observed that there are concerns regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of current research and assessment process in driving innovation and quality improvement with TVET programmes in Rivers State. Key issues regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of innovative research and assessment process according to Odunze (2022) include outdated curricula, assessment method, limited industrial linkages, and quality enhancement. Hence, there is need to investigate innovative research and assessment process in order to provide strategies for enhancing the quality, relevance and outcomes of TVET programmes in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate strategies to be adopted for innovative research and assessment process for improving quality (TVET) programmes in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine areas in technical and vocational education and training that innovative research and assessment process should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmes in Rivers State.
2. Find out what problems are associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting quality innovative research and assessment process in Rivers State.
3. Determine the strategies to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of quality innovative research and assessment process for improving quality technical and vocational education and training programmes and Rivers State.



Research Questions

The following research questions are posed to guide the study:

1. What areas of technical and vocational education and training that innovative research and assessment should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmes in Rivers State?
2. What problems are associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting quality innovative research and assessment process in Rivers State?
3. What strategies are to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of conducting innovative research and assessment process for improving quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes in Rivers State?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. According to Nworgu (2015) description survey design is aimed at collecting data or and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, feature or fact about a given population. The population of the study was 130 TVET educators in the department of Technical Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt and Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku as at 2024/2025 academic session obtained from the office of Head of Department. Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain from the population of TVET educators a sample of 100 TVET educators.

A self-structured 28-item questionnaire designer by the researchers titled "Innovation Research and Assessment process: A Strategy for Improving Quality TVET Programme (IRAPSIQTVET)" was the instrument used for data collection from the respondents. The instrument was constructed on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face and content validated by three experts in Technology Education Department and two experts from Measurement and Evaluation Department in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State. The instrument's reliability was ascertained with the use of Cornbrash's alpha method in which a reliability of 0.80 was obtained. A total of 100 copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents directly by the researchers with the help of five research assistants.

The total number of copies of the instrument retrieved after two weeks was 95 and was used for data analysis. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used to answer the research questions. Standard deviation was used to show homogeneity in the responses of the respondents. Thus, it was decided that an item with a calculated mean value equal or greater than 2.50 (2.50 - 4.00) is regarded as "Agree" while an item is regarded as "Disagree" if the mean values fall below the criterion mean of 2.50



PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presentation of Results

The results of the study are presented in Tables 1 - 3 in line with the research questions.

Research Question 1: What aspects of technical and vocational education and training that innovative research and assessment should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmes in Rivers State?

The result in Table 1 revealed that all the nine (9) items on the areas in technical and vocational education and training in which innovative research and assessment process should be carried out for improving quality technical and vocational education and training in Rivers State had their mean ranging from 2.65 to 3.59 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that all the 9 items are important areas in TVET programmes that requires innovative research and assessment for improving quality TVET programmes in Rivers State. Furthermore, Table 1 revealed that the respondents had a standard deviation ranging from 0.61 to 0.89. This indicates that the respondents were close in their opinions.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on areas in TVET that Innovative Research and Assessment Process Should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmes in Rivers State. **N = 95**

S/N	Areas in TVET	\bar{X}	SD	REMARK
1.	Students' industrial work experience scheme.	3.50	0.85	Agree
2.	Funding of TVET programme.	3.21	0.81	Agree
3.	Management of TVET programme.	2.59	0.86	Agree
4.	Administration of TVET programme.	3.05	0.79	Agree
5.	Supervision of TVET programme.	2.85	0.68	Agree
6.	Training and re-training of TVET educators	2.75	0.62	Agree
7.	Facilities on TVET programme	3.41	0.85	Agree
8.	Planning of TVET programme	3.20	0.80	Agree
9.	Evaluation and assessment of TVET programme	2.65	0.61	Agree
Average Mean/SD		3.02	0.76	

Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).

Research Question 2: What problems are associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting effective innovative research and assessment process in Rivers State?

The data in Table 2 revealed that eight (8) items on problems associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting innovative research and assessment process in Rivers State had their mean ranging from 2.55 to 3.00 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50 while one (1) item had a mean of 2.41. This indicates that all the eight (8) items are problems associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting effective innovative research and assessment in Rivers State. Furthermore, Table 2 revealed that TVET educators had a



standard deviation ranging from 0.59 to 0.79. This indicates that the respondents were homogeneous or close in their options.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on Problems Associated with TVET Educators not involving in Conducting Effective Innovative Research and Assessment
N=95

S/N	Problems Associated with TVET	\bar{X}	SD	REMARK
10	Inadequate funding of research project work.	2.82	0.75	Agree
11	Lack of necessary equipment, facilities and materials.	2.67	0.70	Agree
12	Poor communication network.	3.00	0.79	Agree
13	Unattractive working conditions/research workers.	2.91	0.82	Agree
14	Lack of record-keeping culture.	2.63	0.69	Agree
15	Poor attitude of the government on research projects.	2.55	0.61	Agree
16	The “Publish or Perish” syndrome.	2.61	0.62	Agree
17	Poor attitude of the business sector.	2.70	0.73	Agree
18	Lack of interest by TVET educators in conduction research projects.	2.41	0.59	Disagree
Average Mean/SD		2.70	0.70	

Source: Authors’ Analysis (2025).

Research Question 3: What strategies are to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of innovative research and assessment process for improving quality TVET programmes in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on Strategies to be adopted for Innovative Research and Assessment process.
N = 95

S/N	Strategies to be Adopted	\bar{X}	SD	REMARK
19	Adequate provision of necessary equipment, facilities and materials.	3.10	0.88	Agree
20	Provision of adequate fund for research project.	3.25	0.91	Agree
21	Upgrading of ICT centers in higher institution of learning	2.67	0.72	Agree
22	Proper record-keeping of previous research works.	2.51	0.70	Agree
23	Government regularly sponsoring educational research projects.	2.65	0.69	Agree
24	Business sectors participating in sponsoring research projects.	2.58	0.62	Agree
25	Motivating scholars to show interest in conducting research projects.	2.57	0.61	Agree
26	Recognizing outstanding research projects through rewards and commendation.	3.15	0.91	Agree
27	Improve standard of working condition of TVET educators.	2.82	0.75	Agree
28	Organizing regular workshops/seminars for TVET educators.	2.71	0.71	Agree
Average Mean/SD		2.80	0.75	

Source: Authors’ Analysis (2025).



The data in Table 3 reveal that all the ten (10) items on strategies to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of innovative research and assessment process in improving quality TVET programmes in Rivers State had their mean ranging from 2.51 to 3.25 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that all the ten (10) items are strategies to be adopted in order to achieve the goal of innovative research and assessment process in improving quality TVET programmes in Rivers State. Furthermore, Table 3 revealed that the respondents had a standard deviation ranging from 0.70 to 0.91. This indicates that the respondents were homogeneous or close to their opinions.

Discussion of Findings

Data presented in Table 1 on areas in TVET that innovative research and assessment process should be carried out in order to improve quality of TVET programmes in Rivers State revealed that there are aspects of technical and volitional education and training that invocative research and assessment process should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmed in technical training institutions in Rivers State. The finding is in line with Jeremiah and Kufor (2023) who posited that educational programme such as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) that is designed to assist individuals to possess all the required technical skills and knowledge that will enable them to live a successful live in this changing world requires a constant innovative research and assessment process in different aspects of the programme.

Similarly, Achononu and Ibara (2023) equally stated that to improve the quality of technical and vocational education and training in Nigeria, that regular innovative research and assessment process should always be conducted by scholars for quality improvement. The authors further stated that innovative research and assessment process should be carried out for quality improvement include, teaching and learning process, findings, planning, management, supervision, teaching methods and SIWES programme.

Data presented in Table 2 on problems associated with TVET educators not involving in conducting quality innovative research and assessment process in Rivers State reveals that Inadequate funding of research projects, lack of necessary equipment, facilities and materials, poor communication network, lack of record-keeping culture, poor attitude of the business sector, unattractive working condition/research workers. The lack of interest of TVET educators to conduct research projects may be due to lack of motivation by the government and school authorities in terms of reward and commendation. The poor attitude of government and society towards research projects confirms the observation of Ikpeazu and Apuega (2023) that the government and the society in general seem to have a poor attitude to research projects. That the government and society seem not to realize that research is a painstaking exercise, which requires relatively long period of time before its results could produce practical effects.



The result in Table 3 on strategies to be adopted for effective innovative research and assessment for improving quality of TVET programmes in Rivers State reveals that in the opinion of respondents all the listed ten effective strategies that can be adopted by higher institutions, government and stake holders in education to achieve the goal of effective research and assessment process in improving quality TVET programmes. These findings are consistent with those of Ugwumadu and Ekeagwu (2024) who reported that educators interest in conducting quality research projects will improve if government and higher institutions of learning will participate in recognizing outstanding research project works through rewards and commendation, regular sponsoring of research project work by government and improve working condition of TVET educators.

Retrospectively, the following deductions are drawn from the findings of the study:

Nine important areas in TVET were been identified by TVET educators as those areas in TVET that innovative research and assessment process should be carried out in order to improve quality TVET programmes in Rivers State.

Eight problems associated with TVET educators not effectively involving in conducting innovative research and assessment process were identified by TVET educators.

A total of ten (10) strategies to achieve the goal of innovative research and assessment process in improving quality TVET programmes in Rivers State were identified by the respondents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study has shown that there are several problems such as lack of adequate fund to carry out quality research work, poor communication network, poor attitude of the business sector, poor attitude of government towards the research work and lack of necessary equipment, facilities and materials are major problems faced by TVET educators to conduct quality innovative research and assessment process in TVET programmes in Rivers State.

The highlighted problems have impacted negatively on the quality of research and assessment process in TVET for national and global change. This point to the need for adequate provision of fund by government at all levels for effective innovative research and assessment process that will improve quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) educators should be sponsored by government and school authorities as to encourage them regularly to conduct quality innovative research project.



2. Budgetary provision should be set aside by school administrators for sponsoring educators to conduct research work
3. Schools with TVET programmes should as a matter of urgency ensure that funds released by TETFUND for research project work are properly utilized for research project works in their various institutions.
4. Outstanding research project conducted by scholars in TVET institutions should be rewarded and commended by school administrators and government as to encourage them conduct more research project.
5. Working condition of educators of TVET programmes should as a matter of urgency be improved as to encourage them to effectively engage in quality research work.

Competing Interest

The authors have declared that no conflicting interest exist in this manuscript.

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