

OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT STUDENT'S RATING OF SKILLS NEEDED FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION COLLEGES OF OGUN STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated Office Technology and Management students' ratings of skills needed for self-reliance in public education colleges of Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Thus, the study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses. Consisting of 245 Business Education students' sampling. The study developed a structured questionnaire, Skills for Self-Reliance of Office Technology and Management Programme Students Questionnaire (SSROTMQ) as its structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by three experts and applied to the study. Split-half method was utilized to establish reliability coefficient, at 0.83 using Cronbach Alpha. The data generated for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. All null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using inferential statistic of ANOVA. The findings showed that Business Education curriculum of Office Technology and Management program influenced the achievement of Office Education Programme's objective. The instrument which was face-validated by three experts from the Department of Business Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka was used to collect data from the respondents. The study made use of Kuder-Richards formula (K-R 21) to determine the reliability of the instrument and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions raised and standard deviation to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses from the mean while t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the analysis revealed that Office Technology and Management students needed skills in word processing, social media and information and communication technology for self-reliance. It was recommended amongst others that Business Educators and school counsellors should trained students in basic skills capable of equipping them with appropriate ability to set up ventures of their own as it will boost the economic growth of the nation and facilitates self-reliance.

Keywords: Office technology, Management students, Business education, Skills and Self-Reliance

Introduction

Office Technology and Management education is a type of education that is designed to inculcate in individuals the skills, knowledge, business spirit and acumen needed to function appropriately in office work of all endeavors in the world of work in order to become self-reliant. Iwhuoha and Chiwen (2018) viewed Office Technology and Management program as a dynamic field of study designed to equip students with Secretarial/Office skills for employment in various fields of endeavors. Office Technology and Management program equips its recipient with the right skills, attitudes, competence and knowledge needed to function in office and interact appropriately, leading to transition of skills from school to work and for advancement in the office technology and Management career path. On the other hand, Business Education is also viewed as an educational programme that prepares students for entry and advancement in jobs within business and to handle their business affairs as well as to function intelligently as consumers and citizens in a business economy (Abanyam, 2016).

Public Education Colleges according to the Nigerian Academy of Management Administration cited in Abanyam (2016) is an educational programme created to prepare individuals to be leaders and practitioners in education and related human service fields by expanding and deepening understanding of education as a fundamental human endeavour in helping society define and respond to its educational responsibilities and challenges. At this stage of education, one of the programmes offered is Office Technology and Management program prepares recipients for teaching profession, undertake job in industry and or creation of venture that is owned, managed and controlled by the recipients after graduation. There are three public education colleges in Ogun State one of which is owned by federal government while the remaining two are owned by the State government. Nevertheless, National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is the regulating body that approves content of the study and quality of lecturers in both state and federal colleges of education in Nigeria. Ability to create self-venture is as a result of necessary skills which would have been imparted in the trainees during the programme in the institutions.

Skill is seen as the ability to do a task expertly, gained through training and experience (Uzor and Ikeh, 2010). Skill therefore can be referred to mean ability and dexterity which if employed on a particular task such as business, the result will commensurate with the predetermined objective and thus brings about improved economic status. Office technology and management skills can therefore, be referred to mean those abilities required for carrying out and communicate effectively, use information and communication technology equipment, manage information at the right time as well as ability to recognize and utilize office automation among others. A person who acquires adequate skills in office technology and management activities during the course of training stands the chance of setting up an occupation of his choice and even capable of employing many others after the training. Such person is deemed to be self-sufficient and self-reliant in the environment where he or she domiciles.

Self-reliance is the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs (including protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health and education) in a sustainable manner and with dignity. Baba and Akaraha (2018) maintained that self-reliance refers to dependence on one's own abilities, judgments, or independence. It thus means the ability to rely on oneself to do whatever should be done. Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family (Enwere, Ugwu, & Olawoyin, 2013). In order for office technology and management students to be self-reliant, there is need for them to acquire certain skills which will equip individual for being on his or her own in the society. Such skills include word processing skills and information and communication technology skills among others.

Word Processing is an area of study in office technology and management of Business Education that equips trainees with requisite knowledge, dexterity and attitude relevant for handling and transforming written, spoken and recorded information into typewritten or printed form. (Oyedele and Fadare 2018). Word Processing skills involves ability to handle alphabetical and alphanumeric information electronically. Also involves ability to use computer to create, edit, save and print documents through usage of a specialized software known as Word Processor. Word processing describes creating or editing a document using a word processor, such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or OpenOffice Writer. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) involves the use of computers and other electronic devices to process information (Ibelegbu, 2018). ICT spread up the business operational process, and increase efficiency. At the same time, ICT adds value to the processes of learning, and in the organization and management of learning institutions. ICT skills are a set of skills which include skills needed for word processing packages, internet access, accessing electronic mails, print document, use scanning machines to send messages, install computer programmes and software, create payroll for workers of different grade levels, conference calls and video conferencing for staff meetings, enter and edit data, insert rows and columns in excel.

Statement of the Problem

Having looked into many of the graduates of office technology and management who should have been equipped with necessary modern office skills, it was discovered that these skills are seriously deficient in their area of specialization of which they are expected to be an expert and have positive impact on the society at large. The overall expectation of the populace for graduates of any higher institutions including colleges of education particularly Office Technology and Management Programme is to acquire certain business knowledge, understanding, skills which will in turn avail them ample opportunity to remain endlessly productive and be self-reliant in the society. Ogun State graduates are equally not left out of this robust hope to boost economy of the state. Despite the large turnout of the graduates produced by the colleges of education in the State, there is still alarming rate of unemployment owing to the fact that many of such graduates are in search of white-collar jobs that are not available. Ekankumo and Kemebaradikumo (2011) asserted that the availability of white-collar jobs compared to the massive turnout of graduates from universities as well as the National Youth Service Corps shows a negative ratio. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2020) disclosed that unemployment rate in Nigeria is of alarming and disturbing rate. Ibelegbu (2018) noted that lack of effective modern communication skills by office technology and management graduates contribute to lack of job. It is on the basis of the foregoing that this study was aimed at investigating Office Technology and Management students' ratings of skills needed for self-reliance in public education colleges, Ogun state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate Office Technology and Management students' ratings of skills needed for self-reliance in Ogun state. Specifically, the study determined:

1. The word processing skills needed by Office Technology and Management students for self-reliance.
2. The ICT skills needed by Office Technology and Management students for self-reliance.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the word processing skills needed by Office Technology and Management students for self-reliance?
2. What are the ICT skills needed by Office Technology and Management students for self-reliance?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female Office Technology and Management students regarding the word processing skills needed for self-reliance.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female Office Technology and Management students regarding the ICT skills needed for self-reliance.

Methodology

The design for the study was descriptive survey. The study was carried out in public Colleges of Education in Ogun state, Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of 2,450 business education office technology and management students 10% of 245 respondents formed the sample size for this study due to a large population. This study developed Skills for Self-reliance of Office Technology and Management Programme Students Questionnaire (SSROTMQ) as its structured questionnaire and was validated by three experts in the Department of Business Education, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu -Ode, Ogun State. Earlier, the questionnaire was adapted from Babayemi (2019), Azasu, et. al. (2015) and Salami (2019). Using split half method, the pilot study conducted, it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.83, which was high enough for the instrument to be considered reliable. A total of 245 copies of the instrument were distributed to the respondents with the help of four research assistants to collect data for the study and the same number was retrieved, which represent 100% rate of return.

Part A of the instrument collected personal information of the respondents while part B was divided into two sections: section 1 with 12 items on word processing skills which addressed research question 1, section 2 with 12 items elicited information relating to obtaining information from the respondents on ICT skills to address research question 2. The instrument was face-validated by three experts from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Akoka. Corrections were accordingly affected. The instrument was administered through direct contact with the respondents. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while t-test inferential statistics was employed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

In answering the research questions, any mean found between 3.0 and 5.0 was interpreted as Needed (N) while mean below 3.0 was interpreted as Not Needed (NN). The standard deviation was also employed to indicate how scattered or close the opinions of the respondents are around the mean. Where the Standard Deviation was high, the individual responses varied greatly, where the Standard Deviation was low, the respondents were taken to be close in their opinions. Null hypothesis was rejected where p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 level of significance, hypothesis was not rejected where p-value obtained was high, the individual responses varied greatly, where the Standard Deviation was low, the respondents were taken to be close in their opinions. Null hypothesis was rejected where p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 level of significance, hypothesis was not rejected where p-value obtained was greater than 0.05.

Results

Table 1: Mean Ratings and t-test Analysis on Word Processing Skills Needed by Business Education Office Technology and Management Students for Self-Reliance (N=245)

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Responses on Word Processing Skills Needed by Office Technology and Management Students for Self-Reliance

S/N	Item statements	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Typing using appropriate fingers skills	3.43	0.63	MHN
2.	Sort Text skills	3.40	0.66	MHN
3.	Merge text	3.47	0.68	MHN
4.	Use different MsWord Packages	3.51	0.69	VHN
5.	Transcribing Shorthand on Computer	3.44	0.69	MHN
6.	Search for word or character	3.55	0.65	VHN
7.	Replace word or character skills	3.43	0.66	MHN
8.	Spell check error skills	3.49	0.67	MHN
9.	Correction of Error skills	3.48	0.66	MHN
10.	Move text to appropriate place	3.60	0.62	VHN
11.	Store documents	3.48	0.65	MHN
12.	Retrieve documents	3.56	0.69	VHN
Weighted Average		3.44	0.62	MHL

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1 reveals that the students indicated a moderately high level of need for the following: To type using appropriate fingers (\bar{x} =3.43), sorting text (\bar{x} =3.40), merge text to become a whole (\bar{x} =3.47). The students indicated that they are greatly in need of the ability to use different MsWord Packages like Microsoft word, Word Perfect, Ms Star, Ms Publisher in producing documents and this need is of a very high level (\bar{x} =3.51). Also, they noted the need of ability to transcribe Shorthand using computer (\bar{x} =3.44), the need of ability to search for appropriate word or character to produce a meaningful and mailable document is of very high level (\bar{x} =3.55) and ability to replace word or character in documents is moderately high (\bar{x} =3.43). OTM students indicated the need of skills to check for errors in document (\bar{x} =3.49), ability to correct errors in documents (\bar{x} =3.48), skill to move text to desired place (\bar{x} =3.60), ability to store document appropriately (\bar{x} =3.48), skills needed in retrieving saved document immediately when needed is also of very high level (\bar{x} =3.56). The standard deviations of the

items are low ranging from 0.62 to 0.69 indicating that their responses are not too widespread. Summarily, OTM students in higher institutions need of word processing skill is moderately high. (\bar{x} =3.44, SD = 0.62).

Research Question 2: What are the ICT skills needed by office technology and management students for Self-Reliance?

To answer this research question two, the data collected in section B of the questionnaire were analyzed and presented as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on ICT skills needed by Office Technology and Management Students for Self-Reliance

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to use social networks	3.61	0.64	VHN
2.	Ability to upload information on internet	3.54	0.61	VHN
3.	Ability to use mobile phones	3.43	0.71	MHN
4.	Knowledge to do online transactions	3.44	0.73	MHN
5.	Skills to use search engines	3.37	0.64	MHN
6.	Ability to use chat apps	3.47	0.73	MHN
7.	Skills to do video conferencing	3.48	0.67	MHN
8.	Ability to browse on the internet	3.34	0.66	MHN
9.	Skills to download from the internet	3.36	0.74	MHN
10.	Ability to do teleconferencing	3.42	0.72	MHN
11.	Ability to interconnect systems	3.43	0.62	MHN
12.	Skills to edit online messages	3.30	0.76	MHN
Weighted Average		3.29	0.77	MHL

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 2 reveals that the students have a very high level of need of skills to use social networks (\bar{x} =3.61). They also expressed a very high level of desire to be able to upload information on internet (\bar{x} =3.54). Also, they indicated that they preferred to be able to utilize mobile phones with the aid of internet (\bar{x} =3.43) and have knowledge to do online transactions (\bar{x} =3.44). In addition, the students stated that they needed the skills to use search engines (\bar{x} =3.37), use chat apps (\bar{x} =3.47), do video conferencing (\bar{x} =3.48), and have the ability to browse on the internet (\bar{x} =3.34). In addition, students indicated a high need of ability download from the internet (\bar{x} =3.36), have teleconference competency skills (\bar{x} =3.42), and ability to interconnect systems (\bar{x} = 3.43). It was shown that the students were in high need to be able to edit online messages and update records when necessary (\bar{x} =3.30). Generally, the table shows that the OTM students in public education colleges in Ogun State indicated a high level of need for ICT skills for self-reliance. This is evident in the average mean and standard deviation scores of 3.29 and 0.79.

Discussion of Findings

Result in Table 1 shows that all word processing skills were needed by Business Education students for self-reliance. This is in agreement with the study of Baba and Akaraha (2016) which indicated that Business Education graduates highly needed word processing skills for self-employment. However, the result of test of null hypothesis in Table 1 shows that items have their p-values greater than 0.05. It therefore implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education office technology and management students regarding the word processing skills needed for self-reliance based on their gender. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Eze, Ezenwafor and Igberaharha (2016) who found that gender did not significantly affect the respondents mean ratings on the extent Business Education graduates need word processing skills for self-employment. Word processing skills if thoroughly taught at the colleges of education in Ogun and any other college, students would be able to possess skills to improve office efficiency and speed up business process.

Result in Table 2 indicates that Business Education Office Technology and Management students needed all ICT skills for self-reliance. The outcome of this study is in line with Okoli and Binuomote (2015) who reported

that Business Education students needed ICT skills for entrepreneurship development. This finding is also in support of the finding of Akpotohwo, Watchman, Ogeibiri (2016) who noted that ICT skills are required by Business Education students to achieve success in business enterprise. The skill acquisition in ICT will pave the way for Business Education students of colleges of education in Oyo State to keep themselves in line with the technological advancement in the world of business. These skills will help them understand how to chat business matter via internet, prepare business report in word environment, browse web, make video call and the like. All these will then encourage the business activities.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate Business Education Office Technology and Management students' ratings of skills needed for self-reliance in Ogun state. Data were collected, analyzed and interpreted. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that Office Technology and Management students of the colleges of education in Ogun State needed skills in word processing and information and communication technology for self-reliance.

Recommendations

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

3. Students of Office Technology and Management should be trained by Lecturers in basic skills capable of equipping them with appropriate ability to set up ventures of their own as it will boost the economic growth of the nation and facilitates Self-Reliance
4. Necessary training equipment's should be made available by State and Federal Governments agencies to the students for them to acquire the needed skills to function well in the world of work as employee or employer of labour.
5. Education authority and Counselling Psychologist should create enough awareness through seminars, conferences, symposia and workshop among the experts in charge of tertiary education about teaching of skills relevant to becoming self-reliant in order to encourage lunching self-reliance goal among the students.

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