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INFLUENCE OF JOB DEMAND AND STRESS ON INTEREST AND JOB SATISFACTION OF PROFESSIONAL SECRETARIES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BAUCHI STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the Influence of job demand and stress on interest and job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The study had four objectives and four null hypotheses. Survey design was adopted for the study. The population was 156 professional secretaries from ten tertiary institutions in Bauchi State and the entire population was used for the study. Instrument for data collection was adopted questionnaire validated by experts and pilot tested at Gombe State. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained. Data for the study was collected with the help of four research assistants and subjected to Linear Regression at $P < 0.05$ level of significance. The result revealed that the job demands and stress have significant influence on interest and job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State, Nigeria. It was therefore concluded that the job satisfaction of secretaries which is considered as very critical to achieving the goals of our tertiary institutions could only be achieved in the presence of a favorable demands, effective job resources and management of stress. It was recommended that tertiary institutions where secretaries work should employ more secretaries to avoid the major sources of high job demands and stress affecting interest and job satisfaction of the secretaries. The seminars and workshops should also be conducted to secretarial staff on continuous basis to enable them update their digital skills and computer word processing skills.

Keywords: Job Demand, Stress, Interest, Job Satisfaction, Secretaries

Introduction

Secretaries in organization are people responsible for coordinating personnel of various arms, channeling each of the correspondence to the appropriate office for action. Secretaries are pivots on which management revolves and they are the life wire of an organization with high work demand. Amoor and Magaji (2015) defined secretary as a person, whose work consists of supporting management, including executives, using a variety of project management, communication and organizational skills. According to Buseni (2013) secretary is an individual involved in organization of information flow from the source to eventual storage. Wikipedia (2018) defines secretary as a person employed to write orders, letters, dispatch public or private papers, records and the like, an official scribe, one who attends to correspondence and transacts other business for an association, a public body, or an individual. This means that secretaries are the communication link in an organization. Thus this mean those secretaries are considered as engine on all organizations



including tertiary institutions. Based on these, secretaries in tertiary institutions are beset with a lot of stress in the course of discharging their duties or responsibilities, which may arise from both the job environment and from their duties. Secretaries are in a vulnerable position to varying degrees of stress while at work due to the very nature of their job; numerous job demands may be present and have impact upon them.

The jobs of secretaries are demanding and require long-term physical, emotional or cognitive effort and therefore are associated with physiological and psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). According to the author, job demands (irregular work hours, time pressure, attending to many visitors at the same time) are not necessarily negative, but they turn into work stressors if they require excessive effort. Job demand also refers to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained effort, and as such incur certain costs as a result (Wanjohi & Iravo, 2018). Examples are a high work pressure, an unfavorable physical environment, and emotionally demanding interactions with clients. The authors maintained that job demands are not necessarily negative, they may turn into job stressors when meeting those demands requires high effort from which the secretaries has not adequately recovered. Thus job demands within the public sector including tertiary institutions are the perceived unmanageable paperwork that cause stress on secretaries.

Stress is a frequent problem across occupations and it impacts on job performance. Stress is defined as physiological responses that occur when an organism fails to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats. Odu and Vito (2017) opined that stress is a condition of strain that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person. The authors maintained that stress is a chronic complex emotional state with uneasiness characterized by various nervous and mental disorders. According to World Health Organisation (2016) also define occupational stress as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fill these demands. The organization added that work-related stress is a pattern of physiological, emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions to some extreme taxing aspects of work content, work organization and work environment. These therefore suggested that work-related stress was once thought of as occurring only in those who work in senior positions; hence, stress is much more common in employees at lower levels of workplace hierarchies, where they have less control over their work situation.

Secretarial occupation has always been an enviable profession. This is because it is recognized to the extent that no office or establishment can function without the services of secretaries. Stressors affect employee performance and decrease their efficiency. High levels of work demands are congruent with fatigue and stress, which may result in burnout and stress (Kavitha, 2009). In all organizations including tertiary institutions, factors that are burden to secretaries and inadvertently develops to stress according to Amoor and Magaji (2015) includes meeting deadlines, tackling unapproachable bosses, overtime, working hours, workload, inadequate monetary rewards, communication barriers, pressures of avoiding errors at job or to complete tasks in a given limited time. According to the authors, these may affect the job aspiration of individual. Job aspiration is an employee interest, which refers to the topic of a person's engagement (an interest in secretarial work) and is described as a characteristic of a person.

Interests reflect stable preferences for certain work activities and work environments. Research has demonstrated that congruence between interests and work environments affects some



important workplace outcomes, such as job performance and turnover (Amoor & Magaji, 2015). When a career is aligned with one's interest, the job demands on the an employee is favourable, there may have more motivation to devote effort into developing relevant knowledge and skills, set higher career-related goals, and take actions to achieve those goals. All of these behaviors can help individuals improve their performance at work and enhance their career potential. The benefits of matching careers with interests are not limited to individual employees. From an organizational perspective, choosing employees with the best fit not only contributes to higher job performance, which ultimately influences organizational effectiveness, but also helps to control turnover rates. Employees whose interests are congruent with their jobs are more likely to be satisfied with work and find intrinsic motivation to stay in the work environment longer (Houfort & colleagues, 2014). Lavigne, Forest and Crevier-Braud (2010) conducted a longitudinal and a cross-sectional study on the effects of interest in relation to stress like burnout. The results from the study showed that interest was related to higher levels of flow experiences, which appeared to protect against the experience of burnout symptoms. In a recent study by Houfort and colleagues (2014) interest was positively related to turnover intentions. The authors argued that that any job that is highly demanding have negative effective on the interest of employee. The assertions suggest that when job demands are high, they translate into stress affecting the interest of a secretary negatively. The presence of these high job demands among secretaries prompted the researcher to carry out the study using secretaries' interest as one of the variables. The interests among secretaries could be an antecedent to their job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a person's positive feeling about his work (Robbins & Judge 2011). Cranny, Smith and Stone (2014) defined job satisfaction as employees' emotional state regarding the job, considering what they expected and what they actually got out of it. Robbins and Judge (2011) argue that organizations that have more satisfied employees tend to be more effective when compared to organizations that have employees who are less satisfied. Smith (2012) defines job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person to say, "I am satisfied with my job". Smith (2012), remarks that the concept refers to an effective response of the worker to his job. By this, it is meant that satisfaction results from consequences of the worker's experience on the job in relation to his own values and needs. In their views, satisfaction can be taken as similar in meaning to pleasure. Lawal (2015), suggests that the determinants of satisfaction are more complicated than this. People and their job are the basic elements involved; but, it is clear that there are numerous other job demands and stressors that emanate from the job or the environment surrounding secretaries.

Job satisfaction and secretaries' performance goes hand in hand and is therefore very imperative to the well-being of any organization. The problem of job satisfaction has been a great concern to employers of labor and employees alike. Secretaries hold important positions in an organization; as a result, they are viewed as the medium by which organizational goals are realized. Without secretaries, an organization cannot function effectively and successfully. The effective performance of the secretary is dependent on the level of his satisfaction on the job (Amoor & Magaji, 2015). The author maintained that in any organizations that the secretaries are satisfied, their morale is always low and job commitment, performance and loyalty would be affected. It is based



on this background that the study specifically determined the influence of: (i) job demand on interest of professional Secretaries; (2) job demand on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries; (3) stress on interest of professional Secretaries; and (4) stress on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State

Research Hypotheses

- HO₁:** Job demand has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.
- HO₂:** Job demand has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.
- HO₃:** Stress has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.
- HO₄:** Stress has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Descriptive Survey research design was used to carry out this study. The Choice of the design was based on the fact that the study involved a population of respondents from whom information is obtained through questionnaire (Adamu & Sani, 2014). Therefore, survey method was considered suitable for the study. The population for the study consisted of 156 professional secretaries in the ten (10) tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The entire population was used for the study.

The instrument for data collection was four scale structured questionnaire. The questionnaire on stress was adapted from Aniedi, Offiong and Effiom (2014) on their work Occupational stress sources among university academic and administrative staff. The instrument of job demand was adopted from the work of Janse, Rensburg, Rothmann and Diedericks (2018) on their work titled Job demands and resources: Flourishing and job performance in South African universities of technology settings. The questionnaire items consisted of 40 items divided into four sections with each section having 10 items and measured on 4-point scales. All the items were in four rating scale (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). The dependent variables were used to determine the respondents' opinions based on the construct while the independent variables and dependent variables were used to test the null hypotheses.

The instrument was validated by Three (3) experts. Their suggestions were used to improve the quality of the instrument. A pilot study was conducted with twenty-seven (27) secretaries from Federal University Kashere, Gombe State. The data collected were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 25 to determine the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained. The instrument was reliable for the study. The data for



the study were collected by the researchers assisted by four research assistants. The researchers used face to face approach and the exercise lasted for nine weeks. The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 25 to run linear regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance. In the test of null hypotheses, when the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and if the p-value is greater than 0.05 the null hypothesis was retained.

Results of Study

The results of the study were presented in Tables 1 to 4.4.2.1

Research Hypothesis One

Job demand has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Table 1: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Job Demand on Interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Demand	.851	20.081	.851 ^a	.724	.722	.000

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand
- b. Dependent variable; interest

The outcome of regression analysis used to test null hypothesis one disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .851 with $t=20.081$ with R-value of .851. The R-square obtained was .724 which indicated that job demand has 72.4% influence on the interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institution in Bauchi state. The p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$, this suggest that the influence of the independent variable (Job demand) on dependent variable (interest) was significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Research Hypothesis Two

Job demand has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.



Table 2: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Job Demand on Job Satisfaction of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Demand	.173	2.182	.173 ^a	.030	.024	.031

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand
- b. Dependent variable; job satisfaction

The regression analysis in Table 2 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .173 with $t=2.182$ and R-value was .173. The R-square value of .030 suggests that job demand has 3% influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The p-value was less than the alpha value ($.031 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of job demand on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi state was significant. The hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Research Hypothesis Three

Stress has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Table 3: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Stress on Interest of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Stress	.903	26.122	.903 ^a	.816	.815	.000

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress
- b. Dependent variable; interest

The regression analysis on the test of hypothesis three in Table 9 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta coefficient of .903 with $t=26.122$ and R-value was .903. The R-square of .816 obtained suggests that stress has 81.6% influence on interest of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The $p=.000$ was less than 0.05 level of significance. The obtained p-value indicated that stress significantly influenced the interest of professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Research Hypothesis Four

Stress has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Stress on Job Satisfaction of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Stress	.856	20.565	.856 ^a	.733	.731	.000

- Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress
- Dependent variable; job satisfaction

The regression analysis for the test of null hypothesis four in Table 4 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta of .856 which was found to be the same with the R-value. The $t=20.565$ with R-square of .733. The obtained R-square value suggests that the independent variable has 73.3% influence on the dependent variable. The p-value obtained was less than the alpha value ($.000 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of stress on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State was significant.

Discussion of Finding

The result of the research question one and test of corresponding null hypothesis one revealed that job demand had significant influence on interest of secretaries in tertiary institution. The result agreed with the earlier study of Ali and Farooqi (2014) who reported that high job demands (such as unpleasant work environment, excessive work pressure, work–family imbalance, and emotional demands) lead towards higher levels of exhaustion and disappointment and thereby reducing employee’s interest in job, which eventually induces withdrawal from the organization. This result is also concordant with the scientific results which present a relation between the interest and job demands and this matching can correlate with work satisfaction in a positive way, and it seems to correlate in a negative way when the job demands are high (Bakker & Demeroutii, 2017). It can therefore be concluded that high level of matching between personal interest and job demands is associated with a high level of job satisfaction, both directly and indirectly (through work involvement).

The result from research question two and test of corresponding null hypothesis indicated that job demands significantly influenced the job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result agreed with a previous finding of non-profit and public employees, when job demands are high, the job satisfaction of employees improves (Knapp, Smith, & Sprinkle, 2017). The finding in line with a previous study conducted Rai (2013) who reported that job demand like work overload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction. This suggests that respondent who felt heavy demands made upon them are also less satisfied with their job. The pressure on secretaries to do their secretarial duties and also work extra hard to carry out other duties that can be carried out by other junior non-teaching such as



photocopying, filing, handling incoming and outgoing correspondences will affect the secretaries job satisfaction in job.

The result from research question three and test of corresponding null hypothesis indicated that stress has influence on interest of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result is in agreement with a previous finding of Ali, Raheem, Nawaz, and Imamuddin (2014) who noted that the stress level of workers affect their involvement in their job and this will definitely affect their interest in the job. Asekun (2015) also noted that stress has negative influence on job satisfaction, job performance and interest of employee.

The result of the research question four and test of corresponding null hypothesis four revealed that stress influenced job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result is in agreement with the study conducted by Adeniji, Salau, Awe and Odunayo (2018) who reported that people with higher percentage of stress in their job may feel frustrated when they are having problems with colleagues or society and this may lead to the negative impact to their satisfaction in the organization. Similarly, Ahmad, Khan, Srikanth, Patel, Nagappa and Jamshed (2015) argued that if a person is stressed in his job, he will experience job dissatisfaction and will not be able to deliver 100% and the productivity will be affected.

Conclusion

The result of this study revealed that job demand and stress significantly influenced the interest and job satisfaction among professional secretaries of tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result also established that secretaries in tertiary institutions consider most of the work functions as causes of high job demand and stress in the workplace, and these stressors have great effect on their commitment, performance, and productivity. This implies that secretaries experience high job demand and a lot of work stress as they carry out their administrative and clerical functions in the tertiary institutions in the State. Since there is presence of unavoidable demand and stress in work life, it is obvious that in tertiary institutions, secretaries must go through a form of stress to accomplish office tasks. It is therefore concluded that the productivity of secretaries which is considered as very critical to achieving the goals of our tertiary institution could only be achieved in the presence of a favourable demands and efforts towards effective management of stress.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings and conclusions of the study, the following measures should be put in place to help secretaries of the tertiary institutions manage and reduce stress at work.

1. Government should employ more secretaries to avoid high job demand and work overload which are the major sources of stress affecting interest and job satisfaction of the secretaries.
2. Management should emphasize on favourable job demand and introduce stress management training program strategy at various units in the tertiary institutions.
3. There is the need for tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics and colleges to train their secretarial staff regularly to update their digital skills and computer based word processing knowledge in order to make them relevant in the modern business offices.



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STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM BY UNIVERSITY LECTURERS FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigates strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by universities lecturers for self-reliance in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two specific purposes and research questions guided the study, while two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from 89 business education lecturers from five universities in South-East Nigeria. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Business Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha statistic which yielded an overall cluster reliability coefficient of 0.89. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test and ANOVA. The study found that the lecturers were in agreement that all the strategies identified in the study are strategies for the effective implementation of business education curriculum in universities. Such strategies include: training of lecturers in regard to technologies, conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes among others. The findings also reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the university authorities should seek assistance from non-governmental organization, alumni, parents and philanthropies in order to adequately fund business education programmes to enable them have some required facilities for effective teaching and learning. Also, there should be a well-established communication link between the universities and industries.

KEYWORDS: *Business education, Self-reliant, Curriculum, Business education Curriculum, Curriculum implementation. strategies.*

Introduction

Business Education plays a significant role in Nigeria's economic growth and development. It improves personal qualities and builds the attitudes of individuals that are necessary for adjustment to personal and employment situations, and also provides knowledge and, skills for



individuals to function well in office occupation and also create jobs for themselves and others (Amoor & Udoh, 2008). According to Ola (2019) the uncontrolled rate of unemployment and poverty has brought about the dire need to carry out some modifications in the curriculum of business education programme in Nigeria so that the students will not only be exposed to a particular skill but also to bring about creative thinking sufficient enough to establish and run a business at least at the small-scale level. In order to be able to understand the concept of business education, it would be necessary to look at the definitions of business education in the past and present time. This is because technology has helped to change the concept of things. It, therefore, implies that business education, as a course of study should move with the trends of the time.

The earliest form of Business Education according to Osuala, Popham (1975), and Njoku (1990) as well as most authors was the apprenticeship training. At that time an individual had to learn a trade under another person who had the skill for the trade, or who was experienced in a particular area. These were craft, bookkeeping, farming, and sales. In 2004, Osuala, gave another definition as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts (1) Office education - a vocational programme of office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education and (2) General business education - a programme to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business. Business education as a branch of vocational education provides students with requisite skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical that equip the learner with knowledge and skills to teach effectively, work in an office or be self-reliant (Okoro, 2020) According to Osuala (2009) Business Education is an academic programme offered in tertiary institution which is designed to provide learning situations for skill acquisition among students who could apply such skills in their occupation, managing personal business, for personal living in the society and for nation building. It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by; the definitions of business education continue to change. This means that business education is not static. Osuala also maintained that business education components are therefore a union of general education and business components. The growing need for business knowledge has continued to expand and increase from the era of industrial revolution in western world and indigenization policy.

Technology as applied to Business Education according to Igberaharha (2009) is known as electronic commerce (e-commerce) or electronic business, which involves the use of networks, expert systems, and artificial intelligence (e-communication business). E-commerce enables Companies and their customers to trade information, commodities, and services more easily. Furthermore, Ololube (2006); Teo (2014), stated that business education teachers' competence is Connected with how they integrate technology in their classroom activities. Therefore, the need for Identification of value calls for adequate training of lecturers in line with the modern business education curriculum so as to enable them improves their instructions to students (Ibelegbu, 2013). Having looked at different definition from authors, it can be said that business education is a component of vocational technical education that prepares students for careers in business by providing them with the necessary competencies, skills, knowledge, learning the use of technology (electronic commerce), understanding of becoming self-reliant and attitudes to perform as workers in industries as well as to be informed consumers of goods and services.



Self-reliance is a viable development strategy adopted by contemporary Africans in their attempt to save themselves from the firm grips of poverty (Mahammad, 2012). According to Salau (2014) economic stability of most developed countries of the world has been attributed to entrepreneurship minded self-starters who perceive opportunities and risk their resources in creating and managing their own business. In this work self-reliance is defined in line with Rama and Goldenberg (2017) who stated that self-reliance is all about depending on oneself for economic wellbeing. Moreso, Okafor (2012) stated that teacher's instructional methods can serve as a means for improving the development of entrepreneurship among the students. According to Blessing and Promise (2017) entrepreneurship is best promoted by school administrators that have interest. This indicates that school administrators have a huge role to play in the implementation of business education curriculum in order to ascertain entrepreneurship which in turn promotes self-reliance. Attaining self-reliant is in consonance on how the curriculum of a school is well prepared in order to serve as a guide in building the learner's mind. The society is dynamic and the changes are integrated into the curricula of schools for effective dissemination of the required knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

The word "curriculum" was derived from a latin language "currus", which means a race course. This implies that the child has been exposed to an informal curriculum before arriving at school; it suggests that the child is beginning to run intellectually and educationally. This is why curriculum is explained as the experiences of the child which the school uses in the process of educating the child (Atah, 2019). In any field of education curriculum is seen as the reconstruction of knowledge and experience, systematically developed with the guidance of the school or relevant agencies, which will enhance the learners and the society's well-being (Moronkola, Akinsola& Abe 2003). According to Ogwo and Oranu (2006), curriculum is the planned guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience under the auspices of a school, for the learners' continuous and willful growth in personal, social competence. Curriculum refers to all of the planned experiences that the school provides as part of its instructional responsibilities, as well as the tools and content with which students will interact for the goal of accomplishing designated educational outcomes (Indiana Department of Education, 2010). These definitions show that for a curriculum of any course to be meaningful, it must take into cognizance, the learners and the environment. This means that curriculum should not be rigid; it should be adaptive to changes and flexible (Odesanya & Bwala, 2004), Therefore, for business education to attain its' goals and objectives, curriculum need to be flexible in order to accommodate the necessary changes that may arise as a result of changes in technology.

The term business education curriculum refers to course content that prepares students for employment and vocational business careers (Osuala, 2009). Worthwhile business education curriculum should be dynamic and relevant, possessing the following characteristics as outlined by Isyaku in Okoro (2013) such as: business education courses should provide for students' development of knowledge, manipulation competencies, attitudes and values which should be applied in real work setting, business education courses should be based on societal needs. Thus, business education curriculum must be responsive to technological changes in the society; new



developments in the area should be incorporated into the curriculum so that graduates can be better equipped to compete for jobs, become self-reliant. Therefore, the equipment, facilities, supplies and instructional resources must be obtained for effective implementation of the curriculum. Implementation is the process of putting into action a previously agreed-upon plan, decision, proposal, idea, or policy. Curriculum implementation process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is important to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. The learner is therefore the central figure in the curriculum implementation. Process. Ivowi (2009) noted that curriculum implementation entails the interaction of the learner and the curriculum contents under the guidance of the teacher in order to acquire desired knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills. Curriculum implementation according to Ivowi (2009) in Obilo and Saugoleye (2015) involves the dissemination of the structured set of learning experiences, the provision of resources to effectively execute the plan, and the actual execution of the plan in the classroom setting, where the teacher-learner interactions take place. Curriculum implementation refers to how teachers deliver instruction and assess learning through the use of specified resources provided in a curriculum. The major purpose of curriculum implementation in business education is to improve the quality of the services rendered by schools in order to make them more proficient in furnishing students with knowledge, right attitude and varied skills that will help them to become self-reliant in the society. In order to attain this proficiency, some strategies must be applied.

Strategy according to Bryson (2015) is a pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that define what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Okoye, and Ashibogwu, (2018). saw strategies as techniques or mechanisms put in place to maintain degree of quality of excellence of a product or service. To them strategies are the same as methods and procedures of attaining a goal. According to Ikelegbe, (2020), strategy is viewed as the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term, which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment and fulfils stakeholders' exceptions. To them, it is a set of goals and objectives of an organization including major programmes of action chosen to reach those goals and objectives. In the context of this work, strategies are mechanisms or techniques set aside to maintain degree of excellence in business education programme. Therefore, this article will focus on instructional and institutional strategies.

Instructional strategies are the techniques or methods that a teacher adopts to meet various learning objectives. These instructional strategies help students to walk on the path of independent learning and become strategic learners. Some researchers like Emesoba and Mmuo (2018) revealed in their study that some innovative instructional strategies for enhancing quality business education programme in tertiary institutions through school industry collaboration for economic development are as follows: formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme, involving business educators in planning school curriculum for business education programme and government establishing special grant scheme for school-industry collaboration in business education programme. Furthermore, Okoro (2020) also listed some possible institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum as follows: employing qualified lecturers to teach in business education programme, lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theories and practical, the curriculum should be updated based



on the market needs; students should be exposed to industrial Practice, adequate funding of business education programmes, review of business education curriculum by school authorities, collaboration with employers of labor to employ business education graduates, collaboration with National Universities Commission for accreditation of courses, collaboration with association of business educators for their input in curriculum, provision of Modern Equipment in business education programme, public enlightenments programmes on business education and formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme.

The findings of this study shall be of immense benefit to lecturers of business education, students of business education, National Universities Commission (NUC), curriculum reviewers and future researchers.

The findings of the study will benefit lecturers of business education, if published through conference papers, journals and books, would help them to acquire information on the best strategies to adopt in the implementation of the curriculum that can make the students self-reliance. The findings of the study, when published and adopted would be of benefit to the students by providing them with a qualitative and a skilled oriented curriculum that is capable of producing self-reliant graduates. The findings of the study, when published, would also be beneficial to the National University for commission (NUC) to use the empirical data of the study in business education curriculum reforms and design. Curriculum planners will also benefit from the findings of this study because, it will provide relevant information for curriculum review and update to meet societal needs for improved teaching and learning. Finally, the findings will help to provide useful research information to fellow researchers with keen research interest into identifying strategies for improving curriculum development and implementation.

Statement of Problem

Over the years business education has been bedeviled by multidimensional curriculum problems which have undermined the plans and policy statements of government with regards to the achievement of the broad goals and objectives of producing self-reliant graduates. Despite the efforts made by the stakeholders the problems still persist till date with different dimensions. Without any doubt the problems besetting business education have attendant consequences not only for the university education but the senior secondary level of education which the products of the university are expected to serve. Therefore, there is a dire need to arrest this ugly trend through Strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main aim of this study was to investigate strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum by university lecturers for self-reliance in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:



1. The instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.
2. The institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?
2. What are the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference among the mean responses of lecturers studied on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum.

Methodology:

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 89 lecturers (from five federal and state universities in South-East Nigeria) consisting of 20 lecturers from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 25 from University of Nigeria Nsukka, 17 from Imo State University Owerri, 13 from Alex Ekwueme University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State, and 14 from Michael Okpara University of Agricultural Umudike, Abia State. No sample was drawn because of the small population.

A researcher-developed instrument titled “Strategies for Effective Implementation of Business Education Curriculum for Self-Reliant Questionnaire (SEIBEC SRQ) was used for collecting data for the study. The instrument was divided into 2 sections based on the specific purposes of the study. Each item in the questionnaire was assigned a four response options of Strongly Agree (SA =4), Agree (A =3), Disagree (D =2), Strongly Disagree (SD =1). The instrument was validated by experts from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the department of business education and one from computer and robotics education all in University of Nigeria Nsukka. To test the reliability of the instrument a pilot test was conducted using twenty-five (25) lecturers in University of Nigeria Nsukka which is outside the study area and the instrument yielded a reliability index of 0.89.

The researchers and two research assistants administered copies of the questionnaires to the respondents in their various universities. Since, efforts were made to retrieve the instruments the



same way it was distributed within a period of one week and two days and this yielded a 100 percent rate of return. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The independent t-test was used to test null hypothesis 1, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test null hypothesis 2 all at 0.05 level of significance. The study used Statistical package for Social Science (v26.0) for analysis. Mean of 2.50 was used as cut off point any item with a mean of 2.50 and above will be agreed while any item with a mean less than 2.50 will be disagreed. Conversely, in testing the null hypothesis, any item whose p-value was greater than 0.05, then the hypothesis of no significance will be accepted but if p-value was less than or equal to 0.05, the hypothesis of no significance was rejected.

Result

The result is presented according to the research questions that guided the study and the hypotheses tested.

Research Question 1: What are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Table 1: This table shows mean responses of lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	Training of Lecturers in regard to Technologies.	3.52	0.75	Agree
2	Conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes.	3.42	0.77	Agree
3	The curriculum should be developed and updated based on the market needs.	3.05	0.78	Agree
4	Lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical.	3.47	0.51	Agree
5	Lecturers' use of current teaching strategies should be encouraged.	3.16	0.69	Agree
6	Incentives should be given to lecturers who improve their knowledge and skills especially in technology.	3.56	0.73	Agree
7	Adequate time allotment for practical lectures.	3.37	0.60	Agree
8	Lecturers' use of emerging technologies during teaching.	3.51	0.63	Agree
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		3.50	0.60	Agree

Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation



Table 1 presented the result of the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in South East Nigeria. Result showed mean ranged from 3.05 – 3.56 with a grand mean of 3.50 which is above the 2.5 cut-off point. This implies that the respondents accepted that the items identified are the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities. The standard deviation ranged from 0.51 – 0.78, implying that the respondents are not far from each other in their responses.

Research question 2: What are the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria?

Table 2: This table shows mean rating of lecturers on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
9	Provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education.	3.55	0.71	Agree
10	Public enlightenment programmes on business education.	3.32	0.67	Agree
11	Adequate modern business education library facilities, textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals.	3.42	0.51	Agree
12	Students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised.	3.51	0.66	Agree
13	Adequate funding of modern infrastructures.	3.57	0.76	Agree
14	There should be a well-established communication link between the schools and industries.	3.56	0.85	Agree
15	Alternative power supply should be provided during lectures.	3.09	0.85	Agree
16	Provision of well-equipped laboratories.	3.32	0.75	Agree
17	Provision of well-equipped ICT facilities	3.53	0.61	Agree
18	Review of business education curriculum	3.42	0.69	Agree
Grand mean and Standard Deviation		3.54	0.67	Agree

Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

Table 2 showed the result of the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria. The result reveals mean range of 3.09 – 3.57 which is above 2.5 cut off point. This implies that all the business education lecturers accepted that the institutional strategies identified can support them for effective



implementation of business education curriculum in the universities. Also, standard deviation ranged from 0.51 – 0.85 indicating that respondents were homogeneous in their responses.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities in south east Nigeria.

Table 3: T-test Analysis of the difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Level of Sig.	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Male	36	3.43	0.61	0.05	87	2.07	0.12	NS
Female	53	3.55	0.77					

Note: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df = Degree of freedom.

The t-test analysis in table 4 revealed p-value of 0.12 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance at 87 degrees of freedom. This indicates that the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female lecturers on the instructional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities is retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference among the mean responses of lecturers studied on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance on the Difference Among the Mean Responses of Business Education Lecturers in Universities on the Institutional Strategies for Effective Implementation of Business Education Curriculum

Sources of Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Sig	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	1.782	4	0.05	.445	2.106	.087	NS
Within Groups	17.769	84		.212			
Total	19.551	88					

Note: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, df = Degree of freedom.

Table 4 shows that the calculated probability value (p-value) of .087 is greater than the alpha level of .05 with the degree of freedom of 84 and 88. Based on this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference among the mean responses of business education lecturers in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka , University of Nigeria Nsukka, Imo state University



Owerri, Alex Ekwueme University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi state and Michael Okpara University of Agricultural Umudike, Abia state on the institutional strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum is upheld.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that training of lecturers in regard to technologies, lecturers use of emerging technologies during teaching and lecturers' use of current teaching strategies should be encouraged to ensure effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in line with Ololube, 2006 and Teo (2004) which stated that business education teachers' competence is now connected with how they integrate technology in their classroom activities in order to enhance learning. Also, the findings of the study show that the curriculum should be developed and updated based on the following: market needs; adequate time allotment for practical lectures; provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education; adequate modern business education library facilities; textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals; public enlightenment programmes on business education; students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised; adequate funding of modern infrastructures; lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical; alternative power supply should be provided during lectures; and provision of well-equipped laboratories, provision of well-equipped ICT facilities and review of business education curriculum. These findings are consistent with earlier studies of Okoro (2020) which agreed that some of the possible strategies for effective implementation of business education curriculum are: lecturers should emphasize on narrowing gap between theory and practical, the curriculum should be updated based on the market needs, students should be exposed to industrial practice, adequate funding of business education programmes, review of business education curriculum by school authorities, collaboration with National Universities Commission for accreditation of courses, provision of Modern Equipment in business education programme and public enlightenment programmes on business education. More so, the study revealed that conducting seminars and workshops to help lecturers keep abreast of technological changes will enable effective implementation business education curriculum. Ibelegbu (2013) work supports these findings by stating that the need for identification of value calls for retraining of business education teachers in the areas of technology so as to enable them improves their instruction to students in business education.

Therefore, to assist the business education teachers in the area of study, it becomes important to retrain these teachers through intervention programmes to update their knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective instruction. The study also shows that there should be a well-established communication link between the schools and industries. This is in consonance with the study of Emesoba and Mmuo (2018) which revealed in their findings that for innovative strategies to be used in enhancing quality business education programme in tertiary institutions through school industry collaboration for economic development, the following facts are to be considered: formulation of government policies that will encourage school-industry collaboration in business education programme; involving business educators in planning school curriculum for business education programme; and government establishing special grant scheme for school-industry collaboration in



business education programme. The findings of the study revealed that lecturers accepted all the instructional strategies as possible ways of effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in agreement with Okafor (2012) that teacher's instructional method can serve as a means for improving the development of entrepreneurship among the students.

This implies that business education is also about entrepreneurship because it prepares students to be self-reliant. The findings of the study further revealed that the lecturers accepted all the institutional strategies as possible ways of effective implementation of business education curriculum. This is in support of Promise and Blessing (2017) who noted that entrepreneurship is best promoted by school administrators that have interest, implying that school administrators have a huge role to play in the implementation of business education curriculum so as to promotes students' self-reliance on graduation.

Conclusion

For business education to achieve its major purpose which is self-reliance that will lead to poverty alleviation there is need to follow the above-mentioned strategies in order to attain effective implementation of business education curriculum. This study demonstrates that adequate time allotment for practical lectures, provision of instructional materials for teaching and learning business education, adequate modern business education library facilities, textbooks in business education and provision of foreign periodicals, public enlightenment programmes on business education, students should be exposed to industrial practice and properly supervised, adequate funding of modern infrastructures amongst other are strategies that can enable the effective implementation of business education curriculum. Moreover, if these strategies are not absorbed then the success of business education programme will be hindered. Whereas, if these strategies are rightly implemented in the business education curriculum, then business education graduates will be equipped with effective and efficient skills that will enable them become self-reliant, create jobs for themselves and others. This will go a long way to reduce poverty in the society and unemployment in the labor market.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The university authorities should seek assistance from non-governmental organization, alumni, parents and philanthropies in order to adequately fund Business education Programmes to enable them have some required facilities for effective teaching and learning.
2. There should regularly organize workshops, seminars, in-service training, and re-training programmes to equip the lecturers with the skills and strategies needed for effective implementation of business education curriculum in the universities.
3. Hardworking lecturers of business education who utilize appropriate technologies during lectures should be adequately rewarded to encourage them to put in their best.
4. Business education course structure should be regularly reviewed by the university management to meet up to the current economic trends.



5. Lecturers should be encouraged to make use of modern equipment and instructional facilities during instructional delivery in order to bring about effectiveness and efficiency in business education.
6. Collaboration and synergy between institutions and industries should be encouraged through policy formulation, and institution and industry efforts.

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SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES IN OGUN STATE

BY

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Abstract

This study investigated social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates in Ogun state, Nigeria using a descriptive survey research design. A total of 1480 Business Education undergraduates selected through a simple random sampling technique participated in the study. Two validated instruments namely Social Media Utilization Questionnaire (SMUQ) and Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ) were used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson moment correlation and t-test of significance. The Finding revealed that a positive and significant relation exists between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, there is no significant gender difference in the entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates. It is recommended among others, that social media utilization skills should be infused in the curriculum of Business Education programme at the university level with a view to enhancing undergraduates' entrepreneurial aspiration.

Key words: *social media utilization, Entrepreneurial intention, Business education.*

Introduction

Business Education has remained an invaluable academic programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and beyond. It is a programme designed to empower students with educational and business competencies needed to effectively cope with the challenges in the world of work. According to Okoye and Umezuluike (2014), Business Education is part of vocational education programme which inculcates in individual, business competencies, skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding necessary to perform and progress effectively in the business world. As a designed programme of instruction, it prepares people for jobs requiring specialized training.

The objectives of Business Education programme in universities according to Soneye (2015) can be summarized thus:

1. To produce well qualified and competent graduates in business subjects who will be able to teach business subjects in secondary schools and other related educational institutions.
2. To produce business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of Business Education in society.



3. To produce business teachers who will be involved in the much-desired revolution of vocational development right from the primary and secondary schools.
4. To equip graduates with the skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well as self-employment.

Puri (2016), added that irrespective of the level, Business Education is aimed at providing training that will equip its recipients with business skills for optimal performance in the work place. In Nigeria, social media has become an essential tool for promoting entrepreneurship and business development. Many entrepreneurs have used social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to promote their business, attract customers and build their brand. This has created an environment in which students are more likely to view entrepreneurship as a viable career path, and to be inspired by success stories of other entrepreneurs.

Boateng and Amankwa (2016), defined social media as the application that allow users to converse and interact with each other. It is an online space that is used by people to connect, share, communicate, established or maintain connections with others for various purposes. Social media is an online platform which enables people to build social networks or relations with other people who share similar personal or career interest, activities, background or real-life connections. Social media relies on many electronic devices such as tablets, i-pads, laptops and internet-based technologies for connecting people. Thus, it can be described as technologies that facilitate social interaction, make collaboration possible, and enable deliberation among people at global level.

According to Ail, Iqbal and Iqbal (2016), social media is the collection of applications such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and YouTube among others, that link people together as they share information through social networking. From the above, it can be deduced that social media is the platform that gives individual the opportunity to interact, using two-way communication such that it allows anyone who has an online account to share their opinions with other social media users.

Entrepreneurship is a concept that has been studied by scholars across various fields, including economics, business and management. According to Akinboade and Oluseyi (2016), entrepreneurship is the process of creating and managing a business venture in order to make a profit. This process involves identifying an opportunity, mobilizing resources, and taking risks in order to bring a new product or service to the market. In the view of Ogbuji, Amadi and Eze (2018), entrepreneurship involves the creation of new businesses or the expansion of existing ones. This process requires a combination of creativity, innovation and risk taking in order to identify and capitalize on market opportunities. Okpara and Wynn (2007), defined entrepreneurship as the process of identifying and exploiting business opportunities through the creation of new ventures. They noted that successful entrepreneurship requires a combination of skills, knowledge and resources, as well as a willingness to take calculated risks. From the foregoing, entrepreneurship is the process of creating and managing a new business venture with the aim of making profit. The process requires a combination of skills, knowledge, resources, and risk taking, as well as the ability to identify and capitalize on market opportunities.

Intention is explained as how much efforts is expended to display certain behaviours. Intentions are consistent efforts to keep trying and achieving a goal. Daryanto (2012), explained that



entrepreneurial intention is the effort and tendency of a person to set-up a new business by using the resources and daring to take risks to gain profit. When associated with business, the entrepreneurial intention is the willingness and ability of individuals to create valuable business ideas, the ability to see opportunities and available resources to realize their dreams, the willingness to take risks, and the ability to minimize risks. Student entrepreneurial intention refers to the degree to which a student is motivated and has a desire to start and manage personal business in the future. It reflects the level of commitment and willingness of a student to take necessary steps to start a new venture such as developing a business plan, seeking funding, and networking with potential partners and customers. The concept of student entrepreneurial intention is important because it has been shown to be a key predictor of actual entrepreneurial behaviour. Students with high levels of entrepreneurial intention are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship as a career path, and to start their own businesses after graduation.

Few empirical studies have been documented on the relationship between social media utilization, student entrepreneurial intention, and academic performance. One study by Umoren and Umoren (2017), found a significant positive relationship between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of university students in Nigeria. The study surveyed 368 students and found that social media use was positively associated with entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived desirability of entrepreneurship, and intention to start a business. Another study by Olaoye (2018), examined the impact of social media utilization on students' entrepreneurial intention, with a focus on the role of social media in facilitating access to information and resources. The study found that social media use was positively associated with entrepreneurial intention. The study concluded that social media can be an effective tool for enhancing students' entrepreneurial intention and access to information and resources. Similarly, Adekunle (2020), explored the relationship between social media utilization, entrepreneurial education and students' entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates in Nigeria. The study surveyed 234 students and found that social media use was positively associated with entrepreneurship education which in turn was also positively correlated with entrepreneurial intention.

However, not all studies have found a positive relationship between social media utilization and student entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Udechukwu (2019), found that while social media utilization was positively associated with entrepreneurial self-efficacy, it was not significantly associated with entrepreneurial intention among students. Empirical studies on gender differences on students' entrepreneurial intention have also been reported. A study by Fayolle (2006), found that female students were less likely to have an entrepreneurial intention than male students in France. The researcher suggested that this could be due to cultural and societal factors that discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship. In a study conducted by Wilson (2007), found that there was no significant difference in the entrepreneurial intention of male and female students in United Kingdom. However, they did find that male students had a higher level of perceived self-efficacy than female students which may be a contributing factor to the gender gap in entrepreneurship.

Measuring social media utilization and students' entrepreneurial intention can be useful for educators, researchers, curriculum planners and other stakeholders particularly in the present digital



age. This study, therefore, investigated social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates in Ogun State.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates in Ogun State.
2. There is no significant gender difference in the entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates in Ogun State.

Methods

A descriptive design of correlation type was employed in the study. A total of 1480 Business Education undergraduates selected from two public universities in Ogun State through simple random sampling technique participated in the study. Two instruments were developed and used for data collection. The Social Media Utilization Questionnaire (SMUQ) and Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ). The SMUQ was made up of two sections; section A sought demographic information on students’ gender, level and name of institution, while section B contained 30 structured items meant to elicit information on students’ social media utilization. The EIQ was also made up of two sections: section A sought demographic information on students’ gender, level and name of institution, while section B contained 25 structured items meant to elicit information on entrepreneurial intention of students. The initial version of the two instruments were given to experts in the department of Computer Science and Faculty of Education of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye for validation and their comments before coming up with the final version. The two instruments were trial tested in a typical institution in Lagos state which was not part of the main study. Trial testing of the instrument showed it to be reliable with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient value of 0.86 for SMUQ and 0.78 for EIQ respectively. The two instruments were administered on the subject in the two public universities with the help of four (4) research assistants. The data gathered from the study were collated and analyzed using the Pearson Moment Correlation and independent t-test.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduate in Ogun State.

Table 1: Relationship between Social Media Utilization and Entrepreneurial Intention of Business Education Undergraduates

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Pearson (r)	Sig.
Social media Utilization	1480	56.5	6.0		
Entrepreneurial Intention of Business Education Undergraduates	1480	58.4	6.2	0.84	0.000



The results in Table 1 revealed a significant outcome ($r = 0.84, P < 0.05$). An r value of 0.84 is an indication of a very high and positive relationship. This implies that positive and significant relationship exist between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates. Hypothesis 1 is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant gender difference in the entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates in Ogun State.

Table 2: Gender Difference in Entrepreneurial Intention of Business Education Undergraduates

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Male	800	52.6	4.82			
Female	680	50.2	4.2			
				1478	0.092	0.916

The results in Table 2 revealed a non-significant outcome ($t = 0.092, P > 0.05$). This implies that the observed difference in the mean entrepreneurial intention scores of male and female undergraduates is not statistically significant. Hence, there is no significant gender difference in the entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates. Hypothesis 2 is hereby retained.

Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

In this study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested. The findings from hypothesis 1 revealed that a positive and significant relationship exists between social media utilization and entrepreneurial intention of Business Education undergraduates. This finding corroborates the study of Olajide and Adegbuyi (2020) who found that social media utilization has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention. The study revealed that students who use social media are more likely to have the intention to start a business than those who do not use social media. This is because they are likely to have access to relevant information and resources that can facilitate their entrepreneurial activities. This finding is also similar to the conclusion of Adetunji (2021) that students who have higher levels of social media use have a strong intention to start their business. The outcome of this study negates the findings of Adeniyi (2021) who reported that social media utilization has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial intention among undergraduates. The study suggests that social media use may not be sufficient to promote entrepreneurial intention unless combined with other factors such as training, mentorship and access to capital.

Findings from hypothesis 2 revealed, that there is no significant gender difference in students' entrepreneurial intention. The outcome supports Shinnar (2012), who found that both male and female students have high level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and perceived desirability for entrepreneurship. The study also confirms the outcome of Linan and Chen (2009) who found no significant gender differences in students' entrepreneurial intention. The study further showed that



both male and female students were equally influenced by factors such as perceived desirability, feasibility and self-efficacy in their decision to pursue entrepreneurship. However, the outcome of this study negates the findings of Adele Thomas and Carin Cruywagen (2018) who reported that male students had significantly higher entrepreneurial intentions than female students. The researchers suggested that this may be due to cultural and societal norms that discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

This study has provided empirical evidence to support the fact that social media utilization is a strong predictor and correlate of students' entrepreneurial intention. This study suggests that social media utilization has a positive influence on students' entrepreneurial intention. This is because the social media can provide students with access to entrepreneurial information, resources, networks and role models which can increase their intention to start a business.

Recommendations

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

1. Government should integrate social media utilization skills in the curriculum of Business Education curriculum in Nigeria at the University level.
2. Government should provide ICT devices and software for pedagogical purposes in the University.
3. Government and stakeholders in education should support initiatives that promote entrepreneurship education and social media utilization among undergraduates in Nigeria.
4. Government should provide resources and training for university lecturers on social media utilization for entrepreneurship purposes.
5. Business firms and corporate bodies should provide mentorship, internship and job shadowing opportunities for undergraduates in Business Education to gain hands-on experience in entrepreneurship and social media utilization.

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INFLUENCE OF COMPETITIVE ORIENTATION STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF SMALL-SCALE ENTERPRISES IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

The study determined the Influence of Competitive Orientation strategy on Performance of Small-Scale Enterprises in Nasarawa State, Nigeria” the study was guided by four specific objectives, four research questions were formulated and four null hypotheses were raised. The population of the study was 631 proprietors of registered Small Scale Enterprises in Nasarawa state. The study used the entire population for data collection. Fifty (50) items structured questionnaire was employed for data collection. Two experts validated the instrument and it was pilot tested in Makurdi, Benue state using 40 proprietors of registered Small Scale Enterprises. The instrument yields a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83. Five research assistants assisted the researcher in the data collection using direct delivery approach. The data collected were analyzed using Statistics Package of Social Science (SPSS), 25. The research questions were answered using mean score and standard deviation while Simple Logistic Regression was employed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that competitive orientation strategy significantly influences the financial, operational, market-based, employee and adaptability performances of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state. It was concluded that effective adoption of Competition Strategies would help to boost the performance of Small-Scale Enterprises in Nasarawa state. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that proprietors of small scale enterprises in Nasarawa state should integrate effective competition strategies that would enable them to compete with other Small-Scale Enterprises across the globe.

Keywords: Competition, Orientation, Strategies, Performance,

Introduction

The concept of Small scale enterprise (SSEs) varies depending on the three indicators guides and the country (Visser, 2013). The first indicator was based on the number of employees (10 to 50). The second definition is based on the degree of legal formality while the third definition was based on amounts of capital employed (Sulayman, 2014). The author stressed that in developed countries such as Britain, the United States, and various European countries define small-scale enterprises in terms of turnover and number of employees. Developing countries such as Nigeria define small businesses in terms of work force, management structure, and capital investment limit (Lucky &



Olusegun, 2012). Generally, SSEs is considered as a business entity that require little capital to start with quick decision and with not more than 50 employees.

The contributions of SSEs as the driving force of economy development and growth cannot be overemphasized. Mohammed (2020) opined that SSEs are global instrument of economic growth and development of both developed and developing countries. The author maintained that the enormous importance of SSEs cut across agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, and industry services. Equally, Ahmed, Adamu, Audu and Edemenang (2022) reported that SSEs is the global building block for industrialization, internally generated revenue and self-reliance. The authors maintained that, SSEs contribute over 55% of gross domestic product (GDP) and over 65% of total employment in developed economies and it also plays a significant role by contributing 60% of GDP and over 70% of total employment in developing economies. The report by SMEDAN (2020) indicates Nigeria's SSEs contribute nearly 50% of the country's GDP and account for over 80% of employment in the country. No doubt, the sector is considered as the pivot to Nigeria's growth including reducing poverty levels.

Despite the importance of SSEs, studies have shown that there is high mortality rate in the sector. The study conducted by Nigerian Economic Summit Group (2020) reported that, about 70 percent of small enterprises in Nigeria go out of business within the first three years of operation. Adamu, Anas and Bala (2020) reported that less than 5% of SSEs in Nigeria do survive beyond 5 years of its operation. Empirical evidences have attributed the mortality rate of SSEs to many factors. For instance, study conducted by Akande (2011) attributed the high mortality rate of small businesses in Nigeria to inadequate managerial, leadership, and marketing skill needed for owner's competitive business ventures. The author stressed most of proprietors of SSEs in Nigeria lack requisite competitive scale for growth and development. Similarly, Muhammad, Adamu and Umar (2022) reported that SSEs failed due to inability of integrating effective competitive strategy.

The study conducted Suleiman, Mohammed and Owoicho (2022) reported that the underlying constraints that affect SSEs include inability of adopting effective competitive strategy for competing with international business terrain. Similarly, Recia (2016) opined that, the globalization of marketing environment made it difficult for any firm that lack effective competitive strategy to gain competitive advantage for survival. The study of Mohammed (2020) also reported that the performance of SSEs in Nigeria is relatively low due to lack of combination of competitive strategies. This was also supported by the to the work of Adamu (2020) which revealed that competitive strategy (CPS) has effect on performance of Small scale enterprises in North Central Nigeria.

To address this problem, Adamu, Anas and Bala (2020) reported that, proprietors and management of SSEs need to learn the storms of competition that is needed in today's market forces and structure. The authors maintained that the performance of Small-Scale Enterprises is effected by inability of management to adopt appropriate strategy to gain national and international competitive advantages. Competitive strategy can be defined as the ability of business organization intends to create and maintain a competitive advantage with respect to competitors. According to Mohammed, Bala and Umar (2022), competitive strategy is business policies and procedures organization identify and execute to gain advantage in the market environment. Mohammed (2020) opined that



policies and procedures of business organizations are essential for components for business performance and success. Mohammed further maintained that, effective competitive strategy of business firms will greatly influence its performance operations. This therefore suggested that success, sustainability and performance of business organizations depends marketing strategies adopted. Nwaeze, Nwadike, Ufomadu and Nwankpa (2020) argued that for small business entrepreneurs to stay afloat in business they must get their competitive strategies right. Thus, the citations show that competitive strategy is a viable tool for business performance in a global competitive business environment.

The importance of competitive strategy on success and performance of business firms have been documented by scholars, for example, the study conducted by Owomoyela, Oyeniyi and Ola (2013) maintained that organization's competitive marketing strategy helps in building, defending and maintaining the competitive advantage of business. The authors argued that utilization of competitive strategies enhances the level of profit of business organization in Kaduna state. Similarly, Muhammad, Adamu and Umar(2022) reported that competitive strategies have a significant positive effect on firm performance. Similarly, Siti Nur (2014) reported the performance of business organization is subject to adoption of effective marketing strategy. Prinka, Sarita and Pankaj (2019) noted that in the globalization of market, business organizations must internationalization of their activities and events as a way to remain competitive in the market and initiate a competitive market environment that will make it stronger. These therefore suggested marketing strategy is the pivot for business performance, it against this background that the researcher determined the influence of competitive orientation strategy on performance of small-scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

Statement of the Problem

The high rate of small-scale enterprises failure in Nigeria has become a matter of concern to government, shareholders and stakeholders in business organizations. Empirical studies have revealed that SSEs often have problem of ensuring continuous survival in the global market. In Nigeria, 80% of small businesses fail within the first 5 years (Anas, Adamu & Bala, 2020). Research has documented that 70% of SSEs fail in their first three years of operations in Nigeria Mohammed (2020). Similarly, the study conducted by Nigerian Economic Summit Group 2020 emphasized that about 70 percent of small enterprises in Nigeria go out of business within the first three years of operation. The situation is not different with that of Nasarawa state. A study conducted by Isa, Odili and Daniel (2022) indicated that the performance of SSEs is low and there is high rate of business failure in the Nasarawa state. The author attributed to problem to lack of competitive orientation strategy required by small and medium scale entrepreneurs in the state. Empirical study from Adamu (2020) reported that performance of SSEs relied on creativity, business diversification, and effective strategies. Mohammed (2020) maintained that, every business that adopt unique strategies that distinguish it from other firms will greatly influence its performance operations. These therefore suggest that the growth and development of every business depends on strategies adopted. It is based on this, that the researchers determined the influence of competitive orientation strategy on performance of small-scale enterprises in Nasarawa state, Nigeria, Specifically, the study



determined the extent to which competitive orientation influence the: (i) financial performance; (ii) operational performance; (iii) market-based performance; and (iv) adaptability performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significant.

- i. Competitive orientation has no significant influence on financial performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.
- ii. Competitive orientation has no significant influence on operational performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.
- iii. Competitive orientation has no significant influence on market-based performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.
- iv. Competitive orientation has no significant influence on adaptability performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of this study, Correlational design was employed. According to Adamu and Kabir (2019) descriptive survey research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to use questionnaire and elicit data from the sample of the study which were used to answer the research questions and hypotheses raised in the study. The population of this study was 631 made up of 482 proprietors and 239 managers of registered Small Scale Business in Nasarawa State. The study adopted Total Population Sample (TPS) Technique were the entire population of 631 management staff of four hundred and thirteen (481) SMEs that registered with SMEDAN in Nasarawa State was used for the study.

The instrument for the data collection was 40 items structured questionnaire titled “Competitors’ Orientation Strategies” (ICOS). The instrument was adopted from previous study as agreed by Creswell (2012) who suggests that a researcher can adopt instrument from the prior studies relevant to the current research and as the easiest approach. Based on these, the instrument was adopted from previous studies of Abdullahi, Kunya, Bustani and Usman, (2019) titled impact of competitive aggressiveness on performance of Small and Eedium Construction Firms in Nigeria and Recia (2016) titled the impact of market orientation and innovation on SME performance in Kosovo.

The instrument was structured 4-point ratingscale (Strongly Agreed 4 points, Agreed, 3 points; Disagreed, 2 points and Strongly Disagreed, 1 point). In order to ensure that the instrument, measures correctly the subject matter of this study, the questionnaire items was given to two (2) experts from Federal University Lafia and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi for content and construct validity. The experts vetted the instrument for the purpose of determining its face validity. Their observations, suggestions and corrections were used to arrive at the final questionnaire items. The validated instrument was pilot tested. The data collected from pilot study were entered into Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS, 25) for reliability test. Cronbach’s

alpha was used in the actual study to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained. The instrument was adjudged to be reliable.

Five researcher assistants assisted the researchers in the data collection. Face-to-face method in the data collection. The method entailed handing copy of questionnaire to the respondent and being physically present as they complete it. This face to face approach facilitate the data collection and enabled the researchers to retrieve number of completed questionnaire (Adamu & Kabir, 2019). The exercise lasted for 5 weeks. Data collected were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25. The package was used to run Simple Logistic Regression to test all the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using Statistical Packages of Social Sciences (SPSS) 25. In the analysis, when the p-value is found to be less or equal to the alpha value ($p < 0.05$), the hypothesis was rejected and when the p-value is found to be greater than the alpha value ($p > 0.05$), the hypothesis was retained. The SPSS output as presented in Table 1 to 4.

Results of the Study

The results of hypotheses are as presented in Tables 1 to 4.

Research Hypothesis One

Competitive orientation has no significant influence on financial performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

The finding of null hypothesis one presented in Table 1 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .912 with $t=51.571$. The $R=-.912$ with R-square of .831 and Adjusted R Square .831. The R-Square of .831 suggested that Competitive Orientation strategy (COS) has 83.1% influence on Financial Performance of Small scale enterprise (FPSSE) in Nasarawa state. The $p=.000 < 0.05$ level of significance further suggested that the influence of COS on FPSSE was significant. The hypothesis was rejected.

Table 1: Linear Regression analysis on influence of competitive orientation strategy on financial performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

Std. Coeff, Beta	T	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	p-value	Decision
.912	51.571	.912 ^a	.831	.831	.000	H ₀₁ rejected

- Dependent Variable: FPSSE
- Predictors: (Constant), COS
- Source Fieldwork, 2023

Research Hypothesis Two

Competitive orientation has no significant influence on operational performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

The result of test of hypothesis two in Table 2 disclosed .928 for Standardized Coefficients Beta with t-value of 57.854. The R-value stood at .928 with R-Square of .861 and Adjusted R Square

of .861. The $R=.861$ indicated that COS has 86.1% influence on Operational Performance in Small Scale Enterprise (OPSSE). The p -value obtained was less than the level of significance ($.000<0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of COS on OPSSE in Nasarawa state was significance. The hypothesis was not retained.

Table 2: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Competitive orientation strategy on employees' performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state

Std. Coeff, Beta	T	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	p -value	Decision
.928	57.854	.928 ^a	.861	.861	.000	H0 ₂ Rejected

a. Dependent Variable: OPSSE

b. Predictors: (Constant), COS

c. Source Fieldwork, 2023

Research Hypothesis Three

Competitive orientation has no significant influence on market-based performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

The regression analysis used to test null hypothesis three documented in Table 3 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .914 with the t-value of 52.264. The $R=.914$ and R -square=.835 with Adjusted R-vale of .835. The obtained .835 R-square suggested that COS has 83.5% influence on Market-Based Performance of Small Scale Enterprise (MBPSSE).The $p=.000<0.05$ further indicated that the influence of COS on MBPSSE in Nasarawa state was significant. The hypothesis was rejected.

Table 3: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Competitive orientation strategy on performance review of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state

Std. Coeff, Beta	T	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	p -value	Decision
.914	52.264	.914 ^a	.835	.835	.000	H0 ₃ Rejected

a. Dependent Variable: MBPSSE

b. Predictors: (Constant), COS

c. Source Fieldwork, 2023

Research Hypothesis Four

Competitive orientation has no significant influence on adaptability performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state.

The test of research hypothesis five documented in Table 4 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta of .870 with $t=41.036$. The R-value stood at .870 with R-square was .758 and Adjusted R-Square of .757. The $R=.758$ suggested that COS has 75.7% influence on Adaptability performance of Small Scale Enterprise (APSSE) in Nasarawa state. This can also be seen in the p -value of $.0000<0.05$ obtained which suggested that COS has significant influence on APSSE in Nasarawa state. The hypothesis was therefore rejected.

**Table 4: Linear Regression Result on the Influence of Competitive orientation strategy on adaptability performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state**

Std. Coeff, Beta	T	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	p-value	Decision
.870	41.036	.870 ^a	.758	.757	.000	H ₀₅ Rejected

a. Dependent Variable: APSSE

b. Predictors: (Constant), COS

c. Source Fieldwork, 2023

Discussion of the Findings

The result of research question one disclosed that competitive orientation strategy has influence the financial performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state. The test of corresponding null hypothesis further shows that the influence of competitive orientation strategy on financial performance of small and medium scale business was significant. The outcome of the result agrees with that Nigerian Economic Summit Group (2020) which reported that significant numbers of small enterprises in Nigeria do face financial problem which led them to go out of business within the first three years of operation as a result of ineffective competitive orientation strategy. Similarly, Mohammed (2020) reported that the financial performance of SSEs is low and there is high rate of business failure in the Nasarawa state as a result of adopting wrong competitive orientation. Mohammed (2020) and Adamu (2020) also disclosed that SSEs financial performance relied on competitive orientation strategy, business diversification and business location among others.

The finding of research question two and test of null hypothesis two shows that competitive orientation strategy has significant influence operational performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state. The finding is similar with the outcome of the study conducted by Recia (2016) which shows that, the rising globalization, rapid technological development due to stronger competitive pressure, rapid changes in the market and more demanding customers, irregular regulations, impulsive tax, has made it much more difficult for SSEs in developing countries to gain competitive advantage of operational performance review. To address this problem, Adamu, Anas and Bala (2020) reported that, proprietors and management of SSEs need to learn the storms of competition that is needed in today's market forces and structure to improve their operational performance. Mohammed (2020) maintained that, every business that adoption of unique strategies that distinguish it from other firms will greatly influence its performance operations.

The aftermath of research question three shows that competitive orientation strategy has influence the market-base performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state. This was also applicable with the test of corresponding null hypothesis four which indicated the influence was significant. The result of the study was found to be in line with that of Abdullahi, Kunya, Bustani and Usman (2019) which revealed that competitive aggressiveness allows a firm to act forcefully to secure or improve its position in a field of rivals. The result also reveals a significant and positive correlation between competitive aggressiveness and firm performances. Another similar study was conducted by Bylon and Kraa (2019) which shows that market orientation variable of customer orientation positively and significantly predict performance and that competitor orientation positively predicts the sales of business enterprises. Also the study conducted by Similarly,



Abdullahi, Kunya, Bustani and Usman (2019) find out that a significant and positive correlation exist between competitive aggressiveness and firm performances.

The outcome of research question four which was further affirmed by the test of corresponding null hypothesis indicated that competitive orientation strategy has significant influence on adaptability performance of small scale enterprise in Nasarawa state. Similar result was reported by Mohammed, Adamu and Umar (2022) which reported that market orientation variable of customer orientation positively and significantly predicts adaptability and market performance of business organizations. Another study conducted by Mamman and Abuga (2020) reported that competitor orientation significantly affects SSEs in Yobe State. Another study conducted by Adamu (2020) reported that customer relationship marketing strategies and technology based marketing strategies have a positive insignificant influence on the performance of SSEs while promotional strategies had a negative insignificant.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The outcome of the study disclosed that Competition orientation strategies have positive and significant influence on the performance of Small Scale Enterprises in Nasarawa State. The outcome therefore suggested that effective competition orientation strategies will help to improve the success and sustainability of Small Scale Business in Nasarawa State. It is therefore concluded that effective adoption of Competition Strategies will go a long way to boost the performance of Small Scale Business in Nasarawa state, consequently, the general complain of the rate of Small-Scale Businesses failure in Nasarawa state will be eliminated or reduced drastically. Based on the result, it was recommended that proprietors of small scale enterprises in Nasarawa state should integrate effective competition strategies that will enable them to compete with other small scale markets across the globe.

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HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF OFFICE MANAGERS IN YABA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, YABA, LAGOS

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Abstract

This research work focused on human relations skills and the job performance of office managers. The purpose of this study was to determine the human relation skills that are required of office managers for effective job performance and the effect of such skills on the performance of office managers in Yaba College of Technology, Yaba Lagos State. The methodology adopted was a quantitative descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. A structured questionnaire was designed and administered to collect data from the whole population of 132 office managers in the college who received the questionnaire but only 72 returned filled. The frequency distribution was used to present the descriptive statistics and the hypothesis was tested using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis with the aid of a statistical package for social science (SPSS 26). The result shows that human relations skills were rated with a mean of 79.07% while job performance was rated a mean of 79.14% and that human relation skills have a weak, negative and non-significant effect on an office manager's performance in an organisation ($p > 0.05$). This study recommends that office managers should acquire human relations skills that will help them to improve their performance.

Keywords: Human relations skills, personal skills, interpersonal skills, and Job performance

Introduction

Job performance is the result of an employee's contribution to organizational success. It is the measurement of organisational success by assessing its employees' productivity and contributions (Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017); the yardstick of measuring employees' contributions towards organizational growth and development (Rahaman, Gupta, Ali, Ali, & Taru, 2021; Inuwa, 2016) and it has always been a top priority for every organization. Job performance is an important component of industrial and organizational psychology, representing scalable activities, behaviours, and outcomes that employees engage in or contribute to organizational goals (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020).

Job performance is defined as the fulfilment of an employee's designated duties and the results generated on a certain job function or activity within a time frame (Inayat & Khan, 2021).



The job performance of office managers has a significant role to play in attaining organizational goals. The work of an office manager is deeply rooted in personal and interpersonal relationships. Virtually every work that an office manager does involves other people such as the boss, colleagues, and even members of the general public. An office manager is an administrative staff who oversees the affairs of the office and works closely with other people. An office manager is in charge of intra and inter-office relationships, streamlining administrative procedures, communication practices and office supervision (Loby, 2018).

An office manager's poor relationship with others (boss, colleagues and customers,) might make a business to fail. Their ability to effectively manage the relationship that exists in an organization determines the level of job performance. Job performance has always been a key factor in determining the success of any organization (Inuwa, 2016; Osibanjo, 2020). Organizational results and success are heavily reliant on office managers' performance. Office managers' job performance refers to how they execute their roles concerning personal and people relationships.

Office managers' job performance involves the ability to meet deadlines, take appropriate action, when necessary, respond to feedback, deal with sensitive issues, gives guidance in support of daily tasks and recognition of good performance and many other indices of job performance. The ability to effectively manage the workflow and the relationship that exists in organizations is a parameter for measuring office managers' job performance. No employee operates or performs assigned tasks alone; he/she needs the support of other employees while maintaining good work relationships with them. To achieve effective human relations for better job performance, office managers must respect the views of others and recognize their contributions.

Human relation skills are essential for creating and sustaining a pleasant work environment that enhances efficiency at work. Human relations are the employees' ability to interact with people within and outside the organization for mutual and lasting relationships (Dias, 2012). Human relation skills as those employability skills that help an individual secure and keep a job. Human relations employability skills focus on personal and interpersonal skills. Personal skills are soft skills that help an office manager interact with people.

Personal skills are defined as those skills individuals are born with, the natural talents, potentials or capabilities individuals develop through their experiences and deliberate practice (Bryce, 2022); an individual's inner skills and abilities (Mohmand, 2021). Personal skills are individuals' skills that are considered to be their strengths or weaknesses. Personal skills address an individual's ability to listen attentively, maintain an open mind, set clear goals, manage time effectively, resolve conflict, act without being directed, keep secrets and many more.

On the other hand, interpersonal skills are traits needed to interact and communicate with others. Interpersonal skills address how an individual interacts effectively with other employees within and outside the organization. Interpersonal skills are individuals' abilities that enable them to interact efficiently and effectively with others (Bryce, 2022; Mohmand, 2021; Sato, Nakamuro, & Owan, 2019). These are individual skills that facilitate interaction between or among employees within or outside the organization. Interpersonal skills include the ability to share information with others, build strong relationships, seek feedback, recognize the accomplishment of others, listen to the views of others, create an atmosphere of trust, network with professional associates, seek counsel



from others, and work well with others. Interpersonal skills are widely considered to be critical for workplace success. Both personal and interpersonal skills are essential in human relations.

The main goal of human relations skills development is to align workplace relationships with organizational expected goals to establish a favourable work atmosphere and minimize miscommunication while supporting individual and organizational performance (Hartati, 2020). Ineffective human relations skills negatively influence job performance in organizations. In line with the aforementioned, the study is aimed to examine the level of human relations skills and job performance of office managers and determine whether there is a significant relationship between human relations skills and job performance of office managers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Job Performance

Job performance is the worth and quantity of anticipated efforts put forth by employees to execute a specific task well (Wikipedia, 2022). Job performance is a measure that determines whether or not an employee is performing effectively at the workplace. It refers to the measure of job results and their predefined targets. Job performance is critical in every organization since pleased employees will work better to increase their organisation's performance and overall productivity in the long term (Saraih, Azmi, Sakdan, & Amlus, 2019; Rukmana, Sopiah, & Elfia-Nora, 2018). The employee must be observed and assessed at all times because employees' job performances are influenced by their abilities, leadership style, working conditions, incentive, training and development, personal and interpersonal skills and so on. Job performance encompasses employees' behaviour, talents, skills, proficiency and technical know-how (Inayat & Khan, 2021).

With employees' identified skills and competencies such as punctuality, meeting deadlines, giving clear guidance, and taking action promptly, employers assign duties and responsibilities to employees where they would effectively demonstrate their skills, potential, talent and competencies to achieve high performance and also meet the organisational goals. Job performance varies greatly since each employee has a varying amount of competence in doing their duties (Saraih, Azmi, Sakdan, & Amlus, 2019).

Concept of Human Relations Skills

Human relations skills is a term used to describe the interaction or relationships that exist between employees at the workplace or in a professional setting – a relationship between managers and the subordinates; the executive team and the managers to achieve the organisation's targeted goal (Marc Farland 2011; Ohaegbulam 2014; Keith Davies 2015; Phiri, Bano, & Raouf, 2019; Hardianto, Riadi, Mintarti, Hariyadi, Hutauruk, & Ghozali, 2020; Hartati, 2020; Cetinkaya, Habibi, & Yavuz, 2021). Effective human relation is imperative for the survival of an organization because human resource coordinates, control, handle, and supervises other resources in an organization. To achieve an organization's goals, all stakeholders must work together. Human relations influence employees' daily life interactions and help to prevent misunderstandings between them.



Elements of personal and interpersonal human relations skills

The available literature shows that human relations skills, by and large, have a significant role in workplace healthy relationship and promotes good performance (Nna, 2011; Magaña-Medina, 2022; Manevska et. al., 2018; Jung & Shin, 2015; Muhammad, Toryila & Saanyol, 2018; Ayofe & Martha, 2022; Lewis, Olowo, & Okotoni, 2020; Ukaigwe & Jack 2020). Office managers should demonstrate effective interpersonal skills to perform at their best. The inability of office managers to demonstrate good interpersonal skills would not only affect their performance but the general well-being of the organization. Office managers should develop the skills to communicate, show empathy, resolve conflicts, seek counsel, and network with colleagues.

Communication: research findings show that human relations skills in the form of interpersonal communication are fundamental to job performance (Fatimayin, 2018; Kalogiannidis, 2020; Khan, Wajidi, & Alam, 2020; Hee, Qin, Kowang, Husin, & Ping, 2019; Titang, 2013; Hee, Qin, Kowang, Husin, & Ping, 2019; Kalogiannidis, 2020; Hee, Qin, Kowang, Husin, & Ping, 2019).). Employee trust is built and job performance is enhanced as long as people share information and build strong relationships. Effective communication strengthens interpersonal relationships and improves job performance (Fatimayin, 2018; Hee, Qin, Kowang, Husin, & Ping, 2019). An office manager's ability to communicate with others well helps build strong relationships, seek counsel from others, meet the needs of people, and listen carefully to the needs of others.

Empathy: this is a critical interpersonal skill designed to understand other workers' feelings, emotions or challenges. Empathy is a significant characteristic that fosters trust and faith (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019; Schwartzberg, 2022; Treen & Yu, 2022). It is the ability to perceive the world through the eyes of other people - the ability to tune into what someone else is thinking and feeling about a situation (Clark, Robertson, & Young, 2019; Singh, 2014). It enables office managers to consider the opinions of others, look at a situation from others' points of view, show compassion, find solutions to problems and strengthen relationships.

Conflict resolution: Conflict is unavoidable in organizations (Odeleye, 2020; Ndulue & Ekechukwu, 2016; Ajike, Akinlabi, Magaji, & Sonubi, 2015). How to resolve conflict when it arises is the priority of most organisations (Chibuokwu & Nwosu, 2016),and also leads to waste of resources and poor job performance (Utaka & Silas-Dibiko, 2020). To foster better work relationships, office managers must listen to the views of others to guarantee that everyone engaged in a disagreement feels heard and understood.

Empirical Review

Muhammad, Toryila and Saanyol (2018) investigated the influence of interpersonal relationships on job performance. The findings showed that there was a strong significant relationship between interpersonal relationships and the job performance of employees. This study's findings revealed that a healthy work environment where employees communicate effectively, show empathy and assist those who require the attention of others improves job performance.

Tantua and Akere (2022) studied the impact of employee workplace relation skills (measured by their empathy and anger management) on employee job performance (measured by their effectiveness and efficiency among hotel workers in Rivers State, Nigeria. They found that

workplace employee human relation skills (anger management and empathy) have a strong positive and significant relationship with their job performance in terms of their effectiveness and efficiency.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design of about 72 office administrators in Yaba College of Technology, Yaba Lagos. A questionnaire in three sections delineated into section A – demographic characteristics, section B dealt with human relations skills of office managers and section C dealt with the employees’ job performance, was used to collect data to answer the research questions. The data collected were analysed using frequency distributions, correlation analysis and regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 26).

Results

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of office managers

Demographic characteristics		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Female	71	94.7
	Male	2	2.7
	Non-response	2	2.7
Age	<= 30	4	5.3
	31 – 40	39	52.0
	41 – 50	30	40.0
	Non-response	2	2.7
Marital status	Single	10	13.3
	Married	63	84.0
	Non-response	2	2.7
Education Qualification	WASSCE	1	1.3
	NCE/ND	21	28.0
	HND/BS.C	51	68.0
	Non-response	2	2.7
Years in service	5 years & below	8	10.7
	6 - 10 years	30	40.0
	11 - 15 years	25	33.3
	16 years & above	9	12.0
	Non-response	3	4.0

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork (2023)

Table 1 shows that 94.7% of the office managers are female, 2.7% were male and 2.7% did not respond. Also, 52.0% of them were aged 31 – 40 years, 40% were aged 41 – 50 years, 5.3% were aged 30 years and below and 2.7% did not respond. In addition, 84.0% of the office managers were married, 13.3% were single and 2.7% did not respond. Furthermore, 68% of them had HND/BSc, 28.0% had NCE/ND, 1.3% had WASSCE and 2.7% did not respond. Lastly, 40.0% of the office managers had worked for 6 – 10 years, 33.3% had worked for 11 – 15 years, 12.0% had worked for 16 years and above, 10.7% had 5 years and below and 4.0% did not respond

Table 2: Human relation skills of office managers

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Personal skills				
I listen attentively	36 (48.0)	34 (45.3)	2 (2.7)	3 (4.0)
I communicate effectively	8 (10.8)	22 (29.7)	27 (36.5)	17 (23.0)
I maintain open-mind	24 (32.0)	45 (60.0)	2 (2.7)	4 (5.3)
My goals are clearly defined	30 (40.0)	45 (60.0)	-	-
I use my time effectively	37 (50.0)	37 (50.0)	-	-
I have the ability to resolve conflict	39 (52.0)	36 (48.0)	-	-
I put myself in other people's shoes	38 (50.7)	36 (48.0)	-	1 (1.3)
I act without waiting for directives	38 (51.4)	34 (45.9)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)
I keep to the agreed time	37 (49.3)	37 (49.3)	-	1 (1.3)
I keep peoples' secrets, secret	40 (53.3)	35 (46.7)	-	-
Interpersonal skills				
I seek feedback and clarification	35 (46.7)	40 (53.3)	-	-
I meet the needs of other people	26 (34.7)	49 (65.3)	-	-
I share information with others	32 (42.7)	43 (57.3)	-	-
I build stronger relationships	24 (32.0)	51 (68.0)	-	-
I recognise the accomplishment of others	33 (44.0)	42 (56.0)	-	-
I listen carefully to the views of others	32 (43.2)	42 (56.8)	-	-
I create an atmosphere of mutual trust	36 (48.0)	38 (50.7)	-	1 (1.3)
I network with professional associates	29 (38.7)	45 (60.8)	-	-
I seek counsel from co-workers	34 (45.3)	40 (53.3)	1 (1.3)	-
I work well with others	26 (34.7)	49 (65.3)	-	-

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2023)

Table 2 shows the personal domains of the human relation skills of office managers and reveals that 93.3% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they listen attentively, 40.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they communicate effectively, 92.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they maintain open-mind and all of them agreed or strongly agreed that their goals were clearly defined.

Also, it shows that 100% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they use their time effectively, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they can resolve conflict, and 98.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they put themselves into other people's shoes. Also, it shows that 97.2% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they act without waiting for directives, 98.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they keep to the agreed time, and 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they keep people's secrets.

The interpersonal domains of human relations skills of office managers reveal that 100.0% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they seek feedback and clarification, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they meet the needs of other people, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they share information with others and all of them agreed or strongly agreed that they build stronger relationships. Also, it shows that 100% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they recognise the accomplishment of others, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they listen carefully to the views



of others, and all the secretaries agreed or strongly agreed that they create an atmosphere of mutual trust. Also, it shows that 100.0% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they network with professional associates, 98.7% agreed or strongly agreed that they seek counsel from co-workers, and 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they work well with others.

Table 3: Employee Job Performance of Office Managers

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Arrive for work on time	39 (52.0)	36 (48.0)	-	-
Meet work deadlines	32 (42.7)	43 (57.3)	-	-
Propose solutions to problems	31 (41.3)	44 (58.7)	-	-
Take appropriate action on the problem as necessary	29 (38.7)	46 (61.3)	-	-
Use time effectively	30 (41.1)	43 (58.9)	-	-
Consult with supervisors and co-workers as necessary	29 (38.7)	46 (61.3)	-	-
Effectively collaborate with other department members as necessary	23 (30.7)	52 (69.3)	-	-
Deal effectively and professionally with employees in other areas	34 (45.3)	41 (54.7)	-	-
Respond appropriately to feedback on job performance	29 (38.7)	46 (61.3)	-	-
Deals appropriately with confidential information	32 (42.7)	43 (57.3)	-	-
Deals appropriately with sensitive issues	28 (37.3)	47 (62.7)	-	-
Give clear guidance in support of daily tasks	25 (33.3)	50 (66.7)	-	-
Maintain a positive relationship with all employees supervised	22 (29.7)	52 (70.3)	-	-
Demonstrate appropriate interactions with colleagues	19 (25.3)	56 (74.7)	-	-
Recognition for good performance	17 (22.7)	58 (77.3)	-	-

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2023)

Table 3 is on the job performance ratings of office managers and it shows that 100.0% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they arrive for work on time, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they meet work deadlines, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed they propose a solution to problems and all the office managers agreed or strongly agreed they take appropriate action on the problem as necessary.

Also, shows that 100.0% of them agreed or strongly agreed that they use time effectively, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they consult with supervisors and co-workers as necessary, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed they effectively collaborate with other department members as necessary and all the office managers agreed or strongly agreed they deal effectively and professionally with employees in other areas.

In addition, it shows that all of the office managers agreed or strongly agreed that they respond appropriately to feedback on job performance, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they deal appropriately with confidential information, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed they deal appropriately with sensitive information and all the office managers agreed or strongly agreed they give clear guidance in support of daily tasks.



Lastly, shows that all of the office managers agreed or strongly agreed that they maintain a positive relationship with all employees supervised, 100.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they demonstrate appropriate interaction with the staff, and all the office managers agreed or strongly agreed they have good recognition for good performance.

Table 4: Correlation coefficients between human relation skills and job performance of Office managers

Variables	Std.		r	p	Remark
	Mean	Deviation			
Job performance evaluation score (%)	79.14	7.64	-0.195	0.095	Not sig
Human relations skills score (%)	79.07	5.31			

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork (2023)

The mean job performance evaluation score (%) was 79.14% (sd = 7.64%) while their human relations skills score (%) was 79.07 (5.31%). The correlation coefficient between them is - 0.195 which shows that there is a non-significant negative and weak linear relationship between office managers' human relations skills and their job performance ($p > 0.05$). This implies that the greater the human relations skills of office managers, the less they perform on their job.

Table 5: Regression model of employee human relation skills and their job performance

Model	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	102.386	13.696	7.476	.000
Human relations skills score	-.295	.173	-1.701	.093
$F_{1,72} = 2.893; p = 0.093; R^2 = 0.038$				

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork (2023)

The regression model is given as:

Office managers’ Job Performance = 102.386 – 295*human relations skills

It shows that a percent increase in human relations skills will reduce employee job performance by .295% and the decrease is not significant ($p > 0.05$). The implication is that office managers’ performance on their job will improve by reducing their human relations skills. The coefficient of determination obtained was 0.038 which shows that human relations skills account for only 3.8% of the total variability in their job performance leaving the remaining 96.2% to other factors.

Discussion

The study found that a non-significant negative and weak relationship exists between human relations skills and the job performance of office managers in Yaba College of Technology, Yaba Lagos. This contradicts with the reports of Tantua and Akere (2022) who submitted that a positive, strong and significant relationship between workplace human relations skills and the job performance of hotel workers in Rivers State Nigeria. The finding also disagrees with Samwel



(2018) who found a weak positive and significant relationship between human relations and employee performance and organisational performance. This finding also negates the findings of Shahmohammadi (2015) who reported a positive and significant relationship between human relations skills and productivity skills and the effectiveness of employees. It also negates the findings of Hartati (2020) in the study of public service where they reported a direct positive relationship between employee performance and human relations implemented by the head of the service.

The study also found that human relations skills decrease the job performance of office managers which is at variance with the findings of Tantua and Akere (2022) who reported that workplace human relations skills improve employees' job performance.

Conclusion

Given the findings of this study, it is concluded that human relations skills in terms of personal and non-personal skills hurt the job performance of office managers. This conclusion runs in the face of previous studies which were positive and significant. The implication is that while human relations skills and job performance are positively and significantly correlated in the private sector, the findings here could only relate to the civil service where outcome is not commensurate with input and where recruitment and placement are not purely on merit but follows other criteria like who you know and whether you are politically connected. In the light of this implication, we recommend that the civil service in Nigeria should endeavour to “put square pegs in square holes” to ensure and enhance productivity and service delivery to the populace. Also, the mentality of fixing people into offices they are not well suited for should be discouraged or completely eradicated. Lastly, continuous training and retraining of staff, and more importantly general reorientation of the workforce should be engaged in and implemented to make the civil service “bite” again. The private sector is not left out in the decadence experienced as a country where merit is relegated. Every sector of the society must ensure that meritocracy is the new norm.

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**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: IMPERATIVE IN
TEACHING AND LEARNING IN A PANDEMIC ERA FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The paper examined information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning in pandemic era for sustainable national development. The role of ICT in promoting national development cannot be overemphasized. ICT is one of the most reliable sources of support for national development (Global and Local Economy). ICT in teaching and learning in pandemic era in Nigeria include: E-learning system which enables students to learn from their various homes without necessarily coming to class physically, e-business model allows customers to buy and sell products online, providing employment opportunity through the development of new ideas and improvement in technology via the education system, training facilities and affordable access to computers among others. Since the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic by the end of 2019, many aspects of human's lives have been affected dramatically. Therefore, this paper looks at concept of ICT, Education, National development, sustainable development goals, sustainable national development, importance of ICT in national development, and effects of pandemic era on national development in Nigeria. The paper concludes that ICT has improved man's ingenuity and opportunity to retrieve real-time information for solving societal challenges, and it has also helped in improving the national economy around the world. It was therefore recommended that e-learning facilities should be constantly upgraded to facilitate effective teaching and learning in educational institutions, also, government should adopt e-learning system educationally to avoid schools closure, especially during state of emergency or pandemic.

Keywords: *ICT, Pandemic Era, Sustainable National Development, Education*

Introduction

Information and communication technology (ICT) emergence has improved man's ingenuity and opportunity to retrieve real-time information for solving societal challenges, needs and for skilled development (Eze & Chinedu-Eze, 2018). The digital transformation of education system in all levels has allowed incorporating a new teaching and learning process called e-learning (electronic



learning) for the purpose of advancement of knowledge at all level of education. Developing countries in comparison with developed world are facing challenges such as poor internet connectivity, poor or inadequate knowledge of the adoption of ICT for content development (Aung & Khaing, 2015).

These interactive interconnectivity platform link students, schools around the world in such a way to improve education, enhance understanding, and develop skills that are needed for job placement and invariably for sustainable national development of any nation. Educational institutions in developing countries suffered and are still suffering poor funding from the dearth of qualified staff with less accessibility to technology usage (Ahmed, 2010). Digital transformation, which is widely used in the 21st Century is associated with the mandatory COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown which resulted to greater access of digital technology platform potential for the enhancement of teaching and learning in our educational sector (Radha, Mahalakshmi, Kumar & Saravana-kumar, 2020).

The digital technology in educational contexts resulted to terms such as e-learning, online learning, web-based learning, virtual learning environment (VLE), massive open online courses (MOOC) (Daniel, 2014). Technological digitalization affects how people interact, live, work, study and this makes investing in digital skills throughout life of utmost importance. Education is the backbone of national development and growth. There is an urgent task of preparing citizens to make the utmost opportunities of it and meet the challenges of a fast moving globalized and interconnected world through the tools of digitalization of ICT. However, research studies have shown that most of the teachers and facilitators ignored potential pivotal role of ICT in delivering qualitative standard of education (Endedijk, Vermunt, Verloop & Brekelmans, 2012).

The adoption of digital technologies significantly improves learning outcomes, innovation, enhance equity and quality, and increase efficiency in educational system. Similarly, digital technology accessibility helps to reduce the learning gap between students from high and low socio-economic background. There must be an improvement in digital technology accessibility and connectivity for ill students in learning institutions by reducing inequality and exclusion. Accessibility to technology tool usage and infrastructure leads to innovative potential if fulfilling learning experience outcomes.

Educational innovation depends largely on empowering both the learners and the educators together through an expert – led training professional seminars and workshops. Digital transformation of education call for change in perception and strategies adopted by the stakeholders both the policy makers and the educators in order to witness the desired outcomes. Making digital technology readiness in education, providers of education need to provide the right environment, infrastructure, devices and leadership support that are beneficial to both students and the teachers. It is an approach that blend teacher's training, curriculum contents and other educational materials that are fit for digitally- supported teaching models.



Conceptualization

Education

Education is a word with root from old Latin “educatio” which has to do with the process of providing information to an inexperienced person in order to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially, economically, spiritually and politically. It is an all-round developmental process. Education leads to acquisition of adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which could form cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain of learning that are aimed at making the learner functional optimally in the society. It is in the light of this reality that Ocho, considers education as the process through which individuals are made functional members of their societies. Thus, education is not just aimed at enriching the individual knowledge but also geared toward preparing such individual for special tasks and employment functions essential for national development. Education is morality. It is about learning how to be loyal, honest and effective in the society. It is an individual guide for national development. Education maybe formal, informal and non-formal in whichever way viewed, education is central to development productivity and growth. It is about learning skills and knowledge.

Education develops a country economy and society, therefore, it is the transmitting of cultural heritage, stabilizing the present, improving and changing the future. Education provides knowledge and skills to the population, as well as shaping the personality of the individual of a nation. According to Egeonu (2019), education remains a vital tools and a powerful instrument for socio-economic empowerment, wealth creation, employment generation, poverty eradication and value orientation. Education is very important for an individual’s success in life. It is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability. Education is also capable to give power for individual to voice out their views expose to them their real potential, lead them to become a better person and widen their views in certain areas. Education is the key to move in the world, seek better jobs and ultimately succeed in life.

Education is said to be the best investment for the people because well educated people have more opportunities to get a job which gives them satisfaction. Most educated individuals enjoy respect among their colleagues and they can effectively contribute to the development of their country and society by inventing new devices and discoveries. The main purpose of education is to educate individuals within society, to prepare and qualify them for work in economy and to integrate people into society and teach those values and morals of society. Students at all level of education must be equipped with knowledge and skills which are needed to participate effectively as members of the society and contribute towards the nation’s development most especially in the pandemic era.

National Development

National development is referred to as the type of achievement and choices that are essential for human life to prosper (Hamel, 2010). These types of achievements are non-hierarchical, irreducible, incommensurable and basic kind of human ends that are valuable objectives for human progress beyond social or cultural values (Alkire, 2002). National development is the means by which the people’s welfare can be improved by eliminating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty by



providing amenities like education, transportation, and healthcare (ITU, 2011). National development centres on human, trade and governance (Bankole, Osei-Bryson & Brown, 2013). National development encapsulates the notion of human development as the means of enlarging people's choices in order to raise levels of wellbeing so as to lead a long healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living (UNDP, 2006). Trade (both international and regional) serves as cornerstone of socio-economic development by creating and enlarging regional and international economy from small and unequal national economies thereby stimulating productive capacity and industry competition for national development (Bankole, 2015).

The role of ICT in promoting national development cannot be overemphasized. ICT has been receiving enormous scientific and political attention among international organisations such as World Bank and United Nation, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Soper, Dermirlean, Goul & St. Louis, 2012). This has led to a continued debate on strategy to position ICT for global development. However, the role of investments in ICT to aid national development is not yet fully understood, and to-date there is still not sufficient published mainstream information system (IS) research that looks at the impacts of ICT on national development. In addition, several of the national leaders, policy makers, and the development practitioners that have the capability to initiate changes in both developed, developing and transition economics particularly Africa have not been able to determine how the limited resources set aside for improving the economy should be effectively allocated.

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations member in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and posterity by 2030. Everyone is needed to reach these ambitions targets. The creativity knowhow, technology and financial resources from all societies is necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context (UNDP, 2015). SDGs recognized that action in one area will outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. The vision is also laden with the intent to reduce the burden of poverty on the populace and to massively roll out infrastructure in large magnitude (Isizoh & Anazia, 2013). However, as promising as the vision seems, without commensurate investment in science and technology and the adoption of appropriate technologies to drive that vision, it might as well go the way of previous development plan initiated by the country since independence in 1960.

Therefore, Nigeria's vision of becoming among one of the 20 most developed industrialized nations in the world would remain in mirage without information communication technology (NITDA, 2013). ICT has helped in improving the national economy around the world by changing the way people live and work. It has helped to links the world together by networking. People are able to interact with one another in real-time without having to travel from one end of the world to another (Seewanyana & Busler, 2007).

The importance of ICT lies in the technologies themselves, but more in their ability to create greater access to information and communication in underserved populations (Tech Target, 2003).



Many countries around the world have established organisations for the promotion of ICT with a focus on closing up the already existing economic gap between technological “have” and “have not” areas. Internationally, the United Nations actively promotes ICT for development (ICT for D) as a means of bringing the digital devices.

As long as the world has not found a cure or a vaccine for COVID-19, we may have to adjust to a new way of living and going about our lives, work and interactions with other people. COVID-19 was described as an infection disease which is caused by severe respiratory syndrome (SAR) Corona virus 2. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared a public health emergency related to COVID-19 on January 28, 2020. With increasing number of cases globally, a pandemic was declared by WHO in March 11, 2020. The declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic caused the economy of nations all over the world to suffocate as economic activities were brought to standstill. Obviously, there was complete halt in economic growth and development followed by stringent measures, such as lockdown which were taken by some nations globally to contain the spread of the disease (Onyekwena & Ekeruche, 2020). This consequently affected income with more adverse effect on the vulnerable populations in developing countries.

However, a consolation has been taken by most central bank, finance institutions and ministries and independent economic professionals around the globe based on the prediction that impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic might be sharp but brief, and thereafter economy activities will return to fullness. As one of the developing economies, the chances of sliding into a recession are steadily be anticipated as the outbreak of the pandemic continues to put pressure on Nigeria economy. The impact of the dreaded corona virus, it was believed can give a serious blow to the already fragile economy of developing countries like Nigeria even before the outbreak. However, much has not been done on the use of ICT in coping with the pandemic era.

Sustainable National Development

Sustainable national development refers to the ability to harness all available resources, human capital, materials of a nation. In his view, Dzungwe (2012) affirmed that national development is the ability to flow along with other nations in terms of effective management and utilization of current development in science and technology. According to Aguele and Uhuamuabi (2003), development means “bringing a nation to an advanced or a highly organized state, that is, utilizing all the human and material potential of a nation to bring about growth and development”. Development has to do with employment for all the citizens of a nation.

However, sustainable development is attaining and maintaining the height of standard in the development agenda of the nation. This include – education, health services, economic, transportation, good road network, justice and equity, food security and all the social amenities needed for safe and healthy living of citizen in a country.



The Importance of ICT in Teaching and Learning in National Development in a Pandemic Era in Nigeria

It is generally agreed that ICT has enhance National Development (Heeks & Arun, 2009; Evans & Herman, 2011) but the clear cut link between the two has often been left vague (Harindranath & Sein, 2007). Nigeria, like the rest of the world recognized the significance of information and communication technology (ICT) to meet the growing demands of work business, production and services in different sectors in the Nigeria economy include the following:

-E-learning comprises all forms of electronic supported learning of teaching: The information communication systems, whether networked learning or not serve as specific media to implement the learning process. It offers teachers an efficient way to deliver lessons to students. Student can attend classes from any location of their choice and as such there are fewer chances of students missing out on lessons. It suits a variety of learning styles.

-Employment Opportunities: The use of ICT to bring new employment for youths and migrant workers has also been given the opportunity to develop new ideas in the technology via the education system, training facilities and affordable access to computers. In this way, youths have an opportunity to be self-employed; and they are exposed to entrepreneurship through the use of information and communication technology thereby improving national development.

-E-business and services in Nigeria: The growing young educated and technology friendly population has contributed largely in growing trend of e-business in the country popular E-commerce model Business to Business (B to B). Business to Customer (B to C) and Customer to Customer (C to C) are adopted by many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as a growth strategy for their business.

-Diversification of the Economy: The decline in oil revenue due to COVID-19 Pandemic, it is imperative that Nigeria diversifies its economy. The sudden fall in crude oil price suggests that Nigeria should consider other options of sustaining its economy apart from the oil sector. Available option are Agriculture, Mining, Energy, Human Capital, Telecommunication, Manufacturing, etc.

Effect of Pandemic Era on National Development in Nigeria

The COVID-19 pandemic has social, religious, political and economic effect on the national development in Nigeria. The introduction of lockdown by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) movement, commercial and social activities were brought to halt as a result of the pandemic. This lead to decline in revenue of the government due to decline in global oil market, which the Nigerian economy largely depends on, also, this was further intensified by sub-national governments who quickly followed suit by imposing lockdowns in their States (Onyekwena & Ekeruche, 2020). The following are some of the effect the pandemic era on national development in Nigeria.



Decline in Oil Revenue: The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has affected negatively the price of crude oil in the international market. For example, the price of crude oil dropped from about \$60 per barrel to less than \$30 per barrel (Ozih, 2020) and this has affected negatively the revenues from the sales of crude oil for Nigeria.

-Job Losses: Many people have lost their jobs as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and many jobs are at risk. The pandemic has worsened the unemployment situation in Nigeria.

-Business Closure: Many businesses/particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been closed down as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. SMEs are made badly hit by the outbreak of the pandemic due to their vulnerability and limited resources. Measures such as self-isolation or quarantine, social distance, ban on social gatherings the closure of markets taken to contain the spread of the disease have impacted negatively on their operations, sales and profits.

-School Closure: The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a challenge to education system, with the ban on social gathering and social distancing measure adopted to contain the spread of the disease, school have closed down. Academic activities and calendars have been disrupted. Therefore, students would not graduate at the expected time.

Conclusion

Information and communication technology (ICT) emergence has improved man's ingenuity and opportunity to retrieve real-time information for solving societal challenges. ICT has helped in improving the Nation economy around the world by changing the way people live and work. It has help to link the world together by networking. People are able to interact with one another in real-time without having to travel from one end of the world to another. The information and communication systems (ICT), whether networked learning or not, serve as specific media to implement the learning process. It offers teachers an efficient way to deliver lessons to students. Students can attend classes from any location of their choice and as such there are fewer chances of students missing out on lessons. It suits a variety of learning styles. ICT and its applications will have far-reaching positive effects on Nigerian economy in year to come when fully adopted. It is very important that the Nigerian government should invest heavily in the use of ICT in order to realize its full potential.



Recommendations

1. E-learning facilities should be constantly upgraded to facilitate effective teaching and learning in educational institutions.
2. The government should adopt e-learning system to avoid schools closure, especially during states of emergency or pandemic of this kind. E-learning system enables students to learn from home. With the lockdown policy and other containment measures enforced during the pandemic, many schools have adopted online education system so that academic activities would not be disrupted.
3. Equipment such as computer hardware, software must be adequately provided for operational services of digital platform transforming and facilitating teaching and learning activities.
4. The Government should ensure that the electric power supply is made available around the clock in educational institutions.
5. The Nigerian government should focus on the manufacturing sector in its economic diversification drive (EDD). When this sector is revamped, it would not only drive the economic sustainability of the country, but also job opportunities would be created.
6. The government should encourage the adoption of e-business model. Due to lockdown and restrictions of movement during the pandemic, many customers have adopted online shopping. Online shopping allows goods bought to be delivered to the buyer at the comfort of their home.
7. The government should also reduce the existing tax rate to certain small scale and medium enterprise (SMEs). This is as a result of the effect of the pandemic on SMEs business.
8. It is also imperative that Nigerian diversifies its economy due to the decline in oil revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nigeria should consider other options of sustaining its economy apart from the oil sector.

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EMPOWERING MARKETING EDUCATORS FOR OPTIMAL PRODUCTIVITY IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Marketing practices in recent times have taken a dynamic function which requires that those marketing educators saddled with the responsibility of imparting knowledge on the students are productive. As a result, tertiary institutions in Nigeria must be in a position to empower marketing educators to respond swiftly to customers' demands. Empowerment meets the organizations' needs for high-performing employees that enhance their chances of remaining competitive in the current turbulent business environment. It is on this note that this research article focused on how to empower business educators for optimal productivity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, hence, the author discussed the concept of employee empowerment, the empowerment process of employees, practical measures to empowering employees, and tools for creating empowerment in organizations as well as the implications of employee empowerment on business education programme were projected. It was suggested amongst others that school administrators should adopt the driving force strategy of encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work; and helping in the retention of marketing educators so as to achieve productivity in Nigeria.

Key words: Empowerment; Marketing Educators; Productivity; Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Changes in business environment have forced organizations to review management actions so as to empower employees to remain competitive in a troubled economy, such as that of Nigeria. Empowering employees has become a central theme of related management and leadership practices that have been advocated to allow organizations to become more competitive. Empowerment is a development strategy for organizational prosperity. Employees' empowerment entails encouraging workers to be more participative in decision making as it affects their activities in the organization (Hamid & Behrad, 2014). That means to provide space for employees to be able to create good ideas, and convert them to actions that impact on the organization positively. Berry, Daughtrey and Wieder (2012) noted that employee empowerment is one of the most effective techniques for increasing employee productivity and better use of the capacities and capabilities of their individual and collective organizational goals. Empowered employees are not just proud of their work; they are more productive than their disempowered colleagues.



Empowerment is a critical element of business in the modern world. Obimgbo, Abanyam and Owenubiugie (2022) presented some of the objectives of empowerment to include closeness to the customer, rendering after-sales service, offering continuous innovation, increasing productivity and gaining a competitive fields to organizations that have found new ways to empower their employees. The role of skilled and efficient manpower is obvious and undeniable in achieving the goals of the organization, and no doubt that the wealth of a country and a better sense of human capital appear in the form of skills, organizations and their motives. Managers should accurately identify the motivation factors in their incitement in order to make more use of employed manpower, and try to further this ability on track of organization's goals (Reyahi, 2014). In recent time; empowerment has become one of the concerns of managers, since managers' workload has increased rapidly. Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) opined that the awareness of the importance of empowerment is at the increase.

This, according to Obimgbo et. al. (2022), is due largely to the recent changes to business transactions as a result of, technological developments and competitive nature of the business environment, which demand innovative strategies. Hence, in the course of this study, the author discussed the concept of employee empowerment, the empowerment process of employees, practical measures to empowering employees, and tools for creating empowerment in organizations as well as the implications of employee empowerment on business education programme.

Concept of Employees' Empowerment

Empowerment is a process through which individuals and teams develop the ability to continuously improve performance. In other words, empowerment is a strategy developed for organizational prosperity. Hamid and Behrad (2014) stated that empowerment is the development of capabilities and competencies needed to achieve continuous improvement in organizational performance. The empowerment of employees is the use of power detection and analysis capability, having an insight in their work and participating fully in decisions that affect their lives. Empowerment is the release of internal forces to achieve amazing results. Empowerment of human resources means creating collection of required capacity in staff to enable them create added value in organizations.

Employee empowerment, which in this study would refer to Marketing Educators, is a term that is used to express the ways in which non-managerial staff members can make decisions without consulting their bosses or managers (Ramesh & Kumar, 2014). These decisions can be small or large, depending upon the degree of power with which the company wishes to invest in employees. Employee empowerment can begin with training and converting a whole company to an empowerment model. Conversely, it might merely mean giving employees the ability to make some decisions on their own. Employee empowerment has been defined in many ways but generally means the process of allowing employees to have input and control over their work, and the ability to openly share suggestions and ideas about their work and the organization as a whole. Empowered employees are committed, loyal and conscientious. They are eager to share ideas and can serve as strong ambassadors for their organizations.



Many managers feel that by empowering employees, they relinquish the responsibility to lead and control the organization. This is not the case. Empowerment is actually a culmination of many of the ideas and tenets of employee satisfaction. According to Jinkins, Klecker and Loadman (2008), employee empowerment is a process and through it develops a culture of empowerment where dreams, goals, boundaries and attempts to influence their decisions and the results will be shared with the entire organization.

Today, organizations are affected by factors such as increased global competition, rapid changes, the need for quality after-sales service and limited resources and are under high pressure. After many years of experience, the world has come to the conclusion that if an organization wants to be a leader in the economy and its business affairs and stay in the competition arena, such organization should possess saleable skills, creativity and be highly innovative. Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) reported that there is a direct relationship between human capital and productivity in organizations. Ramesh and Kumar (2014) noted that a successful organization is a set of organization composed of cultured people, ideas and common goals. Teamwork in flexible organization provides experience and knowledge with increasing love and progress for management. Therefore, any individual who performs the task for organization will feel ownership. Using the human resources potential is a huge advantage for any organization. Personal productivity of organization use set of individual talents and potential to improve the organization and with potential power and talents to make tremendous progress in the development of individual and organizational alignment (Rastgar, 2017).

In this regard, growth, progress, prosperity and improved capabilities in recent years as staff empowerment are considered by scholars and experts in human resource management. Employees through knowledge, experience and motivation build up their powers, and, in fact, empowerment is release of this power.

Process of Empowering Marketing Educators

In empowering Marketing Educators for better productivity, mechanical and organic methods must be considered. The mechanical method delegates authority from top to bottom with clear boundaries and limits (Ramesh & Kumar, 2014). In this method, empowerment is a process by which senior management develops a clear vision, plan programs and assign specific responsibilities to be achieved. The management team provides information and resources needed to perform duties for Marketing Educators and allows the employee to practice change and processes improvement (Abdullahi & Ebrahim, 2016). Organic method, on the other hand, assigns responsibilities from down to up to reduce control. Based on this method, empowerment is defined in terms of personal beliefs. According to HamidAzad, Mojtaba, Hamidrezam, Abdolreza, and Marjan (2013), capable Marketing Educators usually possess common characteristics which reflect in their performance in the organization. Thus, empowerment is not something which managers carry out to Marketing Educators; instead it is the mindset of Marketing Educators about their role in the organization.

More so, empowerment process of Marketing Educators should consist of information sharing, autonomy, and team work phases. **Information Sharing** allows Marketing Educators to know their organization's status and to analyze it. Information sharing begins with trust in the



organization, and breaking traditional hierarchical thinking and increases Marketing Educators' sense of responsibility (HamidAzad et. al, 2013).Autonomy has to do with empowering Marketing Educators to work across organizational boundaries by specifying destination, values, imagination, objectives, roles, system and organizational structure (Ibelegbu, Abanyam, & Kanu, 2022). Also, team work should be emphasized instead of hierarchy.Balkar (2015) observed that Marketing Educators engaged in team work usually have divided responsibilities shared among them. Thus, employees with specific responsibilities for work processes be allowed to select, plan and implement their tasks from start to end, and manage everything under their control.

Practical Measures to Empowering Marketing Educators

To achieve empowerment for Marketing Educators is usually an onerous task, however, Berry et. al. (2012), outlined six practical measures for empowering Marketing Educators in an organisation:

- Demonstrate leadership commitment through empowerment
- Consider the interests of Marketing Educators through empowerment
- Staff training to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities through empowerment
- Application of quality teams through empowerment
- Employee participation in planning and performance, information sharing through empowerment
- Delegation of authority through empowerment

Similarly, Ibelegbu and Abanyam (2022) posited that achievable empowerment of Marketing Educators should accompany training and development, participation, and union activities. Training programs would be useful if implemented and supported with the participation of Marketing Educators and relying on scientific methods. The real purpose of training programs is to create harmonious relationship between marketing educators and management for cordial engagement in institutional programs. Several studies have revealed that engagement of employees in administrative activities is at the core of empowerment indicators (Ibelagbu et. al., 2022; Davidson & Dell, 2013).

Driving Factors towards Empowerment of Marketing Educators

The driving forces to achieving Marketing Educators' productivity in Nigeria includes but not limited to encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work: and helping in employee retention.Hamid and Behra (2014) stated that employee initiation and creativity helps organizations to innovate and improve the processes. Similarly, Ramesh and Kumar (2014) pointed out that when Marketing Educators are satisfied they will display zeal towards their jobs and align their goals with those of the organization. Furthermore where Marketing Educators are given autonomy in the way they perform their jobs, it motivates them in developing their skills and knowledge (Klecker & Loadman, (2008).



Moreover, Marketing Educators have a need to feel like they are participating in the well-being of the organization. They want to know that they are contributing to the success of the organization. In organizations that provide Marketing Educators with the guarantee flexibility in decision making, Marketing Educators feel empowered to deliver high quality work. Lee and Nie (2014) noted that empowered Marketing Educators take personal pride in their work and responsibility for doing a good job. As a result, organizations reap the benefits of empowered Marketing Educators by delivering high quality products and services.

Empowering Marketing Educators for Optimal Productivity

Marketing Educators empowerment has a scope different from the empowerment of other employees working outside the education sector. Teacher empowerment generally is ascertained in line with the authority given to them to engage in the decision-making processes linked to teaching and learning processes (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2015). Balkar (2015) explained teacher empowerment under six dimensions: participation of teachers in decision-making processes, professional development of teachers, teacher status, self-efficacy of teachers, teacher autonomy, and teacher impact on others and educational issues at school. The level of teacher empowerment is measured by how well teachers shape the operational and pedagogic culture (Talbert, 2013). Empowerment is used for expressing the appreciation and support of the organisation leaders regarding their Marketing Educators (Bogler & Nir, 2012). School leaders may encourage the inclusion of marketing educators into school reform with an understanding of distributive leadership, thus enabling them to evaluate their own growth or otherwise (Vernon-Dotson & Floyd, 2012). The inclusion of teachers in the decision making processes by way of participative leadership understanding enables teacher empowerment (Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013).

Empowerment, as a critical domain to teachers' working conditions, implies that teachers desire a major voice in school improvement. For educational reforms to occur, teachers' working conditions should be considered (Hirsch, 2016). Empowered teachers encourage colleagues to improve student achievement (Anderson, 2014). Teacher empowerment creates a positive learning environment (Martin, Crossland, & Johnson, 2015). According to Hirsch (2016), working conditions which are sometimes overlooked, are essential to student learning.

Administrators are an important component in empowering teachers; they must be transformational leaders, those that empower their staff (Hirsch, 2016; Leech & Fulton, 2008). Administrators should consider allowing teachers to assist in hiring and budgeting decisions and choosing the content of their professional learning; this will help the teachers to feel more empowered (Hirsch, 2016). Administrators should consider promoting an atmosphere of trust; teachers who have a positive view of the administrators in the building feel more empowered. It is suggested that administrators be an integral part of creating a climate for teacher empowerment to occur (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

When administrators promote participatory leadership/distributed leadership, teacher leaders will evolve and this will often lead to teacher empowerment. Teachers who are allowed to



participate in decision making and other aspects of leadership will feel more empowered (Leech & Fulton, 2008). According to Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel (2009), distributed leadership is important in creating high performing schools. In the context of educational changes, teacher empowerment is an important tool for carrying out educational reforms at schools. Carrying out the reforms requires consideration of both administrative and behavioural changes. Empowerment provides a new administrative framework and its outputs create changes in the behaviours of teachers.

The outputs of teacher empowerment facilitate the adoption of changes, as well as implementation of new necessities by teachers at schools. There are many studies indicating the benefits of empowering teachers at schools. Empowerment has positive effects on organisational and professional commitment (Bogler & Somech, 2014; Keiser, 2017; Park, 2013), organisational citizenship behaviour (Aksel, Serinkan, Kızıloğlu & Aksoy, 2013; Bogler & Somech, 2014) and job satisfaction (Martino, 2013; Meng & Han, 2013; Hung, 2015). Teachers can feel that their work is more meaningful if principals emphasise the importance of the individual roles of teachers, as well as the work they do which supports school objectives during their interactions with other teachers (Janssen, 2014). Thus, Balkar (2015) stated that members of organisations feel a greater desire to take action when they are empowered. Teacher empowerment contributes to sustainability of the professional development of teachers, via the autonomy it supplies to the teachers and the positive impacts it makes on their job satisfaction.

The establishments of professional learning communities that contribute to professional development of teachers as well as their progressive behaviour are also supported by empowering behaviours of school leaders (Hollingworth, 2012). Studies carried out in Turkey on teacher empowerment have observed that it is an application that helps in the professional development of teachers, increasing student success as well as supporting the development of the school and the educational region (Kuzu, 2009). Even though these positive outcomes from teacher empowerment are emphasised, when findings on what is done to empower teachers are examined it is seen that these applications are not sufficient. Studies in this field indicate that teachers are seen as disempowered individuals who work devotedly with no thought of any personal gain (Yıldırım, Ünal & Çelik, 2011); that they are empowered in issues related only with the development of their effective behaviour, whilst they are not empowered in issues relating to autonomy, status and decision making as well as professional development (Metek, 2014).

The most important tool needed for teacher empowerment is in-service training, since professional development plays an effective role in development of teacher empowerment (Balkar, 2015). However, serving teacher empowerment through this training is dependent on the arrangement of the school in line with the needs of the teacher (İlğan, 2013). Personal development areas such as conflict and stress management, communication skills and problem solving methods are also among the areas for which teachers need training. When the determined training needs are examined, it is observed that they may differ according to the attributes of teachers, schools and students. Thus, it is not possible to state that including every teacher in a standard training session will yield effective results. Hence, the best method for ensuring teacher empowerment under the current conditions of Nigeria can be identified as school based applications carried out under the



coordination of the school managers, addressing also the attitudes of the school managers regarding these issues.

Teachers' perceptions of empowerment are affected by different factors. The personalities of teachers, their positions in the school, the leadership style of the principal and their relationships to the principal can affect the empowerment perception of teachers (Lim, 2017). School culture is among the most important factors with impact on teacher empowerment.

Conclusion

Employee empowerment is a philosophy associated with real benefits for an organization. Its underlying principle of giving Marketing Educators the freedom, flexibility, and power to make decisions and solve problems leaves an employee feeling energized, capable, and determined to make the organization successful. As a result of these management practices, quality of work increases, employee satisfaction increases, collaboration increases, employee productivity rises, and organizational costs decrease. All of these benefits enable an organization to achieve a competitive advantage and to bolster its bottom line. Teacher empowerment is defined according to the power that teachers have in participating in the decision-making processes related to school wide learning and teaching processes. Marketing Educators can be empowered through involvement in decision making, provision of professional development, autonomy, self-efficacy and status improvement.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were made to achieve empowerment for Marketing Educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions:

1. . Management Team should ensure that Marketing Educators with specific responsibilities for work processes be allowed to select, plan and implement their tasks from start to end, and manage everything under their control. This action would empower them for better productivity;
2. School administrators should adopt mechanical and organic methods in empowering Marketing Educators for better productivity,. These methods provide authority and confidence to the marketing educators to function productively;
3. School administrators should adopt the driving force strategy of encouraging creativity and innovation; increasing productivity; aligning goals of marketing educators with those of the organization; ensuring quality of work: and helping in the retention of marketing educators so as to achieve productivity in Nigeria

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INFLUENCE OF BANK ACCESS ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN PLATEAU NORTH, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study seeks to find Impact of Bank Access on Persons with Disabilities in Plateau North, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to examine the extent to which bank admission and usage can be used to change bank access of PWD, using survey research design. The population is one hundred and two (102) PWDs. The sample size is forty-seven (47) PWDs. Bank Access Scale (BAS) was the instrument used to obtain data in this research. Data were collected and analysed using descriptive statistics comprising of simple means, percentages, frequencies, standard deviations and tables to answer the two research questions. The results revealed that bank access changed the bank admission and usage of PWDs to a great extent. This study therefore, recommended that Government and private settings such as banks, must ensure that banks are accessible to PWDs, especially when it comes to removal of physical barriers, communication barriers and institutional barriers.

Keywords: Bank Access, Persons with Disabilities, bank admission & bank usage.

Introduction

A Bank is a commercial or business place where Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) just like any other person are expected to deposit, withdraw and borrow money. Gordy, Vega and Ness (2022) averred that a bank is a financial institution that accepts deposits and channels the money into lending or loaning activities in order to strengthen retailing banking. Gordy, Vega and Ness further affirmed that retail banking also known as consumer banking, otherwise personal banking which is the provision of funds by a bank to the general public. Banking services which are regarded as retail include provision of savings and transactional accounts, loans, debit cards and credit cards. Retail banking is also distinguished from investment banking or commercial banking. It may also refer to a division or department of a bank which deals with individual customers.



Ehiametalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye (2018) emphasized that a bank is a place/an organization where PWDs and businesses can invest or borrow money, change money into foreign currency and many more. Ehiametalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye further emphasized that PWDs can open bank account and that most workers are required to open bank accounts into which their monthly salaries are paid. The PWDs can then withdraw when needed. The bank acts as a safe for both the employee and the employer. Dan (2022) maintained that a bank is a place where PWDs can keep money in accounts and may ask the banks for loans. Banks receive, lend, exchanges and protects PWDs' money.

Access is basically right to use, right of entry or admission. Bank Access therefore implies rights to admission/entry into banking facilities such as building/hall and getting/receiving needed services. Bank Access also implies rights to correct usage, practices and procedures. Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka (2012) averred that bank access is simply getting/receiving all kinds of services offered by a bank by PWDs. In this investigation, the buildups of Bank Access are bank admission and bank usage by PWDs.

Bank Admission is basically admittance into the bank or creating space for a PWD on the bank facility area to enable the PWD obtain service or services in the bank or by a bank facility. Ehiametalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye (2018) opined that banking halls and ATM areas are often made conducive and convenient for all customers to obtain services or carryout transactions. But Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka (2012) heightened that there is so much discrimination against PWDs in and on facilities including banks in our societies.

UNESCO (2003) accentuated that there is severe discriminations against PWDs in our public spaces including bank spaces today which purely derive by attitudinal issues. Discrimination in this way is a form of social exclusion. At the individual level the impact of social exclusion can be devastating, leading to low self-esteem, poor social relationships, isolation, depression and psych-trauma. From simple experience and observations of the researchers it was witnessed that bank admission issues are sad ones. For instance, public entrance doors/gates of most banks are not accessible for: persons on Wheel Chairs, persons on Crouches (Walkers), the visually impaired with their White Cain and the like. Others are, physically impaired persons who cannot access many offices and officers because they are located upstairs or in story buildings which are not easy for PWDs to access or be easily admitted into.

Bank Usage is modestly coming in contact with the facilities and using them gracefully with little or no assistance at all. Ehiametalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye (2018) observed that banking is migrating to e-banking (also known as online banking) or internet banking; the researchers would wish to observe that with this e-banking issues, many Nigerians who are PWDs and at the same time majority are illiterates, cannot bank anywhere soon and very soon; this is because the ability to read, write/text and listen is very essential in e-banking. Ehiametalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye further averred that bank usage can be enhanced by bank access and bank access enhances bank usage to a high extent.

Jatau (2019) affirmed that literacy skills enables and makes it possible for PWD to carryout countless banking transactions. Using a smartphone or computer system from the comfort of the homes. Jatau thereafter lamented that many PWD cannot read and write, therefore cannot use certain



banking facilities such as smartphones, computer systems and ATMs. Ehiamezor, Osu-Nwufe, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye (2018) painted that most Automated Teller Machines (ATM) in Nigeria are mounted in such a way that PWDs cannot access and so, cannot use them. For example, a person with physical impairment who is on a wheel-board, cannot use ATM machine, even those on wheel chair cannot use such machines gracefully. These ATMs do not have talkbacks, therefore the visually impaired cannot effectively use ATM too. It is as a result of the above problems that the researcher finds it necessary to investigate the influence of Bank Access on Persons with Disabilities in Plateau North, Nigeria.

This study is hinged on the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA). The theory states that workers will continually alter themselves and their job atmosphere until they are able to achieve equilibrium of professional satisfaction. This TWA was propounded by Kelly Cal who is also a PWD. The theory is related to this study because it advocates that a worker/PWD in an environment keeps adjusting to his work and work environment until he/she is experienced in the work culture and obtains job satisfaction and that, perseverance is how long a PWD will wait to attain work satisfaction (Cal, 2022); the relevance of this Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) to this study is in the fact that Banks can adapt or reform their buildings, infrastructures and arrangements to accommodate PWDs or be accessible for PWDs. The researchers feel that once Banks acknowledge the importance and possible contributions of PWDs to Banks and banking, both as potential workers or as customers, the managers and administrators will continually alter their policies, decisions and their job atmosphere until both the managers and PWDs are able to achieve an equilibrium of satisfaction, happiness then fulfilment, and until PWDs are properly included in the current world of inclusive banking, until banking satisfaction is reached by all (banking for all), irrespective of physiological status.

Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka (2012) lamented that bank barriers hinder participation of PWDs to access (admission and use) bank facilities and services. These barriers are classified/described in three categories: attitudinal, physical (including structural and communication) and institutional. UNESCO (2003) said that proper handling of attitudinal barrier is one of the most important factors for handling barriers to effective participation and inclusion of PWDs into accessing banking facilities, services and employment. Negative attitudes and stereotypes are often related to PWDs.

From the researchers' experiences, banks often see PWDs as profoundly dependent, weak, and full of issues. This stimulates the segregation and exclusion of PWDs from many banks. Andzayi (2012); Dan (2022); Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka (2012) affirmed that an example of attitudinal barriers in the bank's context include: holding to a belief that PWDs are dirty and not worthy to be found in a facility like bank or in the company of clean men/women, this typecast belief is habitually seen in the attitudes of bank administrators and would never desire to give room for admittance nor employment of PWDs into their facilities; this makes these PWDs feel unwelcome, it creates barrier against PWDs from entering banks to do businesses or obtain services. These PWDs simply feel stigmatized, discriminated upon and tactfully excluded by many banks.

Spungin (2003) said that physical barriers are either structural or communication barriers in banks environments that prevent access or hinder PWDs from moving into and out or around the bank independently. Examples of structural barriers in the banks include: a bank without ramps at



the entrance, narrow doorways, inaccessible doors, pathways without tactile guide markers, banks without proper lightening for those with low vision and banks without squat-style toilets, all those often create barriers to access for PWDs inside/outside banks areas.

Jatau (2019) also alleged that communication barriers may be experienced by PWDs in speaking, reading, seeing, writing and understanding. These persons often communicate in different ways to persons without disabilities, and if adaptations are not made, PWDs may be unable to understand or convey information. A bank with high (tall) service counters and information desks, create a kind of barrier for persons with physical impairment who use wheelchairs.

McCall (2003) said that institutional barriers are often created when there is no legal framework for disability inclusion or when existing laws and regulations, such as those that require programmes and activities to be inclusive and accessible to PWDs and make 'reasonable accommodation' for PWDs' specific needs, are poorly enforced. Okwudire (2012) said that institutional barriers are difficult to identify because they are often entrenched within social and cultural norms, 'but when I see one, I will know'. Examples of institutional barriers in the bank's setting include: a bank that does not adhere to the bank's policy of identifying and responding to PWDs' diverse needs by the bank; for instance, inability for a bank to provide an interpreter to assist a person with hearing impairment.

Dan (2022) lamented that lack of access to micro-finance and banking services by PWDs constitute inaccessibility to bank mainstreaming and bank inclusion which are world's contemporary issues that must not be joked with or taken for granted. Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka (2012) lamented that PWDs are faced with severe stigmatization, deprivation, frustration, marginalization, exclusion, discrimination, segregation and negative attitude from the larger society when it comes to securing jobs in places like banks and financial institutions as a whole. To also access capital or funds from banks by PWDs for business development, it is like squeezing water from a rock as the banks will request for collaterals which many PWDs couldn't afford. Jurmang, Jatau and Jikukka then estimated that individuals with disabilities are the majority of the poorest of the poor; the largest number are jobless and without any business opportunity.

Disability is not just a mere health predicament, it is a multifarious experience that affects the person's mind or thoughts, body or physique, spirit or essence of life and the ability to function just as any other person in the society in which the person lives. Andzayi (2012) professed that disability may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional and developmental or some combination of those, and may be present from birth or occur during a person's life.

Disability is an umbrella term connoting, activity limitation (low ability) and/or participation restrictions and is an outcome of interaction between impairment and negative environmental impact. It is a fact that most people at some points in their lives will experience one type of disability or the other (Ozaji, 2005). The researchers feel that a Person with Disability is one with 'reduced ability' as a result of an impairment. A person with disability is one faced with restriction or low/reduced ability to perform a certain task within a manner that is considered normal for human beings. Cal (2022) and Andzayi (2012) opined that a condition is considered disabling only when it interferes with activity or adjustment in an important manner. Disability is actually an effect. Banks



often focus too much attention on the defects and deficiencies of PWDs rather than on the strengths and efficiencies.

A person with disability is said to be one whose impairment reduces his/her ability to perform certain tasks. This means that there are many tasks PWDs can perform in banks; especially tasks that are not related to or dependent on the damaged organ. But the negative attitudes of banks employers are the undesirable consequences of their presumed limitations (disabilities) to work in the bank (Ozaji, 2005; Andzayi, 2012).

Other problems are, can bank access be used to: Change the emotions of PWDs to emotions of peace and tranquility? Enhance the attitude of discrimination, fear of humiliation and trauma experienced by PWDs? The aim of this investigation is to investigate the influence of Bank Access on PWDs. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. examine the extent to which bank admission can be used to change bank access of PWDs.
- ii. determine the extent to which bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs.

Research Questions

1. To what extent can bank admission be used to change bank access of PWDs?
2. What is the extent to which bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs?

Research Design

This study utilized the survey research design; specifically the cross-sectional survey. Awotunde and Ugodulunwa (2004) opined that a cross-sectional survey examines a sample from the population for the purpose of achieving any or all of the following objectives: description, explanation, and exploration. The reason for using this cross-sectional survey, is that it collected data, from the sample at this particular time and determine the influence of Bank Access on PWDs in Jos metropolitan area.

The population of this research is one hundred and two (102) PWDs in the study area. This population is found to be suitable for this study because it depicts the same characteristics (PWDs) to be used in this study. The sample size of this study comprised of forty-seven (47) PWDs. The choice of forty-seven (47) as the sample size, was informed by the fact that this was the only number that was present for the investigation and also met the requirement for this investigation: PWDs with only one specific disability (not multiple). The paucity of PWDs, the researchers understood that it was for lack of means of transportation to the investigation Centre. Therefore the sampling technique used considering those factors was the purposive sampling technique; this was a purposive sampling technique based on the following reasons as well: First, the choice of the study area where the research took place was based on purpose, the selected area had the largest group of PWDs who also met the criteria needed. Second, the researchers purposely selected: 7 PWDs with leprosy; 10 PWDs with hearing impairment; 10 PWDs with visual impairment; 10 with physical impairment and 10 PWDs with cerebral palsy who are ready for the survey research.

The said forty-seven (47) PWDs were given the instrument: Bank Access Scale (BAS) to be responded to, then obtain data for this investigation. The Chronbach's alpha reliability method was

used in this study to ascertain the suitability of the research instruments. This method was a more generalized method of estimating internal consistency. It was the average split-half correlation based on all possible divisions of an investigation into two parts. Cronbach's alpha (α) were computed from the variances of individual investigation items and variance of the total investigation scores. BAS provide response: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (U), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD).

Cronbach's alpha is defined by the formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K - 1} \frac{[1 - \sum S^2 \text{ items}]}{[S^2 \text{ test }]}$$

Where α = Cronbach's alpha

K = Number of items

S^2 = Variance

The reliability of the instrument obtained using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient index was 0.793 for BAS. BAS is basically divided into Sections A. and B. Section A. was the Bio-data of the respondents and Section B. has eight (8) items via which the respondents responded to. Those are list of items that sought to collect the bank access of the respondents.

The respondents' responses were collected and used; the sample items: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were used to test research question one, while items 6, 7 and 8 were used to test research question two. Respondents were asked to tick (\checkmark) items from the options that best expressed their minds. The scale used for scoring each of the items on bank access was the five points Likert Scale rated: Strongly Agreed (SA: 5 points), Agreed (A: 4 points), Undecided (U: 3 points), Disagreed (D: 2 points) and Strongly Disagreed (SD: 1 point).

Two experts were used to establish the validity of BAS. This is to ensure that, the contents of the instrument are applicable and effective for use with the sample, and these experts judged and guided the researchers in making revision of the items for content validity. The items on the instrument were judged for the instrument's comprehensiveness, adequacy and relevance by the experts. The validity index of the instrument was generated to be 0.801. The two research questions were answered using simple means, frequencies, percentages, standard deviation and tabled.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: To what extent can bank admission be used to change bank access of PWDs?

Table 1: Extent to which bank admission can be used to change bank access of PWDs

Determinant Factors	Respondents' Responses					Total	Mean \pm SD
	SA	A	UD	D	SD		
Entrance/Entry Based							
My bank needs ramp for entry.	17(36.2)	24(51.1)	3(6.4)	3(6.4)	0	47(100)	4.17 \pm 0.82
My bank's entrance needs to be disability compliant.	7(14.9)	17(36.2)	11(23.4)	12(25.5)	0	47(100)	3.40 \pm 1.04



Enabling Facilities Based

My bank facilities cater for PWDs.	4(8.5)	3(6.4)	20(42.6)	16(34.0)	4(8.5)	47(100)	2.72 ±1.02
There are no services for PWDs in my bank.	10(21.3)	28(59.6)	3(6.4)	6(12.8)	0	47(100)	3.89 ± 0.89

Employment Based

There is need to employ PWDs in my bank.	8(17.0)	39(83.0)	0	0	0	47(100)	4.17 ± 0.38
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Source: field data 2022

Table 1 shows the Extent to which bank admission can be used to change bank access of PWDs. Based on the mean and standard deviation, Entrance/Entry Based determinant factor had 4.17±0.82 and 3.40±1.04 is ranked highest, followed by Employment Based determinant factor had 4.17 ± 0.38 and Enabling Facilities Based determinant factor had 2.72 ±1.02 and 3.89 ± 0.89 ranked third. This implies that Entrance/Entry Based determinant factor is the most important factor (bank admission/access) with the highest (to a great extent).

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs?

Table 2: Extent to which bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs.

Problems Hindering	Respondents Responses					Total	Mean ± SD
	SA	A	UD	D	SD		
I need special needs services in my bank.	7(14.9)	37(78.7)	0	3(6.4)	0	47(100)	4.0213±0.64
Bank area usage has affected me negatively.	7(14.9)	27(57.4)	6(12.8)	3(6.4)	4(8.5)	47(100)	3.6383±1.09
My bank allows me to use special facilities.	10(21.3)	14(29.8)	10(21.3)	13(27.7)	0	47(100)	3.4468±1.12

Source: field data 2022

Table 2 shows the extent to which bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs to a great extent. Based on the mean and standard deviation, special needs services with mean and standard deviation 4.0213±0.64 ranked first. Bank area usage had 3.6383±1.09 ranked second and the use of special facilities had 3.4468±1.12 ranked third. This implies that the major problem on which other problem lied is lack of special needs services.



Discussion of Findings

The first research question revealed that Entrance/Entry Based determinant factors were effective in improving bank access of PWDs to a great extent. Similarly, the second research question showed that bank usage can be used to change bank access of PWDs to a great extent. These results strengthened the position of Ehiamentalor, Osu-Nwufo, Makeri-Yahaya and Oladunjoye (2018) who averred that bank usage can be enhanced by bank access and that bank access enhances bank usage to a high extent.

Conclusion

This study has substantiated that bank access by PWDs can change bank admission, usage and even employment of PWDs to a great extent. Bank access enables PWDs to deposit, withdraw and borrow money. However, bank managers and administrators need to work on their attitudes and policies to consciously and deliberately work to create space for PWDs in banks and other financial institutions in order to strengthen purchasing and retailing banking amongst PWDs.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the strength of the research findings:

1. Government and nongovernmental organisations should be made such that they are committed to helping PWDs in the area of entrance/entry into banking infrastructures to obtain services.
2. Government and private settings such as banks, must ensure that banks are accessible to PWDs, especially when it comes to removal of physical barriers, communication barriers and institutional barriers in banks.

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ROLES OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSEMENT PATICIPATION IN STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

This paper examines the Roles of Continuous Assessment Participation in Students' Academic Performance. Over the years, continuous assessment has been the pre-evaluation process of students academic success before the final examination period, in this 21st century, however, it appears that lecturers are not using continuous assessment to prepare students ahead of examination because some of them don't mark their test script and return the script back to students to see their performance before the final examination.. This paper concludes that continuous assessment helps students to remember what has been learnt, to concentrate effort on difficult areas of the subject and helps identify their areas of strengths and weaknesses. It was suggested amongst others that lecturers should critically examine students performance in continuous assessment so as to understand their area of weaknesses and help them on it by equipping students' with effective study habits and social skills that can contribute to their level of subject mastery.

Key Words: Continuous Assessment, Participation, Assessment, Students Academic Performance

Introduction

Continuous Assessment refers to a system of assessment, which is carried out at pre-determined intervals for the purpose of monitoring and improving the overall performance of students and of the teaching – learning process (Okpala, Onocha & Oyediji 2013). Examination is a formal written, oral or practical test especially at school or college to see how much learners know about a subject or what he/she can do.

Education has to do with the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. These are the philosophy behind the introduction of the variables contained in the title of the investigation. Beaton & Faloyago (2006) opined that the rise of continuous assessment between countries used as measure of all the overall quality of education as a consequence, assessment has acquired an importance beyond merely providing some kinds of reliable and valid measure of students' knowledge and understanding the emphasis has shifted to it becoming a measure of the individual



teachers capabilities than when sum across the country a measure of the effectiveness of the quality of the educational system as a whole (Falayajo, 2009)

Hasting, Ohumche & Madaus (2018) defined Continuous Assessment as the use of systematic, evaluation in the process of curriculum construction teaching and learning processes. Continuous Assessment is also explained as the systematic determination of the extent of students' progress or lack of it in school subjects including attitude and values from the first day students steps into the school up to and including the last day in it.

The former system of education in Nigeria was criticized by educationists and other well-meaning citizens. The system lacked scientific and vocational content and over emphasized the arts and social sciences. Its evaluation was inadequate in that only the cognitive behaviour of the students was evaluated. It also put emphasis on decisions as the end of term or course so that it was often too late to help students improve on their learning because most of them would be going on to other classes. These weaknesses contributed to the inability of the system to provide functional Nigerians.

To tackle the above inadequacies, the 6 – 3 – 3 – 4 - system of education was introduced in 1982. This system incorporates a system of evaluation which is a method of ascertaining what a student has gained from learning activities in terms of knowledge, thinking, reasoning, character development and industry, taking into account all his/her performances in tests, assignments, projects and other school activities, during a given period (term, year, in entire course). (Ezeoke 2002). This evaluation is systematic, continuous, comprehensive, and correlative and guidance oriented

Ezewu and Okoye (2012) sees continuous assessment as a systematic and objective process of determining the extent of a students' performance in all expected changes in behaviour from the day he enters upon a course of study to the end of such a course and a judicious accumulation of all pieces of information derived from the process with a view to using them to guide and shape the student in his learning from time to time and to serve as a basis for important decisions about the child.

Continuous Assessment is therefore a way of obtaining the most valid assessment of the capabilities and qualities of a student. This is because it is an aggregate of all the performances of a student from the beginning of the course to the end of it. Denga (2003) assessing the importance of continuous assessment writes that the 6 – 3 – 3 -4 system of education requires that many important decisions have to be taken on the child at the end of the primary, first three years of secondary school and the later three years of secondary school before the child joins the labour force or goes into the university. Many of these decisions are so sensitive and internally crucial to the child that the traditional strategy of examination at the end of the term or the end of the year is a woefully inadequate data source for it.

This paper will give lecturers some insight into the problems of students as regards continuous assessment practice. The knowledge gained from this paper will help teachers to implement continuous assessment effectively. It will also be useful to policy makers in formulating suitable policies, concerning continuous assessment.



Concept of Continuous Assessment

Assessment of student's level of academic performance is vital to teaching and learning process as it provides the necessary feedback about the outcome of educational goals and objectives. The assessment of learning outcomes provides objective evidences necessary in the decision making process in education. As pointed out by Bassavanthappa (2019), good measurement resulting in accurate data is the foundation of sound decision making about educational endeavour. In education, assessment aims at determining the level of students' mastery of body of knowledge and skills in a subject.

Continuous Assessment is a classroom strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain the knowledge, skills and understanding attained by students at a particular point in time. Teachers administer assessments in a variety of ways in order to observe multiple tasks and information about what students know, understand and can do. Continuous Assessment is a method of evaluation carried out periodically or at a predetermined interval of the school year. It is aimed at finding out how much students have acquired in a subject matter. It is a consistent monitoring of students' progress at school. It involves collecting data with a view to making value judgment about the quality of person, object, group of event (Ajuonuma, 2017).

The continuous assessment grading system requires the assessment of the change in behaviors, in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The students are evaluated from one stage to the other through tests, quiz, assignments, projects and other school activities. At the end of the term or session, the tests are used for determining the performance of the students in a particular subject. Race (2017) stated that continuous assessment is more useful to the students, as it provides them with on-going feedback on their performance, helps them to become more self-critical and encourages them to attempt mastering material as they actually work through a course, thus, achieving success in their academic goals. According to Adegbeye (2013), continuous assessment is more relevant as it allows students to demonstrate their ability and development on a periodical basis, so that students who have studied hard but is not very good in sitting for examination is not placed at the disadvantage compared with lazy students who engage in minimum amount of work needed to pass such examinations.

In the past, the educational systems of many African nations were dominated by the one-short summative type of assessment. Students were trained to pass examinations so as to move up the education ladder, in order to stop this, suggestions for a broader approach to assessment, which would be flexible and also provide valid and reliable results were made (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). In the light of this, Continuous Assessment was introduced to find ways in which academic evaluation impacts on the way teaching occurred and learners learnt, hence, the significance of teachers' understanding of relevance of continuous assessment to students' academic success.

Through the National Policy on Education (NPE), the Federal Government of Nigeria (FCN, 2004) stated that educational assessment at all levels of education would be liberalized by basing them in whole or part on continuous assessment. This recommendation was based on some deficiencies identified in the nation's way of assessing students. The traditional system of



assessment concentrated only on the cognitive domain, with little or no attempt made to assess the affective and psychomotor domains. This system encourages students to study only during the period of examination. This is done by the memorization of facts, which are forgotten after the examination. It was based on these reasons that more that the committee set for National Policy on Education in 1971), recommended the use of continuous assessment in Nigeria Educational System. In pursuance of this policy statement, National University Commission (NUC) allotted 30% and 70%, while the Polytechnic is 40% and 60% of the total scores of the students to continuous assessment and end of semester examination respectively.

Continuous assessment is work that students do during a course rather in examination especially work that counts towards student final grades. It is a form of educational examination that evaluates a students' progress throughout a prescribed course. It is often used as alternative to the final examination system.

Hornby (2017) sees continuous assessment as the work that is assigned to as part of an educational course and counts towards the grade given for the performance are assessed at the end of the semester or session with the combination of continuous assessment (CA) and semester examination. Continuous assessment comprises of classroom work activities, practical and tests, attendance which all students must participate in to fulfill the school requirements before students can graduate. Continuous Assessment is activities which are frequently encountered in all formal education all over the world. It is essentially a mental activity which involves thinking, reading, speaking out, reconsideration, re-examining, summarizing or repeat performance of an activity whether purely mental or psycho-motor in nature, with the aim of enhancing learning.

Therefore, continuous assessment enhances performance in academics, no lecturer can afford not to allow his or her students participate in continuous assessment activity and no student can also avoid participation in CA if the student wants to graduate with good grades and become successful in the nearest future. Even now, 75 percent attendance in lectures is required before students are allowed into examination hall. This is not really obtainable in most institution of learning (Ezeogwu & Okoye 2012). Students prefer CA for learning. It is usually specified by the teachers or through learning guides for those who take self-thought courses. It entails a wide range of activities that includes experimentation, research, practice as well as written dissertations. Students in higher institution have course work grades and those courses are combined to those of assessment examinations. This is met to determine the overall performances. CA writing takes several days or weeks as opposed to examination.

Importance of Continuous Assessments

Active class participation also improves critical and higher level thinking skills. Students who participate in course work have studied the material well enough to introduce new concepts to their peers. This level of thinking goes beyond simple comprehension of text, and can also improve memory.

To engage the students in participation in a classroom is an important method of teaching. It provides the students opportunity to receive input from fellow students, to apply their knowledge and to enhance public speaking skills. From the participation of students, the teachers can get



accurate idea of the understanding level of students about the concept being taught (Maznevski, 2016)

Engagement within the learning environment generally refers to the relationship between the learner and the content or topic being pursued. While the highest levels of engagement are seen when the learner is passionate about the topic, significant levels of engagement can be achieved through a variety of strategies that actively involve the learner in activities and environments that make learning both interesting and challenging. Engagement with content leads to higher levels of learning (Whelan, 2017)

Our experience reveals that for many students class participation is a big problem. Lecturers often complain about students' passive behaviour in class participation. But up till now there has been a very little research into the promotion of class participation. More often low self-esteem, anxiety and general lack of confidence is considered responsible for student's non- participation in the classroom activities.

According to Cummins (2013), lack of participation could be due to multiple factors. The first thought is students' reluctance which could be due to lack of understanding but it very well, be that students' does not feel connected to the curriculum, and student cannot relate to it. Students who are empowered by their school experiences develop ability, confidence, and motivation to succeed academically. Students' participate competently in instruction as a result of having developed a confident cultural identity as well as appropriate school based knowledge and interactional structures.

Bonwell and Eison (2011) suggest that active learning is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. Active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing. The core elements of active learning are student activity and engagement in the learning process. Adopting instructional practices that engage students in the learning process is the defining feature of active learning. The importance of students' engagement is widely accepted and there is considerable evidence to support the effectiveness of student engagement on a broad range of learning outcomes.

Jason (2021) pointed out the rationale for continuous assessment. It gives the lecturer the opportunity to participate in the final assessment of his/her students. It is more valid and more indicative of the learners' overall ability than a single examination. A continuous assessment procedure facilitates appropriate guidance of the learners both in their learning and preparation for a career. Data from continuous assessment can be useful to the teacher for self-assessment. It is believed that if continuous assessment is employed examination misconduct would be curbed.

The way the learners perceive any teaching/learning activities is believed to affect their participation in the activities. Since the learners are directly involved in continuous assessment programme. It behooves the implementers of the programme to be aware of their perception of the programme.

Factors Affecting Students' Participation in Continuous Assessments

More of the students appear to have an inactive role in the continuous assessments participation. Synthesis, evaluation, analysis and application are the more important things which



are to be developed during continuous assessment participation. Ames and Ames (2019) outlined the factors affecting students' participation in continuous assessment as follows:

- Continuous assessment improves the performance and the result of the learning in the students, encouraging their work in a continuous way, the easiest way to acquire the necessary skills.
- The overcoming of basic and fundamental subject from previous years affects, clearly the marks.
- It is fundamental that the assessment benefits the learning, encouraging in the feedback, the motivation and the comprehension ability of the student of his own learning process. This way, the students will assimilate it as one more part of their learning process and they will improve their results.
- The valuation of the teaching activities affects in an important way the teaching-learning process and out knowledge of its perception has to give us hints to know how to improve continuously.
- As a general rule, it can be affirmed that the students' ability and perception of the subject and its teacher affect in a determining way in the teaching-learning process.

The power of the lecturer, gender and the age discrimination of the students, the cognitive level towards class room and also the sentiments of the students are such factors which have significant influence on the interaction amongst students in the classroom. The societal behaviour of students and teachers as well has a great effect on CA participation. The students get frightened by the lecturer and lose their confidence to participate in different kind of activities in the CA. To lessen the gap among students and lecturers and to provide student friendly atmosphere enhance the degree of participation in various activities in the class.

The participation of students in continuous assessment increases the reasoning of the students' critical thinking and creativity skills in them as well. The best learning environment and participation could be increased through demolishing the factors like uncertainty and anxiety in the class room.

Mclnnis (2010) suggested that the participation of the students could be increased in the class room through redesigning our curriculum and different types of courses in a significant manner which may prove a mile stone in engaging different groups of students with one another and it is related to classroom with academic and social interchange and by keeping this point in mind, even a lay man can propose the idea of producing the social links among students with other students and with teachers also.

Methods of Assessing Students in Continuous Assessment

To effectively evaluate whether your students meet a subject learning outcomes, you need to choose an appropriate assessment methods. Different assessment methods allow you to assess different skills. For example, while one method may ask students to demonstrate analytical skills, another may focus on collaboration. The method of assessment chosen will then inform the selection of an appropriate task

According to Staut (2022) to choose an appropriate assessment method, you must understand:



- The subjects learning outcomes
- The skills and knowledge associated with those learning outcomes
- Which assessment methods will allow your students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge?

Considering these three aspects puts the student and their learning at the centre of learning design.

Methods of assessment can also be aligned with types of assessment, allowing for types of assessment to be altered at the offering level (i.e in subject outlines) without changing the assessment method. If your criteria standards focus on the skills and knowledge to be assessed, you can change elements such as format, length, detail of task and form of task

Other methods of assessment according to Staut (2022) are application, analytical, clinical, collaborative, creative, evaluate, factual, field, meta-cognitive, practical, procedural, reflective, research and work integrated learning.

Application: Apply concepts and skills to know and new contexts. Many assessment types can be aligned with this method the discriminator for an application task is that it provides an authentic context for application of knowledge and skills.

Analytical: Draw connections between complex ideas, think critically, make judgments and develop solutions. (Developing arguments, reflecting, evaluating, and assessing judging problem solving).

Clinical: Activity in a clinic location that imitates a situation or process, to demonstrate learning and practical skills. (Applying theory experiential learning documenting, recording, observing, reporting, discussion, diagnoses).

Collaborative: Work with others on a defined task and in ways where every individual contributes. If your assessment involves group work, ensure it complies with the assessment conduct of coursework assessment and examinations procedures guidelines on group assessment work.

Creative: Facilitate insight or change based on new and original approaches. This may involve a creative process and /or lead to a new and/or original product (imagining, visualizing designing, producing creating, innovating performing).

Evaluative: Engage in disciplined inquiry to make judgments based on evidence. (Questioning assumptions and bias, making judgments using a set of steps, justifying decisions and judgments, arguing, describing, advocating, negotiating presenting).

Factual: Recall facts and basic concepts and explain ideas or concepts to demonstrate knowledge and understanding. (Recalling, describing, reporting, recounting, recognizing, identifying relating and interrelating).

Field: Participate in work undertaken outside the institution under study to gain knowledge through direct contact and observation. (Applying theory, experiential learning, documenting, recording, observing, reporting, discussion, diagnosis)

Meta Cognitive: Plan a task monitor progress, self assess, and adjust in accordance with self-assessment and understanding one's own knowledge. (Identifying problems, posing problems, defining problems, analyzing data, reviewing, designing experiments, planning, applying information).



Practical: Participate in a hands-on activity that involves practical experience. (Applying theory, problem solving experiential learning, documenting recording observing reporting).

Procedural: Identify and/or perform procedures and demonstrate techniques. (Computation, taking readings, using equipment following laboratory procedures, following protocols, carrying out instructions).

Reflective: Reflect on experiences to support and guide learning, manage and develop one. (Reflecting questioning, revising, assessing what is known and not known, being self-directed managing tasks, organizing).

Research: Accessing, managing and communicating information to answer a question or for a specific purpose. (Researching, investigating, interpreting, organizing, reviewing and paraphrasing information, collecting data, searching observing, interpreting, and managing information sources).

Students' Participation in Continuous Assessments

There is need for students to participate in course work because this will definitely enhance their performance thereby improving the academic performance. Students' interest and engagement is not always an easy thing to predict, nor is it static, because students are constantly changing and growing, educators must be aware of how those changes impact the students. Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, and Kindermann (2018) explored the emotions and behaviors that correlate with engagement and disaffection in the classroom.

Therefore, educators must either be prepared to reach students at all grade levels or must take preventative measures. Students often indicate their engagement through certain behaviors, and when teachers recognize these behaviors and the emotion behind them, they can best address the issue. As a teacher, it is important to recognize these signs both positive and negative and either reinforce or remedy the situation. Marks (2010) purported that three factors influence students' engagement and learning; which are personal background and orientation towards school, school initiatives and subject matter. When students have some semblance of control over their learning, they are more likely to be engaged and achieve academic success.

Lecturers Assessment of Continuous Assessments

What is Assessment? A good place to start is to ask what assessment and appraisal involve. At first sight the two notions appear similar. However, assessment means measuring the knowledge, skills and attitudes a student has accrued. Appraisal is the process of awarding a value to this, for example in the form of grade.

Why do we Assess: Assessments allows you to check whether or not a student has obtained certain knowledge, skills and attitudes. The learning outcome shows the total of knowledge, skills and attitudes at programme level. A programme's objective is for a student to acquire the entire learning outcome. At course level we translate the learning outcome into learning objectives. In a course you can assess the level to which the learning objectives have been obtained taken together the assessments in a programme from the assessment programme. If a student has passed all



assessments for all courses, it is safe to assume that he/she has achieved the intended learning outcome.

As well as the aim of checking whether students have achieved the learning outcome and the learning objectives, assessment also investigate students' study behaviour. For example, a multiple choice assessment with reproduction questions will incite different study behaviour than an assessment with analytical questions or case histories. Finally, the level and content of your learning objectives and assessment determine the learning activities. These activities must make it possible for the students to achieve the learning objectives and prepare for the assessments.

Assessment Functions: You can use assessments for various objectives, such as:

- A means of selection for considering future students suitability to participate in a course.
- An educational tool for directing the learning process
- Progress check the assessment arms the lecturer and the student with information about the students' progress in obtaining the learning objectives.
- Appraisal for checking whether the learning objectives have been obtained to the appropriate level..

When to assess: The point at which the assessment takes place is determined by the assessments objective. Assessment as a selection tool is used prior to the course. Assessment as an educational instrument or progress check acts as feedback during the course. Assessments specifically aimed at appraisal take place during or at the end of a course. Mid-semester assessments formative and summative can provide a powerful stimulus for a student to continue to study regularly.

How to access: The content and the level of the learning objectives and the chief items determining the most appropriate type of assessment to use. A mix of different assessments is usually used in each programme permitting students to show across a spectrum of different contexts the level to which they have acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Academic Performance Explained

Academic performance is the measurement of students' achievements across various academic subjects (Rosie 2022). Teachers and Education officials typically measure achievements using classroom performance, graduation rate and result from standardize test. It describes academic outcome that indicate the extent to which a student has achieved their learning goals. It may be referred to completing educational benchmark such as Bachelor degree. Academic achievement is often measured through examination and continuous assessment. The academic performance involve factors such as intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interest, study habit, self-esteem, the student teacher relationship. When gap between the academic performance and the student expected performance occurred it refers to a diverging performance.

Academic performance means the knowledge and skills the student have mastered in a subject or a course. It is basically a measure of how well students have performed in the various assessment items set for them base on some educational criteria determine by professional educators. Through the student performance in their assessment items such as essays, test, viva and



examination, student' performances are determined in ranking as to the educational standard that they have reached. That is pass, credit, distinction, high distinction and so on.

The academic performance refers to what you gain during school, college days as what is your percentage in tenth standard, twelve standard and graduate or in a master's degree. Here we are talking about the educational performance from school to last education but sometime it will be the whole achievement in academic performance with extra-curricular activities. So the conclusion is that if some ask you what is your academic performance? Then your answer will be the overall performance of education with extracurricular activities (Jason, 2021).

Students Participation in Coursework and Lecturers Assessments in Relation Students' Academic Performance

Students performance in examination varies some perform very well while others perform poorly. There are many factors responsible for this differentials performance among other factors are Lecturers method of teaching availability or otherwise of the necessary laboratory equipment, study habits pattern of the students. Apart from the above factors students' performance in the continuous assessment can determine how they perform in the actual examinations. That is if a student perform very well in course work, be fully aware that the same students will perform excellently well in examinations if the lecturer assess objectively.

In addition, the urgent need to promote learning and improve performance in the developments in continuous assessment at classroom levels. This undetermined the future of many students that are in schools that persistently perform poorly. What therefore remains disturbing is whether a relationship adopted by lecturers with students performance in final examination. There is need for students to talk about their experience while participating in classroom activities such as class test.

There is need to explore lecturers perception about the effects of course work on students who record lower attainment in class. Also for the lecturer to check the class arrangement that they adopt to enhance the participation of students who record lower attainment in classroom activities. To see the experience of students who record lower attainment concerning their performance. And above all to see the challenges that lecturers encounter while supporting student record lower attainments to participation in continuous assessment tasks.

Continuous Assessment should be deeply rooted in specific class task or activity. That is, it should be performed by the students to a certain standard under the strict observation of the Lecturers. It includes competency demonstration, assessment, public disclosure and programme follow-up. (Anaele, 2010). The hallmark of continuous assessment should be the demonstration of exactly what the student can do. Among the objectives of continuous assessment is to provide a basis for the effective maintenance of uniformity in scoring and maintenance of expected standards geared towards quality attainment, to provide a more valid assessment of a student's overall ability and performance, to enable lecturers to be more flexible and innovative in their instructions, to provide a basis for lecturers to improve on their instructional methods and to provide a basis for more effective guidance of the students.



According to Ezeaugwu (2011), the diagnostic nature of continuous assessment is based on the fact that it helps in the continuous monitoring of student's ability level, his strengths and weaknesses with regard to contents of course, possible causes of weaknesses in content and their possible remedies. It is prognostic in predicting how well a learner can perform if exposed to similar tasks or events on completely different tasks in future. It comes in two or three phase-test spread over the semester time frame. continuous assessments should be able to measure what a student knows and what he can do with his knowledge (Wolff, 2012).

In carrying out a competency-based assessment, Briggs (2012) proposed some few principles such as clearly defining the objective of the assessments, identifying the criteria and sharing it with the assesses (students) in a transparent manner, feedback to the assesses on his her performance, the nature of records made and data collected need to be shared with the students, and if the data is to be used for purpose other than what was defined before the assessment is to further use the data take certain strategic decisions like repositioning teaching-learning strategy, learning situation etc. Also, to give feedback for reinforced development in learning.

Briggs, stated that feedback provided after assessments help the participants that is the students in self-reflection, it appeals to the logic of the students participating in the assessment and help them to get a clear understanding of their development area. In executing a feedback on assessment, Briggs proposed the following consideration such as:

- Pre-empt the expectation of participants or students from the feedback which act as a compass for the assessor who eventually is the Lecturer.
- The assessor needs to be specific and stick to the predefined parameters or competencies to make reference; when necessary, cite examples to facilitate better understanding of students.
- Involving the students is important feedback has to be a dialogue and not a monologue which means students should be given the opportunity to discuss their strength and weakness and experience in the assessment and areas of development;
- Students should be allowed to explain the intent behind their response and differing opinions whenever appropriate, assessors should refrain from passing a judgmental statement that is , their statement have to be suggestive rather than an absolute truths, assessors need to be patient and display great listening skills to create the required trust and rapport with the students

Feedback assessment should aim at making the students to be aware of their strength and areas of development, encourage introspection, help students draw inference and read conclusions. As a result, feedback requires care as it is seen as being a delicate process in teaching-learning process. Briggs observed that in a wrongly positioned feedback, students are very good at hiding any feeling of hurt and upset and that beneath the façade lies a demoralized, de-motivated individual as the student might start thinking. "if that is what I am like, am I really going to get to where I want to be? Where tactfulness is not applied in feedback, it can become the road to frustration. The feedback that is explained here means Lecturers must mark, that is assess whatever means of their continuous assessment and return it back to the students; let them see their performance in that particular course or subject before their final examination.



Conclusion

Conclusively, there is need for students to participate in course work because this will definitely enhance their performance thereby improving the academic performance. Lecturers Assessment of continuous assessment will allows them to check whether or not a student has obtained certain knowledge, skills and attitudes.

There is no doubt that students' performance in the continuous assessment can determine how they perform in the actual examinations. That is if a student perform very well in continuous assessment, also be fully aware that the same students will perform excellently well in examinations.

Suggestions

Having concluded that continuous assessment participation by students and assessment by lecturers in relation students' academic performance, it also pertinent to make certain suggestions to help reduce failure rate of students in continuous assessments thereby affecting their performance in examination:

1. Continuous assessments a determining factor in assessment of students' performance, hence students should participate regularly and fully in CA and their attitude towards responses to CA should be positive.
2. Strategy should be put in place to monitor the independence of students participation in CA, award score and commensurate penalty should be meted out to defaulters..
3. Continuous Assessments performance has correlation with examination grades and examination questions are prepared from what has been administered in continuous assessment of students should be motivated to participate in it regularly.
4. Students should adopt positive attitude to continuous assessment since their attitude to CA has impact on their performance.
5. Lecturers must return their marked assessment scripts to the students so as to known their performance and know how to work harder for their examination.

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TEACHERS' ACQUISITION OF DIGITAL SKILLS AND THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Business Education as an aspect of Vocational Education is an essential education intended to provide skills and manpower for industry. Teacher's acquisition of digital skills has so much impact on technology driven because the world today has become a global village. This paper examined Teachers' acquisition of digital skills and the future of business education in Nigeria. The paper further discussed policy formulation and implication, types of Digital skills in enhancing business education, conceptual framework, and objectives of business education, methodologies of business education and features of modern technologies. The paper further elucidates some constraints and gains of teacher's acquisition of digital skills in Nigeria and suggestions and conclusion were made.

Keywords: *Teachers' Acquisition, Business Education, Information and Communication Technology, Digital Skills.*

Introduction

Business education programme prepares professionals to teach business subjects and other business related subjects globally. Business education subjects are taught at Junior, Senior Secondary Schools and tertiary institution nationwide. Business education is a branch of education that involves teaching the skills and operations of the business industry. This field of education occurs at multiple levels including secondary education and higher education (Wikipedia 2023). Business education is designed for use in business training in subjects (such as accounting, shorthand) useful in developing commercially useful skills. In the same vein, Osuala (2004) define Business education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts, that is (a) Office education, a vocational education programme for office careers through initial refresher and upgrading of education leading to employability and advancement in the office occupation and (b) General business education programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and using the services of the business world.



Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in all sphere of life has long become global. Communications are principles of transmitting information and methods by which it is delivered. Technology is the practical application of science or the art or science of applying scientific knowledge to practical problems. Ayelangbe (2005) defined ICT as diverse set of tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information. These technologies includes, computers, the internet, broadcasting technologies (radio and television), and telephone.

Teacher's acquisition of digital skills in business education at the secondary schools and tertiary level is sine – qua-non with the used of modern technologies. Jaduola (2011) noted that 95% of learning process should be practical and remaining 5% theoretical. If this is anything to go by, the students should be taught through the use of ICTs, so that both the teachers and the students can on their own discovers skills that would enhance their appreciation of business education. Nwoso and Ogbona (2012), opined that the use of ICTs in teaching of business education has also paved way for new pedagogical approach where there is unparalleled ability to spread knowledge and disseminate information. With the knowledge of ICTs, students can have access to lessons presented with software, thereby build their own skills, improve their knowledge base, and work with peers and experts and also at their own pace (Sardika & Sader, 2003).

Conceptual Framework

In Nigeria today, technology is the hall mark of any successful business in all ramifications. Business education teacher's acquisition of digital skills knowledge in the discharge of their duties is paramount in technological advancement. In line with the above, Ubulon (2000) in Ojo (2005) considered business education as the pedagogical and business competencies necessary for teaching business attitude, concepts, skills and knowledge. Business education plays a crucial role in economic and social development of a nation. The need for its relevance cannot be overemphasized. The effectiveness and responsibility of business education would be measured by its impact on the economic and social development of the nation.

Policy Formulation and Implementation

The general philosophy behind staff development programmes in educational institutions is to raise the productivity levels of teachers for economic diversification. The issue of policy formulation and implementation is a key factor in innovative approaches to the teaching of business education teacher's knowledge in digital skill utilization. There must be a paradigm shift which gives base to plans, especially academic planning. The most common meaning of implementation is to carry out, to accomplish, to fulfil, to produce or complete an action (Brynard, 2005). According to Omoregie (2013), there are policies necessary for the conduct of education. These policies are curriculum policy, methodological policy, resource policy, distribution policy, and education policy. If these policies are well implemented as discussed below, it would advance the teaching and learning of teachers' knowledge of digital skills in business education and diversification of the economy.



Curriculum Policy: The senior school business programme is designed to provide pre-vocational, vocational, advanced career preparation, and general education experiences for the students. More specifically, this curriculum should,

1. Provide primarily prevocational experiences in the Junior and senior secondary schools level.
2. Provide primarily vocational experiences in the Colleges and University levels.
3. Offer activities and classes that would contribute to each student's becoming an effective citizen capable of making sound economic judgement.
4. Provide foundation for advanced study in business and or a vocational competency.
5. Emphasize decision making, communication, logic, reasoning, and manipulative skills.
6. Offer several career clusters that are designed to provide for a variety of abilities and interests.
7. Provide an opportunity for students to acquire vocational competency in the stenographic and clerical skills.

Methodological Policy: The course is designed to expose students to business education programme and the various methods of teaching it. The goals are

- Help the student to have an understanding of the concepts of business education
- Help the students to acquire skills needed for the teaching of business education.
- Help the students to achieve, through knowledge and practice, effective teaching and learning of business education program.

Resources Policy: The quality and quantity of human resources determines a nation's growth and development. Oni. (2010), opined that there is no time in history that business organisations ever existed with or without individuals being involved in coordinating the activities of such organisation. Human resources in education refer to the lecturers or teachers, academics and the non-academics staffs of an educational institution. Every educational system at every level depends heavily on the human resources for execution of its program.

Distribution Policy: A distribution policy is the strategy applied by a company for the correct shipment of its products from the production chain to its positioning in the market. In the same vein, it's the measures put in place in the teaching field to see that the teachers' or lecturers follows the goals and objectives of every subject or topic before him or her. The rule of engagement is for efficient and effective delivery of the course content.

Educational Policy: The synergy of education, industry, employment and labour policies right from the colonial era has be overwhelming. There were allots of educational policies from 1925 before the Ashby commission of 1959. The British-adopted educational policies failed to meet the local needs and aspirations of Nigeria. In 1968, National Education Conference was held that will meet the needs and aspirations of Nigerians. To further strengthen educational system in Nigeria, the National Policy on Education was held in 1977 to meet the aspirations and needs of Nigerians. The national philosophy of education was deduced based on:



- i. The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen.
- ii. The full integration of the individual into the community.
- iii. The provision of equal access in educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system (FRN,2004:6)

Meaning of Digital Skills: Digital skills are defined as the ability to find, evaluate, use, share, and create content using digital devices, such as computers and Smartphone's. These are knowledge and skills required by individuals for the optimal use of information and communication technologies. These include digital literacy, data management, collaborative work, communication skills, content generation, security, and the ability to solve problems in virtual environments.

Digital Skills Needed in Enhancing Business Education

The teacher's knowledge and skills required by individuals in course of carrying out digital skills in business education will be discussed under the following headings:

- i. **Social Media:** According to recent study, there are 4.2 billion active social media users worldwide in January 2021 to 4.62 billion in January 2022.(Smart 2023) These 4.62 billion are active users on mobile devices. These figures show a 10.1% increase in the number of global social users in just a year with no sign of slowing down. The ability to understand and use social media effectively is a core and valued skill needed that every professional should have in actualising this goals and objectives.
- ii. **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)** Search engine marketing is one of the most influential disciplines that marketers have come to rely on. Students with SEM experience can increase the visibility of a company's website on a search engine (e.g. Google or Bing) primarily via paid advertising.
- iii. **Data Analytics:** During Covid-19, many marketers reverted to mass communication to target customers rather than using data-driven marketing. Data provides students with a wealth of information that-if used correctly can result in effective marketing campaigns that drive conversions, sales, and revenue.
- iv. **Content Marketing:** Content marketing comes in many forms-blog posts, videos, podcasts, info graphics, even social media status updates. Content is crucial in driving brand awareness and can establish brands or influences as thought leaders. With experience and knowledge in content marketing, students will have a valuable and employable skill that will set them up for a career in any industry.
- v. **Email Marketing:** Email is one of the oldest forms of direct marketing and still packs a punch in customer acquisition and retention from start-ups to multinational corporations, a great email marketing strategy helps launch successful campaigns. People may charge social media accounts or home addresses, but people aren't prone to change their email addresses. That is why professional that understand the power of email marketing to connect directly with consumers are in high demand.



- vi. **Mobile Marketing:** According to We Are social and Hoot suite's Digital 2021 report, mobile connectivity continue to grow, with 97% of the world's population using mobile phones, and 96% of all active connections coming from smart phones. Since Smartphone, traffic now exceeds desktop traffic (64%), mobile-first indexing is now used by Google when crawling pages and prioritizing content.
- vii. **Strategy and Planning:** Businesses that use a digital Marketing Campaign Strategy are mostly likely to see measurable results in the long term. Instead of planning on an ad-hoc basis, digital marketers need to create and implement campaigns based on analytics and quantifiable SEO data. Business educators should take advantage of this skills gap, by teaching students how to plan and execute a digital strategy.
- viii. **Social Selling:** Social selling is proving its worth for sellers that use it-65% rely on it for filling their pipelines and it generate half of the revenue for 14 major industries. Businesses are beginning to understand the importance of social selling by investing in new 'sales stack' technology such as email tracking tools, productivity apps, and sales intelligence software. Above all, social selling tools are seen as very effective in connecting with the modern buyers, one that relies on social platforms for reviews and advice.
- ix. **Pay-Per-Click Marketing (PPC)** PPC is a popular way for brand to get traffic quickly. Companies with big budgets can get their search result to appear on Google first page to drive massive traffic. One popular PPC advertising model is Google's Adwords program and a great way monitor spend is by using a PPC for economic tracker.
- x. **Video:** Video has evolved from being just a form of entertainments to a major social media content driver. YouTube is now a powerful and influential platform while networks like TikTok and instagram have turned video on its head to create wealthy influences. Social media apps like WhatsApp, Weibo and Wechat are becoming the de-facto tools of instant message communication.

In actualising the above digital skills, Business education must be ready for the future, better equipped to solve complex multi-faceted problems, able to bring back fresh perspectives to global challenges, and better developed to become a leader or an active participant in the world of politics, commerce, trade and industry and information and communication technology. This can be achieved through the following:-

1. **Quality Education:** Quality education is one that is pedagogically and developmentally sound and educates the learners to be active and productive members of society. Quality education focuses on the whole child both physical and mental ability in respective of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status or geographical location. This is actualised with the aids of technologies using professional teachers with technical know-how.
2. **Reinventing the Curriculum:** Nigeria need to reinvent the curriculum to accommodate business education for skills acquisition and technology. A dynamic curriculum which encompasses ICT technology driven will facilitate learning in all ramifications. Curricular for higher education can be crafted in such a way that it will boost the education industry by training professionals or specialists for global competitive services. If a University have curricular



programmes that are innovative and in demand in the local and global markets, many students even from foreign countries will enrol.

3. **Inclusive Learning and Teaching:** Business education teachers should create equal opportunities for teaching and learning to facilitate all students' sense of personal and professional identity and sense of belonging within a field, so that their background can contribute to their services. Business education teachers who utilized ICTs digital skills in the discharged of his or her duties will carry students along and learn better in an inclusive teaching and learning environment which depends on teachers' attitudes, curriculum content, interactive classroom communities and social culture on campus.
4. **Increase Investment in Education:** Nigeria need to increase investment in their education. Without investment, teachers' knowledge of ICTs as digital skills in business education will be minimal, since education without fund is meaningless. The United Nation Education and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) requirement is 26% of Annual Budget of any Country should be allocated to education have never been met by all successive Governments in Nigeria. This does not promote harmony in the education sector using the ICTs techniques.

Objectives of Business Education

Agbonlahor (2003) in Olumese (2008) opined that objectives of business education are the acquisition of technical skills and knowledge, attitudes, values and ethics which enable individuals to live productive lives and discharge their social duties for the betterment of life in society. In view of the above, business education teachers acquisition of digital skills in business education in Nigeria when employed will helped in reducing poverty, creating wealth and generating employment. These objectives of business education can better be summarized as follows:

1. To provide trained manpower in applied science, technology, commerce, particularly as sub-professional grades: Business education feed the economy with qualified staff competitiveness both on local and international labour market; ensure a match between the fast changing labour market and education technology system.
2. Business education enables young men and women to have intelligence understanding of the increasing complexity of technology: In the same vein, Fafunwa (2002) collaborated that vocational education was the attempt at making education relevant to all socio-economic realities of the nation and immediate community.
3. To provides technical skills necessary for agriculture, industrial, commercial and economic development: Business education give training and improving the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technical and other skill personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliance. It is designed to develop skills, abilities, attitudes and understanding work habits and appreciation, encompassing knowledge and information needed by workers to enter and make progress in employment on a useful and productive basis.



4. Business education ensures professional development of the population minority groups and creates employment opportunities for them: This is done through meeting the education demands of the population, support professional career development and social protection of individuals.

5. Business education foster appropriation of the peoples educational capacities with the new social-economic conditions to support self-employment and entrepreneurship: Government emphasis and recognition of business education, is further strengthened through the assistance rendered to young graduates of business education and entrepreneurship who are faced with the problem of finance and possibly how to set up business.

Meaning of Digital Skills; Unesco's definition of Digital skills is a range of abilities to use digital devices. Digital skills are Communication applications and networks to access and manage information. It enable people to create and share digital content, communicate and collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative self-fulfillment in life, learning, work, and social activities.

Integrating Digital Skills in Business Education

There are different ways teachers in business education carried out their tasks of imparting knowledge to students. Such as teach, implement and assess their courses which can be attributed to three main developments. First, the possibilities of ICT for business education are expanding on a daily basis. For example, ICT tools like online assessment, discussion forums, wikis, web-video conferencing or virtual worlds are available to everyone who wishes to use them. Research has highlighted that ICT tools can provide a rich and valuable learning experience for business students (e.g Belei, Noteborn & De Ruyter, 2009). The second development is characterised by changes in society in general, such as an increase in globalisation and individualism (Rienties & Tempelaar, 2009; Van der Wende, 2003) and the increased pressure on business schools to deliver high quality education to larger numbers of students with less public funding. Thirdly, research and evidence in business education has shown that traditional forms of education do not provide optimal learning experiences for business students. In the past, the transfer of teacher's knowledge to students was considered as a primary method of learning (Van den Bossche, Segers, Gijbels, & Dochy, 2004). Since the traditional methods leads to ill-equipped business graduates, an active approach to learning in education has become more important, whereby a teacher centred approach is replaced by a student-centred approach (Pence & Wulf, 2009). The role of the business education changes from a more product-oriented role (focusing on knowledge transfer learning outcomes, e.g examination) to a more process-oriented role (facilitating the development of the student's knowledge building during the course). Teachers in business education are challenged to understand and apply digital methods as well as to create a powerful learning environment where teachers and students take responsibility for their learning (Mishra & Kaehler, 2006).

Strategies Employed in Digital Skills in Business Education

After integrating the digital skills in Business education as a course of study, the teacher's required some strategies to carry out the programme in Nigeria education. These strategies, as



adopted from citizenship education (2003) will be discussed under the following headings. These include: (i) Formal Education (ii) Non-Formal Education (iii) Informal Education.

- (i) **Formal Education:** This aspect involved preparing people for the demanding role of business education in self-governing society. It is mandatory for all secondary schools in Nigeria curriculum to offered courses in business studies for the acquisition of skills for the world of work.
- (ii) **Non-Formal Education:** Business education can also be inculcated in our societies today, using Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and enlightens programmes.
- (iii) **Informal Education:** The different agents of socialization such as the home, church, peer group, school, community and mass media can help to impact business education.

In actualizing the above, the ICTs tools such as computers, teleconference, video conferencing, electronic mail, cyberspace and internet are used in carrying out these aforementioned programmes. Others are hypertext, video text, communication satellite; interactive cable television must be made available at all times.

Constraints of Using Digital Skills with Information Communication Technology (ICT)

In the actual sense of life, there are always short coming in one way or the other and ICT is not an exception. In this vein, Aylaagbe et al (2005) opined that constraints faced by teachers in attaining high level of competencies can be attributed to:

- (i) Inadequate or inappropriate training by teachers
- (ii) Lack of sufficient confidence to make use of technology in and out of classroom.
- (iii) Lack of hardware and inappropriate software.
- (iv) Lack of teachers and instructors.
- (v) Poor organisation of resources.

Above all, for the training to be effective, some issued need to be addressed such as pedagogical training, skills training on ICT, focus in initial teacher training. Also, teachers have no time to experiment with the technology, share their experiences with colleagues, and attend technology conferences, seminars and in-service training programmes.

Conclusion

In order to successfully implement teacher's acquisition of digital skills and the future of business education programmes, it is important to adjust the content of the business education in line with the technology selected and pedagogical approach used. This is confirmed by Isyaku, (2003) as opined that the approach to business education in educational institutions is not geared towards encouraging self-employment due to some structural inadequacies, lack of practical experiences and insensitivity to technological advancement. This is collaborated by Okebukola (2002), opined that the facilities required for teaching in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria are inadequate. Even the most basic of these are classrooms, academic programmes that required additional facilities like laboratories and workshops are grossly inadequate. The scenario before us is that these short



comings will obviously affects the coverage of course content and reduced the intensity of skills acquisition, both of which result in poor quality of students turn-out.

Suggestions:

In view of the constraints of teachers' acquisition of digital skills and the future of business education in Nigeria, the following suggestions are made:

- (i) Government through curriculum planners should amend and re-design the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education curricula to accommodate the use of digital skills in teaching and learning programmes.
- (ii) Business education teachers and students should be compulsorily provided with the needed infrastructure for teaching and learning to meet the global standards on the use of digital skills.
- (iii) Government should provide digital skills tools for teachers and encourage in-service training for teachers at all levels of education for them to eradicate the syndrome of "no time and no teachers" to replace those that actually need this knowledge while on training.
- (iv) Skilled technologists are needed to install and maintain Information Technology equipment. Vocational and Technical Education should be improved upon in the areas of curriculum development, provision of infrastructure and means of increasing peoples 'interest in VTE

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STAFF CATEGORIZATION IN THE NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY: IMPLICATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT FOR EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY

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Abstract

Staff categorization in the Nigerian University is meant to complement each other through their contrasting features so that, basic university functions are improved and completed seamlessly. Despite this intention, the diverse categories of staff disagree on matters of common interest while performing their duties. The dominant explanation of this disagreement referred to as conflict is the diversity of individual/group's backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. The disagreement results to counter productive work behaviours that debilitate individuals, teams and organizations in the long run. The author reviewed literature on staff categorization in the Nigerian University and the roles/societal expectations from the categories and, went ahead to identify problems areas among diverse staff categories in the Nigerian University. Strategies for improving the management of conflict among diverse categories of staff in the Nigerian University and the implication were also discussed. This gave rise to six recommendations given as suggestions among which is that, personality awareness by individuals and groups resulting to open-mindedness to opinions of others in order to address mutual hostility and all kinds of opposition and antagonistic interaction should be imbibed by the Nigerian University Staff. This will ensure that university processes, people skills and materials are properly integrated to give the designed service

Keywords: *staff categorization, Nigerian University, management of conflict, efficient service delivery*

Introduction

Universities by design have diverse categories of staff. According to Law Insider (n.d) a university staff means the university workforce who contributes in a broad array of positions in support of the university's mission. Law insider further assert that these staff are not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labour Standards Act (FLSA) and that they include all those employed on a permanent, temporary or contractual basis. Maurer (2009) opined that employee (staff) categorization is key planning function of the human resource department because it is important for future identification of needed resources and training. Universities have employees



which are categorized in groups because each possesses common features, defined by the type of work performed. The groups perform their duties within the job standards associated with job families and functions categorized into three by UCSC (2016) namely: operational & technical, professional and, supervisory & management. University Human Resources (2022) and UIOWA HR: (n.d) also stated that staff classified as exempt occupy managerial, administrative and professional positions while those on merit system include those contract and non-contract employees whose salary is determined by pay grades and steps listed for each merit system classification and; merit supervisory exempt/confidential staff exempted from collective bargaining because of their supervisory responsibility over other merit staff. Thus, universities all over the world have diverse categories of staff as well as employment groups and opportunities.

The diverse categorization of staff and employment groups and opportunities which is meant to ensure a seamless performance of the multiple roles expected of university is also found in universities in Nigeria. Both Lockwood (1979) and Ogunraku (2013) agree on such roles as teaching, research and public (community) service. However, like any organization where humans interact, conflict occurs as these groups carry out their legitimate function (John-Eke and Akintokunbo: 2020). Such conflict as perceived by Ejiogu in Ndum *and* Okey (2013) as the mutual hostility and all kinds of opposition and antagonistic interaction including disagreements or controversies about ideas, values, and ways of life. MSG (n.d) also defined conflict as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions. Conflict can be said to be a condition where two or more persons are unable to agree on matters of common interest such that the disagreement causes friction.

Disagreements arising from conflict in the University system could be triggered in situations described by Lockwood (1979) to include decision-taking processes by various decision-taking bodies, inadequate allocation of resources to the various groups due to poor funding and accountability processes for monies spent due to university's heavy dependence on public monies. Each of these actions including the major roles of universities mentioned earlier is carried out individually and/or collectively by diverse groups of staff hence as stated by CIPD (2020), conflicts are bound to occur because of the diversity of individual's experiences, backgrounds and perspective. Abdulkareem and Gabadeen (2015) also stated that the Nigerian University like any other public sector organization in the country is confronted with various problems including the management system through participatory decision-making, committee system and democratization of all policies and decisions which often manifest in role conflict among focal persons. Furthermore, Overton and Lowry (2013) opined that conflict cannot be avoided but can be managed. Thus, there is need for the management of conflict among the varying category of staff in the universities for efficient service delivery.

The management of conflict in organisations like the Nigerian University is particularly necessary because conflict is associated with significant cost to organizations (Overton and Lowry; 2013). It has positive and negative impacts and according to Janns e tal in Overton and Lowry (2013) and CIPD (2020), poor management of the negative impact could obstruct the achievement of set goals. Osakede, Ijimakinwa, Adesanya, and Ojo (2018) also stated that management of



conflict are measures put in place towards managing conflict through constructive action in resolving organizational conflict. MSG (n.d) also defined conflict management as the steps undertaken to prevent conflict at the right time as well as efforts to its effective and smooth resolution. In this paper, management of conflict among the varying category of staff in the universities entails all the processes employed to control the impact of disagreement and frictions arising from conflict. These processes would culminate in efficient service delivery in the university.

According to an online document from the OECD team led by Nick Thijs, service delivery is any contact with the public administration during which customers including citizens, residents or enterprise seek or provide data, handle their affairs or fulfill their duties. The team asserts that these services should be delivered in an effective, predictable, reliable and customer-friendly manner. Lovelock and Wright in Martins and Ledimo (2015) also described service delivery as the actual delivery of a service and products to the customer or clients therefore, is concerned with the where, when and how a service product is delivered to the customer and whether this is fair or unfair in nature. Nigerian universities are largely public sector organizations where Martins and Ledimo (2015) asserts its service components are a combination of processes, people skills and materials that must be appropriately integrated to result in the planned or designed service. Thus, efficient service delivery is a necessity which can be actualized through a smooth and healthy working relationship. Smooth and healthy working relationship is needed among university staff hence, there is need to foster an integrative team of workers devoid of conflict situations which Kumar (2020) stated arises from many factor including clash of egos, competition, conflict of interest, power struggle and professional jealousy. In addition, university stakeholders especially, students who are primary customers in universities deserve to be served right. This quality of service can be achieved in a safe and serene environment without counter productive work behaviours that debilitate individuals, teams as well as organizations with time. The researcher therefore writes on ‘Staff Categorization in the Nigerian University: Implications on the Management of Conflict for Efficient Service Delivery’.

Staff Categorization in the Nigerian University

In the Nigerian University, two basic categories covering the job standards associated with job families and functions mentioned in the introduction exist. This includes teaching and non-teaching also, referred to as academic and non-academic staff. (NPE; 2014: UNN Calendar; 2017: UI Staff Information Handbook; 2017). Being an institution that gives education after secondary education and similar to staff categorization in universities globally, the two groups can be further classified using numerous criteria so that the outcome has small groups as a honeycomb. Ideally, each group should complement each other through their contrasting features so that basic university functions are improved and completed. Their categorization is therefore meant to ensure a seamless performance of the multiple roles expected of universities which Ogunraku (2013) listed as teaching, research and public (community) service. Efficient delivery of these roles requires a coordinated broad-based group of staff with comparable job responsibilities because they form a vibrant asset upon which the university framework thrives. These staff are the basic supporting part of the university system and is structured according to the organs, departments, units and offices



available in the system. The organs, departments, units and offices further determine the nature of work performed in it. Thus, universities in Nigeria have two basic staff categories namely: teaching, including academic staff and, non-teaching, consisting administrative and technical staff. (UNN Calendar: 2017; Lawal & Atueyi: 2018) with each category classified into many more groups.

The categorization into many different groups provides for adequate functioning for the actualization of the essence of a university especially the mission-critical and non-mission-critical functions categorized by Maurer (2009). It is worthy to note that the sub-division into academic, administrative and technical staff includes those occupying managerial, administrative, professional positions as well as contract and non-contract employees and that these staff can be employed and/or appointed on a permanent/regular, temporary, contract, visiting, part-time and acting basis (UNN: 2017). These categories of staff provide service in accordance with the department/organ/unit they are attached to meet expectations society has of it. In Nigeria, apart from the primary assignment of all universities including teaching, research and public (community) service (Lockwood 1979; Ogunraku2013) these expectations are enshrined in the NPE (2014) for university education as:

- i. Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation.
- ii. Making professional courses to reflect our national requirements.
- iii. Making all students, as part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge and nationalism.

Staffs are further expected to disseminate their research results to government and industries, inculcate community spirit in the students through projects and action research and expose students in technically-based courses to relevant working environment. These expectations are enormous and cannot be adequately accomplished by one group of staff rather, diverse categories of staff need to partner to meet these expectations. Thus, the specific role of each category of staff in the university need to be identified so as to reveal their areas of partnership, challenges that may arise in the partnership and strategies for its handling.

Role of the Diverse Categories of Staff in the Nigerian University

Academic staff: ISCED (2003) defined an academic staff as personnel whose primary assignment is instruction, research or public service; one that hold an academic rank with titles such as professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer or the equivalent of any of these academic ranks and that the category includes personnel with other titles like dean, director, associate dean, assistant dean, chair or head of department if their principal activity is instruction and research. According to UNN Regulations Governing Conditions of Service(n.d), an academic staff includes all persons holding appointments as members of the teaching or research staff of the University and whose primary duty is teaching or research or both while, UI Staff Information Handbook (2017) opined that, this category of staff means all persons holding appointments as members of the teaching and/or research staff of the university and whose primary duty is teaching and/or research including the professional library staff of the status of Librarian II and above. These definitions reveal the role



of an academic staff also referred to as academic personnel and faculty member to be that of generation and dissemination of knowledge for utilization by the society. The cardinal role of an academic staff derives from the major purposes of any university which is teaching, research and community service hence, the academic staff is employed to instruct, teach, research and provide public (community) service. UNN Regulations Governing Conditions of Service (n.d), explains public service as service which ranks as such for the purpose of the Federal Pension Scheme.

Administrative staff: This category of staff occupy non-faculty positions Lawinsider (n.d) and are also referred to as academic administrators. JSTOR (2012) in Wikipedia Encyclopedia stated that administrative staff are a branch of university employees responsible for the maintenance and supervision of the institution. Lawinsider (n.d) also asserts that administrative staff are professional and administrative personnel of the university other than teaching faculty with administrative duties subject to the types of appointments that are primarily associated with higher education institutions or their administrations and, that persons whose duties include both academic and administrative responsibilities shall be considered administrative staff to the extent of the administrative appointment. According to Fowler (2015), administrative staff is a body of professional services staff. Eurydice (2022) also stated that this category of staff comprises civil servants belonging to administrative bodies and various levels of public administrations. Thus, similar to the academic staff, the role of an administrative staff in the university also derives from the major purposes of university.

According to Lawal and Atueyi (2018), these roles are recognized by the universities and centres on university administration and, cannot be filled by just anyone. Scholars like Nakai (2014) earlier opined that administrative staff in universities possesses practical knowledge with a deep and long experience in academic administration and that their role is currently an important issue in higher education policies including the promotion of educational management in universities. Fowler (2015) also assert that administrative staff ensure that the enormous growth of accountability, auditing and reporting needs in the university are satisfied ; that they generate income used to support the core activity of the university and that they work collaboratively to ensure that academic time is reserved for academic pursuits. Eurydice (2022) stated that administrative staff responsibility include support, assistance and advising of academic authorities; management and supervision of everything related to human resources, administrative organization, financial affairs, information technology, archives, libraries, information and general services as well as any other administrative management process. JSTOR also stated that some administrative staff may have joint responsibilities however, their key broad responsibilities include admissions; supervision of academic affairs for example; hiring, promotion, tenure and evaluation with faculty input where appropriate; maintenance of official records, maintenance of audit and financial flows; maintenance and construction of campus buildings; safety and security of people and property on campus, supervision and support of office computers and network; fundraising from private individual and foundation; research administration; public affairs and student services.

Technical Staff: According to Lawinsider (n.d), university technical staff are persons employed by the University and categorized in terms of statues as members of the technical staff to conduct



general clerical, laboratory and field courses, and to assist in the conduct of lectures, examinations and research of the university. They form part of the non-teaching staff and according to Fowler (2015) account for the professional services grouping while Lawal and Atueyi (2018) reported that their role cannot be filled by just anyone. The university technical staff work in partnership and collaborate with other category of staff to achieve the university mission especially, using their technical knowledge to help the teaching faculty in the area of skill inculcation through laboratories, workshops, media units, counselors for rendering guidance to the students among others. In the Nigerian University, this category of staff occupies positions like technologists and technical officer to provide support for research and teaching to other category of staff especially the academic. According to Vere (2013), technicians are often a department's most experienced fixture; they provide essential technical duties and are the first port of call for both staff and students in an academic department; drive innovation through knowledge transfer activities and educate technicians of the future. Fowler (2015) also stated that technical staff accounted for the professional services grouping and are vital to science teaching and research while, Jones (n.d) stated that the university technician play a vital role in the kind of experiential learning emphasized in the university and that these staff has assumed greater significance as pressure on academic roles has increased.

Problem Areas among Diverse Staff Categories in the Nigerian University

The diverse categories of staff encounter a plethora of problems in the process of rendering efficient service. These problems culminate to conflict among and between individuals and groups and, if not properly managed could become university-wide. Doubtlessly, such condition would hinder the attainment of university essence which Ugwu in Anyebe (2014) states are to advance themselves in academic programmes, research and innovations towards academic excellence and world-class status with a current trend that emphasizes reputation and recognition including ranking of universities as key performance indicators. Quite often, these problems derive from frequent causes of conflict which several researchers including Overton & Lowry (2013) asserts are lack of clarity with expectations or guidelines, poor communication, lack of clear jurisdiction, personality differences, conflicts of interest and changes within the organization (university).

Each of these factors poses a lot of challenge to efficient service delivery by the varied category of staff in the Nigerian University especially, where there is individual conflict referred to as "man against self" by Lamb in Tabitha and Florence (2019). Individuals form the groups that are categorized as staff and conflict arising from these individuals is described by Kodiakal, Rahiman and Pakkeerrappa (2014) as conflict in the intrapersonal level. Such conflict can be seen through emotions like anger, frustration, depression, aggression and withdrawal from others because such individual disagrees with others on how a job or task should be executed, has different perception about work in the university including lack of understanding about the scope and parameters of the job as well as the goals and priorities to pursue referred to as role ambiguity by McCormick and Cotter (2013), engage in pull him down syndrome (not wanting to collaborate with others) or lacks the skill required for the job.



These factors also find expression in interpersonal conflicts existing between workers of the same hierarchy or category. In the Nigerian university, opportunity for equivalent status/rank exist for the different category of staff for example, a senior lecturer (academic staff) and a principal assistant registrar (administrative staff) however, according to Ojutiku (1986) the Nigerian university organizational structure places decision-making powers in the hands of academics with little direct participation by other staff groups. Sometimes staff from a particular group is meant to supervise staff from another with the result that there is a display of behaviours like lack of respect so that the quality of working relationships are reduced; negative feelings towards one another arising from role conflict referred to by McCormick and Cotter (2013), as competing and incompatible demands placed on an employee, for example, being both a supervisor and a friend or the demands of providing good service while striving to reduce costs; differences in personality style or working including management style, competition for recognition and positions of authority and the display of eye service.

The factors can further be seen in inter-group conflict involving differences between two or more groups like the academic, administrative and technical staff existing in the university. These categories of staff suffers from suspicion and animosity because of lack of mutual respect and confidence between the groups; bullying, intimidation and rivalry for positions for example some of the positions occupied currently by academic staff as deans and directors were originally meant for the non-teaching (administrative staff) in the scheme of service; pressure from excess workload resulting to anxiety and role stress which Igharia and Shayo (2003) asserts is as a result of role ambiguity and/or role conflict; inability to manage performance in a systematic way; non-inclusive workplace environment built on acceptance and celebration of every group because as Ojutiku (1986) stated the university organizational structure places decision-making powers in the hands of academics with little direct participation by other groups of staff and, lack of transparency and accountability.

Strategies for Improving the Management of Conflicts among Diverse Categories of Staff in the Nigerian University

- Nurture self awareness in relation to one's physical and emotional reaction to incidents involving conflict. Individuals as well as the varied categories of staff working in the university should recognize how they react physically and emotionally to various conflict situations and allow themselves to develop mentally and morally to overcome the negative consequences arising from their reaction. This consciousness will help them become open-minded to the ideas and perspectives of others and so promote positive outcomes of conflict (Quinn e tal in Overton & Lowry 2013).
- Teach the necessary communication skills required in the workplace. This is vital in the modern workplace where people with diversity of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives work together to achieve a common goal. The teaching can be held during orientation of new staff and capacity building sessions to better habits exhibited by the varied category of staff working in



the university when faced with difficult issues at the workplace. It will also impact these staff's perception of conflict as well as relieve the negative results.

- Build a neutral, safe and supportive working environment. Such environment respects and treats all participants fairly. It involves using a tone of voice, words and facial expressions that convey respect for others as human beings and having the common goal of problem solving. Where these exist, the university including the diverse categories of staff will naturally enjoy the confidence of each other's intention. The varied categories of staff will also be comfortable that people will be honest, share information and keep private information confidential as well as have confidence in the abilities that every one of them will deliver on promises.
- Maintain an inclusive structure that actively engages all categories of staff. Organizational structure in universities of global standard is clearly defined and, since Nigerian universities are striving for academic excellence and world-class status, it should practice same. This is important because the university ranking in this era is not restricted to achievement from academic staff alone but, that of other categories of staff. Moreover, according to Fowler (2015) universities are complex organizations with a wide range of stakeholders to satisfy. There should therefore be an active engagement of all categories of staff in the area of their employment and necessary partnership and collaboration between the groups should be promoted. This will ensure services that enhance stakeholders' experience and sustain accountability as well as scrutiny required from practitioners in the university system. It will also solve the challenges arising from role ambiguity, role conflict and role stress experienced among the diverse categories of staff in the university.

Implications on the Management of Conflict in the Nigerian University

- Individuals and groups working in the Nigerian University should develop awareness about their personality and be open-minded to the diversity of opinions common among people from diverse experiences, competences and background.
- Requisite communication skills for working in the university should be taught to new entrants including the organization of employee relations training courses/capacity building seminars and workshops for every category of staff in the university by the University Management.
- Individuals and groups working in the university should avail themselves of the opportunities provided for employee relations trainings/capacity building seminars and workshops by the management.
- Working climate that promotes respect for every cadre of staff, honesty, information sharing and confidence in the ability of each individual and/or group of staff should be established by the university management.
- Active engagement of all categories of staff in relation to the individual/group's terms of employment should be encouraged by both the university management and the supervising ministries/departments.



- Sufficient funds, equipment and tools required for work by each category of staff should be provided by the ministry/department responsible for supervising/regulating the university and its workforce.

Conclusion

The university staff irrespective of his/her categorization is meant to contribute in a broad array of positions in support of the university mission. This broad contribution may not be realized because of unavoidable disagreements that occur among and between the varying categories of staff when they perform their legitimate function. In this paper, the author identified these staff categories and their role/what society expects from them, problem areas among diverse staff categories, strategies for improving the management of such conflict situations and implications on the management of conflict with particular reference to the Nigerian University. Consequently, six suggestions believed would improve the management of conflict for efficient service delivery was made in line with the strategies for a seamless performance of the multiple roles expected of universities.

Suggestions

- Individuals and groups working in the Nigerian University should develop an awareness about their personality and so encourage themselves to be open-minded to the diversity of opinions common among people from diverse experiences, competences and background. This will reduce the mutual hostility and all kinds of opposition and antagonistic interaction including disagreements or controversies about ideas, values, and ways of life.
- Necessary communication skills required for work in the university should be taught to new entrants to work including the organization of employee relations training courses/capacity building seminars and workshops for every category of staff in the university by the University Management. This will enable staff acquire new insights, experiences and perceptions about acceptable best practices and skill for their job as well as promote professionalism among them.
- Individuals and groups working in the university should avail themselves of the opportunities provided for employee relations trainings/capacity building seminars and workshops by the management. This will help them recognize and appreciate the scope and parameters of different jobs in the university and know the goals and priorities they should pursue while working.
- Working climate that promotes respect for every cadre of staff, honesty, information sharing and confidence in the ability of each individual and/or group of staff should be established by the university management. This will promote the interdependence of these staff and ensure that university processes, people skills and materials are properly integrated to give the designed service.
- Active engagement of all categories of staff in relation to the individual/group's terms of employment should be encouraged by both the university management and the supervising ministries/departments. This will result to inclusiveness in the educational management of the



university and enable the nation to avert significant cost associated with conflict between the diverse categories of staff.

- Sufficient funds, equipment and tools required for work by each category of staff should be provided by the ministry/department responsible for supervising/regulating the university and its workforce. This will help to promote educational management in the universities and provide feedback through accountability, auditing and reporting.

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EVALUATION OF ACCOUNTING COMPETENCIES OF BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

The study was conducted to evaluate the competencies of business educators in Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study. The study adopted Evaluative Research Design (ERD). The population of the study comprises 60 business education lecturers consisting of 32 lecturers from the Department of Business Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and 28 lecturers from the Department of Business Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. No sample was taken since the population was of a manageable size. The instrument for data collection was a 24-items structured questionnaire designed on a 4-point scale. Three experts consisting of two accounting lecturers from the Department of Business Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka and one from Enugu State University of Science and Technology validated the instrument. The reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha coefficient which yielded reliability indices of .82% and .85% with a grand mean of .84%. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The result of the findings revealed that Business education lecturers do not possess cutting edge accounting skills such as proficiency in accounting software. It was also revealed that business educators highly possess cutting edge accounting aptitude e.g., professional integrity. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended among others a curriculum development and reform that will accommodate the cutting-edge accounting skills such as accounting software packages, Advanced Excel, Big Data, Machine Learning and Blockchain application in accounting in order to ensure global competitive advantage for business education products.

Keywords: Skills, Aptitude, Cutting Edge, Evaluative Research Design (ERD).

Introduction

Education that is needed in this contemporary/21st century is one that can assist the learner to be self-employed and to also work in the modern office which is characterized by high-tech devices. Competency is the ability to use skill or set of skills by an individual to properly perform a specific job. Osinem and Ugwuoke in Baba, Victor-Igwe, and Baba (2015) stated that competency is



an essential knowledge and skills obtainable in a profession and those which the professionals in the field must possess and be able to demonstrate at optimal level of acquisition and functioning. Encarta Dictionary (2009) defines competence as the ability to do something well, measured against a standard; especially ability acquired through specialized training which is mostly acquired by undergoing trainings in business education. Business education involves the teaching of cutting edge skills and aptitude that are in high demands in the industry.

Business Education is a programme of instruction that prepares students to take up their roles in enterprise as entrepreneurs and employers. Business education is an option of vocational and technical education that is designed to prepare students for the world of work and for self-reliance (Nfam, & Ntino, 2018). It is a programme of study that equips the students with relevant skills for self and societal development. It is education that prepares students for the world of work and the world of business. Business education is education for and about training in business skills, competencies required for use in business offices, clerical occupations and that which gives occupational identity (Nnaji, 2014, Ehirheme, 2014, Obayi, Abuka and Okeke 2014, and Chigbuson, 2014). Globally, business education courses are aimed at equipping the individuals with knowledge, skills, vocations and attitudes needed to manage personal business as well as function effectively in the economic system (Njoku, 2015). Ayelotan and Sholagbade (2014) opine that business education is a programme of instruction which consists of many parts: the Office Education (presently known as Office Technology Management), Marketing, Accounting, and Management. But for the sake of this paper only the accounting components of Business Education shall be examined in details.

In this present computer age, a good application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) competencies are needed for a successful business education programme and sustainable development. Nwosu (2003), identified the benefits of ICT competencies to business education graduates to include: development of multiple sensory delivery, increased self-expression, active and co-operative learning, critical thinking, communication skills, multiple cultural learning through teleconferencing, internet and telecommunication utilization. In most tertiary institutions today, large amount of data and information are created, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated due to improved and advanced information technology. The application of these new technology gadgets in educational institutions have resulted in the development of cheaper, accurate, and more flexible method of handling information. Research revealed that most business educators possess little or no useful ICT skills to be used in the world of work. Furthermore, Ezeani (2008), identified the following areas in which training should be given to business educators: Accounting knowledge, ICT skills, cash management competencies, marketing knowledge and Risk management skills.

With particular reference to emerging workplace technologies, Bhat (2013) noted that we live in a global world where technology, especially information and communication technology, is changing the manner in which businesses create, strife and capture value, how and where we work, and how we interact and communicate. Houston (2017) presented some technologies that are transforming the very foundations of global business and the organizations that drive it: cloud and mobile computing, big data and machine learning, sensors and intelligent manufacturing, advanced robotics and drones, and clean-energy technologies. These technologies are not just helping people



to do things better and faster, but they are enabling profound changes in the ways that work is done in organizations. Another serious scenario is the fact that due to the intense ravaging of corona virus the world can never be same. Ordu (2020) opined that covid-19 pandemic has changed the social bearing of both humans and organizations, and this has totally impacted skills delivery in some tertiary institution in Enugu state.

Skills are specific learned abilities needed to perform a given job well. According to Maryville University (2021) relevant skills for the present and the future include Cloud computing, Blockchain Technology, proficiency in using accounting software programs etc. Other examples may include strictly adhering to regulations, procedures and practices e.g. IFRS Regulations. There is a distinction, however, to be made between hard skills and soft skills. Whereas a hard skill is a technical and quantifiable skill that a professional may demonstrate through their specific qualifications and professional experiences, a soft skill is a non-technical skill that is less rooted in specific vocations. An example of a hard skill, then, may be computer programming or proficiency in a foreign language, whereas a soft skill may be time management or verbal communication (McNeill, 2021).

Examples of competencies that will be evaluated in this work include aptitudes such as Professional integrity and improvement of business processes. Competencies effectively explain how an individual's behaviours bring about the desired results in their role. As with skills, there are various types of competencies – including core competencies, which are those that any successful employee requires to rise through an organization. It is something that could potentially set you apart from every other candidate.”(McNeill, 2021). Previous studies established that while core competencies in marketing include innovation expertise, speed and flexibility in the marketplace, superior product development skills, cutting edge competencies in accounting consists of measurement analysis, interpretation, communication, and interpersonal skills as well as evaluation (Harvard Business Review, 2021).

Evaluation is defined as the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. There are three important points in regard to this definition. First, evaluation is conceived of as a systematic, continuing process. Second, the evaluation process includes three basic steps: the delineating of questions to be answered and information to be obtained, the obtaining of relevant information, and the providing of information to decision makers so that they can use it to make decisions and thereby to improve ongoing programs. Third, evaluation is conceived of as a process to serve decision making. Hence, proper implementation of the CIPP Model requires understanding of educational decision making and procedures for projecting decisions to be serviced. The acronym CIPP was derived from the first letters of the names of these four kinds of evaluation: Context, Input, Process, and Product Evaluation.

Therefore, this study will be anchored on the CIPP Model of Stufflebeam with concentration on the last 2 PP's, that is, Process and Product. Specifically, process evaluation component monitors the project process and potential procedural barriers, and identifies needs for project adjustments while the product evaluation component measures, interprets, and judges project outcomes and interprets their merit, worth, significance, and probity (Zhang, et al., 2011). In this paper, the



processes employed by business education lecturers to produce competent graduate with cutting edge skills and aptitude shall be examined.

Skills and Aptitude of Business Educators in The Past

There have always been reforms in education in Nigeria and its origin dates back to the nineteenth century as a result of the industrial revolution that made the Europeans who were in search of raw materials and markets for their finished products to come to Nigeria. To effectively achieve this, the Europeans introduced Christianity and Western Education, whose curriculum was merely on reading and memorization of the bible. They drastically changed the system of informal traditional education that already existed in the country before they came. The recipients of this education could only be employed in white-collar jobs as interpreters and office helps.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 introduced the dual themes of responding to economic demands for a trained workforce with marketable skills including individuals with special needs. All the educational policies introduced thereafter had the mandate of increased standard in vocational, technical occupation skills. It would be recalled that the first move towards the introduction of vocational business education into the mainstream of the Nigerian education system could be traced to the establishment of Yaba Technical Institute in 1963. The Ashby Commission in 1960 recommended for the development of the Technical and Commercial Business and for the award of the City and Guilds Institute and the Royal Society of Arts. Efforts to strengthen vocational business education were made by the Federal Government in 1962 eventually culminated into the New National Policy on Education. This policy brought about the 6-3-3-4 system of education, which is six years in the primary school, three years in the junior secondary school, three years in the senior secondary and four years in the tertiary institution. (FRN, 2013).

Business Education actually began as apprenticeship training. In other words, people then were learning trades under some other person who had the knowledge and the skill for the trade, or who was an expert or had experienced in a particular area of trade. And these trades include: Bookkeeping, and Farming, and Sales among others. Although the duration of this training was not the same depending on the type of trade, most of the time, the duration was dependent on how fast the apprentice can learn the skill. For example, sole traders then used to take apprentices for the purpose of assisting in the sale of wears via the learning of how this product was made. Some of these skills are carried out and as well, acquired via apprenticeship training. So as time went by, the apprentice was able to gain his freedom after learning the trade and then became either a salesman or a bookkeeper. (Athanasius, 2019).

In Nigeria, business education started in private business schools and private commercial schools. Some of these schools were recognized and approved by the Nigerian government. Nonetheless, the earliest business education during colonial Nigeria was in the form of on-the-job, that is, after primary or post-primary education. It was then believed that once a person completes secondary education, he can be trained on the job so as to acquire knowledge and skills in office occupation, apart from in typewriting and in shorthand areas of secretarial occupations. That was why graduates of secondary schools were employed automatically as clerical officers once they applied and were interviewed.



As the demands for typewriting and shorthand arises, private schools, known as commercial schools were also established for the purpose of teaching typewriting and shorthand. These were the schools that graduated typists and stenographers then into the civil service and other private business organizations or companies in Nigeria. These schools were known to have prepared candidates for RSA, that is, the Royal Society of Arts examinations. Candidates, who succeeded in the examinations, were employed by the Nigerian government and business organizations. Majority of these employees were typists, while others were stenographers. And because these groups of employees usually benefited the most from the commercial training schools and even in government, many small scale private organizations were also established for the purpose of assisting in teaching mainly typewriting and shorthand.

Skills and Aptitudes of Business Educators for the Present and the Future

Although, there is paucity of researches and literature especially on business educators' present and future skills and aptitudes, however, some authors have made attempts to highlight future technologies and skills required by accounting professionals. For instance, Maryville University (2021) in empirical research entitled: The future of accounting: demand and evolving technology, highlighted the following skills needed by business educators/accountants:

Cloud Computing

A significant technology trend is working in the cloud. The cloud allows instant access to resources, such as data and computing capabilities. An important advantage of a cloud-based system is the continual updating of information, which allows accountants and clients to analyze data and make decisions based on cutting-edge information. Additionally, according to the *Journal of Accountancy*, cloud-based technology can also ensure “constant monitoring, rather than intermittent analysis,” whenever information on the system is updated.

Cloud computing is experiencing rapid growth as new intelligent technologies - such as the internet of things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning - are integrated into the cloud, according to *Forbes*. As these technologies become more commonplace, the future of accounting is looking decidedly cloud-based.

Automated Accounting Tasks

Labor and time-intensive facets of accounting such as audits, tax preparation, banking, and payroll - are quickly becoming fully automated. As the application of AI to create self-learning systems continues to be integrated into accounting tasks, technological systems will take on the repetitive and time-consuming jobs, leaving the analytical and managerial tasks to humans. For example, major software vendors, such as Intuit, Sage, OneUp, and Xero, offer automated data entry and reconciliation options using AI and machine learning technologies in company bookkeeping, according to *Forbes*. Another example is the use of robotic process automation (RPA) to reduce processing times for audits and contracts down to weeks instead of months, according to the *CPA Journal*. As *Forbes* explains, larger firms using RPA AI integration have “increased efficiency and higher-level services,” compared with smaller, non-AI competitors.



Blockchain Technology

Another trend impacting the demand for accountants in the future is blockchain technology, a computer-based recording system that uses crypto currency within a user-to-user network. While blockchain may have gained popularity due to bitcoin — a digital currency in which a record of transactions is maintained and new units of currency are generated independent of a bank — the technology has progressed substantially. The attractiveness of blockchain for accounting lies in “the possibility of a new type of accounting ledger — one that can be continuously updated and verified without the threat of being altered or corrupted,” *Accounting Today* stated that blockchain enables users to access ledgers in real time, as well as create smart contracts and record transactions, it’s no surprise the system is catching the notice of accountants. In fact, many accounting firms already implement blockchain, including the Big Four — EY, PwC, Deloitte, and KPMG.

Accounting Competencies

Accounting competencies are the technical competencies of the profession that add value to business and contribute to a prosperous society. They include: Risk Assessment, Analysis and Management, Measurement Analysis and Interpretation, IFRS Reporting, Accounting Research and Systems and Process Management, Accuracy, Financial Monitoring & Analysis, Decision Making, Communication and Interpersonal Skills, Mastering time management, Lifelong Learning (Hohbein, 2017).

Problem Statement

We live in an ever dynamic society affected by the impact of globalization. Technological changes have become the norm especially in the industrial and corporate world. These changes come with emerging workplace skills and aptitude of which the Nigerian educational sector is usually not prepared for, which has resulted in recycling olds skills and aptitude in our educational institutions. The rampant mismatch of aptitude and skills needed in the world of work and the traditional skills and aptitude possess by business education lecturers have resulted in unemployment and frustration for their products (business education/accounting graduates). This is a true reflection of the popular saying that “no one can give what he does not have. Consequently, the influx of graduates of accounting education yearly into the labour market with limited hope for gainful employment has become a worrisome experience especially in Nigeria. This unusual trend has been attributed to lack of cutting edge accounting skills and aptitudes prevalent among the accounting education lecturers.

However, the right question will be what are those emerging skills and aptitudes that should be acquired by business educators that will be the solution to the aforementioned problems? This is the main thrust of this study. Hence, the study will be an evaluation of the process and product of the Business Educators of the selected universities in Enugu State in the light of the current impact of globalization on workplace requirement.



Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study is to evaluate accounting competencies of Business Educators in Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The extent to which lecturers of accounting education in universities in Enugu State possess cutting edge accounting skills.
2. The extent to which lecturers of accounting education in universities in Enugu State possess cutting edge accounting aptitude.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do lecturers of accounting education in universities in Enugu State possess cutting edge accounting skills?
2. To what extent do lecturers of accounting education in universities in Enugu State possess cutting edge accounting aptitude?

Methodology

The study was carried out in two universities in Enugu State, namely: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). An evaluative research design (ERD) was adopted for the study. Evaluative design is considered appropriate for this study because the researcher intended to determine the extent of possessiveness of cutting edge accounting skills and aptitudes among business education lecturers of the universities studied. Two research questions guided the study. The questionnaire was structured on a 4-point rating scale which ranges from 4-1 (“Very Highly Possessed = 4”, “Highly Possessed = 3”, Moderately Possessed = 2”, “Not Possessed = 1”). The instrument of data collection for this study was a 20 items structured questionnaire titled “Evaluation of Accounting Competencies of Business Educators Questionnaire (EACBEQ). This instrument was considered appropriate to determine the extent of possessiveness of cutting edge Accounting skills and aptitude which by extension could serve as a feedback for improving the contents and instructional delivery methods and techniques in Business Education/Accounting. The whole population was used since they are too small for sampling 60 Business Education/Accounting lecturers. Three experts consisting of two accounting lecturers from the Department Business Education, UNN, and one from ESUT validated the instrument. The reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha which yielded a reliability index of .82% and .85% with a grand mean of .84%. The researchers and two (2) research assistants administered copies of the questionnaires to the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation with the aid of SPSS analytical software.

**Results****Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Accounting Education Lecturers in Enugu State (UNN and ESUT) on the Extent they Possess Cutting Edge Accounting Skills N=60**

S/N	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1.	Proficiency in the use of accounting software e.g. sage 50, QuickBooks etc.	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
2	Proficiency in Advanced Excel	1.12	0.42	Not Possessed
3	Application of Cloud Computing knowledge in accounting.	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
4	Application of Big Data knowledge in accounting.	1.08	0.33	Not Possessed
5	Application of Block Chain Technology in accounting.	1.05	0.22	Not Possessed
6	Application of Machine Learning knowledge in accounting.	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
7	Application artificial intelligence in accounting.	1.07	0.31	Not Possessed
8	Application of Robotic Process Automation (RPA).	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
9	Preparation and interpretation of financial statement.	1.50	0.45	Moderately Possessed
10	Mathematics and deductive reasoning ability.	1.50	0.81	Moderately Possessed
11	Microsoft Certification Program (MCP) for finance professionals.	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
12	Critical Thinking.	1.17	0.49	Not Possessed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	1.11	0.25	Not Possessed

\bar{X} Note: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The mean of the items in Table 1 ranged from 1.00 to 1.50 with a grand mean of 1.11, which is below the 2.50 cut off point. This implies that accounting education lecturers do not possess so many of the above mentioned cutting edge Accounting Skills. The standard deviation ranged from 0.00 – 0.81 showing that respondents were close in their ratings.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Accounting Education Lecturers in Enugu State (UNN and ESUT) on the Extent they Possess Cutting Edge Accounting Aptitude N=60

S/N	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	REMARK
1.	Accuracy	2.02	0.29	Moderately Possessed
2	Professional Integrity	3.63	0.66	Very Highly Possessed
3	Mastering Time Management	3.20	0.61	Highly Possessed
4	Risk assessment, analysis and management	1.97	0.18	Moderately Possessed
5	Measurement analysis and interpretation	2.93	0.36	Highly Possessed
6	Accounting Research	3.00	0.00	Highly Possessed
7	Hitting deadlines set by management	2.40	0.49	Moderately Possessed
8	Financial monitoring and analysis	2.07	0.25	Moderately Possessed
9	Decision making	2.50	0.50	Highly Possessed



10	Communication and Interpersonal skill	3.43	0.62	Highly Possessed
11	IFRS Reporting Standard	1.00	0.00	Not Possessed
12	Lifelong Learning (Personal development/Improvement)	3.90	0.54	Very Highly Possessed
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.87	0.38	Moderately Possessed

_Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The mean of the items in table 2 ranged from 1.00 – 3.90 with a grand mean of 2.87, which is above the 2.50 cut off point. This implies that the Accounting Education lecturers possess the above-mentioned cutting-edge accounting aptitudes. The standard deviation ranged from 0.00 – 0.66 showing that respondents were close in their ratings.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of research question 1 revealed that Accounting Education lecturers do not possess cutting edge accounting skills in the following areas: accounting software, advanced excel, application of cloud computing, big data, artificial intelligence, block chain technology, machine learning, robotics process automation, Microsoft certification program, critical thinking. This finding is supported by Bayerlein and Thompson (2017) in Ewa Banasik & Christene Jubb (2021) that accounting graduates are likely to possess knowledge and skills that enable them to carry out traditional tasks but their broader cutting edge skills are not well developed.

The finding of research question 2 revealed that accounting education lecturers possess cutting edge accounting competencies in the following areas: Professional Integrity, Mastering Time Management, Measurement analysis and interpretation, Accounting Research, Decision making, Communication and Interpersonal skill and Lifelong Learning. However, they do not possess cutting edge accounting competencies in the following areas: Accuracy, risk assessment and analysis, hitting deadlines set by management, financial monitoring and analysis and IFRS reporting standards. The findings disprove the finding of (Conrod, 2010) in Sylvestre, Uwizeyemungu, Jacques, Bertrand and Poba-Nzaou (2020) that competency frameworks adopted by professional accounting bodies have traditionally and clearly reflected the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). However, the findings are in agreement with study by Sylvestre, Uwizeyemungu, Jacques Bertrand and Poba-Nzaou (2020) who confirmed that one of the most required aptitudes include organizational performance/analysis measurement.

Conclusion

The study determines the extent to which Accounting Education lecturers of UNN and ESUT possess cutting edge accounting skills and aptitudes needed in the process and production of global competitive accounting graduates for the ever dynamic labour market. The study revealed that accounting education lecturers do not possess cutting edge accounting skills such as proficiency in the use of accounting software and advanced excel, application of cloud computing in accounting etc. However, the study also revealed that the lecturers highly possess cutting edge accounting



aptitudes in the following areas: Measurement analysis and interpretation, Professional Integrity and accounting research etc.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Business Education curriculum development and reform should be structured in a way to accommodate the cutting edge accounting skills such as modules on Accounting software, Advanced Excel, Big Data, Machine Learning and Blockchain application in accounting in order to ensure global competitive advantage for Business Education products.
2. Lecturers of accounting education should be sent on compulsory courses on cutting edge accounting skills and they should also personally improve themselves in those areas.
3. All accounting lecturers in Business Education department should be mandated to comply with the use of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in their teaching of accounting.

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ALERTNESS AS PREDICTORS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN EDO STATE

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Abstract

It becomes essential to look for alternative employment opportunities by starting new businesses that may address society's concerns in an environment marked by rising levels of social problems and unemployment. The current study focused on entrepreneurial education and alertness as predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. To direct the investigation, four research questions were posed. Three hypotheses were developed and evaluated at the significance level of 0.05. A Correlational survey research design was used for the investigation. All 382 business education students from the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, made up the study's population. Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Alertness and Social Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EASEIQ) was the tool that was employed. Two people validated the tool. After giving the test to 20 business education students at Delta State University, Abraka, the cronbach alpha was employed to determine the instrument's reliability, and it produced a reliability coefficient of .81. Using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, simple linear regression, and multiple regression analysis, the data gathered from the respondents was examined. The findings revealed that that entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State ($R^2 = .171$, $F(2, 242) = 50.035$, $P < .05$). The finding further revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State ($R^2 = .267$, $F(2, 242) = 87.975$, $P < .05$). It was suggested that social entrepreneurship should be promoted in light of the findings.

Keywords: *Business education, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention*

INTRODUCTION

In the absence of white collar jobs or paid employment, entrepreneurship education (EE) continues to be a crucial component of education that can equip students with the desirable competencies needed to create their own jobs. In order to better equip graduates from postsecondary institutions in Nigeria to create jobs when there is a lack of paid work, entrepreneurship education was incorporated into the curricula of programs. According to Hagg, Politis, and Alsos (2022), entrepreneurship education is a crucial tool for helping students acquire entrepreneurial knowledge



and skills, promote an entrepreneurial identity, and consequently grow the number of entrepreneurs. According to Ediagbonya (2013), EE is interdisciplinary and aims to provide participants the skills to either build something new or incorporate something new into an existing product in order to address problems and find economic opportunities. According to Sulaiman and Wan-Fauziah (2013), EE is a type of education that aims to alter students' perspectives by giving them skills necessary to start their own business. In order to give students the necessary skills to function in the present knowledge and socioeconomic environment, EE is intended to be offered by all students in higher institutions (Ediagboya, 2022a; Ediagbonya, 2022b). This program is meant to familiarize the students with the minutiae and complexities of business venture creation. The development of entrepreneurial ventures tends to increase productivity, encourage economic growth, reduce poverty, and address socio-economic problems in the society. The need to address the socio-economic problems of the society has informed the concept of Social Entrepreneurship in recent times.

Social entrepreneurship (SE) has remained popular worldwide. The development of the private sector is where social entrepreneurship got its start (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017; Sousa-Fillio, & Almeida, 2023). In underdeveloped nations where there are still inequalities in social development and economic discrimination, social entrepreneurship is particularly crucial (Chell, 2007; Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017). According to Tiwari, Bhat, and Tikoria (2017) and Hattab (2023), social entrepreneurship is a process that starts with a perceived social opportunity, converts it into a business model, determines and acquires the wealth required to execute the venture, and launches and expands the venture toward the venture's objective. The actors or participants in social entrepreneurship are known as social entrepreneurs. By (i) adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value); (ii) recognizing and assiduously pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission; (iii) engaging in the process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning; (iv) acting boldly without being constrained by the resources currently in hand; and (v) displaying a heightened sense of accountability to the constituency, the social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector.

Social Entrepreneurial Intention (SEI) can be defined as the decision made by an entrepreneur to create a new business that brings social changes. In addition, it expresses a state of mind such as a desire, a wish and a hope that steers the endeavor of entrepreneur towards a new business concept (Rozar, Razik, Sidik, & Bahrein, 2020; Ruiz-Rosa, Gutierrez-Tano, & Garcia-Rodriguez, 2020; Aloulou, Algarni, Ramadani, & Hughes, 2023). This is in agreement with Tran and Korflesch (2016) that summarized SEI as a rooted belief, catalyst, desire, determination and engagement for an entrepreneur or a person to assemble a social enterprise. The SEI of people is often influenced by several variables among which are Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness.

According to Kirzner (1979), alertness is the capacity of a person to recognize chances that others may pass over. The author contends that in further defining the parameters of alertness, the feature of judgment—which is concerned with assessing fresh developments, shifts, and information and determining if they would represent a business opportunity with potential for profit—is a crucial element. Three unique components make up alertness: scanning and looking for information, connecting previously unrelated information, and determining whether there are any lucrative



business chances. According to the entrepreneurial cognitive school of thinking, one's cognitive framework is impacted by entrepreneurial alertness (Lanivich, Smith, Levasseur, Pidduck, Busenitz, & Tang, 2022; Li, Jiang, Bi, Feng, & Cui, 2022). A particular mental model called entrepreneurial alertness motivates entrepreneurial teams to go through and analyze both internal and external data in order to spot business possibilities (Li, Jiang, Bi, Feng, & Cui, 2022). Entrepreneurial alertness is a crucial determining factor in the entrepreneurial process because it influences how the entrepreneur processes information and views the market, which in turn influences how they recognize outside opportunities (Eteh, 2020). Entrepreneurial alertness is defined by Tang, Kacmar, and Busenitz (2012) as a mental activity that entails searching for new information, connecting disparate pieces of information from various sources, and assessing potential business opportunities. This mental activity also includes scanning and searching, association and connection, and evaluation and judgment.

In order to produce value, an entrepreneur must be alert to new business opportunities and exploit the resources at their disposal (Puapradit & Supan, 2021). Based on the information available for such entrepreneurial intention, it is an attitude that is significant in the tendency to act on prospective opportunities in an entrepreneurial event (Izlem, & Nurdan, 2016; Ugwueze, Ike, & Ugwu, 2022). Studies such as Alvi and Sharma (2017), Biswas and Verma (2021), Gill, Bencheva, N., Karayel, and Usman (2021), Jiatong, Murad, Li, Gll, and Ashraf (2021), Odebunmi, Kee, and Jimoh (2020) and Urban (2020), offers a useful mechanism for the propensity to act on potential opportunities based on the perception of available knowledge as a result of the perception of desirability and feasibility on the entrepreneurial event. Similar to this, Saadat, Aliakbari, Alizadeh Majd, and Bell (2022) found a strong link between entrepreneurial alertness and education.

In order to establish a relationship between entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention, there has been an increase in study interest in the field of social entrepreneurship. According to Hockerts' (2018) empirical research, taking social entrepreneurship courses boosts one's sense of self-efficacy, perception of social support, and ambition to pursue social entrepreneurship. Additionally, research by Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweed, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), as well as Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), found a strong correlation between entrepreneurial education and the intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. Studies have also shown a link between entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention, in a similar line. The authors of the studies by Urban (2020) and Nsereko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakoto (2022) found that entrepreneurial alertness substantially predicted the participants' propensity to engage in social entrepreneurship. According to the review, the majority of previous research was conducted on unrelated subjects, and while a few studies have linked entrepreneurial alertness and entrepreneurship education, none of them have done so with business education students' intentions for social entrepreneurship in Edo State. This study has considerably filled a gap in the literature by investigating entrepreneurial education and alertness as predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.



Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the extent to which Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness predict Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. The relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention.
2. If Entrepreneurship Education is a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
3. If entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
4. If Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered.

1. What is the relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention?
2. Is Entrepreneurship Education a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?
3. Is entrepreneurial alertness a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?
4. Are Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Entrepreneurship Education is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
2. Entrepreneurial alertness is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.
3. Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are not significant predictors of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

**METHOD****Results and Discussion**

Research Question One: What is the relationship among Entrepreneurship Education, entrepreneurial alertness and Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention?

Table 1

Correlation Matrix showing the relationship among Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurial alertness and Social Entrepreneurial Intention (N=244)

		Entrepreneurship Education	Entrepreneurial Alertness	Social Entrepreneurial Intention
Entrepreneurship Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.436**	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	244	244	244
Entrepreneurial Alertness	Pearson Correlation	.436**	1	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	244	244	244
Social Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson Correlation	.414**	.516**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	244	244	244

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The data presented in Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients among entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention. The correlation coefficients range from .414 to .516 among the variables. There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and business education students' social entrepreneurial intention ($r=.414$, $n=244$). There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurial alertness and business education students' social entrepreneurial intention ($r=.516$, $n=244$). There was a moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurial alertness and entrepreneurship education ($r=.436$, $n=244$).

Hypothesis One: Entrepreneurship Education is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

The result of this hypothesis analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 2: Entrepreneurship Education Predicting Business Education Students' Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	7.283	.667		10.919	.000
Entrepreneurship Education	.282	.040	.414	7.074	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .171$, $F = 50.035$, $P < .05$, $Df = 1, 242$

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 2 indicated that entrepreneurship education explained 17.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .171$, $F(2, 242) = 50.035$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis one revealed that there entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Hypothesis Two: Entrepreneurial alertness is not a significant predictor of Business Education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 3: Entrepreneurial Alertness Predicting Business Education Students' Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.349	.604		10.516	.000
Entrepreneurial Alertness	.454	.048	.516	9.379	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .267$, $F = 87.975$, $P < .05$, $Df = 1, 242$

Source: Researcher's Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 3 indicated that entrepreneurial alertness explained 26.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .267$, $F(2, 242) = 87.975$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis one



revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students’ social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Hypothesis Three: Entrepreneurship Education and entrepreneurial alertness are not significant predictors of Business Education students’ social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Table 4: Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial alertness predicting Business Education Students’ Social Entrepreneurial Intention in Edo State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.820	.704		6.842	.000
	Entrepreneurship Education	.159	.041	.233	3.919	.000
	Entrepreneurial Alertness	.365	.052	.415	6.976	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Entrepreneurial Intention

Note: $R^2 = .311$, $F = 54.279$, $P < .05$, $Df = 2, 241$

Source: Researcher’s Field work (2023)

The results of the regression on Table 4 indicated that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness collectively explained 31.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .311$, $F (2, 241) = 50.279$, $P < .05$). The result from hypothesis three revealed that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of business education students’ social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of hypothesis one revealed that entrepreneurship education is a significant predictor of business education students social entrepreneurship intention in Edo State. It implies that students in business education who are appropriately exposed to the EE curriculum content will be more inclined to start a business that will aid in resolving societal issues. The results support those of Hockerts (2018), who discovered that taking social entrepreneurship courses boosts social entrepreneurship intention, self-efficacy, and perceived social support. The results support those of Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweed, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), as well as Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), who discovered that the intention to engage in social entrepreneurship was significantly predicted by one's experience with entrepreneurship education.

The analysis of hypothesis two revealed that entrepreneurial alertness is a significant predictor of business education students’ social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. It follows that entrepreneurially astute students of business education will be more likely to take the risk of starting a business that will aid in solving societal challenges. This finding supports that of Urban (2020), who discovered that entrepreneurial alertness is strongly and favorably related to social



entrepreneurial initiative. The findings were also validated by Nserekko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakato (2023), who found a positive and substantial association between entrepreneurial alertness and social entrepreneurial intention.

The analysis of hypothesis three revealed that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial alertness are significant predictors of business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. This finding supports those revealed by Hassan (2020), Ndou (2021), Naweed, Zia, Younis, and Shah (2021), Chang, Wannamakok, and Kao (2021), Nserekko, Balunywa, Kyazze, Nsereko, and Nakato (2023), who all found a strong correlation between entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial alertness, and social entrepreneurial intention in their respective studies.

Conclusion

Based on the results, it can be said that entrepreneurship education and alertness are both predictive of business education students' intention to engage in social entrepreneurship in Edo State. Additionally, it was found that EE and EA both independently predict business education students' social entrepreneurial intention in Edo State. The results suggest that deliberate efforts must be made to improve the EE program in higher institutions in order to promote SE that is able to address the socioeconomic issues the country is currently facing. By bridging the empirical and scholarly gaps in this sector, this study has significantly advanced understanding.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are therefore advanced:

- i. Entrepreneurship education programme should be strengthened in tertiary institutions;
- ii. Social entrepreneurship should be emphasized in the curriculum of entrepreneurship education;
- iii. Practical ways to promoting entrepreneurial alertness among students should be encouraged; and
- iv. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); should encourage and sponsor research work in the field of SE with a view to creating more awareness.

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