

**ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM CONTENT AND HUMAN  
RESOURCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY  
AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC POLYTECHNICS  
IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**

**BY**

**L. C. Ndogu:** Office Technology and Management, Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi

**Dr. A. Ibrahim:** Vocational and Technology Education,  
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

**Prof. A. M. Mshelia:** Vocational and Technology Education,  
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

**&**

**Prof. I. Y. Shehu:** Vocational and Technology Education,  
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.  
Corresponding Author: cnlekar1@gmail.com

**Abstract**

*The study was conducted to assess the Curriculum Content and Human Resource available for implementation of Office Technology and Management Programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. Descriptive survey research designed was adopted for the study. A purposive sampling was used because the population of was manageable. The population of the study was 248 OTM academic staff and 714 Higher National Diploma (HND) II OTM students in 2020/2021 academic year in 20 public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. The entire population was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Assessment of Office Technology and Management Programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria (EOTMP). The instrument was validated by three experts and pilot tested. A Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained. The questionnaire was administered through Research Assistants in the various institutions. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using independent sample t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The study found among others, that the curriculum content of OTM programme is adequate to train and produce graduates to be skillful for office management. It was concluded among others that academic staff are not adequate for training the students in order to acquire the desired skills. It was recommended that government and regulatory body (National Board for Technical Education) should train and re-train OTM Academic Staff in order to ensure proper implementation of the OTM programme.*

**Keywords:** *Assessment, Curriculum Content, Implementation, Office Technology and Management*

**Introduction**

Office Technology and Management is the new nomenclature for Secretarial Studies used for training secretaries in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Secretarial profession has existed from ages, and like many other professions, it has passed through changes as a result of technological revolution. The curriculum of OTM was designed to equip students with vocational skills in the programme and socio-psychological competence required for management of office, (Ezeani & Ogunlade, 2015). Specifically, the objectives of the OTM according to Nnaji & Bagudu (2012)

and Udo (2014) is to equip students with the knowledge, competencies and skills needed to successfully hold positions as secretaries, managers, administrative assistants in both private and public sectors; develop in students the knowledge that will make them versatile and adaptable to the changing situation in the business world; and develop the potentials of students for further academic and professional pursuits. To realize these objectives, the curriculum was structured to provide students with skills on competency based approach. It is hoped that after graduation, students should be equipped for job opportunities and enhancement, (Nwaiwu, Dikeocha & Nwagwu, 2015).

The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) lays emphasis on Computer and Computer related course in the programme. This indicates that for any trainee to be more useful and effective in the course of studies, he must be prepared to learn computer related courses. The aim of OTM programme, according to Apagu, and Bala, (2015), is to make the students to be self-reliant after graduation, especially with the daily rise in unemployment in the country (Adelakin, 2009) and also meet the needs of secretarial students and practitioners on the need to change approach, so that they can cope with the challenges of technology of the era. The new OTM curriculum integrates six modules in its design, namely: Office Application, Office Technology, Business and Administrative Management, Numeric Component, General Studies and Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). Office Technology and Management Programme offers in-depth administrative office work training to meet the demands and challenges in the business atmosphere.

Olorundare and Kayode (2014) observed that inadequate trainers of OTM in Polytechnics is a major challenge to the programme. Study of Onuma (2016) revealed that OTM learning environment and support tools are not adequately available, likewise, adequate teachers to provide the needed appropriate skills and attitude are inadequate. Buttressing the assertion Adenike (2016) noted that inadequate skilled Academic Staff is a challenge to Office Technology and Management in Nigerian Polytechnics. Research finding of (Nwambam *et al*, 2018) showed that trained teachers for teaching of OTM are not adequate in the Polytechnics. Nigerian education is presently at cross road as far as producing personnel who will work to deserve and justify their pay, work independently, globally and bring creativity into their work place. This is why experts charge the Polytechnics on the mandate of providing employable skills to the students. To this end, the role of Polytechnics in promoting Office Technology and Management is laudable (Brown, 2012).

Nigeria is bedeviled with a many of problems, which despite her oil wealth, inhibits her development. Unemployment is one of the developmental difficulties that face every developing economy in this twenty-first century including Nigeria. Akhuemonkhan, Raimi & Sofoluwe (2013) defined unemployment as a condition in which people who are eager to work at the prevailing wage rate are unable to find work to do. The unemployed is a member of the economically active population, who are without work but available for and seeking for work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work, (Adeshina, 2013; Akarahu & Buba, 2011). National Bureau of statistic (2017-2018) reported that unemployment rate is at increasing rate, (Eme, 2014, Surajo and Karim, 2016 and National Bureau for Statistics, 2020). It is observed that despite the introduction of OTM programme in polytechnics in Nigeria, the problem of poor performance at work, students' poor performance

and graduate unemployment is still existing and disturbing. The above suggest and calls for curriculum assessment of the programme.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The trend in unemployed polytechnic graduates has resulted to questioning whether the redesigned curriculum has been able to yield the desired objective of providing skills in Polytechnic students. Amiaya and Ranor (2015) maintained that the NBTE has been lauded for the introduction of OTM programme, but a lot still needs to be done, Amiaya *et-al* (2015) observed that the enthusiasm and energy generated at the introduction of OTM programme have decreased as an expectation as polytechnics graduates unemployment is disturbing. Evidence from Udo (2014) showed that the introduction of OTM programme has not improved the problem of graduate employability skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> automated offices in Nigeria. This is an indication that the aims and objectives of the programme are not being adequately achieved.

The study conducted by Esene (2015) revealed that some Nigerian graduates (Polytechnic inclusive) annually find it difficult to secure gainful employment. On the same lane, Udo (2014) added that graduates of tertiary institutions who are unemployed and had studied OTM with the aim of building a zealous career lack 21<sup>st</sup> century employability skills to manage automated office equipment and facilities. These contentions motivated the researchers to evaluate the OTM Programme in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study is to assess curriculum content and human resource for the implementation of office technology and management programme in public polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. Specifically; the study sought to determine the extent to which the:

- (1) Curriculum content of OTM meets the aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management.
- (2) OTM programme has needed academic staff for curriculum implementation in Northern Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent has the Curriculum Content of OTM achieved the aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management?
2. To what extent does OTM programme have appropriate Academic Staff for curriculum implementation?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following Null hypotheses are postulated for the study and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Academic Staff and Students in the Polytechnics on the extent to which the Curriculum Content of OTM achieved the aims and objectives of providing students with skills for Office Management.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of staff and students on the extent to which polytechnics have needed OTM lecturers for curriculum implementation in Northern Nigeria.

**Methodology**

Descriptive survey research designed was adopted for the study. A purposive sampling was used because the population of the study was manageable. The population of the study was made up of 248 OTM academic staff and 714 Higher National Diploma (HND) II OTM students in 2020/2021 academic year in 20 public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. The entire population was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire adapted from Kabiru, (2019), titled Evaluation of Office Technology and Management Programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria (EOTMP). The Instrument was validated by three lecturers one from Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, one from Modibbo Adama University Yola and one from Department of Office Technology and Management, Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi. The response categories and decisions for the items were based on the boundary limits as follows: 3.00-4.00 (Very High), 2.50-3.49 (High), 1.50-2.49 (Low) and 1.00-1.49 (Very Low). The internal consistency of the questionnaire items was ascertained through Cronbach Alpha technique, which yielded a reliability coefficient of .758. Questionnaire was administered through trained research assistants in the various institutions. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation and null hypotheses were tested using independent sample t-test, at 0.05 level of significance. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The decision rule was based on the mean of the boundary limits of the four responses options. For decision, items with mean of 2.50 > were considered to be accepted, any item with the mean < 2.50 were not accepted.

**Results**

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the extent to which Curriculum Content of OTM meets its aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management**

S/N	Item	M	SD	Remark
1.	The extent to which OTM curriculum contain provide students with needed skills for Office Management.	3.45	.69	High
2.	The extent to which contents of OTM programme relevant to provide needed skills for Office Management.	3.41	.68	High
3.	The extent to which overall design of the OTM programme satisfactory to provided needed skills.	3.11	.63	High
4.	The extent to which the topics in OTM adequate to raise interest to gain needed skills for Office Management.	3.28	.65	High
5.	The extent to which are topics in OTM rich to take care of diverse natures of Office Management.	3.21	.68	High
6.	The extent to which do tasks provided in the content of OTM programme effective for practical experience for Office Management.	3.28	.80	High
7.	The extent to which do the volumes of course content of OTM made it difficult to achieve the objectives of the programme	3.22	.83	High
8.	The extent to which do the exercises in OTM content suitable for enhancing adequate skills for Office Management.	3.31	.60	High
9.	The extent to which does the contents of OTM programme need review to meet modern realities for Office Management.	3.32	.72	High
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.25</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>High</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the extent to which curriculum content of OTM meets its aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management. The result indicated that all the 9 items are having a mean scores of above 3.00. The mean scores of the items are ranging from 3.11 to 3.45 with a grand mean of 3.25 and a standard deviation of .430. The result indicated that to a very high extent curriculum content of OTM meets its aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the extent of the adequacy of Staff for OTM curriculum implementation in public polytechnics.**

S/N	Items	M	SD	Remark
10.	The extent to which do OTM Academic Staff have sufficient knowledge to teach OTM programme?	2.50	.58	High
11	The extent to which do OTM Academic Staff use different techniques to group students to achieve the objectives of OTM programme.	2.21	.62	Low
12	The extent to which do OTM Academic Staff know when to use appropriate teaching methods to achieve the objectives of OTM programme.	2.14	.64	Low
13	The extent to which do OTM Academic Staff respond appropriately to question ask by students in OTM programme?	2.18	.69	Low
14	The extent to which does the mastery of topics stimulate interest for learning in OTM programme.	2.21	.62	Low
15	The extent to which do examples of subject matters used by OTM Academic Staff in OTM programme.	2.15	.66	Low
16	The extent to which do OTM Academic Staff require training to improve their teaching skills performance.	2.39	.74	Low
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.26</b>	<b>.42</b>	Low

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 indicates that all the items are having a mean score of less than 3.00. The mean scores of the items are ranging from 2.14 to 2.50, with grand mean of 2.26. The results revealed to a low extent that OTM programme in public polytechnics Academic Staffs for curriculum implementation of OTM programme is not adequate.

## Test of Hypotheses

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Academic Staff and Students on the extent to which the Curriculum Content of OTM meets the aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management.

**Table 3 Independent t-test for mean responses of Curriculum Content.**

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Staff	33	3.3704	.34247	1.051	.303	NS
Students	101	3.1896	.46023			

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The outcome of the *independent-samples t-test* in table 10 indicates that there is no existence of a statistically significant difference between the mean responses of Academic Staff (M = 3.3704, SD = .34247), and Students (M = 3.1896, SD = .46023),  $t(27) = 1.051$ ,  $p = .303$ . Hypothesis one is, therefore, failed to reject. This finding suggested that both Academic Staff and students assumed that Curriculum Content of OTM meets the aims and objectives of providing Polytechnic students with skills for Office Management. The null hypothesis was retained.

### Hypothesis 2

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of staff and students on the extent to which polytechnics have needed OTM lecturers for curriculum implementation in Northern Nigeria.

**Table 4: Independent t-test for mean responses of Academic Staff.**

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Staff	33	3.2746	.37333	.219	.829	NS
Students	101	3.2369	.45152			

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

An independent-samples t-test was performed to test the difference in the mean responses of Academic Staff and Students on the extent to which OTM programme has needed Academic Staff for curriculum implementation in Northern Nigeria. The result *in* table 11 revealed that there is no statistic significant difference between the mean responses of Academic Staff (M = 3.2746, SD = .37333), and Students (M = 3.2369, SD = .45152),  $t(27) = .219$ ,  $p = .829$ . Hypothesis two is, therefore, failed to reject. This finding suggested that both Academic Staff and students proved that OTM Programme has needed Academic Staff for curriculum implementation in Northern Nigeria. The hypothesis was retained.

### Discussion of Findings

The study was conducted to assess the level of implementation of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. The findings on the adequacy of Curriculum content of the programme agrees with the National Board For Technical Education, which curriculum was designed to meet up with the needs of the society in the secretarial profession, (NBTE,2004). Findings on the adequacy of Academic for implementation of the programme revealed that the adequacy is low. The is in consonance with the position of Olorundare *et-al*, (2014) who said the academic staff for training OTM students is not adequate and from the available ones, some are not ICT compliant to be able to teach courses that are computer based. Therefore, there is need to maintain the curriculum and reviewed whenever the need arises; also government and responsible bodies should work towards improving the quality of academic staff in OTM. This will contribute immensely towards proper implementation in order to lead to production of OTM graduates that can fit into the changing office management.

The study conducted found that the content of OTM curriculum in Polytechnics is adequate for training and to compete favourably with their counterparts globally, after graduation. As stated by Olukemi and Boluwaji, (2014); students need to be trained with modern technology to acquire skills to be able to work productively with any organization; also to be self-employed. With respect to human resource, the study found the adequacy of Academic Staff to implement the OTM curriculum to be low. This goes with the assertion of Adenike (2016), who pointed out that academic staff to implement OTM programme is not adequate. Because of that, students are not adequately trained to acquire the desired skills. This partly leads to increase in the rate of unemployment as reported by National Bureau for Statistics, (2020).

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the curriculum content of OTM is rich enough for training, to enable graduates work in modern offices and favorably compete with their counterparts. However, with the Academic Staff for the implementation of the program, the rating revealed that it is low. This obviously affect the implementation of the OTM programme. The implication of this is that, OTM graduates will hardly perform well in office work or be self-employed.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Government and National Board for Technical Education should provide opportunities for training and re-training of OTM
2. Academic Staff in public Polytechnics in order to ensure proper implementation of the Programme, this will bridge the gap in the area of unemployment and also enable students get trained and be able to acquire the necessary skills for gainful employment.

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