



## ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR SELF-RELIANCE IN BALI LOCAL GOVERNMENT TARABA STATE

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### Abstract

The paper assessed the contribution of office technology and management programme on skill development for self-reliance in Bali Local Government Taraba State. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses. The population and sample of the study comprised of 10 lecturers and 43 graduates of OTM who are self-reliant in Bali Local Government. Structured questionnaire titled Contribution of Office Technology and Management Programme on Skill Development Questionnaire (COTMPSDQ) with 4-point scale and 21 constructs was used to elicit data from the respondents. The instrument was duly validated. The reliability of the instrument was determined using cronbach Alpha method and it yielded a coefficient of 0.83. The 53 questionnaires were personally administered and collected by the researcher. 49 of the questionnaires were properly filled and used for the study and this represents 98% of the administered questionnaire. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistics was employed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that OTM programme has equipped many graduates in Bali LGA for self-reliance. Other findings were that many graduates of OTM are willing to be self-reliant and graduates who are self-employed are very efficient in their business. The results of the hypotheses further revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of lecturers and graduates on all the items. Thus, inference drawn was that the lecturers and graduates did not differ in their opinion on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development for self-reliance in Bali LGA. Based on these findings the study recommended amongst others that OTM lecturers should always encourage the students to be innovative and contribute in the improvement of the economy after graduation instead of remaining idle waiting for paid jobs.

**Keywords:** Office Technology and Management, programme, Skill Development, Self-reliance.

### Introduction

Skill development is the only criteria for advancement in office technology and management. A system of education required for the present economic downgrade is education and training that can prepare learners for self-employment. Office technology and management programme is designed to allow learners develop their skills in different areas of learning. According to Federal Government of Nigeria Policy on Education (2004) the objectives of Polytechnic education is to provide course of instructions and training in applied sciences, other technology, engineering, business management leading to the production of adequate manpower who can provide the technical knowledge and skills necessary for occupational development in the nation as well as training and imparting necessary skills for the production of skilled personnel. Graduates of OTM are inclusive in the skilled manpower produced by Polytechnics in Nigeria. Office technology and management is a segment of business education concerned with the development of skills, knowledge and abilities needed to enable the recipients function effectively in a modern office environment (Fadare, 2014). National Board for Technical Education (2006) designed OTM programme to equip recipients with office skills for employment in various fields of endeavour. It includes acquisition of vocational skills in OTM, students are equipped with effective work competencies and socio-psychological work skills which are very essential to every day interactions with others.



Hornby (2010) defined skill as the ability to do something well. Boytzis (2010) stated that skill is the ability to demonstrate a system and sequence of behaviour that is functionally related to attaining a performance goal. Atakpa (2014) viewed skill as the rapidity, precision, expertise, dexterity and proficiency exhibited through mental and manual repetition of performance of an operation. It is a well-established habit of doing something through acquisition of performance capabilities. Nnaji and Bagudu (2017) stated that skill acquisition prepares individuals for self-employment. Etonyeaku (2013) opined that skill is the capacity of a person to accomplish a task with desired precision and certainty. He maintained that skill acquisition involves practical knowledge in combination with cleverness, expertise, dexterity and ability to perform function which could be acquired or learnt in school. Secretaries in the modern business offices have functions beyond the traditional functions. The goal of a skill is to integrate productive efforts for proper maximization or utilization of resources and to get optimum output.

Development is a gradual process of becoming bigger, stronger or more advanced in a profession. Put together skill development is the ability to do something that comes from training experience or practice. It involves the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance. It is a learned power of doing something competently. Office technology and management programme is aimed at contributing to the national sustainability through self-reliance. It equips recipients with employability skills in various fields of endeavour. Bali Local Government is located in Bali town in the North-east of Nigeria. It is a rapidly developing urban centre and administrative headquarter of Bali L.G.A in Taraba State situated 180km away from Jalingo the State capital.

According to Esene (2013) the emphasis in the OTM curriculum is to radically shift from where the profession has been in order to join the rest of the developed countries. Akasi and Aliu (2018) observed that OTM programme is information systems management and information system profession that relates the functions of information system to organizational structure. The OTM curriculum as reviewed by NBTE (2004) laid emphasis on computer related courses such as (a) secretarial studies and techniques in office management and control (b) information and communication technology application which include computer appreciation like web page design, desktop publishing, database management and (c) general education relating to contemporary issues usually called general studies. The general objectives of the programme can therefore, be summarized as acquisition of secretarial skills, acquisition of general education and laying foundation for advanced studies and for contribution in national development.

In webpage design the students are expected to design software application to enhance online performance and utilization of internet for commercial and business purposes. This is the area of creating an e-mail address, username and password, composing, replying and sending e-mails. Sani (2007) stated that OTM education involves the process of guiding and initiating the learners to acquire the necessary skills, facts, knowledge, habits and attitudes that will make them co-exist with others as useful and productive members of the society. He upheld that it is a programme of instruction designed to equip its recipients with knowledge and skills for gainful employment. Nwosu (2007) supported this when he said that OTM education is to assist in the production of suitable secretarial manpower with requisite skills, knowledge and attitudes for effective participation in economy. Adeyemi (2006) agreed that OTM education provides adequate training for Nigerian citizens for the new world order of technological devices. OTM graduates acquire and develop needed skills, attitudes and knowledge to meet with the new technological challenges which have revolutionary changes in the offices. Ojohwoh (2014) supporting these views said that OTM is an



effective, efficient productive and functional educational programme which prepares graduates for self-employment, paid jobs employment, self-reliance and self-realization. She upheld that it is a competence-based programme that allows its recipients to be independent and be employer of labour.

Yusuf and Iyiola (2018) added that acquisition of relevant skills is very important at various levels of the Nigeria education because the progress of a nation is a function of the level of the resourcefulness of the people which to a great extent, relates to the level of quality of the training and purposeful development of education in that nation. They maintained that such progress or development could only occur when an individual in the society is gainfully employed and per capital income is enhanced. Agi and Yellowe (2013) stated that education should be geared towards the system of producing the right type of manpower in the right quality and quantity for nation building. The national education goal is principally the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical, social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to leave in, and contribute to the development of the nation. Furthermore OTM programme trains the learner to operate with ease, dexterity, efficiency and effectiveness the emerging technological devices which range from computer with scanner and coloured printers, to fax machines, photocopiers, franking machines, internet facilities, micrographic and reprographic machines, shredding machines telephone with cellular and word processors to qualify for paid jobs or for self-employment. The OTM lecturers are the instruments through which skills are developed in the students. Skill development is measured by the way the graduates handles the machines. OTM is a skill programme which has its fundamental principles that is followed in order to achieve the desired objectives. Self-employment is being encouraged so as to reduce unemployment which has gone to a very a high rate in the nation. If students are given the requisite skills they can operate a business after graduation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Since the introduction of technology, questions continue to arise on the relevance of Office Technology and Management programme because the society beliefs that everyone can now input data in a computer. It is believed that the major learning experience in OTM is typing documents. In support of this Olayanju (2016) stated that the introduction of technology has provoked real questions whether secretarial professionals are still needed in the office environment. She upheld that many people are of the opinion that since virtually everybody is now computer-literate and are able to perform the basic secretarial functions, such as typing and printing of documents from computer without the input of secretarial professionals, there is not much for them in an office environment. Buttressing on this point Ademiluyi (2016) states that some administrators point to the declining fortunes of the secretarial profession in the advanced countries, where vast proportions of the population are computer-literate and can perform basic secretarial function without the support of secretarial professionals, as evidence that the profession is in the twilight of its relevance. He maintained that attention has been drawn to the fact that in some offices here in Nigeria, the secretarial cadre is being phased out on the premise that every employee should be able to perform his own secretarial function. Esene (2013) said that there are allegations and counter-allegations that the products (graduates) of OTM should be the basis of assessment. OTM is a programme designed to develop useful skills required for employment in the public business offices and for self-reliance. Some of the graduates are self-employed because it is believed that they have acquired the right acumen and skills to set up businesses to contribute to sustainable national development. The

Department of Office Technology and Management Federal Polytechnic Bali has been churning out graduates since its inception but no study has been undertaken to establish the level of competence of these graduates for self-reliance. It is on this premise that the study assessed the contribution of office technology and management programme on skill development for self-reliance in Bali Local Government Taraba State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study is the assessment of the contribution of office technology and management programme on Skill Development for Self-reliance in Bali Local Government Taraba State. Specifically, the study.

Examined the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA

Ascertained the efficiency of graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

To what extent has OTM programme contributed on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA?

How efficient are graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA?

### **Hypotheses for the Study**

Two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level.

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA

H<sub>02</sub>. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the efficiency of graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA.

### **Methods**

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 10 lecturers and 43 graduates of OTM who are self-reliant in Bali LGA. The sample was the entire population hence an intact population. A structured questionnaire on a 4-point scale titled Contribution of Office Technology and Management Programme on Skill Development Questionnaire (COTMPSDQ) with 21 constructs was used to collect data for the study. For Research Question 1, the options were: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Fair Extent (FE) and Low Extent (Low Extent) (4, 3, 2, and 1). The options for Research Question 2 were: Highly Efficient (HE), Very Efficient (VE), Efficient (E) and Not Efficient (NE) (4, 3, 2, 1,) respectively. Two experts from the Department of office Technology and Management Federal Polytechnic Bali validated the instrument. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to test the reliability of the instrument and it yielded a coefficient of 0.83 which means that the instrument was adjudged to be highly reliable for the study. The instrument was administered and collected personally by the researcher after completion. 49 of the administered and collected questionnaire were properly filled and used for the study and this represents 98% of the administered questionnaire. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. T-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was that items with a mean score range of 3.00 to 4.00 were regarded as very high extent and highly efficient respectively, 2.00 to 2.99 as high extent and very efficient, 1.00

to 1.99 as fair extent and efficient and mean scores of 0.00 to 0.99 as low extent and not efficient. Standard Deviation according to Uzoagulu (2012) is a measure of dispersion or variability from the mean. He upheld that researchers always report the mean along with the Standard Deviation and vice versa. The hypotheses was rejected if the calculated t-value is equal or greater than the critical t-value that is, there is a significant difference. Similarly, if the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value; the hypotheses was not rejected that is there is no significant difference.

**Table 1:** Mean rating responses of lecturers and graduates on contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA.

S/N	Item Statements	X	SD	Remark
1.	OTMequips students with employability skills	3.86	0.24	Very High Extent
2.	OTM graduates acquire and develop needed skills	3.59	0.33	Very High Extent
3.	It equips students to join the rest developed countries	2.63	0.94	High Extent
4.	It is a process of guiding learners to acquire skills	3.88	0.24	Very High Extent
5.	It complies with the national education goal	3.52	0.43	Very High Extent
6.	OTM students acquire mental and social abilities	3.62	0.15	Very High Extent
7.	It encourages learners to be self-reliant	3.47	0.22	Very High Extent
8.	It provides training on new technologies	4.00	0.00	Very High Extent
9.	OTM graduates contribute to national development	2.68	0.95	High Extent
<b>Mean of Means/Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.47</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>Very High Extent</b>

The result in Table I shows that OTM programme contributed on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA because all the items have remarks of either very high extent or high extent with mean scores ranging from 4.00 to 2.63.

## Research Question 2

How efficient are graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA?

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of respondents on the efficiency of graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA

S/N	Item Statements	X	SD	Remarks
1.	Efficient in the use of computers	3.19	0.94	Highly Efficient
2.	Efficient in knowledge and attitudes	2.75	0.98	Very Efficient
3.	Efficient in innovation and creativity	2.95	0.76	Very Efficient
4.	Knowledge and skill for effective participation	3.87	0.24	Highly Efficient
5.	Skills to meet with the new technological challenges	3.09	0.68	Highly Efficient
6.	Become employers of labour	3.50	0.31	Highly Efficient
7.	Production of suitable manpower with requisite skill	3.58	0.33	Highly Efficient
8.	Habits to enable them co-exist with others	2.75	0.57	Very Efficient
9.	Efficient in ICT application	2.80	0.41	Very Efficient
10.	Efficient in information systems management	3.24	0.36	Highly Efficient
11.	Efficient in accomplishing task with precision	2.61	0.94	Very Efficient
12.	Function efficient in a modern office environment	3.25	0.36	Highly Efficient
<b>Mean of Means/Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>Highly Efficient</b>

The result in Table 2 shows that OTM graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA are highly efficient and very efficient because all the items had a mean score above 2.50.

### Hypotheses Testing

$H_{101}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA

**Table 3.** Summary of t-test of the difference between lecturers and graduates responses on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA.

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Lecturers	10	3.43	0.80	0.196	47	1.69	NS
Graduates	39	3.36	0.82				

Source: Field survey August, 2018

$p > 0.05$

$N$  = Number of Respondents,  $SD$  = Standard Deviation,  $t$ -cal = t-test calculated,  $df$  = Degree of Freedom  $P$ -value = table value,  $NS$  = Not Significant,  $S$  = Significant

The result in Table 3 shows that lecturers in FPB recorded a mean score of 3.43 on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA. While graduates had a mean score of 3.36 on their ratings of OTM programme on skill development of graduates. The  $t$ -cal of 0.196 is less than  $t$ -table value of 1.69 at 0.05 level of significance and 47 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

$H_{102}$

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the efficiency of graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA.

**Table 4:** Summary of t-test of the difference between lecturers and graduates responses on the efficiency of graduates

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Lecturers	10	3.45	0.66	0.169	47	1.56	NS
Graduates	39	3.28	0.70				

Source: Field survey August, 2018

$p > 0.05$

The result in Table 4 shows that 0.169 is the value of  $t$ -calculated and 1.56 is  $t$ -table value at 0.05 level of significance. Since  $t$ -calculated value is less than table value, the hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the efficiency of graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question 1 showed that all the respondents agreed that OTM programme contributed to a very high extent on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA. Attempt was made here to discuss the finding in line with the relevant literature reviewed. The study in Table 1 revealed that OTM equips students with employability skills, OTM graduates acquire and develop needed skills, and it prepares students to join the rest developed countries. This is in agreement with the studies of Nwosu (2007) and Sani (2007) who stated that OTM is a process of guiding learners to



acquire skills, OTM programme complies with the national education goal, and OTM students acquire mental, physical and social abilities. Supporting these views Adeyemi (2006) found that OTM programme equip recipients with office skills for employment in various fields of endeavour. This was also in line with NBTE (2006) revealed curriculum which said that OTM programme includes acquisition of vocational skills, students are equipped with effective work competencies and socio-psychological work skills which are very essential to every day interactions with others.

The results of the study in respect to research question 2 revealed that all the respondents agreed with the 12 items that graduates of FPB who are self-reliant in Bali LGA are highly efficient in their services which include: efficient in the use of computers, efficient in knowledge and attitudes, gainfully employed and per capital income is enhanced, knowledge and skill for effective participation in economy, skills to meet with the new technological challenges, become employers of labour. This concurred with studies of Agi and Yellowe (2013) who stated that education should be geared towards the system of producing the right type of manpower in the right quality and quantity for nation building. In support of this view Yusuf and Iyiola (2018) added that acquisition of relevant skills is very important at various levels of the Nigeria education because the progress of a nation is a function of the level of the resourcefulness of the people which to a great extent, relates to the level of quality of the training and purposeful development of education in that nation. Akasi and Aliu (2018) observed that OTM programme is information systems management and information system profession that relates the functions of information system to organizational structure.

The test of the null hypothesis 1 revealed that lecturers and graduates did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the contribution of OTM programme on skill development of graduates in Bali LGA. The second hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and graduates on the efficiency of OTM graduates who are self-reliant in Bali LGA was not rejected.

### **Conclusion**

In view of the findings and discussions of this study, OTM programme has contributed to a high extent on skill development of graduates for self-reliance in Bali local Government Area of Taraba State. It is therefore concluded that OTM programme in Federal Polytechnic Bali equips the student for self-reliance.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings the researcher proffers the following recommendations:

OTM lecturers should always encourage the students to be innovative and contribute in the improvement of the economy after graduation instead of remaining idle waiting for paid jobs.

The lecturers should be versatile in the use of new technologies and make use of them when teaching so that the students can develop their skills ready for self-employment.

Government should provide all the needed infrastructure in schools and management should make such infrastructure available to the Departments that need them so that they can be utilized in teaching to make the students efficient for self-employment.

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