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## ENACTING BUSINESS EDUCATION BILL INTO LAW: CHALLENGES AND UNDERPINNING IMPERATIVES

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### Abstract

*This review was about the need for enactment of Business Education Bill into law. Factors that would fast-track the enactment process were revealed. These meant that the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN) should first put her house in order by defining the aim of the association, its characteristics, code of conduct and the need for the enactment itself. The issue of membership qualification into the association needed to be settled and the establishment of an institute to build capacity in the profession put in place urgently. The unique nature of Business Education Bill was distinguished from already existing laws and the value of the Bill to the nation when enacted was clearly explained.*

### Introduction

The urgent need for Business Education Law is something quite compelling to business education and business education professionals. The professionals need this law to enable repositioning of the profession and proper regulation of business education practice. The other benefits to be enjoyed by the professionals and the nation at large are unquantifiable. In order to realize the enactment of the law, the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN) must brace up and tackle the challenges along the way. First of all, to put the house in order, ABEN must not only understand fully what it takes to get a bill enacted in the National Assembly but also document ancillary provision requirements from which the law itself will derive its powers.

One of the major preoccupations of great nations, especially developing nations, is to achieve rapid economic growth and development. That is why it is often said that business is the primary concern of any serious nation. The American example has shown that a nation is only as great as its crop of entrepreneurs and business leaders. It is in recognition of this that the government recently made entrepreneurship education a compulsory course in Nigerian tertiary Institutions. Indeed, some educators have posited that because entrepreneurship education is so fundamental to national development, it should be made compulsory at all levels of education. However, there is no adequately trained manpower to drive the programme even at the present level. Business education professionals that are supposed to teach entrepreneurship at the primary and secondary levels are few and the few available are got given the required recognition to teach it. Secondly the B.Ed. Entrepreneurship Education



programme we all yearn to help drive teaching of the course has just been approved by National Universities Commission and will take up to four years before the first set of graduates will be produced. Barely qualified teachers teach our children business subjects at all levels with unpredictable negative consequences. This trend must be reversed if Nigeria is to develop.

### **The Need for the Enactment**

The need to enact ABEN law is not only obvious but long overdue. It will, first and foremost, empower ABEN to establish Institute of Business Education so that it could impart requisite skills in the youths to enable engage themselves. The enactment of the law is more pressing now than any time for the following reasons:

1. **To fully engage the youth.** The lack of Institute of Business Education of Nigeria created a vacuum at the primary and secondary levels of education where no organized training, except general education, exists to catch them young and help to manage the population poor, the school drop outs, the almajiris, and by instilling the principles of personal values, basic personal finance, time management, entrepreneurial skills, Information and Communication Technology skills.
2. **To eradicate poverty and create employment opportunities.** The Institute, through the inculcation of the aforementioned skills, will definitely empower the youth with the requisite skills that will ultimately eradicate poverty as the youth will be easily employed or take opportunities for self-employment.
3. **To close the gaps in our educational system.** Have we imagined why the 6-3-3-4 system of education collapsed? The reason was that at the end of the junior and senior secondary education, those without the capacity for further education had no skills to fall back to and get employed or engage themselves in any meaningful way for survival. They then drop out of school. Hence what we have now are youths who have no skills and are jobless and who indulge in all forms of crime. Even the 6-6-4 system we are trying to operate may fail, if the Institute is not established to provide requisite skills so that the teeming school leavers can be gainfully engaged.
4. **To complement the nation's education system:** The Institute will provide continued education for those who have no capacity for higher education so that they can be useful to themselves and the nation thereby reducing illiteracy. As we all know, illiteracy is another form of poverty.

### **Aims of Business Education Professional Association**

The need to articulate the aims of the Association is very important so that the law makers will make up their mind on its relevance to society. Every

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professional association has aims and that of ABEN must not be assumed but spelt out very clearly. In my opinion, the aims of ABEN can be espoused as follows:

1. To promote the establishment and maintenance of standard of competence and conduct of those engaged and interested to foster and maintain a high standard of professionalism in the field
2. To organize seminars, lectures, workshops, conferences, and in-service training aimed at improving professional standards of members
3. It aims to serve as employment bureau for all members and liaises with employers of labour in respect of job opportunities
4. The professional body will ensure that members and the public at large are provided professional consultative advice. Sanders (1983) enumerated others to include: -
5. guiding the laymen in seeking to understand professional conduct
6. Regulating the relationships between practitioners and between practitioners and clients.
7. Distinguishing the scrupulous and unscrupulous practitioners
8. Acquainting the neotype with his professional obligations, privileges, and rights.
9. Protecting the competent ethical practitioners from unjust attack
10. Protecting reputation of the profession when the code of ethics is violated by one or several of the members

### **Characteristics or Qualities of Business Education Profession**

The only way to determine the qualities and characteristics of business education profession is to ensure that its services conform to strong standards. The following activities which were adapted from National Education Association of the United States of America can serve as a good guide:

1. Its activities must always be essentially intellectual
2. It should command a body of specialized knowledge and skills
3. It requires extended professional preparation.
4. Business education profession demands continuous in-service growth
5. Business education profession affords a life career and permanent membership
6. Business education profession should set up its own standards (e.g., ethical standards, licensure, etc.)
7. The profession exalts service above personal gains
8. The profession has a strong closely knit professional association.



### **Code of Conduct for Business Education Professionals**

Professional ethics are standards that govern the behaviour of members of an association. How should business education professionals behave when making decisions especially when how to behave is not clear-cut? According to Waterman (1988), code of ethics are formal standards and rules based on beliefs about right or wrong, that managers can use to help themselves make appropriate decisions with regards to the interest of their stakeholders.

Since core values are the bases of ethics, ABEN needs to create such core values that must be obeyed by all members and punishment meted on those who fail to obey such values. The following values are proffered for ABEN:

1. Members must have clear understanding of the aims and objectives of business education.
2. Members must practice excellence.
3. Encourage every member to offer quality service at all times.
4. Safeguard the confidence of members' employers, students, clients and former employers by not using such confidential information for personal gains.
5. Trust and honesty of purpose must transcend all other considerations.
6. Protect the interest of members where unjust treatment is meted by employers, clients and other stakeholders.
7. Members must ensure currency of skills and competency through attending conferences, workshops and technical sessions of the association and other related bodies.
8. Members must ensure customer satisfaction.
9. Help business educators grow in their career.
10. Members found guilty of corrupt practices, adjudged bankrupt or fail to satisfy judgement debt, shall have their chartered certificates revoked.

### **Adoption of a Unified Qualification Framework**

One of the problems to be overcome is a clear decision on academic and professional qualifications that must serve as entry permit into Business Education profession. It is obvious that a degree in business education is a given but it should not be enough for a lifelong professional career. Even when M. Sc. and PhD in business education are obtained, a stringent laid-down steps must be charted to ensure that the skills of the professional members are continually upscaled and sharpened through compulsory workshops and conferences. This serves dual purpose - updating skills and compulsory attendance and participation in all activities of the profession.

For other interested candidates whose qualifications are not business education who are admitted into the 'associate' cadre, a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Education (PGDBE) must be made compulsory. This is very important so as to make it clear that a membership of Teachers Registration



Council of Nigeria (TRCN) or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) cannot be substitutes. This distinction is key in order to set aside, *ab initio*, the argument that a PGDE or TRCN are teacher qualifications and that a PGDBE is a duplication or unnecessary. Of course, those admitted through PGDBE qualification, just like others with M. Sc. and PhD in Business education, must also follow the lifelong professional experiences earlier explained. For candidates whose qualifications are lower than a degree in business education or outside business education, admission can only be at the 'associate' level until a PGDE and other certifications are attained and this will be discussed later.

### **Establishment of an Institute for Developing Capacity**

As a matter of necessity, ABEN needs to establish an institute that will be charged with the responsibility of designing and administering development programmes in business education that will enable certifications of members. First, the PGDBE curriculum content need to be developed and other certificate programmes at lower, middle and higher levels established and a clear-cut entry requirements outlined. Apart from the PGDBE curriculum which non-business educators must acquire, certifications in three stages must be charted so that a clear route into and progression in the profession will be clear for all to see.

A committee is required to establish the three stages of certifications and level of entry into each. The committee will also design the PGDBE curriculum which must show a clear departure from the normal PGDE so as to lay to rest any argument that may stem from people who may aver that PGDE is the same with PGDBE and therefore, enough for entry into business education profession.

### **Admitting all Business Graduates in ABEN**

It has become necessary to admit all business graduates into the fold of the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria. First, they have the business skills. All they require now is the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Education not Postgraduate Diploma in Education as the heart of the matter is to show that teaching business courses is a specialized discipline quite different from the general pedagogy obtained from a PGDE. This is why a well designed PDGBE curriculum is central to the survival and prosperity of business education. A strong case therefore, need to be made that any business graduate that does not possess a PGDBE is not qualified to teach business course in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. This is the corner stone and the basis for regulation if Business Education Law is enacted. That is the understanding in the United States of America that is championing business education.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics of Business Education Bill from Existing Regulation Bodies**

What will you tell someone who asserts that Business Education Bill is unnecessary in view of the plethora of related regulatory bodies in Nigeria?



There is the absolute need to convince the naysayers that Business Education Bill is unique and a sine qua non for sustainable national development. How is Business Education Bill different? The following reasons can be adduced.

1. It teaches personal value skills early in life
2. It teaches financial skills at the primary and secondary school levels.
3. It teaches entrepreneurship skills at the primary and secondary school levels.
4. It implements teaching using pedagogies related to business.
5. It is the only discipline whose curriculum is ingrained with technology and technology is driving business.
6. Professionals, in addition to business skills, have teacher qualification and industrial qualification obtained through students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and cooperative education.
7. Business education helps to produce secondary school leavers with entrepreneurship skills thereby preparing them for self-employed or employable if they cannot further their studies.
8. It helps in reducing unemployment in a country.

### **Relevance of Business Education in National Development**

Business educators are the most qualified who possess the pedagogical skills to effectively impart into the youths personal, financial, entrepreneurial, and ICT skills which the business world needs right now. This will increase the small and medium enterprises that will grow the economy. When the institute is established, it will offer continuing professional training to all school drop-outs, other youths and the working class thereby:

1. Enabling them to be fully employed whether by the industry or by working for themselves through competing for millions of digital jobs of the future that will not require them to work for someone.
2. Reducing unemployment as the youths will deploy the skills acquired for meaningful livelihood.
3. Reducing poverty as the youths will learn how to engage themselves in meaningful living.
4. Reducing drastically crimes and criminality that threaten our national life.
5. **Provide the nation with a skilled workforce:** Today's workforce must be increasingly able to handle the complex tasks brought about by the technology and information revolution. Business education subjects provide workers with the necessary basic skills, such as technological literacy, communications, and teamwork skills, that will enable them to think both critically and creatively.
6. **Help Nigeria Keep Pace with Technological Change:** Changes in today's society are occurring at an exponential rate. Association of Business Educators of Nigeria is always looking to the future and



- constantly updating her curriculums to meet innovations and advances that impact the business world.
7. **Encourage Entrepreneurship in the Nation:** An explosion of job growth has occurred in small businesses. Business education subjects help prepare future workers who think entrepreneurially and who recognize and take advantage of new business opportunities.
  8. **Develop Beneficial School/Industry Partnerships:** Companies in Nigeria have an opportunity, through cooperative education, to work with business education teachers to produce employees with skills needed in the business world.
  9. **Ensure the Economic Resilience of Nigeria:** The economic resilience of a nation in a fast-changing economy or in an economic downturn is dependent upon a workforce that is flexible and adaptable to change. Business education subjects can instil a healthy respect for lifelong learning whether it is learning a new technology skill or a new method of management.
  10. **Encourage Companies to Locate Their Business in Nigeria:** In addition to looking for a good transportation system and an attractive tax structure, businesses considering whether or not to establish an office or plant in Nigeria will also look closely at the availability of a skilled workforce, particularly information technology employees. Business education teachers can provide that skilled workforce. They can also work closely with companies to develop programmes that allow future workers to train directly at the company before they graduate.
  11. **Encourage Leadership in Nigeria:** Business education subjects teach leadership skills that give future workers the ability to motivate people, communicate goals, and work to effect change. These skills will produce effective managers in industries as well as the future leaders in our nation.
  12. **Provide International Trade Opportunities:** The globalization of business has created unprecedented opportunities in trade and marketing. Business education subjects prepare future workers to deal with the complexities of different cultures and economic systems so that Nigeria can better take advantage of international opportunities.
  13. **Enhance the Economic Literacy of the Nation:** A workforce that knows how to save and invest, as well as make sound business decisions, contributes to the overall health of the nation's economy. Business education subjects teach the citizens to make responsible decisions regarding purchasing homes or cars, using credit, and making consumer choices.
  14. **Strengthen the Productivity and Prosperity of Nigeria:** A prosperous nation has a workforce trained to meet the diverse needs of the ever-changing world of business. Business education subjects provide future workers with a wide range of vital skills: information technology, business management, entrepreneurship, accounting, finance, and international business.



## **Conclusion**

The need for enactment into law of the Business Education Bill for the practice of business education is self-evident. Business education is the blood stream of economic growth in any nation. The higher the economic literacy of any society, the greater the level of development. All efforts should therefore, be made to promote economic literacy among the populace while best practices among the professionals of business and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria should be encouraged. The enactment will go a long way in this direction. The Bill when passed into law will regulate business education practice, develop and promote on sustainable basis, contemporary curricular to plug the gaps created in the general ones provided by government agencies such as National Educational Development and Research Council, National Commission for Colleges of Education, National Board for Technical Education and the National Universities Commission; create ethos for business education practitioners and introduce penalties for infractions. It would provide training and retraining opportunities for thousands of young men and women, prepare millions of youths for better employment opportunities thus reducing poverty and accelerating the pace of national development.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the review, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. A PGDBE should be adopted by ABEN as a unified qualification framework for all business education professionals.
2. The content of the qualification framework should be developed by ABEN.
3. Institute of Business Education should be established to implement programme development policies.
4. A committee should be set up by ABEN to deal with details that will make the enactment a reality.

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## PERCEIVED INFLUENCES OF OFFICE ERGONOMICS ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARIES IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES IN EBONYI STATE

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### Abstract

*This study examined the perceived influences of office ergonomics on the job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. Four research questions as well as four null hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design guided the study. The population of the study was eight six (86) Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. There was no sampling. A structured questionnaire, validated by two experts in Business Education and one expert in Science Education Departments was used for the study. Using Cronbach alpha statistics, the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.96. Eight six (86) copies of the questionnaire were distributed, 81 was retrieved and used for data analyses. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The results of the study showed that office layout, office furniture, office lightning, and office temperature has influence on the job performance. Hypotheses tested shows that male and female Confidential Secretaries did not differ significantly in their opinions regarding the influences of office layout on job performance; highly experienced and less experienced confidential secretaries differed significantly in their mean responses on the perceived influences of office furniture on job performance; male and female Confidential Secretaries differed significantly in their mean responses on the perceived influences of lightening on job performance; there was no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office temperature on job performance based on their educational qualifications, and also there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influences of noise on job performance based on their grade level. Based on the above findings and implications, it was recommended among others that management in Government Ministries should be concerned about office ergonomics, by create conducive work environment that attracts, retain and motivate its employees, since ignoring these principles will result in low productivity and also increased medical costs to its employees.*

**Keywords:** *Perceived, Influences, Office Ergonomics, Job performance, Confidential Secretaries*



## **Introduction**

In an effort to curb employees' job dissatisfaction and consequent disengagement from the office environment, it has become a new challenge for top management in various organizations to develop workplace environment that attracts, retains and motivates its workforce. Based on this, organizations are stepping outside their time-tested policies and comfort zones to create a new work environment that can satisfy both the physical and the emotional needs of the employees at its core. The organizations are also creating office environments where people can enjoy what they do, feel like they have a purpose, have pride in what they do and are allowed to reach their full potentials. This paradigm is connected with the new thinking that the office hazards associated with office ergonomics affects employee productivity and contraction in carrying out office function- both positively and negatively.

Peter and Nnadi (2018) noted that the question of industrial safety is fast changing the way office environment and jobs are designed. Business organizations are now designing their office environment to suit office employees' circumstances like the physically challenged employees. Jobs are designed not just to reduce or eliminate industrial hazards but ensure that the health of the office employees (like avoiding sitting all day long) is factored in. All these are aimed at achieving one thing, work environment-employee-job-fit. In the same vein, Hansika and Amarathunga (2016) stated that office environment features need be design in a favorable manner in which confidential secretaries will be motivated enough to perform well in the organizations. This implies that work environment has to be well taken care of like any other human environment as substantial numbers of individuals' hours are spent in the work environment, especially the office environment. Abdu (2017) noted that office environment need to be taken care of, because it involves a lot of continuous movements, activities and events which increase serious health issue, welfare and overall office workers' job performance. Abdu (2017) noted further that the work of keyboarding functions among typist, secretaries and computer users have been noted as a major factor in the development of carpal tunnel syndrome (a painful condition of hand, fingers and wrist caused pressure on a nerve because of repeated movement over time). Ekstrand, Mari and Sigrid (2018) noted that sitting in office environment while working for a very long period of time in office environment has been noted to cause lower back disorder and several cases of cardiovascular diseases (a disease connected with the heat and blood vessels).

According to Vimalunathan and Ramesh (2017) an office is a room where professional duties and administrative work is carried out in the organization building. Igwe (2019) also described office as any place where information on paper and information is documented converges, preserved and used for current operations of the businesses. Segun, Atinuke and Akeem (2017) define office ergonomics as the scientific use of human data to design a workstation,



work center, or working environment to create a job friendly environment for individual workers. International Ergonomics Association (2017) expressed office ergonomics as an integrated approach where considerations of environmental, physical, cognitive, social, organizational and other relevant factors are taken into account to intensify the design and appraisal of tasks, jobs, products, environments and systems in order to make them suitable with the needs, abilities and limitations of Confidential Secretary. According to Occupational Safety and Health Academy (OSHA) (2017), office ergonomics involves the designing of office environment, work practices and work flow to suit the Confidential Secretaries' comfort and spur their capabilities or productivity. It is also an aspect of office design that reduces risk factors that contribute to common work related injuries and illnesses, such as sprains and strain and cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). The design of office environment that make secretaries to work in wrong postures all the time may bring excessive efforts, fatigue and discomfort to office employee. These designs in office environment according to Occupational Safety and Health Academy (2017) "can cause damage to some of the body unit such as muscles, tendons, ligament, nerves and blood vessels. Such Injuries are known as musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)".

Job performance is defined by Baumeister and Showers in Omoneye (2016) as the execution of a task in a situation that allows optimal outcome. It is also seen as the ability of Secretaries to achieve the organization's criteria. Confidential Secretaries are regarded to achieve good performance when they meet up with the set goals and objectives of an organisation and as such, secretary job performance could have a great influence on an organization's overall performance. Mathis and Jackson (2019) noted that job performance of Confidential Secretaries is associated with quantity and quality of output, timeliness of output, presence on the job, efficiency and/or effectiveness of work completed. Thao and Hwang (2019) also expressed job performance as the successful completion of tasks by an individual(s), as set and measured by the system, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resource within a changing environment. According to the National Safety Council in USA established that on an average workday, one million office workers will be absent from work due to job stress caused by ergonomic hazard. This implies that office environment has impact on the job performance of Confidential Secretaries.

Olufunwa (2015) defined Confidential Secretary as an individual who is employed in an organization for providing secretarial, clerical, and administrative support in order to ensure that services are provided in an effective and efficient manner. He is expected to have a proficient knowledge in the following areas: office administration, an understanding of relevant legislation, policies and procedures. A Confidential Secretary is a top-level officer who reports to a senior executive in an organization. Confidential Secretaries are employed in



Government Ministries to assist in processing information in the office. It is categorized in various grade levels based on the qualification and work experiences which includes: Confidential Secretary grade level 05, Confidential Secretary grade level 06, Confidential Secretary grade level 07, Confidential Secretary on grade level 08, Senior Confidential Secretary on grade level 10, Principal Confidential Secretary on grade level 12, Assistant Chief Confidential Secretary grade level 13 and Chief Confidential Secretary grade level 14

Exemplis (2014) noted that it is difficult for office employees to be productive when physically uncomfortable. Any office provisions including furniture fittings, level of noise, workstations, lighting, temperature etc. that makes Confidential Secretary uncomfortable in the short or long period, can affect their job performance and productivity. This is because office environment without ergonomic inputs can lead to the development of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) among secretaries in the organisation. This disorder is recognized as the most prevalent of all safety issues in the Nigerian public sector (Obi, 2015). This could invariably reduce the efficiency and performance of Confidential Secretary while working. In this study, the ambient features in office ergonomics includes: office layout, furniture, lighting, temperature, and noise, are the elements of the office environment which influence confidential secretaries' attitudes, behaviours, satisfaction and job performance.

Office layout according to Nwosu (2012) is the management of all physical components of the office within the available floor space to provide maximum effectiveness and the coordination of these components into an efficient and attractive unity. The layout of workspace is one of the main contributors to office design where it relates the usage of space and design of the workspace will increase secretaries' job performance. According to Chandrasekar (2020), the designs of office environment have influences on the behaviour of Secretaries and this behaviour drives the performance level low. This implies that office layout is an essential part of the ergonomic factor in the workplace; poor layout and overcrowding of office environment will not lead to optimization but only increases the chance of getting injured or getting involved in accidents such as tripping or striking against objects. Mwbex (2018) and O'Neil (2018) noted that office layout design help secretaries to engage with one another on a more regular and informal basis, and fosters an environment of mutual support and cooperation for effective job performance. In the same vein, Chandrasekar (2018) found that the poor layout of office environment has influences on behaviour of office workers and this behaviour drives the performance level to be very low.

Another part of office ergonomics is office furniture. Shruti (2019) stated that office furniture comprises of desks chairs, the filing system, shelves, drawers, etc. All these components have a specific role to play in the proper functioning of any office and the productivity and the efficiency of the Confidential Secretaries. Office furniture is important because Confidential Secretaries has to



work with them for the entire time that he/she is in office, and if he/she is uncomfortable and furniture is not user friendly, their working style and job performance gets hampered considerably, in turn affects job performance of Confidential Secretaries. Kingsley, (2018) noted that poorly designed furniture has influences on job performance because it can increase employees' stress and fatigue level which brings back pain and eyestrain and also lead to lack of morale and low job performance of workers. Sehgal (2012) also noted that office furniture such as desks chairs, the filing system, shelves, drawers, etc., have a specified part to play in the productivity and the efficiency of the office employees and the suitable functioning of any office. Also, this finding supports Shruti (2019) who noted that furniture in the office have a specific role to play in the proper functioning of any office and the productivity and the efficiency. Shruti further noted that non-ergonomic office furniture can also lead to health problems of employees, which again has an adverse impact on the productivity of office worker.

Temperature is the degree or intensity of heat present in a substance or object, especially as expressed according to a comparative scale and shown by a thermometer or perceived by touch (Dictionary.com). Amna, Umar, and Muhammad (2017) opined that Confidential Secretaries performance reduces when the office temperature increases. Sparks, Cable, Doran, and Maclaren (2018) also noted that office temperature has influence on the health of Confidential Secretaries negatively as there is an increase in cardiovascular stress because of temperature. Sparks et al further stated that the duration of a task and how long Secretaries exposes to high temperature can affect his/her job performance. This mean when the temperature is too hot (above than 900F) or too cold (less than 500F) can have influence on job performance of confidential secretaries. A study conducted by Fisk and Lei, (2016) study also revealed that performance increases when the office temperature is up to 21-22°C and decreases with temperature above 23-24°C. Kamarulzaman, (2018) also reveals that when the air-conditioning system was introduced, confidential secretaries feel that their workplace is more comfortable and the productivity tends to increase by 5-15 percent because they can concentrate on their work.

Another factor that can influence the job performance of secretaries is noise. Navai and Veitch (2013) defined noise as a physiological concept involving unwanted sound perceived by the listener as being unpleasant, bothersome, distracting or physiologically harmful. Noise is defined as unwanted sound, is the most common complaint in offices workplace. Many scholars have indicated that exposing office workers to noisy place can affect their job performance. Noise can be measured by decibels. When noise within office environment exceeded 80 decibels, can damage hearing, if it does exceed it, can lead to annoyance while performing the office task. Nwosu (2012) noted that noise within office environment can cause irritation, distraction and reduce performance of office workers. Similarly, National Open University of Nigeria,



(NOUN, 2014) opined that noise has been one of the major problems affecting effectiveness in an office. Excessive noise, apart from being injurious to health, has been known to affect productivity of Confidential Secretaries. According to Ajala (2012) besides discomfort, noise causes distraction as well which leads to reduction in productivity and increases the stress level and inaccuracies while performing office functions.

Government Ministries are Civil Service Departments that are responsible for delivering various types of government service. Each ministry is headed by a Permanent Secretary who reports to a commissioner in a State or Minister in the Federal Cabinet. It is also a public establishment, owned, financed controlled and managed organization. Therefore, effective and efficient Government Ministries are one that has workers who exhibit high levels of job quality performance, high productivity and organizational commitments. Ebonyi State has twenty one (21) Ministries and five (5) Federal Ministries located within the State Capital, Abakaliki. However, in the Government Ministries in Ebonyi State where professionalism is highly emphasized, it is worthy to note that in spite of the growing need for better office environment; much attention has not been given to the quality of workplace environment by management in the Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. This is evidenced by the unsafe and unhealthy work place environment in some of Government Ministries and non-Ministerial Departments in Ebonyi State, which among others include: poorly designed office layout, unsuitable furniture that are not ergonomics compliant, lack of ventilation, inappropriate lighting arising from erratic power supply, excessive noise due to generator explosion and insufficient safety measures in fire emergencies. These precarious situations have apparently led to intellectual drain and decrease in performance of Confidential Secretaries especially in the Government Ministries and non-ministerial Departments in Ebonyi State. It is against the foregoing that this study examines the perceived influences of office ergonomics on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.

### **Statements of the Problem**

Office ergonomics today is gradually becoming a topic of interest among small and multi-national organizations. The increasing need for proficient of office employees especially, confidential secretaries have equally led to increased attention to office ergonomics. But, in today's industrialized and mechanical society, employers have been neglecting the importance of creating a conducive workplace where employees are given the prospects of having a variety of stimulating collaborative settings to make the working day more flexible, social and productive. According to Occupational Health Safety and Health Academy (OHSHA, 2017), as well as International Association for Improving Office Performance activities have noted that office ergonomics for long has not been receiving attention. However, office ergonomics has important



role to play in improving office employee's health, comfort, and productivity. Most importantly, many office employees, especially Confidential Secretaries, were reported to have given up their employment due to poor office environment. These secretaries have given employers, employees as well as scholars an eye opener to the need for improved attention to office ergonomics. Unfortunately, in our local environment, it is common that office ergonomics is never considered as a factor considered important in office productivity and output. The office comfort for office employees are not taken to focus.

Secondly a preliminary investigation conducted by the researchers shows that Government Ministries in Ebonyi State are characterized by unsafe and unhealthy work environment which include gross inadequate office space, unsuitable furniture and furnishing, lack of ventilation, in-appropriate lighting and excessive noise. This scourge will adversely affect the psyche, intellect and job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. This is so because by virtue of their working in such dangerous environment, they will be exposed to occupational hazards such as diseases and accidents. Again, it is also common to hear Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State complaining of back-ache, poor vision, internal heat, insomnia and so on, due to poor attention to office ergonomics. However, one may begin to speculate that some of the health discomfort like stress, strain, muscular pains that often frustrate office employee performance may have been stemming from our poor attention to office ergonomics. It is on the basis of this neglect to office ergonomics and to the detriment of secretaries' job performance that this study seek to ask what is the perceived influence of office ergonomics on the job performance of Confidential secretaries in government ministries in Ebonyi State?

### **Research Questions**

To achieve the purpose of the study, the following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the perceived influences of office layout on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?
2. What are the perceived influences of office furniture on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?
3. What are the perceived influences of office temperature on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?
4. What are the perceived influences of noise on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses formulated for the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.



- HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office layout on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.
- HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of less experienced and highly experienced Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office furniture on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.
- HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office temperature on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State based on their educational qualifications.
- HO<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office temperature on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State based on their grade levels.

### **Method**

This study utilized descriptive survey design. The researcher chose this design for the study as this study aimed at surveying the opinions of Confidential Secretaries in Ebonyi State Ministries, Abakaliki. The study was carried out in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is a part of the South-East Geo-political zone in Nigeria with its capital town in Abakaliki. The choice of this area is that the present study has not been carried out in this area according to the record available to the researchers. The population of the study comprised of 86 confidential secretaries from State and Federal Ministries in Ebonyi State. The population involved 66 Confidential Secretaries from state and 20 Confidential Secretaries from Federal Ministries in Ebonyi State. The entire population was studied because it is of a manageable size. The instrument for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled: Perceived Influences of Office Ergonomics on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries Questionnaire (PIOEJPCSQ). The questions were structured on a 4point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Business Education and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Science Education all in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to test consistency of the instrument and a general coefficient of 0.96. The researcher administered 86 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents with the help of two research assistants who were trained by the researcher in order to enhance the administration and the return rate of the questionnaire from the respondents. The respondents, due to their tight schedules, were given a day to complete the questionnaire after which they were visited for the retrieval of the completed copies. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-



test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 or above was regarded as accepted while mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as not accepted. For the test of hypotheses, the null hypotheses were rejected if the t-calculated is greater than the t-critical value at 0.05 level of significant, while it was accepted if the t-calculated is less than the t-critical value at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question One:** What are the perceived influences of office layout on the job performance of confidential secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?

**Table 1:** Mean Responses of Confidential Secretaries' on the Perceived Influences of Office Layout on the Job Performance

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remarks
1	Office layout create flexible space for confidential secretaries	38	19	16	8	3.07	1.03	Accepted
2	Office layout enhance reduction in office set up	26	19	14	22	2.60	1.20	Accepted
3	office layout accommodates spreader number of confidential secretaries in offices	31	37	5	8	3.12	0.91	Accepted
4	office layout facilitate easy communication among confidential secretaries	30	22	8	21	2.75	1.21	Accepted
5	office layout increase interaction between confidential secretaries.	33	16	28	4	2.96	0.98	Accepted
6	office layout increases job satisfaction of confidential secretaries	18	33	24	6	2.77	0.88	Accepted
7	office layout increases confidential secretaries moral	26	39	12	4	3.07	0.81	Accepted
8	office layout increases high aesthetic judgment of confidential secretaries	31	22	10	18	2.81	1.17	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>2.89</b>	<b>1.78</b>	<b>A</b>

The analysis in Table 1 reveals that all the six item statements received mean ratings above the cut-off point of 2.50. The mean ratings of these items range from 2.60 to 3.07. Therefore, the confidential secretaries accepted all the eight items as the perceived influences of office layout on the job performance of confidential secretaries.

**Research Question Two:** What are the perceived influences of office furniture on the Job performance of confidential secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?

**Table 2: Mean Responses of Confidential Secretaries' perceived Influences of furniture on the job performance of Confidential Secretaries**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
9	Good office furniture improve sitting posture to confidential secretaries for effective job performance	41	22	13	5	3.22	0.93	Accepted
10	Non ergonomic office furniture cause back pain to secretaries	39	12	25	5	3.04	1.02	Accepted
11	Ergonomic furniture reduces demotivation in completing office work	30	21	15	15	2.81	1.13	Accepted
12	Ergonomic furniture allows secretaries to adjust their allows based on individual performances.	37	17	21	6	3.04	1.01	Accepted
13	Ergonomic furniture increase moral of confidential secretaries	38	19	18	6	3.09	0.99	Accepted
14	Ergonomic furniture increase concentration of confidential secretaries which increase their job performance.	35	18	12	16	2.88	1.17	Accepted
15	Ergonomic furniture reduces the risk of getting injury by secretaries	30	25	19	7	2.97	1.07	Accepted
16	Ergonomic furniture reduces musculoskeletal problems to secretaries.	33	21	10	17	2.86	1.17	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>3.37</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Information on Table 2 shows that means 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 have high mean scores of above 2.50 which indicates that the respondents accepted all the items as influences of office furniture on job performance of confidential secretaries in Government ministries in Ebonyi State

**Research Question Three:** What are the perceived influences of office temperature on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?

**Table 3: Mean Responses of Confidential Secretaries' on the Perceived Influences of Temperature on the Job Performance.**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
17	Excessive heat exposures create well-known risks of heat stroke to confidential secretary	34	21	11	15	2.91	1.14	Accepted



18	Excessive heat exposures cause office secretaries to heat exhaustion	43	14	18	6	3.16	1.01	Accepted
19	Excessive heat affects the psychological health of the confidential secretaries.	32	24	21	4	3.03	0.92	Accepted
20	Excessive heat exposures cause office secretary lethargy and tiredness	34	21	16	10	2.97	1.06	Accepted
21	Increased body temperature lead to decrease efficiency confidential secretary.	20	25	16	20	2.55	1.11	Accepted
22	Low temperature in office environment decrease job efficiency of confidential secretary due to cooler body heat and shivering	21	35	22	3	2.91	0.82	Accepted
23	Low office temperature causes secretaries to make mistakes than at optimal room temperature	26	21	11	23	2.61	1.21	Accepted
24	Good office temperature, increases better performance of confidential Secretaries.	30	34	12	5	3.09	0.87	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>3.25</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Data in Table 3 above show that means 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 received a mean score above 2.50. This implies that the respondents accepted that office temperature has influence on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State

**Research Question Four:** What are the Perceived influences of Noise on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State?

**Table 4:** Mean Responses of Confidential Secretaries' on the Perceived Influences of Noise on the Job Performance.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
25	Nose cause discomfort on confidential secretaries which reduce their job performance	34	41	3	3	3.30	0.71	Accepted
26	Noisy office environment lead to laziness and lower productivity of office secretaries	23	32	17	9	2.85	0.96	Accepted



27	Noise causes lack of concentration on confidential secretaries	24	37	6	14	2.87	1.02	Accepted
28	Noise brings fatigue to confidential secretaries which affect their productivity	22	44	9	6	3.01	0.82	Accepted
29	Noise-induced hearing loss of the confidential secretaries in office environment	13	16	4	48	1.92	1.20	Accepted
30	Noise causes office ergonomics hazards which affect job productivity of confidential secretaries.	36	23	15	7	3.08	0.99	Accepted
31	Noise reduce the creativity of confidential secretaries which affect job performances	30	25	19	7	2.96	0.98	Accepted
32	Noise lead to errors in typing office documents which bring low job efficiency	35	19	17	10	2.97	1.07	Accepted
						<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.96</b>	Accepted

Data in Table 4 presents the results of the ratings of confidential secretaries on perceived influences of noise on the job performance of confidential secretaries. The Data Table a showed that items 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 41 received a mean score above 2.50. This implies that the respondents accepted that noise within office environment influences their job performance

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office layout on job performance.

**Table 5:** Summary of t-test Analysis of the Mean Responses of Male and Female Confidential Secretaries on the Perceived Influence of Office Layout on Job Performance

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean (X)	S.D	D.f	t.cal	t.crit	Decision	Significance
Male	36	2.63	0.96	79	0.61	2.000	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not significant
Female	45	2.48	1.19					

From the Table above it was found that the calculated t-value (1.39) is less than the critical t-value of 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the result, the null hypothesis is accepted indicating that there is no significant difference in the



mean responses of male and female confidential secretaries on the perceived influences of office layout on job performance

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of less experienced and highly experienced Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office furniture on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.

**Table 6:** Summary of t-test Result on mean scores of less experienced and highly experienced Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influences of office furniture on job performance

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean (X)	S.D	D.f	t.cal	t.crit	Decision	Significance
Highly Experienced	37	3.24	0.72	79	2.20	2.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Less Experienced	44	2.81	0.97					

The results presented on Table above shows that the t-calculated value 2.20 is greater than 2.00 critical value ( $2.20 > 2.000$ ) at 0.05 level of significance, and 79 degree of freedom. This implied that there is significant difference in the mean responses of less experienced and highly experienced confidential secretaries on the perceived influences of office furniture on job performance

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influences of office temperature on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State based on their educational qualifications.

**Table 7:** Summary of t-test Result on mean scores of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influences of office temperature on job performance based on their educational qualifications

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean (X)	S.D	D.f	t.cal	t.crit	Decision	Significance
OND/NCE	45	3.20	0.86	79	0.57	2.000	Accept H <sub>0</sub>	Not Significant
HND/B.Sc	36	3.30	0.78					

From the Table above, it was found that the calculated t-value (0.57) is less than the critical t-value of 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the result, the null hypothesis is accepted indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influences of office



temperature on their job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State based on their educational qualifications.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of office noise on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.

**Table 8:** Summary of t-test Result on Mean Scores of Confidential Secretaries on the perceived influence of noise on job performance based on their grade level

Variable (Grade level)	Number of Cases	Mean (X)	S.D	D.f	t.cal	t.crit	Decision	Significance
05-10	42	2.38	1.22	79	1.40	2.00	Accept	Not significant
11-14	39	2.75	1.13			0	HO	

The result presented in Table 8 show that the t-calculated value of 1.40 is less than 2.00 critical value ( $1.40 < 2.000$ ) at 0.05 level of significance, and 79 degree of freedom. This indicated that there is no significant difference in the opinion of confidential secretaries on the perceived influences of noise on their job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State based on their grade level.

### Discussion

The findings of the study showed that office layout has influence on job performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. This finding is so because when the office that is too crowded and restricted, lead to stress, pressure and other psychological impact which may make employees to feel unstable and have lack of freedom and motivation, on the short-run; it may lead to a very stressful environment, which decreases the quality of the job performance. This finding is in line with Mwbex (2018) and O'Neil (2018) who noted that office layout design help secretaries to engage with one another on a more regular and informal basis, and fosters an environment of mutual support and cooperation for effective job performance. In the same vein, Chandrasekar (2018) found that the poor layout of office environment has influences on behaviour of office workers and this behaviour drives the performance level to be very low. The result of the t-test analysis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female confidential secretaries on the perceived influence of office layout on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. This means that the opinions of the male and female Confidential Secretaries are the same indicating a common view of both on the perceived influence of office layout on job performance in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State.



The study revealed that office furniture has influence on the job performance of confidential secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State. This finding is in agreement with the view of Kingsley, (2012) who noted that poorly designed furniture has influences on job performance because it can increase employees' stress and fatigue level which brings back pain and eyestrain and also lead to lack of morale and low job performance of workers. Sehgal (2018) also noted that office furniture such as desks chairs, the filing system, shelves, drawers, etc., have a specified part to play in the productivity and the efficiency of the office employees and the suitable functioning of any office. Also, this finding supports Shruti (2018) who noted that furniture in the office have a specific role to play in the proper functioning of any office and the productivity and the efficiency. Shruti further noted that non-ergonomic office furniture can also lead to health problems of employees, which again has an adverse impact on the productivity of office worker. The t-test analysis revealed there is significant difference between less experienced and highly experienced confidential secretaries on the perceived influence of office furniture on job performance. This implies that there is significant difference between less experienced and highly experienced confidential secretaries on the perceived influence of office furniture on job performance.

The result of the investigation as shown in table 3 shows that office temperature has influence on job performance of confidential secretaries. This statement explains that when an employee feels comfortable with the workplace environment, things that can distract their work can be reduced and they can perform better. This finding concur with the findings of Moloney (2017) confirmed this when it was established that controllability of system for thermal comfort and lighting improved productivity of workers between 0.2 and 3 percent. Good ventilation and room temperature increased productivity and reduces stress in workers. This findings also agreed with the findings of Fisk and Lei, (2016) noted that performance increases when the office temperature is up to 21-22°C and decreases with temperature above 23-24°C. Kamarulzaman (2019) also reveals that when the air-conditioning system was introduced, confidential secretaries feel that their workplace is more comfortable and the productivity tends to increase by 5-15 percent because they can concentrate on their work. Furthermore, the results of the t-test analysis revealed that educational qualifications of Confidential Secretaries do not differ significantly in there mean responses on the perceived influence of office temperature on job performance.

The study also revealed that confidential secretaries agreed that noise within office environment influence their job performance. The study also revealed that: noisy office environment lead to laziness and lower productivity of confidential secretaries, noise causes lack of concentration on confidential secretaries, noise brings fatigue to confidential secretaries which affect their productivity, noise-induced hearing loss of the workforce in office environment, noise causes office ergonomics hazards which affect job productivity of



confidential secretaries, noise reduce the creativity of confidential secretaries which affect job performances, noise lead to errors in typing office documents which bring low job efficiency of confidential. The finding showed that the absence of noise increased confidential secretary's productivity due to less distractions and reduction in job-related stress. The findings is in consonance with work of Bruce (2018) who noted that reduction in office noise reduces physical symptoms of stress by as much as 27% and performance of data-entry workers increased with a 10% improvement in accuracy.

### **Conclusion**

Sequel to the findings of the study, this study establishes that office ergonomics plays a significant role in determining the performance of employees as it influences their job satisfactions level. Office ergonomics plays a vital role in motivating confidential secretaries to perform their assigned job. Good office environment if provided for Confidential Secretaries will go a long way to enhance their morale and job performance. When office environment is neat, noiseless, properly arranged well lighted and ventilated, Confidential Secretaries will feel a sense of belonging and this will make them to work efficiently and effectively. Good physical working environment inspires confidential secretaries to spend more time in their various offices, Confidential Secretaries responded emotionally better towards the provision of good office environment by not absenting themselves unnecessarily from work, lateness to work and other negative attitude will be drastically reduced. Good working environment increase Confidential Secretaries output therefore leading to growth of the organization. This aligns with the dictates of the theory this work was built upon which believe in the importance of recognizing human beings and their needs as paramount in achieving organizational commitment and high productivity. From the findings of the study, which identifies substantial office ergonomic lapses such as inadequate office illumination, use of un-ergonomic furniture, appreciable noise levels and pockets of safety hazards, it is obvious that Government Ministries in Ebonyi State is yet to leverage on its workplace environment as a means of motivating and enhancing the performance of its confidential secretaries.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are offered:

1. Management in Government Ministries should be concerned about office ergonomics, by create conducive work environment that attracts, retain and motivate its employees, since ignoring these principles will result in low productivity and also increased medical costs to its employees.
2. Management in Government Ministries should put ergonomic compliant chairs that are rotational and have adjustable height of 38-54cm which allows sufficient leg space and the ability to flex the knees by 90 degree



- with a backrest of 50cm in order to make confidential secretaries more comfortable while working.
3. Government should provide government ministries in Ebonyi State modern split air conditioners, standing or ceiling fan in every office in the ministries, to circulate the humidity and maintain an ideal office temperature of 22-26 degrees Celsius for effective discharge of office function.
  4. Management in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State should made work environment less noisy by regulating the activities within the ministries in Ebonyi State.

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## EFFECTS OF PAUSE PROCEDURE ON PERFORMANCE OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STUDENTS IN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The study investigates the Effects of Pause procedure on Performance of Financial Students in College of Education, Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were tested for the study. Quasi experimental research using post-test control groups design serves as a design of the study. The population of the study consisted of seven hundred and thirty-five (735); male and female advanced financial accounting students NCE III in federal colleges of education in the business education departments. Three hundred and forty-five (345) advanced financial Accounting Students in Federal College of Education Kano State served as a sample size of the study which were selected using a purposive sampling procedure. The instrument used for data collection is the Financial Accounting Achievement Test which was designed as well as adopted by the researcher. The instrument was vetted by four experts in research who are not below the rank of readers and professors so as to remove all ambiguities of the instrument for the students. Pilot study was carried out at Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education Kumbotso. The reliability coefficient of the instrument obtained was 0.86. The independent t-test was used in testing the null hypotheses all at 0.005 level of significance. The findings of the research concluded that pause teaching is the appropriate method to be used while teaching students financial accounting for the improvement of their performance, The recommendations were made as Pause procedures should be used by the lecturers in teaching students financial accounting in Federal Colleges of Education so as to improve their performance.*

**Keywords:** *Effects, Financial Accounting Students, Pause Procedure, Performance, Colleges of Education, Nigeria.*

### Introduction

Pause procedure is an organised way of teaching that favours the interchange of ideas, experiences, skills, attitudes and knowledge among students in order to meaningfully interact between students and their lecturers while teaching in the class. Pause procedure permits the students to read, write and repeat on the issues, ideas and concerns of financial accounting in the class by the breaks given to them by the lecturers during the lecturing process. Pause procedure helps the lecturers to identify the students' strength and weakness so as to resolve it properly and improve their performance. The Pause procedure is



a teaching method that socialises students' learning mastery and enhances their academic achievement, simply by their responses to self-directed teaching method with the guidance and direction of the lecturers, from the breaks given to them so as to perform most of the activities in the class by themselves (Ruhl, 2015).

Generally speaking, pause is a teaching method that represents an evolutionary process, which is based on the through exploration, deduction, analysis, synthesis, generalisation. Pause procedure uses students' abstraction and focusing on making connections between their senses and requiring a deep intellectual, psychomotor and emotional involvement of what students had been taught through brainstorming of their inner ability by the time given to them by the lecturer(s) during the teaching situation. Pause is a teaching method that enables students to discover; imagine, build and redefine the meanings of subjects such as financial accounting, filtering them through the commitment of their own personality and involving their higher mental abilities and creative processes. Pause procedure is a teaching method in which the lecturer makes use of breaks so as to provide students with time during which they can review their notes, discuss among their peers or undertake any similar activities that help them to retain the materials given to them by the lecturers in order to improve their performance (Chowdhury, 2016).

Students' performance refers to the act that shows how well students prepared, organised, gathered and acquired on subjects through examinations or tests which were given to them by the lecturers and performed significantly better. Students performed very well and mastered the materials presented to them by the lecturers in a class for the achievement and accomplishment of their goals in a given course of study such as financial accounting. This is in line with the position of Ibrahim (2012) who stated that students' performance in financial accounting could be as a result of a number of factors, including their level of motivation, encouragement and gender of the students.

Gender refers to the factor that has an effect on students' performance in learning subjects due to the fact that in some fields of study such as business education in the office, females performed significantly better than the male counterpart in word processing while in accounting male students performed significantly better. In the same vein another factor that is assumed to have a considerable effect on students' performance is gender. Indeed, differences in how both males and females perform academically have been noticed but need scientific confirmation (Hdii & Fagroud 2019). This is in line with the performance of students in their study of the accounting subject, such as financial accounting.

Financial accounting refers to the process of collecting; classifying, summarising, analysing, recording and interpreting financial information that deals with the preparation and presentation of financial statements to the external users in order to make appropriate decisions. The external users of financial accounting include stockholders, suppliers, bankers, employees,



government agencies, among others. This is in line with the position of Abdullahi (2015) who defined financial accounting as a specialised area of instruction that deals with the reporting to outsiders, such as shareholders, analysts, creditors and the general public. Users of financial accounting such as outsiders do not have access to the managerial accounting report(s) and also do not have the mandate to determine what financial accounting information could be reported to them. They depend solely on whatever information presented before them in the annual report(s). (Abdullahi, 2016).

### **Review Related Literature**

This research is linked and based on one (1) theory: The Symbolic Interactionism Theory by (George Herbert Mead 1920). The reason for choosing this theory is that: the theory deals with the interaction between students and lecturers as a result of the break given to them for the purpose to repeat what was done so as to ascertain the level of their understanding skills that enhance students' performance in teaching financial accounting using affecting teaching methods such as Pause procedure. Pause procedure allows the students to interact with their lecturers while teaching in the class before the time.

### **Symbolic Interactionism Theory:**

This perspective of the theory relies on the symbolic interaction meaning that people develop and rely upon in the process of interaction between two or more people in performing activities. Although symbolic interactionism traces its origin to Max Weber's assertion that individuals act according to their interpretation of the meaning of their world, the American philosopher, George Herbert Mead, introduced this perspective to American sociology in the 1920s. This is in line with the position of Korgen and Write (2008) who opined that symbolic interaction theory focused how people interact in their daily lives by means of symbolic interaction and how they create order and meaning that led the supervisors to correct the students' correction such as amending, deletion, editing the text of theses and dissertation.

### **Concept of the Pause Procedure**

The Pause procedure refers to the teaching method in which the lecturer gives students breaks while teaching in the class. Pause procedure creates a state of flow and increases learners' intrinsic motivation through the interaction of students and their lecturers while teaching in the class. Pause procedure gives the students chance so as to repeat what were done in the class by the lecturers purposely to help the lecturers to identify the strength and weakness of the students in the course and resolve it properly. It is reasonable to expect that students would be more motivated in order to engage in the educational contents, thereby increasing their performance. The Pause procedure is one of the active teaching methods, which requires very little class time and can significantly enhance students' learning. The idea of breaking the lecture into

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brief pause was categorically described in the work of Rowe, Frantz and Bozalek (2013). Their work suggests that pausing in between lectures after every 13-28 minutes will increase students' attention and teaching methods. Ruhl (2015) conducted a study where she used the 'pause procedure' every 12-18 minutes during her class compared the students' performance with those taught using the lecture method in the class. During the pause procedure, the students worked in pairs for ten minutes. Students discussed their notes and reworked on the notes especially where they are not understood by the break given to them in order to solve their problems with the help, assistance and guidance of the lecturers. There was lecturer-student interaction while teaching with the use of a Pause procedure in the class. The Pause procedure plays an important role in the improvement of students' performance (Sava, 2016).

### **Concept of Students Performance**

Students' performance refers to the ability of students in order to score high grades in a test or examination after the teaching process has taken place by lecturers for giving the students a test or examination, which they pass very well. Students' performance according to Rothstein (2012) refers to a successful accomplishment of performance in a particular subject area of study in a given school by professional lecturers. Students' performance, according to Rothstein (2012), deals with students' studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their lecturers in a fixed time or year. Also, Yeboah and Dominic (2014) explained that students' performance refers to students' ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate knowledge verbally or written down on paper. This is in line with the findings of Norman (2014), who carried out an analysis of factors leading to students' success in intermediate accounting. Norman was interested to find out if factors, such as students' performance in other courses, age, gender and the primary language of communication, affected financial accounting students' success.

### **Concept of Financial Accounting**

Financial accounting has been discussed by different authors who shared the same ideology based on their definitions. Financial accounting is a process by which data relating to the economic activities of an organisation are measured, recorded and communicated to the interested parties for the purpose of analysis and interpretation so as to make proper decisions for their businesses. It tells owners/managers and other stakeholders of the business what is happening in it. Financial accounting provides information to a wide range of interested groups, and ultimately shows how a business has been managed for a period-whether successfully or otherwise. Financial accounting also provides information regarding the financial position of a firm as at the due date of making decisions using skills as well as to guide the gender and improve students' performance (Okoye, Uniamikogbo & Adeusi, 2017).



### **Gender and Students Performance**

This implies that if there are any differences between males and females, they remain the same for all the years and the gap between boys and girls does not change significantly from one year to another. As far as the performance is concerned and as shown females undeniably outperform males for all the years of the present study. This gap varies from 1.14 in 2014 to 1.5 in 2011. There are also differences over the years and the highest grades were obtained in 2014 (13.7) and the lowest ones in 2010 (12.7). Although the range is small, it is statistically significant due to the small values of standard-deviation which indicates that grades are somehow homogeneous. Males and females' final results of the year from 2010 to 2015 concerning thereabouts that are indicated in the literature as female fields, namely sociology and English, gender effect was evaluated. Sociology results indicate that there is no interaction between years and gender and no effect of years; in other words, the level of students doesn't change over the years. Yet, the performance of males and females is statistically different in favour of girls. Similarly, a high gender gap of 2.3 was reached in 2015 for the English subject (figure 6) although, unlike in Sociology, both males and females performed better in English over the observed years with a mean of 15.8 compared to 10.9 for sociology. The Effect of Gender on University Students' School Performance: The Case of the National School of Agriculture in Meknes, Morocco/Saida Hdii, Mustapha Fagroud 75 (a) (b) Figure 6. Male and female average scores of (a) Sociology and (b) English performance of tests from 2010 to 2015 (Hdii & Froug, 2019).

### **Pause Procedure and Students Performance**

For the Pause procedure to be effective and enhance students' learning, it is important to ensure that lecturers strategically plan the pause to be given to the students ahead of each lecture. The lecturer must utilise the pause to be carried out in various active and collaborative learning so as to improve students' performance of the study. Some of the simple features that can be incorporated during the pause procedures in order to improve students' performance. Reviewing, sharing and comparing notes: Some students are good at taking notes while others are not. During a lecture the lecturer can allow the students to compare their notes with other students, using the Pause procedure students should be given the time by the lecturer, in order to make more clarifications of their notes with fellow classmates, list down or highlight the key points in a lecture that fill any information gap or discuss the key concepts taught them by the lecturer. This, in turn, would allow them to have more retention of their knowledge, skills and improve their performance for the study (Chowdhury, 2016).



### **Factors Affecting Students Performance in Financial Accounting**

Students' performance have been seen as an important issue for tertiary institutions and investigation into the possibility of students' achievement is also important in many ways for colleges, their lecturers and students and can be effective for making policy on student admission programme and changes in teaching method so as to improve students' performance while teaching financial accounting. Measuring students' performance in financial accounting at colleges of education based on internal and external factors, therefore, the present research tries to recognize and combine the most important factors as well as pointing out to the important results for choosing the most qualified candidates and consequently, avoid accounting students' failure and drop-out (Garkaz, Banimahd, & Esmaeili, 2011).

### **Review of Related Empirical Studies**

For the purpose of this study, below were considered as the empirical studies of the research:

Chowdhury (2016) conducted a study titled "The Power of Using Pause Procedure during Accounting Lecture at Faculty of Business Administration in American International University in Bangladesh. Two (2) objectives were raised as well as two (2) research questions were asked. Also two (2) null hypotheses were tested for the study. Seventy-five (75) Students of the Accounting class in the faculty served as the population of the study. The study compared the experimental group with that of the control group while conducting the study using the Pause procedure and lecture method of the study. The findings of the study showed that in the accounting class where the lecturer gave the students two to eight-minute pauses during each ninety-minute lecture, there were greater students' performance and satisfaction compared to the control group where the pause procedure was not used. Therefore, it provided strong support for incorporating Pause procedures during accounting lectures in order to enhance students' satisfaction and overall class performance.

This research work is similar in context with the previous because they both concentrated on the use of a Pause procedure as a teaching method on students' performance. Both studies considered the participation of the students in the teaching process as of paramount importance for the study. The previous research work is relevant to the present study because it helped in the literature development.

Despite their similarities, these research works differ to the extent that the previous research work was carried out at American International University in Bangladesh but the present work will be conducted at Federal College of Education Kano, Nigeria. Hence, they differ in location. The previous study raised, asked and tested only two (2) objectives, two (2) research questions and two (2) null hypotheses in order to guide it. The present study will raise, ask and test five (5) specific objectives, five (5) research questions and five (5) null



hypotheses for the study. The previous study did not specify the reliability test used in testing the reliability of the pilot study. The present study used the Kuder-Richardson KR-20 in determining the reliability coefficient of the instrument of the pilot study. The previous study did not specify the statistical tools used in testing the null hypothesis, which is better to be identified for the help of the reader(s) in determining the reliability of the instrument of the statistical tools used so as to guide it. The previous study did not specify the lesson plan as well as the instrument used for conducting the study.

Richards, Wang, Mahapatra, Jenkins, Collins, Backman, and Wittich (2017) conducted a study, titled `` Use of the Pause Procedure in Continuing Medical Education on Students` Educational outcomes at Baylor College of Medicine ``. The study raised, asked and tested three (3) objectives, (3) research questions as well as (3) null hypotheses in order to guide the study. The design used for the study was a randomised controlled intervention study. Two hundred and fourteen (214) students served as the population of the study. Random sampling technique also served as the sampling procedure of the study. Modified copies of a questionnaire were used as the instrument for data collection of the study. The data collected were analysed using percentage. Based on the data analysed, the researchers found that students taught using pause procedure in continuing medical science courses performed better as well they scored higher grades and better knowledge of recalling their answers in test and examination in their courses of study than those taught using lecture method in large-group settings The study recommended that future research should be used in order to address the effect of the pause procedure on validated MCQ test performance and long-term knowledge retention.

This research work is similar in context with the previous research work because they both concentrated on the pause procedure as a teaching method on students` performance. The previous study used percentages to answer the research questions. The present study will use mean and standard deviation to answer them. In the previous study there was no tool for testing the null hypotheses. The present study used independent t-test to answer the null hypothesis 1 and 2, hypothesis 3 were tested using simple logistic analysis of Variance in order to determine the effect of one method on the other hypothesis 4, and 5 were tested using independent t-test in order to compare between the performance of male students taught using Pause procedure and that of Pause procedure in the class as well as female students differently. The previous research work is relevant to the present study because it helped in the literature development.

Despite their similarities, these research works differ to the extent that the previous research work was carried out at Baylor College of Medicine, New York, United States of America, but the present work was conducted at Federal College of Education, Kano, Nigeria. Hence, they differ in location. The previous study raised, asked and tested only three (3) objectives, three (3) research



questions and three (3) null hypotheses in order to guide it. The present study raised, asked and tested five (5) specific objectives, five (5) research questions and five (5) null hypotheses. The previous study failed to use appropriate statistical tools in testing the pilot study. The present study used the Kuder-Richardson KR-20 to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument of the pilot study. The previous research work did not specify the total targeted population of the study whereas the present study did so. The previous study did not specify the lesson plans used in carrying out the study which showed that each experimental research study must have laid down procedures to follow in conducting it. The previous study did not use appropriate statistical tools in analysing the data for the study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In a global competition for job specification and the placement of students appropriately, their performances have been identified as an essential determinant ingredient for providing students with more career opportunities, choices and job security. This is in line with the position of Mamman (2016) who stated that students' performances are the ingredients of students' enhancement and societal development so as to minimise poor performance of students. This is in line with the position of Bayram-Jacobs and Hayirsever (2016) who stated that neglecting students-centre while teaching increases the poor performance of students that are in line with the reasons that necessitated the conducting of this study from the researcher's assessment on the declining of students' performance in colleges of education. In confirmation of the above-mentioned statement, the researcher's assessment of the recent performance of accounting option students in financial accounting in the Department of Business Education, Federal College of Education, Kano, Nigeria, between 2016 and 2019 revealed that students' performances were very poor and declining. These poor performances of students agree with the position of Azih and Nwosu, (2011); Atieh (2013); Enwere and Enwere (2014) as well as Obidile, Amobi, Uzoekwe and Akuezilo (2017) that the major reasons for poor performance of students was the use of lecture method in teaching financial accounting.

### **Research Hypotheses**

In line with the objectives of the study, the following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance on this study:

1. Pause procedure has no significant effect on performance of Business Education Students in Federal College of Education, Kano, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the performance of financial accounting male students taught using the Pause procedure in Federal College of Education Kano, Nigeria.



## **Methodology**

The study used quasi experimental research using pre-test post-test design serves as a design of the study. The population of the study was made up of seven hundred and thirty-five (735) advanced financial accounting students NCE III in Business Education departments in federal colleges of education, in Northwest Nigeria. Based on the nature of the population and the topic, three hundred and forty-five advanced financial accounting Students NCE III (345) of the Federal College of Education Kano State served as sample size of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the Sample sizes of the study. The Financial Accounting Achievement Test had forty-five objectives and one essay question which were designed as an instrument for data collection. The respondents` responses of the tests were analysed using statistical techniques. The instrument was validated by four experts` before carrying out pilot study. The pilot study was conducted using (30) respondents such as twenty-one (21) male and (09) nine female accounting students at NCE III Accounting option at Sa`adatu Rimi College of Education Kumbotso State who are nearest to the population of the study. They have the same features with the population of the study. The result of the pilot study splits into two using split half test and tested the reliability using split half test and calculated using SPSS by Kuder-Richardson KR-20 and derived the reliability of 0.86. The researcher administered the tests after the treatment was given to the students for eight weeks. Two hundred and Sixty-eight (268) copies of the test were collected back and analysed using inferential statistics. The hypotheses were tested using independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance, if the P- value is equal or greater than the Alpha value ( $0.05 \geq$ ), then the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant effect between the groups while the P-value is less than the Alpha then the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant effect between the groups.

## **Test of Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses were tested as follows:

**Null Hypothesis One:** Pause procedure has no significant effect on the performance of financial accounting students in Federal College of Education, Kano in Nigeria Data collected to address the null hypothesis one was summarised in Table 3

**Table 1** Test of difference between the performances of financial accounting students taught using Pause procedure and that of those taught using lecture method

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Alpha	P	Decision
Pause procedure	114	64.37	10.03	228	0.05	0.00	Rejected
Lecture Method	116	50.91	12.64				

Source (Field survey, 2021). Source (Field survey, 2021).

Table 1 indicates that, since the calculated P-value is 0.00 while Alpha is 0.05, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected and concluded that there are significant differences in the performance of students taught using Pause procedure and that of those taught using lecture method of teaching in learning financial accounting in Federal College of Education, Kano.

**Null Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference on the performance of financial accounting male students taught using Pause procedure in Federal College of Education Kano in Nigeria Data collected to analyse the null hypothesis two was summarised and presented in Table 4

**Table 2** Test of difference between the performances of financial accounting male students taught using Pause procedures in Federal College of Education Kano.

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Alpha	P	Decision
Male Students	71	64.29	10.52	141	0.05	0.00	Rejected
Female Students	72	63.52	10.21				

Source (Field survey, 2021). Source (Field survey, 2021).

From table 2, the t-calculated value of 0.9 is greater than the Alpha value of 0.05, suggesting that there is no significant difference between the performance of the female students taught financial accounting using Pause procedure and that of those taught using Pause procedure. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of r hypothesis one in Table 1 shows that the students who are taught using Pause procedures in learning financial accounting performed significantly better than those who are taught using lecture methods. The findings are consistent with that of (Asemah 2011) who opines that the Pause procedure can go a long way in effecting people to accept a particular idea,



either by the government or by an individual and improves students' performance after teaching, especially in financial accounting. In the same vein Hasan (2016) said that schools that have the means can challenge lecturers to use Pause procedures in their classrooms for effective performance of students' especially in learning financial accounting and even other students in some fields of study. The finding related to null hypothesis two in Table 2 revealed statistically that gender difference had no significant effect on the academic performance of all respondents. This means that the results of the null hypothesis two suggested that the differences between the male students who were taught using the Pause procedure is not significantly different in form of gender differences between the variables. The implication is that, both the male students performed significantly better. The findings are consistent with that of (Azih and Nwosu 2011) who are on the view that gender had no influence (effect) on students' performance in teaching a process provided they were taught under the same condition, Pause procedure had a significant effect on the performance of financial accounting in learning financial accounting in Federal College of Education, Kano ( $p = 0.000$ ). According to the researcher's view, find out that the students taught using the pause procedure of teaching performed significantly better while learning financial accounting. **The significant difference did not exist in the performance of financial accounting male students taught financial accounting using Pause procedures in the Federal College of Education, Kano ( $p = 0.00$ ). Because all the male advanced financial accounting students' performances were very good in terms of their participation in the learning financial accounting at Federal College of Education Kano State.**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings discussed in chapter four, this study concludes that Pause procedures are the appropriate methods to be used in teaching students financial accounting in Federal Colleges of Education. It is also revealed that Pause procedures help, assist and guide the financial accounting students to improve their performance regardless of their gender differences. The students who were taught using Pause procedures are capable of earning good grades which will enable them to have admission into the university. This will also make their parents proud of their students' performance and the students become productive members of the society after graduation for earning their living.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. Pause procedures should be used in teaching financial accounting in federal colleges of education so as to improve students' performance.



2. Pause procedures should be used to teach male students' financial accounting in federal colleges of education.

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## OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC DEBT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA (2001 – 2019)

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### Abstract

*This study is aimed at ascertaining the impact of external debt on economic growth in Nigeria. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Data on Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Public debt, Domestic debt, Capital expenditure and Recurrent expenditure were collected from Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin, 2018. Model was formulated and data were analyzed using Ordinary Least Square. Diagnostic tests were conducted using Augmented Dick Fuller Unit Root Test, correlation and causality test. The independent variable was RGDP, while the explanatory variables were Domestic debt, Capital expenditure and recurrent expenditure. We discovered that External Debt had a positive relationship with Real Gross Domestic Product had a negative relationship. While Domestic had negative relationship with Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP), capital expenditure had a negative relationship with RGDP. The paper concluded that recurrent expenditure had negative impact on the Nigerian economy but not significant. The study recommended amongst others, that Debt Management Office should set mechanism in to ensure that loans were utilized for purposes for which they were acquired as well as set a ceiling for borrowing for states and federal governments based on well-defined criteria.*

**Keywords:** External debt, Real Gross Domestic Product, Domestic debt, Capital expenditure and Re-current expenditure

### Introduction

The government aimed at the maximization of societal welfare and proper implementation of macroeconomic objectives. To achieve this societal welfare and implement macroeconomic objective, borrowing becomes inevitable since the capital required at a particular time to finance a capital project by the government may not be readily available. This research work is on Public Debt and Economic Growth in Nigeria. Public debt is generating a lot of controversy in



Nigeria. While some people say borrowing from international organisation and wealthy national is normal, other believed that the debts are much. Other even say that the debt are too much is not a problem but the money borrowed is not always used for the purpose for which it is borrowed. When the government borrows, the debts are usually referred to as public debts. Governments usually borrow by issuing securities, government bonds and bills. It was on the bases of this that the federal government borrows the sum of 850 billion US dollar and in recent time, the government asks for another loan of 5.5 billion US dollar.

The external debt in Nigeria started in 1958 when a loan of USD28 Million was obtained from the World Bank to construct a railway and other developmental projects (Ndekwe, 2008) in Nigerian. However, in 1985 the problem of debt servicing began since the total foreign debt of Nigeria rose to USD19 billion. The government was able to repay the foreign creditors which is Paris Club more than USD35 billion. Rieffel, (2005), opined that the same period the borrowed money was less than USD15 billion. According to Adedoyin, Babalola, Otekunri&Adeoti, (2016), the apparent debt overhang in Nigeria, the Obasanjo'sgovernment in 2003-2007, pursued debt revocation which resulted to a reduction of the foreign debt to the turn of USD3.4 billion in 2007. The CBN Statistical Bulletin, (2018) and if this is translated into the local currency it amounted to N438.89 Billion.

The trend in revealed an unstable and a fluctuating characteristic. The CBN Statistical Bulletin, (2018) recalled that the succeeding government after President Obasanjoswiftly resumed the borrowing to the level that Nigeria's debt profile started rising again from N438.89 Billion in 2007; N523.25 Billion in 2008; N590.44 Billion in 2009; N689.84 Billion in 2010; N896.85 Billion in 2011; N1,026.90 Billion in 2012; N1,387.33 Billion in 2013; N1,631.50 Billion in 2014; N2,111.51 Billion in 2015; N3,478.91 Billion in 2016; N5,787.51 in 2017 to N7,759.20 in 2018. Debt Management Office(2020) thetotal debt owed to the World Bank Group by Nigeria rose by \$1.3bn in one year to \$9.81bn as at 2019while in the states, the total public debt the states owes within Nigerian and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) jumped to N28. 63 trillion in the Q1 of 2020.

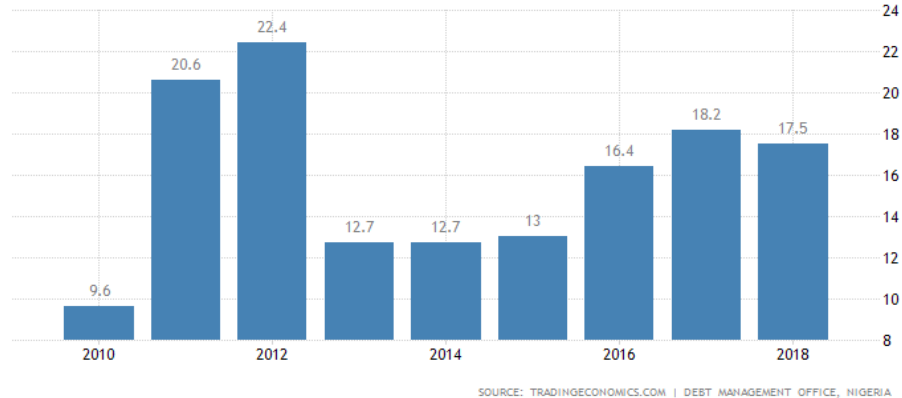


Fig. 1: The Growing Trend in Government Debt

The term public debt is used to connote government national debt. It is debt or all money owed by any level of government being Federal, State or Local government. Due to the fact that government collects revenue from the members of the public through taxation, it implies indirectly that public debt is the debt of the tax payer. However, a broader definition of government debt considers all government liabilities, including future pension payments and payments for goods and services the government has contracted but not yet paid for. In fact, public debt is a term used to describe all of the money owed at any given time by any branch of the government. It encompasses public debt owed by the federal government, the state government and local government. Public debt is, in effect, an extension of personal debt, since individuals make up the revenue stream of the government. Public debt accrues over time when the government spends more money than it collected in taxation.

In Nigeria, Public debts can be categorized either in terms of the source of the debts or in terms of the duration of repayment period. In whichever case, the following categories of public debts are identified:

In terms of the source of the debt, we have;

**(a) Internal Debt**

This debt refers to money borrowed within the country either from the banks, wealthy individuals or other institutions in the country. Jhingan, (2005) reiterated that internal debt sources are purchase of public bonds by non-banking financial institutions like insurance companies, investment trust, mutual funds etc, individuals corporations, commercials banks and central bank.

**(b) External Debt**

This debt refers to all money borrowed from foreign lenders; that is, either from international organization like International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), African Development Bank



(ADB), etc, private foreign institutions, or the government of wealthy countries.

In terms of the duration, we have;

- (a) Short term debt: This is generally that debt which duration of repayment is considered to be one year or less.
- (b) Long term debt: This is that which duration of repayment is considered to be ten years and above.
- (c) Medium term debt: This is that loan in which the repayment period falls between these two boundaries.

### **Objective of the study**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the impact of public debt and on the economic growth of Nigeria. The study also seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the impact of public on the real gross domestic product (RGDP).
2. To establish the effect of capital investment on the real gross domestic product (RGDP).
3. To assess the influence of domestic debt gross domestic product (RGDP).

### **Hypotheses formulation**

H<sub>0</sub>: Public debt does not significantly impact on real gross domestic product.

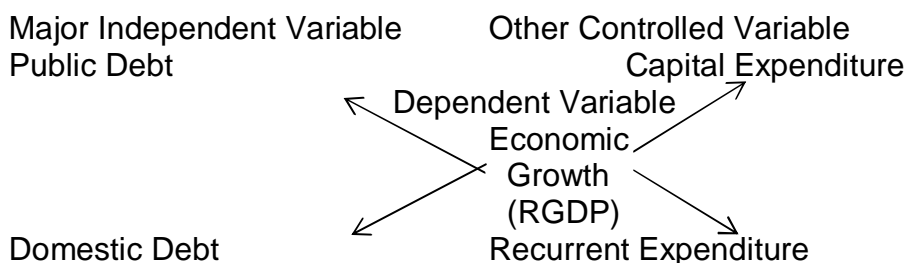
H<sub>0</sub>: Capital investment does not have a significant effect on real gross domestic product.

H<sub>0</sub>: Domestic debt does not have a significant influence on real gross domestic product.

### **Literature Review**

Conceptual framework

The dependent and independent variables have been presented in the diagram below.



*Fig. 1: Conceptual framework*

Adopted from Omodero and Alpheaus(2019) The Effect of Foreign Debt on the Economic Growth of Nigeria



Figure 1 above depicts economic growth (RGDP) as a function of the major independent variables (Public debt and Domestic debt) and the control variables (Capital expenditure and Recurrent expenditure).

The government borrows a lot of money from both international organisation and the national. The effect of this loan may not be noticed by the masses but the truth is the money borrow affect both the entire economy and the masses. Jihngan, (2005) identified five effects of public debts on the economy as a whole. These are explained below:

### **Theoretical Framework**

The effect of Public Debts in Nigeria cannot be over looked especially when we look at the spate of Economic Growth. It creates a huge burden on the masses and the politician seems to look aside.

### **Public Debt Burden**

In Jihngan, (2005) the term “public debt burden” refers to the person who actually carries or bears the load as to the repayment of the debt. Public debt is meant to repay back with interest and since the government levy taxes on the people, it implies that public debt burden falls on the tax payer.

### **Effects of the Public Debt Burden**

In Igberi, Odo, Anoke, Nwachukwu (2016) public debt, whether internal or external have direct and indirect burden on the tax payer and the public. He there explains the burden of public debt on the citizen as:

### **Burden of Internal Public Debt**

- (1) Increase in taxes to be paid by the people. This is called direct money burden.
- (2) Reduction in economic welfare this also called the direct real burden
- (3) The strain and stress of paying higher tax creates economic hardship on the tax payer.
- (4) The general price level may also be affected either by increase or decrease in the value of money.
- (5) Internal debt may also affect the level of production in the country, especially when the debt is not used for productive purposes.
- (6) Since internal debt may increase taxes, it could discourage saving and the willingness to work harder.

### **Burden of External Public Debt**

- (1) Increase in interest may affect the country's foreign reserves as foreign debts are repaid in hard currency.



- (2) External debt also have a way of reducing the economic welfare as the government would make effort to increase export in order to generate more income thus depriving the people of the much needed goods.
- (3) In government impose tax on goods with mass consumption; the low income earner bears a higher burden which also lowers their welfare.
- (4) If the interest on external debt consumes larger part of the country's national income, then the government would be forced to reduce expenditure on social and development which is detrimental to the masses.

Amakom (2013) sums up the effects of public debts on economic growth when he said, "In order to encourage growth, countries at early stages of development like Nigeria borrow to augment what they have because of dominance of small stocks of capital hence they are likely to have investment opportunities with rates of return higher than that of their counterparts in developed economies. This becomes effective as long as borrowed funds and some internally ploughed back funds are properly utilized for productive investment, and do not suffer from macroeconomic instability, policies that distort economic incentives, or sizable adverse shocks. Growth therefore is likely to increase and allow for timely debt repayments. When this cycle is maintained for a period of time, growth will affect per capita income positively which is a prerequisite for poverty reduction.

Stiglitz (2010) opined that government borrowing can crowd out investment, which will reduce future output and wages. When output and wages are affected the welfare of the citizens will be made vulnerable. And that for the past two decades, Nigeria has borrowed large amounts, often at highly concessional interest rates with the hope to put them on a faster route to development through higher investment, faster growth and poverty improvement but on the contrast economic growth and poverty situations are staggering at the back door amidst excess debt, albeit that was the initial intention. According to Igberi, Odo, Anoke, Nwachukwu (2016) it is then obvious that the Nigerian indebtedness has gone beyond such limits and it is noteworthy if such limit is dictated to help the economy in their pursuit towards debt free or less debt burden that will enhance economic growth with a resultant improvement in poverty level. While Soludo (2003), opined that countries borrow for two broad categories: macroeconomic reasons or to finance transitory balance of payments deficits. This implies that economy indulges in debt to boost economic growth and reduce poverty. Soludo (2003) further opine that once an initial stock of debt grows to a certain threshold, servicing them becomes a burden, and countries find themselves on the wrong side of the debt-laffer curve, with debt crowding out investment and growth. This seems to be the position of Nigeria today because investment, which will accordingly result to high-speed growth with a positive effect on poverty, is moving sporadically in both positive and negative directions.

**Effects of Debts**

It is important to note that debts can affect the society in a variety of ways. Egbe & Aganyi (2015) explain the effect of debts in Nigerian. These are:

**Effects of Debts on Consumption**

There is a great relationship between the growth of the economy and the level of consumption. This is because, if the government spends the borrowed funds on capital goods such as roads, canal, power etc, the income of the recipient of their benefits will increase and this will in effect increase the level of consumption. If on the other hand, public debt is used to increase production of goods and services, it will also increase consumption. W.W. Rostow, in his stages of growth affirm that high rate of consumption is an evidence of economic growth.

**Effects of Debts on Production**

If the government spends the borrowed funds on capital goods such as roads, canal, power etc, and other development projects, production and productive capacity of the economy will increase. But when government levy more taxes to service the debts, productivity is affected negatively as this will affect the business sector and companies that pays the taxes. Public debts can affect investment; saving and ability to work if the debt is spend on productive assets.

**Effects of Debts on Distribution**

Distribution of income depends upon the manner in which the borrowed fund is being spent by the government. If the fund is spent to benefit the lower income group in the form of social security, public works, development schemes, etc public debt reduces income inequalities. (Jhingan, 2005)

**Effects of Debts on Economic Activities**

The government of any country can affect economic activities through the control of money supply. Therefore, public borrowing can be used as anti-inflationary device by reducing the purchasing power of the people. If on the other hand, the borrowed fund is spent on public works, it leads to greater economic activities in terms of high employment, income, production and prices.

**Effect of public debt on private sector**

In private sector when the government spent the borrowed fund by purchasing goods and services produced by the private sector, the private sector is expanded. This will lead to increase in salaries of workers in the private sector. The implication is that there will be increase in demand for goods and service in the entire economy resulting to growth.

**Methodology****Research design and sources of data collection**

This study employed expo facto research design in order to achieve the purpose of the study. According to Kothari (2004), expo fact research is used to explore the effect of one variable on another and this is consistent with this study which seeks to establish the effect of public debt on economic growth in Nigeria. Here, the research adopted the econometric analysis techniques of ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression techniques. The study uses the secondary data which were obtained from the Central Bank (CBN), Statistical Bulletin and World Bank. Due to the difference in the values, all the data were expressed in logarithm form for uniformity.

**Model specification**

The two models specified for this article. The functional relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables are seen in the equation below:

$$RGDP = f(\text{PubDebt}, \text{DomDebt}, \text{CapExp}, \text{RecExp}) \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

$$\text{PubDebt} = f(\text{RGDP}, \text{DomDebt}, \text{CapExp}, \text{RecExp}) \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

The econometric is presented in log formant is stated below:

$$RGDP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{LogPubDebt} + \beta_2 \text{LogDomDebt} + \beta_3 \text{LogCapExp} + \beta_4 \text{LogRecExp} \dots (3)$$

$$\text{PubDebt} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{LogRGDP} + \alpha_2 \text{LogDomDebt} + \alpha_3 \text{LogCapExp} + \alpha_4 \text{LogRecExp} \dots (4)$$

Where

RGDP = Real Gross Domestic Product, DomDebt = Domestic debt, CapExp = Capital expenditure and RecExp = Recurrent expenditure

**Analysis of Data**

The regression analysis uses OLS, Augmented Dickey Fuller Unit Root and Correlation test to examine the effect of debt in Nigeria. It was discovered total public debt had a negative relationship with RGDP in both the short and long run. The paper concluded that Debt fluctuation had negative impact on the Nigerian economy as most of the variable revealed negative result. The study recommended amongst others, that Debt Management Office should set a mechanism in motion to ensure that loans were utilized for the purpose for which they were acquired as well as set a ceiling for borrowing for states and federal governments based on well-defined criteria.

The regression below revealed that the average value of RGDP is 38,204,117 but with the influence of the variables under consideration in the model, changes are seen to occur in RGDP annually. Public debt is expected to increase the value of the RGDP annually holding the effect of all other variables constant. The rate of increase in the resulting value of RGDP per unit change in



PubDebt is negative and stood at -2.892 annually. The variable is significant in the model with a P-value of 0.008, which implies that the variables have sufficient negative statistical power in predicting the value of RGDP over the period under consideration.

Regression Analysis: RGDP versus PubDebt, Dom Debt, Cap Exp, Rec Exp

#### General Regression Model

Variable	Coefficient	SE	T-Value	P-Value	VIF
Constant	38204117	4883088	7.82	0.000	
PubDebt	-2.892	0.937	-3.09	0.008	5.20
DomDebt	3.06	1.10	2.78	0.015	2.54
CapExp	-10187	5800	-1.76	0.101	5.31
RecExp	9427	1636	5.76	0.000	6.60
R <sup>2</sup>	94.68%				
Adj R <sup>2</sup>	93.16%				

The Domestic debt is expected to increase the value of the RGDP annually holding the effect of all other variables constant. The rate of increase in the resulting value of RGDP per unit change in DomDebt is positive and stood at 3.06 annually. The variable is significant in the model with a P-value of 0.015, which implies that the variables have sufficient statistical but positive power in predicting the value of RGDP in the same period.

Capital expenditure effect on RGDP indicates that it is insignificant with p-value greater than 0.05% and high standard error of 5800. Recurrent expenditure proved efficient and significant in statistically predicting the value of the RGDP over time. In this regard, the value of RGDP will grow with about 9427 units per every change in the value of recurrent expenditure. The P-value of RecExpe is 0.000 and a standard error of 1636. The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) shows that the variable can explain about 94.68% of RGDP in the model.

#### Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
Regression	4	4.43170E+15	1.10792E+15	62.31	0.000
PubDebt	1	1.69276E+14	1.69276E+14	9.52	0.008
DomDebt	1	1.37244E+14	1.37244E+14	7.72	0.015
CapDebt	1	5.48614E+13	5.48614E+13	3.09	0.101
RecDebt	1	5.90375E+14	5.90375E+14	33.20	0.000
Error	14	2.48922E+14	1.77802E+13		
Total	18	4.68062E+15			

The variance also proves that the variables are significant except RecExp which has a P-value of 0.101. But all other variables (PubDebt, DomDebt, CapDebt) are statistically significant.

*Summary of statistical indicators*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	SE	Durbin Watson
1	.974	.9468	.9316	4883088	2.010

Table 1 above shows the summary of the model's regression results of this study. The correlation (R) value of 97.4% implies that the relationship between economic growth and the explanatory variables is very strong and significant. This means that public debt and its servicing influence Nigeria's economy substantially. In other words, the relationship is so robust that if the public debt is accumulated and put into proper use the economy will improve. The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) of 94.68% shows the extent to which all the independent variables explains the dependent variable.

**Regression Analysis: PubDebt versus RGDP, Dom Debt, Cap Exp, Rec Exp**

Variable	Coefficient	SE	T-value	P-value	VIF
Copnstant	8041885	1256770	6.40	0.000	
RGDP	-0.1400	0.0454	-3.09	0.008	8.19
DomDebt	0.900	0.182	4.94	0.000	1.44
CapExp	-2287	1270	-1.80	0.093	5.26
RecExp	917	614	1.49	0.158	19.21
R <sup>2</sup>	88.5%				
Adj R <sup>2</sup>	83.27				

In the second hypothesis two, the regression analysis is presented are explain above. In the regression, it is revealed that the average value of the constant is 8041885 and with the influence of the variables used in the model, changes seen to occur in PubDebt annually. The value of RGDP is negative but significant with a value of -0.1400. This implies that PubDebt has a negative impact on the economy which is by proxy RGDP. The DomDebt is expected to increase the value of the PubDebt annually holding the effect of all other variables constant. However, the rate of increase in the resulting value of PubDebt per unit change in DomDebt is positive with a value 0.900 and significant. This also implies that the variables have sufficient positivestatistical power in predicting the influence inPubDebtin the period under consideration.

The influence of CapExpon PubDebt is significant but negative with a value of -2287 and a with p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 and a high standard error of 1270. The recurrent expenditure proved inefficient and insignificant in statistically predicting the value of the PubDebt over time. In this regard, the value of PubDebt will grow with about 917 units per a change in the value of recurrent expenditure. The value of R<sup>2</sup> shows that the variable can explain about 88.5% of PubDebt in the model.

**Analysis of Variance**

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-value	P-value
Regression	4	9.31204E+13	2.32801E+13	27.06	0.000
RGDP	1	8.19157E+12	8.19157E+12	9.52	0.008
DomDebt	1	2.09675E+13	2.09675E+13	24.37	0.000
CapExp	1	2.79049E+12	2.79049E+12	3.24	0.093
RecExp	1	1.91878E+12	1.91878E+12	2.23	0.158
Error	14	1.20458E+13	8.60411E+11		
Total	18	1.05166E+14			

The variance proves that the variables are significant except RecExp which has a P-value of 0.158. But all other variables (RGDP, DomDebt, CapDebt) are statistically significant judging from their P-value.

**OVERALL FIT**

Multiple R	0.897762	AIC	614.9492
R Square	0.805976	AICc	621.9492
Adj R Square	0.750541	SBC	619.6714
Standard Error			
Error	9553396		
Observations	18		

Results contained in this table give a general evaluation of the efficiency of the estimated model. In this light, the adjusted coefficient of determination reports that in an overall, 75.05% of the changes notable in the Real GDP can be firmly accounted for by the explanatory variables included in the model.

<b>ANOVA</b>				<b>Alpha</b>	<b>0.05</b>	
	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Regression	4	5.31E+15	1.33E+15	14.53904	6.87E-05	Yes
Residual	14	1.28E+15	9.13E+13			
Total	18	6.59E+15				

Also, an assessment of the estimated model using the Global F-test, indicated that the model is statistically efficient for prediction.

**Spearman Rho: RGDP, PubDebt, Dom Debt, Cap Exp, Rec Exp**

	RGDP	PubDebt	DomDebt	CapExp
PubDebt	-0.710 0.001			
DomDebt	-0.415 0.077	0.716 0.001		
CapExp	-0.826 0.000	-0.607 0.001	-0.136 0.579	
RecExp	0.869 0.822 0.000 0.000	-0.682 0.001	-0.382 0.107	

The correlation result indicates that there exist a very firm negative relationship among the variable used for the regression, this because most of the variable displayed negative result except DomDebt and RecDebt which displayed a value of 0.716, 0.869 and 0.822 respectively.

**Test Multicollinearity**

Multicollinearity occurs when an existence of a strong relationship between two independent variables or among independent variables assessing the same element. The Variance RecExpFactor (VIF) is used to measure the velocity with which variances of a variable accelerate. The VIF indicates how the variance of a variable increase by the existence of multicollinearity. The extent of collinearity increases as the variance of a variable increase (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). The rule is that if the value of VIF of a variable exceeds 10, then there is high collinearity between that variable and other independent variables (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). The VIF values of all the independent variables used in this study are all less than 10, in equation 1 and therefore, there is no presence of multicollinearity among the explanatory variables. However, in equation 2, there is evidence multicollinearity in CapExp and this was care of by removing the variable.

**Conclusion**

Public debt is an economic burden that hinders economic growth instead of improving. When a public debt accumulates over time, it results in debt overhang and the developing country in question remains a perpetual dependent country to the creditor countries using debt servicing instrument to exploit them. As a result, the huge part of the debtor country's resources goes into debt servicing in order for the country to remain credit worthy. This is the case with



Nigeria that ensures that in servicing debt so as to attract more debt. But the debt profile keeps rising as well as the servicing cost which is does not favour any country. The economic implication is public debt servicing impacts positively on economic growth by attracting more debt while the increase in public leads to debt overhang which depresses the economy. Thus, the economic improvement experienced by servicing debt and making Nigeria credit worthy is a shame because the increasing level of public borrowing is detrimental to the economy and is enslaving the nation.

### **Recommendations**

1. The study recommends that a purposeful borrowing pattern and development should be taken into account. The government should develop infant industries so as to reduce public borrowing and partnership with other foreign countries that have the expertise to develop certain natural resources that are not untapped in the country. Nigeria is endowed with a lot of mineral resources that should be tap so that money could be realized by both the government and the national. This can reduce borrowing from these developed countries by the government.
2. The paper also recommends amongst others, that Debt Management Office should set up a mechanism that would ensure that loans were utilized for the purpose for which they were acquired as well as set a ceiling for borrowing for states and federal governments based on well-defined criteria. This requires proper monitoring especially now that a system of government that evidence of duplication.
3. Borrowing must not be for political reasons but for the establishment of industries especially the agriculture and manufacturing industries. It is disheartening to observe that most of our public debts are incurred for political reasons and which is not a profitable ventures. Therefore, the government should gear up revenue generation plan to stir economic development in the country. This can be achieved through proper feasibility study to establish the profitability of capital investment that would reduce the country's borrowing
4. The study further suggests that the revival of abandoned industries in the country. The industries in the country that have been abandoned over the years can be revived to continue in production, and employ indigenous experts in the country and run profitably. Some of industries incudes the Ajaokuta Steel Company (ASCO) which engulf about USD7 Billion and still requires less than USD1 Billion dollar for completion (Jegede, 2013), the Delta Steel Company (DSC) which have the capacity of generating revenue for the country and employing many jobless Nigerian youths as well as helping in poverty reduction.



Others are manufacturing industries and the textile industry which has the capacity in Nigeria to boost our GDP. and West Africa but is presently in comatose (Olagide, 2019).

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## BUSINESS EDUCATORS' PERCEPTION OF DIGITAL SKILLS REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS FOR JOB IN A CHANGING WORLD

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### Abstract

*This study examined business educators' perception of digital skills required by business education students for job in a changing world. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. One research question was raised in line with the purpose of the study and one hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprises 43 business education lecturers from colleges of education and polytechnics in Oyo State. Twenty-three business educators from colleges of education and 20 business educators from polytechnics in Oyo State. Internal consistency of the research instrument was tested by administering it on 15 business educators in Osun State using Cronbach alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question while t-test statistic was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study revealed that business educators agreed that digital skills are highly required by business education students for job in a changing world. The testing of the hypothesis shows that there was no significant difference between the two groups in term of their mean ratings on digital skills required by business education students for job in a changing world. Based on the findings, the study concluded that digital skills are vital for gaining employment opportunities by business education students in a world driven by technology. The researcher recommends among others that regular training and workshops should be designed for business educators by governments and institutions to update their digital skills for seamless transfer of knowledge to students.*

**Key Words:** Business Educators, Digital Skills, Business Education Students, Changing World



## **Introduction**

Economic, social, and organizational environment have undergone significant changes over the past two decades due to technological advancement. As a result, organizational operations are being redefined and the way people live in the today's information society is also changing. Work is given universal approach, personal communication is instantaneous, and information is available at all hours of the day and night. Understanding and coping with these changes as a person progresses through life requires digital skills. The European Union (EU) (2013) stated that information and communication technologies has deeply affected pattern of working, knowledge acquisition, socialising, communicating, collaborating - and succeeding – in all profession and individual life. Availability and use of digital technologies in daily life is basically changing the way individuals access and expand their knowledge. Individuals need to process complex information, think and logically take decisions based on facts. Updating of skills is essential for coping with rapid technological changes in work places. In order to seize the new opportunities that digital technologies are opening in many areas, individuals have to develop the right set of skills to make a meaningful use of these technologies (OECD, 2016).

International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (2020) define digital skills as a set of technological abilities that may be fully or partially acquired before entering the workforce. Some digital skills are required to use and interact with technology in order to fulfil specific tasks, while others are required to design, create and maintain tools and solutions for different industries. Different skills create different categories of digital users and job profiles. The (ITU, 2018) proposed three levels of digital skills – basic, intermediate, and advanced – as defined in various studies. Digitization in various industries transforms the workplace to ensure effective tasking, business and field resources optimization, high competitiveness, greater interaction and inclusion between workers. This process leads to fast and efficient responses to customers, innovative services and economic growth. The World Economic Forum (2018) in its future job report 2018 identified a set of digital technologies that might be adopted by different surveyed companies in different industries. Those technologies are, either related to software applications running locally on computers and/or smart tablets, or running remotely over cloud services. New technologies play a critical role in all sectors of the economy and have an impact on interactions within society and the labour market (Leahy & Wilson, 2014). As a result, the changing digital landscape forces workers to continually update their skills to remain competitive in the labour market.

Grand-Clement (2017) categorized digital skills for the new world of work into; digital skills and digital navigation skills. Digital skills are technical skills required to use digital technologies, while digital navigation skills are a wider set of skills needed to succeed in the digital world. These include finding information, prioritising information and assessing the quality and reliability of information.



These digital navigation skills are not fundamentally different from the non-digital skills that were necessary for jobs in the past and that are still needed today. However, they must conform to usage in digital context. Digital navigation skills were also referred to as 'eternal skills' Actually, digital skills are essential asset, not only to employees but also to an unemployed population seeking to participate in the labour market. Digital skills have proven to be necessary for almost all occupations, from primary occupations to managerial positions (Curtarelli, Gualtieri., Jannati., and Donlevy, 2016). As the workplace grows increasingly connected, digital skills have become of greater interest to employers; thus, the level and type of digital skills determine inclusion in the labour market (Andrews et al., 2018). According to Digital Agenda for Europe European Commission (2010) the need for digital skills for innovation and growth in Europe and the skill requirements are constantly changing. CEDEFOP (2012) submitted that workforces need to be capable of continuously adapting to shifting job requirements and organisation procedures related to new skill-intensive technologies in a competitive and dynamic world. Leahy and Dolan (2013) hinted that as technology touches all levels of society and business, e-leaders with digital skills (e-skills) are needed at every level in an organisation. In the same vein, Accenture Technology Vision (2013) opined that every business is a digital business which shows that every employee needs digital skills.

Furthermore, universal application of digital technologies at work is raising the demand for new skills along three lines: ICT specialist skills to programme, develop applications and manage networks; ICT generic skills to use such technologies for professional purposes; and ICT complementary skills to perform new tasks associated to the use of ICTs at work, e.g.: information-processing, self-direction, problem-solving and communication. Foundation skills, digital literacies as well as social and emotional skills are crucial to enable effective use of digital technologies by all individuals in their daily lives. Innosight (2013) reported that employment and organisations are being threatened; many jobs have become contractual, part-time or flexible and the average lifespan of a company has fallen since 1960 from 76 years to 15 years. The idea of job for life is no longer true. It is the acquisition of digital skills that can give people entering, or re-entering the workplace greater choice and job security. In fact, the decreasing cost of technologies and their application opens up new opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship that had previously been denied (e.g. Arduino, Raspberry Pi, 3D printers).

Moreover, jobs for today and tomorrow will be characterised by a two-way focus on skills. Firstly, a growing demand for solid knowledge and technical-scientific expertise and secondly, application of soft skills and aptitudes (flexibility, sharing, an ability to cope with change). Indeed, the demand for these skills has grown as a result of digital transformation. Jobs will be less and less tied into specific tasks. They will require interconnected skills. Hence the emerging need to support development of skills suitable for the workforce of the



future. Artificial intelligence, cloud, robotics, 3-D printing, augmented reality, virtual reality, blockchain and other emerging technologies are transforming our lifestyles and approaches to life, thought and work (PWC, 2020). Digitalization and the new technologies impose a profound transformation on all organisational levels (corporate, social and family), reflected not only in a freshly 'revamped' set of skills to be acquired but also in an 'overhauling' of our traditional approaches to study and the labour market. (PWC, 2020).

Digital skills are not only critical to finding or keeping jobs. They are also critical to closing the digital divide. According to ITU (2019), 46 per cent of the population worldwide was still not using the Internet, with slowing growth rates compared to earlier years because some parts of the world are reaching saturation. 11 in developing countries, 53 per cent of the population is offline, and in least developed countries almost 80 per cent of the population is not using the Internet. ITU (2019) affirmed that the lack of capacity and skills of people to use the Internet and optimize its advantages is a major constraint to adoption of digital skills in many organisations and societies. Even in more advanced countries, 60 per cent of the population lack standard digital skills. Prior to the covid-19 pandemic outbreak, the digital skills gap existed and demand for digitally skilled workers was high across all levels of skills (basic, intermediate and advanced skills). The pandemic has, however, heightened the digital skills gap. According to a business survey carried out by Capgemini (2017), 55 per cent of organizations worldwide acknowledge that the digital skills gap is widening. Also, International Finance Corporation (2019) predicted that by 2030, over 200 million jobs in Africa will require digital skills, which will result in almost 600 million training opportunities. In view of this, individuals who wish to benefit from technology and the changing world needs to demonstrate a large variety of "complex cognitive, motor, sociological, and emotional skills" (Eshet, 2002).

Dumont and Istance (2010) submitted that workers in the digital economy should be able to generate and process complex information; think systematically and critically; take decisions based on different forms of evidence; be adaptable and flexible to new information; be creative; and be able to identify and solve real-world problems. These skills are within the purview of business education. Okoro (2013) define business education as that part of the total educational process that provides the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes needed to perform in the business world as a producer and/or consumer. In other words, Anao in Oliver (2011) described business education as the sum total of the knowledge, skills and attitude that are required for successfully promoting and administering business enterprises. The need for business education as a form of education is crucial especially in this era of globalization and information and communication technology (ICT) in which work processes and organizations are getting increasingly flexible, multi-tasking and performance-based. Business Education as a programme must work in tandem with the needs of the learners and the society (Utoware and Kren-Ikidi, 2013).



Business education provide learners with marketable skills for relevance in the world of work. In a changing world that is driven by technology, Business education programmes must adapt to evolving technologies for it to perform its primary function of producing competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work. Considering the level of unemployment in Nigeria, it is obvious that there is skill gap which the educational system must fill to guarantee graduate employability in the changing world. Indeed, business education graduates must be adequately equipped with digital skill to fit into labour market in the changing world (Utoware and Kren-Ikidi, 2013). Therefore, it is pertinent to determine the perception of teachers on digital skills required by business education students for employment in the new world.

### **Research Question**

This research question guided the study:

1. What are the digital skills required by business education students for job in a changing world?

### **Research Hypothesis**

One hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of colleges of education and polytechnics business educators on the digital skills required by business education *students* for job in a changing world.

### **Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. According to Nworgu (2015), a survey research design is one which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire group. The population of this study comprised 23 business education lecturers from colleges of education and 20 business education lecturers from polytechnics in Oyo State. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire on a four point Likert scale of; Very Highly Required (4), Highly Required (3), Not Required (2), and Highly Not Required (1). The instrument was validated by two experts in business education and achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.84 based on Cronbach Alpha procedure. A total number of 43 questionnaires were administered on the respondents with 100% rate of return. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decision on research questions were made based on the real limit of scale values 1 to 4 on a 4-point scale as follows: Very Highly Required - 3.50 – 4.00, Highly Required - 2.50 – 3.49, Not Required - 1.50 – 2.49, Highly Not Required - 0.50 – 1.49. The null hypothesis was accepted



where the calculated p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance at the appropriate degree of freedom, otherwise, the null hypothesis was rejected.

## Results

### Research Question 1:

1. What are the digital skills required by business education *students* for job in a changing world?

**Table 1: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation of business educators on the digital skills required by business education *students* for job in a changing world?**

S/N	Item Statement	X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>	XG	SDG	Decision
	<b>Digital skills required by business education students for working in a changing world:</b>							
1	Ability to impute information on a range of devices and software packages	3.61	0.65	3.20	0.73	3.41	0.73	HR
2	Ability to process information and present it to others in a meaningful way	3.30	0.48	2.50	0.59	2.87	0.52	HR
3	Ability to use social media platforms Instagram, twitter, Facebook etc.	3.56	0.77	3.45	0.52	3.50	0.65	VHR
4	Understanding of websites basics	3.09	0.55	3.15	0.67	3.12	0.60	HR
5	Ability to differentiate high-quality sources of information from low- quality sources	3.12	0.69	2.85	0.57	2.99	0.62	HR
6	Ability to use of spreadsheets and databases efficiently.	3.25	0.53	3.12	0.72	3.19	0.63	HR
7	On-line marketing skill	3.41	0.84	3.26	0.58	3.27	0.71	HR
8	Ability to install on digital devices apps	3.55	0.75	3.12	0.55	3.34	0.67	HR
9	Effective interpersonal communication skills	3.58	1.02	3.48	0.84	3.53	0.93	VHR
10	Ability to use cloud computing for storage and sharing files	3.10	0.57	3.08	0.54	3.09	0.55	HR
11	Ability to personalise devices to suit your human and work needs	3.20	0.73	2.95	0.67	3.08	0.69	HR
12	Ability to participate in social channels	3.34	0.51	3.30	0.69	3.32	0.60	HR



13	Ability to manage virtual interpersonal relationships	3.35	0.66	3.10	0.71	3.23	0.68	HR
14	Ability to create new products, services, and customer experiences	3.15	0.59	2.73	0.86	2.94	0.71	HR
15	Ability to handle massive amounts of structured and unstructured data	3.60	0.66	3.00	0.71	3.30	0.63	HR
16	Ability to transform data into actionable insights for data driven decisions	3.23	0.65	3.56	0.83	3.40	0.74	HR
17	Search Engine Optimization	3.02	0.59	3.50	0.76	3.26	0.67	HR
18	Ability to use tools such as Analytics and Web scanners	3.23	0.64	3.06	0.83	3.15	0.76	HR
19	Ability to execute on-line financial transactions.	3.36	0.71	3.67	0.54	3.52	0.64	VHR
20	Ability for on-line business security for networks, systems and software improvement	3.45	0.56	2.86	0.76	3.16	0.60	HR
<b>Grand Mean/Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>HR</b>

**Key:**  $x_1$  = Mean responses of college of education business educators,  $SD_1$  = Standard Deviation of college of education business educators,  $X_2$  = Mean responses of polytechnic business educators,  $SD_2$  = Standard Deviation of polytechnic business educators,  $XG$  = Pull or aggregate mean,  $SDG$  = Pull or aggregate standard deviation.

Results from the Table 1 shows that items 3, 9 and 19 which has a mean of 3.50, 3.53 and 3.52 are very highly required. this implies that digital skills such as; ability to execute on-line financial transactions, effective interpersonal communication skills, ability to use social media platforms Instagram, twitter, Facebook etc. are very highly required of business education *students* for employment in the changing world. other items; 1, 2, 4-8, 9-18, 20 with means ranging from 2.94 to 3.41 are highly required of business education *students* for employment in a changing world. The grand mean of 3.23 attested to the fact that all the digital skills listed in the questionnaire are highly required of business education *students* for employment in a changing world. The pull standard deviation ranges from 0.52 to 0.93 revealed that the opinions of the respondents are not heterogeneous.

### Test of Hypothesis

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the perception of business educators in colleges of education and polytechnics on digital skills required of business education *students* in Oyo State for job in a changing world.



**Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of the perception of business educators in colleges of education and polytechnics on digital skills required of business education students in Oyo State for job in a changing world.**

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-Cal	P Value	Decision
Colleges of Education Lecturers	23	3.25	0.57	41	0.67	0.235	Not significant
Polytechnic Lecturers	20	3.33	0.68				

The result in Table 2 shows a t-calculated value of 0.67 with a degree of freedom of 41 and p-value of 0.235 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of colleges of education and polytechnic business educators on the digital skills required of business education graduates for job in the changing world. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The research question for this study sought to find out the perception of business educators on the digital skills required by business education students for job in a changing world. The findings of this study revealed that digital skills are highly required by business education students for employment in the changing world as perceived by business educators. This in agreement with CEDEFOP (2012) which submitted that workforces need to be capable of continuously adapting to shifting job requirements and organisation procedures related to new skill-intensive technologies in a competitive and dynamic world. The findings are further supported by International Finance Corporation (2019) submission that digital skills are essential to the future workforce in Africa, with basic skills most critical. The IFC added that the share of employees needing more advanced digital skills will likely increase as sectors become more digitally enabled.

The findings are also in consonance with the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development (OECD) report (2016) that there is a worldwide demand for competent and skilled ICT practitioners and a demand for digitally literate people in all organisations and walks of life. OECD (2016) noted that the portfolio of basic skills needed to navigate ICT-rich environments and function effectively in modern connected societies has expanded. The study further revealed that there was no significant difference between the responses of business educators from both colleges of education and polytechnics on the digital skills required by business education students for working in the changing world.



## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that students of business education in colleges of education and polytechnics highly require standard digital skills for job in the global market. The perception of business educators on the digital skill need of business education students is indeed paramount because they are the implementers of business education programmes who will impart these skills into the learners. If business educators perceived digital skills as less required, they would not be able to muster necessary zeal for equipping the students with these digital skills. This clearly indicates that business education programmes needs to be appropriately modelled towards inculcation of digital skills in the beneficiaries of the programmes for them to be suitable for the technology driven society and a changing world.

## Recommendation

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

1. Business educators from colleges of education and polytechnics should develop needed interest in acquiring and teaching digital skills. Educators' personal interest in digital skill acquisition would go a long way in motivating their teaching. Also, regular training and workshops should be designed for business educators by governments and institutions to update their digital skills for seamless transfer of knowledge to students.

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## IMPACT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION LECTURERS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to ascertain the impact of staff development programmes on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study had two specific purposes from where two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested. The design of the study was a descriptive survey. The population of the study comprised all 75 business education lecturers from the four tertiary institutions in the state. Since the population size is manageable no sampling was done. The research instrument was a 24 items structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and titled "Impact of Staff Development Programmes on Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers Questionnaire (ISDPJPBELQ). The instrument was validated by three senior experts from the School of Technology and Science Education, Modibbo Adama University, Yola. Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the two clusters yielded coefficient values of .69 and .71 for section A and B respectively with over-all coefficient value of .70 which indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used in answering the research questions and simple linear regression analysis was employed in the test of the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The study revealed that the study-fellowship training and conferences attended by Business Education lecturers have significant positive impacts on their job performance. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the need for Business Education lecturers to undergo study-fellowship training and conferences should not be overemphasized as it will help in improving and enhancing their job performances. The researchers recommended among others, that there is need for the lecturers to be acquainted with the current trends and development in education. The study has therefore recommended that lecturers, heads of departments, directors and deans of all the four tertiary institutions in Adamawa State to be sensitized by their various heads, tefunds and professional Associations/Organisations on the need for regular attendance of study-fellowship training and conference to enable them to abreast on current educational practices, strategies and methods/techniques among others.*



**Key Words:** Impact, Staff Development Programmes, Job Performance, Business Education lecturers

## **Introduction**

Education is considered to be a paramount instrument for attaining national development. It serves as one of the conditions for actualizing the growth and development of any nation. It is recognized as an instrument par excellence for achieving growth, progress, and national development (FRN, 2013). This therefore, underscores the value being placed on the quality and standards of education which encompass quality learning, resources inputs, instructional process, effective management, monitoring, and evaluation as well as human resources capacity development. Human resources are the people who make up the workforce of an organization, the human resources (staff) of any tertiary education are expected to bring about the competitive difference since the success or failure of an educational organ is dependent on the quality of its human resources. Human resources are the competitive advantage which any tertiary institutions may have. This is because equipment, infrastructure, methods of production, packaging and distribution strategies could all be copied by other competitive tertiary institutions, the innate qualities which may include; innovativeness, knowledge, abilities and skills of the human resources (staff) cannot be easily copied. Studies on human capital development revealed that; it is the human resources of a nation and not its capital or natural resources that ultimately determine the pace of its economic and social development (Broadwell, 2006; Amadi, 2008 in David, 2008).

Every society requires adequate human and material resources to improve its social organisation, preserve the culture, enhance economic development and reform the political structures. Education is often seen as a prerequisite for quality manpower development and creation of wealth, a sure path to success in life and service to humanity. Thus, teachers have important role to play to adequately prepare the young for their roles in the society in order to achieve the set national objectives. Teachers' influence is always felt in every aspect of the society because all other professionals and workers within the society have, at one time or the other, passed through the tutelage of a teacher and thus whatever they now become is a direct outcome of what teachers have passed on to them (Okemakinde, Adewuyi & Alabi 2013).

As important as the human resource are to every tertiary education, merely recruiting and selecting high-potential workforce does not guarantee that they will perform their duties effectively. The staff who does not know what to do



or how to do it cannot perform effectively even if they want to (Lawan, 2014). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the human resource management to ensure that the staff knows what to do and how to do it. This can only be possible through staff development programmes. Syeda, Nighat & Syeda (2012) stated that education is extremely important not only for the success of an individual but for the nation as well. Education is defined as a process or art of imparting knowledge, character, skills and judgment to learners. Its major objective is to make an individual learn about how to level with the society by developing intellect, equipping one's self to deal with the reality of life and by facilitating realization of self-potential and latent talents of an individual. Education encompasses teaching and learning specific skills, positive judgement, well developed wisdom and profoundness (Afshan, Sobia, Kamran, & Nasir 2012). A successful lecturer is required to be equipped with the characteristics like mastery of subject matter, professional training, sound physical and mental health as well as devotion and dedication to the profession (Syeda, Nighat & Syeda 2012). The lecturer of today is an individual who is not only interested in student's acquired knowledge and skills but also equally involved in their total development.

Considering the crucial role of lecturers in the academic achievement and overall development of his students, it is imperative that they should possess qualities like command on the subject, moral and mental fitness, devotion to the profession and appropriate skill to perform his duties for the achievement of the coveted objectives (Day, 2016). A lecturer has to play many roles in an educational set up. The lecturer is supposed to work simultaneously as "authority figure, leader, knower, director, manager counselor and guide". In addition to above, the lecturer is supposed to play the roles as friend, confidante, and parent as well. In this regard, a lecturer is not a mere provider of knowledge and lessons in the classroom but moreover he is a person involved and interested in the wholesome development of students; he (lecturer) is accordingly supposed to have some qualities and characteristics like proficiency in the subject, moral health, physical and mental fitness. Performance of these roles be effectively enhancing through numerous staff development programmes.

Staff development has been accepted as an effective method of increasing the knowledge of skills of teachers in order to enable teachers to teach more effectively. It is the important aspect of education process that deals with the art of acquiring skills in the teaching profession. They are essential practice that enhances subject mastery, teaching methodology and classroom management. The primary aims of staff development, as submitted by Health



(2009), include enhancing professional competence which will also have some impact on personal growth and awareness, increasing job satisfaction and developing potentials for future work, and improving the individuals and institutions abilities to achieve their aims and objectives. The skills and competencies acquire because of prudent staff development programmes will enable the lecturers to perform optimally if not maximally. Their performance will not enable them give efficient and proficient service but will provide the avenues for technological advancement as well as enabling the attainment of varied policies toward reaching our national most expected destination compassionately.

Generally speaking, staff development through study-fellowship, conference, workshop, seminars and mentoring offer one of the most promising ways of improving classroom instruction and job performance of Business Education lecturers. At the tertiary level, the term Business Education is sometimes considered as synonymous with education in the broad areas of business administration in which the objective is primarily preparatory for professional careers in the management and administration of business enterprises. Business education is also used to designate the preparation of teachers of business and economics both at the secondary and tertiary levels of education. It is an important part of the general education which emphasizes on skills and competency acquisition (Okolocha & Onyenrke 2013). Business education is that program of study which encompasses education for office occupations business teaching administration and economic understanding. One remarkable and important characteristic of business education program is that its products can function independently as self-employed and employers of labour (Okwuanaso & Nwazo, 2014). Consequent upon these, there exist broad spectrums of job prospects for products of business education even from the junior secondary level to the graduate level, included in this spectrum are: teaching careers, entrepreneurship, office environment, vocational practices.

Effective performance on the part of staff is essential for the success of the organisation. Such performance, to a large extent, will depend on their knowledge skills, and confidence in originating ideas as to how best to carry out the task of the job. Hence, the need of staff development programmes which should aim at improving the effectiveness of individuals at work and for the greater responsibilities. Lecturers constitute an important factor in the implementation of the curriculum. The quality of lecturers is known to be a key predictor of student's performance. Lecturing as a profession demand continuous development of knowledge and ability through training programmes



such training programmes includes study-fellowship, conference, workshop, seminars and mentoring staff (Bright & Innocent 2015). Generally speaking, staff development through study-fellowship, conference, workshop, seminars and mentoring offer one of the most promising ways of improving classroom instruction. It is an attempt to assist the lecturers to improve on their teaching strategies, techniques, handle new instructional materials or possessed the necessary information and skills that are required for effective lesson delivery. In essence the dream of self-reliance, skill acquisition and entrepreneurship through education can only be realized through a well-defined programme. In most cases, staff development programmes are organized by an institution, a corporate body, association or government agency and is normally lasted for a short period of time. An activity similar to that but which may take a long time period is what is referred to as study-fellowship training programmes. In this case workers who are already in the service go on training or courses programme in order to update or acquire the intellectual and professional skills that are necessary to discharge their duties more efficiently (David, 2008). As such, the need for study-fellowship training for lecturers plays an essential role in successful education reform. It also serves as a bridge between prospective and experienced educators to meet the new challenges of guiding students towards higher standards of learning and self-development

Training programme in an institution is a process by which people are taught with skills and given the necessary knowledge or attitude to enable them to carry out their responsibilities to the required standard in the present job and to undertake greater and more demanding roles for effective job performance. Institutions are facing many changes which are related to economic needs, social needs and technology needs. As such, training programme plays an important part to overcome these problems and to cater the needs of the institution (Che, 2014). Study-fellowship training is a kind of teaching type which helps the working staff to obtain the ability to keep up with the changes within their organisation, to learn new knowledge in order to reach the targets determined by the organization, to improve him/her in his/her profession. Harbau (2014) stated that the study-fellowship training enables lecturers to obtain higher academic and professional qualifications in order to improve their positions in the school system.

According to Hakan, (2013) study-fellowship training is defined as the educational opportunities to help the staff to improve themselves in their professions for all the personnel in all the work fields (education, health, technology, and private sector, all working fields in public institution, press and media institution). Study-fellowship training is attempt to improve staff competence through continuing education courses, meetings and study groups,



visits, lectures and personnel reform. According to Lawal (2014) study-fellowship training programme is a process for continuous up–dating of lecturer’s knowledge, skills and interest in chosen field. It is a means for continuous professional growth which encourages the extension of technical assistance by lecturers.

Study-fellowship is an integral part of staff development programme, which is organized for teachers/lecturer’s while in service. Musa (2016) outline the benefits of study-fellowship training of teachers/lecturer’s to include:

1. To enable teachers/lecturers obtain higher academic and professional qualifications in order to improve their positions in the school system.
2. To help teachers/lecturer’s acquire more conceptual and technical knowledge, skills and competences in their teaching subjects and pedagogy in order to improve their efficiency in classroom instruction.
3. To enable the teachers/lecturer’s to be adequately equipped to meet up with the new changes in the school system in the 21st century.

Okemakinde, Adewuyi &Alabi (2013) in an early study had established that investment in the form of study-fellowship training was a crucial factor in the development of job commitment. The result of the study showed that lecturers who had low commitment to the profession prior to training became highly committed after they were given opportunity to go for study-fellowship training. Thus, study-fellowship training served to boost teacher moral and thus, engendered positive work performance among them. The purpose of study-fellowship training is to educate the personnel through study-fellowship activities such as courses and workshops and study-fellowship training is short term of educational activity which helps the teacher/lecturers to obtain professional knowledge and abilities and new ideas considering the improvements in their own fields and educational technologies (Hakan, 2013). Study-fellowship training has for many years been the driving force behind much changes that has occurred in the area of teaching and learning. As in any other profession, it is vital that lecturers keep up to date on the most current concepts, thinking and research in their field. This, in turn supports in their “lifelong learning” as educators, as professionals and as individuals who are responsible for the education of the next generation. Besides that, study-fellowship training also provides employees with ample opportunities to learn new concepts, methods and approaches through professional development. Study-fellowship training is a deliberate and continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual staff for furthering their job satisfaction and career prospects and the implementation of programmes of staff activities designed for the harmonious satisfaction of these needs. Lastly, the impact of study-fellowship training on the performance of staff in an organisation should be looked in various perspectives (Oduselu, 2011). It promotes a very flexible environment and allows staff to adapt with the working situation and it is also one form of motivation for employees or employers and it will continue to



increase creativity in staff. It also enables staff to acquire new understanding and skills to develop their effectiveness in the organisation.

Conference enhances lecturers' growth and development. It is a formal meeting of people with a shared interest, typically one that takes place over several days mostly held at school level and at cluster level with the purpose of reviewing and reflecting on practice on a regular basis. Conference comprise different personalities in the field of education with bountiful of ideas. Che (2014) discussing the form and use of conferences, which the researchers adopted as one of the elements under training recognized its strength for conveying a message to a large audience, while seeking opportunity to hear and comment on view of recognized authorities. Lecturers have access to a broad range of ideas through conference which lead to the enhanced performance. Staff development is a key to the success of any institution as the smooth and efficient running of any organisation depends on how well employees are equipped with relevant skills to perform their task. The success or failure of the organisation depends on employee's performance. Therefore, institutions are investing huge amount of money on staff development. The knowledge, ideas, skills and attitudes of the staff must be developed through integrated and systematic way of attending conference. Afshan, Sobia, Kamran, & Nasir (2012) stated that conferences are usually used to tackle a single or set of problems. It may involve session of various types; such as lectures, panel discussion, workshop etc. Conferences therefore, have a very important place in the work place. The work place is rapidly changing and information needs to be customized in order to meet the diverse of all institutions.

Musa (2016) stated that the conference allows lecturers to better demonstrate their professionalism, their understanding of the ongoing need for professional learning which enhances their job performance. Moreover, educational conferences mostly comprise different personalities in the field of education with bountiful of ideas. Conference provide learning environment that encourages participants to exchange experience, ideas and practices from their own schools/colleges (Okemakinde, Adewuyi & Alabi 2013). Kheyrollah & Nasser (2012) observed that the conference provides a forum for the team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes and how they can apply them in their school to improve their job performance. Lecturers have access to a broad range of ideas through conferences which lead to enhanced performance. Edet & Nkama (2013) stated that attending a conference also has numerous benefits to the lecturers, and this includes the following:

1. They allow lecturers to better demonstrate their professionalism, their understanding of the ongoing need for professional learning and the broader role of educators.



2. Recognizing, acknowledging, and rewarding individual creativity to create greater job satisfaction, enhanced self-worth, and professional pride in teaching.

3. Providing a forum for participatory inputs that affects the sense of investment and consequent ownership that all participants develop toward their school;

4. Assist lecturers in understanding and effectively using the instructional text in the classroom, new textbooks, lecturers' guides, and also support lecturers to better meet the needs of their students;

5. Develop lecturers' reflective practice and problem-solving skills in teaching/lecturing, administration, and community relations; and

6. Facilitate a process of collegiality in order to reduce lecturer's isolation and thereby enhance the prospect of nurturing substantive change in lecturers' beliefs and practices.

On the other hand, staff job performance is a criterion that relates to organizational outcomes and success. Daniel, Agbe, Odeh, & Tyokyaa (2019) defines job performance as goal accomplishment. It is the process of reaching an end that is organizational goals. Job performance is, therefore the qualitative and, quantitative measure of activities, duties and operations which a job holder achieves efficiently and effectively within a defined time limit. It could be an act of accomplishing or executing a given task (Gani, 2013). It could also be described as the ability to combine the right behavior skillfully towards the achievement of the school goals and objectives (Kalash, (2014). The success with which an educational institution survives depends largely on the ability and expertise of human resources who operate both at the managerial and teaching levels of operation. Such ability and expertise usually stem from the qualitative knowledge possessed and standard training received.

Staff job performance has been a great concern to stakeholders in education such as the government, external examination bodies, parents, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), among others in recent times in Nigeria, given the deteriorating academic performance of students' performance (Ekpoh, 2017). Parents, students, government and employees have expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in the schools in spite of improved academic and professional qualification of employees and huge government investment in education of their children in secondary, polytechnics, colleges of education and university system seems to have failed to produce graduates who can contribute to solving the problems of the society (Modibbo, Titus, Nwabufo, & Okereke, 2019). States in North Eastern Nigeria have made substantial moves to improve employees' work performance through such measures as it may increase staff participation in developmental



programmes but to no avail. This, therefore, implies that staff development practices are effective motivational strategies for skill and knowledge acquisition for enhanced staff job performance. The researchers observed that many tertiary institutions that organize staff training programmes in the country do have a wrong nomenclature that staff development programmes require placing few people with high potentials in a training programme while ignoring the rest of staff. It is, of course, difficult to identify the potential of prospective staff, but to rely on a few trainees is also risky. It is even much riskier when the staff in tertiary institutions is selected to go for study-fellowships and conferences based on friendship or kinship with executives. Hence, it has been observed by the researchers that lack of efficient and skillful staff development could be the reason behind this sordid job performance of staff as well as declined in student's performance in tertiary institutions. This study therefore, determines the impact of staff development programmes on job performance of Business Education lecturers' in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The caliber of lecturers working in the public tertiary institutions in Adamawa State is nothing to write home about in terms of their training and re-training. Some lecturers are usually inefficient in the performance of their duties. Thus, this cannot be unconnected of their failure to attend their professional conferences and update their knowledge. The researcher observed that in the whole of Adamawa State polytechnic and collages of education, there is no single PhD holder in Business Education lecturing, and less than 30 percent of lecturers in Adamawa State Polytechnic, Federal and State Colleges of Education and Modibbo Adama University, Yola had master's qualifications in Business Education. In same vein study conducted by Haruna & Modibbo (2018) reveals that, only 3 percent of Business Educators in Adamawa State attends Professional Annual Conference of Association of Business Educators in Nigeria (ABEN), while attends 2.1 percent of same attends Conference of Business Educators Association in Vocational Education (BEAVE), despite of the presence of four tertiary institutions in the State and tertiary education fund (tetfund).

Efforts were made by management of the tertiary institutions and tetfund in sponsoring study-fellowship training and conference for lecturers in tertiary institutions to improve themselves, in spite of their critical role in bringing about lecturers' efficiency and effectiveness, however, this has grossly affected the quality and quantity of lecturers. Thus, this may have contributed to the present poor academic achievements of students in schools, poor job performance of



lecturers. Another challenge is financial constraints; this evidence shows that financial constraints are contributory to limited professional practices undertaken to upgrade lecturers. Limited funds inhibit lecturers' maturity. Underfunding of staff development programmes can be one of the factors that act as a barrier to effective lecturers' growth. Therefore, lecturers are the main determinates of quality education. If they are apathetic, uncommitted, uninspired, lazy, unmotivated, the whole nation is doomed. If they lack or are ignorant in their discipline and impart wrong knowledge, they become not only redundant, but dangerous and end up producing half bake graduates.

This study is, however, imperative to determine the impact of staff development programmes on job performance of Business Education lecturers' in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the specific purposes, the following research questions were raised and answered.

1. What is the impact of study-fellowship training on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria?
2. What is the impact of conference attendance on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

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

- H01. Study-fellowship training has no significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.
- H02. Conference has no significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

### **Method**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The area of the study consists of 21 local governments and five educational zones in Adamawa State. The population of the study was 75 Business Education lecturers drawn from four tertiary institutions in the area offering the programme, namely; Modibbo Adama University, Yola, Federal College of Education, Yola, College of Education Hong and State Polytechnic Yola. The entire population was used for the study and so there was no sample and sampling technique for this study due to the relatively manageable size of the population the entire populations of 75.



Therefore, census population was used in this study since there was no sampling. This is in compliance with the recommendation of Ademuluyi and Okwuanaso (2009), that it is ideal to study the entire population whenever it is not more than 250. The research instrument consists of 24 items structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and titled Impact of Staff Development Programmes on Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers' Questionnaire (ISDPJPBELQ). The instrument was subjected to face validation by three specialists from the department of Vocational Education Modibbo Adama University, Yola. The validates were specifically requested to critique the instrument to be devoid of ambiguity and ensure the use proper and correct grammar to make it concise and also precise. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the two clusters yielded co-efficient values of .69 and .71 for section A and B respectively with over-all co-coefficient value of .70 indicating that the instrument was deemed reliable for the study. This is in line with what Spiegel and Stevens (1999) recommended that the reliability coefficient of between .5 to +1 is adequate in most social sciences environment based. Arithmetic mean was used to answer the research questions while simple linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In the questionnaire, the items were based on 4-point scale, and weighed on the following scale:-Very High Impact (VHI) 4 points, High Impact (HI) 3 points, Medium Impact (MI) 2 points, Low Impact (LI) 1 point. Any item with a mean value equal to or greater than 2.50 was regarded as High Impact by the respondents while mean values less than 2.50 was regarded as Low Impact by the respondents. Out of the 75 copies of questionnaire distributed, 73 copies were retrieved. In the test of hypotheses, if the p-value was less or equal to 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was failed to retain. Notwithstanding, where p-value was greater or equal to 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), then the null hypothesis was retained. All the two hypotheses were rejected.

## Results

**Table 1: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Impact of Study Fellowship on Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers in Tertiary Institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria, N = 73.**

S/N	Items/Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	The study-fellowship training enables lecturers to obtain higher academic and professional qualifications in order to improve their positions in the school system.	3.80	1.93	VHI
2	The study-fellowship training helps lecturers to acquire more conceptual and technical knowledge.	3.68	1.92	VHI



3	Study-fellowship training enhances lecturer's competences in their teaching subjects and pedagogy and improves their efficiency in classroom instruction.	3.54	1.88	VHI
4	Study-fellowship training enables the lecturers to be adequately equipped to meet up with the new changes in the school system in the 21st century.	2.98	1.73	VHI
5	Study-fellowship training has impacted lecturers in my school to learn how to prepare their lesson well and this enables them to perform better in their classes.	3.76	1.94	VHI
6	Study-fellowship training impacted the lecturers to learn how to control their lectures and this enhances their performances in their classes.	2.37	1.41	VLE
7	Study-fellowship training enhances the overall development of their students.	2.67	1.63	VHI
8	Study-fellowship training constitutes an important factor in the implementation of the curriculum.	3.01	1.73	VHI
9	The study-fellowship training has impacted not only for the success of an individual lecturer, but for the nation as well.	2.97	1.72	VHI
10	Study-fellowship training has positively impacted the lecturers in my school to master their areas of specializations and this improves their job performances.	3.21	1.79	VHI
11	The study-fellowship training plays a positive impact on the job performance of Business Education lecturers.	3.13	1.77	VHI
12	The study-fellowship training helps to keep lecturers up-to-date and enhances the academic achievement of their students.	3.25	1.80	VHI
<b>Grand Weighted Mean</b>		<b>3.20</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>VHI</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Data in table 1 showed that all the mean scores are above 2.50 which is the mean score for decision making, with the exception of item six which revealed a mean score of 2.37 and standard deviation valued at 1.41. The highest mean score of 3.80 with standard deviation valued at 1.93 was recorded in item 1. The grand mean and standard deviation were 3.20 and 1.97 respectively. Since the grand mean score is 3.20 and it is above the mean value of 2.50, all the items except one were therefore accepted which means that the study-fellowship training given to the lecturers has very high impact of on their job performance in Business Education at tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Impact of Conference on Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers in Tertiary Institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria, N = 73.**

S/N	Items/Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
13	Lecturers have access to a broad range of ideas through conference which lead to the enhancement of their job performance.	2.41	1.55	VLI



14	Conference enhances lecturers' growth and development in teaching and learning.	3.13	1.77	VHI
15	Conference allow organisation to get updated information on key issues that their institutions are concerned with and improve their job performance.	3.05	1.45	VHI
16	Conference allows lecturers to better demonstrate their professionalism, their understanding of the ongoing need for professional learning which enhances their job performance.	2.99	1.72	VHI
17	Recognizing, acknowledging, and rewarding individual creativity to create greater job satisfaction, enhanced self-worth, and professional pride in teaching.	3.47	1.86	VHI
18	Conference allows lecturers in providing a forum for participatory inputs that affects the sense of investment and consequent ownership that all participants develop toward their school.	2.97	1.72	VHI
19	Conference helps in understanding and effectively using the instructional text in the classroom, new textbooks, lecturers' guides, and also support lecturers in enhancing their job performance.	3.02	1.74	VHI
20	Conference allows lecturers to develop reflective practice and problem-solving skills in teaching, administration, and community relations.	2.54	1.59	VHI
21	Conference facilitate a process of collegiality in order to reduce lecturer's isolation and thereby enhance the prospect of nurturing substantive change in lecturers' beliefs and practices	3.00	1.73	VHI
22	Attending conference will allow staff to network with each other professionals in the industry, to build their team which in turn enhances their job performance.	2.88	1.70	VHI
23	Conference providing a forum for the team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes and how they can apply them in their school to improve their job performance.	2.79	1.67	VHI
24	Conference provide learning environment that encourages participants to exchange experience, ideas and practices from their own schools/colleges.	3.16	1.78	VHI
<b>Grand Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.95</b>	<b>1.71</b>	<b>VHI</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Data in table 2 showed that all the mean scores are above 2.50 which is the mean score for decision making, with the exception of item 13 which revealed a mean score of 2.41 and standard deviation valued at 1.55. The highest mean score of 3.47 with standard deviation valued at 1.86 was recorded in item 17. The grand mean and standard deviation were 2.95 and 1.71 respectively. Since the grand mean score is 2.95 and it is above the mean value of 2.50, all the items except one were therefore accepted which means that the conference attendance given to the lecturers has very high impact of on their job



performance in Business Education at tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Presents Summary of Simple Regression of the Impact of Study-fellowship Training on Business Education Lecturers' Job Performance.**

Variables	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.	Beta Standardised	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Add. R <sup>2</sup>	Dec.
Study-fellowship Training	50.234	7.012	8.750	.000					
Lecturers' Job Performance	.023	.195	.043	.000	.877	0.941	.896	0.759	H <sub>01</sub> Rejected

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$ .

**Source: Field Study 2022.**

Data in Table 3 reveals the analysis of impact of study-fellowship training on job performance of Business Education lecturers. The table, indicates that R<sup>2</sup> value is .896, Beta = .877 and  $p = .000$ . It implies that 89.6% of job performance of Business Education lecturers was dependent upon the study-fellowship training of the lecturers. Thus, since p-value of .000 is less than the level of significance of 0.05, this implies that study-fellowship training has a positive significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the study-fellowship training has no significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers' in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria was rejected.

**Table 4: Presents Summary of Simple Regression of the Impact of Conference on Business Education Lecturers' Job Performance.**

Variables	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.	Beta Standardised	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Add. R <sup>2</sup>	Dec.
Conference	37.565	9.487	5.314	.000					
Lecturers' Job Performance	.521	.297	2.131	.000	.874	0.875	.754	0.777	H <sub>02</sub> Rejected

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$ .

**Source: Field Study 2022.**

Data in Table 4 reveals the analysis of impact of conference on job performance of Business Education lecturers. The table, indicates that R<sup>2</sup> value is .754, Beta = .874 and  $p = .000$ . It implies that 75.4% of lecturers' job



performance was dependent upon the conference attended on job performance of Business Education lecturers. Thus, since p-value of .000 is less than the level of significance of 0.05, this implies that conference has a positive significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the conference has no significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria rejected.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study reveal that the study-fellowship training has a positive significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. This collaborate with what Lawal (2014) stated that the study-fellowship training is an important part of the general education which emphasizes on skills and competency acquisition of lecturers for better job performances. This is in line with the view of Hakan (2013) who noted that study-fellowship training is a short term of educational activity which helps the teacher/lecturers to obtain professional knowledge and abilities and new ideas considering the improvements in their own fields.

Business education is used to designate the preparation of teachers of business and economics both at the secondary and tertiary levels of education. The findings of this study are also in coherence with what Harbau (2014)) reported that the study-fellowship training enables lecturers to obtain higher academic and professional qualifications in order to improve their positions in the school system.

The findings of the study as well reveal that the conference attended by lecturers has a positive significant impact on job performance of Business Education lecturers' in tertiary institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The findings are in agreements with what Musa (2016) found in his study that the conference allows lecturers to better demonstrate their professionalism, their understanding of the ongoing need for professional learning which enhances their job performance. Similarly, results of the findings supported with what Kheyrollah & Nasser (2012) noted that the conference provides a forum for the team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes and how they can apply them in their school to improve their job performance. The study also agreed with what Okemakinde, Adewuyi & Alabi (2013) who found that conference provide learning environment that encourages participants to exchange experience, ideas and practices from their own schools/colleges.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the need for Business Education lecturers' for to go study-fellowship training and conference

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should not be overemphasized, as this will help in improving and enhancing their job performances. Since the responsibilities of lecturers in any circumstance is the education of the students. However, the lecturers should possess the up-to-date knowledge's skills and competences necessary for the realization of the objectives of the programme. Thus, if the lecturers are lacking the knowledge which are acquired through study-fellowship training and conferences then, there could be lost of interest on the part of lecturers, poor academic performances. More so, this clearly indicates that the Business Education lecturers would be producing half bake graduates who would not be able to functions effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world of work and who may not contribute anything meaningful to the development of an economy driven.

### **Recommendations**

In line with the research findings and conclusion the following recommendations were made:

1. Government at both Federal and State should continuously be given permission and sponsorship of lecturers to go on study-fellowship training programmes since their performances are enhanced through such trainings and retraining.
2. There should be an open-door policy to all lecturers at tertiary institutions in Adamawa State to allow all lecturers to be attending conferences at least in two years to better demonstrate their professionalism, their understanding of the ongoing need for professional learning and the broader role of business educators.
3. There is need for the lecturers to be acquainted with the current trends and development in education. The study has therefore recommended that lecturers, heads of departments, directors and deans of all the four tertiary institutions in Adamawa State to be sensitized by their various heads, tetfunds and professional Associations/Organisations on the need for regular attendance of study-fellowship training and conference to enable them to abreast on current educational practices, strategies, methods/techniques etc.

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## **E -BUSINESS COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BY BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS FOR MITIGATING CURRENT CHALLENGES OF MANAGING SMALL SCALE BUSINESSES IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The study was designed to ascertain e-business competencies required by Business Education students for mitigating challenges of managing small scale businesses in Delta State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 86 Business Educators from the colleges of education in Delta State. The entire population constituted the sample of the study because of its manageable size. Three research questions and two hypotheses tested at 0.05 alpha level guided the study. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection and data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while t-test statistics was used to analyze the hypotheses. Two experts validated the instrument. The instrument was trial tested using Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient(r) and found to have a coefficient of 0.76. The findings of the study revealed that: e-banking, e-accounting and e-advertising competencies are required by business education students for mitigating current challenges of management of small scale businesses. The finding on the hypotheses testing at 0.05 alpha level revealed that one of the hypotheses was retained while the other rejected. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that: business education curriculum should be reviewed from time to time to reflect current trends and issues, the business educators should as a matter of necessity ensure the usage of available and relevant new information and communication technologies in teaching and learning process and that students of business education should harness the potentials of ICT to create wealth and be self-reliant.*

**Key words:** E-business, Competencies, Business education, Business education students and Small scale businesses.



## **Introduction**

The emergence of new technologies has in no doubt tremendously influenced every facet of human endeavors today positively, the business enterprises inclusive, because of its inherent benefits. The success or failure of any chosen small scale business in this era of information and communication technology innovations, depends to a large extent on the operators' "know how" and competencies to adopt and adapt to these new technologies or current innovations. The business world is not exempted from these current trends of innovations. So many small scale businesses are now swimming with the tide of electronic/digital commerce and switching from the traditional method of business. Many companies greatly depend on technology to provide accurate information for the effective management of their businesses today (Udegbumam, Uchenu, Odimmega & Macpherson, 2018).

Modern communication and information technologies have caused changes in the narratives of many business processes, organization structures and the competitive advantages of firms or enterprises positively. Besides, it has augmented firms' capability to coordinate business transactions within and outside firms. Besides, it enhanced easy entrance to and departure from the market, reduced switching costs for consumers who may wish to choose among suitable goods and services from competing firms, and provided fast and quick access to information about any goods to be acquired by any consumer. With the advent of internet, computer net-workings, web-based technologies in businesses, graduates of business education, if acquainted with the necessary skills and competences involved, upon graduation could stand the chance of mitigating the current challenges of managing small scale businesses and enterprises in this contemporary times.

Electronic commerce denotes the seamless application of information and communication technology from its point of origin to its endpoint along the entire value chain of business processes conducted electronically and designed to enable the accomplishment of a business goal. These processes may be partial or complete and may encompass business-to-business as well as business-to-consumer and consumer-to-business transactions, (Wigand, 1970). E-business, according to Ayeni & Olatona as cited in Nwokike & Ugwunwoti (2020), is the sales and purchases of goods and services conducted over computer networks by methods specifically designed for the purpose of receiving or placing orders. E-business is the art of buying and selling goods and services via the internet. It could also be referred to as the buying and selling of goods and services, servicing customers, processing, making payments, managing production control, collaborating with business partners, sharing information and running automated services. E-businesses are web-based technology that requires some levels of competencies in applying it in managing current realities in small scale businesses.



The benefits of e-business are numerous and cannot be overemphasized; it offers a variety of products as obtainable in conventional markets, provides one the opportunity to use point of sales (POS) and automated teller machines (ATM), reduces the stress of going to and queuing in banks, enhances quick service delivery, reduction in the risk of carrying about bulk money and sometimes accidents and makes transactions pleasurable. In the use of new technologies in managing small scale businesses, competence is a core issue, because it enables employees to transform ideas into business values and in the end, higher productivity. Competencies are skills, abilities, attitudes and behaviours acquired and exhibited after an exposure to theories and practices in an individual's field of endeavour/study, Nwalado (2021). Competencies are a set of skills combined with knowledge and abilities. There are competencies required of business education graduates to manage small scale business; these competencies or skills include; e-banking skill (Sweety, 2017), e-accounting skill (Nwokike & Ugwunwoti, 2020) and e-advertising skills.

E-banking competencies entail the ability to: use automated teller machines (ATM), use electronic fund transfer (ETF), and point of sales terminal (POS), to use direct deposits, use debit card purchases, and use mobile banking and to use alerts and auto writing cheques. These are for convenience and tracking of transfers and payments.

E-accounting competencies deals with the ability to: use sage accounting, use microsoft excel, use loan amortization application, use digital web links, use payable and purchases application, use application for preparing profit and loss account, use application for preparing statement of affairs account. The e-accounting competencies use ICT application tools in gathering, recording, analyzing, processing, interpreting and communicating financial transactions to enable stakeholders make quick and rightful decisions and even detect frauds where necessary.

E-adverting competencies are also known as online marketing skills; it is a form of marketing and advertising which uses the internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. The competencies involved in e-advertising include the ability to: use web design/development, use graphic design, to use search engine optimization, effectively analyze data and draw insight, use Google Adwords and bing, manage social media, use website conversion funnel, manage social media and understand customers' experience and knowledge on emerging platforms, (Rocco,2015). There are more opportunities for advertisers to reach out to a larger online audience through technology. Web portals provide effective ways to attract viewers using the various websites in advertising their products and services, (Marvan & Gonzales, 2014). With the current information and communication technology innovations, the management of small scale businesses in Delta State need the integration of e-banking, e-accounting and e-advertising to survive and flourish as its benefits are enormous and in comparison to the traditional means of exchange of goods and services offline.



Business education, according to Ibrahim & Yakubu (2018), is the teaching of skills, attitude and knowledge needed for success in a business career. In the opinion of Njoku in Azuka & Nwosu (2018), business education is an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that enables him/her to operate in the environment he/she finds himself/herself in. Business education is the inculcation and ingraining of competencies, employable and saleable skills in its recipients for self-reliance and in turn national development.

Business education students are youths/individuals admitted into higher institutions of learning (i.e Universities or Colleges of Education) to undertake a course of learning in a business education programme, expected to be certificated upon graduation and to gainfully use the skills learnt to earn a living. Those who teach business education in colleges of education are called business educators and are made up of males and females.

The management of small scale businesses need the adoption of new technologies like; e- banking, e-accounting and e-advertising to survive and flourish as its benefits are enormous and incomparable to the conventional/traditional exchange of goods and services offline.

Business education students are youths/individuals admitted into higher institutions of learning (i.e Colleges of Education, Universities) to undertake a course of learning in a business education programme, expected to be certificated upon graduation and to gainfully use the skills learnt to earn a livelihood.

Small scale businesses, according to Ebuo as cited in Nwokike & Ugwunwoti (2020), are businesses which are owned and managed by one or two persons, influenced by the family in decision making, has undifferentiated organizational structure, market share which is relatively small and employ less than fifty(50) employees. Small scale businesses are privately owned and operated businesses, characterized by a small number of employees and low turnovers. Some business education students upon graduation become entrepreneurs' vis-à-vis owning and operating a small scale business, it becomes imperative to align and adopt current technologies in managing their business. The diffusion of innovation theory, propounded by E.M. Rogers in 1962, quickly comes to mind as this topic is concerned; it actually explains how, over a period, an idea or product gains momentum and spreads through a specific population or social clime. The resultant effect of this spread is that people adopt this new idea, behavior, product or innovations. *“Adoption means that a person does something differently than what they had previously (i.e., purchase or use a new product, acquire and perform a new behavior, etc.). Adoption of a new idea, behavior, or product (i.e., "innovation") does not happen simultaneously in a social system; rather it is a process whereby some people are more apt to adopt the innovation than others, Wayne (2019)”*.



### **Statement of the Problem**

The new information and communication technologies and its applications in business management have revolutionized the mode of business operations globally, creating gap between management of traditional small scale businesses and conventional small scale businesses at all levels. It is no more business as usual for both government and individual owned enterprises. It has inevitably posed a great challenge to business education curriculum, educators and students respectively. The question is; with the emergence of these new information and communication technologies, its adoption and adaptation in management of businesses, small scale businesses inclusive, what are the e-business competencies required by business education students in mitigating the challenges of managing small scale businesses upon graduation in Delta State? It is on this premise that the researchers decide to venture into this study.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What are the e-banking competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses in Delta State?
- ii. What are the e-accounting competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses in Delta State?
- iii. What are the e-advertising competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses in Delta State?

### **Hypotheses**

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

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business

competencies required for managing small scale business based on gender.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business

competencies required for managing small scale business based on experience.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The area consisted of all the colleges of education in Delta State that offer business education programme. The colleges of education are namely: Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, College of Education, Warri and Physical College of Education, Mosoghar. The population of the study comprised all the 86 Business Educators currently teaching in the three colleges of education in the state. The entire population was studied as it was too small to be sampled. The instrument for data collection was a 25 item structured questionnaire titled: "E-business Competencies Required by Business Education Students for



Management of Small Scale Businesses Questionnaire (EBCRMSMBQ)". The instrument was validated by two experts from School of Secondary Education (Business), Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State. The instrument was a 4-point rating scale structured questionnaire of Highly Required (HR), moderately Required (MR), Rarely Required (RR) and Not Required (NR) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Test-re-test method was used on ten Business Educators in Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State, who were not part of the study area to ensure its reliability. The same instrument was re-administered to the same respondents after a two week interval to check for consistency of response. The data obtained was analyzed using Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The instrument yielded a coefficient of 0.75 which indicated that the instrument was reliable and it was considered appropriate. Out of the 86 questionnaires administered by hand and by Google forms online, 73copies (representing 84.9%) were retrieved and used for analysis. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 for analysis. The decision rule for the research question was based on mean value of 2.50 and above as required and mean value of less than 2.50 as not required. The decision rule for the hypotheses was that any hypothesis with a t-calculated value less than the t-critical value is considered accepted whereas if the t-calculated value is more than the t-critical value it is considered rejected.

## Results

### Research Question 1

What are the e-banking competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises?

**Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on e-banking competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises.**

S/N	STATEMENT	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to use automated teller machine (ATM).	3.36	0.58	MR
2.	Ability to use electronic fund transfer (EFT).	3.18	0.56	MR
3.	Ability to use point of sales terminal (POS).	3.27	0.56	MR
4.	Ability to use direct deposits.	3.34	0.60	MR
5.	Ability to use debit card purchases.	3.40	0.57	MR
6.	Ability to use mobile banking.	3.55	0.53	HR
7.	Ability to use alerts and auto writing cheques.	3.38	0.73	MR
8.	Ability to query wrong debit alerts on transactions made.	3.30	0.75	MR
9.	Ability to use credit cards to make transactions online.	3.47	0.74	MR
10.	Ability to remember and protect password to accounts.	3.34	0.81	MR
<b>Grand Mean / SD</b>		<b>3 .36</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>MR</b>

Source: field study, 2021. Highly Required (HR), Moderately Required (MR).



The data on research question 1, table 1 above, shows business educators' mean responses on the e-banking competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses. The mean scores ranged from 3.18 to 3.55 showing that all the items listed were accepted competencies required. The grand mean score of 3.36 showed e-banking competencies are moderately required for business education students to manage small scale businesses in Delta State. The standard deviations for all the items fall within 0.53 to 0.81 which indicates that they are within the same range showing that the respondents' mean ratings are not widely apart in their views.

### Research Question 2

What are the e-accounting competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises?

**Table 2: Respondents' mean ratings on e-accounting competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises.**

S/N	STATEMENT	Mean	SD	Remark
11.	Ability to use sage accounting.	3.23	0.73	MR
12.	Ability to use Microsoft excel.	3.27	0.73	MR
13.	Ability to use loan amortization.	3.59	0.64	HR
14.	Ability to use digital web links.	3.52	0.70	HR
15.	Ability to use payable and purchases applications.	0.73	0.74	MR
16.	Ability to use application for preparing profit and loss amount.	3.34	0.76	MR
17.	Ability to use application for preparing statement of affairs account.	3.21	0.79	MR
18.	Ability to use inventory taking packages/applications.	3.26	0.79	MR
<b>Grand Mean / SD</b>		<b>3.36</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>MR</b>

*Source: Field study, 2021. Highly Required (HR), Moderately Required (MR).*

The data on research question 2, table 2. above, shows business educators' mean responses on e-accounting competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses. The mean scores ranged from 3.21 to 3.59 showing that all the items listed were accepted competencies required. The cluster mean score of 3.36 showed e-accounting competencies are moderately required for business education students to manage small scale businesses in Delta State. The standard deviations for all the items fall within 0.64 to 0.79 which indicates that they are within the same range showing that the respondents' mean ratings are not widely apart in their views.

### Research Question 3

What are the e-advertising competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises?

**Table 3: Respondents' mean ratings on the e-advertising competencies required by business education students for managing small scale enterprises.**

S/N	STATEMENT	Mean	SD	Remark
19.	Ability to use web design/development (e.g Java. script using visual studio code, Html and CSS	3.26	0.72	MR
20.	Ability to use graphics design(e,g photoshop, corel draw etc).	3.41	0.68	MR
21.	Ability to use search engine optimization (SEO ie. return links to websites link building).	3.27	0.65	MR
22.	Ability to effectively analyze data and draw insight.	2.96	0.63	MR
23.	Ability to use adwords and bing.	1.52	0.50	RR
24.	Ability to manage social media(facebook pages, twitter profile).	2.34	0.48	RR
25.	Ability to use website conversion funnel(procedures customer/consumer take through to an internet Advertised product).	1.67	0.55	RR
<b>Grand Mean / SD</b>		<b>.63</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>MR</b>

**Source: field study, 2021. Moderately Required (MR), Rarely Required (RR)**

The data on research question 3, table 3. above shows business educators' mean responses on e-advertising competencies required by business education students for managing small scale businesses. The mean scores ranged from 1.53 to 3.41 showed that not all the items listed were accepted competencies required. However, the grand mean score of 2.63 showed e-advertising competencies are moderately required by business education students to manage small scale businesses in Delta State. The standard deviations for all the items are within the same range showing that the respondents were homogenous in their views.

### Hypotheses Testing

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale business based on gender.

**Table 4: Independent sample t –test of difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale business based on gender.**

Competencies	N	Mean	St D	df	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	level	Remark
Male	30	72.04	10.170	71	-1.253	0.011	0.05	NS
Female	43	83.14	5.970					

\*NS= Not Significant



The data in Table 4 above, on hypotheses testing, indicate that the t–calculate value is -1.253 and the t-critical value is 0.011, at 0.05 level of significance and 71 degree of freedom. This means that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale businesses based on gender. Since the t-calculated value is less than t-critical value, the null hypothesis is therefore retained.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale business based on experience.

**Table 5: Independent sample t –test of difference between the mean ratings of Business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale business based on experience.**

Experiences Remark	N	Mean	St.D	df	t-Cal.	t-Crit.	Level
Below 10years	34	83.00	7.691	71	0.833	0.810	0.05
10years & above	39	81.44	8.271				

**\*S= Significant**

The data in Table 5 above on hypothesis testing, indicate that the t–calculate value is 0.833 and the t-critical value is 0.810, at 0.05 level of significance and 71 degree of freedom. This means that there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small scale businesses based on experiences. Since the t-calculated value is greater than t-critical value, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 1 revealed that e-banking competencies are required by business education students for effective management of small scale businesses in Delta State. This is in tandem with the assertion of Sweetey (2017), who opined that e-banking skills or competencies are necessarily required of business education graduates to effectively manage small scale business in this era of new technologies influx. With e-banking skill and competence, small scale business owners do their businesses from the comfort of their homes, are saved from the stress of carrying money to and from banks and risk of being attacked by thieves. The first null hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business educators on the e-business competencies required for managing small businesses based on gender. The findings in respect to the second research question shows that e-accounting competencies are required by business education students to effectively manage small scale businesses. This corroborated with the opinion of Nwokike and



Ugwunwoti (2020), who remarked that new technologies have become a driving force in modern accounting and financial record keeping. Modern e-accounting applications are needed in gathering; recording, analyzing, processing, interpreting and communicating financial transactions to enable stakeholders make quick, rightful decisions and reduction of costs. The second null hypothesis further revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in the e-business competencies required for managing small scale businesses based on experiences. And lastly, the finding in respect to the third research question revealed that e-advertising competencies are required by business education students to thrive in management of small scale businesses in Delta State. The finding also agreed with the view of Marzan and Gonzales, (2014), opined that there are more opportunities for advertisers to reach out a larger online audience through technology and that web portals provide effective ways to attract viewers using the various websites in advertising their products and services. The relevance of e-advertising cannot be overemphasized, as it enhances the last long relationship, personalized for targeted audience and wider coverage of customers. The discussion cannot be said to be complete without an allusion to the aforementioned diffusion theory of Rogers (1962), which explains how, why and at what rate new ideas and technology spreads among groups of people. And its application supports the assertion of Udegbumam, Uchenu, Odimmega and Macpherson (2018) and who in their opinion maintained that many companies greatly depend on new technology(ies) to provide accurate information for the effective management of their businesses today.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that for business education students to effectively manage small scale business outfits upon graduation the knowledge of new technologies in business is inevitable and possessing the requisite competencies and its application is key to relevance and self-reliance.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. The business education curriculum planners should incorporate digital marketingskills, which is one of the global trends and new technologies in the business education programme and from time to time review the curriculum as more technological development evolves.
2. Business educators should practically utilize and expose students to new technologies of accounting and banking in the teaching and learning process.



3. Business education students should explore the potentials of new information and communication technologies beyond just social use to create wealth and be self-reliant.

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## REVAMPING NIGERIA'S RECEDING ECONOMY THROUGH SMES FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

*The study investigated ways forward for revamping Nigeria's receding economy through Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for Sustainable National Development. The Nigerian economy has been worse hit by Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) and recession, caused by excessive imports, plunging oil revenue and low investment in flows. It is in response to the realization of the very role played by SMEs in sustainable national development as evidenced in the use of capacity for job creation and national development, self-reliance and poverty eradication. Small and medium enterprises are seen as the engine room that promote sustainable national development, and the bedrock of economic development of any country, Nigeria inclusive. The paper concluded that economic recession has serious negative implications on government revenue, employment generation, income vulnerability, inflation, human health, poverty and natural resources management in the country. Recovery and sustainable national development are dependent on effective SMEs. It was recommended among others that the government should assist intending entrepreneurs or small and medium entrepreneurs to have access to finance and necessary information relative to business opportunities, modern technology, raw materials, and machinery which would enable them to reduce their operating cost and be more efficient to meet the everyday level of competition. The development of a strong nation and commitment towards adequate funding and investment can only be achieved through SMEs.*

**Keywords:** Revamping, Recession, SMEs, Sustainable National Development

### Introduction

The present economic recession in Nigeria is a manifestation of long-term ills in the structure of the economy that became full blown under the present administration. Recession has brought about an undeniable feeling of disappointment in the country. The result is that many firms are folding up due to dramatic decline in domestic industrial production as a result of insufficient raw materials and spare parts. The exchange rate of the naira keeps deteriorating against the dollar and pound sterling. There is high rate of inflation, falling wages, rising taxes, high cost of goods and services, rising cost of petrol due to subsidy removal, and the wake of Covid-19. It has also witnessed a wide-spread



manpower contractions both in private and public sectors of the economy. More so, the federal and the state government cannot meet their financial obligations. The high rate of unemployment is one of the most serious consequences of economic recession in Nigeria which cuts across graduates of tertiary institutions and professional managers. This has informed the need for the government to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty, unemployment and other socio-economic problems by investing heavily on SMEs for sustainable national development.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) the world over have been recognized as instrument of sustainable national development. Small and Medium Enterprises constitute essential ingredients in the lubrication and development of any economy and have been recognized as the main sustenance of national development because of their capacity in enhancing the economy's output and enhancing human welfare (Akingunola, 2011). There is a greater likelihood that SMEs are going to utilize labour intensive technologies thereby reducing unemployment particularly in developing countries and thus have an immediate influence on employment generation (Muritala, Awolaja, and Biako, 2012). The challenge of Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19), problem of hunger, poverty and unemployment have undermined the capacity of the economy and SMEs are seen as mechanism for intervention in addressing these long term problem of our nation. SMEs are unique in many respects owing to their advantages and challenges as they also differ from those of large organizations/businesses. Hence, it is necessary to have large number of small and medium enterprises if robust competition is to exist among companies and if freedom of initiative and business enterprises are to be maintained, and if there has to be continuation and progress in extending more goods and services by increasing the number of people in the globe. SMEs are one of those educational programmes that emphasize the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of the mental, physical and social abilities and competencies for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Revamping Nigeria's receding economy through SMEs cannot be over emphasized as the sector cuts across all other sectors of our economy and has the potential to transform these other sectors and set them into the path of sustainable national development. There is no doubt that the SMEs have to strengthen their linkages to large scale enterprises as they are key players in the supply of raw materials and distribution of manufactured goods. SMEs are the backbone of sustainable national development taking into account the important role they play to the indigenous micro and other businesses and the contribution they make to the country. Nigeria is now at the lowest ebb in human capital development owing to the fact that there is inadequate course contents in its educational system which tends to produce more of those who lack job skills for self and paid employment than those the economy requires to remain vibrant



(Akhigbe, Ogiagah, and Ogunmilade, 2013). It therefore, means that every citizen in Nigeria should be equipped with SMEs' skills to contribute effectively to the economic development of the country. Moreso, the government plays a very key role in the administration of SMEs in the country as it operates in a society governed by the government and owing to the fact that there are micro policies specifically designed to address SMEs in the country. Hence, the promotion of SMEs in developing economies since they bring about a great distribution of income and wealth, economic self-dependence, entrepreneurial development, employment and a host of other positive economic uplifting factors (Aremu, 2004). SMEs speed up the rate of socio-economic development of all nations, particularly developing ones. SMEs also serve as a system or catalyst for the attainment of national objectives in terms of employment generation at low investment cost and also the development of entrepreneurial capabilities and indigenous technology that is profit driven.

SMEs also bring about local capital reformation and help in achieving high level of production. Going by the above, SMEs are desirable for sustainable national development. In Nigeria however, the sector remains relatively small in terms of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or to gainful employment as the oil sector is known to have taken the lead. Invariably, SMEs are perceived to be viable engines of sustainable economic development, their growth and development level have been slow and in some cases even stunted, owing to a number of problems and challenges confronting this important sub-sector of our economy. The poor performance of the SMEs can be blamed on poor management practices, poor access to funds, low equity participation from stakeholders, poor infrastructural facilities, shortage of skilled manpower, multiplicity of regulating agencies, the over-bearing operating environment, societal and attitudinal problems, little access to markets and inadequate information (Olubaba, 2011). The Nigerian economy today has declined to its lowest for the first time since 1987. In the first quarter of 2016, the National Bureau of Statistics reported that the economy shrank by 0.36% to hit its lowest point in the last 30 years. The last time the country had such instance of drastic economic decline according to the World Bank was under the regime of Ibrahim Babangida (Obasaniho, 2017). At that time, the economy recorded constitutive decline of 0.15% and 0.82% in first and second quarters of 1987. However, the world economists saw light at the end of the tunnel as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted that the economy of Nigeria was going to grow by 0.8% by the end of 2017. Similarly, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that Nigeria's GDP increased from -0.91% in the first quarter of 2017 to 0.55% in the second quarter of 2017, thereby officially declining Nigeria out of recession (Vanguard News, 2017).

The poverty rate in the country is still very high despite the report by the IMF and the declaration by the NBS that Nigeria was out of recession. There is high inflation rate, a general rise in prices of goods and services, leading to low



purchasing power. Debt accumulation especially foreign ones is on the high side coupled with high interest rate in the economy thereby discouraging investors. There is also fall in aggregate demands, fall in wages and income are now the order of the day. There is mass unemployment and general loss of confidence on the government. The government is also trying to contend with the activities of separatist agitation in the South East, farmers-herders clashes in the North Central and South-South, Boko Haram insurgency in the North, banditry in the North, kidnappings and militancy in the Southern part of the country.

### **Concept of Recession**

Recession is seen as a backward march or reversal of the economy over a relatively long term, delivered by some economists to be part of a regular cyclical phenomenon of decline which must inevitably follow some periods of sustained growth or over-heating (Igwe, in Dode, 2010). It is a period when the economy of a nation begins to experience a down-turn/downward trend. It is also a significant decline in economic activities spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months, normally visible in real GDP, real income, employment, industrial production, and wholesale-retail sales (Saul, 2008). It is a negative Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate for two consecutive quarters. Nigeria however, started experiencing economic recession in the second quarter of 2016, and since the first and second quarter growth in 2016, there were -0.36% and -1.5% growth respectively (Noko, 2016). However, there is no clear cut distinction between a recession and a depression, but most analysis consider a depression as an extremely severe recession in which the decline in GDP exceeds 10% (Claessens, Ayhan, and Terrones, 2008). Depression is a deep and long lasting recession. Saul (2008) in his assertion stated that the difference between a recession and a depression is more than simply one of magnitude or duration that is, it is not simply a matter of saying that if a recession lasts more than say, four quarters, or involves a decline in real GDP of more than say. 4 or 5%, then it thereby becomes a depression, as the distinction hangs on the causes and other characteristics of the down-turn. A recession is nearly always the result of a period of tight monetary policy, while a depression is a significant and protracted asset price cycle that involves a construction in credit or debt and is characterized by a decline in the general price level as well as in economic activity experienced in the economy.

A recession often witnesses a decline in certain macroeconomic indicators such as GDP, employment, investment spending, capacity utilization, household income, business income, and inflation, with the attendant increase in the rate of unemployment (Agri, Mailafia, and Umejiaku, 2017). Recession causes extreme poverty and suffering of the masses, children's right to quality education, affordable intensive health care are deprived, there is adverse demand and supply shocks. There is also weak purchasing power, reduced consumer spending and decrease in sales of goods and services. It also has



contractionary effects on aggregate demand and supply resulting in volatile shocks in economic activities leading to scarcity of foreign exchange, few money, reduced income, decreased finances available to households and other investing members of the public.

### **Factors Responsible for a Receding Economy**

**High Inflation Rate:** The activity of the government in placing a ban on the importation of certain essential agricultural productions like rice without gestation period has posed a challenge. Also the removal of fuel subsidy should not be simultaneous with the ban placed on the said agricultural products. The main cause of the inflation include: speculation in stock market owing to budget delay, rise in domestic oil price, deteriorating exchange rate, etc, which puts inflation rate at the end of September, 2016 at 18.63% which should have been avoided.

**Policy Conflict:** High interest rates, high tax rates, high monetary policies instead of the expansionary policies proclaimed by the government, etc appear conflicting. The severity of the great depression brought more calamities and monetary policy mistakes by the United States Federal Reserve between 1929 and 1932. There is however, need for the Nigerian government and its economic team to re-assess its monetary policies with the view of adopting flexible economic policies that will take this country out of the wounds of recession.

**Poor Economic Planning:** Poor economic planning and lack of concrete implementation of economic planning is a major cause of Nigeria's recession.

**High Taxation:** The high tax charged by the government has a discouraging effect on businesses in the country. The government charges high tax rates during economic recession and this exposes the SMEs to the danger of high interest rates.

**Poor Economic Planning:** Poor economic planning and lack of concrete implementation of economic planning is a management factor that contributes to recession in a receding economy.

### **Concept of SMEs**

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) can be seen as those business enterprises whose total costs excluding land is not more than two hundred million naira (N200,000,000) only (National Council of Industries, 2009). SMEs are also known to be those enterprises whose total assets or capital is less than fifty thousand naira (N50,000) and employees fewer than fifty (50) full time workers (Individual Research Unit of ObafemiAwolowo University, 1987). The Central Bank of Nigeria (2006) however, agrees with the Small and Medium Industries and Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) which is any enterprise with



a maximum asset base less than two hundred million naira (₦200,000,000), equivalent of about 1.43 million naira excluding land and working capital, and with the number of staff employed not less than ten (10) (otherwise it will be a cottage or micro enterprise) and not more than three hundred (300) staff (Sanusi, 2003; Udechukwu, 2003; Akabueze, 2002; SMEIS, 2002; Sanusi, 2004). SMEs have a very great impact on the sustainable development of the nation as the more presence of SMEs in the country, the more important is the SMEs' role for achieving sustainability. SMEs do not only contribute significantly to improving the standard of living, they also bring about local capital formation and achieve high level of production.

The brain behind every successful SME is entrepreneurship which is an undertaking in which one is involved in the task of creating and managing an enterprise for a purpose (Omolola, 2008). The purpose could be personal, social or developmental in nature. According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO, 1999), 90% of private businesses contribute to more than 50% of employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in most African countries. Kozak (2007) however, argued that SMEs are companies with metric (usually number of employees or annual turnover that fall below certain threshold). The indicators in terms of number of employees and or rate of turnover that tend to define the context within which different countries and economies situate their understanding of Small and Medium Enterprises.

Ogechukwu (2006) put forward a general criterion for defining SMEs in different countries to include: number of employees, annual turnover, local operations, sales volumes, financial strength, managers' and owners' autonomy, relatively small markets and capital usually supplied by individuals or shareholders. It is argued that 80% of the financing of SMEs come from owners, friends and families, and the business can take different forms including private ownership limited partnership/contract and sub-contracting, cooperatives or associations (Kozak, 2007). SMEs also depend on business and ownership structure to become large business units (Macqueen, 2006). SMEs are commercially and economically oriented establishments whose activities or operations are geared towards making profits and sustaining national development through the creation of employment to the teaming population.

### **Sustainable National Development**

Every country of the world yearns for sustainable national development. Sustainable national development is seen as a process of improving on the range of opportunities that will enable individuals, humans and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potentials over a sustainable period of time, while maintaining the resilience of the economic, social, and environmental system (Abubakar, 2014). Sustainable development can be measured in good



road networks, enough and adequate hospitals and health facilities, equal access to functional development, opportunities, adequate security of lives and properties, job creation and industrial uprise and social security support for the vulnerable ones. Sustainable national development is also the state of having well balanced, steady and effective use of human, material and capital resources for total economic independence of a nation without compromising the future (Umezulike and Okoye, 2013).

Shaibu, Okpe and Mbaegbu (2019) see sustainable national development to mean progress, advancement or qualitative changes that are evident in a nation over a period of time. It has to do with the contributions of individuals who transmit desirable values, habits, wisdom from one generation to the other so as to ensure continuity. Development is a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced within a social system to higher per capita income and levels of living through more production methods and social organizations (Rogers, 2006) in (Shaibu, Okpe, Musa and Nwaka, 2019). Sustainable development is a system approach to growth and development and involves managing natural resources, production and social capital for welfare of their own and future generations (United Nations, 2012) in (Shaibu, Okpe, Musa and Nwaka, 2019).

The basic principles underlying sustainable national development can be divided into social, economic, and ecological dimension. The social dimension points out the importance of resources, power and influence that are fairly distributed and that people can feel secured and can participate. The economical dimension refers to the fact that economic growth shall carry on with respect to the environment, growth of the people's health and education, and fair distribution of prosperity/wealth. The economic dimension is seen as a requirement for development as no country can achieve a sustainable economic growth if the environment is worsened, if the prosperity/wealth is not fairly distributed, and if growth of the human resources has not taken place. The ecological dimension on its part means that consideration should be given to the social and economic development.

### **Ways through Which SMEs Can Revamp a Receding Economy**

Effective SMEs' operation will revamp a receding economy in the following ways:

1. **Resource Mobilization:** SMEs encourage and enhance effective resource mobilization of skills, knowledge and machines which might otherwise remain unutilized and idle.
2. **Industrial development:** SMEs will lead to gradual but, smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy through its information and communication technology component.
3. **Wealth Creation and Increased GDP:** SMEs will lead to development of entrepreneurs and as a result serve as a source of income to the nation



- through the payment of taxes generated from their businesses. These taxes are in turn used by the government for the uplifting and development of the nation. In addition, the value of output of goods and services realized from the activities of entrepreneurs will enormously contribute to the GDP of the nation.
4. **Source of Government Revenue:** SMEs' practitioners involved in self-employment or paid employment pay government revenue in the form of tax permit, licenses or personal income tax. These will be used by government to provide different social services and amenities to the society.
  5. **Reduction in Urban Drift and Enhancement of Social Status of the Citizenry:** There is no doubt that increase in business activities in the rural areas reduces rural-urban migration and enhances the social status and confidence of the citizenry through SMEs.
  6. **Improvement in the Standard of Living:** SMEs being self-employed ventures serve as a major source of income to the individual, which leads to continuous increase in income and standard of living. There are many intelligent, creative and motivated self-employed individuals who made it in business and are now more comfortable than many civil servants in the country.

### **Challenges of SMEs in a Receding Economy**

1. **Inadequate Facilities and Equipment:** SMEs are also bedeviled with inadequate infrastructural facilities such as inadequate power supply, telecommunication, access road, network, and water supply. Most banks have also capitalized on this reason and blamed their inability to fund SMEs on the poor states of infrastructure, economic climate, and low performance of public utility. The state of physical facilities in many of the Nigerian Polytechnics is very deplorable. The shortage of equipment and facilities can affect SMEs' programme. Quality diminishes when the facilities are inadequate or at times not available (National Council of Industries, 2009).
2. **Inadequate Funding:** Finance is usually a constraint to most SMEs in the country. In Nigeria, most SMEs are folding up or lack competitiveness owing to the fact that they lack the much required financial capacity to prosecute their manufacturing concern as most of them can not have access to loan on a long and short term basis (World Bank, 2012). It has forced most SMEs to resort to their internal financing which is usually unsustainable and vulnerable as a result of low capital base.
3. **Government Unfavourable Fiscal Policy Inconsistencies:** They have also posed as great challenge to SMEs in Nigeria. The inability of the government to execute favourable fiscal policies and policies inconsistencies has undermined the capacity of SMEs. Inappropriate time



or delay in budget implementation is a factor constraining investment and trade decision in SMEs (Ogujuiba, 2004). Njoku (2002) was also in agreement with the above submission that inconsistencies in government policies are a major problem affecting SMEs in Nigeria.

4. **Internal Characteristics and Problems of SMEs:** Most SMEs are battling with serious internal problem ranging from poor management practice, poor accounting standards, shortage of manpower, financial indiscipline, and corruption (World Bank, 2001). Owing to ignorance in business management and accountability measures, reckless financial administration, wrong investment decision and corruption have become the order of the day (Omolola, 2008).
5. **Lack of Political will and Interest Towards Investment in Vocational and Technical Education:** The government of Nigeria has not shown serious political will towards investing in vocational and technical education in which are a part of SME.
6. **Corruption and Mismanagement of Funds:** Corruption has become a common characteristic of the Nigerian State. Eze (2013), opined that a key reason why society is unable to fund the provision of public goods such as the SMEs'programme is that public funds are looted heavily by corrupt officials. Similarly, school administrators and others responsible for managing educational funds mismanage these funds at the detriment of the students. Allocation to schools is often diverted for social activities and political reasons rather than educational purposes. This affects the provision of quality education and consequently the products of the system.
7. **Inadequate Electricity Supply:** Inadequate electricity supply is also a great challenge to skill acquisition in SMEs. Where there is no power supply, it becomes difficult to effectively impart skills to students as frequent interruption of power will cause the equipment to go off and may even cause damage to the equipment. The issue of electricity supply has become a national emergency that needs to be addressed. Nigeria has been having difficulty providing stable and reliable electricity to every nook and cranny of the country (SMIEIS, 2002).
8. **Inadequate and Unqualified Personnel:** SMEs'programme in Nigeria is bedeviled by inadequate and unqualified staff. The qualification a teacher has and the years of experience matters a lot in the field of academics, especially in SMEsprogrammes. An inexperienced teacher finds it difficult to carry the students along and this constitutes poor teacher quality thereby affecting skill acquisition (SMEDAN, 2007).

## Conclusion

Small and Medium Enterprises are a way forward to sustainable national development. In a declining economy, changes caused by recession pose threat



which the government must be aware both at home and globally. The changes in some respects present opportunities which the government must strategize to grab and make necessary adaptations. Similarly, where the changes create unpalatable situations, means must be devised to combat same. This is because, it is not abnormal for a market economy to go through a business cycle: boom, recession, and recovery. What matters is how long the phase of recession is managed to avoid a depression. The economic recession has serious negative impacts on government revenue, employment, income vulnerability, inflation, human health, infrastructural supply, poverty and natural resource management in Nigeria. Recovery and sustained economic development are desirable, but presently, Nigeria is a dependent capitalist economy. This therefore, informs the need for effective skill acquisition in SMEs. This will help in rejuvenating the economy through employment generation, resource generation, increased GDP, poverty reduction and wealth creation which translate into sustainable national development.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made to help revamp a receding economy for sustainable national development:

1. Prospective investors or business operators should conduct an extensive feasibility study to evaluate the viability or otherwise of any proposed business to avoid investment in unprofitable business.
2. Provision of adequate and functional equipment and facilities is a necessity for the SMEs programme. Skill acquisition in SMEs, adequate provision of facilities in terms of space and quality of equipment. The training environment should be like the work environment. Teaching with real materials and real situation can help to encourage the students to learn and enhance skill acquisition.
3. There is need for government to develop the political will towards improved infrastructure in the Nigerian educational system and SMEs in particular. This can be achieved by improving government funding and development of adequate school infrastructure.
4. Government should be committed towards improving funding for the SMEs to thrive. Management of SMEs should look beyond funding from government and engage in revenue generation through training, research and development, partnership with private organizations, alumni associations, etc.
5. There is need for the recruitment of adequate and qualified personnel for SMEs programme. Mechanisms for updating the competence of these personnel to imbibe current knowledge and experiences should be formulated and adhered to, since the development of a competent, skilled workforce is recognized as vital to quality assurance system.



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## SCHOOL PLANT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT EFFORTS REQUIRED FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' SKILLS ACQUISITION IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to determine the expected efforts of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State. Two research questions guided the study. Literatures relevant to the study were reviewed. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Oyo State is the area of the study. A total of forty eight (48) Business Education lecturers in government Colleges of Education formed the population of the study. No sample was drawn because of small number of the population. A self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher tagged: "school plant planning and management efforts required for business education students' skills acquisition in colleges of education (SPAMSAQ)" as used for data collection. The instrument was validated by four (4) senior lecturers in university. Test-retest method was used to establish reliability coefficient of 0.81. The data generated for the study were analyzed using frequency count and percentages for demographic information while arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions. The findings of this study showed that lecturers of Business Education must have access to free internet, staff quarters should be available for Business Education lecturers, teaching aid must be made available for all courses in Business Education, and management must participate in the planning of school plant among others. The study concluded that plant planning in school require effort of management. Based on the findings the researcher recommended among others, that Business Education departments' facilities must be well planned, Business Education facilities must be audited as at when due, all essential facilities needed for skill acquisition must be provided by all stakeholders.*

**Keywords:** Management, Plant Planning, Skills Acquisition and Business Education.

### Introduction

Education is the bedrock of which the foundation of every nation is built. Education helps the growth of the nation through preparation of qualified and competent citizens. Fehintola and Oyewole (2022) buttressed this by saying that Education is the bedrock of any country's economic growth. It benefits both the economy and society. Eboatu and Agogbua (2018) said education prepares citizens for useful living in the society by maximizing their creative potentials. Ebuatu and Agogbua moved further that preparation of citizens for useful living in the society can be attained through education if adequate school plant (facilities)



are provided and utilized for effective teaching by the lecturers, which in turn produces improved learning of the students.

It is important and very reasonable for a good manager to make sure that the academic environment is conducive for learning. Students learn better in a good and conducive environment. Skinner in his theory denotes that good environment helps students learn better (Google, 2022). Skinner emphasized that man's behaviours are developed or conditioned through reinforcement which he refers to as Operant. The place of adequate provision of essential facilities in school setting, specifically, Colleges of Education as a place for training is very paramount and essential. Yusuf, Ajayi and Sofoluwe as quoted by Eboatu and Agogbua (2018) said that the place of school plant planning in the development of effective educational programmes of the school system cannot be over emphasized. It can be adequately said that students' learning performance is influenced by the physical and social environment. This was buttressed by Baradari and Omer (2021) that the physical environment affects students' learning performance. On this note management for school plant planning is needed especially now that skill acquisition is a major concern of educational and economic planners.

School plant are the facilities needed in the school such as teaching aids, equipment, building/ learning space, electricity, school landscape, such as trees, grasses, lawn among others. Basil (2017) categorized school plan planning into various sub-groups namely: (i) The school landscape comprising of trees, grasses, lawns, hedges, and accompanying paths. (ii) Security facilities such as walls, gates alarm system, phone, visitors' books, (iii) Utility such as electricity, pipe borne water/borehole and transport facilities, (iv) Educational equipment such as computer, chalkboard, chalk, chart, flannel graph, beakers, burette, pipettes, text tubes, thermometers, weighing balances, map, glass jars, globes, (v) office equipment such as cupboards, generator, typewriter, photocopying machines, (vi) sports facilities like football, table tennis, basketball, (vii) classroom/educational equipment such as chairs desk, tables, chalkboards, dusters wash-hand basin, napkins, chalk, (viii) building like classrooms, administrative blocks, library, laboratories, health blocks, kitchen, examination hall, dining hall, assembly hall, clinics, restrooms, toilets, hostels, store, staff rooms, workshops and (ix) play grounds including football, volley ball, basketball and badminton, tennis court, swing slide ground. School plant as categorized above is need for business education students for proper skill acquisition. The curriculum planner and the management of tertiary institutions especially colleges of education must try as possible to make these materials available in the school for academic performance of Business Education Students.

Availability of these facilities is not enough but maintenance must be mandatory. The laboratory for shorthand and Information Communication Technology (ICT) should be effectively utilized of by the lecturers in charge of these courses and maintain accordingly. Good planning for selection, usage and



maintaining of these facilities will help the teacher and students likewise the lifespan of the equipment. Failure to plan maintain and utilize those facilities may result to the principle of use and disuse. The principle says that any facilities that the owner fails to use will naturally damage but if a facility is used regularly and maintained that the facility's lifespan will be prolonged. Therefore, based on this principle the management of higher school o learning including colleges of education must make sure that school plant are well planned and maintenance should be paramount in their managerial endeavour.

School plant planning is the aspect of school facilities management that ensures that the schools, as the basic learning units, have adequate teaching facilities and any other needed materials for conducive learning environment. This include planning for good teaching aids, equipment, building/learning space and any other things required for effective teaching and learning to take place. Eboatu and Agogbua (2018) noted that planning for school plant involves school site planning, instructional planning, circulation space, building construction and procurement of materials among others. Eboatu and Agogbua moved further that effective school plant planning should start with plant audit which gives information on existing school plant, their functional state and the students' needs based on the schools' programmes and students' population. Here, population of the students must be taken into consideration if school plant is to be well-planned and managed.

Management is the ability to make use of management functions which are planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. These functions help the manager to stay informed about what he needs to do and how he can guide the staff accordingly. Planning is a step by step arrangement of projected activities. It is also a road map for the future. A good manager must look at how things were done in the past in order to make adjustment to mitigate error. Sound planning strategies is needed by the manager by considering both internal and external factors such as people, time, cost, competitors, policies and general business environment. Also, it is the responsibility of management to organized the school system, this is the stage of putting plans into action through establishing hierarchy in the context of organization structure. Here, every member of the organization must be held responsible, regardless of his position, to share accountability and responsibility. A manager must see that all workers are on the same page and tasks should be delegated as appropriate. Staffing is also important function of manager. Tasks {must be} assigned based on the team member's knowledge, skills and abilities. Directing is concern with supervising team progress. The manager keeps an open channel of communication so as to get regular update from the subordinate. Controlling as part of function indicating that manager should measure the progress of each step established in the planning stage against the goals of the organization. Coordinating of staffs is necessary here to make sure they are moving in the right direction and in the right manner. Controlling can be understood in term of



coordinating, reporting and budgeting. In essence, the management must effectively plan for Business Education department's facilities, organize them, employ right staffs and develop them accordingly to help them achieve both the education which is theory aspect and as well skill which is training. Management of Colleges of Education must direct by supervising Business Education personnel for team's progress. Likewise, all activities in Business Education, specifically, the facilities need to be controlled by management through coordinating, reporting and budgeting.

Skill acquisition is the art of learning to do something in order to earn a living and or to survive. Training is important today that unemployment is the talk of the day. Theoretical knowledge alone will not prepare educated person for the world of work. The worker or productive individual must not only be knowledgeable but must also be versatile in the application of skills to perform defined job or work. To be acceptable by the employer in the field of work Business Education students must be competent enough to innovate and create. They must be able to cope outside the school work after graduation. Business Education students must stand fit anywhere he found himself. There is need for Business Educators to carry out the functions of his or her chosen field effectively. Also, Business Education student must be capable of satisfying his employer after graduation. This would be attained if the facilities in school is well-planned and use. In the end students would likely to perform both in theory and skill aspect of their training. Facilities availability and planning helps students to perform well academically.

Student academic performance include all grades, honours, awards, competitive results and experiences that demonstrate academic prowess, engagement in students life, contribution to a community. Academic performance means anything completed such as a degree, certification or standardize test. John (2022) defined academic achievement as positive, demonstrable results of academic performance. These includes grades, honours, awards, competitive results and experiences to attain these achievements, Business Education students need to be in conducive environment attractive enough for learning. Everything works together Skinner in his theory regarded environment as reinforcer to learn and achieve. This fact was corroborated by System Theory.

System theory was first introduced in the year 1940s by Biologist Ludwig-Von-Bertalanffy and later by Ross Ashby W. and George Bateson. The argument of Bertalanffy is that the component part of a system can best be understood in the context of the relationship with each other and with other system, rather than in isolation that is why the propounder of the theory argued for open system as opposed to the more closed system. In open system there is interaction with other system or the environment outside the system, whereas, close system do not. Mele, Pels and Polese as quoted by Jeevika (2021) defined a system as a complex for interacting element which are open to, and interact with the environment. System theory is relevance to this study because Business



Education comprises of wide range of interacting and interdependent component which all works together for survival of the system (Jeevika, 2021). Notwithstanding, both man and non-human materials work together to make teaching and learning meaningful. Business Education training need qualified lecturers and good available materials if education is to take place and skill is to be acquired.

### **Statement of Problem**

It is obvious to that planning of education and its' facilities goes a long way to help students to perform academically, specifically, Business Education students, due to the nature of their training. The nature of the training of Business Education students is skills acquisition. Skills acquisition require practical. Any practical aspect of training needs abundant and necessary facilities to practice. Therefore, despite the effort of government and many other stakeholders to make sure that Business Educators are self-employed or self-reliant after graduation or fit for work after school, many graduates remain unable to establish or employ, some that employed faced with series of complaints from employers that they are not competent. Could these reasons be as a result of resources put in place to teach them or un-conducive environment. It seems that Colleges of Education in Oyo State still lack good school plant planning. In the light of the forgoing, several studies have investigated factors such school building, instructional materials, physical facilities and infrastructure are components that affects students learning outcome most especially in secondary schools, but not many have focused on the efforts of management on school plant planning towards skills acquisition of Business Education students. Also, no direct research study which dealt with school plant planning and management efforts required for business education students' skills acquisition in colleges of education. It was this gap that influenced the researcher to conduct the study to find out the effort of management and benefits to be derived from effective planning and management of school plant towards business education students' skill acquisition, hence the need for this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate expected management efforts and benefits on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in colleges of education in Oyo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. investigate what should be the responsibilities of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State.



2. find out the benefits to derived by students on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State.

### Research Questions

The study was guided by the following formulated research questions:

1. What should be the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State?
2. What are the benefits to be derived by students on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State?

### Method

The design for the study is descriptive survey design. The population for the study comprised all 48 Business Education lecturers in government Colleges of Education in Oyo State. No sample was drawn because of small number of the population. Data was gathered through the use of a 36-items 4-point rating scale questionnaire: "Effort of Management on School Plant Planning towards Skill Acquisition of Business Education Students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State Questionnaire (EMSAQ) was developed and covered various facilities in school and students skills acquisition in Business Education department in government owned College Of Education in Oyo State, Nigeria. The rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agreed (A) =3, Disagreed (D) =2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1 was used for this study. The instrument was validated by four (4) senior lecturers both in university and college of education and the overall reliability coefficient was also established at 0.81 using test-retest. The data generated for the study were analyzed using frequency count and percentages for demographic information while arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions. Any mean score below 2.50 was considered disagreed while mean score that was 2.50 and above was considered Agreed.

### Result

**Question 1:** What should be the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State?

**Table 1: Effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students**

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Management must participate in the planning of school plant.	20	10	11	07	2.94	1.22	Agreed
2.	Management must plan to provide the	18	18	04	08	2.96	1.12	Agreed



	necessary and most important facilities needed for skill acquisition by student.								
3.	Management must see that school plant are maintained as at when due.	23	19	05	01	3.33	0.58	Agreed	
4.	Management must make sure that school facilities are audited	17	21	05	05	3.04	0.50	Agreed	
5.	There should be asset register for recording old and additional school plant (facilities)	22	13	09	04	3.10	0.97	Agreed	
6.	Typing pool attendance must have the knowledge of typing not just employ anyone.	09	30	06	03	2.94	0.56	Agreed	
7.	Shorthand laboratory must be equipped with necessary materials	10	21	09	08	2.69	0.96	Agreed	
8.	Teaching aids must be available for all Business Education courses.	16	18	07	07	2.90	1.05	Agreed	
9.	There should be Business Education library equipped with relevant and updated textbooks, journals, periodical etc.	38	07	01	02	3.69	0.51	Agreed	
10.	Information Communication Technology (ICT) laboratory for Business Education students must be equipped with enough computer.	28	17	02	01	3.50	0.58	Agreed	
11.	School plants must be coordinated by the Dean School of Vocational and Technical Education.	19	23	04	02	3.23	0.56	Agreed	
12.	Toilet, Pipe borne water and electricity should be available for staff and students at all time.	22	16	06	04	3.17	0.89	Agreed	
13.	School vans or buses must be available to carry Business Education students for excursion	31	09	03	05	3.38	0.98	Agreed	
14.	Lecturers of Business Education must have access to free internet during the school hour.	30	12	05	01	3.48	0.59	Agreed	
15.	Useful materials like duster, marker, pen, stapler, pin etc must be given to Business Education lecturers yearly.	19	20	07	02	3.17	0.68	Agreed	
16.	Good office must be provided for Business Education lecturers	17	21	10	00	3.15	0.55	Agreed	
17.	Business Education lecturers must have access to departmental computers and printers though supposed to be given to each lecturer	25	13	06	04	3.23	0.93	Agreed	
18.	Standby generators must be in Business Education department for practical aspect of education.	10	20	11	07	2.69	0.92	Agreed	
19.	During the school plant planning management must recommend laptop for each students before admission	10	25	05	08	2.77	0.93	Agreed	
20.	Any school plant donated such building	24	14	08	02	3.25	0.77	Agreed	



	or materials must be used for the purpose it was donated for							
21.	Staff quarters should be planned for Business Education lecturers specifically, for lecturers that his or her family is in another place	39	05	02	02	3.69	0.55	Agreed
22.	Evaluation of school facilities should be highly done and encouraged	21	09	09	09	2.88	1.35	Agreed
23.	Equitable classroom for lectures must be provided.	15	25	06	02	3.10	0.59	Agreed
	<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>3.14</b>		<b>Agreed</b>

Table 1 above shows the mean ratings and standard deviation on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State with the mean ratings from 2.69 to 3.69 and a grand mean of 3.14 indicate agreed that all those items are worth the management should properly take note of during their planning stage or budgeting stage. The standard deviation of the study ranged from 0.51 to 1.35 meaning closeness and agreed.

**Question 2:** What are the benefits to be derived by students on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in Colleges of Education in Oyo State?

**Table 2: Benefits to derive by students, lecturers and government on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students**

SN	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Students will be well taught	18	12	10	08	2.83	0.95	Agreed
2.	Students will acquire necessary skills	12	20	06	10	2.71	1.12	Agreed
3.	Students will perform better in their examination	20	19	05	04	3.35	0.83	Agreed
4.	The nation will produce competent business teachers	19	17	06	06	3.02	1.02	Agreed
5.	Teaching will easy for the lecturers	25	10	10	03	3.19	0.94	Agreed
6.	School facilities life span will be elongated	19	20	05	04	3.13	0.82	Agreed
7.	Practical aspect of the course will be taught easily	11	19	08	10	2.65	1.10	Agreed
8.	The employers will enjoy the students after graduation	20	14	07	07	2.98	1.15	Agreed
9.	Unemployment will reduce because of the competency of the graduates they will establish	40	05	01	02	3.73	0.49	Agreed



	on their own or get good job from employers.							
10.	Universally, business education graduates certificate could work anywhere because of proper skills acquired.	29	15	02	02	3.52	0.58	Agreed
11.	Graduate of Business Education will be hot-cake in the labour market.	16	25	04	03	3.13	0.65	Agreed
12.	The economy of nation will improve because of qualified personnel produced	23	15	05	05	3.17	0.97	Agreed
13.	Staffs return will be minimized.	28	09	06	05	3.25	1.06	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 2 above shows the mean ratings and standard deviation on the benefits to be derived by students on the effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of in Colleges of Education in Oyo State with the mean ratings ranging from 2.65 to 3.73 and a grand mean of 3.13. Majority of the standard deviation range from 0.58 to 1.15 except item 9 which has 0.49 indicate closeness and agreed.

### Discussion of Findings

This study investigated effort of management on school plant planning towards skill acquisition of Business Education students in colleges of education in Oyo State. Table 1 showed that effort of the management must gear towards good planning of school plant. On the table it shows that materials to put in place for use. This was buttress by Oviawe, Uwamelye and Uddin (2017) as cited by Jeevika (2021) that at secondary school in India, technical education is provided in technical colleges such colleges are unique in that they are different from other secondary schools which provide learners with general education. They are rather being run to cater for the diverse potentials possessed by learners which are capable of leading them into economic independence.

Table 1 also showed that all necessary school plant must be provided for like library, classroom, electricity and the like. This view was supported by Ochogba, Johnwest, Isiodu and Igwe (2017) that the implementation of technical and vocational education and training involves adequate classroom and facilities/materials for practical purposes.

Table 2 showed many benefits to derive if school plant is well planned. Among the benefits are: Students will acquire necessary skills and Students will perform better in their examination. This was stressed by Adesina as quoted by Moses (2021) that a well-maintain school plan will gear up expected outcomes of



education that will facilitate effective teaching and learning process and academic performance of the students.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the current research study, it can be concluded that efforts of management towards students planning of Business Education department's facilities is a prerequisite to ensuring that skills acquisition among Business Education students in Colleges of Education is assured. The implication of this is that when lecturers teach in conducive environment teaching will be effective. Likewise, when students learn in good and well planned environment they perform better. Therefore, if both lecturers and students performed, government will gain by achieving the aims and objectives of Business Education and society at large will benefit by having competent and independent graduates who are ready to improve nation's economy.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management must participate in the planning of the school plant and make sure that necessary and most important facilities are provided for skill acquisition of the students.
2. Management, government and other stakeholders must put more efforts in school plant planning to be appropriate for use. To derive benefits, specifically, on practical aspect of the course to be taught easily to make the beneficiaries competent, be self-reliant and work anywhere in the world or universally.

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## **EFFECT OF HEURISTIC METHOD ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN SHORTHAND IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the effect of heuristic method on students' performance in shorthand in colleges of education in Kano State, Nigeria. It had two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses. Quasi-experimental research design (pre-test post-test) was used in the study. The population of the study was (756) of NCE 1 students of shorthand for 2019/2020 academic session from colleges of education in the State, from which a sample size of 249 was drawn and was purposively selected. Frequency distribution was used in analyzing respondents' genders; mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test null hypothesis one, then pair-sample t-test was used to test null hypotheses two. The findings revealed that a significant positive difference existed between the mean academic performances of students taught shorthand using heuristic method from those taught using lecture method. The study showed that there was no significant difference in the performances of the male and female students taught with heuristic method. The study concluded that heuristic method had effect on students' academic performance in shorthand over the lecture method. The study recommended, among other things, that Heuristic should be introduced as a better method of teaching and learning of shorthand in Colleges of Education.*

**Keywords:** *Heuristic, Shorthand and Performance*

### **Introduction**

“Heuristics” is a word derived from the Greek language. It means to “find” or “discover”. It is an adjective for experience-based techniques that help in problem solving, learning and discovery (Katarzyna & Jaszczolt, 2022). A heuristic method is particularly used to rapidly come to a solution that is hoped to be close to the best possible answer, or ‘optimal solution’. In Heuristic method, the student is put in the place of an independent discovery. In this method the teacher sets a problem for the students and then stands aside while the students discover the answer and where students did not understand the concept clearly, the teacher explains and it becomes a rule of thumb for the student which aids them in the study of shorthand. According to Armstrong, as cited in Maheshwari (2016) a heuristic method of teaching is a method which involves students finding out instead of being merely told about things”. The heuristic method is a method which gives adequate training for discovery, heuristic is rules of thumb,



educated guesses, intuitive judgments. More precisely, heuristics are strategies using readily accessible information to control problem solving in human beings and machine. It is quite different from other methods because it will make the students inquire or check thoroughly the studies in order to get a heuristic idea about the subject taught. Heuristics which can be used in everything from matching nuts and bolts to finding solution to the variables in shorthand problems. However, the researcher wants to try the use of this method in order to see how it will help the academic performance of students in shorthand.

According to Khan, Begum, & Imad, (2019), academic performance is defined as the measure of what a person has accomplished after exposure to an educational program. It is an important parameter for ascertaining the level of mastery attained by the student in a particular course of study. It is assessed by standardized or teacher made test, through which feedback is obtained by the school. Assessing students' academic performance plays significant role in the school system and society at large. It is also crucial at individual levels. Grade level has learning goals or instructional standards that educators are required to teach. Standards are similar to a 'to-do' list that a teacher can use to guide instruction. Student performance will increase when quality instruction is used to teach instructional standards and with good and accurate teaching method or methods. According to Sinha, Ghate, Chatur and Sinha (2017), educational institutions' success is measured by academic performance or how well students meet the standards set out by the institutions. Their performance at each level provides them with a sense of satisfaction which in turn spurs them on to practice further the desired learning activities. So, for a good performance, there is the need for a better method that will help students achieve high grades in their studies of shorthand and equally cope with or accomplish learning experiences given to them by the business education teacher.

Shorthand is the art of representing spoken sounds by written signs. It is a core course taught in business education. It provides students with appropriate skills, abilities and competences, both mental and physical, that equip them with knowledge and make them effective in teaching, office occupation and self-reliant. Njoku (2022) opined that shorthand provides good skills that help students to be marketable in the world of work, especially in a country that is under the pressure of high and rising rate of unemployment. Shorthand has to do with drilling and transcribing of outlines, and also has to do with representation of spoken sounds with written signs. It uses abbreviated symbolic signs which represent phonemes, words and phrase. Shorthand increases speed and brevity in writing when compared to the normal method of writing a language. Shorthand is one of the vital subjects required in business education curriculum as prepared by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE 2020) in the office option in Nigeria. This subject has a lot of skills like understanding the signs and their sounds of English language consonants, vowels and the phrases which are broken into a larger range than how it is in the



normal English letters and vowels. For example, from the 26 letters of the English alphabets, there are 21 consonants and five vowels but in the shorthand outlines, there are 24 consonants, 12 vowels and 4 diphthongs. These make pronunciation of the sounds heard in English clearly explained and better understood, thereby helping the business education students in speech and writing.

Business education develops in the student critical skills, attitudes and abilities that are relevant for securing jobs in the business world. It has contributed positively to the personal and intellectual developments of the recipient. (Ejeka and Nwokeji 2016). According to (1995) as cited in Enyikit, Onuekwa, and Silas-Dikibo, (2012), the strength of an education system must largely depend on the quality of its teachers and the utilization of teaching methods. The importance of shorthand cannot be overemphasized. This has attracted many methods to be used in teaching shorthand but not at ease, which calls the attention of other methods that can be used in place of the conventional methods, development of skills in shorthand is the teacher's attitude. His approach should be teaching shorthand with a question mark instead of with an exclamation point, that is ; where students listen to the teachings of the teacher and that ends it, the students should put into practice what has been taught. The acceptance of and the quest for unique solutions to the problems that the class is investigating should be a guiding principle in the teacher's approach to the programme of shorthand for students' performance.

Learning shorthand is similar to learning any other subject in the school system, which requires the alertness of different teaching methods in order to achieve cognitive and non-cognitive factors. The learning requirement in the twenty- first century is to develop life-long skills for learners to cope with the various emerging challenges being encountered. In the same vein, heuristic and think-pair-share methods are such that target towards developing a life-long skill for learners. While using the methods to teach shorthand, it is expected that students can learn better than the way they are taught using other methods.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Shorthand is one of the oldest subjects, which has been of much importance to the whole world. It was doing what no machine could effectively produce before the advent of contemporary technology (Pitman 1837). It has been a lucrative subject that is well sellable in the labor market. Shorthand contributes to the office productivity in a way automated equipment may not. For instance, when there is power failure, shorthand can be used to keep records and it can be saved and retrieved in the future. Several researchers have undergone a study about the poor performance of students in shorthand and most of the results showed that the method of teaching this subject contributes to the poor performance of students (Uzoagulu 2011, Emetl 2010, Vundi, Nasongo & Majanga 2011) and also (Umar 2022)



The performance of students in the course is becoming poorer every day. As a teacher of shorthand for the past five years, the researcher has noticed that students dislike shorthand. When the researcher tried to find out the cause of the dislike, students complained that the subject is difficult, blaming the difficulty on the teaching methods used by teachers in teaching the subjects.

The poor performance in shorthand in colleges of education in Kano State of Nigeria was evident in students' performance in the subject in the Federal College of Education, Kano. During the 2013/2014 session, only 38% of students passed shorthand at credit level. In 2014/2015, 23% of students passed shorthand at credit level. In 2015/2016, only 23% of students passed shorthand at credit level. In 2016/2017 12% were able to score credit. Based on the calculation the percentage and the ratio of the students that failed shorthand were always higher than the number of the passes.

It was based on this problem that the researcher carried out this study in order to find a solution to this aforementioned problem in the Colleges of Education in Kano State, Nigeria.

### **Research Question**

The following research questions guided the study:-

1. What is the effect of heuristic method of teaching on the academic performance of student in shorthand in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria?
2. What is the difference between the academic performance of male and female students taught shorthand using heuristic method of teaching in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean performance scores of students taught Shorthand using heuristic Method and those taught using Lecture Method in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the academic performance of male and female students taught shorthand using Heuristic Method of teaching in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria.

### **Method**

Quasi-experimental (pre-test post test) design was adopted for this **study**. **The area of the study was Kano state Colleges of Education. The population of the study consisted of 756 students. The sample comprised**The Sample size was 249 NCE 1 business education students of Federal College of Education, Kano which was purposely selected because it has been offering shorthand for the past twenty (20) years and has facilities needed for teaching and learning shorthand. The instrument for data collection was Shorthand Achievement Test



(SAT). It was developed by the researcher which was from syllabus of the Federal Government, from WAEC and NECO pass questions base on the minimum standard of the NCCE. There were four (4) sections with forty-five (45) questions. The instrument was subjected to both face and content validity. It was checked and corrected by three experts from the department of test and measurements in the faculty of education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The test-retest method of testing reliability was used which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.87. The researcher used six weeks for the teaching, marking of the pre-test and post-test with the help of research assistant which the result collected was used as the data for this study. The two (2) research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, and the null hypothesis one was tested using t-test (independent sample test) while the null hypothesis two was tested using t-test (pair sample t-test), all at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was that a mean score of 50% and above was regarded as pass and a mean score below 50% was termed as fail and if the p-value is equal or less than 0.05 level of significant the null hypotheses will be rejected, but if p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significant, the null hypotheses will be retained.

## Results

**Research Question One:** What is the effect of Heuristic method of teaching on the academic performance of students in shorthand in colleges of education, KanoState, Nigeria?

To find out the effect of Heuristic method of teaching on the students' academic performance in Shorthand, the scores of the students exposed to the use of Heuristic approach were computed and compared with those taught with the lecture method. Table 1 shows the mean performance of the students exposed to the two methods.

**Table 1: Mean Scores of Students Exposed to the Use of Heuristic and Lecture Methods of Teaching Shorthand**

Method of teaching	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean difference
Heuristic Method	83	65.96	10.775	15.00
Lecture Method	83	50.96	10.081	

*Source: Field Study, 2018*

Table 1 reveals that students exposed to the use of Heuristic method had mean performance of 65.96 and standard deviation of 10.775 respectively while those taught the shorthand with the lecture teaching method with a mean 50.96 and standard deviation score of 10.081 respectively. Then mean difference was 15.00.



**Research Question Two:** What is the difference between the academic performance of male and female students taught shorthand using the heuristic method of teaching in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria?

To establish the difference in the academic performance of male and female students taught shorthand using the heuristic method of teaching, the mean scores of the male and female students exposed to the use of the method were computed and compared. Table 2 shows the scores and the observed difference between the two groups.

**Table 2: Mean Scores of Male and Female Students Exposed to the Use of Heuristic Method of Teaching Shorthand**

Method of teaching	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean difference
Male	51	64.84	10.201	2.91
Female	32	67.75	11.573	

*Source: Field Study, 2018*

Table 2 reveals that the female students had mean and standard deviation score of 67.75 and 11.573 respectively compared with their male counterparts whose mean and standard deviation score was 64.84 and 10.201. The mean difference was 2.91 obtained between the two groups.

### Test of Null Hypotheses

**Null hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between the mean performance scores of students taught Shorthand using Heuristic method and those taught using Lecture method in Colleges of Education, Kano State, Nigeria.

The significance of the observed variability in the mean score of students exposed to the use of Heuristic and those taught using Lecture method for teaching Shorthand in the colleges were tested here with the two sample t-tests. Table 3 shows the summary of the result.

**Table 3: The t-test analysis showing difference in the performance score of students taught shorthand using heuristic and lecture methods**

Methods	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-value	t-critical	DF	p-value
Heuristic	83	65.96	10.775	9.261	1.96	164	0.000
Lecture	83	50.96	10.081				

*Source: Field Study, 2018*

Table 3 showed the result of independent t-test analysis used for testing difference between the performances of students taught shorthand using heuristic method and lecture method. The data revealed that the group taught



using heuristic method had mean performance of 65.96 and standard deviation of 10.775 while those taught using lecture method had mean performance of 50.96 and standard deviation of 10.081. t-value was 9.261 while the t-critical was 1.96. The result revealed that students who were taught shorthand with the Heuristic method had a significantly higher mean score compared to their counterparts who were taught shorthand with the lecture method. These observations provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean performance scores of students taught Shorthand using Heuristic method and those taught using Lecture method is therefore rejected. The test revealed that the use of the Heuristic method has more positive effects in improving the students' academic performance in Shorthand than use of lecture method.

**Null hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between the academic performance of the male and female students taught shorthand using the Heuristic method of teaching in Colleges of Education, Kano State, Nigeria.

The effect of gender on performance of students exposed to the use of Heuristic method in teaching of Shorthand is tested here with the two sample t-test. The result of the test is summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4:** The t-test analysis showing difference between the performance of male and female taught shorthand using heuristic method

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-value	t-critical	DF	p-value
Male	51	64.84	10.201	1.199	1.96	81	0.234
Female	32	67.75	11.573				

Source: Field Study, 2018

From table 4, the mean score of male 64.84 while that of female was 67.75, showed that the observed t-value was 1.199 and is lower than the t-critical (2.00) and the level of significance is 0.234 ( $p > 0.05$ ). These did not revealed significant difference in performances of the male and female students taught the shorthand with Heuristic method. These observations did not provide sufficient evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of male and female students taught shorthand using Heuristic method of teaching in colleges of education, Kano State, Nigeria is therefore retained. The implication here is that performance of students exposed to the teaching method is not affected by gender, which observation implies that the method has no gender effects which in other words means that it enhances the performances of male and female students almost at the same level.

## Discussion of Findings



The analysis of data relating to the first research question revealed that students exposed to the use of Heuristic method for teaching shorthand performed significantly better than was obtained for students who were taught the same subject with lecture method. In hypothesis one (1) of the study, the result revealed that the observed difference was statistically significant. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The finding revealed that the use of Heuristic method for teaching and learning of shorthand in the colleges has more effect than the use of lecture method. This finding is consistent with Ozen (2022) who explained that discovery involves a process of conceptualize and put into practice what is learnt in a meaningful manner and that Learner works out part of the information and processes it to yield positive result. The finding here are in line with Emiliano (2015) who postulated that Heuristic is a mental shortcut that allows people to get information to solve problems and make judgments quickly and efficiently.

The second research question was tested for significance in null hypothesis two Female had a higher mean score than the male but the result of the tested hypothesis revealed that when observed, there was no significant difference. The null hypothesis was therefore retained. The finding means that the use of the method for teaching and learning of shorthand in colleges has no gender effect. This finding is similar with the finding of Deepak, Al-Umran, Al-Sheikh, and Al-Rubaish, (2011) who reported from a similar investigation that while male performed better in some studies, in other studies female students performed higher than their male counterparts.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study revealed that the use of alternative teaching method (Heuristic) could significantly enhance the academic performance of students in shorthand at the Colleges of Education involved in the study. This findings could be valuable to the Colleges of Education Authority, the National Board for Technical Education, Lecturers in Business education and other stakeholders who will be interested in improved academic performance of students in the subject at the Colleges of Education. The findings could provide a base for policy formulation on the use of different teaching method for improving performance of students in Colleges of education.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the analyzed data in the study, the researcher wishes to recommend as follows:

1. The teaching of Shorthand should not be focused only on the use of lecture method since Heuristic method is found to be a better alternative for improving students' academic performance in the Colleges.



2. Both male and female students should always be encouraged to use the Heuristic method of teaching and learning of Shorthand in the Colleges of Education.

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## DIGITAL COMPETENCIES AS CORRELATE OF SECRETARIAL PERSONNEL EFFICIENCY IN OSUN STATE POLYTECHNIC, IREE

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### Abstract

*With numerous digital technologies being introduced into contemporary office management, and the changing business environment, achieving efficiency in office operations will require digital competencies. This study surveyed the digital competencies of secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree and examined the correlation between the competencies and the personnel's efficiency. The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted forty-eight (48) secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. The study used total enumeration. Four research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. Questionnaire was used for data collection, and the data collected were analyzed using simple mean to answer the research questions while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient with the aid of SPSS. The analysis revealed that the secretarial personnel do not possess digital document management and digital meeting management competencies. It was however revealed that the personnel possess digital communication competencies. The analysis also showed that the secretarial personnel are generally slightly efficient in performing duties relating to digital technology. The hypothesis tested revealed digital document management and digital communication competencies both have moderate positive correlation with efficiency of the personnel. The study concluded that digital competencies generally have positive moderate correlation with the efficiency of the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic. The study recommended that management of the institution should continuously provide training and retraining opportunities on the digital technologies for secretarial personnel as these technologies keep evolving.*

**Keywords:** Digital competencies, Secretarial personnel, efficiency

### Introduction

Changes in technological environment is radically overhauling office management processes. The contemporary office is being transformed by the influx of digital technologies useful for office management functions. Digital transformation of offices is a recurrent issue as new technologies are always on



the horizon as viewed by Peladeau (n.d). Zain, Eryanto and Marsofiyati (2019) in their study, found that larger percentage of office works are now being automated with the use of ICT. Office automation, they opined, is a must in every office as new technology occupy the business environment. Automation and digitalization, according to Deloitte (2017), require rapid response associated with equipping people with required skills and competency. In his view, usage of digital technologies spans through varieties of office functions including staff recruitment. Using digital devices like iPhone with internet access is shaping everyday lives and becoming integral part of many occupation including office management.

Achieving efficiency is the goal of every office. Alozie and Nnorom (2015) attested to this when they viewed every office as always striving to achieve efficiency in her daily activities in order to realize target goals which can only be achieved by going digital. For organizations to achieve success, employees, especially secretarial personnel at the centre of office management functions must be effective and efficient in their job performance. Meanwhile, Zain *et al* (2019) had observed that office work can be easily and efficiently performed through the use of digital office equipment. Deloitte (2017) also opined that use of computers and other digital devices make office staff more productive rather than making them redundant.

Managing the office for success involve efficient correspondence and document management, effective communication process, effective meeting management, and functional record management. Office management is thus dominated by sharing/filing documents, chairing and attending meetings and transmitting information among others. AIIM (2015) observed that correspondence can be managed through digital mailroom. Core business processes and office management functions are steadily being transformed into digital forms. They opined that digital mailroom can be used to scan inbound mails, minimizing the use of paper. Similarly, Zain *et al* (2019) found 96% of their respondents responding in the affirmative that MSOffice is now widely used for correspondence management. It is important for secretarial personnel to be able to manage the filing and indexing for both digital and hard copy documents. They also affirmed that mobile and smartphones are now being used as digital tools not only for communication, but also for performing wide range of office functions. Many IT-based applications are being employed for office works including Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Team etcetera to organize and host meetings. While at the same time, proceedings of the meetings can be recorded by the host. AIIM (2015) observed that most people in the office now use video link and multimedia to attend meetings and conferences remotely, and virtual presence systems are becoming ubiquitous. Also, meeting documents can be shared via email and cloud technology as viewed by AIIM (2015).

Although the use of social media is largely discouraged at work, Bizzi (2018) saw it as a powerful communication tool for employees. He opined that



social media serves as means of collaboration amidst employees. Video Conferencing System was also identified as digital meeting management technology with features of identity which control and manage the system. Multimedia conferencing like Multiplex are useful for video conferencing solutions, bridging the gap of social distancing and geographical barriers in meeting management.

Competency, according to Akarahu and Ile (2014), is a standardized requirement for an individual to properly perform a specific job. It is the capability for doing something well. In the context of this study, digital competencies refer to skills and capabilities for handling and manipulating digital technologies for performing office management functions in relation to the secretarial personnel. Digital competency therefore, can be viewed as physical, psychomotor and sensory capabilities to manipulate digital devices/technologies well to bring about required results. The study therefore, aimed at surveying the digital competencies of secretarial personnel in document management, communication and meeting management and also correlate these with the level of efficiency of the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree

### **Statement of the Problem**

Numerous digital technologies are being introduced into contemporary office management. The business environment keeps changing with continuous technological innovations. Most office management functions like documents management, internal and external communication, filing and record keeping, and meeting management are being digitalized for cost and space management and for higher productivity and efficiency. Organizations that will remain competitive in the dynamic socio-economic and business environment are being faced with the challenge of adopting digital transformation. It was observed that although most organizations strive to embark on digital transformation, most employees have not developed the skills and competencies to effectively manage the digital workplace. Since secretarial personnel are considered to be at the center of office management, they are mostly expected to possess competencies required for managing the digital office. It is against this background that the study seeks to survey the digital competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree and find out how these relate to their work efficiency.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the digital document management competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?
2. What are the digital communication competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?
3. What are the digital meeting management competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?



4. How efficient are secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?

### Research Hypothesis

There is no significant correlation between digital competencies and efficiency of secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree

### Methods

The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study consist forty-eight (48) secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree. The entire population formed the sample size. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consists 20 items structured in 4-point Likert type mode with responses ranging from Highly Possessed/Highly Efficient (HP/VE – 4), Moderately Possessed/Moderately Efficient (MP/E – 3), Slightly Possessed/Slightly Efficient (SP/SE – 2), to Not Possessed/Not Efficient (NP/NE – 1). The questionnaire was administered through personal contact to give room for clarification where necessary. All copies of questionnaire distributed were returned duly completed. The data was analyzed using simple Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient with the aid of SPSS.

### Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the digital document management competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?

*Table 1: Mean responses on digital document management competencies possessed by Secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree*

		N=48		
S/N	Digital document management competencies	X	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to use digital mailroom to scan inbound mails	1.50	0.50	Not possessed
2.	Ability to manage document using cloud technology	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
3.	Ability to use digital signature for electronic documents	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
4.	Ability to use digital storage devices for electronic filing &	2.38	0.48	S. Possessed
5.	indexing	3.15	0.79	M. Possessed
	Ability to use computer to produce documents			
	Grand Mean	1.80		S. Possessed

Table 1, showing grand mean of 1.80 indicated that the secretarial personnel slightly possess digital document management competencies. The Table revealed that they however, moderately possessed the competence of manipulating the computer to produce documents.

**Research Question 2:** What are the digital communication competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?

*Table 2: Mean responses on digital communication competencies possessed by Secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree**N=48*

S/N	Digital Communication Competencies	X	SD	Remark
6.	Ability to use email technology for internal and external communication	2.71	0.65	Moderately
7.	Ability to manipulate iPhone for online communication	2.58	0.67	Possessed
8.	Ability to use smartphone to transmit written and oral messages internally and externally	3.35	0.48	Moderately
9.	Ability to connect with clients online via the internet	2.60	0.48	Possessed
10.	Ability to use social media to transmit information	2.73	0.44	Moderately possessed
				Moderately Possessed
				Moderately Possessed
				Moderately Possessed
				Moderately Possessed
	Grand Mean	3.00		Moderately possessed

Table 2 revealed a grand mean of 3.00 indicating that the secretarial personnel moderately possess digital communication competencies. All the items in the Table rated between 2.58 and 3.35 which fall within the moderately possessed response.

**Research Question 3:** What are the digital meeting management competencies possessed by the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?

*Table 3: Mean responses on digital meeting management competencies possessed by Secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree**N=48*

S/N	Digital Meeting Management Competence	X	SD	Remark
11.	Ability to send notice and agenda of meeting via email	2.85	0.61	M. Possessed
12.	Ability to organize online meeting using Zoom Application	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
13.	Ability to use Google Meet Application to host meeting	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
14.	Ability to record proceedings of online meeting on Zoom and Google Meet	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
15.	Ability to use Video Conference System (VCS)	1.00	0.00	Not possessed
	Grand Mean	1.37		Not possessed

Table 3 showed a grand mean of 1.37 indicating that the secretarial personnel do not possess digital competencies for meeting management. The Table, however revealed that they possessed the competence for using email to send notice and agenda of meetings.

**Research Question 4:** How efficient are the secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree?



Table 4: Mean responses on the effectiveness of secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree

N=48				
S/N	Areas of Secretarial Efficiency	X	SD	Remark
16.	Document production	3.60	0.49	Highly Efficient
17.	Conversion of paper document to digital form	1.65	0.00	Slightly Efficient
18.	Quick retrieval of record for reference	2.60	0.00	Moderately Efficient
19.	Organizing online meetings	1.00	0.48	Not Efficient
20.	Electronic transmission of official information to reach target audience within few minutes	1.65	0.79	Slightly Efficient
Grand Mean		2.10		Slightly efficient

Table 4 showed that the secretarial personnel are highly efficient and moderately efficient in document production and retrieval of records with the mean responses of 3.60 and 2.60 respectively. They are however slightly efficient in converting paper document to digital form and also in transmitting official information electronically within few minutes with both having the means of 1.65. The secretarial personnel are not efficient in organizing online meetings. The grand mean of 2.10 indicated that the secretarial personnel are generally slightly effective in performing duties relating to digital technology.

### Testing of Hypothesis

There is no significant correlation between digital competencies and efficiency of secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree

Table 5: Correlation between digital competencies and efficiency of secretarial personnel

Dependent Variable		N	SPE	Remark
Independent variables				
DDMC	Pearson Correlation	48	.672	Moderate positive correlation
	Sign.		.000	
DCC	Pearson Correlation		.670	Moderate positive correlation
	Sign.		.000	
DMMC	Pearson Correlation		-.116	Weak negative correlation
	Sign.		.434	

Table 5 showed correlation between DDMC (digital document management competencies) and SPE (secretarial personnel efficiency) to be .672. This is a moderate positive correlation. Similarly, DCC (Digital communication competencies) have moderate positive correlation with SPE with  $r=.670$  However, DMMC (Digital meeting management competencies) have a weak negative correlation with SPE with  $-.116$

### Discussion of Findings

On the digital document management competencies possessed by secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, it was found that secretarial personnel slightly possessed digital document management competencies except ability to use personal computer to produce document.



This finding contradicts Deloitte (2017), who opined that digitization of the contemporary office requires rapid response associated with equipping workers with required digital skills and competency. This deficiency implies there will be need for training and retraining if the secretarial personnel will be able to manage the contemporary digital office.

Secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree were found to moderately possess digital communication competencies. This implies the personnel have access to the identified digital communication technologies and that they are user-friendly. However, the secretarial personnel were found to be deficient in the acquisition and use of digital technologies for meeting management. This implies most offices in the said institution still engage in brick and wall, face-to-face meeting and are yet to adopt digital meeting management technologies like Zoom, Google Meet, Video Conferencing System etcetera.

On efficiency of secretarial personnel, it was found that the personnel are highly efficient only in document production and record retrieval but not efficient in organizing online meetings and converting paper documents to digital form for easy storage and future references. This reflects and confirms the finding on the deficiency of the secretarial personnel in digital meeting management competency.

The hypothesis tested showed moderate positive correlation between DDMC, DCC and SPE. This finding corroborates Zain et al (2019) who observed that efficiency of office works can be achieved through the use of digital technologies.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that secretarial personnel in Osun State Polytechnic, Iree moderately possess the competence to use personal computer to produce documents but are lacking in the ability to use digital technologies like cloud technology, digital signature and digital mailroom scanning. The personnel possess digital communication competencies but are lacking in digital meeting management competency. The secretarial personnel are generally slightly efficient in the performance of their digital-technology related duties.

It could also be concluded that these digital competencies (DDMC and DCC) generally have positive moderate correlation with the efficiency of the secretarial personnel.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion, this study recommends the following:

1. Management of the institution to continuously provide training and retraining opportunities on the digital technologies for office management for the secretarial personnel as these technologies keep evolving.



2. The secretarial personnel should avail themselves of the opportunity to learn the use of digital office technologies to update themselves and keep pace with the technological changes.
3. Training institutions should update the curriculum for training secretarial personnel for acquisition of required competence for manipulating digital office technologies.

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## **A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY EDUCATION STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE**

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### **Abstract**

*The Covid-19 pandemic has led to major disruptions in social and economic activities as well as educational sector in all countries of the world. The primary aim of this study was to conduct a comparative analysis of Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 Pandemic in Kwara State University, Malete. The research design used was descriptive research design. The respondents were 150 students and were purposively selected. The research instrument was Proforma on Students Academic Achievement (PSAA). Five hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data obtained from respondents were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics (percentages and frequency counts) and inferential statistics (t-test and Hypothesis (Analysis of Variance). The results of this investigation showed that there was no significant difference between students' academic performance before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since female students perform better than male students, there was a significant difference in academic performance between students before and during the COVID-19 pandemic depending on gender (t-cal was 0.19, degree of freedom 148, F was 1.92, and significant level of 0.01, P0.05). Students' academic performance differed significantly between before and during the COVID-19 pandemic based on level since 300L (F (2,149) = 0.537; P 0.05).students perform better than 200l and 400l. Based on the research findings, Researchers recommended that, governments, policy makers and curriculum planners should modify curriculum to accommodate both physical and virtual learning, parents should provide technological(teaching and learning) tools to enable their children to meet the standard of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning, teachers should update their knowledge on daily basis.*

**Keyword:** Covid-19 pandemic, Academic performance



## **Introduction**

Education is the bedrock of economic development of any nation. Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) which originated in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, was declared as a pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th of March, 2020 after it has spread to many countries of the world. It also caused more than 171 countries of the world to close their educational institutions for several months in the year 2020 (Agbele & Oyelade, 2020). Several governmental measures have been taken to counteract the risk of disease spreading. These measures include travel restrictions, mandatory quarantines for travelers, social distancing, bans on public gatherings, schools and universities closure, business closures, self-isolation, asking people to work at home, curfews, and lockdown (Bedford et al., 2020; Gostin and Wiley, 2020). Authorities in several countries worldwide have declared either lockdown or curfew as a measure to break the fast spread of virus infection (Paital et al., 2020). These measures have a negative worldwide effect on business, education, health, and tourism.

Several governmental measures have been taken to counteract the risk of disease spreading. These measures include travel restrictions, mandatory quarantines for travelers, social distancing, bans on public gatherings, schools and universities closure, business closures, self-isolation, asking people to work at home, curfews, and lockdown (Bedford, Gerry, Hatch, Rechner, Young & Watkinson, 2020; Gostin & Wiley, 2020). Authorities in several countries worldwide have declared either lockdown or curfew as a measure to break the fast spread of virus infection (Paital et al., 2020).

These measures have a negative worldwide effect on business, education, health, and tourism. COVID-19 pandemic has affected all levels of organizations including education system (Nicola et al, 2020). Educational institutions around the world have either temporarily closed or implemented localized closures affecting about 1.7 billion student populations worldwide (UNESCO 2020). Many Universities around the world either postponed or canceled all campus activities to minimize gatherings and hence decrease the transmission of the virus. However, these measures have had to higher economical, medical, and social implications on both undergraduate and postgraduate communities (Nicola et al, 2020; Esposito and Principi, 2020). Due to the suspension of classroom teaching in many colleges and universities, a switch to online teaching for undergraduate and graduate students become effective (Sahu, 2020; Yamin, 2020)]. This form of learning provides an alternative way to minimize either the contact between students themselves or between the students and lecturers (Pragholapati, 2020). However, many students have no access to online teaching due to a lack of either the means or the instruments due to the economical and digital divide (UNESCO 2020). There is a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education—through various online platforms. The online learning, distance and continuing education



have become a panacea for this unprecedented global pandemic, despite the challenges posed to both educators and the learners. Transitioning from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning can be an entirely different experience for learners and educators, which they must adapt to with little or no other alternatives available.

Through a variety of online channels, the educational system and instructors have accepted "Education in Emergency," forcing them to use a system for which they are not ready. Students, parents, and educators all over the world have been affected by the unforeseen ripple effect of the COVID-19 epidemic as schools have been closed to deal with the global pandemic. Governments, first responders, and health officials are working hard to stop the spread of the disease, but education systems are still making an effort to provide high-quality instruction to everyone during these stressful times. Many students have experienced psychological and emotional turmoil at home, which has prevented them from contributing effectively to their academic work. The best practices for online homeschooling are yet to be explored (Petrie, 2020). The use of suitable and relevant pedagogy for online education may depend on the expertise and exposure to information and communications technology (ICT) for both educators and the learners. Some of the online platforms used so far include unified communication and collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Canvas and Blackboard, which allow the teachers to create educational courses, training and skill development programmes (Petrie, 2020). They include options of workplace chat, video meeting and file storage that keep classes organized and easy to work. They usually support the sharing of a variety of content like Word, PDF, Excel file, audio, videos and many more.

These also allow the tracking of student learning and assessment by using quizzes and the rubric-based assessment of submitted assignments. The flipped classroom is a simple strategy for providing learning resources such as articles, pre-recorded videos and YouTube links before the class. The online classroom time is then used to deepen understanding through discussion with faculty and peers (Doucet et al., 2020). This is a very effective way of encouraging skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and self-directed learning. The virtual classroom platforms like videoconferencing (Google Hangouts Meet, Zoom, Slack, Cisco, and WebEx) and customizable cloud-based learning management platforms such as Elias, Moodle, Big Blue Button and Skype are increasingly being used.

According to Aji (2021), Covid-19 affect academic performance of secondary students in Gashua town of Yobe State, because they perform low during covid-19. Report showed that 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic school closure have impact on research program of higher institutions in FCT and all of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic affects the flow of international research grants into higher institutions in FCT, 92%, the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic affects government



funding of research higher institutions in FCT and 100% agreed that higher institutions as part of their community services by creating awareness to the general public on prevention of Covid-19 (Jacob, 2021 ) Most Nigerian students and other African or underdeveloped countries were more disadvantaged because most educational institutions in Nigeria still follow the traditional set-up of face-to-face lectures in the normal classroom settings. (Agbele & Oyelade, 2020). Middle-class families were able to maintain higher standards of education quality in a critical context, while children from socially disadvantaged families had few learning opportunities both in terms of time and learning experiences (Bonal & González, 2020).

### **Statement of the problem**

Covid-19 pandemic has led to major disruptions in social and economic activities as well as educational sector in all countries in the world. In Nigeria, the first case of Covid-19 was recorded on February 27, 2020. As the number of confirmed cases continued to increase, the Federal Government of Nigeria responded by restricting movements of persons for two weeks in the country's capital Abuja, as well as in Lagos and Ogun States, among other things. Different states followed immediately. Kwara State Government directed all levels education to closedown schools and Kwara State University management directed all lecturers to embark on virtual learning few months later. It was observed that some students did not have access to android phone, laptop, internet, stable electricity, uninterrupted network and others; this has negative impact in teaching and learning. This prompted the researchers to carry out a comparative study on students' academic performance of Early Childhood and Primary Education, Kwara State University before and during covid-19 pandemic.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine difference between students' academic performance before and during covid-19 pandemic

The specific purposes for this study are to:

1. Determine the difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before covid-19 pandemic on based on gender.
2. Determine the difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during covid-19 pandemic on based on gender.
3. Determine the difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during covid-19 pandemic based on level
4. Determine the difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before covid-19 pandemic based on level



- Determine the difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during covid-19 pandemic based on level

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 of level of significance

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during covid-19 pandemic

**H<sub>0</sub>2** There is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

**H<sub>0</sub>3** There is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

**H<sub>0</sub>4:** There is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before covid-19 pandemic based on level.

**H<sub>0</sub>5:** There is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during covid-19 pandemic based on level.

### Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. This research work was carried out in Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. There are a total number of 150 students (200 to 400) in the department of Early Childhood and Primary Education. The total population of the study was 150 students (200 to 400) all were sampled for the study because this number is manageable. The research instrument was Proforma on Students Academic Achievement (PSAA). Data obtained from respondents were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics (percentages and frequency counts) and inferential statistics (t-test and Analysis of Variance).

### Result

Ho1: there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 pandemic Kwara State University.

Table 1: Summary of t test result showing Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 pandemic Kwara State University.

Period	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-cal	df	F	Sig	Decision
Before	150	2.46	0.56					



Academic Performance	During	150	2.52	1.07	0.59	298	0.62	0.06	Not Sig
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Table 1 shows the summary of t-test result showing Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 pandemic Kwara State University. It was revealed that academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.46 and standard deviation 0.56 while academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.52 and standard deviation 1.07, the t-cal was 0.59, degree of freedom 298, F was 0.62 and significant level of 0.06 ( $P>0.05$ ). This implies that there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 pandemic Kwara State University. Therefore the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before and during Covid-19 pandemic in Kwara State University was not rejected.

Ho2: there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

Table 2: Summary of t test result showing significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-cal	df	F	Sig	Decision
Academic Performance before Covid-19	Male	69	2.34	0.57	2.57	148	0.52	0.01	Sig
	Female	81	2.57	0.51					

Table 2 showed the summary of t-test result shows Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on gender. It was revealed that male students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.34 and standard deviation 0.57 while female students academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.57 and standard deviation 0.51, the t-cal was 2.57, degree of freedom 148, F was 0.52 and significant level of 0.01 ( $P<0.05$ ). This implies that there was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on gender. The difference can be



seeing in students mean scores where female students had better mean score than male. Therefore the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on gender is rejected.

Ho3: there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

Table 3: Summary of t test result showing significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on gender.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-cal	df	F	Sig	Decision
Academic Performance during Covid-19	Male	69	2.33	0.59	0.19	148	1.92	0.04	Sig
	Female	81	2.68	1.34					

Results from table 3 shows the summary of t-test of Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on gender. It was revealed that male students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.33 and standard deviation 0.59 while female students academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic had mean 2.68 and standard deviation 1.34, the t-cal was 0.19, degree of freedom 148, F was 1.92 and significant level of 0.01 ( $P < 0.05$ ). This implies that there was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on gender. The difference can be seen in students mean scores where female students had better mean score than male. Therefore the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance Covid-19 pandemic based on gender is rejected

Ho4: there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on level.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA result showing significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on level.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.



Corrected Model	1.074 <sup>a</sup>	2	0.537	1.771	0.179
Intercept	911.151	1	911.151	3004.110	.000
Level	1.074	2	0.537	1.771	.174
Error	44.584	147	0.303		
Total	957.340	150			
Corrected Total	45.660	149			

R square = .024, Adjusted R Square= 0.01

Table 4 reveals the significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on level. There was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on level. ( $F_{(2,149)} = 0.537$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result since the significant value (.00) is less than 0.05. This implies that there was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance before Covid-19 pandemic based on level.

Table 5 revealed the sources of the difference in level.

**Table 5:** Summary of estimated marginal means with groups

Level	Mean	Standard Deviation
200	2.35	0.63
300	2.53	0.56
400	2.52	0.44

This implies that respondents in 300level had better mean score than respondents in other levels

Ho5: there is no significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on level.

Table 6: Summary of ANOVA result showing significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on level.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2.194 <sup>a</sup>	2	1.097	0.955	0.387
Intercept	953.336	1	953.366	829.961	.000
Level	2.94	2	1.097	0.955	.387



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Error	169.857	147	1.149
Total	1123.057	150	
Corrected	171.051	149	
Total			

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R square = .013, Adjusted R Square= 0.001

Table 6 reveals the significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on level. There was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on level. ( $F_{(2,149)} = 1.097$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). The hypothesis is therefore not rejected in the light of the result since the significant value (.00) is less than 0.05. This implies that there was significant difference between Early Childhood and Primary Education students' academic performance during Covid-19 pandemic based on level..

### **Discussion of findings**

These research hypotheses were to compare the academic performance of early childhood and primary education students at Kwara State University, Matete, before and during the Covid-19 Pandemic. According to the findings' summary, there was no significant difference between students' academic performance before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a sizable gender-based difference in student academic performance before the COVID-19 pandemic, and there was significant difference in student academic performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating that female students perform better than male students. Before the COVID-19 epidemic, pupils' academic performance varied significantly. There were significance difference in students' academic achievement during the COVID-19 pandemic based on level. Accordingly, 300L students perform better than 200L and 400L students. This clearly shows that there was no significant difference between students' academic performance before and during the COVID-19 outbreak; this conclusion may be related to their exposure to virtual learning at the time. The results negate that of Aji (2021), who claimed that the Covid-19 pandemic negatively impacted the academic performance of secondary students in Gashua, Yobe State, because they performed poorly during the pandemic. Jacob (2021) also claimed that most Nigerian students and those from other African or developing nations suffered greater disadvantages because most educational institutions in Nigeria still adhere to the traditional model of face-to-face lectures in the normal classroom.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it concluded that there was no significant difference in the academic performance of students before and during covid-19 pandemic. There was significant difference in the academic



performance of students before and during covid-19 pandemic based on gender, i.e. female students perform higher than male. There was significant difference in the academic performance of students before and during covid-19 pandemic based on level, that is, 300l students perform higher than 200l and 400l. However, based on the findings of this study it was concluded that covid-19 pandemic did not affect academic performance of early childhood and primary education student in Kwara State University Malete.

### **Recommendations**

Based on this study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1. Government, Policy Maker and Curriculum planner should modify curriculum to suite both male and female students
2. Parent should always provide technological (teaching and learning) tools to enable their children (male and female) to meet the standard (21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning strategies)
3. Teachers should update their knowledge on daily bases through training such as seminar, workshop to cater for any educational challenge in future.
4. Government, Policy Maker and Curriculum planner should modify curriculum to cater for all level(200l – 400l) in all tertiary institutions
5. Society/community should always assist students

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## **BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND SKILLS ACQUISITION IN DIGITAL MARKETING ERA**

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### **Abstract**

*It is obvious that Business Education is dynamic in nature and it is quite relevant for successful living, job creation, employability and efficient participation and contribution to the growth of Nigerian economy as well as global economy. In view of this, this paper examines the current business education curriculum goals and objectives and the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It goes further to highlight the importance of the use of internet in facilitating the success of the entire Business Education programme. It also takes a discursive approach in probing into the potency of entrepreneurial skills acquisition in the digital marketing era. The paper concludes that enriching the Business Education curriculum will foster its continued relevance in skills acquisition and efficiency in marketing goods and services. It recommends, amongst others that with increasing emphasis on digitization and more focused attention on the global market, there is need for policy makers to develop the spirit and techniqueness of digital marketing in the youths. Therefore, greater efforts should be channeled towards providing basic training in digital marketing as part of business education curriculum.*

**Keywords:** *Business Education, Internet, Skills acquisition, Digital Marketing, Curriculum*

### **Introduction**

Business has occupied a strategic place in the history of education in Nigeria and the world at large. It is important to national development as it seeks to develop vocational skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for employment and advancement in a business career. There is no gainsaying that the modes, methods of teaching and the areas of occupation of graduates of Business Education in the past cannot be compared to the present. This is attributable to the fact that Business Education is evolving rapidly, most especially in the developed nations of the world, in the areas of innovation, entrepreneurship, and information technology.



Oyedele (2011) advanced a reason for the new directions of the business education, which is that we live in a world where change is constant and learning never stops. This thus calls for the need to look at what changes have happened so far in Business Education especially in the developed nations of the world. This will significantly motivate developing nations to seek inspiration from the developed nations and follow their steps in moving their economies forward.

Otteweill and Macfarlane (2003) stated that Nigeria has witnessed a lot of developments which have great impact on business education. These developments they stated, are in the areas of curriculum trends, rapid industrialization, and urbanization, economic forces-both national and international, new methodologies in the classrooms and offices, and government influences. Okoli (2013) sees Business Education as an important part of the general education which emphasizes skills and competency acquisition. It is a programme of study which encompasses education for office, occupations, business teaching administration and economic understanding. Abdulkadir (2011) added that one remarkable and important characteristic of business education programme is that its products can function independently as self employed and employers of labour.

It is believed that the country's economic and social development can be accelerated through curriculum development. Curriculum experts and other specialists should therefore, work hand in hand with law-makers and other stakeholders for curriculum improvement. Curriculum development matters a lot in setting the direction of change in an organization, not only at the micro but also at macro levels. As long as the goals and objectives of curriculum development are clear, in the planner's mind, cutting edge achievements in various concerns can be realized (Alvoir, 2014).

It is in the light of the above views that this paper seeks to examine the concept of business Education Curriculum and skills acquisition in digital marketing era by discussing in details these sub-topics under them, namely: Current business education curriculum and the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century; the goals and objectives of business education; the importance of the use of internet in facilitating success of the entire business education programme; potency of entrepreneurship skills acquisition in the digital marketing era; among others. The world has gone digital. It has been reduced to a "global village" where jobs abound and are accessible to any and all who possess the requisite skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century labour market. If business education graduates in Nigeria must avail themselves of these job opportunities, it is imperative to, as a matter of urgency, enrich the business education curriculum and improve the delivery system (Aquah, 2009).

### **Business Education as a Concept**

Business education is a broad and comprehensive discipline whose instructional programme comprises the knowledge, attitude and skills needed by



all citizens in order to effectively manage their personal business and the economic system. Business education also fosters the acquisition of general or basic knowledge and understanding of business, essential for all persons regardless of age, occupation, profession, social or economic status. At the tertiary level, the term Business Education is sometimes considered as synonymous with education in the broad areas of business administration in which the objective is primarily preparatory for professional careers in the management and administration of business enterprises. Business education is also used to designate the preparation of teachers of business and economics both at the secondary and tertiary levels of education (Aquah, 2009).

Business Education is an aspect of vocational education which has been existing for a very long time in the history of mankind. The acquisition of skills in most trades was not automatic; on the other hand, entry into each guild was highly controlled by the members from the knowledge of trade or craft originated and by initiated members. The only option available to anyone who wanted to learn any craft or trade was to undergo a period of training or apprenticeship. This roughly marked the beginning of vocational education which Business Education fall under. The roles performed by a business educator is so encompassing that the society cannot do without them if truly such society will achieve greatness in training and entrepreneurship of such.

Business Education is also viewed as a course that offers knowledge and competencies required for entering into business occupations of all sorts and prospering in them. Business education, which encompasses several disciplines, enables people to think, speak and behave in ways that support the growth, efficiency and effectiveness of an organization or several organizations (Sulyman & Philo, 2014).

Sam and Joe (2000), see business education as a process of instructing a person on what happens during business transactions in offices, banks, markets and anywhere money changes hands. They further categorize business education into two main components called, "education for business and education about business." In 2004, Osuala gave a definition of business education 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. Njoku (2006) gave another definition of business education as an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operate in the environment he/she finds himself/herself.

It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by, the definitions of Business education continue to change. This means Business Education is not static. Any worthwhile programme has to move with time.



Indeed, business educators have always accepted that change is a fact of life. From the typewriter to the transistor, business curriculum has continually reshaped itself to meet the needs of business. As a result, the success and survival of business education constantly depends on its ability to adapt and keep pace with the needs of its recipients. These changes present challenges for both the learner and the instructor. Nevertheless, it is the business educator that must be willing to adapt and manage these changes to ensure successful programmes for the future. It is essential that Business Education be a useful and vital component of transformation agenda if the curriculum of business programmes across the country and globe is to continue to meet the needs of its students.

### **Concept of Curriculum**

The word curriculum comes from the Latin word, “Currus” connoting, a “run way” or “running a course”. It is a course of study in schools and colleges. A curriculum is a document which comprises the goals and objectives of a particular course of study, the subject matter, or content, the learning, the learning experiences and evaluation. Also, any comprehensive curriculum usually spells out the materials/resources required to enhance teaching and learning. To this effect, a dynamic curriculum must have definite and dynamic objectives, must be flexible and must have built into the process constant evaluation (Aquah 2014).

It therefore becomes imperative to examine the goals of Business Education in Nigeria. The objectives of Business Education cannot be over-emphasized as business education is generally borne out of the needs of industry, commerce and society. In addition, it is career oriented and aims at preparing people for gainful employment.

### **Goals and Objectives of Business Education Curriculum**

The philosophy of the Business education curriculum include: To lay a foundation and/ or build on the foundation at NCE level in the pedagogy education system; to equip the learner with saleable skills, i.e. skills which will enable them acquire, sustain and grow in their jobs; and to create jobs, be self-employed and be employers of labour, become better and wiser consumers of goods and services. Business education also seeks too prepare the individuals for higher studies in Business Education.

Business Education objectives are designed to direct students’ preparations to be skilled in Pedagogy in Business education; principles and practice of Accounting, Management; marketing; and information and communication technology (ICT); curriculum design and evaluation in business education. Business education also seeks to impart knowledge and skills on development of instructional materials for business education; and supervision and administration of the business education programme in secondary schools.



Thus, at the end of the programme of study the careers are expected to acquire the basic knowledge and skills of business education, relate the knowledge and skills acquired to national development, develop basic skills in office occupations, provide the needed background for teaching business subjects, prepare students for further training/studies and provide orientation for starting a career.

For business education to provide the individual the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to take up readily available jobs or openings in the global job market, it becomes imperative that our educational system must function optimally and the curriculum must encompass the most current topics that will provide the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable the individuals avail themselves with the job openings and opportunities in the global market (Aguah, 2014).

### **Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Emerging Global Issues**

In this global age, it is not sufficient to be knowledgeable in just any one discipline or profession. What matters today is knowledge about a variety of issues and problems or challenges plaguing mankind today. These issues have great negative impact on the society. The issues do not emerge in isolation as they are usually inter-related. They emerge gradually and end up into states of emergency or knowledge explosion. These include: diseases, all kinds of economic down-turns, unemployment, Poverty, climate change, political affairs, environment pollution or disasters, population/family life issue, reproductive health issues, gender issues, STD/HIV/AIDS education, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, global warming and a host of others. The question then arises as to how one could as expert business educators, enrich our business education curriculum to offer solution to these ever challenging global issues. Thus, it is imperative that the curriculum we offer must ensure satisfactory output/results that can function effectively in the global market and that will meet the current global needs. This calls for enriching the Business Education Curriculum.

### **Enriching the Business Education Curriculum**

It is of note that Business education prepares individuals for initial office or selling jobs, and for managing of individually owned controlled and operated business enterprises. It also provides general knowledge and understanding for all persons regardless of age, occupations, professions, social or economic status. The curriculum offerings, especially at the tertiary levels cater for some of the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. This is achieved through core and elective courses taken in other departments such as sociology, psychology, law and others. In spite of these, graduates from these programmes join the rank of files in unemployment due to inability for those employed to carry out their assigned duties without further training. This thus creates doubt as to the



relevance, functionality and adequacy of the Curriculum and its delivery system in meeting the demands of employability.

This therefore calls for the enrichment of business education curriculum in several ways. These include organizing periodic review of the curriculum, highlighting the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and globally relevant courses which are germane for gainful employment in the global workplace; and making conscious efforts to match theory with practice by providing adequate time-tabling for classroom teaching and learning. Furthermore, adequate provision should be made for instructional technology in order to meet enrolment needs.

All stake holders in the curriculum should also participate effectively in the planning and review process. The stakeholders should include experts in curriculum design and evaluation, members of the society, prospective employers of labour, the teachers and the learners themselves. Teachers, learners and employers should take advantage of the field trips, Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) to expose learners to work methods and provide needed experience in handling equipment and machinery that may not be available in the educational institutions. Learning environment should be made learner friendly. Finally, business education programme should be mainstreamed as a general studies course in our tertiary institutions in Nigeria. (Aquah, 2014).

### **How Internet has helped the Development of Business Education**

One of the basic requirements for education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to prepare learners for participation in a networked, knowledge-based economy in which knowledge will be the most critical resource for social and economic development. The internet is a valuable tool that is tremendously useful to teachers. Through the use of the internet, teachers can allow their students access to new information, points of view and experiences that they would otherwise not have been able to encounter. There are several tools that have proved particularly useful in teaching and learning of Business Education in the developed countries. Some of the ways the internet has helped teachers in the development of business education are these, according to Olumide and Olaitan (2017):

**Webquests:** Teachers can improve students' ability to locate information independently by sending them on a digital treasure hunt through cyberspace. Webquests promote independent learning and help students develop problem – solving skills.

**Lesson Planning;** With the assistance of the internet teachers have instant access to tested lesson plans that have worked for others in the past. This saves them time and increases their effectiveness.

**Stream Videos:** Through the internet, teachers can access useful sites that feature videos designed for use in the classroom. Discovery Education's



stream could be made use of by teachers to enable them search for topics relevant to their lessons.

Test Preparation: There are now a number of websites aimed at helping students improve their scores on standardized tests that offer subscription services to schools. Study Island is one most popular test preparation sites that provide services to schools across the globe.

### **Acquisition of Entrepreneurial & Business Studies Skills**

Skills do not depend solely upon a person's fundamental, innate capacities, but must be developed through training, practice and experience an individual acquired. Skills, according to Belt-Lee and Foster (2003) are the arts of possessing the abilities to power, authority, or competency to do the task required of an individual on the job. Two fundamental issues are important when a skill is to be acquired. According to Okoro and Ursula (2012), the first is the conditions which promote acquisition and the second is the change that will occur when the skill is acquired. However, when an individual sets out to learn a new skill he usually starts with a communicable programme of instructions. Good learners do not jump into an operation without first receiving the necessary verbal instruction. Thus, instruction given in bits, units, modules, in stages, perhaps must be fused together to form a skilled performance.

There are many processes of acquisition and development in achieving entrepreneurial skills. Okoro and Ursula (2012) outlined four main stages of acquisition and development of entrepreneurial business skills to include: Analyze and identify the internet and foreseeable skill needs to business, in terms of management, administrative and technical skills and relative importance of these; and identify the entrepreneur's own personal goals, objectives and analyze and evaluate his/her skills and resources in relation to these. Others are to produce a realistic personal development plan for the potential entrepreneur and to monitor on-going performance of follow-up of the entrepreneurs once the business has started and progress made towards developing the skills that had been previously identified as necessary for success of the business.

Baret (2005) also identified the following as skills required in entrepreneurship:

Technical skills: These skills include: writing oral communication, monitoring environment, technical business management, technology, interpersonal, listening, ability to recognize, network, building, management style, coaching and being a team player.

Business Management skills: These skills include: planning and goal setting, decision making, human relationship, marketing, finance, accounting, management, negotiation, venture, and managing growth, and

Personal Entrepreneurship skills, which include: inner control discipline, risk taking, innovative, change oriented, persistent visionary leader and ability to manage change. However, this involves the personal needs of the entrepreneurs



as well as helping employees in new skills development which will be of immense benefit to the business.

### **The Concept and Relevance of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is a globalized and current development in business strategy, and a departure from the traditional method of connecting and reaching a diversified audience through conventional media like radio, television, newspaper, and magazines. Digital marketing as explained by Barne (2020) is the use of internet, mobile devices, search engines, and other channel, to reach consumers.

Dawada (2019) gave reasons why digital marketing is important in today's business which include higher conversion rates, increase of trust in brands, creation of longer growth options for any business, cost effective marketing, targeting and getting connected to mobile consumers. Online marketing has opened up new avenues for business opportunities to both the seller and buyer. Companies, organizations, including individuals are leveraging the opportunities to attract potential markets to their goods and services. The benefit of digital media marketing are numerous, and interesting, the business outlets are growing rapidly. Online advertisements, sales, purchases and e-payment make interactions less cumbersome for the business community.

Describing the relevance of digital marketing Matta (2019) explained that the role of digital marketing is spreading beyond brand awareness and hard cost advertising and those companies; businesses have realized its importance in the present scenario. Most businesses around the world are becoming more conscious and moving towards sustainable means of marketing and advertising. Moreover, the skills are used for a better connect with the markets; boost online relation and preserve and help stay ahead of competition.

Unemployed people who have acquired entrepreneurial skills stand the opportunity to show case their products and services to potential customers and consequently grow their businesses through such platforms. Digital media marketing has a high success rate because they have the potential to create a quick and secure channel to contract with the customers. Also, a larger audience can be reached at a less cost. Again it offers the opportunity to build trust and relationship with customers, creates forum to question and make recommendations.

### **Conclusion**

It is quite glaring from all discussed thus far that Business education curriculum needs to expand or extend its content to cater for the current topics that will provide the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable individuals avail themselves with the job openings and opportunities in the global market. The enriched Business Education. Curriculum would thus foster its



further relevance in skills acquisition and efficacy in marketing goods and services.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the drawn conclusion presented above, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. The curriculum of business education programme should constantly be reviewed to reflect the current development and technological changes in the country.
2. With increasing emphasis on digitization and more focused attention on the global market, there is need for policy makers to inculcate the spirit of digital marketing on the youths who are mostly affected. Therefore efforts should be made towards providing basic training in digital marketing as part of school curriculum.
3. The higher institutions should focus on curriculum that is aimed at a growing job market and expanding the production of qualified professionals most required by industries.
4. There should be provision for periodic retraining of the teachers to update their knowledge in the various areas of entrepreneurship and in the use of information and communication technology across the globe and enhance effective teaching.

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