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# Understanding the demand for and supply of skills in the oil and gas industry in Ghana: a case study of what TVET institutions offer and what exploration and production oil and gas companies need

**Awude, Hans**

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Name: Hans Awude
Student Number: 2060735

## Abstract

The study analyses the relationship between mid-level technical skills providers and the demands of core technical jobs in Ghana's oil and gas exploration and production companies. It is important for policy makers and researchers to understand the complexities of skills demands of the Ghanaian oil and gas companies and those supplied by TVET institutions within a TVET system that is small and weak and that has structural inconsistencies.

The literature identifies middle-level occupations as core technical skills occupations in high demand by the Ghanaian oil companies. However, the literature further argues that the oil companies have concerns about the quality of TVET education and cannot readily recruit qualified graduates from the local labour market. It further highlights a perceived skills mismatch between TVET qualifications and the core technical skills required by industry. At the same time, the International Labour Organization and others claim that TVET graduates fail to get jobs because their skills fail to match the skills required in the oil and gas industry.

The study set out to investigate the following questions:

- What are the structural and institutional constraints behind the perceived skill mismatches between TVET qualifications and the upstream sub-sector of the oil companies?
- Why are the TVET institutions mandated to supply core technical skills and occupations not meeting the employment and hiring criteria of the oil companies?
- What are the relationships between TVET providers and the oil and gas industry concerning on-the-job training?
- What is the government's response to the perceived skills mismatches?

For the study data were collected from three key role-players: exploration and production oil and gas companies, TVET providers, and regulatory and intermediary bodies The data collected were supported with a desktop review. The study adopted a descriptive design and systematic descriptive analysis because these methods are well-suited to answering the research questions.

The findings of the study show that while there is a widespread perception of a skills mismatch among the key role-players and researchers, more important is a structural dislocation that policy reforms have not addressed to date, despite efforts to do so, making it impossible for TVET providers to supply skilled workers to the oil and gas industry. The study explored why TVET graduates with core technical competence are not employed directly from TVET universities, a phenomenon widely attributed in the literature to a skills mismatch. A key finding is that the exploration and production oil and gas companies require international professional certification for all mid-level technical jobs which none of the Ghanaian TVET providers can offer.

**Key Words**: Skill, qualification, competency-based training, technical and vocational education and training, Ghanaian exploration and production oil and gas companies.