

The Reliability of Retention Rates, Competency Assessment, and Satisfaction Surveys as a
Measurement Tool

A Review of the Literature

By

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Introduction

Certified Surgical Technologists (CSTs) transition directly from clinical practice to teaching roles without formal educational training. This shift can be particularly challenging for those assuming responsibilities as program directors. The lack of pedagogical and leadership training often results in inconsistent teaching practices, difficulties in curriculum management, and higher educator turnover. Such instability can significantly impact student retention, program effectiveness, and, ultimately, the quality of patient care (Stewart, 2019).

In addressing these issues, I will develop a formalized training program for surgical technology educators in collaboration with my professional organization, accrediting body, and other experienced program directors. The modules will be specifically designed to address the unique roles within surgical technology education. Initially, this project will focus on the program director modules; however, it will later develop module training for the didactic instructors, lab instructors, and clinical coordinators.

This study aims to assess whether a standardized training program influences the retention of new surgical technology program directors. The objective is to see if module-based training and support for directors lowers turnover rates, increases program stability, and improves trained program director retention at the initial training level and the overall competency across many programs. The overarching question of my investigation is: What is the effect of structured module-based training on retention rates for newly appointed surgical technology program directors?

Review of the Literature

The literature speaks to retention, competency, and educator satisfaction regarding the impact of professional development on education. Professional development is the "acquisition of skills and knowledge that enhances an individual's capabilities to perform in a career" (Harvard Division of Continuing Education, n.d.). According to the studies, retention rates, competency assessments (tools for individual professional successes), and satisfaction surveys will continue to be critical in measuring aspects of professional development education effectiveness.

Advantages of Using Retention Rates, Competency Assessments, and Satisfaction Surveys as a Measurement Tool

Turnover Rates/Retention. The utilization of professional development can be a good predictor of employee job satisfaction and promote employee engagement. The researcher found that when an organization provides professional development using effective training programs, employees are more likely to remain in their position (Shiri, 2023). High retention of employees and knowledge is found to a direct outcome of engagement and driven learning that gives the employee ownership of the process and benefits the organization simultaneously (Shiri, 2023). Additionally, studies show that training programs improve job satisfaction, employee commitment to the organization, and employee engagement leading to significantly lower turnover rates (Bresk, 2023).

Professional development and retentions relationship is apparent throughout several sectors, including education. For example, studies show that providing educators with professional development opportunities increases their pedagogical skills and reduces turnover intentions (Ekabu, 2020). Likewise, competency development efforts custom-made to employee needs and roles contribute to lower dysfunctional turnover by addressing gaps in skills and improving

performance outcomes (Mitiku, 2010). Recruiting qualified talent and performing regular assessments are critical to distinguishing functional from dysfunctional turnover, ensuring that underperformers exit the organization (Erasmus, 2015).

Several factor can play a significant role in employee retention such as organizational factors, including leadership and workplace culture. Organizations that emphasize motivation and professional development tend to experience lower voluntary turnover rates, particularly among high-risk groups such as younger employees and those nearing retirement (Shiri, 2023). This focuses on the importance of providing professional development training to retain skilled employees.

Competency Assessments. Competency assessments assess the combination of what organizations need to remain competitive and those unique assets that differentiate an organization from its competitors. They also focus on an individual's performance and identify their skills. Competency assessments help employees identify their strengths and weaknesses to earn the career path they desire efficiently, and organizations may target their investments in development initiatives (Boyatzis, 1982; De Vos et al., 2015). In addition, these assessments are associated with lower turnover rates by providing an organized way to build communication and collaboration skills that lead to organizational fit (Rusilowati, 2020).

Competency assessments help promote employability: Role played by higher Ed institutions
Curricular and extra-curricular activities aimed at improving the delivery of learning experiences that go into acquiring skills necessary to achieve professional success. However, the use of these competencies in workplaces varies according to the organizational context, structures, and transformational leadership styles (Suresh Kumar P., 2019).

Assessment tools are needed for other innovative competencies or at least more aligned with contemporary educational contexts. Recent research has led to this, producing a self-assessment inventory for assessing teaching competencies with high assurance of reliability and validity due to adequate factor analysis. Such tools allow educators to identify areas of improvement that can then accommodate focused development programs (Lee, 2023). Furthermore, instruments interpreting creative thinking according to cognitive, experiential, and sociocultural learning theories are helpful for preservice teachers (Sigal Morad, 2021).

Satisfaction Surveys. Satisfaction surveys are reliable tools for evaluating educational program quality and providing insights for improvement. Using Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model surveys and validated scales, a program can measure relevance, the quality of the resources, and program effectiveness (Athanasiadis, 2022). In addition, satisfaction surveys have been employed in educational settings to assess service quality, demonstrating strong reliability through measures such as Cronbach's alpha (Rigopoulos, 2022).

Surveys also enable institutional improvements by identifying key stakeholders, such as assessment fairness, clarity of criteria, and timely feedback. For example, the UK's National Student Survey (NNS) has a broad application that highlights their ability to guide policies and improve teaching practices (Rigopoulos, 2022).

Satisfaction surveys help with long-term data collection and monitoring issues related to specific courses which can otherwise be addressed as per need by institutions especially in a blended learning environment. These surveys are a vital part of any quality assurance process, enabling the establishment of a feedback loop that can be used to develop the course and drive decision-making (Gaftandzhieva, 2023). Additionally, satisfaction surveys encompass more than just the

reaction phase when combined with evaluation models such as Kirkpatrick's, but guide through organizational level outcomes and continual improvement (Alsalamah, 2021).

Organizations and institutions can use these established frameworks to potentially gather actionable evidence in the name of improving employee or learner experience and outcomes.

Barriers to Implementing Module Based Training For Surgical Technology Program

Directors

Barriers to implementing a national module-based training program for surgical technology program directors include resource barriers, organizational barriers, and individual-level barriers.

A major barrier is the shortage of resources, funding, theoretical knowledge available among faculty and time for training. Many program directors face heavily constrained budgets that may not accommodate the creation or continued operation of full module-based programs. Some programs may not have sufficiently prepared faculty or clinical preceptors who could provide high quality didactic training that meets the standards set for the program (Sreedharan, 2022). A third barrier relates to time, as many program directors simultaneously bear considerable administrative burdens (e.g., program administration, teaching responsibilities, and curriculum development) that limit their ability to participate in training programs.

Resistance to change within institutions, whether due to an organizational culture resistant to adapting practices or a hierarchical structure stifling innovation, would be another significant barrier." Training programs can only be effective with institutional buy-in and strong leadership backing. Conversely, inflexible management styles or non-acceptance of new educational practices limit the incorporation of new training modules" (Suresh Kumar P., 2019). Second, regional differences in institutional policies and accreditation criteria are likely to inhibit

standardization of these programs further, making similar outcomes hard to promise across the country.

Individual-level factors such as training motivation and perceived training relevance also provide difficulties. Suppose the modules do not address gap training tailored to the local context or precisely targeted skill gaps. In that case, program directors will likely view them as duplicative and out of step with immediate need (Shiri, 2023). All questions about the perceived value of these training initiatives might be compounded due to the absence of competency assessments linked to these trainings, as directors may not notice an improvement in their capabilities or any positive impact on their program manifestations (Boyatzis, 1982; Rusilowati, 2020). This must be done by planning how to teach the curriculum, allocating resources, and aligning our goals with the needs of surgical technology programs across the country.

Summary

Theory with evidence for the measurement tools – retention rates, competency assessments, and satisfaction surveys alone hold great validity to improving truly functioning organizations. Well-trained employees benefit the organization as they contribute more, do their jobs better, and the retention rates increase (Shiri, 2023). Employees who are trained effectively for improved engagement and job satisfaction will be committed to your organization, thereby reducing voluntary turnover and creating opportunities for career advancement. Assessment of competency identifies individual's strengths and weaknesses to allow organizations to target their development efficiently, improving cohesion and supporting retention (Boyatzis, 1982; Rusilowati, 2020). Conclusion Satisfaction surveys are valid for generating feedback to improve program quality, influence improvements, and help with strategic decisions (Athanasiadis, 2022;

Rigopoulos, 2022). All of this, together, provides a comprehensive structure for improving organizational performance and the impact of training programs.

This Review and the Field of Education

The literature review presented here contributed to a point in the education sector by stating that retention rates, competency assessments, and satisfaction surveys are indicators to address training outcomes and refine the training program. The review integrates findings from research across various domains of vocational and postgraduate education, higher education, allied health disciplines, and organizational development to provide a theoretical model for how these metrics might affect learner outcomes and gains in institution performance. More specifically, it highlights the importance of competency assessments to ensure that training programs are aligned with framed methodologies that continue to evolve regarding workforce needs, providing direction where educators can implement them on the ground (Boyatzis, 1982; Suresh Kumar P., 2019). Moreover, the review highlights that satisfaction surveys are essential for collecting multidimensional feedback as they can inform image-based decisions to help improve teaching and curriculum design (Athanasiadis, 2022). Using these tools within this practice practically improves educational practice to move beyond turnover and engagement, passively supporting programs toward influential roles in shaping and developing spaces for both learners and educators. Thus, this approach positions the review as helpful for educators and policymakers trying to improve educational quality and results about what stakeholders need.

Strengths and Weaknesses of this Body of Literature

Strengths of the Literature. This review has several strengths, including a comprehensive examination of tools such as retention metrics, competency assessments, and satisfaction surveys in educational/educational settings. The diversity of perspectives and

methodologies is one richness: the works vary from theoretical frameworks, such as the CIPP model (Athanasiadis, 2022), to empirical analysis of training program results (Rigopoulos, 2022). The wide variety of research gives a good basis for understanding how these tools increase program quality, worker turnover, and employee engagement. A second strength involves validating tools and frameworks (for example, the validity of satisfaction surveys and the ability to assess competency levels) such that these findings are directly helpful to educators [1] (Lee, 2023; Boyatzis, 1982). In addition, integrating insights on the sector level – for instance, healthcare and allied education, in this case, points to how adaptable these tools are to multiple educational landscapes and heightens the relevance of the literature to diverse stakeholders.

Weaknesses and Gaps in the Literature. The literature has significant strengths and essential gaps, but this is only part of the story. One major hurdle is the need for an agreement about what training tools and metrics should be standardized between various levels of education. Competency assessments often come up in such discussions, but there needs to be a consensus on standardizing the design and implementation of competency assessments across institutions to enable cross-institutional comparisons (Suresh Kumar, 2019; Rusilowati, 2020). Furthermore, most research is about finding the advantages of these tools. However, they could be shaping out better, and hardly any will discuss practical implementation challenges such as lack of resources, faculty resistance, or inconsistency with institutional policies (Shiri, 2023; Sreedharan, 2022). A further significant shortcoming is a lack of longitudinal studies that measure the long-term effect of these tools on teachers and students. Moreover, while the literature emphasizes directing attention toward leadership and organizational culture, it provides limited instructions on systematically creating these conducive conditions. Future work that fills

these gaps would bolster the usefulness and relevance of this literature base for education practitioners and policymakers.

Focus of the Current Study

Lessons learned from this literature will directly guide the design and implementation of my action research project by illustrating how retention rates, competency assessment data, and satisfaction surveys should be synthesized into an evidence-based evaluation plan. I will focus on creating a modular training system for surgical technology program directors that utilizes validated competency assessments to target specific weaknesses and strengths. Based on assessments, the program would be flexible to the actual needs of directors that correspond to economic demand and governmental policies and develop according to institutional goals (Boyatzis, 1982; Suresh Kumar P).

I will also use satisfaction surveys as a primary measure to assess participant feedback on program relevance, content delivery, and overall impact. Based on research emphasizing the broader applicability of satisfaction surveys, I will conduct surveys tailored to capture actionable data at multiple points during our training program for continuous improvement (Athanasiadis, 2022). The data informing the role of professional development in promoting engagement and lowering turnover will inform my work to focus on offering career advancement opportunities and leadership development in the program so that I may increase retention (Shiri, 2023). My action research project will seek to cultivate a sustainable, meaningful training model that acknowledges systemic challenges and the individual needs of surgical technology program directors nationwide by employing evidence-based strategies.

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