ENHANCING QUALITY OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR SELF EMPOWERMENT OF GRADUATING STUDENTS OF POLYTECHNICS IN SOUTH WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract
Quality of Office Technology and Management in Polytechnics is fundamental for the programme to fulfil its goal of producing competent graduates. However, research revealed that the quality of Office Technology and Management (OTM) programme in polytechnics is perceived to be low. This has adversely affected the graduates from acquiring the basic skills that are needed for self empowerment. Self empowerment is essential for job success, establishment and efficient management of one's enterprising initiatives. Hence, this study examined how the quality of OTM programme could be enhanced for self empowerment of graduating students of Polytechnics in South Western States, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study consists of 507 academic staff and higher national diploma graduating students in the department of Office Technology and Management in public polytechnics in six states of South West, Nigeria, made up of 80 academic staff and 427 higher national diploma graduating students. Total enumeration was used for academic staff and a sample of 205 graduating students determined through Krejcie and Morgan formula. A validated questionnaire was used to collect data. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that the quality of OTM programme in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria is low and the self empowerment ability of OTM graduating students is equally low. The study concluded that quality of office technology and management programme is a determinant for self empowerment of its graduates in polytechnics. The study recommended that management of institutions should set up quality councils that will evaluate the teaching learning process to ensure and sustain quality, based on the specifications of the curriculum of OTM programme.
Keywords: *Office technology, Management programme, Quality and Self-empowerment*

Introduction
Office Technology and Management was established with an emphasis on vocational skills to produce graduates with vocational skills so that they can contribute to the development of the nation. This is a new academic programme in polytechnics designed to replace the secretarial studies programme with the main objective of promoting vocational education and training, technology transfer as well as skills development. It is a vocational programme in polytechnics that emphasizes job competencies, self empowerment and work adjustment (Ikelegbe, 2020). For office technology and management programme in the polytechnics to fulfil its objectives according to Sokyes, Wetnwan and Bewaran (2018), there is need for adequate infrastructural facilities, implementation of the curriculum, enforcement of quality assurance, qualified teachers, organized teachers' training and development and ability to access research grants and sponsors in the programme.

The National Board for Technical Education whose statutory functions it is to formulate policies, including reviewing of curriculum for Polytechnic and Colleges of Technology in Nigeria came up with the change of Secretarial Studies training to Office Technology and Management and there is no doubt that the restructuring has brought a lot of dynamics and enrichment to the programme for graduating students in polytechnics in south western, Nigeria. Quality in Office Technology and Management programme is the relevance and appropriateness of the programme to the needs of graduating students in

polytechnics for which it is provided. Nwada and Seyi (2017) asserted that it has to do with the establishment of standard in various processes and activities that lead to the attainment of quality result. The quality of OTM programme in polytechnics in Nigeria is measured in terms of facilities, the implementation of the curriculum, quality assurance, quality of teachers, admission of students, research and development as well as training and development of staff. However, in the various polytechnics in Nigeria where this programme is offered, quality of the programme seems to be affected when the facilities and other measures needed for the enhancement of the programme are not in place. Quality is compromised when the measures are not in place and there is a setback in the effective implementation of the curriculum. Maintaining quality in the implementation of office technology and management curriculum will no doubt be an addition to the effort being put in place by the supervisory body.

However, the level of curriculum implementation in the polytechnics in Nigeria calls for concern. Inability to adhere strictly to the curriculum as stipulated by the controlling body has negatively affected the quality of the programme in the various polytechnics. Facilities are equipment essentially needed in OTM programme in polytechnics for effective teaching, learning and research. The current status of facilities and equipment in OTM programme show that there are acute shortages in most institutions. To ensure quality in every vocational programme like OTM, equipment and facilities are needed for training and skilling of students. Koffi and Etukudo (2016) viewed that quality assurance in office technology and management is needed as there are concerns for a potential decline in academic standards against the background of increase in students' population. Onajite (2016) asserted that Office Technology and Management (OTM) programme encompasses education programme that seeks to develop in the learners basic skills for personal use in the future. Quality assurance in Office Technology and Management brings together such variables as general pedagogical knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of student, knowledge of strategies to sustain learning and knowledge to use technology to produce a competent graduate.

Self empowerment improves the identity of OTM graduating students, develops their talents and potentials, enhance the quality of life and realization of their dreams and aspirations (Wikipedia, 2020). It is a measure designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self determined way, acting on their own authority. Oladunjoye (2016) averred that self empowerment of OTM graduating students in polytechnics entails creating and supporting enabling conditions that would enable them to act for themselves in an environment that supports access to knowledge, information and skills as well as a positive value system. This will result in creation of jobs and employment opportunities for graduates. Gidado and Agbazuwaka (2019) opined that empowerment focuses on giving OTM graduating students the opportunity of acting for themselves and having access to all the necessary ingredients needed for their self employment. Self empowerment is the conscious pursuit of personal growth of graduating students by improving personal skills, competencies, talents, and knowledge. However, Odyssey (2020) believed that the key component to self empowerment has to do with self growth in order to seek self fulfillment and proactively reach full potential. Personal development is a lifelong process. It is a way for people to assess their skills and qualities, consider their aims in life and set goals in order to realize and maximize their potential.

Literature Review
Quality of Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics in Nigeria
Quality of Office Technology and Management programme has as its controlling purpose the preparation of individuals for gainful employment and life-long education (Omoniyi and Elemure, 2019). It is a quality programme designed to train students essentially on the utilization or application of technologies to office management processes with the general objective leading students to the understanding of the use and impact of computer-based communication technologies in a working environment. It is a recent nomenclature for secretarial education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Quality Office

Technology and Management emphasizes job competence, career preparation and work adjustment and with various tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics and colleges of education having the mandate to train interested individuals and the product of such training are called office managers.

Ikelegbe (2020) viewed that the acquisition of comprehensive office vocational skills, understanding, attitudes, work habits and competencies that are requisite to success in office management occupations shows the quality of office technology and management. He further submitted that it is an efficient, effective, productive and functional education which leads itself to self employment, self reliance, paid-employment and consequently self actualization. Amesi (2016) said that sustaining the quality of office technology and management programme is important for it to be accountable to society, employers, students, and each other. As more universities, polytechnics, colleges of education are established to meet these demands, there arose the need to upgrade the quality of education and ensure that standards remain above the minimum benchmarks. Quality Office Technology and Management programme has the objectives of continuous striving for excellence and quality in all ramifications. According to Omoniyi and Elemure (2020), certain precautions coupled with other factors such as facilities are taken to achieve quality in the programme.

Oluwalola, Oyedeji and Oyedele viewed that quality assurance in Office Technology and Management is an indispensable component for quality control strategy and determines the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control in office technology and management programme. Quality in Office Technology and Management programme is the relevance and appropriateness of the programme to the needs of modern office for which it is provided.   Quality in Office Technology and Management involves bringing together such variables as general pedagogical knowledge, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of student, knowledge of strategies to sustain learning and knowledge to use technology to produce a competent graduate.

Self Empowerment

To be self empowered is to rely on one's own capabilities, judgment, or resources; to be independent. Self empowerment in the view of Ezeahurukwe (2015) is essential for job success, establishment and efficient management of one's enterprising initiatives. The concept of empowerment has to do with improvement in the quality of life or well being of the citizens of a country. Economic development is more fundamental than economic growth as it goes beyond the mere rise in national income. Underdeveloped countries are characterized by abject poverty, ignorance, diseases, and low life expectancy rate, high illiteracy rate, low income etc.   Abubakar, Abdullahi and Gupa (2017) viewed that the society need to solve the adverse problems of mass unemployment and poverty which business skills in office technology and management could provide.

Self empowerment can be seen to mean being able to depend on one self, one's resources rather than those of others. It is relying on one's own abilities and efforts to be independent. The desire of most developing countries including Nigeria in the submission of Abubakar, Abdullahi and Gupa (2017) is to have a self- reliant and resilient economy capable of generating an internally self sustaining growth and alleviate poverty through skill acquisition. Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender, or economic strength of individuals. Empowerment is perceived as the ability to direct and control one's own business. The importance of self empowerment arises because of increasing unemployment and under employment in the country. Every year thousands of graduates are passing out from various institutions in the country but unfortunately they remain as literate unemployed because they lack the required skill as per the industry standard and ultimately become a burden for the society instead of economically contributing to the society and nation (Panigrahi and Joshi, 2015). Boldureanu et al (2020) admitted that integrating business skills into office technology and management curriculum is important for its graduate to become important engines of technological development and economic growth. Cultivating business qualities in graduates helps them across every profession.

Innovativeness and ambition are critical drivers in professional success, while high self-esteem and self-control provide graduates with the confidence and discipline to realize their dreams.

Self empowerment programme provides learners with self-employable skills and special ability in vocations. It enables learners to adapt the skills they have acquired to their own context. The goal of office technology and management programme is to empower graduates with knowledge and skills that will enable them to create their own income generating ventures, even if they are not able to secure jobs in the public sector. The introduction of vocational skills into the curriculum is an empowerment strategy for graduate self-employment, self-reliance and poverty reduction. Where appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge accompanied with appropriate practical work are taught to the students, they would on graduation become self-employed and employers of labour. This according to Kareem et al (2015) will reduce the rate of unemployment if not completely eradicated and make graduates to be self sufficient.

Objectives of the study
1. Examine the quality of Office Technology and Management programme in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.
2. Examine the self empowerment attributes of graduating students in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Research Questions
1. What is the quality of Office Technology and Management programme in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria?
2. What is the self empowerment attributes of office technology and management graduating students in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria?

Methodology
A descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The population of this study consists of 507 academic staff and higher national diploma graduating students in the department of Office Technology and Management in public polytechnics in six states of South West, Nigeria, made up of 80 academic staff and 427 higher national diploma graduating students. Total enumeration was used for the academic staff because of the fewness of number. A sample of two hundred and five (205) higher national diploma graduating students was used for the study using proportionate sampling from the six polytechnics selected for the study. A total number of 260 academic staff and graduating students were used for the study. This sample is considered suitable for the work. The sample size was derived and adopted from Krejcie and Morgan sample size table. A four point Likert-type rating scale structured questionnaire was used for the study. Both face and content validity of the research instrument was ensured. Data collection was done by the researcher and with other research assistants. The analysis of data for the research questions was done using descriptive statistics.

Results
Research Question 1: What is the quality of office technology and management programme in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria?
Table 1: The quality of Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics in South Western States, Nigeria

Item statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	$\bar{X}$ Mean	Std. Dev.
1. Adequate and functional infrastructural facilities	10 (14.7%)	19 (27.9%)	25 (36.8%)	10 (14.7%)	2.161	0.283

2.	Conducive classroom environment	7 (10.3%)	4 (5.9%)	39 (57.4%)	18 (26.5%)	2.000	0.296
3.	Strict adherence to curriculum implementation	4 (5.9%)	29 (42.6%)	33 (48.5%)	2 (2.9%)	2.514	0.271
4.	Integration of key competencies into OTM curricula and developing appropriate means of assessment	19 (27.9%)	42 (61.8%)	5 (7.4%)	2 (2.9%)	3.147	0.313
5.	Ensuring quality assurance and control	14 (20.6%)	6 (8.8%)	39 (57.4%)	9 (13.2%)	2.367	0.272
6.	Effective monitoring to access the level of performance	13 (19.1%)	5 (7.4%)	42 (61.8%)	8 (11.8%)	2.338	0.273
7.	Effective supervision in the quality of content and input	7 (10.3%)	23 (33.8%)	35 (51.5%)	3 (4.4%)	2.500	0.313
8.	Implementation of due process in the recruitment of teachers in OTM programme	12 (17.6%)	17 (25%)	27 (39.8%)	12 (17.6%)	2.426	0.268
9.	Employing teachers with high qualifications into OTM programme	4 (5.9%)	26 (38.2%)	38 (55.9%)	- (0.0%)	2.500	0.363
10.	Strict adherence to students' entry qualifications	3 (4.4%)	24 (35.3%)	40 (58.8%)	1 (1.5%)	2.426	0.366
11.	Admission spaces are provided to match the resources available in OTM programme	8 (11.8%)	19 (27.9%)	32 (47.1%)	9 (13.2%)	2.382	0.272
12.	Accessibility to research grants and sponsors to enhance research in OTM programme	16 (23.5%)	8 (11.8%)	33 (48.5%)	11 (16.2%)	2.426	0.271
13.	Existence of policy to take care of research and development in the programme	3 (4.4%)	25 (6.8%)	31 (45.6%)	9 (13.2%)	2.323	0.303
14.	Improving skills, knowledge and competence of teachers and other professionals through seminars/workshop	3 (4.4%)	27 (39.7%)	37 (54.4%)	1 (1.5%)	2.470	0.271
15.	Organized teacher	13	5	33	17		

training and development programme	(19.1%)	(7.4%)	(48.5%)	(25.0%)	2.264	0.277
Grand Mean =	**2.416**					

Source: Field survey, 2021

The above table reveals the quality of office technology and management programme in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria using their frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. All the items on the table were decided as 'disagree' with a grand mean of 2.461 except integration of key competencies into OTM curricula and developing appropriate means of assessment. This implies that the quality of Office Technology and Management programme is low in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The above table shows adequate and functional infrastructural facilities ($X = 2.161$), conducive classroom environment ($X = 2.000$), strict adherence to curriculum implementation ($X = 2.514$), integration of key competencies into OTM curricula and developing appropriate means of assessment ($X = 3.147$), ensuring quality assurance and control ($X = 2.367$), effective monitoring to access the level of performance ($X = 2.338$), effective supervision in the quality of content and input ($X = 2.500$), implementation of due process in the recruitment of teachers in OTM programme ($X = 2.426$), employing teachers with high qualifications into OTM programme ($X = 2.500$), strict adherence to students' entry qualifications ($X = 2.426$), admission spaces are provided to match the resources available in OTM programme ($X = 2.382$), accessibility to research grants and sponsors to enhance research in OTM programme ($X = 2.426$), existence of policy to take care of research and development in the programme ($X = 2.323$), improving skills, knowledge and competence of teachers and other professionals through seminars and other developmental programme ($X = 2.470$), organized teacher training and development programme ($X = 2.264$) Generally, the table shows a grand mean of 2.416 and overall decision as 'disagree'.

Research Question 2: What is the self empowerment attributes of office technology and management graduating students in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Self empowerment attributes of OTM graduating students in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria

	Item Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Initiative and drive for computer sales, book binding and photocopying centre	91 (44.4%)	90 (43.9%)	14 (6.8%)	10 (4.9%)	3.278	0.190
2	Intelligent and managerial skills in internet service	91 (44.4%)	89 (43.4%)	17 (8.3%)	8 (3.9%)	3.282	0.190
3	Honesty and discretion to handle business / computer training schools	8 (3.9%)	79 (38.5%)	106 (51.7%)	12 (5.9%)	2.404	0.156
4	Well organized to establish a computer centre	6 (2.9%)	74 (36.1%)	119 (58.1%)	6 (2.9%)	1.639	0.197
5	Nobility in Professional career counseling	90 (43.9%)	71 (34.6%)	34 (16.6%)	10 (4.9%)	3.175	0.182
6	IT literary knowledge of commercial programming / software	18 (8.8%)	90 (43.9%)	91 (44.4%)	6 (2.9%)	2.585	0.156
7	Project management skills in holding a printing press	7 (3.4%)	73 (35.6%)	104 (50.7%)	7 (3.4%)	2.302	0.158

8	Professional communication skills to manage business registration and employment agency	12 (5.9%)	17 (8.3%)	85 (41.5%)	91 (44.4%)	1.756	0.187
9	Objectivity in handling documentary / information centre	59 (28.8%)	16 (7.8%)	121 (59.0%)	9 (4.4%)	2.400	0.156
10	Professionalism in business curriculum development	17 (8.3%)	75 (36.6%)	102 (49.8%)	11 (5.4%)	2.478	0.156
11	Organization skills in handling seminars / short courses	11 (5.4%)	77 (37.6%)	88 (42.9%)	29 (14.1%)	2.341	0.157
12	Methodical in working as a research fellow	37 (18.0%)	28 (13.7%)	69 (33.7%)	71 (34.6%)	2.151	0.163
13	Multitasking ability in dealing with several stakeholders in consultancy services	25 (12.2%)	46 (22.4%)	92 (44.9%)	42 (20.5%)	2.278	0.159
	Grand Mean = 2.466						

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 2 reveals the self empowerment attributes of office technology and management graduating students in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria using their frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. The table shows a grand mean of 2.466. This implies that the self empowerment attributes of office technology and management graduating students in Polytechnics is low. The table shows the initiative and drive for computer sales, book binding and photocopying centre ($X = 3.278$), intelligent and managerial skills in internet service ($X = 3.282$), honesty and discretion to handle business / computer training schools, computer sales, book binding and photocopying centre ($X = 2.404$), well organized to establish a computer centre ($X = 1.639$), nobility in professional career counseling ($X = 3.178$), IT literary knowledge of commercial programming / software ($X = 2.585$), project management skills in holding a printing press ($X = 2.302$), professional communication skills to manage business registration and employment agency ($X = 1.756$), objectivity in handling documentary / information centre ($X = 2.400$), professionalism in business curriculum development ($X = 2.478$), organization skills in handling seminars / short courses ($X = 2.341$), methodical in working as a research fellow ($X = 2.151$) and multitasking ability in dealing with several stakeholders in consultancy services ($X = 2.278$). Generally, the table shows a grand mean of 2.466 and overall decision as 'disagree'.

Discussion of Findings
The study revealed that the quality of Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria is low. The findings were supported by Ubogu and Veronica (2018) which affirmed that office technology and management in Nigeria has been experiencing loss of facilities, deterioration' of equipment and plants and uncompleted projects as a result of financial crises facing the system. This was also in agreement with the findings of Eravwoke and Ukavwe (2019) which revealed that funding of office technology and management is imperative because of the costs involved in maintaining the programme. Lending support to this finding, Orobor and Orobor (2018) affirmed that trend in office technology and management programme in Nigeria revealed that there is no progressive increase in the funding injected to the programme with the growing cost of maintenance, increased students intake, inflation trends and overhead cost. This result was also strengthened by the finding of a study that found that there are no adequate funds for the purchase of equipment and maintenance of facilities in office technology and management which has negatively affected the implementation of office technology and management curricula (Nwachukwu and Okpo, 2018).

The data on the second research question revealed that self empowerment ability of office technology and management graduating students in polytechnics is low. Supporting this finding, Suleiman (2016) affirmed that office technology and management programme is a functional education that takes cognizance of the dynamics of the labour market, equips its graduates with occupational skills and competences for self empowerment. Babalola and Tiamiyu (2013) also viewed that possession of appropriate skills by graduates enable them contribute maximally to national development. The findings of Irukakusr and Noeleen (2018) confirm the empowerment of office technology and management graduates to creativity and innovation and the core set of 21st century skills which include capabilities in analytical problem solving, innovation and creativity, self-direction and initiative, flexibility and adaptability, critical thinking, and communication and collaboration skills. Ubulom and Ogwunte (2017) also affirmed that office technology and management assists students to develop positive attitudes, innovation and skills for self empowerment, rather than depending on the government for employment and which in-turn produces graduates with self-confidence and capacities for independent thought to discover new information leading to economic development. Hassan (2013) agreed that office technology and management programme is essential in that it offers the type of education and training that empowers and encourages the employment of sense of creativity and development of competencies for graduates in order to accept responsibilities.

Conclusion

This study established and emphasized the need for enhancement of office technology and management programme for self empowerment of graduating students in polytechnics in south west, Nigeria. Quality of office technology and management programme is a determinant for self empowerment of its graduates in polytechnics. The increasing costs of establishing and running office technology and management programme in Nigerian polytechnics, due to high cost of materials and facilities, require adequate attention and the introduction of cost reducing innovative measures. Low quality of the programme in polytechnics has inadvertently affected the business and personal attributes of graduating students in polytechnics in south west, Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

i. Management of institutions offering OTM programme should set up quality councils that will evaluate the teaching learning process to ensure and sustain quality, based on the specifications of the curriculum of office technology and management programme.
ii. Curriculum planners and other stakeholders should consider the review and expansion of office technology and management curriculum for inclusion of various office and business skills required for self empowerment of graduating students after graduation.
iii. The government should co-opt the private sector and other educational stakeholders in supporting the education system to solve the identified challenges. This will ensure quality delivery in OTM programme and also contributes to the provision of quality manpower for other sector of the economy.

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