DETERMINANTS OF MALE STUDENTS' CHOICE OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, BALI TARABA STATE

BY

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Abstract

The study examined determinants of male students' choice of office technology and management programme in Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was employed for the study. The population of the study was 53 males Higher National Diploma (HND) and National Diploma (ND) Students in Federal Polytechnic Bali, Taraba State. There was no sampling as the population was manageable. A structured questionnaire designed by the researchers was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was validated by three Experts in Business Education, Office Technology and Management option and Cronbach alpha reliability method was used to test the reliability of the instrument and it yielded a co-efficient of 0.79. The instrument was administered by the researchers and a research assistant. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that respondents the influence of societal perception and students skill on the male Students' choice of *Office Technology and Management programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali. The findings also revealed that there was no significant difference on the responses respondents on the two hypotheses raised. It was recommended amongst other that OTM department should hold a seminar for the students to enlighten the students on the relevance of OTM to both male and female even in this technological age, so that the students can defend the course in the society.*
Keywords: Male Students, Choice, Office Technology and Management

Introduction

There are various options in Business Education programme especially at the university level, these includes; Office Technology and Management, Accounting and Marketing. Office Technology and Management is the new nomenclature of secretarial studies The choice of programme of study is always a complex one since the decision a candidate makes determines the person's type of vocation and that is what he/she will pursue throughout his/her life time. The choice vocation does not only affect the individual as it goes further to affect the parents, community and government. The aim of education is to impart saleable knowledge, skills and competencies on the learner to enable him/her contribute favourably in the society. Generally, secretarial studies which are now called office technology and management because of

technological trend has turned to be the course for females. The history of secretarial studies confirmed that until late 1800s men occupied the secretarial offices more than women. In early modern times, members of the nobility had secretaries, who functioned quite similarly to those of the present day. They were always men; most had command of several languages, including Latin, and were required to have what we would consider today as a broad generalized education. As world trade expanded in the 15th and 16th centuries, secretaries often attained an elevated status and held prominent positions. Secretarial status titles frequently included "personal" or "private."

According to International Association of Administrative Professionals (1998) Men continued to dominate the secretarial field until the late 1800s. With the invention of the writing machine, many women entered the office workforce in various clerical roles. During the industrial expansion at the turn of the century, business offices faced a paperwork crisis. Women solved the crisis by adapting well to new technologies such as the adding and calculating machine, telephone, and typewriter. Many women held, or aspired to hold, positions as secretaries. They attended secretarial schools and worked to attain superior skills. The demand for secretaries was so great that it outpaced supply. In the 1930s, the number of men with the title secretary dwindled. Women dominated the office workforce. Some were promoted from steno pools, some were graduates of business colleges or secretarial schools, but all were seeking the professional status and pay previously enjoyed by their male counterparts. This turn around in the profession has affected the career choice of most male students. Amoor (2014) asserts that the choice of course of study in schools and colleges, and the subsequent path to follow is always a difficult challenge which faces prospective undergraduates. Amoor (2014) stressed that students across the nations are usually faced with the task of academic and career decision taking. Often, choosing the right subject combination which could lead to the right profession can make the difference between enjoying and detesting a future career.

Office Technology and Management is a programme of study which is expected to develop appropriate skills on the learner. These skills include keyboarding skill, ICT skill, general office procedure skill, shorthand skill and so on. It is a branch of vocational and business education which prepares the students for paid job and for self-employment (Nnaji, 2020). Komolafe and Ajani (2010) observe that office technology and management as a course can be said to be a work oriented educational programme which aims at skills acquisition to be gainfully employable, self-employment, or employer of labour. The students are also equipped with effective work competencies and socio-psychological work skills, which are essential in everyday interaction with others. According to Ademiluyi and Okwuanaso (2013) the name "Office Technology and Management" is a recent innovation which signals secretarial profession's evolution not only from an analogue era to a digital age, but also from its time-honoured appendage (assistant) status to an executive/managerial one. Okoye and Umezuluike (2014) state that students with knowledge and skills that will enable them find a job after schooling across territorial boundaries or which they can use to create their own employment are the emphasis of the 21st century learning. This means that office technology and management education needs business educators who are skilled, knowledgeable and competent enough to make use of diversified teaching strategies during lesson instruction so that the students will be equipped to face the world of work.

Etonyeaku (2013) described it as an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and saleable skills; knowledge, attitude and value that would enable the individual operate in the environment he finds himself. Esene (2013) views Office Technology and Management programme as a work oriented education, a means whereby the individuals acquire occupational education to enable them function creatively and productively in their job. He maintains that OTM is an efficient, effective, productive and functional education which leads to self-employment, self-reliance, paid-employment and consequently self-actualization. Office Technology and Management therefore, is a programme of study in tertiary institutions which has packaged its own aspect of business education as a vital part of development of an individual's life. It is a programme of study which opens door for career opportunities in the modern business office. These career opportunities can only come to pass in the life of the learner through the proper training which is gained from competent business educators. The learner is prepared for self-reliance or for gainful employment in the government offices. This branch of education involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business. OTM education has the capacity to do this because it equips the learner with skills and competencies to survive in a society. The means that the practical elements acquired by the secretary should include habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clerical reasoning, emotions, values and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served (Okoro and Nnaji 2020).

Ekwue, Udemba and Ojuro (2019) affirmed that the training of the students is based on the production of skilful individuals who are proficient in the production of goods and services that are not only relevant to themselves but to the society. Education and training becomes very useful tools in preparing the individuals to realize his/her personality and provide skills and knowledge that would raise output and generate income (Emesoba, Mmuo and Ezani, (2020). OTM education is skill demanding, the female students endures in learning skills. The male students by observation find it difficult to sit in a place for a long time doing one thing such as typing, drilling of shorthand and so. Boytzis (2010) defined skill as the ability to demonstrate a system and sequence of behaviour that is functionally related to attaining a performance goal. Atakpa (2014) viewed skill as the rapidity, precision, expertise, dexterity and proficiency exhibited through mental and manual repetition of performance of an operation. It is a well-established habit of doing something through acquisition of performance capabilities..Etonyeaku (2013) opined that skill is the capacity of a person to accomplish a task with desired precision and certainty. It involves practical knowledge in combination with cleverness, expertise, dexterity and ability to perform function which could be acquired or learnt in school.

The choice of academic programme can be influenced by peer groups, parents, perception of students, skills, and abilities of the candidate and societal perception. Most parents determine the academic choice of their ward and in most cases do not look at the skills and abilities of the child. Peer group influence is another factor that determines academic choice of some youths as they would want to go for the course which their friends are into. Societal perception is another factor, most times the society misconstrues some courses. It is believed by many people that OTM is the course of women, sometimes the men are mocked for studying OTM. The societal perception as

can be observed makes the male students feel that OTM programme is meant for women and sometimes not only that it is meant for women but that it is meant for the unintelligent.

Statement of the Problem

The determination to make an academic choice is always a difficult one. The choice of academic profession goes a long way to determine the future of the recipient. OTM is an academic programme that prepares the students for the world of work and business. The dwindling nature of male enrolment in OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali has become a concern to both academicians and administrators. It is observed that male students do not have interest in studying OTM thereby, allowing the course to be filled with their female counterparts. Sometimes those who are admitted into the programme strive to change the course. It is against this back drops that the researchers examined determinates of male Students' choice of office technology and management programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to examine Determinates of Male Students' choice of Office Technology and Management Programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.
Specifically, the study was designed to:
1. determine the influence of societal perception on the male students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali
2. ascertain the extent to which students' skill influence the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:
1. What are the influence of societal perception on the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali?
2. To what extent do Students' skill influence the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Research Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were formulated for the study.
1. There is no significant difference on the mean ratings of HND and ND male students on societal perception of the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali
2. There is no significant difference on the mean ratings of HND and ND male students on the extent students' skill influence the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research approach. The population of the study is 53 Higher National Diploma (HND) and National Diploma (ND) male students of office technology and management Federal Polytechnic Bali. It is an intact population since the population is sizeable to handle. A 17 item structured questionnaire designed by the researchers on a four point rating scale and validated by three experts from the department of OTM Federal Polytechnic Bali was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was titled Determinants of Male Students'

choice of Office Technology and Questionnaire (DMSCOTMQ). Research question one was designed on a rating scale of Strongly Agreed-4points, Agreed-3points, Disagreed-2points and Strongly Disagreed-1point while research question two was Very High Extent-4 High Extent-3, Low Extent-2 and Very Low Extent-1. High Extent is used in Table 2 for research question 2 instead of agreed.

Cronbach alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistence of the test instrument and it yield a coefficient of 0.79 indicating that the instrument was reliable of the study. Data was collected by the researchers and a research assistant. The research assistant was briefed on how questionnaire was administered and collected after completion. The 53 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the target population and 53 copies were collected back after completion. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A mean score of 2.50 and above was the benchmark for agreement while below 2.50 was disagreed. The hypothesis was rejected if the p-value was less than 0.05, it means that there was significant difference. Conversely, where the calculated p-value was equal to or greater than the table value it means that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was upheld.

Results
Research Question 1: What are the influence of societal perception on the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali?

Table 1: Male students mean responses on the influence of societal perception on the choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

S/N	Influence of Societal Perception	Mean	SD	Remark
1. The society looks down on OTM students		2.71	0.87	Agree
2. The society takes secretarial work as the work for women		3.82	0.82	Agree
3. The society downplays the male secretary		3.32	1.01	Agree
4. Male students' feels bad sitting down with female Students in the Typing Pool		2.63	1.22	Agree
5. The society thinks that OTM programme is not prospective		3.14	1.83	Agree
6. Secretaries stop on a low cadre than their counterparts in the public service		2.64	0.98	Agree
7. The society takes OTM as a programme of the unintelligent		2.59	0.73	Agree
8. Male students are discouraged by their peer group		3.19	0.81	Agree
9. Shorthand is an impossible course		2.58	0.72	Agree
10. OTM is no longer relevant in this Technology age		3.12	1.85	Agree
Total Means/SD		**29.74**	**10.84**	
Grand Mean/SD		**3.00**	**1.08**	**Agree**

Table 1 reveals that respondents agreed in all the items on the influence societal perception on the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali, with a mean score ranging from 3.94-2.59. Respondents response proved that the societal perception greatly determines male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali with as the grand mean of 2.79 and standard deviation of 0.88 confirmed it.

Research Question 2: To what extent do students' skill influence the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Table 2: Male students Mean ratings on the extent students skill influence the male

Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali

S/N Influence of students skill	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Male students are not patient in learning Keyboarding skills	2.88	0.69	High Extent
2. Male students lack shorthand skills	3.13	0.86	High Extent
3. Male students are ashamed of OTM programme	2.69	0.98	High Extent
4. Male students lack skill of defending their choice of OTM programme	2.50	1.22	High Extent
5. Male students are easily confused by their mate	2.69	0.98	High Extent
6. Male students lack skill to demonstrate a system and sequence of behaviour	2.88	0.69	High Extent
7. They lack organizing skill	3.13	0.86	High Extent
Total Mean/SD	**19.9**	**6.28**	
Grand Mean/SD	**2.84**	**0.9**	

Table 2 shows that respondents agreed in all the items on the extent students skill influence male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali, with the highest mean score of 3.13 and lowest mean score of 2.50. Respondents' response proved that students skill greatly influences male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali with as the grand mean of 3.16 and standard deviation of 1.01 confirmed it

Hypotheses 1
There is no significant difference on the mean ratings of HND and ND male students on societal perception of the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Table 3: t-test difference between HND and ND male students on societal perception of the male Students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali

Male Students	N	Mean	SD	Sig.	df. Level	t-cal	t-cri.	Remark
HND	7	3.79	1.37	0.05	51	0.883	0.383	NS
ND	46	3.62	1.21					

Source: Field Survey 2020

Table 3 reveals that the aggregate mean ratings of HND and ND male students in Federal Polytechnic Bali on the influence of societal perception of the male Students' choice of OTM programme is 3.79 and 3.62, while the corresponding standard deviation is 1.37 and 1.21. The table shows that the t-cal value is 0.883 at degree of freedom of 51, while the p-value is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, therefore, the hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, the mean responses of HND male students in Federal Polytechnic Bali do not significantly differ from ND students in the same institution.

Null Hypothesis 2
There is no significant difference on the mean ratings of HND and ND male students on the extent students skill influence the male students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali

Table 4: t-test difference between HND and ND male students on the extent Students skill influence the male students' choice of OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali.

Male Students	N	Mean	SD	Sig.	df. level	t-cal	t-cri.	Remark
HND	7	3.72	1.22	0.05	51	0.606	0.353	NS
ND	46	3.45	1.15					

Source: Field Survey 2020

Table 4 indicates that the aggregate mean ratings of HND and ND male students in Federal Polytechnic Bali on the extent students' skill influence male students' choice of OTM programme is 3.72 and 3.45 respectively, while the corresponding standard deviation is 1.22 and 1.15. The table indicates that the t-cal value is 0.606 at degree of freedom of 51, while the p-value is 0.353 at alpha level of (0.05). Hence, the hypothesis was not rejected, therefore, the mean responses of HND male students in Federal Polytechnic Bali do not significantly differ from ND students in the same institution.

Discussion of Findings
Finding from research question one proved that the society looks down on OTM students, the society takes secretarial work as the work for women, the society downplays the male secretary, male students feels bad sitting down with female students in the Typing Pool, the society thinks that OTM programme is not prospective, secretaries stop on a low cadre than their counterparts in the public service and that the society takes OTM as a programme of the unintelligent, shorthand is an impossible course. These findings are in agreement with the study of Amoor (2014) who asserted that the choice of course of study in schools and colleges, and the subsequent path to follow is always a difficult challenge which faces prospective undergraduates. He affirmed that students across the nations are usually faced with the task of academic and career decision taking.

Findings of the study in research question two proved that respondents considered male students are not patient in learning keyboarding skills, male students lack shorthand skills, male students

are ashamed of OTM programme, male students lack skill of defending their choice of OTM programme, male students are easily confused by their mate, male students lack skill to demonstrate a system and sequence of behaviour, they lack organizing skill. The finding is in agreement with the views of Etonyeaku (2013) who opined that skill is the capacity of a person to accomplish a task with desired precision and certainty. It involves practical knowledge in combination with cleverness, expertise, dexterity and ability to perform function which could be acquired or learnt in school. Boytzis (2010) and Atakpa (2014) affirmed that skill is the ability to demonstrate a system and sequence of behaviour that is functionally related to attaining a performance goal.

Findings in Tables 3 and 4 revealed that HND male students in Federal Polytechnic Bali did not differ significantly from ND male students in the same institution on the two hypotheses tested. This is because responses of respondents on societal influence on male students' choice of Office Technology and Management and the influence of skill on male students' choice of OTM programme discourage male students from choosing OTM programme.

Conclusion

The study has established that societal perception and students' skill influence male students' choice of Office Technology and Management. Based on these findings it was concluded that if students are not sensitized and awareness are not created on the relevance of OTM programme male students will continue to see the programme as a female course.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusion of the study, the researcher proffers the following recommendations:
1. OTM Department should hold a seminar especially at entry point for the students to enlighten the students on the relevance of OTM even in this technological age, so that the students can defend the course in the society.
2. Course Advisers, HODs and even lecturers of OTM courses should continue to counsel the students, in order to make the students understand the prestige in OTM positions.
3. Government should make policies necessary to allow secretaries to grow to management level in their chosen career.

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