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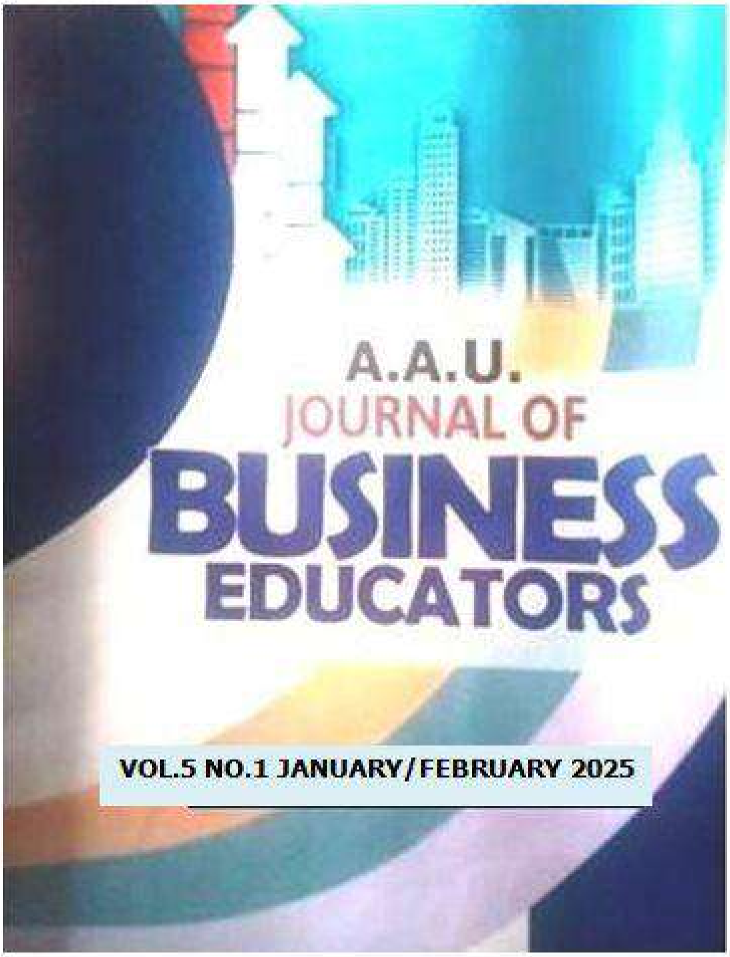

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CONTENTS

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, WORK ETHICS AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract
This study discusses the interplay between corporate governance, work ethics and service delivery in Nigerian Higher Education Institutions. In this paper, a conceptual framework was developed, which explains the interplays between corporate governance, work ethics and service delivery, with the help of a schematic model. The meaning of corporate governance was discussed in detail. The meaning of work ethics was also discussed in detail. The meaning of service delivery was further discussed in detail. The interplay between corporate governance, work ethics and service delivery in Nigerian Higher Education Institutions was later discussed theoretical. One of the recommendations, among others, proffered in the paper is that leaders in Nigerian HEIs should endeavor to be people-centered. This is because people (both employees and students) represent a central place in the HEIs and the focus is on service rather than product, and therefore the students should be seen as raw materials.

***Keywords**: Corporate Governance, Higher Education Institutions, Nigeria, Service Delivery, Work Ethics.*

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are tertiary institutions available to individuals after secondary education. Examples of HEIs are universities; polytechnics, monotechnics; colleges of education; including those institutions offering corresponding courses like innovation enterprise institutions (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013). These HEIs (especially universities) are currently managed and funded by governments, private individuals and general overseers of faith-based organizations such as Redeemer's University, Benson Idahosa University, Covenant University, Landmark University, and many others.

The FRN in its education policy document (Section 8) indicated that the goals of HEIs shall be to: (a) contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; (2) develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society; (3) develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments; (4) acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; (5) promote and encourage scholarship and community service; (6) forge and cement national unity; and (7) promote national and international understanding and interaction (FRN, 2013). The education policy document of Nigeria further pointed out that the HEIs shall pursue these goals through: quality student intake; quality teaching and learning; research and development; high standards in quality of facilities, services and resources; staff welfare and development programmes; provision of a more practical-based curriculum relevant to the need of labour market; generation and dissemination of knowledge, skills and competencies that contribute to national and local economic goals which enable students to succeed in a knowledge-based economy.

From the above goals, it is obvious that HEIs have a salient role in producing students who possesses the requisite skills and knowledge to become gainfully employed and engage in lifelong learning tasks immediately after graduation. Despite its potential mission, as exemplified above, the HEIs still experience series of challenges ranging from poor infrastructures (Okebukola, 2002), mass exodus of many brilliant lecturers (Akinnaso, 2012), inadequate funding and socio-political generated tensions (Olujuwon, 2004), improper planning and management, lack of inclusive education, irrelevant curricula to industrial needs, inadequate commitment on the part of students and teachers (Adegoke, 2017). Akinnaso (2012) argued that it is not poor funding alone that has contributed to the present state of underachievement, but rather, the anti-intellectual stance of corrupt and valueless Federal and State Governments since the days of the military administration has also eroded ethical values and academic standards in HEIs. Akinnaso (2012) contended that it is a combination of these issues and problems that led to the weakening of HEIs such as university administration; ineffective teaching and learning outcomes; diminishing research and consultancy traditions; and questionable service to the community. Alubo (2014) also lamented on the spate of poor record keeping in HEIs when he said; "in most HEIs records are poorly kept such that the issuance of academic transcript is a tug of war". He added that in many instances students wait for months and years for transcripts which may never be issued. The challenges according to him relate to the analogue or old system of records keeping, poor work attitude and muddled up filing system.

In the face of these issues and challenges, the authors of this paper would like to say that HEIs has been finding it difficult to effectively deliver their tripartite mandates (such as teaching, research and community service). Since the HEIs have been experiencing series of issues and challenges, what they believe and practice in the process of fulfilling these tripartite mandates in such an institution is of paramount importance. Hence, corporate governance practices and work ethics becomes important in this regard. This is because corporate governance involves a set of processes, customs, policies, laws and institutions affecting the way an institution is managed, directed, administered or controlled. It is also concerned with transparency in decision-making and accountability of institutions to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders and the investors. Corporate governance involves how institutional management pursues economic objectives that relates to a number of wider ethical and societal considerations. It is the application of best management practices, compliance of law in true letter and spirit and adherence to ethical standards for effective management and distribution of wealth and discharge of social responsibility for sustainable development of all stakeholders. Work ethics on the other hand deals with the question of what is right and/or wrong, good and/or bad in human behaviour. It also deals with how workers (both teaching and non-teaching) ought to behave in their institutions. This is why Abun, Julian and Ballesteros (2022) opined that HEIs must find strategic ways of equipping their employees with the right values and work behaviours considering the importance of the organization's strategic direction and financial capital to support the implementation of the vision and mission.

The theoretical discourse consists of five major parts. The first part is the conceptual framework, which explains the interplays between and among the key concepts, with the help of a schematic model. The second part is the clarification of concepts that specifically provides the meaning of each concepts in detail. The essence is to deepen the understanding of the study. The third part is the discussion on relating to the interplay between the concepts based on existing literature. The fourth is the conclusion, which was presented in a logical manner. The fifth part is the recommendations for future practice.

Conceptual Framework

The authors support this manuscript with a schematic model (see Figure 1) to describe the interplay between and among good corporate governance, work ethics and service delivery. The author developed a schematic model to provide a clear perspective/direction for the manuscript.

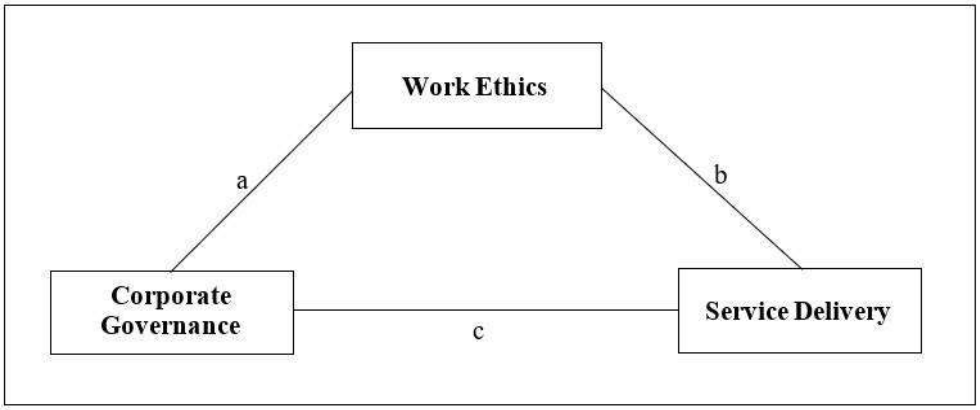

Figure 1: A Conceptual Model Showing the Interplay between the Variables.
Source: Developed by the Authors.

The underlying assumption of this manuscript is that when administrators and other major stakeholders engage in good corporate governance practices (accountability, transparency, and integrity) members of staff will equally exert high level of work ethics. Another underlying assumption of this manuscript is that when administrators and other major stakeholders engage in good corporate governance practices (accountability, transparency, and integrity) members of staff (especially the teaching staff) will experience effective and quality service delivery. Also, when every member of staff (especially the teaching staff) exerts high level of work ethics, they will, in turn, experience effective and quality service delivery. Furthermore, when every member of staff (especially the teaching staff) exerts high level of work ethics, it will positively mediate the interplay between good corporate governance practices and effective/quality service delivery.

Clarification of Concepts

Corporate Governance

A corporation is a meeting place for the principal-owner, the agents and the shareholders. In their transactions, targets are set, goals are met and challenges are surmounted collaboratively, using shared paradigms and set down rules. Governance can be defined as the activity of governing a country or controlling a company or an organization (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010). Simply put, governance is the process by which decisions are made and implemented (Sharma, Sadana, & Kaur, 2013). Governance also involves organizing collective action through the processes of selecting goals, making decisions, allocating resources, implementing policies and generating feedback. Governance determines how power is exercised, how decisions are taken, and how stakeholders (including citizens) have their say (Oliver, 2010). Based on this clarification, it is worthy of note that 'governance' is 'corporate'. Essentially, 'governance' becomes 'corporate' when it is operated in accordance with legal, moral and ethical principles and standards as perceived by people in the society or in an institution or organization.

Corporate governance is concerned with a structure that ensures distribution of rights and responsibilities among the workforce such that a shared vision/mission is attained. It represents a fair and effective way of implementing standards/principles (means) to achieve the goals (ends) of institutions. Corporate governance is founded upon the capacity and reliability of institutions to effectively respond to problems and achieve social unity via various forms of consultation, negotiation and multi-stakeholders' agreements. Corporate governance in HEIs can be defined as a model for policy-making management based on involving relevant stakeholders at all levels (e.g., sectorial, local or regional, national or international) for the setting, implementing and monitoring of goals. Corporate governance, therefore, involves the participation of stakeholders in formulating, implementing, reviewing and monitoring of policies and strategies for the realization of goals. The ETF (2013) opined that corporate governance refers to the transparent and accountability management of policies for the purpose of making the HEIs a source of attractiveness associated with excellence to improve its image. However, corporate governance in HEIs would help in facilitating the right implementation of policies in ways that are effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, equitable and coherent. Therefore, corporate governance in HEIs relies on effectiveness and efficiency, transparency, accountability, and integrity so as to be able to achieve its goals and contributes to economic growth and development of economies.

Work Ethics

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines work as “exerting oneself physically or mentally, especially in sustained effort for a purpose or under compulsion or necessity”. This definition suggests that work is not limited to physical effort but also a mental effort for a certain objective or purpose. Under this definition, the purpose is not exclusive. A similar definition is also found in Online Dictionary which defines work as “activity involving mental or physical effort done to achieve a purpose or result”. This definition is also not exclusive because it does not indicate specifically the purpose. In resolving this conception of work, little (1948) defines work in two senses. In a narrow sense, work is manual labour and in a broader sense, work is a deliberate production by man to change matter for man. Manual labour or any kind of actual operation is directly a change of matter. By working, one generates goods, be it material objects, experiences, or a state of mind (Cholbi, 2022) that others can value and enjoy. Thus, in many cases, a person or a worker is compensated because their labour contributes to the production of goods that have objective value (Cholbi, 2022).

According to Singer (2022), a group of philosopher uses the term “ethics” as the moral philosophy that deals with the morality of a certain act or the standards to determine the morality of a certain act. Ethics deals with the question of why a certain act or behavior is good or bad, or in short, it is the study or science of morals. Whereas, morality refers to the code of conduct or moral norms. On the other hand, many philosophers also use the two terms. In a more general terminology, work ethics can be interpreted as a gesture of personality, temperament, character, and belief in something. It involves being personally accountable and responsible for the work that one does or how one feel about the job he/she does. Reeves (2015) sees work ethics as a person who shows up on time with the willingness to do what it takes to get the job done without complain. He outlined some features of “good” work ethics to include: honesty, personal integrity, responsibility, optimism, self-motivation and being a team player, commenting on personal integrity, Reeves (2015) argued that a person with personal integrity and values is trustworthy. This assertion may account for why several scholars and researchers (e.g. Salahudina, et al., 2016; Osibanjo, et al., 2015; Bataineh, 2020; Benedicto & Caelian, 2021; Banister, 2017) proved that work ethics of employees are given priority because they can affect the effectiveness and performance of the organization. They further suggest that management needs to establish policies and practices that guide the employee’s work values and behaviours. Failing to equip their employees with the right work values and behaviours can greatly hinder the organization’s productivity and performance.

Transparency Iternational (2021) and Tasi and Syamsir (2021) reported that several issues of corruption have been traced to the low experiences of work ethics in HEIs. To be able to surmount the issue of corruption in HEIs, Transparency International (2021) suggests some guidelines to prevent corruption such as: anticipating specific threats to ethics standards and integrity in the public sector, strengthening the ethical competence of civil servants, strengthening mechanisms to support professional ethics, and developing administrative practices and processes which promote ethical values and integrity. The negative effect of work ethics problems or challenges is the organization’s inability to improve social services that promote the welfare of the general public and the inability to provide quality services to its stakeholder, which leads to its inability to pay salaries or dept.

Service Delivery

Service delivery can be regarded as the paramount function of any established institution. The principal-owner provides employment for workers to ensure that the services required are provided at the right time. For this paper, service delivery in HEIs may be defined as those services which are mainly, or completely, delivered by staff (both teaching and non-teaching). Service delivery refers to the actual delivery of a service and products to the customer or clients. In general, service delivery is described as the capability of producing a specific, desired effect, or in other words "getting the right things done" (Drucker, 2004). It has been broadly defined as the orientation towards students' needs to be understood as encompassing all contacts and all tasks performed by the administrators and staff that affect students. This broad definition encompasses not only contacts between administrators, staff and students, but also the rules regulating those contacts (that is administrative procedures). Service delivery normally should be able to produce several positive outcomes, ranging from reduced costs, increased availability of efficient operations, improved service quality and optimum customer experience.

Good Governance, Work Ethics and Service Delivery: Does Interplay Exist?

Corporate governance is about promoting fairness, transparency and accountability. Key elements of good corporate governance principles include honesty, trust and integrity, openness, performance orientation, responsibility and accountability, mutual respect, and commitment to the organization. Looking closely implies that the practice of corporate governance will provide opportunity for staff to exert high level of work ethics, in turn, lead to quality service delivery. Schreiner (2015) contended that "people who possess a strong work ethics embody certain principles that guide their work behavior, leading them to deliver high-quality work consistently and without the suspicion that some individuals require staying on track". There are five principles of work ethics which include: reliability, dedication, productivity, cooperation and character. Reliability goes hand in hand with a good work ethics. For instance, if individuals with a good work ethics will always say they are going to attend a work function or arrive at a certain time; they do, as they value punctuality. Individuals with a strong work ethics often want to appear dependable, showing their employers that they are workers to whom they can turn. Because of this, workers put effort into portraying and proving this dependability by being reliable and performing consistently. According to Jenkins (2015), a strong work ethics is vital to a company achieving its goals. According to him, certain factors come together to create a strong work ethics. These include: integrity, sense of responsibility, emphasis on quality, discipline and sense of teamwork. Service delivery is strongly influenced by the work ethic and discipline of employees. For instance, researchers and scholars (e.g. Salahudin, et al., 2016; Osibanjo, et al., 2015) opined that when employees have no proper work ethics or right attitude toward their work, this can affect their service delivery. Sunday and Michael (2018) reported that work ethics can slow the progress of service delivery. Therefore, an employee with a high sense of teamwork helps a team meet its goals and deliver quality services at workplace. These employees respect their peers, colleagues and help where they can, making collaborations go smoother for the attainment of set goals and objectives.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that effective and quality service delivery can be achieved only with good corporate governance and work ethics through dedicated and committed leadership. The HEIs in Nigeria appear to be facing series of challenges ranging from poor infrastructures, mass exodus of many brilliant and competent lecturers, inadequate funding and socio-political generated tensions, anti-intellectual stance of corrupt, to list but a few has affected good governance practices, eroded ethical values and academic standards in the HEIs. It is therefore suggested that institutions of higher learning must put in place mechanism that promotes good corporate governance and encourages good work ethics, in turn, leading quality service delivery.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Leaders in Nigerian HEIs should be people-centered. This is because people represent a central place in the HEIs and the focus is on service rather than product and therefore the students should be seen as raw materials.
2. In addition, staff (Both teaching and non-teaching) should be encourage to imbibe the culture

of creative thinking (initiative) and learn to speak with one voice.

3. Furthermore, in other to promote best practices, management should create a resourceful working environment to encourage and motivate staff to fully utilize their potentials and contribute positively to service delivery in our universities and all other HEIs.
4. Finally, there should be flexible service delivery so as to help HEIs deliver and sustain transformational change and improvement, including real efficiency savings and other measurable strategic and educational value through the streamlined flexible provision of administrative and students' services.

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DIGITAL SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR TEACHING OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

This study investigates the levels of digital skills and technologies in teaching of Office Technology and Management (OTM) in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. It also investigates the relationships between digital skills, digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey research design, the study employed 119 lecturers (75 full-time and 44 part-time) from Public universities in South-West, Nigeria. A census sampling method was employed to retain the entire population as the sample. Data were collected using three instruments, namely: Digital Skills Questionnaire (r = .92), Digital Technologies Availability Questionnaire (r = .94), and Teaching of Office Technology and Management Questionnaire (r = .75). Research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics, while the null hypotheses were tested with linear regression statistic at a significance level of .05. Findings revealed that there are significant relationships between digital skills, digital technologies availability and effective teaching of OTM. The study concluded that fostering digital skills acquisition, digital technology availability is crucial for improving effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. The author recommended, among others, university management should endeavor to organize training workshops regularly for lecturers in order to improve their digital skills and ensure adequate supply of digital technologies for effective instructional delivery.

***Keywords**: Digital Skills Acquisition, Digital Technologies Availability, Public Universities, Office Technology and Management, Teaching Effectiveness.*

Introduction

Teaching is essential for imparting knowledge and achieving educational goals and aims, as meaningful learning cannot occur without it. It plays a crucial role in determining students' academic performance. Onyekuru and Ibegbunam (2019) defined teaching as demonstrating intellectual, social, and emotional stability, along with a love for students and a positive attitude towards the profession. Evans (2020) further describes it as the ability to motivate learners of all skill levels while incorporating learning objectives and evaluating effective learning styles. The impact of teaching is particularly significant in Office Technology and Management (OTM), where it surpasses other factors influencing student success. Effective teaching fosters not only academic growth but also personal development, critical thinking, and emotional support for students.

The training formerly known as secretarial education, as highlighted by Fafunwa (1993) and Dauda (2020), initially required Nigerians to seek education abroad until the 1970s. By the 1980s, local institutions like UNN and ABU began offering secretarial education (Osuala, 2004). Over time, OTM education has integrated ICT advancements into its curriculum, reflecting global trends in business education. This evolution aims to promote personal and national development by expanding into various commercial and technological fields. According to Oyedele and Fadare (2018), OTM is an effective educational strategy that fosters self-employment, self-reliance, and paid work, leading to self-actualization. OTM focuses on developing the mental and physical skills necessary for individuals to thrive in society. Ajayi (2019) noted that modern OTM instructional delivery involves more interaction and utilizes digital skills and technologies to reach a broader audience beyond traditional classroom settings.

Digital skills encompass the ability to use devices like computers and smartphones for communication, information sharing, transactions, problem-solving, and online safety (Olaniyi, 2022). The term “digital skills” was initially focused on computers, the scope has expanded with the rise of the internet and mobile devices. Jenkins (2019) noted that these skills complement traditional literacy, enhancing foundational competencies. Proficiency in digital technology among OTM lecturers significantly improves classroom learning outcomes (Olaniyi, 2022). Digital technologies on the other hand refer to electronic or ICT-based resources that produce, store, or process data for instructional purposes (Crossdale & Nwosu, 2022).

The strategies employed by lecturers in OTM to achieve various learning objectives are referred to as teaching tactics. These include stimulating and structuring activities, modeling ideal behavior, allowing student input in establishing guidelines, and avoiding a pushy teaching style. While extensive research on OTM instructional delivery has produced varied findings, only a few landmark studies have had a significant impact. Notable works include Osuala's exploration of vocational education foundations in 2004 and descriptive surveys by Oyedele and Fadare (2018) on the impacts of new technologies, and Ajayi (2019) on the link between digital skills and student performance in OTM programmes. Despite these researches, there is a lack of empirical studies on that assesses the levels of digital skills and technologies and the extent to which they are related to the teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

From the foregoing, it is worthy of note that the OTM programme must effectively prepare graduates for employment; however, many instructors lack the necessary digital technologies and skills, relying on outdated teaching methods. This situation is compounded by insufficient availability of digital technologies, which further hinders effective teaching and learning delivery and students' readiness for career progressions. This study aims to investigate the levels of digital skills and digital technologies and the extent to which they relate to the teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of OTM programme is very important for preparing graduates to enter the workforce and reduce unemployment. In the 21st century, it is essential that instructors possess strong digital technology skills to effectively utilize various ICTs during teaching delivery. Unfortunately, many lecturers in Nigerian universities possess low levels of necessary expertise in digital technologies, leading to a reliance on traditional or manual teaching methods. This reliance on outdated instructional practices does not adequately equip students with the skills needed for modern office environments. The current state of OTM education is faced by numerous challenges, primarily originate from insufficient availability of digital technologies. This lack of resources may hinder effective instructional delivery and limits students' preparedness to utilize these technologies in their future careers. However, many OTM programmes have not developed the necessary digital infrastructure over the years. It is based on this situation that the author of this study investigates the levels of digital skills and digital technologies and the extent to which they relate to the teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this study is to assess the levels of digital skills and technologies required for teaching OTM courses in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aims to examine:

1. the levels of digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.
2. the levels of digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.
3. the relationships between digital skills, digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

Research Question 1: What are the levels of digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Research Question 2: What are the levels of digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided this study.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationships between digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationships between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative research design to investigate the levels of digital skills and digital technologies in teaching of OTM and the relationships between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria, which are justified the effectiveness this research design in measuring such levels and associations, as supported by previous research.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population for this study consisted of 119 full-time and part-time lecturers in OTM in Public Universities. Due to the manageable size of the population, the study utilized the entire population without the need for employing sampling procedure.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used three structured research instruments, titled: Digital Skills Questionnaire, Digital Technologies Availability Questionnaire, and Teaching of Office Technology and Management Questionnaire which comprises of set of items to measure the variables of study. Lecturers of OTM rated themselves with on a 4-point rating scale, ranging from 4 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The instrument was subjected to face, construct, criterion and content validity by three experts, two in OTM and one in Measurement and Evaluation. To ensure the internal consistencies of the items in the instruments, a test-retest reliability approach was conducted, yielding a coefficient alpha values of .92 for Digital Skills Acquisition, .94 for Digital Technologies Availability, .75 for Teaching of Office Technology and Management.

Data Analysis

The IBM-SPSS version 22.0 was used to analyze the data collected from the respondents (that is, OTM lecturers). Linear regression analysis was performed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decision criteria is based on when a coefficient probability or r-value is equal to or lesser than 0.05 it implied a significant relationship. Similarly, when a coefficient probability or r-value is greater than 0.05 it implied a non-significant relationship.

Result

Research Question 1: What are the levels of digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Levels of Digital Skills and Teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Digital skills	118	38.00	62.00	62.12	7.12
Teaching of OTM	118	16.00	56.00	51.20	6.22

Table 1 revealed the mean and standard deviation of digital skills and teaching of OTM of respondents in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. The Table showed that the respondents have mean score of 62.12 with standard deviation of 7.12 in digital skills and 51.20 mean score with standard deviation of 6.22 in teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the levels of digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Levels of Digital Technologies and Teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Digital Technologies	118	37.00	62.00	61.52	7.03
Teaching of OTM	118	16.00	56.00	51.20	6.22

Table 2 revealed the mean and standard deviation of digital technologies availability and teaching of OTM of respondents in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. The Table showed that the respondents have mean score of 61.52 with standard deviation of 7.03 in digital technologies availability and 51.20 mean score with standard deviation of 6.22 in teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Testing of Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationships between digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis on the Relationships Between Digital Skills and Teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	SE
1	.740[a]	.547	.543	3.73799

ANOVA

Model		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1956.171	1	1956.171	140.001	.000[b]
	Residual	1620.820	116	13.973		
	Total	3576.992	117			

Note. SS = Sum of Square, df = degree of freedom, MS = Mean Square.

Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.045	3.898		4.629	.000
	Digital Skills	.719	.061	.740	11.832	.000

Table 3 presents the result of the relationships between digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Based on the analysis and the result generated, a coefficient magnitude of (β = 740; t = 11.832, p < .05), since p-value is less 0.05, this means that there is a significant relationship between digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Hence, the higher the digital skills possessed by the lecturer the higher the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis one is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationships between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis on the Relationships Between Digital Technologies and Teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE
1	.657[a]	.431	.426	4.18778

ANOVA

Model		SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1542.640	1	1542.640	87.962	.000[b]
	Residual	2034.352	116	17.538		
	Total	3576.992	117			

Note. SS = Sum of Square, df = degree of freedom, MS = Mean Square.

Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	24.940	4.182		5.964	.000
	Digital tools availability	.604	.064	.657	9.379	.000

Table 4 presents the result of the relationships between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Based on the analysis and the result generated, a coefficient magnitude of (β = .657; t = 9.379, p < .05), since p-value is less 0.05, this means that digital technologies availability has a significant relationship between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Hence, the higher the digital technologies availability, the higher the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Therefore, the null hypothesis one is rejected.

Discussion

Data from research hypothesis 1 reveals that there is a significant relationship between digital skills and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Hence, the higher the digital skills possessed by the lecturer the higher the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. This finding supports the assertion of Kurt and Doğan (2020) that teachers possess digital literacy skills that will enable them to conduct their lessons in a virtual environment. Aslan (2021) added that if teachers have high digital literacy skills and digital pedagogical competence, they be capable to organize the teaching environment by taking digital technologies into account. To also support this finding, Emeasoba, Akudolu and Agbo (2022) found that there is high extent use of mobile phone and internet and low extent use of smart board in teaching and learning of Business Education. The study carried out by Yünkül and Güneş (2022) also revealed a favorable correlation among teacher candidates' attitudes toward the teaching profession, their academic motivation, and their levels of digital literacy skills acquisition.

Data from research hypothesis 2 reveals that digital technologies availability has a significant relationship between digital technologies and teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South West, Nigeria. Hence, the higher the digital technologies availability, the higher the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. This finding supports the assertion of Kurt and Doğan (2020) that teachers must have integrate digital technologies into learning-teaching processes. Martins et al. (2023) also found that there are advantages of digital technologies in enhancing teachinglearning process of students with Specific Needs, not being so evident with regard to Technologies as a decisive factor in the process of inclusion of these students. Castro and Lucas (2022) opined that there are several advantages associated with the use of digital technologies in teachers' practice: the diversification of learning tools, better management of classes and of the school itself. Some scholars and researchers (e.g. Belusso & Peruchin, 2018; Diaz & Lee, 2020; Castro & Lucas, 2022) empirically found that, for most teachers, digital technologies facilitate teaching and learning, make children more motivated and are resources that help pedagogical intervention, in line with several studies.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that digital skills acquisition and digital technologies availability contribute significantly to the effective teaching of OTM. This showed that digital skills acquisition and digital technologies availability have relative and combined influence on the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities in South-West, Nigeria. However, with the contemporary changes in the mode of instructional delivery, it becomes imperative for teachers' and/or lecturers' to constantly adopt new methods in the teaching of OTM. Therefore, after investigating digital skills acquisition and digital technologies availability as factors influencing the effective teaching of OTM in Public Universities, the study concludes that digital skills acquisition and digital technologies availability are highly relevant in actualizing the goals and objectives of OTM education in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made.

1. The Nigerian Government in collaboration with the National Universities Commission (NUC) should endeavor to ensure that digital technologies are regularly provided and constantly available for teaching and learning in OTM programmes in Public Universities.
2. The Nigerian government should endeavor to partner with private organizations to supply tertiary institutions with advanced ICT facilities like electronic and interactive whiteboards to improve instructional delivery in OTM.
3. Existing ICT facilities and equipment should be effectively used for teaching and research in OTM to maximize the benefits of available resources.
4. OTM lecturers should endeavor to continually update their knowledge and skills in using

digital tools to enhance OTM course instruction.

5. Both lecturers and students should endeavor to use available ICT gadgets for OTM teaching and learning, with regular assessments to determine essential ICT tools needed for OTM education.

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BLENDED LEARNING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AMONG PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN LAGOS STATE: CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract
This study explores the challenges pre-service teachers face in adopting blended learning in Colleges of Education in Lagos State. It examines the impact of these challenges on their engagement and perception of blended learning. The population for this study includes all business education pre-service teachers in the College of Education in Lagos State. Three research questions and hypotheses were postulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The sample size was seventy-three ((73) using a Simple random sampling technique to select pre-service teachers from specialized areas of business education. A structured questionnaire, titled Questionnaire on Blended Learning Adoption by Business Educators in College of Education (QBLABECE). The instrument was validated. A test-retest reliability was carried out within the intervals of two (2) weeks, which yielded a coefficient of 0.82, which was considered very high and dependable. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the research questions while inferential statistics was used to analyze the hypothesis. The study revealed that significant challenges, including diminished enthusiasm, technical support deficits, and time constraints are part of the overwhelming challenges facing the adoption of blended learning in the College of Education in Lagos State. It was recommended among others that the government should provide technical support to enhance the adoption of blended learning in facilitating teaching and learning and encourage capacity-building training for pre-service teachers.

***Keywords**: Blended Learning, Challenges, Colleges of Education, Lagos State, The Way Forward.*

Introduction

The critical role of teacher education in shaping the future of any nation cannot be overemphasized. As the primary source of qualified educators, teacher-training institutions, such as the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, bear the responsibility of equipping future teachers with the skills, knowledge, and pedagogical approaches necessary for effective 21st-century education. However, the persistence of traditional teaching methods in these institutions has become a growing concern in the face of rapidly evolving educational landscapes. Traditional teaching methods, characterized by lecturer-centered approaches, rote learning, and limited student engagement, have long been criticized for their inadequacies in preparing teachers for the complexities of modern classrooms. According to recent studies, such methods often fail to develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and technological competence among pre-service teachers (Lai & Hwang, 2016). Furthermore, these approaches do not align with the learning preferences of today's digital have-native students, potentially leading to disengagement and reduced learning outcomes (Roach, 2014). Resistance to transitioning from traditional teaching methods to technology-integrated approaches remains a significant barrier. For example, many lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions are hesitant to adopt new technologies in their teaching practices due to a lack of training or fear of technology (Hew & Lo, 2018). Additionally, limited resources for acquiring and maintaining the necessary hardware and software have further hindered the widespread adoption of blended learning (Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016).

Blended learning, which combines face-to-face instruction with online components, is increasingly recognized for its potential to enhance student engagement, foster active learning, and develop essential digital literacy skills. Recent studies have highlighted its positive impact on student motivation and achievement. For instance, a 2023 study confirmed that blended learning significantly boosts student performance and engagement across diverse educational settings (Miller, 2021). However, the adoption of this model in Nigerian teacher education institutions has been slow, largely due to challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and resistance to change (Miller, 2021). These barriers emphasize the need for more targeted efforts to integrate blended learning into educational systems effectively.

The rapid growth of technology in the 21st century has greatly influenced education, with blended learning emerging as a powerful method to improve educational outcomes. This approach, which merges traditional in-person teaching with online elements, is gaining worldwide popularity for its ability to provide flexibility, create personalized learning experiences, and enhance access to educational resources. It supports diverse learning styles and enables students to engage with content at their own pace, promoting learning that is more effective and increases student success. In Nigeria, the adoption of blended learning has been gradual but steady, particularly in higher education institutions. The Federal Government, through the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), has encouraged the integration of technology in education to improve the quality and accessibility of higher education. The Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, as a key institution in teacher education, has been part of this national drive towards technological integration in education.

Despite the potential benefits, the implementation of blended learning in Nigerian Colleges of Education, including the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, has faced numerous challenges. These include: Infrastructure limitations: Inconsistent power supply and inadequate internet connectivity; Digital literacy gaps: Both among students and faculty members; Resistance to change: From traditional teaching methods to technology-integrated approaches; Limited resources: For acquiring and maintaining necessary hardware and software; and Lack of institutional policies: To guide the effective implementation of blended learning. Several factors contribute to the reluctance to adopt blended learning approaches. Stereotypes and misconceptions about technology-enhanced learning play a significant role. Adedoja and Abimbade (2016) found that many educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions perceive blended learning as a threat to traditional teaching roles or as an entirely online approach, which diminishes face-to-face interactions. These misconceptions often lead to resistance among faculty members.

Infrastructure and facilities pose another substantial challenge. Eze et al. (2018) highlight the inadequate technological infrastructure in many Nigerian educational institutions, including unreliable internet connectivity, insufficient computer laboratories, and outdated hardware and software. These limitations can severely impede the effective implementation of blended learning strategies. The integration of blended learning in Nigerian institutions, including the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, has faced numerous challenges. Recent studies continue to identify significant barriers such as inadequate infrastructure, insufficient technical support, and resistance to innovation. For instance, Oluwajana et al. (2021) noted that despite the widespread availability of smartphones and other digital devices, many Nigerian students and faculty members lack the digital literacy skills needed to optimize these tools for learning. Similarly, Kamba et al. (2020) emphasized that the absence of clear institutional policies and inconsistent internet access further hinder the effective adoption of blended learning in higher education.

These challenges mirror those observed in other developing nations. For example, a study in Kenya by Amutabi et al. (2022) highlighted similar issues, including insufficient training for educators and students on e-learning platforms, along with the financial constraints associated with acquiring and maintaining the necessary technology. Such findings underscore the need for a holistic approach that addresses both technological and human resource development to ensure the success of blended learning in Nigerian institutions. Furthermore, Okocha et al. (2017) emphasized the impact of institutional factors on the successful implementation of blended learning. Their study revealed that the absence of clear institutional policies and inadequate technical support significantly hinder the adoption of blended learning approaches in Nigerian higher education institutions. Likewise, the lack of institutional policies to guide the effective implementation of blended learning has been identified as a key challenge. Adedoja and Ojuade (2016) emphasized the need for clear institutional strategies and support systems to facilitate the successful integration of technology in higher education.

The unique context of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka presents an opportunity to delve deeper into these challenges. As an institution focused on teacher education, its successful adoption of blended learning could have far-reaching implications for the broader education sector in Nigeria. However, little research has been conducted specifically on the challenges faced by students in this institution in adopting blended learning. Furthermore, the interest and motivation of both lecturers and pre-service teachers in adopting blended learning approaches are crucial factors. Aboderin (2015) notes that while many students show enthusiasm for technology-enhanced learning, some lecturers display reluctance due to perceived increased workload or fear of technology. Conversely, some pre-service teachers may be hesitant to engage with blended learning due to limited exposure to technology or concerns about the quality of online components.

While blended learning offers numerous potential benefits, its successful implementation requires a thorough understanding of the challenges faced by students and institutions. This study focuses specifically on the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, aiming to identify the unique challenges in this context and develop targeted recommendations. By examining factors such as diminished enthusiasm, technical support deficits, absence of college-driven guidance, time constraints, and skill deficiencies, this research seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on blended learning adoption in Nigerian higher education institutions. Bozkurt (2019) highlights the successful implementation of blended learning requires thoughtful consideration of institutional context, the needs of learners, and the overarching pedagogical goals. This approach is especially important in the context of Nigerian higher education, where challenges such as limited infrastructure and varying levels of digital literacy can hinder the effective adoption of blended learning methods. By addressing these specific challenges at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the broader discourse on blended learning in Nigeria. The ultimate goal is to enhance both the quality and accessibility of education in the country, ensuring that the benefits of blended learning are fully realized. In light of these challenges, there is a pressing need to investigate the specific barriers to blended learning adoption in the context of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. Understanding these challenges is crucial for developing targeted strategies to overcome them, thereby enhancing the quality of teacher education and preparing future educators for the demands of 21st-century classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

The integration of technology in education, particularly through blended learning approaches, has become increasingly important in enhancing the quality and accessibility of higher education. However, the adoption of blended learning in Nigerian institutions, including the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, has been fraught with challenges that hinder its effective implementation and potential benefits. Despite the push for technological integration in education by the Nigerian government and educational bodies, there is a significant gap between the intended outcomes and the actual implementation of blended learning at the institutional level. The Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, as a key institution in teacher education, faces unique challenges in adopting blended learning that needs to be addressed critically. Preliminary observations and existing literature suggest that pre-service teachers at the college experience diminished enthusiasm towards blended learning, face technical support deficits, and struggle with the absence of clear college-driven guidance. Additionally, time constraints and skill deficiencies among both students and faculty members further complicate the adoption process. These challenges not only impede the effective implementation of blended learning but also potentially compromise the quality of education and the development of essential 21st-century skills among future teachers. The lack of a comprehensive understanding of these specific challenges in the context of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka hinders the development of targeted solutions and policies to improve blended learning adoption. However, little or no empirical research specifically addresses the challenges of blended learning adoption in teacher education institutions in Nigeria. This gap in knowledge limits the ability of policymakers and institutional leaders to make informed decisions about resource allocation, infrastructure development, and curriculum design to support effective blended learning implementation. Therefore, this study aims to address this problem by conducting a thorough investigation into the challenges faced by students in adopting blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. By identifying and analyzing these challenges, the research seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations that can inform policy, practice, and future research in the field of blended learning adoption in Nigerian higher education institutions, particularly those focused on teacher education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the current state of blended learning in Colleges of Education in Lagos State. Specifically, the study seeks to examine:

1. the primary challenges pre-service teachers face in adopting blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka.
2. the impact of diminished enthusiasm, technical support deficits, absence of college-driven guidance, time constraints, and skill deficiencies on pre-service teachers' experiences with blended learning.
3. evidence-based recommendations for improving the implementation of blended learning at the institution.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges pre-service teachers face when using blended learning for instructional delivery at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka?

Research Question 2: How do the challenges (diminished enthusiasm, technical support deficits, absence of college-driven guidance, time constraints, and skill deficiencies) influence pre-service teachers' engagement with and perception of blended learning?

Research Question 3: What are the strategies that can address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka?

Research Hypotheses

The following null research hypotheses guided the study.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the challenges and pre-service teachers' overall satisfaction with blended learning.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the perception of blended learning challenges among pre-service teachers from different academic programs or levels of study.

Research Hypothesis 3: The absence of college-driven guidance does not significantly affect pre-service teachers' adoption of blended learning.

Methods

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research methodology to actualize the goal of the study. The goal of a quantitative research methodology is to analyze a particular phenomenon at a specific moment. For the purpose of this study, a quantitative research methodology aims to evaluate the current state of blended learning for instructional delivery among pre-service teachers at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka (Sessier & Imrey, 2015).

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population for this study includes all the pre-service teachers in Business Education in Colleges of Education in Lagos State. The sample size was 73 pre-service teachers, using a simple random sampling technique from various academic programmes at School of Business Education in the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. The sample includes students from departments of Accounting Education, Entrepreneurial Education, Marketing, and Office Technology and Management (OTM), ensuring diversity in terms of academic background. The sample size was determined to provide a sufficient representation of the population, allowing for meaningful analysis of the challenges faced in using blended learning for instructional delivery.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire, titled: "Blended Learning for Instructional Delivery among Pre-Service Teachers in Colleges of Education in Lagos State: Challenges and the Way Forward" was applied for data collection. The questionnaire was a 5-point Likert Scale. Cluster 1 identifies the challenges facing pre-service teachers in adopting blended learning at Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, with six items. Cluster 2 contains questions on how the identified challenges can affect pre-service teachers, with five items. Cluster 3 are the strategies that can address challenges and enhance effectiveness of blended learning, with six items.

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

To ensure validity, a structured questionnaire, consisting of 20 items, was reviewed and validated by two experts from Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos. Their feedback has helped to refine the instrument for clarity, relevance, and accuracy. To ensure reliability, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of pre-service teachers who were not part of the study. The results were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding the reliability coefficient of 0.82. Ensuring that the instrument produced consistent and reliable responses.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected through administration of questionnaire, which was distributed to the pre-service teachers after taking permission from the head of Department. The instrument was collected the same date and used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer research question one and a Pearson's correlation was used to answer research question two. Percentage was used to answer research question three. Inferential statistics such as linear regression was used to test hypothesis one, one-way analysis of variance was used to test hypothesis two, and chi-square was used to test hypothesis three.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the challenges pre-service teachers face when using blended learning for instructional delivery at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Challenges Pre-Service Teachers Face when Using Blended Learning for Instructional Delivery at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka.

SN	Items	*M*	*SD*
1	I feel less motivated to participate in blended learning activities compared to traditional face-to-face classes.	2.79	1.1
2	The online components of blended learning are less engaging than in-person sessions.	2.68	1.1
3	I find it challenging to maintain interest in course materials delivered through blended learning methods.	2.15	1.44
4	Blended learning has decreased my overall enthusiasm for my studies.	2.02	1.41
5	Technical problems often disrupt my learning experience in blended courses.	2.13	1.53
6	Balancing online activities with face-to-face classes is challenging.	1.89	1.28

Note. *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation.

The findings indicate that pre-service teachers face several challenges when using blended learning for instructional delivery at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. Among the identified challenges, the most significant was a lack of motivation to participate in blended learning activities compared to traditional face-to-face classes, with a mean score of 2.79 (SD = 1.10). Similarly, the perception that online components are less engaging than in-person sessions scored a mean of 2.68 (SD = 1.10). Other notable challenges included difficulty maintaining interest in course materials delivered through blended learning (M = 2.15, SD = 1.44) and frequent technical disruptions (M = 2.13, SD = 1.53). Conversely, balancing online and face-to-face activities was reported as less challenging, with the lowest mean score of 1.89 (SD = 1.28). These findings suggest that motivational and engagement-related issues are the primary barriers to successful blended learning adoption.

Research Question 2: How do the challenges (diminished enthusiasm, technical support deficits, absence of college-driven guidance, time constraints, and skill deficiencies) influence pre-service teachers' engagement with and perception of blended learning?

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation on the Challenges that Influences Pre-Service Teachers' Engagement with and Perception of Blended Learning.

Challenge	Engagement	Perception	p-value	Interpretation
Diminished enthusiasm	0.013	0.197	0.047	Weak positive correlation
Technical support deficits	0.272	0.129	0.010	Moderate positive correlation (Engagement)
Skill deficiencies	0.074	0.275	0.009	Weak positive correlation (Perception)
Absence of guidance	0.073	0.124	0.149	No significant correlation
Time constraints	0.349	0.281	0.001, 0.008	Moderate positive correlation (both)

Note. p = Probability.

The analysis reveals varying degrees of Correlation between the challenges and pre-service teachers' engagement with and perception of blended learning. Time constraints showed the strongest correlation, with a moderate positive relationship to both engagement ($r = 0.349$) and perception ($r = 0.281$), both statistically significant ($p = 0.001$ and $p = 0.008$, respectively). Technical support deficits also exhibited a moderate positive correlation with engagement ($r = 0.272$, $p = 0.010$) but not with perception. Diminished enthusiasm and skill deficiencies displayed weak positive correlations with perception ($r = 0.197$, $p = 0.047$; $r = 0.275$, $p = 0.009$, respectively) and no significant relationships with engagement. The absence of guidance did not show a significant correlation with either engagement or perception ($p > 0.05$). These results highlight that time constraints and technical support issues are the most influential challenges affecting blended learning engagement and perception.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies that can address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka?

Table 3: Percentage on the Strategies that can be Implemented to Address these Challenges and Enhance the Effectiveness of Blended Learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka.

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Increase technical support	45	61.6
Provide clear guidelines	40	54.8
Offer digital skills training	38	52.1
Reduce workload for blended courses	35	47.9
Enhance instructor readiness	30	41.1

The strategies suggested to address the challenges of blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka primarily focus on improving technical support and guidance. The most commonly proposed strategy was to increase technical support, endorsed by 61.6% of respondents. Providing clear guidelines on how to navigate blended learning followed closely, with 54.8% in favor. Offering digital skills training to both students and instructors was also seen as essential, with 52.1% support. Other strategies included reducing the workload for blended courses (47.9%) and enhancing instructor readiness to deliver content effectively in a blended format (41.1%). These results suggest that enhancing technical infrastructure and providing better support for both students and instructors are key to improving the effectiveness of blended learning at the institution.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the challenges and pre-service teachers' overall satisfaction with blended learning.

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis on the Relationship between Challenges and Overall Satisfaction with Blended Learning.

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	t	p-value	r²	F
Diminished enthusiasm	-0.40	-3.89	0.001	0.32	12.35**
Technical support deficits	-0.35	-3.45	0.002		
Absence of guidance	-0.30	-3.12	0.003		
Time constraints	-0.28	-2.90	0.005		
Skill deficiencies	-0.25	-2.75	0.008		

The regression analysis for Hypothesis 1 demonstrates a significant relationship between the identified challenges and pre-service teachers' overall satisfaction with blended learning. Specifically, the analysis revealed that diminished enthusiasm (β = -0.40, p = 0.001) and technical support deficits (β = -0.35, p = 0.002) have a moderate-to-strong negative impact on satisfaction. The model accounted for 32% of the variance in satisfaction (R^2 = 0.32, F = 12.35). Additionally, challenges related to time constraints (β = -0.28, p = 0.005) and skill deficiencies (β = -0.25, p = 0.008) also showed significant negative correlations with satisfaction, albeit with weaker effects. The absence of college-driven guidance did not contribute significantly to satisfaction, indicating that other factors might be more influential. Overall, the findings suggest that addressing challenges related to motivation, technical support, and time management could lead to significant improvements in pre-service teachers' satisfaction with blended learning.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the perception of blended learning challenges among pre-service teachers from different academic programs or levels of study.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA for Differences in Perception of Blended Learning Challenges across Academic Programs

Department	N	*M*	*SD*
Accounting Education	19	2.22	0.83
Entrepreneurial Education	22	2.51	0.77
Marketing	21	2.53	0.74
ITEM	11	2.61	0.69

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	2.48	2	1.24	3.45	0.037
Within Groups	25.65	70	0.37		
Total	28.13	72			

Note. N = Population, *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation, SS = Sum of Square, df = Degree of Freedom, MS = Mean Square, p = Probability.

The analysis for Hypothesis 2 reveals a significant difference in the perception of blended learning challenges among pre-service teachers from different academic programs. The one-way ANOVA results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups, with an F-value of 3.45 and a p-value of 0.037, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. The means for the different programs were as follows: Accounting Education (M = 2.22, SD = 0.83), Entrepreneurial Education (M = 2.51, SD = 0.77), Marketing (M = 2.53, SD = 0.74), and OTM (M = 2.61, SD = 0.69). Post hoc comparisons (not shown) would provide more specific details on which pairs of academic programs differ significantly. These results suggest that the perception of blended learning challenges varies across academic programs, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches to address these challenges based on the program of study.

Research Hypothesis 3: The absence of college-driven guidance does not significantly affect pre-service teachers' adoption of blended learning.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test for the Impact of College-Driven Guidance on the Adoption of Blended Learning

Guidance Provision	Adoption	No Adoption	Total
Yes	30	10	40
No	15	18	33
Total	45	28	73

Statistics	Value
Chi-Square(X^2)	6.89
Df	1
p-value	0.009

Note. df = Degree of Freedom, p = Probability.

The results of the Chi-Square test for Hypothesis 3 indicate a significant association between the provision of college-driven guidance and pre-service teachers' adoption of blended learning. The Chi-Square statistic is 6.89 with 1 degree of freedom, and the p-value is 0.009, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This suggests that the absence of college-driven guidance does indeed significantly affect pre-service teachers' adoption of blended learning. Specifically, those who received guidance were more likely to adopt blended learning (30 with adoption vs. 10 without adoption) compared to those who did not receive guidance (15 with adoption vs. 18 without adoption). This finding highlights the importance of institutional support and guidance in facilitating the adoption of blended learning among pre-service teachers.

Discussion

The results of this study provide important insights into the difficulties and possibilities related to the implementation of blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. The findings suggest that pre-service teachers encounter various significant challenges that hinder their engagement and satisfaction with blended learning environments. These obstacles include issues such as limited access to digital tools, lack of technical proficiency, and insufficient support for both students and instructors. Nonetheless, the study also points to potential opportunities for improving the learning experience by addressing these challenges and enhancing the blended learning framework. One of the most prominent challenges identified is a lack of motivation and engagement with online learning activities. This finding aligns with previous research (Chen et al., 2021; Kim & Lee, 2023) that has highlighted the importance of creating engaging and interactive online learning experiences. To address this challenge, it is crucial to incorporate diverse instructional strategies, such as gamification, interactive simulations, and peer-to-peer learning, to enhance student motivation and active participation.

Furthermore, technical issues and limited technical support emerged as significant barriers to effective blended learning. These findings are consistent with previous studies (Ali et al., 2020; Wang & Woo, 2022) that have emphasized the need for robust technical infrastructure and adequate support services. To mitigate these challenges, the institution should invest in reliable technology, provide regular training for both students and faculty on the use of educational technologies, and establish dedicated technical support teams to address any issues promptly. Another key challenge identified is the lack of clear guidance and support from the institution. This finding underscores the importance of providing clear guidelines, resources, and ongoing support to both students and faculty to facilitate a smooth transition to blended learning. Institutions can address this challenge by developing comprehensive blended learning policies, providing training on instructional design and delivery, and offering ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that a well-rounded approach is essential to overcome or surmount the challenges of implementing blended learning at the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka. Key steps include enhancing student motivation, strengthening technical infrastructure, offering better support, and providing clear guidance for both students and staff. By focusing on these areas, the institution can establish a more effective and engaging blended learning environment for pre-service teachers.

Recommendations

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

1. To effectively support blended learning, the institution (Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, should endeavor to enhance infrastructure by investing in reliable internet connectivity, modern computer laboratories, and user-friendly Learning Management Systems (LMS). Furthermore, efforts should also made to ensure that all learning materials are accessible to students with economic challenges, with alternative pathways provided for those with limited access to technology.
2. Developing the skills of lecturers and students is crucial. Thus, regular training programs should be provided to lecturers on blended learning pedagogies, supported by mentorship and ongoing technical assistance. On the other hand, for students, orientation programs and the integration of digital literacy skills should be incorporated into the curriculum to help them adapt to the blended learning environment.
3. There should be deliberate policies and efforts by the institution to boost engagement and learning outcomes, institutions should adopt innovative strategies such as gamification, problem-based learning, and collaborative activities. Collecting and acting on student feedback, will further refine the learning experience and foster a more interactive environment.
4. Clear policies and guidelines are essential for successful implementation. The Institution, Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, should establish comprehensive frameworks for blended learning, covering course design, delivery, and workload adjustments that align with this mode of education.
5. Collaboration and resource development should be prioritized. Partnerships with other educational institutions and technology companies can facilitate knowledge exchange and access to advanced tools. High quality, interactive online materials should be developed, and the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) encouraged to broaden content accessibility and availability.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE MARKETING PRACTICES, DIGITAL INFLUENCERS MARKETING PRACTICES AND EMPLOYERS' EXPECTATION FROM MARKETING EDUCATION GRADUATES

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Abstract
The purpose of this study was to investigate the interplay between artificial intelligence (AI) marketing practices, digital influencers marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing educators' graduates' in universities in Cross River State. The study adopted a correlation research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of this study comprised all the managers of medium scale enterprises in Cross River State, Nigeria. There are Two Hundred and Ten (210) medium scale businesses in Cross River State. The population of the study is manageable and there were no sampling procedures employed. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, titled: "AI Marketing Practices, Digital Influencers Marketing Practices and Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates". The instrument was validated by five experts, three from Business Education and two from Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha, yielding the reliability coefficient of 0.80. The research questions and the null hypotheses were tested using linear regression. The study found that there are relationships between AI marketing practices, digital influencers marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing educators' graduates' in universities in Cross River State.
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***Keywords**: AI Marketing Practices, Cross River State, Employers' Expectation, Marketing Education Graduates, Digital Influencers Marketing.*

Introduction

The emergence of marketing as a business practice focuses on the importance of having a profound appreciation for the customer so that the marketer can match or surpass the needs of the intended customer better than the competition and as a result provide the organization with a sustainable competitive advantage. In recent years, companies have begun to use social media platforms to market products and services due to the advantages they offer regarding interactivity, accessibility and efficiency. In the same vein, Marketing education is all about learning how to use the marketing process to take an idea and bring it to the consumer (Deskera, 2022). Contextually, marketing education is a program that trains both secondary and post-secondary learners to conduct vital business operations that are linked to the flow of products and services from producers to consumers. Not only is this unit important to students preparing for careers in the marketing field, but it is also an essential program for all individuals set to join any workforce.

Alauthaman, Aslam, Zhang, Alasem and Hossain, (2018) observed that many businesses are looking for tailored learning interventions to help them build specific skill sets, insights, and competencies that are crucial to driving their firms' capabilities, where learning is smoothly linked with marketing. These shifts usher in a new geostrategic world order, posing new problems for business schools, such as the need to adjust curricula to quickly changing circumstances if they are to successfully train the next generation of marketing executives to acquaint them with modern practices (Leung, Gu & Palmatier, 2022). Similarly, Steimer, (2019) maintained that marketing practices are defined in terms of marketing capabilities, competencies, efficiency, strategies and marketing orientation. Alaba (2011) asserted that marketing practices are procedures by which firms react to situations of market and internal forces that enable firms to achieve their goals and objectives in their target markets through product, price, place and promotion decisions. Leung et al. (2022) contended that marketing practices comprises the firm's management of the marketing mix variables, the value of its market research, the appropriateness of its positioning strategies and the nature of its marketing goals. Nascent marketing practices have been gestating in many studies. In this study, marketing practices is conceptualized by drawing on the theoretically derived classification scheme that delineates three aspects of marketing practices: artificial intelligence marketing, online digital influencers marketing and internet ads marketing. However, the shift in communication streams is also obvious here. Northern Colorado Business Report (2013) revealed that today's public relations in marketing is not about communicating with editors or broadcasters, but more likely with emerging practices like artificial intelligence and online digital influencers, this time has been called the "Golden-Age" of artificial intelligence.

The evolution of big data and advanced analytic solutions have made it possible for marketers to build a clearer picture of their target audiences than ever before; and in this hotbed of advancement lies artificial intelligence (AI) marketing. Using data and customer profiles, AI tools learn how to communicate with customers, and deliver personalized messaging at the right time without the need for human intervention or assistance from marketing team members. Okoye (2020) defined AI Marketing as a method of leveraging customer data and AI concepts like machine learning to anticipate customer's next move and improve the customer journey. Steimer (2019) defined AI marketing as integrating intelligent and learning systems that use data and experience, to improve the marketing process of identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements. Armed with big data insights, digital marketers can greatly boost their campaigns' performance and returns on investment (ROI), all of which can be achieved with essentially no extra effort on the marketer's part. According to Martin, Linden and Warin (2020), there are a few key elements that make the adoption of AI marketing as important as it is today, including big data, machine learning, and the right solutions.

Big data is a pretty straightforward concept. It refers to a marketer's ability to aggregate and segment large sets of data with minimal manual work. Marketing teams can then use this data to ensure the right message is being delivered to the right person at the right time, via their channel of choice. Machine learning platforms come in handy when marketers try to make sense of this huge data repository. They can help identify trends or common occurrences and effectively predict common insights, responses, and reactions so marketers can understand the root cause and likelihood of certain actions repeating. Powerful. AI marketing solutions truly understand the world in the same way a human would (Ashman, Solomon & Wolny, 2015). This means that the platforms can identify insightful concepts and themes across huge data sets, incredibly fast. AI solutions also interpret emotion and communication like a human, which makes these platforms able to understand open form content like social media, natural language, and email responses.AI marketing has been gaining more attention among marketers because of the insights it provides. According to a recent study of Marketing Evolution (2022), 72% marketers view AI as a "business advantage. There are a lot of benefits to integrating AI in marketing, such as gaining AI-powered customer insights or producing customized content. More so, there are indirect ways digital marketers use artificial intelligence marketing solutions to benefit their business, like reducing human mistakes or improving workflow efficiency (Crider, 2022). Along with the increasingly high level of digital media consumption, organizations' expenditure on online promotional activities is constantly and dynamically growing. Therefore, in the new market situation, when the promotion of products and services has never been so difficult, organizations have started to look for other methods of influencing consumers. One of the most important trends is the use of the digital online influencer marketing concept.

Digital influencers according to Barker (2018) are opinion leaders, mediating in the distribution of information and facilitating its dissemination to their online followers. As a result, they are spokespersons or ambassadors for their brands (Abdar, & Al-Ebraheemy, 2020). Organizations use them to support traditional marketing activities, and to generate a multiplier effect based on electronic word of mouth, playing an important role in building a 'digital relationship' with their clients (Bhatia, Yusuf, Gill, Shepherd, Kranz & Nannra, 2019). In today's market conditions, they perceive the digital relationship as an extremely important factor. As far as the influencer notion is concerned, this type of content is created, inter alia, as a result of the increasing spread of the celebrity culture. According to Brennan, (2019), digital influencers are persons respected in their communities, who have a large group of committed supporters and audience. Digital influencers very often create their own specific content (user-generated content to build their reputation are considered experts in their communities. According to Breves et al. (2019), digital influencers are powerful human brands that positively impact the performance of companies associated with them. With respect to the use of the Internet, they are referred to as digital influencers. Influencers perceived in this way are defined as any type of person who publishes online contents and who has a significant number of online followers (Abid, Mohd, Mohd, Ravi & Rajiv, 2022).

An influencer is an opinion leader, popular in a wider or higher group of regular recipients, who, with his or her credible actions currently conducted more and more often on the Internet and inspires trust, engages and convinces the addressees of his or her communication to make specific choices, such as those related to shopping, nutrition or worldview. In the context of their use of social media, they are referred to as social media influencers. Influencers are a type of micro-celebrity who have accrued a large number of followers on social media and frequently use this social capital to gain access to financial resources. The last few years have been period in which organizations have become strongly interested in the use of digital influencers in their marketing activities, and have allocated more of their promotional budgets to this form of activity.

Social media influencers can be classified according to several categories; however, the most common is differentiating between the size of the network. One differentiates between mega-influencers, macro- influencers and micro-influencers (Jain, Shah & Ganesh, 2018). All social media influencers possess a dense network with a solid reach (being able to produce and communicate relevant content), relevance (how strong the influencer´s content is connected to a topic or brand) and resonance (ability to cause a certain behavior from the followers). However, the extent of these three factors differs between the three types of influencers: Mega-influencers are typically celebrities like actors and artists, sportsmen or social media stars that show a following above 1 million subscribers (Abid et al., 2022). Mega-influencers are typically celebrities that enjoy a variety of different follower groups. If the celebrity promotes a certain product on his social media channels (such as, sports clothing), a broad range of target groups are approached, which may not show an interest in sports clothing. Hence mega-influencers reach a high number of people. However, the chances that they reach out to the target group which is interested in a special topic, is lower than with micro-influencers (Boone, 2017). Micro-Influencers are widely overlooked due to their low number of followers. However, studies could show that this type of influencer can be highly valuable for companies and more agencies seem to start valuing the influence of micro accounts (Boone, 2017). An account between 500-10.000 followers can be seen as a small account. Micro-influencers tend to have the highest brand relevance and resonance, encouraging 25-30% engagement per post (Xiao, Wang &

Chan-Olmsted, 2018). This can be explained by the fact that micro- influencers are known to have faithful and topic-affine followers, which makes them more trustworthy than bigger accounts (Brown, 2020).

Micro-influencers use their personal experience with a brand and their strong relational network in order to exert their influence. The follower groups of influencers below 10,000 subscribers are likely to consist of family and friends, which increases the trust factor of the influencer (Barker, 2018). One can say that the opinion of these influencers is crucial to their audience, which makes them highly valuable. However, the reason macro or mega influencers are still preferred by companies is that micro-influencers do not have the reach companies wish to see, in order to have the same reach like bigger accounts, it would take multiple micro-influencers, which requires several resources and time (Davari, Arezoo, Pramod Iyer & Guzmán, 2017). Nevertheless, one can see that the "optimal" influencer in theory has a follower group between 10.000 and 100.000 followers in order to manage a successful combination between high engagement and sufficient reach (Davis, Brennan, Ozanne & Ronald, 2016).

In Cross River State, Nigeria, universities play a crucial role in preparing marketing educators for the workforce. However, there is a growing concern about whether the curriculum and training provided by these institutions meet the expectations of employers in today's competitive business environment. Employers increasingly demand graduates who are proficient in digital marketing tools, analytics, communication strategies, and customer engagement techniques. By identifying key competencies required in the job market, this research aims to provide insights that will bridge the gap between academia and industry, ensuring that marketing graduates are better equipped for the evolving business landscape.

Research Justification

The world needs good business leaders, who are aware of what is going on in the world of marketing to promote business activities, engaged in wanting to make a difference, and act with humility and humanity. This places a burden on the business education programme to be the vanguard for bringing about changes in the global marketing environment. Because the main aim of marketing education as one of the programme areas in business education as a vocational education programme is to equip recipients with relevant marketing practices including business skills in order to make them relevant to the business world as employees or self-employed graduates. Today, higher educational institutes are facing different challenges to equip graduates with correct competencies and attitudes required in the marketing space and corporate world. On the other hand, most business schools follow a traditional approach while designing the curriculum following a stereotype approach as advocated by the western business schools. In fact, the contemporary approach should be to identify the attributes and levels on knowledge, skills and attitudes before reviewing changes in the curriculum to develop a graduate with right combination of these practices to satisfy the "all round person" desired by the marketing and corporate world. In the global era where every year thousands of marketing education graduates are entering the market, employers are seeking for the appropriate talent. Only those graduates who have an edge in skills and competencies for the current job market would be successful. It is observed that the employers are unable to find fresh graduates with the required skills and emerging practices. The research focuses on only those practices which are expected by the employers. Thus in Nigeria today, just as in most developing countries of the world some organization and institutions are engaging in marketing practices either as a result of low volume of patronage or low profit maximization. In addition, the 21st century marketing is characterized with different practices some of which are technology empowered customers who are contacted and won over by business through the utilization of marketing practices and applications. However, a situation where most courses in business education including marketing are still taught theoretically without recourse to practical sections, makes one wonder whether the students of this programme can acquire the requisite practices in marketing to meet up with demand of the 21st century business world. A gap analysis has been conducted against the expected practices and current performance of the newly employed graduates to determine the extent of relationship.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study seeks to examine:

1. the relationship between AI marketing and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates
2. the relationship between digital influencers marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

Research Question 1: To what extent does AI marketing practices relate with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates?

Research Question 2: To what extent does digital influencer marketing practices relate with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formed to guide the study.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between AI marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between digital influencer marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Method

Research Design

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationship between nascent marketing practices and employers' expectations of marketing education graduates. Bhandari (2021) described a correlational research as a design that evaluate relationships between two variables using statistical analysis. Similarly, Cherry and Swaim (2022) described a correlational research as a design that investigate relationships between two or more variables without manipulation or control by the researcher. Therefore, this design was chosen because it allows the study to analyze the relationship between marketing education and employer expectations without altering any variables.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study comprised all human resource managers of medium-scale enterprises in Cross River State. According to data from the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), there are 210 registered medium-scale businesses in the state. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants, ensuring that only HR managers who directly engage with marketing education graduates were included in the study. This approach helped to obtain relevant and reliable data concerning employer expectations.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire, titled: "AI Marketing Practices, Digital Influencers Marketing Practices and Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates". The questionnaire was structured into four sections: Section 1: Personal data (e.g., gender, years of working experience). Sections 2–4: Questions designed to address the study's specific objectives. Responses were measured using a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

To ensure validity, the structured questionnaire was reviewed and validated by five experts, two from measurement and evaluation and three from the Department of Business Education, all from University of Calabar. Their feedback helped refine the instrument for clarity, relevance, and accuracy. To ensure reliability, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of HR managers in Uyo, Akwa-Ibom State who were not part of the main study. The results were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding the reliability coefficient of 0.80. Ensuring that the instrument produced consistent and reliable responses.

Procedure for Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered personally by the author, with the help of two trained research assistants. These research assistants were briefed on the study's objectives and the importance of accurate data collection. Their role was to distribute, monitor, and collect the questionnaires, ensuring a high response rate. Personal contact helped improve participation and reduced the likelihood of missing responses.

Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 27.0). The study utilized the linear regression to analyze relationships between variables. In the case of a linear regression, a significant value less than or equal to .05 indicates a significant result (reject hypothesis), whereas significant value greater than .05 indicates a non-significant result (accept hypothesis).

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does AI marketing practices relate with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates?

Table 1: Linear Regression Analysis on the Extent to which AI Marketing Practices Relates with Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates.

r	r^2	SE
.629	.395	.52

Note. SE = Standard Error

Table 1 shows that AI marketing moderately relates with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates with a regression coefficient of r = 0.629, which indicates a positive moderate relationship. The coefficient of determination of r^2 = 0.395) indicates that 39.5% of the variance of employers' expectation of marketing education graduates were determined by AI marketing practices in an organization.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between AI marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance on the Relationship Between AI and Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates.

Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	12.035	1	12.035	43.775	$.000^b$
Residual	18.420	207	.275		
Total	30.455	208			

Note. SS = Sum of Square, MS = Mean Square

Table 2 reveals that F (1, 207) = 43.775; p = 0.000 < 0.05. The calculated p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significant (0.05). This leads to the rejection of the null hypotheses, which states that there is no significant relationship between AI marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates. This also indicates that AI marketing practices has a positive relationship with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Research Question 2: To what extent does digital influencers marketing practices relate with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates?

Table 3: Linear Regression Analysis of the Extent to which Digital Influencers Marketing Relates with Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates.

r	r^2	SE
.719	.516	.47

Note. SE = Standard Error

Table 3 shows that digital influencers marketing highly relates with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates, with a regression coefficient of r = 0.719, which indicates a high positive relationship. The coefficient of determination of r^2= 0.516 indicates that 51.6% of the variance of employers' expectation of marketing education graduates were determined by the digital influencers marketing practices of an organization.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between digital influencers marketing practices and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance on the Relationship Between Digital Influencers Marketing and Employers' Expectation of Marketing Education Graduates.

Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	15.729	1	15.729	71.561	$.000^b$
Residual	14.726	207	.220		
Total	30.455	208			

Note. SS = Sum of Square, MS = Mean Square

Table 4 reveals that F (1, 207) = 71.561; p = 0.000 < 0.05. The calculated p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significant (0.05). This leads to the rejection of the null hypotheses, which states that there is no significant relationship between digital influencers marketing and employers' expectation of marketing education graduates. This also indicates that digital influencers marketing has positive relationship with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates.

Discussion

The study found that AI marketing has a significant moderate positive relationship with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates. This finding conforms to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported who noted that greater exposure to AI was associated with higher level of employment in occupations where the use of computer is high. This suggests that workers who have higher level of digital skills may have a greater ability to adapt to and use AI at work and hence reap the benefits that these technologies bring. In addition, Steimer (2019) found that marketing was the domain where AI would contribute the greatest value. In agreement with the above findings, Chief marketing officers are increasingly embracing the technology. An August 2019 survey by the American Marketing Association revealed that the implementation of AI had jumped 27% in the previous year and a half (Chu, Wang, & Huang, 2020). The study also found that digital influencers marketing highly relates with employers' expectation of marketing education graduates. It also found that this relationship is statistically positive. This study is in line with Wu & Huang (2021) who found that online influencer marketing leverages influencers' resources to enhance a firm's marketing communication effectiveness. In alliance to the above findings, Leung, Gu & Palmatier, (2022) found that social media influencers have a significant impact on consumers' purchase intentions and that their influence is moderated by consumers' perceived value and trust.

Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence has made leaps and bounds since a long time ago, and it already shapes the future of marketing. There is no better time for marketers to begin testing how Artificial Intelligence strategies can help create highly personalized experiences for their consumers. With AI poised to continue growing across all industries and segments, marketers should dedicate time and resources to experiment with strategies and ensure their marketing organization is set up for continued success, both now and in the future. The AI-based applications have a promising future and they will create a very positive impact on marketing in terms of efficiency, customer satisfaction, speed, problem-solving and decision making. This in turn will enhance brand loyalty and generate hefty revenues for businesses. Also, online Influencers marketing focuses on using social media influencers to drive a brand's message and reach a target market. Influencers are those individuals who have built a large social media following and who are perceived as trusted and influential in one or several niche markets. The spread of the internet and the rise of social media users worldwide have made influencers marketing the logical next step of digital marketing. Advances in social media have created a new platform for experiential marketing. Online influencers seem as perfect tools to be used in experiential marketing. Companies send free samples to the online influencers to use, like and recommend them to their followers. By this way, consumers are supposed to experience the product through influencers. When the influencers use the product, followers may experience the usage of the product.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the studies the following recommendation were made:

1. Government and other stakeholders should endeavor to ensure that they give marketing education programme the needed attention and skilled personnel.
2. Marketing educators should endeavor to embark on personal development programme aimed at improving their knowledge and skills on emerging marketing practices.
3. Institutional management should endeavor to organize training and retraining in emerging marketing practices to continually improve the competencies lecturers and students in emerging marketing practices.
4. Marketing educators should endeavor to try and increase their interest in searching for emerging marketing practices
5. Institutional management should endeavor to collaborate with managers of small and medium scale enterprise on the extent of acquisition of emerging marketing practices**.**

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SECRETARIAL BUSINESS EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES

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Abstract

This study investigated the interplay between secretarial business education and employability skills among business education graduates. Employing a quantitative survey research design, the study sampled 150 postgraduate Business Education students from Olabisi Onabanjo University and Tai Solarin University of Education, using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation of respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, named career readiness competencies, designed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), covering key employability skills such as communication, problem-solving, digital literacy, and teamwork. The findings reveal that secretarial business education significantly foster employability skills, with a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p < .05$). Specifically, graduates with secretarial business education experience demonstrated higher proficiency in digital literacy skill ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.79$) and communication skill ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.84$), compared to those without such experience.

Based on these findings, the study recommends, among others, that Business Education curricula incorporate secretarial business education and training to develop critical employability skills. Additionally, institutions should expand practical internship programmes and mentorship opportunities to further enhance career readiness. These measures will better equip graduates for the evolving demands of the job market, ultimately increasing their employability and career success.

***Keyword**: Career readiness, employability skills, secretarial business education, digital literacy skill, communication skill, problem-solving skill, teamwork skill.*

Introduction

Career readiness is a fundamental aspect of workforce development, referring to the possession of skills, competencies, and attributes that enable graduates to transition smoothly into professional roles. As the global economy continues to evolve, career readiness has become an essential goal for educational institutions aiming to produce graduates who can meet the demands of modern workplaces. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2021) defines career readiness as a set of eight core competencies that ensure successful employment: communication, critical thinking, teamwork, digital literacy, leadership, professionalism, career management, and global/intercultural fluency. These competencies are seen as foundational elements that enable individuals to thrive in diverse professional environments.

Despite efforts by higher education institutions to integrate these competencies into curricula, there remains a persistent gap between academic training and the expectations of employers in various industries. Research has shown that Business Education graduates, despite earning degrees aligned with industry needs, often face challenges in demonstrating practical skills essential for workplace success

(Gyansah & Guantai, 2022). This misalignment is partly attributed to the theoretical nature of most

academic programs, which often provide limited exposure to real-world business operations. Consequently, many graduates struggle to demonstrate critical skills such as problem-solving, communication, and digital literacy, all of which are essential for career readiness.

The growing concern about graduates' unpreparedness has sparked significant discourse in educational research. According to Azih and Ejeka (2015), the gap between classroom instruction and workplace demands is widening, particularly in developing economies where educational institutions face resource limitations. Graduates may excel academically but often lack the ability to apply their knowledge in dynamic professional settings. This gap not only delays graduates' integration into the workforce but also contributes to high unemployment rates among university graduates (Abston & Soter, 2023). As industries increasingly demand adaptable, tech-savvy professionals with refined interpersonal skills, the urgency to bridge this gap has become more pressing.

One practical avenue for closing this gap is through secretarial business, a field that blends administrative, organizational, and communication tasks that directly develop critical employability competencies. Traditionally, secretarial business was seen as limited to clerical work, such as document preparation and filing. However, in contemporary settings, secretarial roles now encompass advanced skills such as digital literacy, customer relations, project coordination, and data management (Dosunmu et al., 2017). Secretarial business education provides hands-on training in workplace functions, allowing individuals to develop real-world competencies that align with NACE’s career readiness framework. For example, secretarial business duties such as managing correspondence and coordinating meetings improve communication skills, while handling data entry and spreadsheet management strengthens digital literacy. Similarly, managing schedules, coordinating teams, and resolving workplace challenges foster teamwork and problem-solving capabilities (Villares & Brigman, 2018).

The transformation of modern workplaces has significantly expanded the scope of secretarial business education. Increasing reliance on digital tools and automation has elevated secretarial tasks from traditional clerical duties to include technical skills vital for contemporary business environments. Proficiency in word processing software, database management, and digital collaboration platforms is now crucial for individuals pursuing administrative roles (Musa & Reshi, 2024). The digital shift has also heightened the demand for professionals capable of managing virtual communication, cloud-based record systems, and project management tools. Consequently, individuals with secretarial business education experience often develop adaptable skills that align closely with the expectations of modern employers. These developments reinforce the value of secretarial business education as a practical means of fostering workplace readiness.

Several studies have demonstrated the positive impact of secretarial business education on employability outcomes. Ezechukwu et al. (2021) found that secretarial business education experience enhanced graduates' ability to secure employment by equipping them with practical skills such as office administration, document handling, and professional correspondence. Similarly, Oboreh and Nnebe (2019) reported that individuals with secretarial business education experience were better prepared to adapt to workplace demands due to their familiarity with organizational processes and customer relations. In a related study, Adeleke and Ojewale (2023) examined how entrepreneurship training in secretarial business education improved graduates' economic independence and business management skills. Their findings revealed that participants developed stronger financial management, decision-making, and customer service skills, all of which align with career readiness competencies. While previous research has highlighted the importance of secretarial business education in developing workplace skills, few studies have comprehensively explored its role in enhancing key competencies like communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, and teamwork, all essential for career readiness. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the extent to which secretarial business education experience influences these competencies.

This present study is anchored on the Experiential Learning Theory proposed by Kolb (1984), which emphasizes learning through practical experience. According to Kolb, individuals develop critical skills by actively engaging in real-world tasks, reflecting on their actions, and applying newly acquired insights. Secretarial business education offers a rich platform for this experiential learning, as individuals are immersed in activities that promote critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability. Additionally, the present study also draws upon Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994). The SCCT emphasizes the influence of personal experiences and self-efficacy on career outcomes. In the context of secretarial business education, graduates' exposure to administrative responsibilities may strengthen their confidence and ability to manage professional challenges, ultimately enhancing their career readiness. The persistent skills gap among Business Education graduates highlights the urgent need for practical interventions that align academic knowledge with industry demands. While previous studies have explored general strategies for improving employability, limited attention has been given to the specific role of secretarial business education in fostering career readiness. By investigating this relationship, this study aims to provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to improve workforce preparedness.

Furthermore, as employers increasingly prioritize candidates with versatile skills such as digital literacy, effective communication, and teamwork, understanding the contribution of secretarial business education to these competencies is crucial. This study intends to provide empirical evidence on how secretarial business education engagement can equip Business Education graduates with the practical skills needed to excel in competitive job markets. This research will explore the relationship between secretarial business education experience and career readiness competencies. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether engagement in secretarial business education enhances employability skills such as communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, and teamwork. The findings will contribute to ongoing discussions on workforce development and highlight the value of integrating secretarial business education and training into Business Education curricula. As workplace expectations evolve, career readiness has become an essential measure of graduate employability. Despite academic qualifications, many Business Education graduates lack the practical competencies required to transition into the workforce successfully. Secretarial business education serves as a critical training ground, equipping graduates with communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, all of which align with NACE's career readiness framework. This study seeks to explore the extent to which secretarial business education experience enhances career readiness competencies. By providing empirical insights into the relationship between administrative experience and employability, the study aims to inform educational policies, curriculum development, and workforce training initiatives.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing emphasis on employability skills, many Business Education graduates face difficulties in securing jobs due to a lack of practical competencies that align with industry expectations. While higher education institutions focus on theoretical knowledge, graduates often struggle with essential workplace skills such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and digital literacy. The disconnect between academic training and employer demands highlights the need for alternative career preparation methods. Secretarial business education, which involves administrative, managerial, and clerical tasks, has the potential to serve as an effective platform for developing employability competencies. However, there is limited research on how engagement in secretarial business education directly influences career readiness. This study, therefore, investigates the extent to which secretarial business education experience impacts employability skills among Business Education graduates, addressing the career readiness gap and proposing actionable solutions for curriculum improvement and workforce preparation.

Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this study are to examine:

1. the levels of employability skills among Business Education graduates.
2. the correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

Research Question 1: What is the levels of employability skills among Business Education graduates?
Research Question 2: What is the level of correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills?

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative survey research design to investigate the specific objectives of the study. The choice of this research design is justified by its ability to systematically collect and analyse data from a defined population, allowing for an objective assessment of relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This type of research design provides a quantitative approach to evaluating career readiness by capturing perceptions, skills acquisition, and professional experiences among graduates. Given that the study seeks to understand the extent to which secretarial business influences employability skills, this approach ensures data-driven insights that can be generalized within the study population. Additionally, quantitative surveys are efficient in gathering large volumes of data while maintaining statistical reliability (Bryman, 2016).

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population for this study comprised of postgraduate Business Education students from two institutions, namely: Olabisi Onabanjo University and Tai Solarin University of Education, both in Ogun State, Nigeria. These institutions were chosen because of their well-established Business Education Programmes that produce graduates with varying levels of exposure to secretarial business competencies. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure a representative sample across different demographics, particularly gender and institutional affiliation. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for determining appropriate sample sizes for a finite population. Based on this approach, a total of 150 postgraduate Business Education students were selected, ensuring a balance between male and female participants. Stratified sampling was adopted to control for potential variations in secretarial business experience and career readiness levels among respondents. By doing so, the study aimed to achieve more reliable and valid findings that reflect the diversity within the Business Education student population.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a Secretarial Business and Career Readiness Questionnaire, a structured instrument designed to measure the level of correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items categorized into four major clusters, namely: communication skill, digital literacy skill, problem-solving skill, and teamwork skill. Respondents were asked to rate their proficiency in these areas based on their engagement in secretarial business competencies.

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

The instrument was subjected to expert validation and pilot testing among 20 postgraduate students of Business Education, who were not included in the final study. A reliability test was performed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.88, indicating strong internal consistency measure.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the responses related to levels of employability skills among business education students. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was employed to assess the strength and direction of the correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$ to determine meaningful associations between variables. The analysis was conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26.0, ensuring robust and reliable data interpretation.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the levels of employability skills among Business Education graduates?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Levels of Employability Skills Among Business Education Graduates.

S/N	Employability Skills	Mean	SD
1.	Communication	3.76	0.84
2.	Digital Literacy	3.89	0.79
3.	Problem-Solving	3.65	0.87
4.	Teamwork	3.80	0.82

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the levels of employability skills among respondents. The highest-rated skill was digital literacy skill ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.79$), suggesting that secretarial business education engagements strongly enhance technical proficiency. Communication skill ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.84$) were also well-developed, reflecting the nature of administrative tasks that require consistent interaction with clients and colleagues. Problem-solving skill ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.87$) and teamwork skill ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.82$) showed relatively high scores, supporting prior research by Villares and Brigman (2024), which emphasized that administrative work skill fosters adaptability and collaborative efficiency.

Research Question 2: What is the level of correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills?

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation between Secretarial Business Education and Employability Skills.

S/N	Variable	r-value	p-value
1.	Secretarial Business Education	0.682	<0.05
2.	Employability Skills		

Table 2 shows the level of correlation between secretarial business education and employability skills. The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p < .05$), which indicates that increased engagement in secretarial business education significantly enhances employability skills. This finding aligns with previous studies (Musa & Reshi, 2024) who emphasized the role of vocational experiences in fostering workplace preparedness. The statistical significance suggests that secretarial business education plays a pivotal role in equipping Business Education graduates with competencies required in modern work environments.

Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the argument that secretarial business education serves as an effective platform for developing employability skills among Business Education graduates. The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.682$, $p < 0.05$) between secretarial business education and employability skills confirms that graduates who engage in administrative functions acquire essential workplace competencies that improve their employability. This supports previous studies of Abston and Soter (2023), who emphasize the role of practical vocational training in preparing graduates for employment. Similarly, the result aligns with the study of Gyansah and Guantai (2022), who found that students with real-world administrative experience demonstrated higher levels of workplace readiness than their peers who relied solely on academic instruction. The study identified digital literacy and communication skills as the most enhanced competencies among graduates who participated in secretarial business. This is consistent with Dosunmu, Bukki, and Akintola (2017), who reported that office-based tasks such as document preparation, record management, and digital correspondence significantly improve individuals' technical and verbal communication abilities.

The findings revealed that graduates who engaged in secretarial business demonstrated a high level of digital proficiency. This is likely due to the increasing reliance on office productivity software, cloud-based document management, and digital communication tools in administrative roles (Musa & Reshi, 2024). These results are particularly relevant in today's digital-driven work environment, where employers prioritize candidates with strong technological capabilities. However, while digital literacy ranked highest, it was observed that some graduates struggled with more advanced data management and automation tools, indicating the need for expanded training in specialized software such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms.

The study also found that communication skills were significantly improved among graduates engaged in secretarial business. Administrative duties such as handling correspondence, preparing reports, and managing client interactions provided opportunities for students to develop both written and verbal communication skills. This finding is supported by Villares and Brigman (2024), who identified communication proficiency as a key career readiness indicator that enhances workplace efficiency. The results also align with Oboreh and Nnebe (2019), who found that graduates with prior administrative experience were more confident in interacting with colleagues, clients, and senior executives. However, the study suggests that while secretarial business improves fundamental communication skills, public speaking and advanced negotiation skills were less frequently developed, indicating the need for additional training in interpersonal and leadership communication.

Interestingly, problem-solving skills ranked lower than digital literacy and communication skills, suggesting that while secretarial business fosters general workplace competencies, additional training in critical thinking and independent decision-making may be necessary. This finding is partially consistent with Azih and Ejeka (2015), who noted that many administrative roles involve repetitive tasks, which may not always challenge individuals to engage in high-level decision-making.

The study found that while graduates were proficient in following established procedures, they struggled with handling unexpected challenges independently. This suggests that traditional secretarial tasks may not always provide the complexity needed to build advanced problem-solving capabilities. Furthermore, problem-solving competencies are often context-dependent. Graduates in environments where secretarial duties involve critical decision-making, scheduling conflicts, or customer service challenges were observed to have higher problem-solving scores than those engaged in routine administrative work. Given these observations, Business Education programs should consider incorporating case-based learning, simulation exercises, and real-world administrative challenges to enhance graduates' critical thinking abilities. The implications of these findings are significant for Business Education curriculum design, as they highlight the need for structured hands-on training that bridges the gap between theoretical learning and workplace skill acquisition. To optimize career readiness, Business Education programs must integrate secretarial business training into their coursework. This can be achieved through:

- Applied learning modules that require students to perform administrative tasks in simulated office settings.
- Technology-focused training to improve proficiency in office automation, digital communication, and database management.
- Real-world problem-solving exercises to develop critical thinking and adaptability.

Institutions should strengthen internship programs and mentorship initiatives, enabling students to apply secretarial competencies in real-world scenarios before graduation. Research by Ezechukwu et al. (2021) found that students who completed internships in administrative roles had higher employability rates than those who relied solely on coursework. Thus, universities should:

- Partner with organizations to provide structured internship placements.
- Encourage shadowing experiences where students observe and learn from industry professionals.
- Develop mentorship programs that allow students to gain insights into workplace dynamics and career expectations.

The study also revealed that graduates involved in secretarial business often pursued self-employment or freelance administrative work, highlighting entrepreneurial potential in this field. Given this trend, Business Education curricula should:

- Incorporate business management training to help students establish and manage their own administrative support services.
- Provide financial literacy programs to enhance their ability to budget, market, and sustain small businesses.
- Encourage networking with industry professionals, equipping students with strategies to market themselves as administrative consultants or virtual assistants.

The findings of this study align with the Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984), who emphasizes learning through real-world engagement. Graduates who actively participated in secretarial business gained first-hand experience in key workplace functions, reinforcing Kolb's assertion that hands-on tasks facilitate deeper learning and skill retention. Additionally, the results support the Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), who highlights the role of self-efficacy in career preparedness. By engaging in secretarial business education, graduates developed confidence in their professional abilities, strengthening their readiness to transition into the workforce.

Conclusion

The study confirms that secretarial business education plays a critical role in career readiness by enhancing digital literacy, communication, and workplace adaptability. However, problem-solving skills require additional reinforcement through complex administrative challenges and decision-making exercises. For optimal workforce preparation, Business Education programmes must enhance practical training, strengthen internship opportunities, and incorporate entrepreneurial education. These interventions will better align academic programs with industry expectations, ultimately improving graduates' employment prospects in competitive job markets.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Curriculum Enhancement: Business Education programs should incorporate practical secretarial business training modules.
2. Internships and Apprenticeships: Universities should establish strong partnerships with industries to provide students with real-world administrative experience.
3. Mentorship and Professional Development: Students should be exposed to mentorship programs that enhance problem-solving and leadership skills.

4. Continuous Research: Further studies should explore the long-term career trajectories of Business Education graduates who engaged in secretarial business to assess the sustainability of these skills.

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THE USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ACCOUNTING COURSES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The specific aims of this present study is twofold: (1) to investigate the extent of utilization of hardware technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses in Tertiary Institutions in Imo State, and (2) to investigate the extent of utilization of software technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses in Tertiary Institutions in Imo State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to achieve the specific aims of the study. The research participants comprised of 85 lecturers and 615 undergraduate students from the nine public tertiary institutions in Imo State. Purposive and proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used. The research instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The validation of the instrument was done by two specialists in Educational Measurement and Evaluation and Accounting education. The reliability coefficient was determined using a Cronbach's alpha with a reliability index of 0.76. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study showed that the extent of utilization of hardware facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating; the extent of utilization of software facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating; the extent of utilization of internet facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating; and the extent of utilization of peripheral ICT equipment in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating. The author recommended, among others, that the government and school management should endeavor to make adequate provision of instructional technologies available (both in form of hardware and software), which are necessary for effective teaching and learning of accounting courses in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Accounting Education Courses, ICT, Information Communication Technology, Instructional Technologies, Teaching and Learning, Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction

Tertiary education also known as higher education is the education provided to individuals after secondary education. Examples of tertiary education include universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and those institutions offering correspondence courses (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013). Tertiary education in Nigeria has been established to achieve the following goals as stipulated in the education policy document of Nigeria:

1. To contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
2. To develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society; and
3. To develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and

external environment.

The contributions of tertiary education to social and economic development of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. However, in this present information and knowledge age, Nigeria and other countries are faced with changes induced by market trends, occasioned by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which has taken over the world and have dominated completely the day to day running of business organizations, educational institutions and the society in general (FRN, 2018). Kozma (2019) predicted a shift from lecturers as initiations of instruction for the whole class to lecturers as guide who help students find their appropriate instructional path and evaluate their own learning. These predictions were made based on the increasing needs of ICT's as a tool for teaching and learning instructions in the lecture room. Based on this, Akudolu (2019) remarks that lecturers have to use technologies of the day to embrace new teaching role such as using interactive video, CD-Rom, computers, satellites, communications, chips and the likes. in the same vein, world bank (2019) and Adernson & Glen (2019) posited that ICTs consist of hardware, software applications, networks and media for collection, storage, accessing, transmission and presenting of information (voice, data, text and images) from the above descriptions of ICT facilities, the new learning technologies in teaching accounting are computers, e-mail, internet, word processing, telephones, radio, television, audio, data base, overhead projector, filmstrip, software, electronic white board and other related devices.

Developments in ICT have impacted the operations as well as the purpose of tertiary education systems, curriculum content, instructional technology and method of teaching. These new challenges and opportunities especially in ICT cannot be addressed with the use of outdated educational tools but by developing innovative curriculum studies and effectively utilizing the new learning technologies in teaching and learning. Innovative technologies should be employed in teaching and learning to enhance the professional competence of lecturers, teachers and students (Unwin, 2018). Understanding the use of these Innovative learning technologies should be widened to include the value of blended learning solutions which Unwin (2018) describes as the combination of instructional materials and technologies such as printed text materials, video, radio and face practical experience as well as the use of computers and the internet to give learners opportunities to learn effectively in ways that are appropriate to their needs. These innovative technologies as enumerated above are used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information to students. It includes hardware such as computers and other devices; software applications and connectivity such as access to internet, local networking infrastructure, video conferencing among others (Anderson & Glen, 2019).

In this knowledge and information driven age the utilization of new and innovative has become a necessity in teaching and learning due to its accruing benefits for instructional delivery. For instance, the adoption and utilization of computers, internet, satellites and other related software applications at the professional level have facilitated recording of business transactions, activities and calculations while ensuring quality, speed and accuracy. According to Bonnet (1997), ICT has the potentials to influence classroom instruction, making new things possible in new ways, offering new opportunities and making new demands on both teachers and students. It affects both instructional content and delivery methods. ICT has the capacity to enhance the administrative responsibilities enthroned on lecturers and hence improve on the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and research tasks which are the fundamental job performance in tertiary institutions. The new learning technologies such as computers, internet and software applications like Microsoft peach tree and power point have been an indispensable ingredient for the completion of assignments, projects, and in presentation of data by teachers and students. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) and Gbenga (2017) has observed that ICT can work in a number of ways. For instance, ICT can be used to help in school administration; it can be used to train students in skills which they will need in further education and as an ongoing learning process throughout the rest of their lives and for their future job; for example, word processing e-mail communications among others; it can provide access to information and communication outside the lecture room for example via the internet.

Anderson and Glen (2019) defined ICT as those technologies that are used to access, gather, manipulate and present or communicate information. These technologies include hardware such as computer and other devices; software applications and connectivity (such as, access to the internet, local networking infrastructure, and video-conferencing). Okwor (2019) defined ICT as the use of computer and telecommunication system in the collection, collation, analysis, processing, manipulation, storage, retrieval, transmission and communication of data in different forms which may include audio, visual, visual formats. Akudolu (2019) defined ICT as all kinds of electronics systems that are used in broadcasting, telecommunications and all forms of computer related communications. It involves the use of computers, online self-learning packages, interactive CDs, chips, Satellites, optical fibre technologies and telepresence systems and other related types of information and technologies. ICT can be seen as a shorthand or acronym for computers, software, networks Satellite links and related systems that allow people to access, create, analyze and exchange information and knowledge in ways that were almost imaginable (Association of African Universities, 2000). The Nigerian National Policy for Information Technology (FRN, 2018) defined ICT as computers, ancillary equipment, software and firmware (hardware) and similar procedures, services (including support services) and to related resources as any equipment or interconnected system or sub system of equipment that is used in automatic acquisition, storage, manipulating, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission or reception of data or information. Thus, these technologies are used for accessing, processing gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information. In another perspective, Unwin (2018) defined ICT as new technologies employed in teaching and learning to enhance the professional development of lecturers, teachers and students. Our understanding for ICT use in professional development should be widen to include the value of blended learning solutions which Unwin described as the combination of printed text materials, video, radio and face to face practical experience as well as the use of computers and the internet to give learners opportunities to learn effectively in ways that are appropriate to their needs. According to Ajagun (2019), ICT encompasses the radio, television, videos, computers, sensors interface boxes, e-mail, satellite connections, internet and all the software and materials such are employed by the teachers for teaching and learning. The use of these technologies in classroom instruction is termed on-line instruction. The development of ICT in education cannot be over emphasized and it is one of a kind in history.

Information and Communication Technology has a number of features which is particularly suitable for tertiary education: it combines and integrates a full range of media essential for effective learning. The ICT uses sounds, vision, text and numeric data; it provides lecturers with new opportunities and in particular, distance learning and involvement in the real world (Onasanya, Shehu, Oduwaire & Shehu, 2010). The increasing advantage of the new learning technologies for national development account for why the FRN (2013) in its education policy document introduce computer education as one of the prevocational electives at the junior secondary school level of education, as a vocational elective at the senior secondary school level of education and at the tertiary institution level of education computer literacy is addressed to be a compulsory course in the curricula.

Making computer literacy as a compulsory academic program in Nigerian tertiary institutions appears not to have resulted in any meaningful change on the fundamentals necessary for teaching and learning, rather more attention is placed on administrative services such as admissions, registration and fee payments. Dogara, Ahmadu and Lawal (2019) and Gambari and Okoli (2007) linked these problems of utilization of ICT in teaching and learning to bureaucracy, lack of adequate provision of well-equipped ICT laboratories, lack of adequate provision of qualified personnel to maintain ICT materials, lack of adequate supply of connectivity to internet and lack of adequate training programmes for the lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Another factor militating against the utilization of ICT in teaching and learning is the ICT course contents for the teachers which appear to lack adequate inputs on how to teach "with" computers but rather teach them "about" computers. This has resulted to some pre-service and in-service lecturers lack of basic computer application methodology in content delivery. Sequel to this ICT course content factor, Willis (2018) opined that general computer literacy, opening system, word processing, spread sheet, data base management and telecommunication are not sufficient to prepare pre-service teachers to use ICTs in their classroom. What is needed is professional literacy, a basic understanding of how computer and related technologies can be used in education as well as specific practical skills for the integration of technology into the curriculum at the graduate and undergraduate level and in the introductory subjects for pre-service teachers' effectiveness in teaching. This is because teachers are the hub and change agent of any educative process and major actors in curriculum implementation.

The technological and environmental demands of the 21st century, knowledge and information driven world, becomes an essential prerequisite for lecturers to utilize adaptable and modern instructional methods, materials, resources and strategies effectively in order to adapt to the change from teacher-centered education system to learner-centered education. These technological empowerments are competencies which lecturers should demonstrate in the application of the new learning technologies in education. These include: competence to master a range of educational paradigms that make use of new learning technologies; competence to make use of new learning technologies as a tool for teaching; and competence to master a range of assessment paradigms which make use of new learning technologies (Kitschner& Davis, 2019).

New learning technologies are enablers of these competencies which should support lecturers' and students' activities by connecting both to each other with a vast array of human and information resources (Kosma, 2019). In accounting, several researchers and educators in the empirical pursuit, envisaged that the future of accounting classroom will accommodate face, seating and workstation equipment arrangements; use advanced technologies to suit a combination of class and distance learning audience. the implication of these future technological projections is that tertiary education programmes will need to better prepare accounting graduates for work place culture. These technological advances demand lecturers to incorporate knowledge and discipline contents from diverse sources and utilize different media both traditional and unconventional methods in teaching accounting. There is therefore, the need for schools especially the higher institutions to help graduates particularly accounting education students to acquire face to face practical technological skills that would help them function effectively as that lecturers as the chief implementers of the curriculum be not only aware of these new learning technologies in teaching accounting education courses but also be able to employ them in their instructional deliveries and/or activities.

Research Questions

The following research question were raised to guide the study.

Research Question 1: What is the extent of utilization of hardware technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses?

Research Question 2: What is the extent of utilization of software technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses?

Methods

Research Design

A quantitative survey research procedure by means of poll was utilized for achieving the purpose of the study. This approach was adopted to offer the authors opportunity to have personal interaction with the research participants.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study participants were selected from the Federal Universities in South-East, Nigeria, using a simple random sampling technique so that lecturers and students can be adequately represented in the study. A representative sample of 700 participants were used in the investigation, which comprised 85 lecturers and 615 undergraduate students (Table 1) who were haphazardly chosen from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education over the three Federal Universities in South-East, Nigeria.

Table1: Distribution of Participants Across Tertiary Institutions in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Name of Institution	Lecturers	Students
1.	Imo State University	12`	431
2.	Federal University of Technology, Owerri	12	211
3.	AlvanIkoku Federal University of Education	18	673
4.	Imo State College of Education Ihitte-Uboma	6	14
5.	Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo	14	367
6.	Federal Polytechnic, Nekede	18	756
7.	Federal College of Land Resources Technology	-	-
8	Imo State College of Nursing and Health Sciences	-	-
9.	Kingsly Ozurumba Mbadiwe University, Ogboko	6	39
	Total	86	2518

Source: Personnel Units of the Respective Institutions, 2024.

Research Instrument

The study used the questionnaire as an appropriate instrument for the collection of quantitative data (Bryman, 2007). Two research instruments were used for data collection. The questionnaires were developed by the author, primarily for lecturers. A five point Likert scale of 18 items ranging from Very High Extent (VHE) = 5 Points, High Extent (HE) = 4 points, Moderate Extent (ME) = 3 Points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 Points, and very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 Point, for the collection of data. Eight items measured the extent of utilizing hardware facilities in teaching and learning accounting of courses. Ten items measured the extent of utilizing software facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Two lecturers, one from Social Science Education (Business Education Unit) and the other from Measurement and Evaluation, ensured the content validity of the Instrument. The reliability test was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and yielded a coefficient value of 0.76 through a Cronbach's alpha.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The survey questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents by the author with the help of two trained research assistants. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the levels of usage of instructional technologies (both hardware and software in the teaching and learning of accounting education courses in tertiary institutions.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the extent of utilization of hardware technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Extent of Utilization of Hardware Technologies in the Teaching and Learning of Accounting Courses.

S/N	Items	N	∑*X*.	*X*	*SD*	Remarks
1	Computer	345	763	2.21	.300	LE
2	Television	345	795	2.30	.350	LE
3	Film Strip	345	882	2.56	.486	LE
4	Video	345	855	2.48	.410	LE
5	Overhead Projector	345	849	2.46	.395	LE
6	Radio	345	864	2.50	.431	LE
7	Tape Recorder	345	822	2.38	.393	LE
8	Telephone	345	802	2.32	.336	LE

Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviations on the extent of utilization of hardware facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses. Laying emphasis on the criterion decision mean, the result points out that all the items were considered to be of low extent. The values of standard deviations are seen to be close to the mean, indicating that the scores in the distribution are not homogeneous. All in all, the means reveals that the extent of utilization of hardware facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of utilization of software technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses by lecturers?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Extent of Utilization of Software Technologies in the Teaching and Learning of Accounting Courses by Lecturers

S/N	**Items**	**N**	**∑*X*.**	**X**	**S**	**Remarks**
1.	Power Point	345	836	2.42	1.379	LE
2.	Peachtree Accounting	345	851	2.47	1.404	LE
3.	CD-Rom	345	863	2.50	1.431	LE
4.	Free Accounting	345	860	2.49	1.400	LE
5.	Keepmore Accounting	345	999	2.90	1.487	ME
6.	Quick Books	345	864	2.50	1.423	LE
7.	Adminsoft Accounting	345	850	2.46	1.381	LE
8.	Gnu Cash Accounting	345	863	2.50	1.412	LE
9.	Onestep Accounting	345	848	2.46	1.378	LE
10.	Others (specify) e.g. Excel	345	847	2.46	1.401	LE

Table 3 shows mean scores and standard deviations used in answering research question one in order to ascertain the extent of utilization of software facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses. Laying emphasis on the criterion decision mean, the result points out that excerpt for item number 13 which was used to a moderate extent, all other items were considered to be on low extent. The values of standard deviations are seen to be close to the mean, indicating that the scores in the distribution are not homogeneous. The means revealed that the extent of utilization of software facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low.

Discussion

Data from research question 1 reveals that extent of utilization of new technologies in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating. It indicates that in the area of using hardware facilitates in teaching and learning of accounting courses, the lecturers are not doing well as its level of utilization is below average. The findings are so because where hardware facilitates are not adequately provided for the teaching of accounting courses, there is no way lecturer can use what is not adequately available. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Chiaha, Eze and Ezeudu (2013) who found that the universities are not yet ready for E-learning service delivery since there are inadequate provision and utilization of hardware facilitates. Also, Amuche and Iyekekpolor (2014) study revealed that the competency level of FUC teachers is low and FUC teachers cannot utilize ICT in teaching their subjects. Similarly, the data from research question 2 reveals that the extent of utilization of software facilitates in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average rating. The finding collaborates with the study of Adebo, Adekunmi and Daramola (2013) who found that majority of lecturers are not versed in computer and other technology usage.

Conclusion

The researcher investigated the extent of utilization of new technologies in the teaching and learning of accounting courses in tertiary institutions in Imo State. The study is adopted a survey research design which involved the descriptive method with two research questions. The findings of the study were that: the extent of utilization of hardware facilities in teaching accounting courses by lecturers is low and not significantly above average rating; the extent of utilization of software facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average; the extent of utilization of internet facilities in teaching and learning of accounting courses is low and not above average.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the government and school management should endeavor to make adequate provision of instructional technologies available (both in form of hardware and software), which are necessary for effective teaching and learning of accounting courses in tertiary institutions.

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CAREER CHOICE AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract
The paper examines the worrisome issue of career choice among Students in recent times. The study focused specifically on the roles of certain factors such as Family, Self-efficacy and Market Demand in fostering career choices among business education students. The paper went further to identify some of the ways that these determinant factors impacts the career choice of business education students and offers practical implications for career counseling, educational policies, and interventions aimed at empowering students to make informed and autonomous career decisions. It calls for a holistic approach that addresses family, personal, and labour market considerations to ensure that Students in Public Universities choose careers that align with their interests, abilities, and societal needs. The authors recommended, among others, that comprehensive career counseling programmes should be implemented in schools as this will help students assess their career interests, skills, and values.

Keywords: Business Education Programme, Business Education Students, Career Choice.

Introduction

The global economic meltdown in early 2008 that made the world economy to take a downward turn could be said to be a child's play. The impacts of global and local lockdowns induced by Covid-19, accompanying value chain disruptions, and widespread economic downturn are increasingly being felt, as they contribute to unemployment and decline in labour incomes, which Nigeria, as a country, is not left out from the effect (Ediomo-Ubong & Dele-Adedeji, 2024). However, global labour mobility, outsourcing, technological advances, and automation fueled fear of job insecurity and wages growth, with unskilled and less educated workers feeling most at risk of job displacement, disengagement and unemployment. Lack of information, understanding orientation, awareness, training and opportunities about the activities in different careers or vocations have helped to worsen the situation. No wonder the endless discussions on career selection to help young youths, make the right career choice that will prepare them for the labour market where they will always remain relevant in world economy. Nyamwange (2016) posited that every individual must, at one time or another, be confronted by the problem of career choice and many of them encounter this problem when as a students and are required to choose study programmes leading to their future careers.

Career choice has become a complex issue because of the emergence of information technology, post industrial revolution and job competition, thus making education a universally recognized solution to socio-economic problems of the world. Ohadoma (2014) opined that nations and individuals rely on education as an instrument for eradication of poverty, ignorance, jobless, hunger, bad governance, poor communication system and inadequate shelter among other things. Effiom and Petters (2019) believes the problem of career choice has generated a lot of questions and answers among scholars. The problem has been a delicate issue and amounted to serious controversies which still remains unresolved and needs to be treated with most caution. There is no clear process that students have used to make career choices. Most students rely heavily on their parents or guardians, peers, mentors or idols to make career choices. Most students are easily cajoled by their parents in the choice of a career which at the long run may not agree with their expectations. Choosing a career is a complex process that coincides with high school and university ages, creating psycho-social stress. In this period, when individuals experience difficulties in both their psychological and social lives, asking them to make decisions that will affect their entire lives will increase individuals' stress and prevent them from making sound decisions (Koçak, Ak, Erdem, Sinan, Younis, & Erdoğan 2021). According to Jayson and Lilibeth (2017), young students have diverse dreams and interests in life. There is an old adage which inspires people to succeed: "if there is a will, there is a way." In choosing a career, suitability to the interest of the students is given importance. Students must know on what degree to pursue in college, one that interest them and must also fit their abilities so that it will not be hard for them to choose the right career path.

Some students who are in Public Universities do not have adequate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choice. This has led to so many swing of career path after graduation from the university. Hence, this has highlighted career selection as one of many important choices students make in determining future plans; these decisions will impart them throughout their lives. Hence it is important to find out the factors or determinants of career choice among universities student; so as to see if it can help to guide them to make the right and rational career choice. Similarly, Effiom, and Petters, (2019) observed that the influence parents, guardians and the home front has on the child's learning is strictly fundamental to the concept of life. This thus suggest that most of the habits are basically developed at home and thus could be adjusted during the early childhood pre-school years. This also highlights the fact that the home front and parents occupy the most important position in the child's education. Proper career choice has become very important as a number of students graduate on a yearly basis without employment. The purpose of a university education, from the point of view of both the university and the individual student, is in the main to train and prepare young people for their future vocational activity, which may bring them into close contact with commercial or social enterprise. In other words, at the family and individual levels, a university education is to enable the beneficiary to have a good and sustainable employment. This is why a number of students seem to prefer business education.

Business Education is a crucial component or aspect of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) in Nigeria. It equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for various business-related careers. It focuses on developing practical skills in areas such as accounting, finance, marketing, office technology and management education (OTM). These skills are essential for students to succeed in the business world (Lindsay, Hughes, Dougherty, Reese, & Joshi, 2024). It does this by providing hands-on training and real-world experience, which prepares students for immediate entry into the workforce. This is particularly important in today's fast-paced and ever-changing job market. Business education often includes training in entrepreneurship, encouraging students to start their own businesses. This can lead to job creation and economic growth. With the rise of digital technologies and global markets, business education programs are continually evolving to include new trends and technologies, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the future (Jacob, 2017). This is why skill acquisition takes the center stage in the 21st century in Nigeria.

Business Education

Business Education, an integral part of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) in Nigeria; is the type of education that equips the individual with knowledge, occupational skills and competencies needed to enter into business world or teaching profession in order to earn a living. Business education as a discipline is expected to expose its recipients to diversity curricula, hence, it is that type of education that inculcate in its recipients the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and values that is required for sustainable livelihood and social-economic development. Amuchie and Matsayi (2018) defined business education as an aspect of education that provide the knowledge, skills, understanding and other attitude needed to perform well in the world of business as producers or consumers of goods and services that business offers. The development of business education skills, as an education for business and education about business, is vital to a nation economic emancipation.

Relevance of Business Education

Skill Development: Business education focuses on developing practical skills in different areas such as accounting, finance, marketing, and management. These skills are essential for students to succeed in the business world (Lindsay, Hughes, Dougherty, Reese & Joshi, 2024).

Career Readiness: By providing hands-on training and real-world learning experience, business education prepares students for immediate entry into the workforce. This is particularly important in today's fast-paced and ever-changing job market.

Entrepreneurship: Business education often includes training in entrepreneurship, encouraging students to start their own businesses (Edokpolor & Egbri, 2017). This can lead to job creation and economic growth.

Adaptability: With the rise of digital technologies and global markets, business education programs are continually evolving to include new trends and technologies, ensuring that students are well-prepared for the future (Jacob, 2017).

Career Choice

Career choice refers to the process of selecting an occupation or profession that aligns with one's interests, skills, values, and goals. It involves evaluating various factors such as personal strengths and weaknesses, educational, job satisfaction, market trends, salary potential, work-life balance, passion and purpose, flexibility and adaptability, and long-term career prospects. Career choice is a significant decision that could greatly influence an individual's professional satisfaction, financial stability, and overall well-being. It often involves self-reflection, research, and sometimes guidance from career counselors or mentors to make informed decisions (Gupta, 2024).

Factors to Look at when Choosing a Career

Gupta (2024) suggested ten keys in look at when choosing career. They are discussed as follows:

Self-Assessment:

Self-assessment is a crucial step in navigating the complex landscape of career choices. It requires introspection into interests, values, skills, and personality traits to gain a deeper understanding of oneself. By reflecting on activities that bring joy and subjects that catch passion, one can uncover innate preferences and aptitudes. Identifying strengths allows the students to leverage them in their career while acknowledging weaknesses help to make informed decisions about areas where one may need to improve or seek support. This process not only empowers them to align career path with authentic self but also enhances the likelihood of finding fulfillment and success in their chosen endeavors. Through self-awareness and honest evaluation, the students can embark on a career journey that resonates with your true identity and aspirations.

Research:

To make a smart career choice, it's important to learn about different jobs. This can be done by checking out career websites, talking to people who work in different fields, and even spending time with them on the job. This lets them see what they do every day and what it takes to succeed. By getting firsthand information about the requirements, tasks, chances to grow, and how much money can make in different careers, they will be better prepared to decide what's right for you. It is like doing some detective work to figure out which career path fits them best.

Education and Training:

Before delving into one's dream job, think about what education or training they might need. Some jobs need a specific degree or certification, while others might require vocational training. It is important to figure out what qualifications the students need and how much time and money it will take to get them. This way, one can plan and make sure they are ready for the journey. Also, take a moment to consider if they have the skills and dedication needed to succeed in their chosen field of study. It is like making sure they have all the tools needed before starting a big project.

Market Demand:

Before committing to a career path, it's wise to check if there are enough job opportunities in the field one is interested in. This can be done by looking at current trends, how many jobs are available, and what experts predict for the future. Some industries like healthcare, technology, and renewable energy are growing fast, which means there might be lots of job openings. By doing this homework on the demand for professionals in one' chosen industry, one can get a better idea of whether it's a good fit. It's like checking the weather before planning a picnic – one needs to make sure the conditions are right for a successful outing.

Work-Life Balance:

Consider your desired work-life balance when evaluating career options. Some professions demand long hours, frequent travel, or irregular schedules, which may impact one personal life and well-being. Determine whether the lifestyle associated with one's chosen career aligns with one's priorities and commitments outside of work.

Financial Considerations:

Evaluate the financial aspects of business students career choice, including salary potential, benefits, and job stability. Research average salaries in the field and consider factors such as location, experience, and industry demand. Additionally, assess the potential for advancement and salary growth over time. Striking a balance between financial stability and personal fulfillment is crucial when choosing a career.

Passion and Purpose:

Seek a career that aligns with business education students' passions and values. Consider what motivates them and brings a sense of fulfillment. A career driven by purpose and passion is more likely to sustain the interest and enthusiasm over the long term. However, be realistic about the challenges and sacrifices involved in pursuing the dreams.

Skills Development:

Evaluate opportunities for skill development and professional growth within one's chosen career path. Consider whether the field offers opportunities for continuous learning, skill enhancement, and career advancement. Assess the availability of mentorship programs, networking opportunities, and professional development resources to support one's growth and success.

Job Satisfaction:

Prioritize job satisfaction and fulfillment when choosing a career. Consider factors such as the alignment of one's values with the company culture, the opportunity to make a meaningful impact, and the level of autonomy and creativity afforded in the role. A fulfilling career enhances the overall well-being and contributes to a sense of purpose and happiness.

Flexibility and Adaptability:

Lastly, consider the flexibility and adaptability of business education students chosen career path. In today is rapidly changing job market, it's essential to be adaptable and open to new opportunities and challenges. Choose a career that allows you to leverage your skills and experiences across different industries and roles, ensuring long-term career resilience and success.

Family and Career Choice

Family and career choice refers to the impact that a student's family background, including their parents, siblings, and other family members, may have on their career choices. Family influence can manifest in various ways, such as parental expectations, socioeconomic status, cultural values, and exposure to different professions within the family. Eremie and Okwulehie (2019) posited that as the child grows up, the immediate environment comprises of the nuclear family and the extended family comprising of uncles, aunts, cousins, and grant parents. Accordingly, these people will be expected to have a significant effect on the students′ choice of career. The family and parents shape the future personality of the students as they grow up. Parents shape the personality of their children by influencing the level of education or training that their children achieve; the knowledge they have about work and different occupations; the beliefs and attitudes they have in working; and the motivation they have to succeed. Most of this is learned unconsciously as children and teenagers absorb their parents' attitudes and expectations of them as they grow up.

Williams (2016) noted that if their parents' jobs give them great satisfaction or provide a comfortable lifestyle, children see the perks early on, and may favour these careers over others. In contrast, if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid roles. According to Williams, the parental variables which influence a students′ career choice include the parents′ occupation, the activities they allow their children to participate in (for example like music or dance lessons or to pursue certain sports activities sometimes influence them to commit to those activities full-time), parental encouragement and expectations of their children, and the Parent-Child relationship.

Mohd and Abdul, (2015) revealed that parents, mothers, in particular were more influential in career choice of school students compared to their peers. Choosing a career is like choosing a life partner in view of its implications for one's happiness or otherwise in future. It determines, to a large degree, how time will be spent; who will be chosen as friends; what attitudes and values will be adopted; where one will reside and what pattern of family living will be adopted (Koçak, Ak, Erdem, Sinan, Younis, & Erdoğan1, 2021). This is why students in business education students are always anxious about what they will do with their lives and the manner of adults they will turn out to be. They are mostly concerned about early entry into the occupational world, finding good working environment, especially, in this fast changing and self-motivated society where employment opportunities are not readily available for young people in the labour market.

Various Ways Family Impacts Career Choice of Children

There are several ways in which family can impact an individual's career choices:

Parental Influence:

Parents often have strong opinions and preferences about the type of career their children should pursue. This could be due to their own experiences, aspirations, or beliefs about what constitutes a "good" or "respectable" career. Children may feel pressured to follow in their parents' footsteps or choose a career path that their parents approve of (Shazia, & Muhammad, 2019).

Socioeconomic Background:

The financial resources and educational opportunities available within a family may significantly influence career choices. Individuals from affluent families may have more access to higher education, internships, and professional networks, which may open up a wider range of career options (Vadivel, Alam, Nikpoo, & Ajanil, 2023). Conversely, those from lower-income families may need to prioritize financial stability and security, leading them to choose more practical or lucrative career paths (Tompsett & Knoester, 2023).

Role Models and Mentors:

The career paths and experiences of family members, such as parents, siblings, or extended family, may serve as role models for an individual. Observing the successes, challenges, and job satisfaction of family members may shape an individual's perceptions of different career options and their own aspirations (Koçak, Ak, Erdem, Sinan, Younis, & Erdoğan1, 2021).

Family Responsibilities and Obligations:

Family responsibilities, like caring for aging relatives or supporting younger siblings, can significantly impact a person's career decisions. Many individuals may select jobs that offer greater flexibility or are more accommodating to family needs. Additionally, they might prioritize financial security over personal satisfaction in their professional lives (Schulz R, & Eden J, (2016).

Geographic Location:

The availability of certain job opportunities and industries within a family's geographic region may limit or expand the range of career options accessible to an individual. Families may encourage their children to pursue careers that are prevalent in the local job market (Rickmeier, 2023).

Family Traditions and Culture:

In some cultures, or family traditions, certain career paths are highly valued or even expected, such as becoming a doctor, lawyer, or engineer. Individuals may feel a strong sense of duty or pressure to maintain these family traditions, even if the chosen career may not align with their personal interests or talents (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018).

Child Upbringing:

If their parents were uneducated or always struggling to get by financially, business education students may decide you're never going to be in the same position. This may prompt them to pursue a vastly different career path, looking for stable, high-earning jobs. Likewise, if parents who were workaholics and were never around when one was a child, one may decide to pursue a line of work with flexibility that gives parents more time with their children (CHRON Contributor, 2021).

It is important to note that the influence of family on career choices can be both positive and negative. While family can provide valuable guidance and support, it is crucial for individuals to balance their own aspirations and interests with the expectations and preferences of their family members. This has raised the issue of self-efficacy.

Self-Efficacy and Career Choice

Self-efficacy is a psychological concept that pertains to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish tasks. In the context of career choice, self-efficacy may refer to a students' confidence in their skills, interests, and capabilities related to different career paths. Higher level of self-efficacy is often associated with greater motivation and persistence in pursuing career goals (Edokpolor, 2018c; Bandura, 1977). In respect to gender differences in academic self-efficacy, Bolat and Odacı (2016) revealed that subjects with masculine and feminine gender roles had greater career decision making self-efficacy than those with indeterminate roles, and those with androgynous roles had greater career making self-efficacy than those with masculine, feminine or indeterminate gender roles.

Some students have a kind of belief in their ability to be successful in a particular career even when it is evident that they lack the required mental capability. Some might achieve success if they are backed with academic accomplishment while others may fail because they have created unrealistic goals for themselves. Although experience has shown that the belief one has about him/herself has a long way in determining success in life. In other words, what an individual call himself to be, that is the exact kind of personality they would build for themselves. Self-efficacy does not believe in failure in any tasks given provided there is a presumed solution.

Sources of Self-Efficacy

Bandura's (1977) postulated that self-efficacy beliefs are developed and increased primarily through four major sources. These sources of self-efficacy are discussed as follows:

Past Performance Accomplishments

Although self-efficacy is flexible, it usually comes from sources that are based primarily on past performance experiences (Lane, Jones & Stevens, 2002). Past performance accomplishments tend to be the most powerful and dependable predictors of self-efficacy beliefs (Dawes, Horan & Hackett, 2000; Lane, Jones & Stevens, 2002). Research evidence showed that high self-efficacy beliefs from past experiences of success and mastery, and low self-efficacy based on poor experiences also generalize across different contexts and situations (Lane, Jones & Stevens, 2002). Based on this research it would be predicted that past performance accomplishment shows the strongest influence on self-efficacy beliefs.

Verbal Persuasion

A person's self-efficacy may increase when encouraged by persons who are capable of completing a task with success, especially with regard to mastery in difficult situations (Bandura, 1977). Guidance and positive suggestions from others may assist in correcting performance in areas needing improvement that was previously producing unsuccessful results. This encouragement, however, could be less influential than an individual's own accomplishment experiences, since it is not based on authentic personal experiences. In response, it is important that people utilize verbal support and encouragement from others, to be motivated to create new opportunities to observe their own success.

Emotional Arousal

Emotional arousal is another source of information that can impact self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). People often rely, to some extent, on their emotional reactions to situations or tasks to help determine if they can cope and be successful at it. High negative emotional arousal often debilitates performance, whereas positive emotional arousal may raise performance. Negative emotional arousals are stressful reactions that often lead to fear, and cause people to doubt their competency. Positive emotional arousals and anxiety towards a task may lead people to be more motivated to perform successfully and increase feelings of satisfaction from the task. It is essential, therefore, that techniques to reduce negative and increase positive emotions may be used to raise self-efficacy.

Vicarious Learning

Many self-efficacy beliefs are also developed by learning from other people's experiences (Bandura, 1977). Observing others perform successfully could improve people's beliefs in their own capabilities to perform in similar ways, and helps encourage persistence in their own efforts. People often compare themselves to others and become convinced that if someone else similar to them can do it, so can they. The clearer the outcomes and the more determination expended in the face of obstacles by the model, the more likely the observer will be to model that behaviour in the future. Since observing others is not a direct reflection on how someone will do personally though, its effect can be weaker than the other sources. As a result, it is beneficial for people to observe the successes of others to help enhance their confidence in their own abilities to succeed.

Market Demand and Career Choice

Market Demand refers to the current and projected needs of the job market or economy in terms of specific skills, industries, or professions. Career choices influenced by market demand may involve considerations such as job availability, salary potential, growth prospects, and alignment with industry trends or emerging sectors (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). When choosing a career path, many individuals take market demand into account. Careers with high market demand often have better job prospects, higher salaries, and more opportunities for advancement (Carnevale, Cheah, & Hanson, 2015). Evaluating market demand could help individuals make informed decisions about their education, training, and career goals.

According to Fogg, and Harrington (2019), some key factors that influence market demand include: Economic conditions and industry growth; demographic changes and shifts in the labor force, advancements in technology and the need for specialized skills, Government policies and regulations that impact certain sectors; global competitive forces and outsourcing trends. By understanding current and projected market demands, individuals could position themselves for success in the job market. This may involve pursuing degrees or certifications in high-demand fields, developing in-demand skills, or targeting industries with strong growth potential (Frey, & Osborne, 2017).

Market demand plays a significant role in determining career choices. It reflects the needs and preferences of consumers, which in turn influence the demand for goods and services, thereby shaping the job market. Understanding market demand may help individuals make informed decisions about their careers by identifying industries and professions that are in high demand and likely to offer opportunities for growth and advancement. Lynham (2018) observed that markets for labour have demand and supply curves, just like markets for goods. The law of demand applies in labor markets this way: A higher salary or wage—that is, a higher price in the labor market—leads to a decrease in the quantity of labor demanded by employers, while a lower salary or wage leads to an increase in the quantity of labor demanded. The law of supply functions in labor markets, too: A higher price for labor leads to a higher quantity of labor supplied; a lower price leads to a lower quantity supplied.

Various Ways Market Demand Impact Career Choices

Industry Growth:

Individuals often consider industries experiencing growth when making career decisions. Industries with high market demand typically offer more job opportunities and better prospects for career advancement (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023).

Skills and Qualifications:

Market demand could dictate the skills and qualifications required for various roles. Job seekers may choose career paths that align with their skills and interests while also considering the demand for those skills in the market (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Salary and Compensation:

High demand for certain skills or professions often translates into higher salaries and better compensation packages. Job seekers may prioritize careers in fields where salaries are competitive and there is potential for financial stability (PayScale, 2023).

Job Security:

Career choices are influenced by the level of job security offered by different industries and professions. Individuals may opt for careers in sectors with stable demand to minimize the risk of unemployment or job instability (Forbes, 2023).

Technological Advances:

Technological advancements could create new career opportunities while making others obsolete. Individuals may choose careers that align with emerging technologies and market trends to stay relevant in their fields (PwC, 2022).

Globalization:

Global market trends and international trade may impact career choices by creating opportunities in new markets and industries. Professionals with skills and experience relevant to global markets may have a competitive advantage in their career pursuits (World Bank, 2023).

Conclusion

Knowing the fact that skills and knowledge acquired from business education offer numerous benefits, and aligned career choices add various benefits not just to the students, but also to the employer and the society. Improved understanding of family, self-efficacy and market demand amongst other factors must be given serious attention since they are cable of influencing career choice that will help to reduce problem of inappropriate career choice by young persons.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. *Reinforce Career Counseling Programmes*: Comprehensive Career Counseling programmes should be implemented in schools that will help students assess their interests, skills, and values. To help them also explore a diverse range of career options that is aligned with their potential and understanding the educational and training requirements for different careers.
2. *Empower Student Self-Awareness*: Incorporate self-assessment activities that enable students to identify their unique strengths; weaknesses; and personal preferences. Understand how their interests, skills, and values align with different career paths. Develop a strong sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to make informed career decisions.
3. *Involve Families in the Process:* Parents and guardians should be educated on the importance of supporting their children's career exploration. Provide guidance on how to have constructive conversations about career choices. Encourage families to consider their child's interests, abilities, and personal aspirations when providing input on career decisions.
4. *Integrate Labour Market Information:* To ensure that career education curriculum include: Up-to-date data on current and projected job market trends, growth industries, and in-demand skills. Share information on the earning potential, job outlook, and career advancement opportunities for various occupations. Discussions on how market demands may influence career choices and the need for flexibility and adaptability.
5. *Foster Collaborative Partnerships:* Develop strong partnerships between schools, local businesses, and community organizations to provide students with real-world work experiences, job shadowing, and mentorship opportunities. Invite industry professionals to share their career journeys and insights with students. Gather feedback from employers on the skills and competencies they seek in prospective employees.
6. *Emphasize Transferable Skills:* Highlight the importance of developing transferable skills,

such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and adaptability, which are valuable across a wide range of careers.

7. *Inspire Lifelong Learning:* Promote the concept of ongoing learning and skill development to help students understand that career paths are not undeviating and that they may need to continuously update their knowledge and abilities to remain competitive in the job market.

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EFFECT OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study examined the effect of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) on students' learning outcomes in Financial Accounting among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study compares the impact of UDL and conventional teaching methods on students' academic achievement and motivation. It also explores the influence of gender on these outcomes. The study employed a quasi-experimental design with a sample of 40 SS2 Financial Accounting students selected from two public secondary schools in Ijebu East Local Government, Ogun State. The experimental group (15 students) was from Ijebu Ife Community Grammar School, and the control group (25 students) was from St. Anthony Grammar School. Data were collected using the Financial Accounting Achievement Test (FAAT) and the Adapted Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (AMSLQ). SPSS was used to conduct statistical analysis, using descriptive statistics and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). Findings from the study showed that UDL significantly improves student motivation and academic achievement in Financial Accounting, while the conventional method was less effective. Gender did not significantly affect student performance or motivation, and the interaction between treatment and gender was minimal. The study recommends incorporating UDL strategies in teaching to enhance student outcomes and suggests further research into factors such as teacher training and resources that may improve student achievement in secondary schools.

Keywords: Financial Accounting, Student achievement, Student Motivation, Secondary Schools, Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Introduction

Education is a cornerstone of progress for both individual and the society. It ensures students are impacted with skills that are needed for their personal development in order to meet the demands of the changing global economy. Akamigbo and Eneja (2020) sees education as a very significant factor that empowers not only individuals but also supports the country's transitioning towards a knowledge-based economy. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in its Education Policy Document lay emphasis on the need for educational practices that are adaptable and relevant in a competitive world (FRN, 2014). This shows the importance of innovative teaching strategies and modern technologies in fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and flexibility (CAST, 2020; Rose, Meyer & Gordon, 2023). In Ogun State where educational environments are characterized by diverse student needs, the challenge of engaging students and motivating them becomes even more critical.

This challenge is of great relevance in the context of Financial Accounting. Financial Accounting is a skilled subject that aids students pursue careers in business, finance, and administration. It equips students with financial literacy needed for both personal and professional success. However, the abstract concepts and complex calculation in the subject often presents challenges to students (Akinloye & Iyekekpolor, 2022). According to Boothe and Lohman (2020), the conventional method often used in teaching do not effectively engage students and tends to diminished their motivation as students struggle to stay engaged. These persistent challenges underscore the need for teaching method that is innovative and inclusive. A method that can address the diverse learning needs of students, especially in complex subjects like Financial Accounting. One of such method is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL is a teaching method that offers a flexible and inclusive framework by providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression to students (CAST, 2018). In the view of Sharma, Thakur, Kapoor and Singh (2023), UDL ensures that teaching methods are adaptable and inclusive, allowing all students regardless of their abilities or learning preferences to engage meaningfully with the material. UDL has proven to be effective in promoting engagement and success for diverse learners. This makes it well suited for Ogun's dynamic classroom settings.

Despite the challenges present with conventional method, UDL principles create a learning environment that is inclusive. Which according to Tobin and Behling (2018) can meaningfully engage students with the content and lead to a deeper understanding of the subject. Central to UDL's impact are student achievement and motivation, both crucial in the learning process. Achievement in Financial Accounting equips students with skills necessary for career success and informed decision-making (Akinloye & Iyekekpolor, 2022). Motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) on the other hand is critical in subjects like Financial Accounting, as it drives persistence in mastering challenging content (Fovet, 2020). UDL's principles provide dynamic learning experiences which increase student interest and involvement and also enhances their motivation and achievement. Additionally, gender influences learning outcomes in Financial Accounting. Research by Alao and Ukpong (2020) suggests that male and female students may approach the subject with differing levels of confidence, interest, and motivation. These differences can impact engagement and achievement, making it essential to create inclusive learning environments that support all students and mitigate gender-based disparities.

This study provides critical insights for educators on the effective implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to address diverse learning needs. It offers strategies to engage students who face challenges with traditional teaching methods, facilitating more inclusive and effective learning experiences. The findings are valuable to administrators and policymakers, serving as a guide for developing professional development programs that promote inclusive teaching practices and enhance student outcomes. Additionally, curriculum developers can apply the results to integrate UDL principles into Financial Accounting curricula, ensuring accessibility and effectiveness for all learners. This research also contributes to the broader discourse on UDL's potential to transform educational practices. The focus on achievement and motivation provides evidence of how UDL can improve academic success in Financial Accounting in secondary schools in Ogun State. Ultimately, the findings of this study could pave the way for more inclusive, engaging, and effective financial education that equips students with the skills necessary for success in a global economy.

Statement of Problem

The teaching of Financial Accounting in secondary schools in Ogun State faces some challenges due to the diverse learning needs of students. While some students excel, many others struggle with abstract concepts and complex calculations. This difficulty is often linked to conventional instructional methods that follow a one-size-fits-all approach. These methods fail to accommodate students with varying cognitive abilities, and educational backgrounds. Thus, leading to disengagement, reduced motivation, and limited success. Furthermore, large class sizes, limited resources, and time constraints hinder personalized support. while the increasing use of digital tools also calls for more inclusive teaching models.

Financial Accounting, with its complex concepts, requires innovative pedagogical approaches for effective learning. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) offers a framework that is flexible and inclusive, which supports diverse learners by promoting multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. Despite the success of UDL in other contexts, its impact on Financial Accounting in secondary schools in Nigeria remains underexplored. This study aims to assess the effect of UDL on students' learning outcomes in Financial Accounting in Ogun State with the specific focus on improving students' comprehension, motivation, and academic performance. As the need for inclusive education grows, it becomes even more pressing to explore evidence-based strategies like UDL which is vital for supporting diverse learners and ensuring equitable academic success.

Theoretical Framework

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) was developed by David Rose and CAST in the 1990s. The framework is aimed at creating learning environment that is flexible and inclusive, which cater to students with diverse learning needs. UDL is based on three principles namely, Multiple Means of Representation, Multiple Means of Engagement and Multiple Means of Expression. These principles provide various ways to access content, offer personalized methods to engage students and also allows students to demonstrate their knowledge in diverse ways. UDL has the ability to cater to students with varied learning styles and also support them in grasping complex concepts in financial accounting. It uses flexible methods that suit individual learning needs. Thus, students are motivated to engage and learn.

Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky are key proponents of constructivist theory. They argued that learners actively build knowledge based on their experiences. Piaget (1934) focused on developmental stages, while Vygotsky (1936) emphasized social interactions and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to ZPD, optimal learning occurs with guided support. In the context of financial accounting, constructivist theory encourages students to actively engage with real-life problems to facilitate deeper understanding. UDL supports constructivism by offering adaptable learning experiences, fostering independent exploration, and encouraging collaboration among students. This alignment enhances student engagement and the ability to connect accounting concepts to practical experiences.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to examine:

1. the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on the students' achievement in financial accounting.
2. the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on students' motivation in financial accounting.
3. the influence of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting.
4. the influence of gender on students' motivation in financial accounting.

Research Questions

The researcher aimed to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on the students' achievement in financial accounting?

Research Question 2: What is the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on the students' motivation in financial accounting?

Research Question 3: What is the influence of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting?

Research Hypotheses

Null hypotheses were formed and tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant effect of treatment on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of treatment on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant influence of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Research Hypothesis 4: There is no significant influence of gender on students' motivation in financial accounting.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design to examine the effect of UDL on student learning outcomes in Financial Accounting in secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. The pre-test and post-test measures were employed to examine the effectiveness of the instructional strategies. This design was chosen to ensure external validity by conducting the study in a natural classroom environment, addressing potential biases like selection and history effects, and reducing logistical constraints typically encountered in randomized experiments.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study targeted SS2 students from two public co-educational schools, with a sample size of 40 students, 15 in the experimental group using UDL and 25 in the control group receiving conventional instruction. The participants were selected using a multi-stage sampling approach, which included simple random sampling to choose the Local Government Area and purposive sampling for selecting co-educational schools.

Research Instrument

The research instruments used for data collection included the Financial Accounting Achievement Test (FAAT), the Adapted Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (AMSLQ), and the Adapted VARK Questionnaire. These instruments were validated by experts and ensured a comprehensive assessment of students' academic achievement and motivation.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to evaluate the impact of UDL on student learning outcomes compared to traditional methods.

Result

Table 1: Distribution of Secondary School Students Based on Treatment Condition.

Groups	Frequency	Percent
Experimental	15	37.5%
Control	25	62.5%
Total	40	100.0%

The distribution of students across treatment conditions shows that 37.5% (15 students) were in the experimental group, while 62.5% (25 students) were in the control group, bringing the total sample size to 40 students (100%). The larger proportion in the control group suggests that more students were exposed to conventional teaching methods compared to those who received the experimental treatment.

Research Question 1: What is the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on the students' achievement in financial accounting?

Table 2: Mean of Pretest and Posttest Scores of Groups Taught Financial Accounting Concepts

Groups	N	Pretest $\bar{X}$	SD	Posttest $\bar{X}$	SD	Mean Difference
UDL Principles	15	27.93	3.674	48.87	8.305	20.94
Conventional Teaching	25	33.56	8.622	38.12	10.756	4.56

The UDL principles group (Experimental) showed a significant improvement, with the mean score increasing from 27.93 (Pretest) to 48.87 (Posttest), a mean difference of 20.94. This suggests that UDL principles had a substantial positive effect on students' academic achievement in financial accounting. The Conventional teaching group (Control) also showed some improvement, but the increase was smaller, from 33.56 (Pretest) to 38.12 (Posttest), with a mean difference of 4.56. The higher mean difference in the UDL group (20.94 vs. 4.56) indicates that the UDL principles were more effective in enhancing students' academic performance compared to the conventional teaching method. The standard deviation increase in both groups suggests some variability in students' performance post-treatment. However, the higher posttest mean score in the UDL group further emphasizes its impact. These findings support the conclusion that UDL principles significantly improve academic achievement in financial accounting compared to conventional teaching methods.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of treatment (UDL principles and Conventional method) on the students' motivation in financial accounting?

Table 3: Mean of Pretest and Posttest Scores for Students' Motivation in Financial Accounting

Groups	N	Pretest $\bar{X}$	SD	Posttest $\bar{X}$	SD	Mean Difference
UDL Principles	15	3.4667	0.36187	3.7400	0.32689	0.2733
Conventional Teaching Method	25	3.5000	0.32146	3.4040	0.38240	-0.0960

- UDL Principles: Motivation (0.2733 increase) improved after treatment, indicating that students responded positively to UDL principles.
- Conventional Teaching Methods: A decline in motivation (-0.0960) suggests that students in this group experienced reduced enthusiasm and participation post-treatment.
- The greater improvement in the UDL group supports the effectiveness of UDL principles in enhancing student engagement and motivation.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting?

Table 4: Mean of Pretest and Posttest Scores for Effect of Gender on Students' Achievement and Motivation in Financial Accounting.

Variables	N	Pretest Mean	Pretest SD	Posttest Mean	Posttest SD	Mean Difference
Financial Accounting Achievement Test (Male)	14	30.210	7.181	44.360	8.215	14.150
Financial Accounting Achievement Test (Female)	26	32.120	7.916	40.960	12.398	8.840
Motivation (Male)	14	3.414	0.404	3.543	0.403	0.129
Motivation (Female)	26	3.527	0.289	3.523	0.397	-0.004

The data evaluates the influence of gender on students' achievement, motivation and engagement in financial accounting. Achievement: Males had a higher posttest mean score (44.36) than females

(40.96), though females initially performed better in the pretest. This suggests that males improved more after the intervention. Motivation: Both genders had similar pretest and posttest motivation scores, indicating minimal gender-based differences.
Overall, while gender influenced achievement, motivation remained consistent across both groups.

Hypotheses Testing
Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant effect of treatment on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Table 5: ANCOVA-Test on Effect of Treatment on The Academic Achievement of Students in Financial Accounting.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Post Financial Accounting Achievement Test					
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	2542.588[a]	2	1271.294	20.608	.000
Intercept	574.486	1	574.486	9.313	.004
PREFAAT	1459.861	1	1459.861	23.665	.000
Treatment	1979.753	1	1979.753	32.092	.000
Error	2282.512	37	61.690		
Total	75890.000	40			
Corrected Total	4825.100	39			
a. R Squared = .527 (Adjusted R Squared = .501)					

The ANCOVA result shows that there is no significant effect of treatment on the academic achievement of students in financial accounting. The dependent variable is the post-test scores of students. The Tests of Between-Subjects Effects show the key results relevant to this hypothesis. The Treatment variable has a Type III Sum of Squares of 1979.753, with an F-value of 32.092 and a Sig. value of 0.000. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}). This indicates that there is a significant effect of the treatment on students' post-test achievement in financial accounting. The PREFAAT (pre-test) variable also shows a significant effect with a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that pre-test scores are a significant covariate in explaining variations in post-test scores. The Corrected Model explains 52.7% of the variance in post-test achievement (R-squared = 0.527), with an adjusted R-squared of 0.501, indicating a moderately strong fit of the model. In conclusion, the treatment significantly influences academic achievement in financial accounting, after accounting for pre-test scores, supporting the effectiveness of the treatment.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of treatment on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Table 6: ANCOVA Test on effect of treatment on students' motivation in financial accounting.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Post- Motivation					
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	1.065[a]	2	.533	3.942	.028
Intercept	4.154	1	4.154	30.749	.000
Pretest	.007	1	.007	.050	.825
Treatment	1.064	1	1.064	7.876	.008
Error	4.999	37	.135		
Total	504.500	40			

Corrected Total	6.064	39			
a. R Squared = .176 (Adjusted R Squared = .131)					

The ANCOVA result shows that there is no significant effect of treatment on students' motivation in financial accounting. The analysis reveals the following: The Corrected Model is significant (p=0.028), suggesting that the model accounts for a meaningful portion of the variability in students' post-motivation scores.

- The Intercept is highly significant (p=0.000), indicating that the baseline motivation level (pre-test score) is strongly associated with post-test motivation scores.
- The Pretest score has an insignificant effect on post-motivation (p=0.825), meaning the pre-test motivation score does not significantly predict the post-test score after adjusting for treatment effects. The Treatment variable is significant (p=0.008), which means that there is a statistically significant effect of treatment on students' motivation in financial accounting, rejecting the null hypothesis. This suggests that the treatment had a notable impact on students' motivation after accounting for their pre-test scores.

Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant effect of treatment on motivation is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant influence of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting.

Table 7: Effect of Gender on Students' Achievement in Financial Accounting.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Post Financial Accounting Achievement Test					
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	736.940[a]	2	368.470	3.335	.047
Intercept	1474.963	1	1474.963	13.349	.001
PREFAAT	632.015	1	632.015	5.720	.022
GENDER	174.105	1	174.105	1.576	.217
Error	4088.160	37	110.491		
Total	75890.000	40			
Corrected Total	4825.100	39			
a. R Squared = .153 (Adjusted R Squared = .107)					

The hypothesis 3 posits that there is no significant effect of gender on students' achievement in financial accounting. The result from the ANCOVA shows that the effect of gender on students' post-test achievement in financial accounting is not statistically significant. Specifically, the F-value for gender is 1.576, with a p-value of 0.217, which is greater than the conventional alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that the gender variable does not have a significant effect on students' achievement after controlling for the pre-test scores (PREFAAT). The corrected model is significant (p = 0.047), meaning that the model as a whole explains a significant amount of variance in students' achievement. However, the gender factor alone does not contribute significantly to this explanation. The pre-test scores (PREFAAT), on the other hand, show a significant effect (p = 0.022), suggesting that prior knowledge or performance on the pre-test is a more influential factor in determining students' post-test achievement. Furthermore, the R-squared value of 0.153 indicates that approximately 15.3% of the variance in post-test achievement can be explained by the model, including the pre-test scores and gender. However, the gender effect alone does not appear to be a significant contributor.

Research Hypothesis 4: There is no significant influence of gender on students' motivation in financial accounting.

Table 8: Effect of Gender on Students' Motivation in Financial Accounting.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Post- Motivation

Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	.005[a]	2	.003	.016	.984
Intercept	4.149	1	4.149	25.339	.000
PREMO	.002	1	.002	.011	.919
GENDER	.004	1	.004	.026	.872
Error	6.059	37	.164		
Total	504.500	40			
Corrected Total	6.064	39			

a. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.053)

The results show that the gender factor has a p-value of 0.872 (Sig.), which is much higher than the common significance level of 0.05. This suggests that there is no significant effect of gender on students' motivation in financial accounting. In other words, the motivation levels between male and female students do not significantly differ after controlling for pre-motivation scores (PREMO). The corrected model also has a very high p-value of 0.984, indicating that the overall model is not statistically significant in explaining the variance in post-motivation scores. Furthermore, the R-squared value is 0.001, and the Adjusted R-squared value is -0.053, both of which indicate that the model explains almost none of the variance in post-motivation scores. Additionally, the PREMO (pre-motivation) variable has a p-value of 0.919, which also supports the conclusion that pre-motivation does not significantly influence post-motivation scores. In conclusion, based on the statistical analysis, we fail to reject the null hypothesis as there is no significant effect of gender on students' motivation in financial accounting.

Conclusion

The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in enhancing students' academic achievement and motivation in financial accounting. The findings suggest that UDL principles significantly improve student outcomes, particularly in motivation, while the conventional method falls short in terms of both academic achievement and engagement. Gender did not have a significant impact on student performance or motivation.

Recommendations

The findings from the study emphasize the need for inclusive teaching strategies like UDL to cater to diverse student needs and improve educational outcomes in financial accounting. Also, the study recommends future research may explore other factors, such as teaching resources, teacher training, or socio-cultural influences, that could contribute to enhancing student achievement and motivation in secondary schools.

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PROMOTION AND ACCESS TO TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AS CORRELATES OF LECTURERS' JOB COMMITMENT IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The study examined the relationships between promotion, access to training and development opportunities and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative research design. The population of the study comprised of 567 lecturers in the four Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria. A sample size of 284 lecturers representing 50% of the population was drawn from each of the target institutions in the State using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Promotion, Access to Training and Development Questionnaire and Lecturers' Job Commitment Questionnaire. The Research Question was descriptively analyzed using mean ($\overline{X}$) and standard deviation (SD). Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Statistic was used to test Research Hypotheses 1 and 2. Results showed that staff promotion, access to training and development opportunities significantly and moderately predicted lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria. Based on findings it was recommended, among others, that administrators of universities should endeavor to reduce the rate at which they use autocratic style of leadership because it has counterproductive effect on lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Access to Training Opportunities, Access to Development Opportunities, Lecturers' Job Commitment, Private Universities

Introduction

The need for private universities in Nigeria has been enhanced by a number of factors such as: increasing demand for higher education and the inability of the public universities to satisfy the growing societal demand for university education. This implied that the main aim of private university is to expand access to university education (Ajadi, 2021). In addition to these factors are the declining capacity of public universities; the retrenchment of public servants, failure in the part of the federal government with no compliance with ASUU agreement, resulting in strike actions by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU); the demand for courses and subject of study which had changed; pressure by external agencies to cut public services; a growing emphasis on the need for a highly skilled labour force among others. Regrettably, these may have effect on the job commitment of staff in the university.

Job commitment refers to how attached or dedicated a worker is in the attainment of the predetermined organizational goals and objectives. Morakinyo (2020) defined commitment as a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets. He noted that employees are theorized to experience this force in the form of three bases, or mindsets: affective, normative, and continuance, which reflect emotional ties, perceived obligation, and perceived need to keep performing a duty, till the objective is attained. Hence, job commitment can be classified into three major core conditions or dimensions, namely: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

Staff promotion is one of the job features that is designed to ensure a sense of achievement and progress for both academic and non-academic workers within the university hierarchy. For instance, the National University Commission (NUC) recommended that a minimum of a Ph.D. degree or a Master degree holder with enrolment in a doctoral degree programme should be the minimum academic qualification of any lecturer in the university. This minimum academic qualification of a Ph.D. entitles a newly employed lecturer the position of Lecturer II. As years of teaching experience and academic publications increase, such lecturers move up the academic ladder to a Lecturer I, Senior Lecturer, associate professor (Reader), Professor. As much as this order of promotion takes effort, commitment, hard work and dedication, many lecturers stay hopeful and work patiently for about three years before they attain the level of the professorial cadre in the University system. Unfortunately, many lecturers in private universities sometimes become unsatisfied with how long it takes them to get their promotion as at when due. In some cases, many are denied their promotion such as a promotion. In some cases, some eventually receive promotion letters after years of waiting; without getting the benefits accrued to the newly attained level. All of these may reduce lecturers' morale, enthusiasm and job interest to a point their commitment and loyalty to the employer may be affected.

Access to training and development programme is another other forms of challenges confronting lecturers in institution. Training and development programme simply means on-the-job professional development. They are programmes that are aimed at enhancing the capacity of lecturers to be effective and efficient in their ability to accomplish the predetermined objectives of the institution. For instance, in-service programme represents a veritable medium which aim at correcting certain deficiencies in order to accelerate technological advancement through the educational system. In addition, workshops, conferences, seminars serve as effective measures of dissemination of information concerning academic practice (Amadi & Anaemeotu, 2013). Unfortunately, not every lecturer has access to these programmes in their institutions and this could constitute another challenge to lectures that seek on the job professional development. This problem may further be compounded by lectures' work load and inadequate financial support from institutions for further training.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that lecturers are faced with a host of challenges such as leadership style of Heads of Department, staff promotion, access to training and development opportunities, shortage of human resources and shortage of staff welfare on a day to day basis at work. These constraints may affect lecturers' job morale, their work relations and job commitment. In addition, the dynamic and competitive nature of private universities is such that new and skilled academic staffs are needed to man the various departments. This is derived from the fact that the best assets in any university organization are skilled and competent staffs who need to be managed effectively to ensure job commitment. To promote effectiveness and efficiency in the private universities, it is pertinent to examine the influence of some of the aforementioned lecturers on job commitment of lecturers.

Studies on lecturers' promotion and training development opportunities and their job commitment have been investigated by scholars. For instance, Adeoye and Ziska (2014) investigated the relationship between promotion of management and employees' job commitment in insurance sector in Nigeria. The study revealed that compensation management and employees' job performance are significantly correlated, though weak and that compensation management has an impact on motivation and employees job commitment.

Iyida (2015) also investigated the effect of increase in wage and fringe benefits on the productivity of workers in Nigeria using Federal Ministry of Transportation (works) Enugu as a case study. The study revealed that increasing wages in the Federal Ministry of Transportation enhanced the job performance or productivity of workers to a large extent. The study also found that monetization of fringe benefits has improved the employees' commitment. Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola and Heirsmac (2014) examined the effect of promotion packages on employees' commitment and retention in a selected private University in Ogun State, South-West Nigeria. The findings indicated that there was a strong correlation between the tested dependent and independent variables (salary, bonus, incentives, allowances, and fringe benefits).

The nexus between access to training and development opportunities and job commitment of employees has attracted the attention of several scholars. For instance, Oni, Ijaiya, and Mohammed (2013) examined the impact of training and management development in Nigeria Banking Industry. The result showed that there is great impact of training and management development on job commitment of employees. Saka and Haruna, (2013) investigated Staff development as a motivating factor in job performance among personnel in branch libraries, University of Maiduguri. The result showed that staff development programmes collectively increases, the job commitment of staff tends to be higher. Abomeh and Nwakoby (2015) examined effects of training on employees' commitment in Nigeria insurance industry. The findings showed that in order for organization to achieve optimum returns from her investment, there is the need to develop on-job training programs and effectively managed training of employees which is the most vital asset of organizations and the dynamic of their commitment. Emeti (2015) assessed the effects of training and development on the performance of paint manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study revealed that on-job training programme has significant influence on job commitment of employees.

Studies have also tried to investigate issues bordering around lecturers' challenges and its implication on their commitment, productivity and quality of higher education in Nigeria. For instance, Asiyai and Oghuvbu (2009) examined the challenges of lecturer's quality in higher education in Nigeria in the 21st Century, but did not include private universities in their investigation. Empirical studies by Peretomode and Chukwuma, (2017) and Uvah (2017) included private universities; and discussed the effect of lecturers' challenges on manpower, educational and national development but did not empirically examine the effect of the former (lecturers' challenges) on their job commitment in universities. Furthermore, empirical studies (e.g., Amadi & Anaemeotu, 2013; Ohunakin, Adeniji & Akintayo, 2016) attempted to bridge this gap were all conducted outside Edo State region) and only investigated one or more of lecturers challenges within selected institutions in one local government area. From the foregoing, one would wonder if promotion and access to training and development opportunities will in any way correlate with lecturers' job commitment. Most of the studies in literature did not jointly investigate the correlation between promotion, training and development opportunities and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State. Therefore, this is the gap the present study has closed.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

Research Question: What is the levels of lecturers' promotion and access to training and development opportunities in Private Universities in Edo State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses was tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between promotion and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between access to training and development opportunities and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State.

Methods

Research Design

The study adopted correlational research design. The correlational research design describes the association between two or more variables in quantitative terms (Obasanmi, 2003). Therefore, the correlational research design was used because the researcher investigated the relationship between lecturers' challenges and their job commitment. Furthermore, the design was adopted because it helped to show the direction of relationship between the two variables in private universities in Edo State.

Research Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study comprised all the 567 lecturers in private universities in Edo State, Nigeria. A sample size of 284 lecturers representing 50% of the population was drawn from the population. The simple random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 50% of lecturers from each of the target institutions in the state.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was the questionnaire, titled: "Promotion and Access to Training and Development Opportunities and Job Commitment Questionnaire". The instrument was divided into three Sections A, B and C. Section A was used to collate data on demographic profile of Heads of Department such as name of institution and department. Section B comprised five parts, namely: Promotion and Access to Training and Development Opportunities. Section C measured lecturers' job commitment. All the items were rated on a four-point scale, namely: Strongly Agreed-4, Agreed -3, Disagreed -2 and Strongly Disagreed -1.

Validation and Reliability of Research Instrument

The face validity was performed on the questionnaire. The split-half reliability procedure was adopted for the study. This was done by administering copies of the questionnaire to a group of 10 lecturers from a private university outside the study area and was chosen in order not to include participants who were included in the main administration of the instrument. A response rate of 284 (100%) was recorded.

Data Analysis

The research Questions was descriptively analyzed using mean ($\bar{X}$). A mean score of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for determining the levels of lecturers' promotion and access to training and development opportunities in Private Universities in Edo State. This was obtained by adding up the four (4) Likert scales such as Strongly Agreed-4, Agreed -3, Disagreed -2 and Strongly Disagreed -1. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) Statistic was used to test Research Hypotheses 1 and 2, All the Hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Please note that the decision rule are as follows: Pearson r- coefficient ± .00 - .39 = Weak relationship, Pearson r- coefficient ±.40 - .69 =Moderate relationship, Pearson r- coefficient ±.70 - .99 =Strong relationship, and Pearson r- coefficient ± 1.00 = Perfect relationship.

Result

Research Question: What is the levels of lecturers' promotion and access to training and development opportunities in Private Universities in Edo State?

Table 1: Mean Scores on the Levels of Lecturers' Promotion and Access to Training and Development Opportunities in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria.

s/n	Staff Promotion	$\bar{X}$	Remarks
1.	I get promoted as at when due.	2.50	Agreed
2.	I have not been denied my promotion to any cadre or rank upon due date.	2.46	Disagreed
3.	My colleagues do not complain of been delayed their promotion in my universities.	2.49	Disagreed
4.	Benefits accrued to my promotion are often paid as at when due.	2.45	Disagreed
5.	The promotion committees does not delay in the appraisal of lecturers in my university.	2.48	Disagreed
6.	I get promotions to the next levels when necessary requirements are met.	2.88	Agreed
		Mean score = 2.54	
	Access to Training		
7	Seminars for teachers.	2.71	Agreed
8	National conferences.	2.35	Disagreed
9	International conferences.	2.30	Disagreed
10	Workshop for teachers.	2.14	Disagreed
11	Computer training and ICT literacy programme for teachers.	2.01	Disagreed
12	Symposium.	2.23	Disagreed
		Mean score = 2.29	

Note. N = 284, **Significant Mean* (X ≥ 2.50)

Table 1 showed that majority of the respondents agreed on items 1, 6, 7,17, 18,20,21, 22 and 23 at a mean score ranging from 2.50 to 2.88 and disagreed on items 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19 and 23 at a mean score range of 1.77 to 2.48 respectively. However, result from the table further showed that the mean score of items 1 to 6 on staff promotion was 2.54, the mean score on items 7 to 12 on access to training was 2.29 the mean score on items 13 to 18 on availability of human resources was 2. 23, the mean score on items 19 to 24 on availability of staff welfare was 2.52. Hence, the result showed that access to training and availability of human resources were the challenges mostly faced by lecturers in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between promotion and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State.

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation on the Relationship between Promotion and Lecturers' Job Commitment in Private Universities in Edo State.

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r	p	Level of Sig.	Decision
Promotion	284	2.54	.876	$-.411^{**}$	.003	.05	Hypothesis Rejected
Lecturers' Job commitment		2.49	.462				

Note. * r-coefficient is significant at 0.05 level.

Table 2 shows that the Mean ($\overline{X}$) and Standard Deviation (SD) of the respondents (N=284) were $\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 2.54 and SD = .876 for promotion and 2.49 and .462 for lecturers' job commitment respectively, while the Pearson correlation coefficient of -.411 was statistically significant; since the probability (p) value was less than the level of significance at which the null hypothesis test was conducted (p>.00 at .05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a significant relationship between promotion and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between access to training and development opportunities and lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State.

Table 3: Relationship Analysis between Access to Training and Development Opportunities and Job Commitment of Lecturers in Private Universities in Edo State

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	r	p	Level of Sig.	Decision
Access to training and development opportunities		2.29	.646				Hypothesis rejected
	284			-.644	.002	.05	
Lecturers Job Commitment		2.49	.462				

Note. * r-coefficient is significant at 0.05 level.

Table 3 showed that the mean ($\overline{X}$) and Standard Deviation (SD) of the respondents (N=284) were $\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ = 2.29 and SD = .646 for access to training and development opportunities and 2.49 and .462 for lecturers' job commitment respectively while the Pearson's correlation of -.644 was statistically significant, since it was greater than the value of 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a significant relationship between access to training and development opportunities and job commitment of lecturers in private universities in Edo State.

Discussion

The result showed that staff promotion and access to training and development were the challenges mostly facing lecturers in private universities in Edo State. The result is in line with that of Dalluay and Jalagat (2016) who found that, leadership styles significantly affected job commitment in selected small-scale businesses in Cavite, Philippines. The result agrees with that of Ukaidi (2016) that democratic leadership style had significant positive relationship with job commitment. The result supports that of Anyango (2015) who found that leadership style (democratic) had a positive significant influence on employee commitment. The result corroborates that of Saasongu (2015) that leadership styles exert a positive but insignificant effect on job commitment while autocratic leadership style had a positive significant effect on job commitment. The result is in line with that of Kiboss and Jemiryott (2014) who found that autocratic leadership style affected teachers' job satisfaction and school job commitment.

The result showed that there was a significant relationship between staff promotion and job commitment of lecturers in private universities in Edo State. The result is in line with that of Saka and Haruna, (2013) who found that staff development programmes collectively increases, the job commitment of staff tends to be higher. The result is in line with that of Abomeh and Nwakoby (2015) who found that for organisation to achieve optimum returns from her investment, there is the need to develop on-job training programs and effectively managed training of employees which is the most vital asset of organisations and the dynamic of their commitment. The result agrees with that of Emeti (2015) who found that on-job training programme has significant influence on job commitment of employees.

Conclusion

Based on findings, the researcher concluded that leadership style of Heads of Department, staff promotion, access to training and development opportunities, shortage of human resources and shortage of staff welfare services are challenges confronting lecturers' job commitment in Private Universities in Edo State. This indicates that lecturers' job commitment can be attributed to leadership styles of Heads of Department, promotion, access to training and development opportunities, shortage of human resources and shortage of staff welfare services

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Head of Department should employ a mix task of both democratic and autocratic leadership styles to promote efficient job commitment, congenial climate, high morale among members of the various unions of the university.
2. The Governing Council of universities should encourage functional communication network and promote free information flow across department. This would help to secure an atmosphere of mutual trust, promote prompt resolution of grievances and encourage cordiality in relationship among management, employee, students and the university entire community.

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CAPACITY BUILDING AS A PREDICTOR OF PROFESSIONALLY-TRAINED SECRETARIES' JOB EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

The study examined capacity building as a predictor of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services. Two research questions guided the study. The study used a quantitative research design of survey type. The population of this study comprised all professionally-trained secretaries in Government Ministries in Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun State. A total of 75 secretaries from Government ministries in Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun State were selected as sample size using purposive sampling technique. Also, stratified sampling technique was also adopted to ensure gender sensitivity is attained. Researcher developed instrument tagged: Capacity Building and Professionally-Trained Secretaries' Job Effectiveness Questionnaire was used for data collection with a reliability coefficient value of 0.85. Research question 1 was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Research question 2 was answered using Pearson's correlation. The findings revealed that training, workshop, seminar, ICT training and conferences were among the needed capacity building for professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services. There was relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services ($r = 0.830$, $P<.05$). Conferences, seminars and workshops should be organized from time to time for training and re-training of professionally-trained secretaries on online networking technologies. Confidential secretaries should endeavor to make personal efforts to update their online skills in order to be professionally relevant and be up-to-date.

Keywords: Capacity Building, Government Ministries, Job Effectiveness, Ogun State Public Services, Professionally-Trained Secretaries.

Introduction

The role play by today professionally-trained secretaries in an organization cannot be overemphasize. They are assistant manager and information keeper. The effectiveness of a secretary in every business organization depends on the availability of office technologies as well as the skills and competencies of the secretary. A professionally-trained secretary is an assistant to a manager. Apart from the traditional responsibilities, such as typing, taking dictation and transcribing, managing records, receiving, storing and retrieving information or operating the computer, attending meetings, answering telephone calls, he now prepares the manager's itinerary, makes travel bookings and hotel reservations, supervises the junior workers, and makes some decisions using his initiatives (Dosunmu, Bukki & Akintola, 2017). Professionally-trained secretary should be able to answer some questions on behalf of the boss. For example, a client who wants the price of a product should not wait to see the boss. A professionally-trained secretary should be familiar with the company's policies, price list and handbooks in order to relieve the boss burden by providing accurate information.

Igbinedion (2016) identifies the professionally-trained secretaries' responsibilities to include; taking dictation and transcribing it into correspondence which is at once dispatched to its business destination. He highlights some forms of these correspondences to include: letters, memos, circulars, orders, quotations, acceptances, contractual terms, and conditions, invitations, among others. As described by Iyanda (2017), the word professionally-trained secretary means the chief administrator of an organization or a person who performs the functions of organizing and recording the proceedings of meetings, skilled in shorthand and keyboarding; responsible to an executive; as such a Secretary has been regarded to be the brain box of the organization. Job effectiveness is the extent to which an activity fulfils its intended purpose or function. Ayelotan (2014) defined effectiveness as a measure of the match between stated goals and achievements, which is doing the right thing. Job effectiveness in context of this research work is the secretaries' ability to use appropriately and available office machinery/automation/tools to carry out the assigned duties or tasks in an efficient manner in line with the employer's expectations. It is a known fact that employees are the key elements of any organization and secretaries are integral part (Buseni, 2013).

Capacity building is a long-term process in which all stakeholders participate (ministries, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, etc.). This creates enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks, institutional development, including community participation (of women), human resources development and strengthening of managerial systems. In every organization manpower represents key decision areas and as such occupies an ever-increasing significance in modern day organizations. This is primarily due to the fact that manpower is an extremely valuable asset in any organization. This importance can be exemplified in the crucial role it plays in attainment of any organizational goal as organization activities revolve around it for their success. It is noteworthy to mention that the single advantage that any organization may have over any competition sometimes consists of the number and quality of people employed to manage organizational activities (Nwapi, 2023).

For workers such as secretary to be able to improve their effectiveness, they need to acquire necessary knowledge and skills, which will help in no small measure to improve the productivity of the organization. This is made possible by the provision of adequate training and capacity building programme by the organization. Training and development helps to ensure that secretary possess the knowledge and skills they need to perform their job effectively, take on new responsibilities and adapt to changing conditions (Jones & George, 2021). It is further argued that training helps to improve product/service quality, customer satisfaction, productivity, morale, business development and profitability. Nwachukwu (2019), emphasizes that placing attention by any organization on training and development of its employees determines the effectiveness of the organization.

Statement of the Problem

In view of the dynamics in the modern-day business environment, capacity building is the keys activities that any organization must engage in if it hopes to survive. A capacity building and digital innovation is created in any organization to coordinate all training activities of the organization. It has the responsibility of determining training and development need by deciding when and what kind of training, for whom, where, under what conditions, at what cost and by whom the training will be implemented. All these activities are necessary to enable the organization derive the utmost benefits from its capacity building activities. However, many organizations fall short of focusing adequate attention on building adequate capacity among their workforce thereby inhibiting the productivity, efficiency, effectiveness and growth of the organization. The focus of this study therefore was to examine capacity building as a predictor of secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of the study was to examine capacity building as a predictor of a professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identify needed capacity building of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun state public services;
2. examine the relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

Research Question 1: What are the needed capacity building of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services?

Research Question 1: Is there any relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services?

Methods

Research Design

The study used a quantitative research design of survey type. A quantitative research design of survey type assisted the researcher to determine the predictive power of a solution variable on a dependent variable. That is, the design is always appropriate to examine the relationship between an explanatory variable and a dependent variable of a study.

Research Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population of this study comprised all professionally-trained secretaries' in Government Ministries in Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun State. A total of 75 professionally-trained secretaries from Government Ministries in Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta, Ogun State were selected as sample size using purposive sampling technique. Also, stratified sampling technique was also adopted to ensure gender sensitivity is attained.

Research Instrument

Researcher developed instrument tagged: "Capacity Building and Professionally-Trained Secretaries' Job Effectiveness Questionnaire" was used for data collection. The questionnaire requested responses on a four (4) – point scale format, which was a modification of 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into 2 sections vis-a-vis sections A and B. Section A focused on demographic characteristics of the respondents while sections B examined items regarding level of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness and needed capacity building.

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

Face and content validity of the instrument were performed on the instrument. A copy of the instrument was made available to the 3 experts for correction and validation. Reliability of the instrument was also performed using the Cronbach's alpha. In this case, copies of the instrument were administered on 7 professionally-trained secretaries in Lagos state ministry of Education. The data that collected were subjected to Cronbach's alpha to yield a reliability coefficient of the items in the questionnaire. A reliability coefficient of 0.85 was reported.

Data Analysis

Research question 1 was analysis using mean and standard deviation. Research question 2 was answered using Pearson's correlation. Any mean score of 2.5 and above is regarded as agree while any one below 2.5 regarded as disagree. For PPMC when a probability value is less than a significance level (p < .05), the research question is positive.

Result

Research Question 1: What are the needed capacity building of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Needed Capacity Building of Professionally-Trained Secretaries' Job Effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Items	Mean	SD	Decisions
Training	2.89	.964	Needed
Workshop	2.99	.986	Needed
Seminar	3.12	.732	Needed
ICT training	3.33	.704	Needed
Conferences	3.25	.715	Needed
Cluster Mean	3.12		Needed

Source: Field survey, 2025

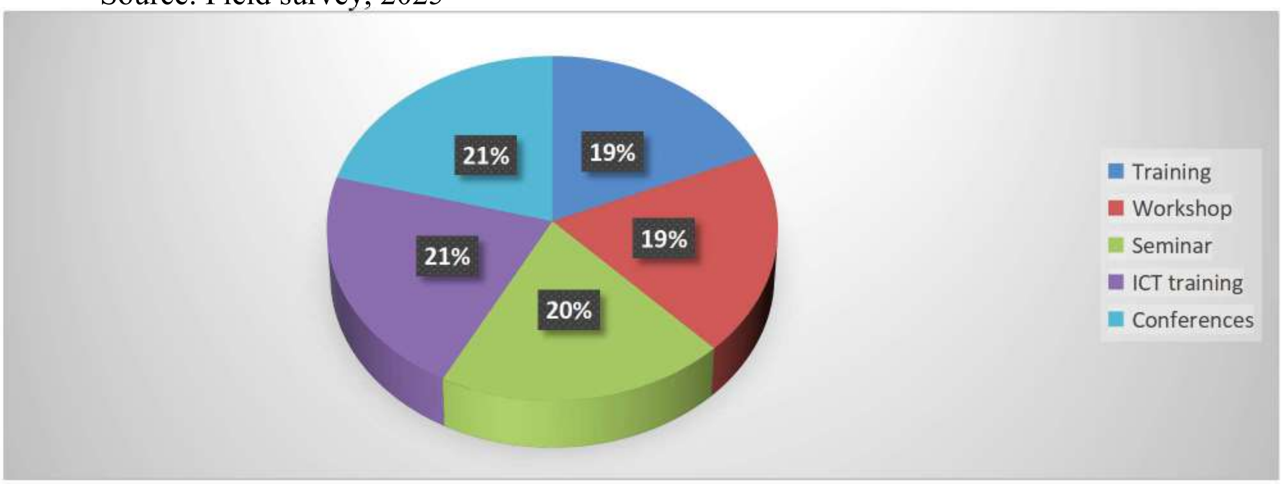

Figure 1: Pie-chart showing the needed capacity building for secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Table 1 revealed that cluster mean was 3.12 and the bench mark mean value was reported as 2.50. Since, 3.12 > 2.50, the implications of this results were that training, workshop, seminar, ICT training and conferences were among the needed capacity building for professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Research Question 1: Is there any relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services?

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation on the Relationship Between Capacity Building and Professionally-Trained Secretaries' Job Effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Variables	Mean	SD	r	p	Remark
Secretaries' job effectiveness	41.446	4.3650			
Capacity building	31.879	3.3772	.830	.003	Significant

Table 2 revealed that mean, standard deviation and zero order correlation between the variables. It was observed that there was significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the order of (r = 0.830, P<.05). On this premise, the researcher concluded that there was relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicated that training, workshop, seminar, ICT training and conferences were among the needed capacity building for professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services. There was relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries job effectiveness. These findings corroborate with Duniya (2021) who found that capacity building programme such as training and conferences have capability to develop employee knowledge and skills on better ways to improve their job effectiveness. The author also buttered that capacity building have direct and positive influence on employees' job productivities in an organization. On the part of Nwachukwu (2019), saw capacity building as antidotes towards improving employee' job performance through acquisition of more skills during the process of training. The author further believed that capacity building programme could sometimes serve as motivation strategy firm can use to aid the effectiveness of its employees. Jones and George (2021) in their study concurred that capacity building aid skills development on the job, serves as job security and experts for employees and consequently aid their job effectiveness. Nwapi, (2023) agreed and concurred that capacity building exercises for secretaries in public sector office promoted their job efficiency and effectiveness.

Conclusion

Having examined capacity building as a predictor of professionally-trained secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun state public services, the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study that training, workshop, seminar, ICT training and conferences were among the needed capacity building for secretaries' job effectiveness in Ogun State Public Services. There was significant relationship between capacity building and professionally-trained secretaries job effectiveness.

Recommendations

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

1. Conferences, seminars and workshops should be organised from time to time for training and re-training of secretaries on on-line networking technologies.
2. Confidential or professionally-trained secretaries should endeavour to make personal efforts to update their online skills in order to be professional relevant and be up to date.
3. Government should endeavour to provide the necessary and up-to-date ICT equipment's and facilities for tertiary institutions to enable confidential secretaries to get acquaintance with the modern information management challenges.

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THE EVOLVING ROLES OF PROFESSIONALLY-TRAINED SECRETARIES IN A DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

The role of professionally-trained secretaries in private establishments has undergone significant transformation with the advent of digital technologies. This study explores the evolving roles of professionally-trained secretaries in Ijebu-Ode Local Government, by empirically examining how digital advancements have reshaped their responsibilities, required skills, and professional development. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, the study investigates the impact of digital tools on secretarial work, highlighting the increased need for digital literacy in areas such as document management, virtual meetings, and communication platforms. A sample of 100 professionally-trained secretaries from private establishments was surveyed, using a structured questionnaire. The study's findings revealed that digital competencies are critical to job performance, with professionally-trained secretaries facing challenges in adapting to new technologies. It also showed that effective training programs significantly enhance digital skills, enabling professionally-trained secretaries to support organizational goals more effectively. This research underscores the importance of continuous professional development to keep pace with technological changes, positioning professionally-trained secretaries as integral contributors to organizational efficiency in the digital age. The study recommends among others that Organizations should provide regular training programmes to enhance the digital skills of professionally-trained secretaries. These programmes should cover the latest digital tools and technologies relevant to secretarial roles.

Keywords: Digital Age, Digital Competencies, Job Performance, Professional Development, Private Establishments, Technological Adaptation.

Introduction

The role of professionally-trained secretaries has undergone significant transformation over the years, particularly with the advent of digital technologies. Historically, professionally-trained secretaries were primarily responsible for clerical tasks such as typing, filing, and answering telephones. However, the digital age has redefined these roles, expanding the responsibilities of secretaries to include a range of administrative and technical tasks (Musty, 2023). This shift is largely attributed to the increasing reliance on digital tools and platforms, which have become integral to modern business operations. In private establishments, especially within the Ijebu-Ode Local Government area, professionally-trained secretaries now play a pivotal role in managing digital communications, coordinating virtual meetings, and utilizing sophisticated software for document management. These changes have not only altered the skill set required for the role but have also enhanced the strategic importance of secretaries in organizational contexts. Secretaries are now expected to possess a high level of digital literacy, enabling them to efficiently manage information and support decision-making processes (Omolade & Tunmibi, 2024).

The integration of digital technologies in office management has led to the development of new competencies among professionally-trained secretaries. For instance, proficiency in office software suites, digital communication tools, and online collaboration platforms is now essential. This evolution has also necessitated continuous professional development to keep pace with technological advancements (Mshelia & Ejiro-Oghen, 2023). Consequently, the traditional perception of secretaries as mere support staff has shifted towards recognizing them as vital contributors to organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, the digital age has introduced remote working capabilities, which have further redefined the roles of secretaries. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition, as many organizations adopted remote working models. In this context, secretaries have had to adapt to new modes of operation, often involving the management of virtual offices and ensuring seamless communication and coordination among remote teams (Bette *et al.*, 2021). This adaptability underscores the dynamic nature of the secretary's role in the contemporary business environment.

The evolving roles of professionally-trained secretaries in the digital age also reflect broader trends in workplace digitization. As organizations strive for greater efficiency and innovation, the demand for tech-savvy secretaries who can navigate digital landscapes has increased. This trend is evident in private establishments within Ijebu-Ode Local Government, where secretaries are often at the forefront of implementing and managing digital solutions. By examining the changes in job responsibilities due to digital advancements, required skills, and the overall impact of digitization on secretarial work, this research will provide valuable insights into the contemporary and future landscape of the secretarial profession.

This study is hinged on the technological determinism theory which posits that technology drives societal changes, influencing all aspects of human life, including the workplace. The adoption of digital technologies has led to a paradigm shift in the roles of professionally-trained secretaries, requiring them to acquire new skills and adapt to new modes of operation (McLuhan, 1964). This theory helps explain the increasing reliance on digital tools in secretarial work. As technology advances, secretaries must continually update their skill sets to remain relevant and effective in their roles. For example, the widespread use of email, cloud storage, and project management software has transformed traditional secretarial tasks, making proficiency in these tools essential. Furthermore, technological determinism suggests that the evolution of technology shapes organizational structures and workflows. In the modern office, secretaries often take on roles that involve complex data management, virtual collaboration, and digital communication. This shift not only changes the nature of their daily tasks but also impacts their interactions with colleagues and superiors, necessitating a higher level of digital literacy and adaptability. Understanding technological determinism provides insight into how secretaries can proactively embrace technological changes to enhance their professional capabilities and contribute to organizational success.

Despite the significant changes in the roles of professionally-trained secretaries due to digital advancements, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that specifically focus on these transformations within the context of private establishments in Ijebu-Ode Local Government. Many professionally-trained secretaries in this region are grappling with the challenges of adapting to new technologies while balancing traditional responsibilities. This gap in the literature necessitates an in-depth analysis to understand the extent of these changes and their implications for both professionally-trained secretaries and the organizations they serve. Moreover, the rapid pace of technological change poses a continuous challenge for secretaries to keep their skills updated. There is a pressing need to identify the specific digital competencies required and the training needs of professionally-trained secretaries in private establishments. Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing the efficiency and productivity of professionally-trained secretaries, thereby contributing to the overall effectiveness of organizational operations in the digital age.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and were tested at a .05 level of significance:

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between demographic characteristics of secretaries and digital advancements.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationships between familiarity with tools, years of training and digital competencies of secretaries in a digital age.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationships between challenges faced by secretaries, prior exposure to technology, level of digital literacy and workplace support.

Research Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationships between training programmes, workplace mentoring and access to digital resources.

Methods

Research Design

The study adopted a quantitative research design to explore the characteristics and roles of professionally-trained secretaries in the digital age within private establishments in Ijebu-Ode Local Government. A quantitative approach was used to collect detailed data that could be generalized to the larger population.

Research Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population comprised all professionally-trained secretaries employed in private establishments within Ijebu-Ode Local Government, spanning small, medium, and large enterprises relevant to the study's focus on evolving secretarial roles. A sample of 100 secretaries was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across industries and organizational sizes.

Research Instrument

A self-designed questionnaire was used as the primary research tool. It included two sections: Section A captured respondents' bio-data, while Section B employed a four-point Likert scale to assess opinions on the roles, skills, and challenges of secretaries. The questionnaire's validity was enhanced through expert reviews, with suggestions incorporated to improve relevance and clarity.

Reliability of Instrument

Reliability was performed using the test-retest method. A small group of secretaries was surveyed twice within a two-week interval to ensure consistent results. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the instrument with a coefficient value of 0.964.

Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaire were personally distributed to professionally-trained secretaries, with explanations provided for clarity. Completed copies of questionnaire were retrieved within two days to minimize loss or delays.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the participants were analyzed using percentage and multiple linear regression to test the relationships between and among variables.

Result

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents.

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	35	35.0
	Female	65	65.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Age	21-30 years	40	40.0
	31-40 years	35	35.0
	41-50 years	20	20.0
	51 years & above	5	5.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Qualification	SSCE	10	10.0
	OND	30	30.0
	HND	40	40.0
	B.Sc	15	15.0
	Others	5	5.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Position at Work	Junior Secretary	30	30.0
	Senior Secretary	25	25.0
	Administrative Assistant	20	20.0
	Office Manager	15	15.0
	Others	10	10.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Years of Experience	1-5 years	25	25.0
	6-10 years	30	30.0
	11-15 years	20	20.0
	16-20 years	15	15.0
	21 years and above	10	10.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**

The Table summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. A majority are female (65%) and predominantly young, with 40% aged 21-30 years and 35% aged 31-40 years. Most respondents hold an HND (40%) or OND (30%) qualification. Common job roles include Junior Secretary (30%) and Senior Secretary (25%), with most respondents having 6-10 years (30%) or 1-5 years (25%) of work experience.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between demographic characteristics of secretaries and digital advancements.

Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression on the Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Secretaries and Digital Advancements.

Variable	B	SE	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.05	0.22	--	4.77	0.000
Digital Advancements	0.65	0.08	0.72	8.13	0.001*
Years of Experience	0.12	0.04	0.18	3.00	0.003
Age	-0.05	0.03	-0.09	-1.67	0.098
Level of Education	0.18	0.06	0.25	3.00	0.003

Note. $R^2 = 0.58$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.56$; $F(4,95) = 32.05$; $p < 0.001$

Digital advancements significantly explain the roles of secretaries (B = 0.65, $p < 0.001$). Together with years of experience and level of education, the model accounts for 58% of the variance in secretarial roles. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationships between familiarity with tools, years of training and digital competencies of secretaries in a digital age.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression on the Relationships Between Familiarity with Tools, Years of Training and Digital Competencies of Secretaries in a Digital Age.

Variable	B	SE	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.15	0.18	--	6.39	0.000
Digital Competencies	0.68	0.07	0.75	9.71	0.001*
Familiarity with Tools	0.10	0.05	0.11	2.00	0.048
Years of Training	0.14	0.06	0.15	2.33	0.021

Note. $R^2 = 0.65$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.63$; $F(3,96) = 59.14$; $p < 0.001$

Digital competencies are a critical predictor of job performance (B = 0.68, $p < 0.001$). The model explains 65% of the variance in job performance, highlighting the importance of digital skills in secretarial roles. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationships between challenges faced by secretaries, prior exposure to technology, level of digital literacy and workplace support.

Table 4: Multiple Linear Regression on the Relationships Between Challenges Faced by Secretaries, Prior Exposure to Technology, Level of Digital Literacy and Workplace Support.

Variable	B	SE	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.20	0.20	--	6.00	0.000
Challenges Faced by Secretaries	0.55	0.07	0.68	7.86	0.001*
Prior Exposure to Technology	-0.08	0.06	-0.10	-1.33	0.186
Level of Digital Literacy	0.20	0.06	0.25	3.33	0.001
Workplace Support	0.18	0.05	0.22	3.60	0.001

Note. $R^2 = 0.54$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.52$; $F(4,95) = 27.23$; $p < 0.001$

Challenges faced significantly predict the ability to adapt to digital tools (B = 0.55, $p < 0.001$). Workplace support and digital literacy also play a role in adaptation. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationships between training programmes, workplace mentoring and access to digital resources.

Table 5: Multiple Linear Regression on the Relationships Between Training Programmes, Workplace Mentoring and Access to Digital Resources.

Variable	B	SE	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.10	0.19	--	5.79	0.000
Training Programmes	0.63	0.07	0.74	9.00	0.001*
Workplace Mentorship	0.15	0.06	0.18	2.50	0.014
Access to Digital Resources	0.18	0.05	0.22	3.60	0.001

Note. $R^2 = 0.62$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.60$; $F(3,96) = 52.63$; $p < 0.001$

Training programs significantly enhance digital skills ($B = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$). The model explains 62% of the variance, emphasizing the importance of structured training and resources. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the transformative impact of digital advancements on secretarial roles. Regarding the first hypothesis, the study revealed a significant relationship between digital advancements and secretarial roles ($B = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$). This aligns with the work of Adenekan and Jimoh (2021), who emphasized that technological innovations and digital tools significantly enhance secretarial efficiency, particularly in public institutions. Similarly, Fasae (2024) noted that the evolution of modern office technologies has transformed secretarial roles, requiring professionals to consistently reskill and upskill to meet evolving organizational demands. These findings collectively highlight that digital advancements are pivotal in reshaping secretarial roles and improving their alignment with modern office requirements.

The second hypothesis focused on the critical role of digital competencies in job performance. This study found digital competencies to be a strong predictor of job performance, explaining 65% of the variance ($B = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$). Supporting this, Kadhim (2024) emphasized that digital literacy is essential for enhancing workplace productivity, efficiency, and collaboration. Likewise, Kuteyi and Fasoranti (2021) reported that ICT tools dramatically improve secretarial performance by enabling the timely and accurate processing of information. Together, these studies and the findings of this research affirm that digital competencies are indispensable for secretarial professionals to perform effectively in a technology-driven workplace.

The third hypothesis explored the challenges secretaries face in adapting to digital tools. This study identified significant barriers, including insufficient workplace support and limited digital literacy ($B = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$). Hashim et al. (2024) highlighted similar issues, reporting that organizations often struggle with providing the infrastructure and training necessary for successful digital transformation. Additionally, Fasae (2024) emphasized that secretarial professionals face challenges in keeping pace with the rapid evolution of technology, necessitating continuous organizational investment in upskilling initiatives. These findings highlight the importance of addressing systemic and organizational barriers to enable secretarial professionals to effectively adapt to digital platforms.

Finally, this study examined the role of training programs in enhancing secretaries' digital skills, with findings showing a strong positive impact ($B = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$). Omolade and Tunmibi (2024) similarly demonstrated that state-of-the-art equipment and targeted training programs significantly improve secretarial performance in tertiary institutions. Furthermore, Brown and Lee (2023) underscored the value of mentorship-based training in equipping secretarial professionals with the digital competencies needed to excel in technology-driven roles. These findings collectively affirm the critical importance of continuous training and development programs in ensuring that secretarial professionals remain proficient and adaptable in an evolving technological landscape.

In summary, this study's findings align with existing literature, highlighting the essential role of digital advancements, competencies, and training in transforming secretarial roles. Future research should delve deeper into systemic factors such as organizational culture and external infrastructural challenges to provide a more holistic understanding of these transformations.

Conclusion

This study has examined the evolving roles of secretaries in the digital age, focusing on private establishments within Ijebu-Ode Local Government. The findings indicate that digital advancements have significantly transformed the responsibilities of secretaries, expanding their role beyond traditional clerical tasks to include complex administrative, technical, and digital competencies. The analysis revealed that digital skills are crucial for the job performance of secretaries, who now play an integral role in the management of digital communications, virtual meetings, and document management. Furthermore, secretaries face substantial challenges in adapting to new technologies, but effective training and development programs can enhance their digital skills and facilitate their successful adaptation. The study highlights the importance of ongoing professional development and the need for private establishments to invest in training programs to ensure that secretaries remain adept in an increasingly digital workplace. As organizations continue to rely on digital tools and technologies, the role of the secretary as a vital contributor to organizational efficiency and effectiveness will only grow. In conclusion, the digital age has redefined the secretary's position in the workplace, and embracing technological advancements is key to their continued success.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Implement Regular Digital Training Programs**: Organizations should provide regular training programs to enhance the digital skills of secretaries. These programs should cover the latest digital tools and technologies relevant to secretarial roles.
2. **Provide Access to Advanced Digital Tools**: Ensure that secretaries have access to the necessary digital tools and technologies to perform their duties effectively. This includes investing in up-to-date software and hardware.
3. **Foster a Supportive Digital Work Culture**: Create a supportive and inclusive work environment that encourages the adoption of digital tools and practices. This can help in reducing resistance to digital transformation.
4. **Offer Continuous Learning and Development Opportunities**: Provide ongoing professional development programs and continuous learning opportunities to help secretaries stay updated with the latest digital advancements.

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EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF SPECIFIC AND OVERALL JOB DEMANDS ON BUSINESS EDUCATORS' TURNOVER INTENTIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF NIGERIA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH

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Abstract
The present study has been carried out to examine: (1) the extent to which Business Educators are prone to specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) and turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South, and (2) the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) predict Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South. A causal research design was used to actualize the aim of this study. Data were collected from 139 Business Educators from 13 Public Universities through the administration of questionnaires on the respondents. The authors applied the descriptive statistics such as Mean and Standard Deviation, and the inferential statistics such as correlation and regression via 10000 resamples bootstrap. The findings show that Business Educators experience a much higher level of specific and overall job demands. Also, Business Educators exert a much higher level of turnover intentions. The study also finds a positive degree of correlation as well as a significant degree of relationship between specific and overall job demands and Business Educators' turnover intentions. Furthermore, limitations of the study and practical implications of the results were discussed.
***Keywords**. Business Educators, Nigeria's Public Universities, Overall Job Demands, South-South Nigeria, Specific Job Demands, Turnover Intentions.*

Introduction

Business Educators perform complex and multiple job activities in low resource or high demand working environments, that characterizes Business Teacher Education as a stressful profession. The complexities and multi-dimensions of job activities coupled with the exposure to low resource or high demand working environments provide understanding of the extent to which Business Educators are susceptible to unprecedented stressful situations which, in turn, leads to turnover intentions (i.e., a desire to quit one's job or leave one's university for another). This means that Business Educators may decide to quit their job or change their university due to exposure to stressful situations caused by the combinations of high specific job demands and low specific job resources. For the purpose of this study, turnover intention refers to a Business Educator willingness to voluntarily quit his or her job or leave his or her university (Edokpolor, Ogedegbe & Oluwasina, 2025). Research revealed that about 30% of teachers or educators quit their job or leave their institution for another in the first five years, adding that 84% of teachers or educators quit their job or leave their institution for another voluntarily. Comparing available statistics with that of employees in public sector, 54% of employees work until retirement age, while 26% of teachers or educators work at the same period (Kusy & O'Leary-Driscoll, 2020).

A Business Educator who exerted the willingness to voluntarily quit his or her job or leave his or her institution for another can be said to have been performing complex and multi-dimensional job activities coupled with high job demands and/or low job resources. This means that high job demands could occur when Business Educators are exposed to low job resources. Exposure to high job demands may imply that when Business Educators experience insufficient job resources, they would, in turn, lose their interest and develop negative attitudes or feelings toward their job. After a prolonged exposure to job demands, Business Educators may distance themselves psychologically and physically from their work, which may predict actual turnover. As postulated by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, job demands may predict several behavioural outcomes, which includes turnover intentions (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001). The JD-R model also proposes that if stressful job demands are not mitigated by increased or appropriate job resources, employees will be prone to constant overtaxing, that potentially leads to negative occupational outcomes like turnover intentions (Rajendran, Watt & Richardson, 2020). Job demands involve those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort and are, therefore, associated with physiological and/or psychological costs (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007). High job demands, which require sustained physical and/or psychological effort, may reduce resources and foster the reduction of energy (Jyoti & Rajib, 2016). Specific job demands may include work-family conflict, family-work, excess workload, time pressure, among others.

Work-family conflict occurs when work-related requirements (e.g. irregular working hours, excess workload or overtime) affect the Business Educator's private and family life (e.g. participation in children's activities, lack of childcare or care of parents). Family-work conflict occurs when family-related requirements affect the Business Educator's job duties (Netemeyer, McMurrian & Boles, 1996). Excess workload involves the tasks or group of tasks completed by a person within a specific timeframe under normal conditions. It can be measured through three factors: the work dimension, which refers to the expected work output from employees; work conditions, which refers to an employee's understanding of their working environment; and the use of working time, which refers to the amount of time employees spend on their tasks each day (Maulida & Wahyuningtyas, 2020). Time pressure is the reduction in amount of time available to perform a job. That is, when time pressure is high, it can lead to turnover intentions. Furthermore, high amounts of time pressure might cause behaviour avoidance and detrimental effect. On the other hand, when time pressure (a key dimension of job demands) is regarded as very high, Business Educators can be impacted by stress, which can lead to turnover intentions.

Several empirical researches have been conducted using rigorous inferential statistics to test the assumptions of the JD-R model. In conformity with this model, Cho (2020) reported significant positive associations between specific job demands (i.e., excess workload and role ambiguity) and turnover intentions. Sakakibara, Shimazu, Toyama and Schaufeli (2020) also reported significant positive associations between specific job demands (i.e., qualitative demand, quantitative demand and emotional demand) and turnover intentions. In a similar vein, De Beer (2021) tested another relationship model successfully in which specific job demands (i.e., emotional load) was positively related to turnover intentions. Yet another study, Russell et al. (2020) found a significant positive relation between job demands and turnover intentions. Furthermore, De Beer, Schaufeli and Bakker (2022b) tested a relation model in which specific job demands (e.g., excess workload) was positively related to turnover intentions. Jyoti and Rajib (2016) previously reported significant positive links between specific job demands (i.e., quantitative demand, problem solving demand and attention demand) and turnover intentions among different occupational groups. All these studies assumed a stressor effect, namely, that the presence of specific job demands and the lack of specific resources have a positive influence on turnover intentions. All in all, these studies conform with the predictions of the JD-R model, namely, that specific job demands were found to positively associated with turnover intentions.

The authors of this present study expect, therefore, that specific job demands would positively related to Business Educators' turnover intentions. Although, numerous studies have been conducted to examine the influence of specific job demands on turnover intentions using JD-R theory and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. But the authors of this present study found no study conducted in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South in this newly area of research inquiry. Generally, related studies focus on work-related characteristics, well-being, behavioural outcomes and personal resources among one major occupational group such as Technology and Vocational Educators. Only one study recently adopted JD-R theory and COR theory to measure and explain a burnout symptoms Business Educators in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South (Edokpolor et al., 2025). Based on this noticeable gap in research, especially on Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities, it has become necessary to examine the extent to which Business Educators' are prone to specific and overall job demands and turnover intentions; and the extent to which specific and overall job demands predict Business Educators' turnover intentions. This oversight makes it difficult to develop effective talent and human resource management strategies that are geared towards tackling the problem that Nigeria's Public Universities face. To fill this gap, the present study aims to examine: (1) the extent to which Business Educators' are prone to specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and turnover intentions; and (2) the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) predicts Business Educators' turnover intentions. Focusing solely on Public Universities will provide empirical-based data that can be used to develop effective engagement and retention strategies, clarifying the specific challenges and dynamics that could shape turnover intentions in this critical sector of Nigeria's educational landscape. Based on the above aims, the present study is driven by two main research questions:

1. to what extent are Business Educators prone to specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South?
2. to what extent does specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) predicts Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South?

It is expected that the outcome of this present study will be of great benefit, especially to university leaders and administrators, as it will provide them with the salient information to understand why work environment needs to be highly resourceful and for Business Educators to stay on the job or stay with their institutions. Turnover intentions of highly talented Business Educators can be very detrimental (i.e., expensive or disruptive) for institutions. Losing highly talented Business Educators can make university managers and administrators incur substantial costs associated with recruiting and re-skilling, and hidden costs associated with difficulties in executing projects or disruptions in team-based work environments (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2020). Determining the antecedents of Business Educators' turnover intentions within Business Teacher Education workforce and tackling it via talent management strategies, human resource management strategies and motivational work situation has become imperative for universities.

Theoretical Framework

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The JD-R theory is used in this present study to explain how specific job demands can predict Business Educators' turnover intentions. To better understand and explain how specific and overall job demands can influence Business Educators' turnover intentions, management and organizational researchers have adopted the JD–R model (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2001) that originated in an organizational context. The JD–R theory is a comprehensive, well-established, and widely used theory to measure and explain the impact of specific and overall job demands on turnover intentions organizational contexts empirically (Cho, 2020; Sakakibara et al., 2020; De Beer, 2021; De Beer et al., 2022b; Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023). The JD–R theory offers great insights from both positive and negative job characteristics and behavioural outcome perspectives, and integrates several job stress and motivational perspectives (Bakker, Demerouti et al., 2023; Demerouti et al., 2001). One of the major tenets of JD-R theory is that it classifies job characteristics into two dimensions, namely: demands (i.e., aspects of work that cost effort and instigate a negative behavioural outcome) and resources (i.e., aspects of work that help cope with demands and fuel a negative behavioural outcome) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014, 2017). These two distinct processes outlined in the JD–R model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Lesener et al., 2020; Salmela-Aro et al., 2022) are to be linked to adverse negative and positive effects (Bakker, Demerouti et al., 2023).

Job demands refer to physical, psychological, social and organizational facets of a job, requiring sustained physical and psychological (i.e., cognitive or emotional) efforts or energies that are linked to some certain physiological and psychological costs (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker et al., 2007). Although job demands are not necessarily negative, they may lead to job stressors, when meeting those demands that requires high effort (Bakker et al., 2007). As such, stress may lead to increased turnover. The JD-R model assumed that job demands are related to negative behavioural outcomes such as turnover intentions. The JD-R model postulates that the negative working condition (i.e., demands) may evoke negative behavioural outcomes such as turnover intentions. High specific job demands are likely to result in strain reactions (e.g., stress), which may lead to an increase in turnover intentions. The pathway from job demands to turnover intentions is known as a negative behavioural pathway (e.g., Bakker et al., 2007).

The JD-R model is related to this present study because it postulates several negative behavioural outcomes in which specific job demands may lead to an increase in the employees' turnover intentions. Therefore, when Business Educators are susceptible to high specific job demands or low specific job resources, it might lead to an increase in their turnover intentions.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The COR theory is also used in this present study as a valuable framework to better understand and explain the links between specific stressful situations and turnover intentions. It is a leading stress theory that has been used successfully in recent years to explain work-related issues. The COR theory is basically a theory with propositions on what people do when they anticipate losing or actually lose resources. The authors of this present study believe that the COR theory is an appropriate theoretical framework to interpret and discuss the results presented in this present study, because it has been supported by previous research on specific job demands (Grandley & Cropanzano, 1999). For instance, the COR theory was one of the theories on which Netemeyer and colleagues built their hypotheses when they executed a study on the links between specific job demands (e.g., work-family conflict), work stress and service employees' performance (Netemeyer, Maxham III & Pullig, 2005). Yet another study recently reported that the COR theory is useful in conducting the research on a specific job demands such as work-family conflict and family-work conflict (Nohe, Meier, Sonntag & Michel, 2015).

The COR theory postulated that people strive to gain, increase, protect and retain their "resources" needed to manage stressful situations or mitigate specific job demands such as work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure (Hobfoll, 1989, 2011, 2012). The theory assumes that stress prevails when there is a loss of resources or when a loss of resources is anticipated or perceived. The theory further states that people attempt to preserve, protect and create new resources so as to maximize their ability to manage or mitigate stressful situations. This implied that the central tenet of the COR theory is that people need resources for survival, and, therefore, everyone attempts to obtain, retain, foster, and protect resources. Therefore, the extent to which people react to a generally life event such as the intent to quit a job can, however, be attributed to individual or work-related factors (Hobfoll, 1988).

The COR theory classified resources into four main categories, namely: objects (such as socio-economic possessions); personal qualities or skills (such as self-confidence or self-esteem); conditions or different roles (such as being employed or in a relationship); and energies or contributing resources (such as knowledge, time and money). People constantly opt for new and valuable resources that they can use to avoid stressful situations where stress can affect them negatively (Hobfoll, 2011). The COR theory postulates two major tenets, namely: (1) the impact of the gain or loss of resources is asymmetric, and (2) people must use resources to limit any loss of resources. People who possess limited resources often become defensive in order to protect their resources, which in turn makes them less successful or flourish under high pressures or stressful situations (Hobfoll, 2011). The COR theory describes people behaviour based on the evolutionary need to “acquire and conserve resources for survival, which is central to human behavioural genetics” (Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu & Westman, 2018).

The COR theory is described as a simple, powerful and comprehensive theory with several attractive characteristics when reporting stress-related variables and constructs at work. The COR theory assumes, for example, that possible losses of resources are linked to, among other things, relational factors in a family for a family member who experiences work-related stressors (Hobfoll, 1988, 1989). A person who is experiencing perceived resource exhaustion or work-related stressors may not be interested in devoting his or her time to work commitment and/or engagement. If the resources are lost (or are exhausted), employees can consider quitting the job or leaving the organization. This means that specific and overall job demands such as work-family conflict, family-work, work overload, time pressure and attitudinal outcomes such as turnover intentions are tightly linked to the extent to which Business Educators are prone to resource depletion or stressful situations. Therefore, COR theory is related to this present study because it explains the links between specific and overall job demands (work-family conflict, family-work, excess workload, and time pressure) and Business Educators’ turnover intentions.

Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Development

The authors provide a firm basis of a conceptual model (Figure 1) for this present study with the support of JD-R and COR theories to understand specific and overall job demands and their links with turnover intentions. The underlying assumption of this present study is that high specific job demands and low specific job resources is predictive of turnover intentions, based on JD-R model (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker et al., 2007) and COR theory (e.g., Hobfoll, 1988, 1989). Although the present study did not investigate the relationships between the two job characteristics and turnover intentions, but the JD-R model and COR theory helps explain the interplays between specific and overall job demands (work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) and business educators’ turnover intentions.

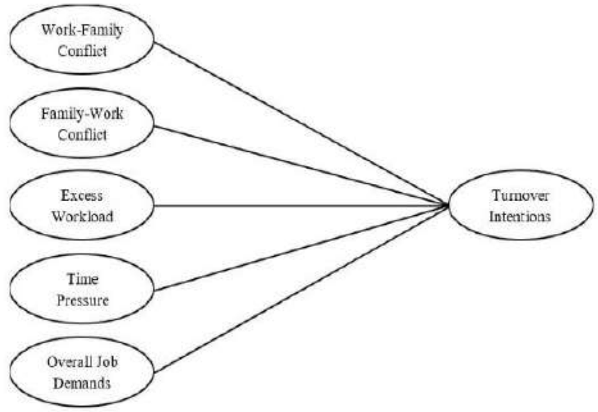

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Hypothesized Links Between Specific and Overall Job Demands and Turnover Intentions.

Job Demands

Job demands are proposed to play a crucial role in the negative pathway of the JD-R model, but not in the positive pathway of the JD-R model. However, some authors have argued that job demands may also play a positive or functional role. Job demands represent a major construct of employees' work situation, job characteristics and work environment. In the early stage of JD-R model, job demands are defined as "those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs" (Demerouti, et al., 2001, p. 501). In the later stage of JD-R theory, job demands are defined as "aspects of work that require effort and therefore are associated with physical and psychological costs" (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017, p. 277). The value-based nature of job demands has called for a redefinition of the concept, namely that job demands are negatively valued physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or psychological effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Specific job demands include work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure (Nahrgang, Morgeson & Hofmann, 2011). Work–family conflict refers to the role conflict of internal resources, emotions, and behaviours due to the role pressure at work and in the family, which is multi-dimensional in nature. It can be divided into two types, namely: (1) work interfering with family as a result of work pressure, and (2) family interfering with work as a result of family pressure. Thus, the boundary between the work and family contexts is permeable, which implied that an interplay may exist between employees work and family. Work-family conflict occurs when work-related requirements (e.g. irregular working hours, workload or overtime) affect the business educator's private and family life (e.g. participation in children's activities, lack of childcare or care of parents). Family-work conflict occurs when family-related requirements and responsibilities affect work activities (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

Employees may be prone to threat of resources loss as a result of time pressure which could be easily transferred to the family. Therefore, the problems encountered by employees at work are likely to snowball to the family (Richter, Näswall, Lindfors & Sverkeet, 2015). Time pressure will spread to their spouses and children and spark the conflict between the work and family (Carlson, Thompson, Crawford, Boswell & Whitten, 2018; Nomaguchi & Fettro, 2019). For instance, Bakker and Sanz-Vergel (2013) found that employees experienced time pressure as a hindrance job demand rather than as a challenge job demand. Excess workload is referred to as the tasks or group of tasks completed by an individual within a specific timeframe under normal conditions. It may also be seen as all the job activities that require an employee's time to fulfill their responsibilities at work, whether it is done directly or indirectly. Excess workload can be measured through three factors: the work dimension, which refers to the expected work output from employees; work conditions, which refers to an employee's understanding of their working environment; and the use of working time, which refers to the amount of time employees spend on their tasks each day (Maulida, et al., 2019). Time pressure is referred to employees' opinions concerning their ability to complete a task based on a time limitation, and it explain that a timely task completion reflects the effectiveness and efficiency in job performance. Time pressure can also be referred to as reduction in the amount of time available to perform a job. That is, when time pressure is high, it can interfere with employees' job performance. Furthermore, excessive amounts of time pressure could result to a behaviour avoidance and detrimental effect. On the other hand, when time pressure is perceived as very high, employees might be impacted by stress.

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention is a core topical issue that organizational and management scholars and researchers have dealt with for over a century ago (Chung, 2022). The first topical problem on turnover intentions focused on "rates of departure" and "stability of employment" (Bon & Shire, 2017). These topical problems have been carried out at the beginning of 20th century, thus making turnover intentions to be a widely research issue since then (Bakker, Demerouti & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). The interest of organizational and management scholars and researchers on turnover intentions has been increasing dramatically over the last two decades or more, with over 100 studies on turnover intentions published in leading journals of management and related fields (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004). Turnover intentions have been defined as the conscious and deliberate will of an employee to leave an organization, e.g. whether the employee has intentions to leave his or her job within a certain timeframe (Bothma & Roodt, 2012). Turnover intentions refer to an employee's perception of the likelihood that they will leave their current position or company due to a variety of factors (Khan, Shah, Haider Aziz & Kazmi, 2020). Turnover intentions also refer to an employee's behavioural inclination to leave their current job or organization and is considered a key antecedent of actual turnover behavior (Cho & Lewis, 2012). There is evidence that employees nurture their intentions to quit before actually deciding to resign, it is most often a process, and the employees most often make an informed and conscious decision to leave their job. This means that turnover intentions often predicts actual quitting behaviour. For instance, turnover intentions may strongly be indicative of a person's intent to voluntarily and permanently leave an institution. The term "turnover" is commonly defined as the combined number of employees that leave an organization in a certain time period and the turnover rate is the total number of employees that leave the organization to the total number of employees within the organization, often measured over one year (Bakker et al., 2014). It refers to a voluntary decision of a person to switch jobs or companies (Kumar, 2024). There is a reason to make a comparison of whether turnover intention is actually initiated by the organization, i.e. involuntary turnover or by an employee, i.e. voluntary turnover. Turnover that is initiated by the organization often includes low performers and the organization may generate better performance after the dismissal. A high ratio of the turnover that is initiated by the organization can be an indication that the quality of the workforce is problematic. Turnover that is initiated by the employee can indicate a great loss of talent that the organization would prefer to avoid, since these are employees that the organization most often would have preferred to retain or at least not dismiss (Kim & Stoner, 2008). In the field of studies that has been conducted on turnover, it has been considered more important to look at why people choose to leave the organizations voluntarily (Epitropaki, 2013). Ultimately the goal is not to eliminate turnover completely, since a certain flow of employees is crucial for an organization. There will always be some involuntary turnover from the layoffs the organization chooses to make, for example to get rid of employees who performs poorly (Epitropaki, 2013).

Job Demands and Turnover Intentions

Job demands which represent key components of job characteristics are considered as system factors that could predict employees' negative attitudinal outcomes (Hussein, 2020). Models have also been developed and tested in an attempt to explain turnover intentions and related constructs. Perhaps the most prominent of these models include the JD-R model, which provides plausible understanding and explanations as to why some people may choose to quit a job or leave an organization. Indeed, the JD-R model has been used as a theoretical basis for predicting turnover intentions by explaining the interplays between specific job demands and negative attitudinal outcomes such as turnover intentions (Cho, 2020; Sakakibara et al., 2020; De Beer et al., 2022b). Furthermore, the bulk of management and organizational literature have showed several specific job demands such as quantitative demands, problem solving demands and attention demands that are positively related to turnover intentions (Jyoti & Rajib, 2016). Specific job demands such as quantitative and attention job demands have also been found to positively related to turnover intentions (Bon & Shire, 2017). An empirical study encompassing multiple job situations and employee populations showed that high job demands are associated with higher turnover intentions (Griffeth et al., 2020). Similarly, a study conducted by de Beer demonstrated that specific job demands such as emotional workload moderately correlated with turnover intention (de Beer, 2021). The results of the study conducted by Yuze further showed that specific job demands were positively associated with employees' turnover intentions (Yuze, 2023). Based on these findings, the present study is expected to show that high specific job demands could be associated with higher turnover intentions, implying that when Business Educators experience work-family conflict, family-work, excess workload or time pressure, they are more likely to consider quitting their job or leaving their organization.

Following the JD-R theory, COR theory, conceptual model and previous research, the authors of this present study hypothesized that:

> *Research Hypothesis:* Specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) will be significant and positive predictors of Business Educators' turnover intentions.

Methods

Research Design

A causal research design, also known as causal-comparative or explanatory research design was used in this present study to achieve the purpose of the study. This type of a research design investigates cause-and-effect relationships between two or more variables or constructs by manipulating one or more predictor variables or constructs and observing their effect on outcome variables or constructs. This implied that a causal research design would help explain how X variable or construct is the cause of Y variable or construct (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013) after an event or action has already occurred. A causal research design is considered more appropriate because it help researchers to investigate the effect of a predictor variable or construct on an outcome variable or construct. For example, the authors of this present study, as educational researchers, seeks to investigate whether specific and overall job demands have a positive effect on business educators' turnover intentions. Therefore, a causal research design is useful for this present study because it helps establish the extent to which specific and overall job demands predicts Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities.

Research Participants

The study sample consists of Business Educators from 13 Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South, who held and execute a variety of job activities, which helped increase the potential generalizability of the findings. All in all, 139 survey questionnaires were distributed, accompanied by a letter to inform and assure the respondents concerning the anonymity and confidentiality of the data. The business educators who were accessed through a direct contact were asked to return their completed questionnaires in pre-stamped and sealed envelopes. The distribution of participants is shown in Table 1. The data of the participants were obtained from the office of the Heads of Department in the respective institutions (2025), except in University of Port-Harcourt where Business Teacher Education is housed in Department of Educational Management.

Table 1: Participants from Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South.

S/N	Public Universities	Number of Participants
1.	Federal Universities	59
2.	State Universities	80
	Grand Total	**139**

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The total population sampling (TPS), also known as census sampling was used to select the entire participants of 139 Business Educators from all the 13 Public Universities in South-South, Nigeria. As a type of purposive sampling procedure, TPS is a non-probability sampling, which involves the study of an entire population instead of a subset; and it is suitable when the population is small and homogenous (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013; Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016).

Ethical Considerations and Approval

Institutional ethical approval was granted to the authors of this present study. As a result, the authors sought informed consent from the Business Educators through a written document before the measuring instruments were administered on them. Furthermore, lecturers (one from each of the 13 Public Universities) served as research assistants to ensure prompt responses to and rapid collection of the measuring instruments. Therefore, the participants were assured of the confidentiality of the data collected from them, which confirms their voluntary participation and understanding of the study's central aims and procedures. No lecturer's personal or institution's identity was reported in order to protect their rights and welfare.

Measuring Instruments

Measuring instruments from a previously developed psychological scales were used for data collection in this present study, namely the Job Demands Scale and Turnover Intentions Scale. The Job Demands Scale comprises of 17 items in four subscales, e.g., Work-Family Conflict Scale (Netemeyer et al., 1996), Family-Work Conflict Scale (Netemeyer et al., 1996), Excess Workload Scale (Karasek, 1985) and Time Pressure Scale (Semmer et al., 1998). The Turnover Intentions Scale (Cammann et al, 1979) comprises of five items. The participants rated their exposure to all the specific job demands and turnover intentions on a 4-point scale, ranging from 4 = Always; 3 = Sometimes; 2 = Rarely; 1 = Never. The items of the measuring instruments or scales for data collection in this present study are documented in the Appendix.

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

The two measuring instruments adapted from a previously developed psychological scales were subjected to face and content validity by three experts, two in Business Teacher Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. The face and content validity was made with respect to relevance, sentence structure and adequacy. The suggestions made by the three experts were effected in the final copies of the two measuring instruments and were reproduced for data collection. To determine the internal consistencies of the items in the two measuring instruments, some copies were administered on 30 Business Educators who were not part of the participants. Thereafter, Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal consistencies of the items in the two measuring instruments. Compared to split-half, Cronbach's alpha is considered a more rigorous assessment of reliability. For instance, while split-half assesses consistency by comparing two halves of a test, Cronbach's alpha, a more rigorous measure, considers the internal consistency of all items of a scale, thereby offering a broader and more comprehensive assessment of reliability (Taber, 2017, Izah, Sylva & Hait, 2024). The reliability coefficients alpha of the proposed constructs and variables are documented in Table 2. Cronbach's alpha reliability values for all the constructs and variables are greater than 0.70. Cronbach's alpha reliability values above 0.70 are suggested to be considered acceptable and reliable (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014). This indicated that the instruments for data collection in this present study are exceptionally or profoundly reliable and can be applied in any study and setting to measure the same scale and it corresponding items at any point in time.

Table 2: Construct Reliability of all Variables in the Study.

S/N	Variables	Cronbach's alpha
1.	Work-Family Conflict	0.78
2.	Family-Work Conflict	0.76
3.	Excess Workload	0.79
4.	Time Pressure	0.77
5.	Overall Job Demands	0.87
6.	Turnover Intentions	0.78

Data Collection Procedure

The instruments were distributed to participants, with the help of six research assistants who were briefed on the procedures to follow. The participants were contacted through letters before the instruments were administered on them using a direct contact mode. The participants were allowed to complete the instruments and were given the chance to return them in two weeks. Copies of the instruments on burnout with its symptoms and turnover intentions were administered on participants, since the instruments were considered self-report measurement scales.

Data Analysis

The International Business Machine (IBM)-Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 23.0) was employed as a suitable software chosen to analyze the research data. The IBM-SPSS is a widely used statistical analysis package to analyze unmediated pathways or direct relationships between and among study constructs in various disciplines, including social science education. The descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the extent to which business educators experience specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and turnover intentions. The inferential statistic such as Spearman's rho were used to analyze the strength of associations between specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and business educators' turnover intentions. Yet another inferential statistic such as simple linear regression was used to analyze the extent of relationships between specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and business educators' turnover intentions.

Uzoagulu (2011) recommended a decision rule for the use of a correlation coefficient based on a range of a correlation coefficient value: (1) very high correlation (between ± .8 and ± 1.0) (2) high correlations (between ± .6 and ± .8) (3) moderate correlation (between ± .4 and ± .6) (4) low correlation (between ± .2 and ± .4) (5) very low correlations (between ± .0 and ± .2) (6) perfect correlation (i.e., ± 1.0) and (7) no correlation (i.e., 0). He also recommended that when a correlation coefficient value is negative, it is considered a negative correlation; which implied that as one variable increase the other also decrease. In contrast, when a correlation coefficient is positive, it is considered a positive correlation; which implied that as one variable increase the other also increase. He also recommended a decision rule for the use of a simple linear regression based on when a probability value is lesser than or equal to .05, it is considered significant, implying that the proposed hypothesis is supported. In contrast, when a probability value is greater than .05, it is considered non-significant, implying that the proposed hypothesis is not supported.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

To examine the extent to which Business Educators are prone to specific and overall job demands, e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure and turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South, the Mean and Standard deviation analyses were performed.

Research Question 1: To what extent are Business Educators prone to specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Analyses on the Extent to Which Business Educators Are Prone to Specific and Overall Job Demands and Turnover Intentions.

S/N	Variables	M	SD	Remark
1.	Work-Family Conflict	3.620	0.332	Always
2.	Family-Work Conflict	3.712	0.322	Always
3.	Excess Workload	3.612	0.063	Always
4.	Time Pressure	3.647	0.349	Always
5.	Overall Job Demands	3.650	0.277	Always
6.	Turnover Intentions	3.708	0.332	Always

Note: *N*=139, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 3 showed the Mean scores and Standard Deviation values of the study variables and constructs. The aggregated mean scores of the study variables and constructs ranges from 3.712 to 3.612, and Standard Deviation values ranges from 0.349 to 0.063. The Mean for the specific and overall job demands indicated high scores and Standard Deviation values for the specific and overall job demands indicated that the responses of Business Educators are very close. Furthermore, the Mean for turnover intentions indicated a high score and Standard Deviation value for turnover intentions indicated that the responses of Business Educators are very close.

Correlation Analysis

To examine the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) predict Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South, the Correlation analysis were performed.

Research Question 2: To what extent does specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) predict Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South?

Table 4: Correlations Coefficient Analysis between and among the Study Variables.

S/N	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Work-Family Conflict						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	---					
2.	Family-Work Conflict	.613**					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	---				

3.	Excess Workload	.521**	.556**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	---			
4.	Time Pressure	.704**	.550**	.452**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	---		
5.	Overall Job Resources	.871**	.838**	.746**	.774**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	---	
6.	Turnover Intentions	.509**	.843**	.499**	.617**	.746**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	---

Note: N = 139, **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), Sig. = Significant.

Table 4 indicated that the correlation analysis was found to be significantly positive, which were in line with the speculations of psychological theories and previous research. For instance, the result indicated that the correlation between work-family conflict and turnover intentions is moderately correlated (r = .509, $p < 0.05$). The result also indicated that the correlation between family-work conflict and turnover intentions is highly correlated (r = .843, $p < 0.05$). The result also indicated that the correlation between excess workload and turnover intentions is moderately correlated (r = .499, $p < 0.05$). The result also indicated that the correlation between time pressure and turnover intentions is moderately correlated (r = .617, $p < 0.05$). The result also indicated that the correlation between overall job demands and turnover intentions is highly correlated (r = .746, $p < 0.05$). All in all, specific and overall job demands was found to positively correlated with Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South.

Regression Analysis

To examine the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) will be significant positive predictors of Business Educators' turnover intentions, the Linear Regression analysis was performed.

Research Hypothesis: Specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) will be significant and positive predictors of Business Educators' turnover intentions.

Table 5: Linear Regression Analysis on the Extent of Relationships between and among the Study Variables.

10000 Bootstrap Resamples								
							95% CI	
Pathways	*SE (β)*	*T*	*Bias*	R^2	*Adj.* R^2	*P*	*LL*	*UL*
WFC → TI	.083 (.527)	7.253	.000	.277	.272	.000	.359	.688
FWC → TI	.059 (.820)	16.796	.000	.673	.671	.000	.718	.948
EXW → TI	.095 (.577)	8.268	-.002	.333	.328	.000	.573	.941
TPR → TI	.104 (.672)	10.615	-.001	.451	.447	.000	.854	1.263
OJD → TI	.018 (.768)	14.049	.000	.590	.587	.000	.232	.303

Note: N = 139, a.) WFC = Work-Family Conflict → TI = Turnover Intentions (F=52.600), b.) FWC = Family-Work Conflict → TI = Turnover Intentions (F=282.097), c.) EXW = Excess Workload → TI = Turnover Intentions (F=68.364), d.) TPR = Time Pressure → TI = Turnover Intentions (F=112.669), OJD = Overall Job Demands → TI = Turnover Intentions (F=197.367), CI = Confidence Interval, LL = Lower Limit, UL = Upper Limit.

Table 5 indicated that Linear Regression analysis for the research hypothesis were performed to test the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) will be significant positive predictors of Business Educators' turnover intentions. Work-family conflict was found to be a significant positive predictor of Business Educators' turnover intentions (β = .525, p < .001). The adjusted r-square indicated that 27.2% of Business Educators' turnover intentions where determined by work-family conflict. Family-work conflict was found to be a significant positive predictor of Business Educators' turnover intentions (β = .820, p < .001). The adjusted r-square indicated that 67.1% of Business Educators' turnover intentions where determined by family-work conflict. Excess workload was found to be a significant positive predictor of Business Educators' turnover intentions (β = .577, p < .001). The adjusted r-square indicated that 33% of Business Educators' turnover intentions where determined by excess workload. Time pressure was found to be a significant positive predictor of Business Educators' turnover intentions (β = .672, p < .001). The adjusted r-square indicated that 45% of Business Educators' turnover intentions where determined by time pressure. Overall job demands were found to be a significant positive predictor of Business Educators' turnover intentions (β = .768, p < .001). The adjusted r-square indicated that 59% of Business Educators' turnover intentions where determined by overall job demands. In all, the hypothesis formed in the study was supported.

Discussion

Turnover intentions have been a core topical problem for organizations, providing great opportunity for organizational and management researchers to deal with or share light on the problem since the 1960s. In this present study, two theories (e.g., JD-R and COR) was adopted and a conceptual model was developed to examine the extent to which business educators' experience specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) and turnover intentions; and the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, and time pressure) predicts business educators' turnover intentions. Results of the Mean and Standard Deviation analyses reveals that Business Educators always experience job demands and turnover intentions. Findings from the analyses agrees with the bulk of previous research who found that employees who are managers and employees who are not managers always suffer from severe burnout syndrome (De Beer et al., 2020; Haar, 2021; Hagqvist et al., 2022; Schaufeli et al., 2023). If these empirical research reported a high burnout-score for employees who are managers and employees who are not managers, the antecedents of burnout such as job demands and the consequences of burnout such as turnover intentions could also be reported to be high among employees who are managers and employees who are not managers.

The above assumption is consistent with the assumption of JD-R theory (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) who maintains that job demands are positively associated with burnout. The result of an existing study conducted by Lee and Ashforth (1996) also reported that employees who experience job demands such as excess workload and work pressure equally experience burnout. Given that the study was conducted among human services providers, Alarcon (2011) extended the study to all types of occupations and professions and confirmed that job demands were salient predictors of burnout for employees working in various sectors of an economy. In a similar study, Bakker, Xanthopoulou and Demerouti (2023) linked a high chronic burnout score to job demands. For instance, high workload was found to be associated with increased burnout score, particularly for employees with high chronic burnout scores. Therefore, burnout is associated with the presence of demands and the absence of resources. In line with the assumption of the JD-R model, Cho (2020) reported that burnout is a perfect predictor of turnover intentions. Sakakibara et al. (2020) also found that burnout associate with turnover intentions. Similarly, De Beer (2021) found a significant relationship between burnout and turnover intentions. De Beer et al. (2022b) also found that burnout positively relate to turnover intentions.

Using the Correlation and Linear Regression statistics, the results of the present study demonstrated a significant positive association between specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) and Business Educators' turnover intentions. These findings concur with the assumption of the JD-R model, and the study conducted by Cho (2020) who found a significant interplay between job demands (work overload and role ambiguity) and turnover intentions. Sakakibara et al. (2020) also found a significant interplay between job demands (qualitative, quantitative and emotional demands) and turnover intentions. In a similar context, De Beer (2021) reported a significant association between and turnover intentions. Furthermore, De Beer et al. (2022b) reported a significant relationship between job demands (e.g., work overload) and turnover intention. This implied that job demands are unavoidable stressors that leads to many negative consequences including turnover intentions. Thus, there is a correlation between job demands and turnover intentions.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Limitations and future research directions cannot be overlooked in any study. First, the aim of this present study was actualized through a causal research study and was only limited to the academicians of publicly-owned and managed universities. This present study does not also include the administrative staff gainfully employed in such universities. Furthermore, this present study does not consider motivational factors such as specific and overall job resources, psychological capital, work engagement, and work commitment that could impacts turnover intentions. Therefore, in future a longitudinal or a mixed-method design is recommended to be used for a similar study to bring into cognizance the time variations over time. A comparative study between the administrative and academic staff of the same universities as well as of other private universities situated in the same geopolitical region is also recommended to be carried out. A study using motivational factors like resources, psychological capital, engagement, and commitment as predictors of Business Educators' turnover intentions is also recommended. In order to generalize its results, an international study in a similar setting is also recommended.

Practical Implications

Considering the need to reduce Business Educators' intentions of quitting the Business Teachers' Education job or leaving their university for another, and the fact that specific and overall job demands intensifies Business Educators' intentions to quit the Business Teachers' Education job or leave their university, it would be valuable to develop stress-reduction strategies. The basis for such strategies could assist the university administrators and managers to promote a resourceful and positive working environment by encouraging social support, i.e., a resource that emphasize listening to Business Educators' grievances, questions and concerns in order to understand their current job situation. The basis for stress-reduction strategies could also provide opportunity for the university administrators and managers to promote a positive and resourceful working environment by encouraging practical support, i.e., a job strategy that emphasize conducting regular or constant dialog with the Business Educators in order to sort and prioritize their job activities and to develop strategies enhancing their personal resources, organizing regular or constant corporate or professional meetings for constructive and reflective discussions about the working conditions. Furthermore, the basis for stress-reduction strategies could also provide opportunity for the university administrators and managers to create a resourceful and positive working environment and providing the Business Educators' with opportunities for skills upgrade and career development. These stress-reduction strategies may allow Business Educators to strengthen their efficacy or confidence regarding their ability to perform their job in an engaged and satisfactory manner with reduced stress.

Conclusion

The central aim of this present study was set out to empirically analyze the extent to which Business Educators are prone to specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) and turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South, and the extent to which specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload and time pressure) associate with Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South. The adapted and adopted measuring scales of this present study have shown adequate and remarkable level of reliability through Cronbach's alpha as shown in Table 2. The hypothesized relationships between specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, time pressure) and Business Educators' turnover intentions were developed; which were supported. Following the findings of the present study, the specific and overall job demands (e.g., work-family conflict, family-work conflict, excess workload, time pressure) have significant and positive relationships with Business Educators' turnover intentions.

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Appendix
QUESTIONNAIRE ON JOB DEMANDS AND BUSINESS EDUCATORS' TURNOVER INTENTIONS

Please you are requested to respond to the items of the questionnaire objectively. It is meant to collect data on *"Job Demands and Business Educators' Turnover Intentions"*. Note that your response to the following items is strictly confidential and will not be published for any selfish or reproachful motive.

Instruction: *Please Tick [√] the column that best express your opinion using the following rating scales: 4 = Always; 3 = Sometimes; 2 = Rarely; 1 = Never.*

Thank you for contributing to this study on job demands and Business Educators' turnover intentions in Nigeria's Public Universities in South-South.

	Job Demands Scale				
	Instruction: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experiences of work-family conflict	4	3	2	1
1.	The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.				
2.	The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill				

	family responsibilities.				
3.	Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.				
4.	My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties.				
5.	Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities.				
Source: Netemeyer, McMurrian and Boles (1996).					
	Instruction: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experiences of family-work conflict.	4	3	2	1
6.	The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.				
7.	I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home.				
8.	Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my family or spouse/partner.				
9.	My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime.				
10.	Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties.				
Source: Netemeyer, McMurrian and Boles (1996).					
	Instruction: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experiences of excess workload.	4	3	2	1
11.	My work requires me to do too much work.				
12.	My work requires me to work very hard.				
13.	My work requires me to work very fast.				
14.	My work requires intense concentration.				
Source: Karasek (1985)					
	Instruction: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experiences of time pressure.	4	3	2	1
15.	I often finish my work later because I have too much work to do.				
16.	I often pressed (checked) for time whenever I am working.				
17.	My work often requires me to work very fast.				
Source: Semmer, Zapf and Dunckel (1998).					
Turnover Intentions Scale					
	Instruction: To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experiences of turnover intentions.	4	3	2	1
18.	I like to actively look for a new job.				
19.	As soon as I get another acceptable job, I will quit.				
20.	I often think about quitting my current job.				
21.	I will probably look for a new job any moment from now.				
22.	I think about quitting my job all the time.				
Source: Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh (1979).					

BUSINESS AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS' EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND STUDY ENGAGEMENT: KOLB'S MODEL ANALYTICAL APPROACH

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Abstract
To address concerns about learning by experience among higher education students, this study was conducted to shed more light on the aspects of experiential learning that can influence students' engagement in their academics. Drawing on Kolb's experiential learning model, this study investigates the influence of experiential learning dimensions (viz., concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation) on the dimensions of study engagement (viz., vigor, dedication, and absorption). Four main hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study. The study was a cross-sectional correlation survey. The participants were Business and Technical education students (N = 663) drawn from four universities in three geo-political zones of Nigeria. Questionnaire was used for data collection and regression analysis was apllied for data analysis in order to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed that concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation are discrete predictors of each dimensions of study engagement – vigor, dedication and absorption. It was therefore recommended that any form of experiential learning should be geared towards promoting students concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation as the cycle will lead to improved academic engagement and outcomes.

Keywords: Business Education, Experiential Learning, Kolb's Learning Model, Study Engagement, Technical Education.

Introduction

While in school, students are expected to acquire multidimensional skills that will enable them to cope with the demands of school-to-work transition. In technical and vocational education and training (TVET), the allied higher education students are expected to possess skills that will make them employable after graduation. Hence, one expectation of any TVET graduate of higher education is the possession of employability skills (Awodiji & Magogodi, 2023). It is expected that such students have the skills to make them gain employment immediately after graduation, yet these skills appear to be lacking or not adequately possessed among these graduates because of certain inhibiting factors such as inadequate use of contemporary teaching techniques, insufficient or lack of teaching resources, political instability, poor learning environment (e.g., Ayonmike, 2014; Onwusa, 2021). These factors definitely affect learning or employability skills acquisition among the TVET students.

Learning is said to occur when there is a relative permanent change in behavior, knowledge and skills of the learner as a result of experience. This may imply that learning is polymorphous. Beyond the regular classroom learning, students are therefore expected to be exposed to different learning approaches, techniques and methods to enhance them change in their knowledge, attitude, values and skills. In TVET, learning is expected to take place within and outside the regular classroom settings. Such learning situations or experiences helps students to maximize learning potentials. Hence, emphasis is placed more on learning by doing in the context of TVET (Coppe et al., 2021).

Technical and vocational education and training is a holistic educational programme that involves the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge, value and attitude to enable the learner transit from school to work smoothly (Orji & Ogbuanya, 2022). In the formal education sector, TVET is offered in the Nigerian university as Agricultural education, Business education, Computer education, Entrepreneurship education, Home economic education, Industrial technical/technology education (Chukwuedo & Odogwu, 2022). In this study, our interest is specifically on business and technical education. While business education is characterized with the programme that prepares graduates to specialize in accounting education, entrepreneurship education, consumer education, marketing education and office technology and management (c.f., Edokpolor & Egbri, 2017); technical education (sometimes referred to as career and technical education, technology education, industrial technical education, or industrial technology education) is characterized by an educational training that prepares prospective graduates in the fields of automobile technology, building technology, electrical technology, electronic technoloigy, mechanical technology and woodwork technology (c.f., Chukwuedo & Ogbuanya, 2020b). A closer look at these conceptualization reveals that the recipients of these programmes must always undertake hand-on training to meet the emerging technological and business dynamics. Hence, experiential learning becomes more necessary than ever in these fields of study. This study, therefore, intends to add to existing literature to call or reawaken the attention of TVET practitioners and experiential educators on how experiential learning can be adopted to foster academic outcomes.

The concept of experiential learning buttress several teaching-learning activities and processes often employed in adult education, vocational education and training, and higher education contexts (Fees & Perchiniak, 2023; Kob & Kolb, 2013, 2015; Miettinen, 2000). Some of these activities include initial training, work placement learning, work-integrated learning, industrial training, internship, work-based learning, workshop practice or laboratory teaching, simulations and service learning experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2013). Experiential learning positions learning as a continuous process where theory and practice are conceptualized and reconceptualized, with each spiral deepening a student’s understanding. However, it appears greater attention has not been given to these activities by scholars, to follow experiential learning approach as a a theory. This is one of the thrust of this study.

Experiential learning theory (ELT) is hinged on the works of famous scholars who gave experience a central role in their theories of human learning and development. Notable among these scholars are John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, William James, Carl Jung, Paulo Freire, Carl Rogers, Lev Vygotsky, and Mary Parker Follett (Kolb & Kolb, 2015; Miettinen, 2000). The contributions of these scholars were geared towards developing a dynamic, holistic model of the process of learning from experience. Thus, ELT is a dynamic view of learning based on a learning cycle driven by the resolution of the dual dialectics of action/reflection and experience/abstraction. It is a holistic theory that defines learning as the major process of human adaptation involving the whole person. As such, ELT is applicable not only in the formal education classroom but in all arenas of life.

Experiential learning can be represented as a four-stage cycle where learning begins with experiences that allow participants to observe, review and reflect on what they have practised, and then critically reflect to consciously link their experiences to theory or previous experiences. Towards this understanding, this study focuses on the application of Kolb’s learning model to ascertain how experiential learning could influence study engagement.

Study engagement is characterized by behaviors such as vigor, dedication, and absorption in a given context. It is a conscious and voluntary effort an individual makes to allocate and direct their resources towards achieving studious, academic, and vocational-related tasks (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Siu et al., 2014) or to achieve the seeming unattainable expectancy equity in academic major or vocation (Chukwuedo et al., 2021). In this study, study engagement is the degree to which students devote their academic-related resources (time, effort, energy, etc.) to enhance their learning experiences. Although different dimensions of engagement exist in literature, we cautiously employed these dimensions - vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor represents the willingness to expend effort, intellectual resilience, and a high level of energy, dedication involves sense of enthusiasm, challenge, and pride; while absorption is characterized by being fully engrossed in a related learning activities (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Alrashidin et al., 2016). Based on these discussions, the present study aims to answer the following research question: What are the relationships between the predictor variables (e.g., CE, RO, AC and AE) and the outcome variables (e.g., vigor, dedication, and absorption)?

Theoretical Framework

Experiential Learning Theory

This study is hinged on the main tenets of Kolb's model of experiential learning, which emphasizes how cognitive, environmental, and emotional experiences influence the learning process and outcomes (Kolb, 1984; 2015). The theory states that learners learn skills better when exposed to real-life situations. Within the ambient of ELT, learning is defined as the process knowledge creation through the transformation of experience. For Kolb's model, knowledge is a function of the combination of grasping and transforming experience (Kolb, 1984). Thus, Kolb's ELT model portrays two dialectically related modes of grasping experience - Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC), as well as two dialectically related modes of transforming experience – Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE).

Experiential learning helps learners to learn skills and develop knowledge through real-world, hands-on experiences. It is a process of constructing knowledge that involves a creative tension among the four learning modes that is responsive to contextual demands. This process is portrayed as an idealized learning cycle or spiral where the learner touches all the bases – experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting – in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned. From the conceptualization of Kolb's model, immediate (i.e., concrete experiences) form the center for observations and reflections. These reflections are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts from which new implications for action can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences

The notions of experiential learning underpin many of the teaching and learning activities used in higher education contexts. Examples include work-integrated learning, work-based learning, laboratory teaching, simulations and service learning experiences. In each of these activity types, learning begins with experiences that allow participants to observe, review and reflect on what they have practiced, and then critically reflect to consciously link their experiences to theory or previous experiences (Cooper et al., 2010). Overall, Kolb's model summarizes these teaching and learning activities as a cycle or learning styles

Kolb (1984) has described experiential learning as a four-stage cycle. These include concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC), and active experimentation (AE) (see Figure 1). This cycle is a sequential process that enables learning to occur "through a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p.41).

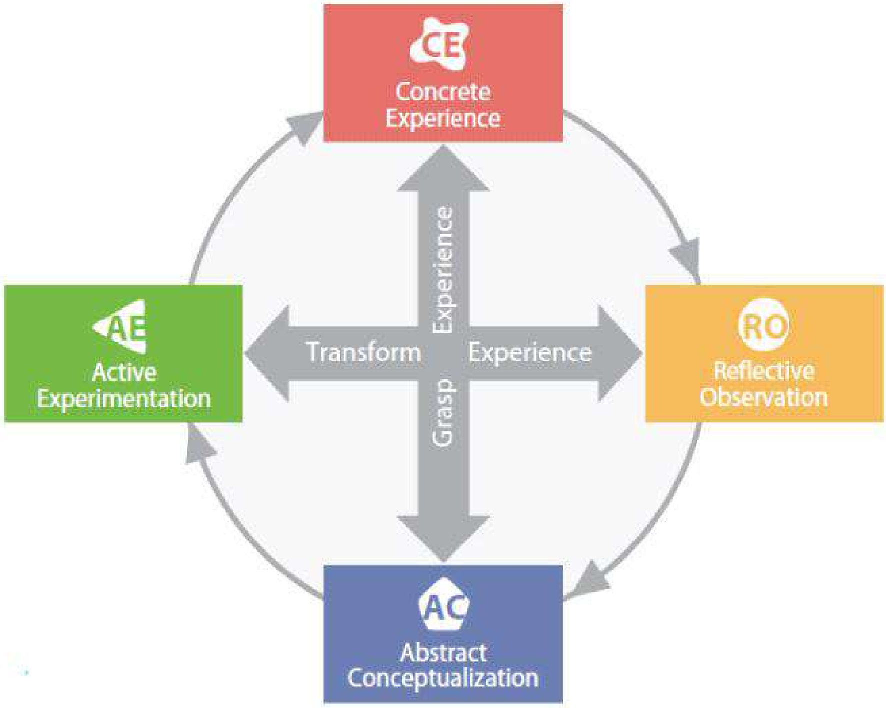

Figure 1. Experiential Learning Model.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

The conceptual framework for this study is schematically represented in Figure 2. The model reflects the path ways between each of the dimensions of the predictor variable – experiential learning styles (CE, RO, AC and AE) and the dimensions of the outcome variable – study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption). The model depicts the possible predictions that gave rise to the hypotheses formulated in this study.

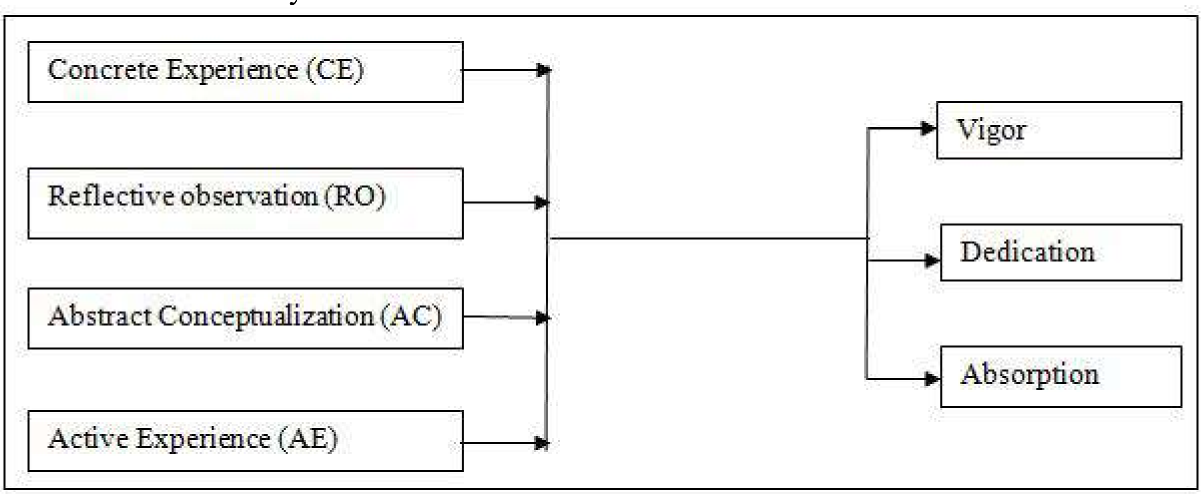

Figure 2. Schematic Representation of the Conceptual Model.

From the conceptual model, the researchers theorize that each dimension of experiential learning style will discretely be associated with or predict each dimension of study engagement. Although there may be possibility of combining the four dimentions of experiential learning to determine the multiple effects on each dimension of study engagement or two or more of the dimensions, this theory is not within the scope of this study. Thus, this study focuses on a model that involes a dimension of experiential learning with each dimension of study engagement and so on, which would give rise to 12 pathways with each dimension of experiential learning to produce three pathways. These theories formed the basis of the hypotheses for this study.

Hypotheses Formulations

Based on the theoretical and conceptual models of this study, the following research hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Research Hypothesis 1: Students' concrete experience (CE) will significantly and positively predict their study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption).

Research Hypothesis 2: Students' reflective observation (RO) will significantly and positively predict their study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption).

Research Hypothesis 3: Students' abstract conceptualization (AC) will significantly and positively predict their study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption).

Research Hypothesis 4: Students' active experimentation (AE) will significantly and positively predict their study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption).

Methods

Design of the Study

This study employed the quantitative approach with a cross-sectional correlation survey. According to Gay et al. (2011), a cross-sectional design involves the collection of data as a snapshot from the respondents, and therefore investigates relationships among variables at a snapshot. This design is deemed fit for this study because the researchers collected data from the respondents at a single administration and determine the relationship between the study variables, which are Kolb's experiential learning styles (CE, RO, AC and AE) and study engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption).

Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 663 undergraduate students of Business Education (n = 461) and Technical Education (n = 202). The participants were drawn from three universities, one from the South-east, two from the South-south, and one from the South-west of Nigeria. The convenient sampling technique was applied in reaching the participants such that the participants were selected based on their accessibility and avalaibility to the researchers at the point the researchers visited the institutions for data collection.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional ethical approval was granted to the researchers. Hence, we sought informed consent from the students before data collection. Additionally, two lecturers (one each from the two institutions) served as the research assistants during the data collection. Therefore, participants were assured of their confidentiality while responding to the instrument for data collection. All in all, participation in this study was voluntary. No student's personal or institution's identity was reported to protect the rights and welfare of the research participants.

Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire was used for data collection, and it consisted of two sections (A and B). Section A was structured to retrieve demographic information of the participants (e.g., gender, age, and academic level); while section B consisted of seven subsections to measure the constructs for the study, which include CE, RO, AC, and AE for experiential learning as well as vigor, dedication, and absorption for study engagement. The response options for each scale in section B were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Experiential Learning Scale. The total number of items that measured the experiential learning style based on the Kolb's model was 16, and were generated by the researchers after careful review of literature (e.g., Kolb & Kolb, 2013). Each subscale was measured with 4 items, see the appendix for samples of all items.

Study Engagement Scale. A total of 15 items were adapted from the original student version of the 17-item study engagement scale drawn from the Utretch Work Engagement Scale (UWES – Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Hence, as used in previous studies, the study engagement scale has three dimensions or subscale, which are vogr, dedication, and absorption (e.g., Chukwuedo, et al., 2021; Salmela-Aro, 2017; Salmela-Aro & Read, 2017; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Siu et al., 2014).

Validity and Reliability

The content and construct validity of the scales were established. Both the self-developed and adapted scales were given to two lecturers and one student to determine the face validity of the scales. The leacturers were used as experts and experienced researchers, while the student was used to determine the language difficulty of the items since the instrument would be administered to students of same characteristics. Futher, the construct validity for each scale was established using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model. The validity of the experiential learning scale was determined with four factor model (χ^2 = 47.324, GFI = .905, TLI = .917, CFI = .908, SRMR = .059, RMSEA = .078, $p < .05$) and that of study engagement was determined with three factor model (χ^2 = 33.128, GFI = .966, TLI = .967, CFI = .963, SRMR = .048, RMSEA = .065, $p > .05$). Additionally, the reliability coefficients, obtained via Cronbach's alpha were 0.77 for experiential learning scale and 0.89 for study engagement scale.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection took a period of four weeks because of distance barriers and it was conducted on a face-to-face administration and retrieval. Two research assistance were used for data collection to enable the researchers get access to the students. The mode of retirieval was absolutely on-the-spot, where the students where waited for by the research assistants to respond to the items of the instrument. However, the instrument was administered to the students during one or more of their lecture time. To avoid clash between administration and lecture hour, some students who got to the class prior to the lecture time were given the instrument. Later, the rest of them were given the instrument just immediately after the lecture hour. All in all, the instrument was successfully retrieved after the lecture hour.

Data Analytical Procedures

Having retrieved the instrument, the responses of the students were coded on SPSS. Then, set of items for a given construct were parceled to form a single aggregated data for that construct. This was done for CE, RO, AC, AE, vigor, dedication, and absorption.

To answer the research question, the bivariate correlation, with Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC = r) coefficient was employed, while the hypotheses weres tested using the simple linear regression model. The decision rule for establishing a relationship via bivariate correlations was based on correlation coefficients ranging between -.35 to +.35 for weak/no correlation; +.35 to +.65 or -.35 to -.65 for moderate correlation; and +.65 to 1.00 or -.65 to -1.00 for strong correlation (Gay et al., 2011). The positive or negative signs explain the direction of relationship. Correlation coefficient with unity (1) is regarded as perfect correlation, while zero (0) coefficient means none or no correlation. The decision for the hypothesis was based on the probability value (p-value) of less than or eaqual to 0.05 for the rejection region; otherwise such an hypothesis was accepted.

Results

Results of the Research Question

To answer the research question, bivariate correlation was performed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Bivariate Correlation of the Constructs/Variables

Variables	Parameters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Concrete Experience	Pearson Correlation	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
2. Reflective Observation	Pearson Correlation	.482**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000						
3. Abstract Conceptualization	Pearson Correlation	.460**	.620**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000					
4. Active Experimentation	Pearson Correlation	.230**	.535**	.553**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000				
5. Vigor	Pearson Correlation	.346**	.413**	.415**	.412**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000			
6. Dedicate	Pearson Correlation	.285**	.351**	.386**	.352**	.626**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		
7. Absorption	Pearson Correlation	.311**	.198**	.224**	.139**	.132**	.066	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.091	

Data presented in Table 1 depict the correlations between the study variables. The table shows significant positive correlation between CE and vigor (r = .346), CE and dedication (r = .285), and CE and absorption (r = .311). Similarly, the table shows significant positive correlation between RO and vigor (r = .413), RO and dedication (r = .351) and RO and absorption (r = .198). Additionally, the table shows significant positive correlation between AC and vigor (r = .415), AC and dedication (r = .386) and AC and absorption (r = .224). Further, the table reveals significant positive correlation between AE and vigor (r = .412), AE and dedication (r = .352) and AE and absorption (r = .139).

Results of the Research Hypotheses

Table 2 shows the results of the test of the hypotheses.

Table 2. Regression Analysis Results for the Hypotheses.

Hyp.	Pathways	R^2	F	B	T	p	Decision
1a	CE → Vigor	.120	90.089	.415	9.492	.000	Significant
1b	CE → Dedication	.081	58.432	.284	7.644	.000	Significant
1c	CE → Absorption	.097	70.694	.371	8.408	.000	Significant
2a	RO → Vigor	.171	136.053	.452	11.664	.000	Significant
2b	RO → Dedication	.123	92.790	.319	9.633	.000	Significant
2c	RO → Absorption	.039	27.021	.215	5.198	.000	Significant
3a	AC → Vigor	.172	137.151	.441	11.711	.000	Significant
3b	AC → Dedication	.149	115.872	.342	10.764	.000	Significant
3c	AC → Absorption	.050	34.768	.237	5.896	.000	Significant
4a	AE → Vigor	.169	134.874	.425	11.614	.000	Significant
4b	AE → Dedication	.124	93.604	.302	9.675	.000	Significant
4c	AE → Absorption	.019	13.051	.143	3.613	.000	Significant

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis for the test of the hypotheses. For hypothesis 1, the table shows that CE is a significant predictor of students' vigor (F = 90.089, β = .415, p < .001), dedication (F = 58.432, β = .284, p < .001), and absorption (F = 70.694, β = .371, p < .001). Hence, hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c are accepted as stated in this study. This means that students' concrete experience in experiential learning cycle is a significant predictor of their vigor, dedication and absorption in academic engagement.

Similarly, for hypothesis 2, Table 2 reveals that RO is a significant predictor of students' vigor (F = 136.053, β = .452, p < .001), dedication (F = 92.790, β = .319, p < .001), and absorption (F = 27.021, β = .215, p < .001). In essence, hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c are upheld as stated in this study. This means that students' reflective observation in experiential learning cycle is a significant predictor of their vigor, dedication and absorption in academic engagement.

Moreso, for hypothesis 3, Table 2 reveals that AC is a significant predictor of students' vigor (F = 137.151, β = .441, p < .001), dedication (F = 115.872, β = .342, p < .001), and absorption (F = 34.768, β = .237, p < .001). Implicitly, hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c are retained as stated in this study. This means that students' abstract conceptualization in experiential learning cycle is a significant predictor of their vigor, dedication and absorption in academic engagement.

Further, for hypothesis 4, Table 2 reveals that AE is a significant predictor of students' vigor (F = 134.874, β = .425, p < .001), dedication (F = 93.604, β = .302, p < .001), and absorption (F = 13.051, β = .143, p < .001). In essence, hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c are accepted as stated in this study. This means that students' active experimentation in experiential learning cycle is a significant predictor of their vigor, dedication and absorption in academic engagement.

Discussion

Drawing insights from the tenets of Kolb's exoerietial learning model, this study investigated the association between the elements of Kolb's experiential learning cycle and study engagement among higher education students of Business and Technical education. From the results, Kolb's theory of experiential learning was supported since the overall results reveals significant effect of experience on learners learning outcomes (c.f., Kolb & Kolb, 2013, 2015, 2017; Miettinen, 2000).

The findings of this study showed that, within experiential learning, students' concrete experiences can contribute significantly to their study engagement. Specifically, concrete experience influences vigor, dedication and absoption. The findings therefore reveal that when students has concrete experience of a real-life situation (Kolb & Kolb, 2017; Miettinen, 2000) their vigor, dedication and absorption to their study will increase. This explains the fact that concrete experience promotes academic engagement and outcomes. Although this study uniquely found the effect of CE on academic engagement, the findings agree with previous studies that elucidated the effect of learning by experience such as teaching practice, work placement learning/work-integrated learning and initial training (e.g., Akpokiniovo & Ogbuanya, 2024) on student' learning outcomes.

Another aspect of the findings of this study is the predictive possibilities of reflective observation on study engagement. The study showed that students' abilitive to reflect on experiential learning outcomes, they have higher tendencies to engage in their study. Hence, this study found that reflective observation is a predictor of students' vigor, dedication and absorption in relation to their academic engagement. These findings also alogn with previous studies (e.g., Edwards, 2014) who found that work-related learning experiences are related to learning outcomes.

In a similar vein, the findings of this study depict that students' abstract conceptuaslization is a predictor of study engagement. In essence, experiential learning leading to abstract conceptualization could help students to develop higher vigor, dedication and absorption in their study. Hence study engagement could be a function of experiential learning that involves abstract conceptualization. These findings are concensus with previous studies which found that learning by experience promotes intentions to partcipate in learning conditions (e.g., Mbagwu et al., 2020) as wellas academic or practical skills performance (e.g., Chukwuedo & Ogbuanya, 2020).

Finaly, this study found that active experimentation is a predictor of study engagement. This means that when students are exposed to experiential learning conditions, participate actively in the experience which will in turn lead to increased academic engagement. In essence, active participation influences vigor , dedication and absorption to one's study activities. These findings concor with previous findings which identified that carerer and work-related learning fosters students engagement (e.g., Chkwuedo & Ementa, 2022; Okoli et al., 2021; Orji & Ogbuanya, 2022) and satisfaction (Brooks & Youngson, 2016; Chukwuedo & Ogbuanya, 2020b).

Limitations

Just as in other studies, this study is not without limitations and will therefore acknowledge a few limitations. Because the findings from cross-sectional survey do not depict causality, we suggest that future studies should employ experimental approach to compare our findings. Although the findings of this study validate aspects of Kolb's learning model, the study did not confirm the cyclic nature of the model. Thus, future researchers should endeavour to employ longitudinal approach or other relevant methods to confirm the cyclic nature of the model. Finally, our study did not recruit students in other fields of study; hence, researchers can study students in other fields of study to confirm our findings. Despite the limitations of this study, we recommend that any form of experiential learning should be geared towards promoting students concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation as the cycle will lead to improved academic engagement and outcomes.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND STUDY ENGAGEMENT

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is strictly meant for academic purpose. I assure you of your confidentiality. Thus, respond objectively to the items of the questionnaire

Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

Level: 300 [ ] 400 [ ]

Major: Business Edu. [ ] Industrial/Technical/Technology. Edu. [ ]
Your Age: ______________

Key. **SA** = Strongly Agree, **A** = Agree, **U** = Undecided, **D** = Disagree, **SD** = Strongly Disagree

	Experiential Learning Scale – Self-Generted via Literature, e.g. Kolb & Kolb 2015					
SN	**Concrete Experience Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1	I enjoy learning new concepts/theories practically					
2	I prefer to learn skills by doing rather than more of reading/listening					
3	I have had opportunities to learn things as they are in real-world situation					
4	I feel comfortable trying new things and learning via practical ways					
SN	**Reflective Observation Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
5	I enjoy learning when I observe others experiences					
6	I make attempt to figure out why things are done in a given pattern					
7	I do take time to reflect on my experiences					
8	When situation arises, I think of ways I could have done them differently					
SN	**Abstract Conceptualization Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
9	I try to define/explain concepts or theories when I anm studying					
10	When I study things, I try to identify patterns and links between concepts					
11	When I learn complex ideas, I enjoy developing patterns to explain it					
12	I enjoy internalizing concepts/ideas to make meaning to me					
SN	**Active Experimentation Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
13	I am excited to experiment new ideas and methods					
14	While learning, I try to summarize the ideas from my lecture materials					
15	I do not mind taking risks to try out difficult tasks for new solutions					
16	I learn better when I see opportunities to apply what I have learned					
	Study Engagement Scale Adapted from UWES and other Literature					
SN	**Vigor Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1	Mentally, I feel very strong when I study					
2	When I study, I always persevere even when it looks difficult					
3	I can embark in academic activities at a time					
4	Every day, I feel like studying/going to school to study/learn					
5	I feel energetic when I study					
SN	**Deification Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
6	I find studying full of meaning and purpose					
7	To me, studying is challenging					
8	I am proud on the things I study in my specialty					
9	I am enthusiastic about my study					
10	Studying make me excited					
SN	**Absorption Subscale**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
11	When I am studying, I forget everything else around me	Please Turn Over				
12	I enjoy concentration when I am studying					
13	I get carried away when I am studying					
14	I feel happy studying intensely					
15	I don't know when time flies when I am studying					

For enquiries, please contact the researcher via 08029026002. *Developed July, 2021*
Thank you for your time

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DETERMINANT FACTORS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS

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Abstract
This study has empirically investigated the determinant factors of business education students' entrepreneurial intentions. A correlational research design was used to actualize the purpose of the study. Data were collected, with structured questionnaires, from 202 business education students from Ambrose Alli University and University of Benin because they are the two public universities offering business education programme in Edo State. The authors applied the correlation and regression statistics. The findings showed that entrepreneurial self-confidence indicators such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotions does not significantly and positively influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Furthermore, logical conclusions and recommendations were made.

Keywords. Business Education Students, Entrepreneurial Self-Confidence, Mastery Experience, Positive Emotions, Verbal Persuasion, Vicarious Experience, Entrepreneurial Intentions.

Introduction

Business education is a field of study aims at equipping students with the knowledge and skills to confidently pursue entrepreneurial career and lifelong learning. The goals of business education as stipulated in the existing literature is threefold, namely: To prepare students for career progression in different occupations and profession; To equip students with the required knowledge and skills to launch and manage a new business venture; and To provide students with the knowledge about how to launch and manage a specific business venture (c.f. Edokpolor & Egbri, 2017; Edokpolor & Oduma, 2018). Despite this conceptual clarification, business education programme is characterized by divers' issues and challenges of producing employable and competent graduates.

Today, many graduates from skill-based programmes possesses low level of employability skills, which further contributed to the increasing rates of unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria (UNIDO, 2017). The rates of unemployment and underemployment among youths and young adults, including business education graduates, are quite high and alarming. For instance, studies have reported that four out of every 10 persons under the age of 35 where unemployed or jobless (Busson, 2020). The

Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2018) reported that the rate of unemployment in the second quarter of 2018 were 22.70% and increased to 23.10% in the third quarter of 2018, rate of unemployment among youths were 36.5%. The world data Atlas (2018) reported that the rate of unemployment has increased from 10.6% in 2012 to 22.6% in 2018, with annual growth rate of 16.02%. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017) noted that the rate of unemployment is increasing simultaneously with the rate of underemployment. For instance, the NBS (2018) reported that the rate of underemployment within the age of 15 and 34 in the third quarter of 2017 were 52.6% and increased to 55.4% in the third quarter of 2018. More recently, university graduates who are unemployed was put as 40.1% and universities graduates who are underemployed was put at 12.5% in the fourth quarter of 2021 (NBS, 2022). These statistics revealed how young graduates from our numerous universities in Nigeria exert low self-confidence towards making the decisions to launch and manage a new business venture.

The alarming rates of unemployment and underemployment suggest that youths and young adults, including business education graduates, exert low intensions to launch and manage their own business venture. Therefore, entrepreneurial intention is important for business education students and their immediate society. Entrepreneurial intension can be seen as a salient element for overcoming the high and alarming incidence of unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria. However, the decision to launch and manage a new business venture among business education graduates is highly important in Nigerian economy and, as such, it is highly discussed by policymakers and other relevant stakeholders as a strategic mechanism for overcoming the high and alarming rates of unemployment and underemployment. This unpleasant situation requires business education students to exert high level of self-confidence in deciding on the entrepreneurial career they may which to pursue throughout their life time.

Business education students' entrepreneurial self-confidence can therefore be defined as the belief in their ability that they can perform and execute entrepreneurial tasks in relations to the model proposed by Albert Bandura, in that the expectations of self-confidence especially towards the decision to launch and manage a new business venture is derived from four major sources (Badura 1977). The first source is mastery experience, which is based on entrepreneurial task accomplishment. This means that previous successes in entrepreneurial task accomplishment is one of the most significant factor of entrepreneurial self-confidence. The second source is vicarious experience, which is an inference from social comparison as imitating and modeling entrepreneurial behaviour or managers behaviour during or when performing an entrepreneurial task. This can stimulate or reinforce the expectations that business education students can also do it. Observing entrepreneurs or managers during or when performing an entrepreneurial task can inspire hopes in business education students in that their own entrepreneurial task will improve when they graduate if they persevere and step up their efforts.

The third source is verbal persuasion, which involves business education students believing that they are capable of handling what has previously overwhelmed them. This means that self-confidence towards an expectation can influence business education student's own efforts. It is likely to be less effective when they do not provide classical basis for them. The fourth and last source is positive emotional state, which implies that business education student are more inclined to participate or experience successes in their entrepreneurial task when they are not influenced by fear and when they do not encounter stressful and demanding situations. For instance, business education students are more inclined to anticipate negative emotions if they experience threatening and challenging situations. Thus, entrepreneurial self-confidence can be seen as a positive and motivational potential that may influence business education students' intensions to launch and manage a new business after graduation. To this end, there is need for the authors of this present study to empirically investigate the factors that could influence the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students in Nigeria. The aim of this present study was to examine the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions of business education students in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to assess the influence of mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotions on entrepreneurial intensions of business education students.

Theoretical Framework

Self-Efficacy Theory

This study is hinged on self-efficacy theory postulated by Albert Bandura in 1977. Bandura argued that self-efficacy, or simply put self-confidence plays an important role in making a decision on a career to pursue, such as, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. Self-efficacy theory provides an understanding of how people develop self-confidence and how it can be used to influence certain behaviour (Bandura 1997, 2001; Betz, 2004). Self-efficacy can also be seen as a critical factor in whether or not students can master specific task and produce positive outcomes (Bandura 2000). It can also help to influence whether students think optimistically and pessimistically and act in certain ways that are beneficial or detrimental to achieving goals, or avoid tasks, engage in tasks with a high or low level of motivation, persevere for a short or a lengthy period of time when task are difficult and are motivated or demoralized by failure. This implied that students with a sense of self efficacy will persist on a given task long enough to obtain success or corrective feedback that leads to expectation of future success. In contrast, students with low self-efficacy tend to abandon a given task at first sign of difficulty and thereby establishing a pattern of failure, low expectation of future success, and task avoidance.

Bandura (1994) defined self-efficacy as people's belief about their abilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over intents that affects their lives. This definition reflects students' innermost thoughts on whether they have the abilities perceived as important to pursue entrepreneurial and lifelong learning task, and the belief that they will be able to effectively convert those abilities into a chosen career task. This is why students who feel competent and skillful are more likely to experiment and engage in new activities, as some authors have noted. Self-efficacy is also referred to the self-confidence of individuals in specific tasks (Bandura 1989, 1992). This implies that self-confidence is an important psychological and cognitive attributes that influence business education students' intentions to start up a new business. Bandura (1992) suggested that student's self confidence in their abilities to successfully perform a specific behaviour comes from four key sources: Mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotions. This is why Bandura (1986) saw self-efficacy as a cognitive structure created by cumulative learning experience in one's life.

Bandura (1994) stated that mastery experience is the most effective way to boost self-efficacy towards a given task. This is because people are more likely to believe they can do something new if it is similar to something they have already done well. This implied that for business education students to confidently make their entrepreneurial intention known there is need to engage them with practical learning experience during the process of their schooling. If business education students are taught with practical learning models, their self-efficacy will definitely increase and are more likely to exert high level of career behaviour.

The second source expected by business education students to perform a specific behavior is known as vicarious experience, which involves observation of managers of entrepreneurs' behavior during their industrial work experience. A business education student who is constantly observing a manger's attitude in performing am entrepreneurial task can be more certain that he or she is capable of performing the same task. Vicarious experience which involves watching and imitating others during practical learning process can provide an observational experience that enhance self-efficacy towards entrepreneurial task.

The third source expected by business education students to perform a specific behavior is known as verbal persuasion which involves a frequent conviction that they possess the ability to perform a given behaviour or entrepreneurial task at an acceptable level. When a student is persuaded verbally that he or she can pursue an entrepreneurial task, such a student is more likely to perform entrepreneurial task. This is why Bandura (1994) argued that when people are told "They do not have the skills or ability to do something" they tend to give up quickly imagine when a professor of business education or an expert of business education inform each students that they cannot pass entrepreneurial studies examination or cannot do well in their future entrepreneurial task, what would their likely outcome be? So business education students can be introduced to a culture through positive encouragement and feedback, not only from their classroom lecturers, but also from their peers or parents. As such, these persuasive or positive statement are internalized as psychological or cognitive process that are autonomously invoked. As Vygotsky (1978) rightly and eloquently put it “Through others we become ourselves” (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003).

The fourth and last source expected by business education students to perform a specific behaviour is known as positive emotional state, which involve the emotions that a person feels as he or she prepares to engage in a certain behaviour or entrepreneurial task. Positive emotions occur when business education students contemplate in engaging in entrepreneurial task, which provides close as to the likelihood of success or failure regarding their future entrepreneurial career endeavor. As they face entrepreneurial task, anxiety, worries, fears and restlessness reduces their self-efficacy beliefs, while assurances, hope, resilience, excitement, comfort, eagerness, and psych raises their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1997). Self-efficacy theory is related to this present study such that when business education students are exposed to previous entrepreneurial activities imitate role models in entrepreneurial environment, are persuaded that they can perform entrepreneurial task and exert positive feelings that they can perform entrepreneurial task, they will exert high level of the intentions of starting their own business.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour is a widely applied theory postulated by Ajzen in 1991. The theory proposes that different kind of human behaviour are best predicted by the intention to perform the various kinds of behaviours in question. This theory emerged or was derived from the theory of reasoned action. The theory of planned behaviour proposed that the time predictors of behavioural intention are attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Attitude towards behaviour refers to human contrast of whether or not it is beneficial to perform a given behviour. Subjective norms represent an important predictor or influence of behavioural intention, the influence of subjective norms on specific behavioural intention has been established in different field of research. For instance, some studies have suggested that subjective norms significantly influence entrepreneurial intention (Ahmed et al., 2020; Maresch et al., 2016). Perceived behavioural control refers to the extent to which an individual feels successful to perform a given behaviour. Ajzen (2011) noted that perceived behavioural control is a key determinant of individual’s intention to perform any type of behaviour. An earlier research study by Ajzen (1988) argued that behavioural modifications in terms of entrepreneurial intention may play an important role in any kind of behaviour, this implied that the theory of planned behaviour was postulated to predict human behaviour in specific domains or contests for instance, the theory of planned behaviour has been used to support some specific behaviour such as career self-efficacy intention (Hackett & Betz, 1981), core values of sustainable development (Edokpolor, Otache & Orji 2022) and entrepreneurial intentions (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Otache, Edokpolor & Okolie, 2021: Otache, Edokpolor & Kadiri, 2022).

Entrepreneurial intentions may be influenced by a factor such as entrepreneurial self-confidence for example, entrepreneurial self-confidence can provide an apparatus for students to acquire or exert entrepreneurial ability that will influence entrepreneurial intention. More importantly, entrepreneurial career self-confidence can motivate students to make informed choices to launch a new entrepreneurial venture. More so, the theory of planned behaviour supported the present study such that the exertion of entrepreneurial self-confidence through exposure to entrepreneurship education and orientation can motivate students to make informed decisions towards launching a new entrepreneurial venture. As a result, the present research or study assumed that students’ intention to start up and manage a new business or entrepreneurial venture could be influenced by the manifestations of entrepreneurial self-confidence.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual model was developed by the authors of this present study through which the independent variables (i.e., mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotional state) influence the dependent variable (i.e., entrepreneurial intention). Therefore, the conceptual model described and explained the extent to which factors such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotional state influence the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students as depicted in figure 1.

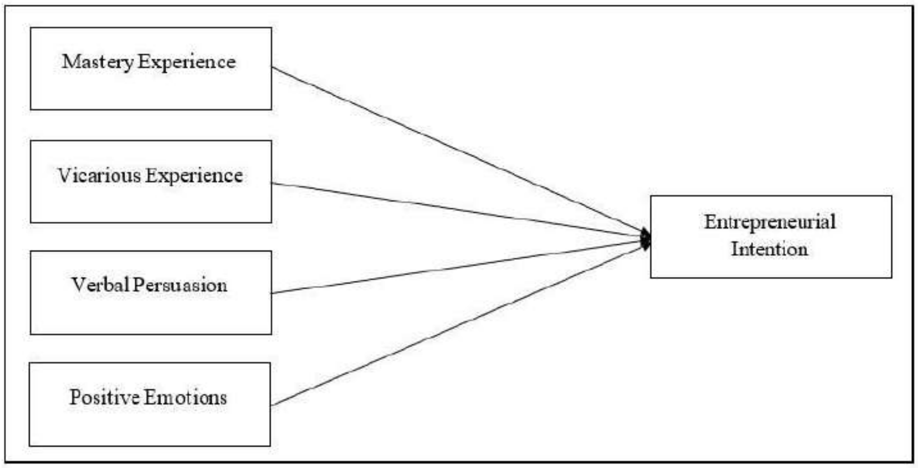

Figure 1: A model showing the determinant factors of entrepreneurial intentions.

The first underlying assumption in the above conceptual model is that when business education students are exposed to previous entrepreneurial experience, it may help to influence their intentions to launch and manage a new business. The second underlying assumptions in the above conceptual model is that when business education students imitate and model the behaviour of managers or entrepreneurs during their industrial work experience, it may influence their intentions to launch and manage a new business. The fourth and last underlying assumptions in the above conceptual model is that when business education students are more inclined to participate or engage in entrepreneurial task, it may influence their intentions to launch and manage a new business.

Hypothetical Propositions

Research Hypothesis 1: Mastery experience does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intensions of business education students.

Research Hypothesis 2: Vicarious experience does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intensions of business education students.

Research Hypothesis 3: Verbal persuasion does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intensions of business education students.

Research Hypothesis 4: Positive emotion does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intensions of business education students.

Methods

Research Design

A correlational survey research design was used to actualize the purpose of the present study. The design was suitable for the present study because it helps to determine the extent to which mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotional state influences the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Participants and Sample

The population of this study comprised of 202 business education students in Public Universities. There are presently two Public Universities: Ambrose Alli University and University of Benin in Edo State offering business education programme. University of Benin is presently managed by the Federal Government and Ambrose Alli University is presently managed by the State Government. The total sampling technique was used to select a total of 202 business education students for the study.

Research Instruments

The instrument for data collection were two structured questionnaires (see Appendix) adapted from existing literature. The instrument for measuring entrepreneurial self-confidence is titled "Questionnaire for entrepreneurial self-confidence" and the questionnaire for measuring entrepreneurial intentions is titled "Questionnaire for entrepreneurial intentions" The instrument for measuring entrepreneurial self-confidence comprises of five items adapted from Gelaidan and Abdullateef (2017) and the instrument for measuring entrepreneurial intentions comprises of six items adapted from Linan and Chen (2009). Business education students rated themselves on a 4-point rating scale, which ranged from 4 = strongly agree (SA) to 1 = strongly disagree (SD).

Validation and Reliability of the Instruments

The instruments for data collection were subjected to face and content validity by two experts in business education. The content validity of the instrument was made with respect to sentence structure and correction covering entrepreneurial self–confidence and intentions. The face validity of the instrument was made with respect to relevance and adequacy, the suggestion points out by experts were effected in the final copies of the instrument and were reproduced for answering of the research questions and testing of the research hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. To establish the reliability of the instruments, few copies were administered on 30 business education students, who were not part of the sample used for the present study. Thereafter, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instruments. The coefficient alpha values revealed the reliabilities for entrepreneurial self-confidence and entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, the alpha values obtained are greater than 0.70, which suggest high reliability and internal consistency measures.

Table 1: Construct Reliabilities for the Two Study Variables.

S/N	Variables	Cronbach's alpha
1.	Entrepreneurial Self-Confidence	0.80
2.	Entrepreneurial Intentions	0.83

Data Collection Procedure

The instruments for data collection were distributed personally to the respondents, with the help of two research assistants who were briefed on the procedures to follow. The respondents were contacted through their respective class representatives before the instruments were administered on them using a direct contact mode of administration. The respondents were allowed to complete the instrument, which were returned immediately.

Data Analysis

The IBM-statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 were used as the statistical package for data analysis. The statistical tools used for analyzing the data collected from the respondents were inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) and linear regression. The PPMCC statistic was used to analyze the research questions while linear regression statistic was used to analyze the research hypotheses. Uzoagulu (2011) recommended some decision criteria for the use of a correlation based on a range of a value: (1) very high correlation (i.e., between ± .8 and ± 1.0) (2) high correlations (i.e., between ± .6 and ± .8) (3) moderate correlation (i.e., between ± .4 and ± .6) (4) low correlation (i.e., between ± .2 and ± .4) (5) very low correlations (i.e., between ± .0 and ± .2) (6) perfect correlation (i.e., ± 1.0) and (7) no correlation (i.e., 0). He also recommended that when a correlation value is negative, it is considered a negative correlation; which implied that as one variable increases the other decreases. In contrast, when a correlation is positive, it is considered a positive correlation; which implied that as one variable increases the other increases. He further recommended some decision criteria for the use of a linear regression based on when a probability value is lesser than or equal to .05, it is considered significant, which implied that the proposed hypothesis is not upheld. In contrast, when a probability value is greater than .05, it is considered significant, which implied that the proposed hypothesis is upheld.

Results

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent does mastery experience influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students?

Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between mastery experience and entrepreneurial intentions.

Variables	Bias: M(SD)	Lower: M(SD)	Upper: M(SD)	r	p	Remark
ME	-.001(-.007)	28.611(2.496)	29.226(2.843)	-.011	0.850	NC
EI	0.001(-.002)	5.056(.786)	5.250(0.912)			

Note. $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{**}p < 0.05$, $N = 202$, ME = Mastery Experience, EI = Entrepreneurial Intentions, NC = Negative Correlation.

Table 2 showed the result of the Pearson's correlation between mastery experience and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.011$) showed a negative correlation between mastery experience and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. By and large, mastery experience negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Research Question 2: To what extent does vicarious experiences influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students?

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between vicarious experience and entrepreneurial intentions.

Variables	Bias: *M*(SD)	Lower: *M*(SD)	Upper: *M*(SD)	*r*	*p*	Remark
VE	0.001(-.004)	17.920(1.618)	18.313(1.822)	-.098	0.098	NC
EI	0.001(-.002)	5.056(0.786)	5.250(0.912)			

Note. **$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, $N = 202$, VE = Vicarious Experience, EI = Entrepreneurial Intentions, NC = Negative Correlation.

Table 3 showed the result of the Pearson's correlation between vicarious experiences and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.098$) indicated a negative correlation between vicarious experiences and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Nevertheless, vicarious experience negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Research Question 3: To what extent does verbal persuasion influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students?

Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between verbal persuasion and entrepreneurial intentions.

Variables	Bias: *M*(SD)	Lower: *M*(SD)	Upper: *M*(SD)	*r*	*p*	Remark
VP	0.000(-.004)	17.861(1.633)	18.267(1.871)	-.009	0.878	
EI	0.001(-.002)	5.056(0.786)	5.250(0.912)			

Note. **$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, $N = 202$, VP = Verbal Persuasion, EI = Entrepreneurial Intentions, NC = Negative Correlation.

Table 4 showed the result of the Pearson's correlation between verbal persuasion and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.009$) indicated a negative correlation between verbal persuasion and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. All in all, verbal persuasion negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Research Question 4: To what extent does positive emotional state influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students?

Table 5: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between positive emotional state and entrepreneurial intentions.

Variables	Bias: *M*(SD)	Lower: *M*(SD)	Upper: *M*(SD)	*r*	*p*	Remark
PE	0.000(-.005)	18.188(1.659)	18.594(1.884)	-.113	0.055	NC
EI	0.001(-.002)	5.056(0.786)	5.250(0.912)			

Note. **$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, $N = 202$, PE = Positive Emotions, EI = Entrepreneurial Intentions, NC = Negative Correlation.

Table 5 showed the result of the Pearson's correlation between positive emotions and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.113$) showed a negative correlation between positive emotions and entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. By and large, positive emotion negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Testing Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: Mastery experience does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Table 6: Linear Regression on the Influence of Mastery Experience on Entrepreneurial Intensions of Business Education Students.

Model	*MS*	*F*	Beta	*Bias*	*t*	*p*	Decision
ME	-		-.011	9.112	-.190	0.850	NS
Regression	0.259	0.036					
Residual	7.209						
Summary	*R* Square = 0.000, Adjusted *R* Square = -.003, *df* = 1, 201						

Note. ME = Mastery Experience, NS = Not Significant.

Table 6 showed the linear regression of mastery experience influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result indicated that mastery experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students: F (1, 287) = 0.036, β = -.011, t = -.190, p < .05. By and large, mastery experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Hence, hypothesis 1 is accepted in the study.

Research Hypothesis 2: Vicarious experience does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Table 7: Linear Regression on the Influence of Vicarious Experience on Entrepreneurial Intentions of Business Education Students.

Model	*MS*	*F*	Beta	*Bias*	*t*	*p*	Decision
VE	-		-.098	0.002	-1.662	0.098	NS
Regression	8.187	2.762					
Residual	2.964						
Summary	*R* Square = 0.010, Adjusted *R* Square = -.006, *df* = 1, 201						

Note. VE = Vicarious Experience, NS = Not Significant.

Table 7 showed the linear regression of vicarious experience influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result indicated that vicarious experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students: F (1, 287) = 2.762, β = -.098, t = -1.662, p < .05. By and large, vicarious experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Hence, hypothesis 1 is accepted in the study.

Research Hypothesis 3: Verbal persuasion does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Table 8: Linear Regression on the Influence of Verbal Persuasion on Entrepreneurial Intensions of Business Education Students.

Model	*MS*	*F*	Beta	*Bias*	*t*	*p*	Decision
VP	-		-.009	0.003	-.154	0.878	NS
Regression	0.073	0.024					
Residual	3.104						
Summary	*R* Square = 0.000, Adjusted *R* Square = -.003, *df* = 1, 201						

Note. VP = Verbal Persuasion, NS = Not Significant.

Table 8 showed the linear regression of verbal persuasion influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result indicated that verbal persuasion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students: F (1, 287) = 0.024, β = -.009, t = -.154, p < .05. By and large, verbal persuasion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Hence, hypothesis 3 is accepted in the study.

Research Hypothesis 4: Positive emotions does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions of business education students.

Table 9: Linear Regression on the Influence of Positive Emotions on Entrepreneurial Intensions of Business Education Students.

Model	*MS*	*F*	Beta	*Bias*	*t*	*p*	Lower	Upper
PE	-		-.113	0.000	-1.930	0.055	-.486	0.017
Regression	11.709	3.725						
Residual	3.143							
Summary	*R* Square = 0.013, Adjusted *R* Square = 0.009, *df* = 1, 201							

Note. PE = Positive Emotions, NS = Not Significant.

Table 9 showed the linear regression of positive emotions influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result indicated that positive emotion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students: F (1, 287) = 3.725, β = -.113, t = -1.930, p < .05. By and large, positive emotion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Hence, hypothesis 4 is accepted in the study.

Discussion

The result of research questions one showed that mastery experience negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result of the corresponding null hypothesis showed that mastery experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students, as mastery experience accounted for less than 1% of variances in entrepreneurial intensions. Therefore, mastery experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. This finding implied that when mastery experience increases, entrepreneurial intentions of business education students increase as well.

The result of research question two showed that vicarious experience negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result of the corresponding null hypothesis showed that vicarious experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students, as mastery experience accounted for less than 1% of variances in entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, vicarious experience does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. This finding implied that when vicarious experience increases, entrepreneurial intentions of business education students increase as well.

The result of research question three showed that verbal persuasion negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intention of business education students. The result of the corresponding null hypothesis showed that verbal persuasion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students, as verbal persuasion accounted for less than 1% of variances in entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, verbal persuasion does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. This finding implied that when verbal persuasion increases, entrepreneurial intentions of business education students increase as well.

The result of research question four showed that positive emotional state negatively correlates with the entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. The result of the corresponding null hypothesis showed that positive emotions does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions of business education students, as positive emotion accounted for less than 1% of variances in entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, positive emotional state does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intensions of business education students. This finding implied that when positive emotions increases, entrepreneurial intentions of business education students increase as well.

The findings from above supported the bulk of research studies (e.g., Kabir et al., 2017; Kerr et al., 2017; Ohanu & Ogbuanya, 2018; Caines et al., 2019; Newmana et al., 2019) who reported that self-efficacy predicts entrepreneurial intentions of students. For instance, Krueger et al. (2000) found self-efficacy antecedents such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotion to be significant positive predictors of entrepreneurial intentions of students. Therefore, the higher an individual's self-efficacy antecedents such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotion are, the stronger his or her entrepreneurial intentions of students will be (e.g., Jiang et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2018; Tu & Wang, 2017; Mardriz et al., 2018; Salami, 2019). Furthermore, individuals' entrepreneurial self-efficacy (i.e., the belief in individual's abilities to start and manage a new business) or self-efficacy antecedents such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotions can foster the development of entrepreneurial intentions among students (Bullough et al., 2014). The theory of planned behaviour have also proposed that self-efficacy can influence entrepreneurial actions via the reinforcement of individual's entrepreneurial intentions of students (Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014).

Conclusion

In this present study, the influence of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intentions of business education students was studied. First, the study had revealed that mastery experience negatively correlates with and relates to entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Second, the study had revealed that vicarious experience negatively correlates with and relates to entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Third, the study had revealed that verbal persuasion negatively correlates with and relates to entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Fourth, the study had revealed that positive emotion negatively correlates with and relates to entrepreneurial intentions of business education students. Based on these results, the authors concluded that the low level of entrepreneurial intentions exerted by the business education students can equally be attributed to the low level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy antecedents such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive emotions exerted by business education students.

Recommendations

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

1. University administrators and managers should endeavour to establish a functional learning environment as this will provide opportunity for business education students to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to pursue entrepreneurial intension upon graduation.

2. University administrators and managers should endeavour to establish a functional learning environment as this will provide the opportunity for business education students to launch a new business after graduation.
3. Business education students should endeavour to continually participate in entrepreneurship education programme and acquire a variety of requisite skills and knowledge as this will help to reinforce their intentions to launch a new business after graduation.

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LEVERAGING ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PREVAILING ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY IN BAYELSA STATE

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Abstract
The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into electrical technology offers a transformative pathway for advancing sustainable development, particularly in economically uncertain regions like Bayelsa State, Nigeria. This study examined how AI can enhance the efficiency, reliability, and sustainability of electrical systems, focusing on its applications in areas such as smart grids, renewable energy integration, predictive maintenance, and energy optimization. In the face of economic challenges, AI has the potential to streamline energy distribution, lower operational expenses, strengthen grid resilience, and accelerate the shift to renewable energy sources. Furthermore, AI-powered systems can support decentralized energy solutions, improve real-time decision-making, and expand energy access in remote and underserved areas. The research also addressed obstacles to AI implementation, including issues related to data quality, cybersecurity, and the need for skilled personnel. Despite these hurdles, the thoughtful integration of AI into electrical technology can bolster energy security, promote environmental sustainability, and enhance economic resilience in Bayelsa State. This exploration underscored AI's pivotal role in driving sustainable development by offering innovative strategies to tackle both energy and socio-economic challenges, ultimately contributing to a greener, more equitable future. Conclusion were therefore reached and recommendations were proffered.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Electrical Technology, Leveraging on, Sustainable Development, Economic Uncertainty.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a game-changing technology with the potential to revolutionize industries, including the electrical, technology and educational sectors. In Nigeria, Bayelsa State, a region rich in natural resources, but grappling with significant economic challenges. As a result, AI offers a compelling opportunity to drive sustainable development in this State. As global economic uncertainties persist, marked by fluctuating oil prices, resource depletion, and financial instability, Bayelsa's dependence on conventional energy sources and aging infrastructure faces mounting pressure. By integrating AI into the state's electrical sector, Bayelsa can unlock innovative solutions to enhance efficiency, lower operational costs, and accelerate the transition to cleaner, more sustainable energy systems.

The current economic climate highlights an urgent need for resilient and adaptive technologies that can optimize resource management, expand energy access, and minimize the environmental footprint of energy production. AI's capabilities in advancing smart grids, predictive maintenance, renewable energy integration, and energy management systems align closely with Bayelsa's long-term sustainability objectives. Beyond modernizing infrastructure, AI-powered innovations have the potential to catalyze economic diversification by fostering green technology development and creating new job opportunities in the tech industry.

Recent studies emphasize AI's critical role in enhancing energy sustainability. For instance, Gomes et al. (2023) found that machine learning algorithms for load forecasting and fault detection can boost energy distribution efficiency by over 30%, even in regions with limited infrastructure. Similarly, Okafor and Akinmoladun (2023) demonstrate that AI-driven optimization in power grid management has significantly reduced energy losses and improved grid stability across parts of Africa, offering valuable insights for Bayelsa State. Furthermore, embracing AI in Bayelsa's electrical sector is more than just a modernization effort—it is a strategic response to both global and local economic challenges. As the state navigates a complex economic landscape, AI presents a unique opportunity to build a sustainable, resilient future by addressing pressing energy and environmental issues. This paper delves into the transformative potential of AI in Bayelsa's electrical industry, exploring its capacity to optimize energy systems, foster innovation, and drive economic resilience amidst uncertainty.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science dedicated to developing systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, problem-solving, perception, and decision-making. Rather than being a single technology, AI encompasses a range of methods, techniques, and processes that empower machines to exhibit intelligent behavior. Over the years, AI has evolved from basic rule-based systems to advanced algorithms that mimic human cognitive abilities, including learning from experience, processing natural language, and identifying patterns in data. Its subfields include machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), robotics, and computer vision.

Machine learning, a prominent AI subfield, enables systems to learn and adapt through data, improving their performance without explicit programming (Goodfellow et al., 2016). Deep learning, a subset of machine learning, employs artificial neural networks to uncover complex relationships, excelling in applications like speech and image recognition (LeCun et al., 2015). Meanwhile, natural language processing focuses on enabling machines to understand, interpret, and generate human language, powering tools like chatbots, virtual assistants, and translation software (Jurafsky & Martin, 2021). AI systems thrive on large datasets and sophisticated algorithms, using them to recognize patterns, make predictions, and automate decisions. The convergence of big data and advancements in computational power has fueled rapid progress in AI, unlocking transformative potential in industries ranging from healthcare and finance to energy and transportation (Russell & Norvig, 2020). However, the rise of AI has also sparked intense discussions about its ethical implications, including job displacement, algorithmic bias, and the need for transparency. Researchers such as Binns (2018) have stressed the importance of ethical guidelines and regulatory measures to ensure AI technologies are developed responsibly and equitably.

AI applications fall into two broad categories: narrow AI and general AI. Narrow AI, or weak AI, specializes in specific tasks such as language translation, facial recognition, or chess-playing. While highly effective within their scope, these systems lack general intelligence or consciousness (Bengio et al., 2018). General AI, also known as strong AI, aspires to emulate human cognitive abilities across diverse tasks. Though narrow AI is already pervasive, general AI remains a theoretical frontier in ongoing research. The transformative potential of AI spans not only industries but society at large. It promises increased productivity, innovation, and economic growth but also raises concerns about job automation, data privacy, and income inequality. Scholars like Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) have explored this dual impact—AI's ability to create wealth alongside its disruptive effects on labor markets. As AI continues to evolve, its applications will undoubtedly grow, creating new opportunities for businesses and individuals. However, addressing the ethical, social, and economic implications of AI will be critical to ensuring that its benefits are distributed equitably, fostering a future where AI serves the greater good.

Electrical Technology

Electrical technology involves the application of electrical engineering principles to design, develop, and maintain systems and devices that produce, transmit, and utilize electrical energy. This expansive field encompasses areas like power generation, electrical circuits, automation, electronics, and telecommunications, all of which form the backbone of modern infrastructure and industrial operations. From powering household appliances and communication networks to enabling large-scale industrial machinery and renewable energy systems, advancements in electrical technology have profoundly shaped contemporary society. At its essence, electrical technology revolves around understanding and harnessing electrical energy for various applications, ranging from routine to highly complex processes. Electrical systems are generally divided into two main categories: power systems and electronic systems. Power systems focus on generating, distributing, and managing electricity, including both traditional energy sources like fossil fuels and renewable options such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power. Conversely, electronic systems emphasize processing signals and information using components like transistors, resistors, and capacitors, enabling the functionality of devices like computers, smartphones, and medical equipment.

Recent advancements in electrical technology have been fueled by innovations in smart grids, renewable energy systems, and automation. Smart grids, for instance, represent a new generation of electricity networks equipped with digital communication tools that monitor and control electricity flow more efficiently. These grids facilitate real-time monitoring to prevent outages, optimize energy use, and seamlessly integrate renewable energy sources (Liu et al., 2023). Such advancements are critical as societies worldwide transition to greener energy solutions to combat climate change. The integration of renewable energy represents another significant milestone in electrical technology. Renewable sources like solar, wind, and hydropower are increasingly seen as viable alternatives to fossil fuels. However, their intermittent nature presents challenges in maintaining a consistent balance between supply and demand. Innovations such as energy storage systems and advanced power electronics are instrumental in overcoming these challenges and enhancing the efficiency of renewable energy systems. Research by Zhou et al. (2023) highlights the importance of technologies like advanced batteries and supercapacitors, which stabilize renewable energy production by storing surplus energy for later use.

These developments underscore the electrical technology's pivotal role in creating sustainable, reliable, and efficient energy systems that align with global efforts to address environmental challenges and build a resilient energy future. Automation has revolutionized industrial processes, profoundly influencing the landscape of electrical technology. Innovations such as the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) and robotics are being seamlessly integrated into manufacturing and energy systems, enhancing performance while minimizing human involvement. These advancements heavily rely on electrical and electronic systems for control, data processing, and sensing. For example, smart homes and automated factories utilize sensors, actuators, and electrical circuits to oversee and regulate various functions (Xu et al., 2022). Such systems not only boost operational efficiency but also reduce energy usage and lower costs.

The fusion of electrical technology with digital advancements has paved the way for artificial intelligence (AI) applications in power systems and electronic devices. AI and machine learning are being deployed to optimize energy distribution, identify faults, and improve predictive maintenance within electrical grids (Yuan et al., 2023). For instance, machine learning algorithms enable precise energy demand forecasting and real-time power flow adjustments in smart grids. AI is also driving the creation of more energy-efficient devices by analyzing consumption patterns and enhancing the performance of electronic systems. Power electronics has become a cornerstone of contemporary electrical technology, particularly with the growing focus on electrification across industries like transportation. The rise of electric vehicles (EVs) and the supporting infrastructure—such as fast-charging stations and power converters—relies on advanced power electronics. These systems convert electricity between forms, ensuring compatibility across various power sources and loads. In EVs, for example, power electronics regulate electricity flow between batteries and motors, maximizing efficiency and performance (Zhao et al., 2023). As a continually evolving discipline, electrical technology is crucial for addressing global challenges such as energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, and the digital transformation of economies. From the integration of smart grids and renewable energy systems to automation and AI, this field is shaping the future of energy, industry, and daily life. With its relentless progression, electrical technology promises to deliver smarter, more sustainable, and efficient solutions, laying the foundation for a technologically advanced future.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is a multifaceted approach designed to harmonize economic growth, environmental protection, and social justice, ensuring that current needs are met without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to fulfill their own. Originating from the 1987 Brundtland Report by the World Commission on Environment and Development, this concept has become the foundation of global development strategies. At its core, sustainable development seeks to integrate economic efficiency, social inclusivity, and environmental responsibility into a cohesive framework that promotes long-term well-being.

A fundamental pillar of sustainable development is environmental sustainability, which focuses on safeguarding ecosystems and responsibly managing natural resources. This entails reducing carbon footprints, preserving biodiversity, and adopting sustainable practices in the use of resources such as water, land, and minerals. The escalating challenge of climate change has intensified the urgency for environmental stewardship. The IPCC (2023) warns that failing to cap global temperature increases at 1.5°C could result in catastrophic consequences for ecosystems and human communities. Transitioning to a low-carbon economy, driven by renewable energy technologies like solar, wind, and hydropower, is essential. Innovations in energy efficiency also play a critical role in minimizing environmental harm (Hepburn et al., 2020). Equally important is the social dimension of sustainable development, which prioritizes equity and the reduction of disparities. This involves guaranteeing that individuals from all backgrounds have access to fundamental resources necessary for a healthy and dignified life, including education, healthcare, clean water, and sanitation. Addressing entrenched issues such as poverty, gender inequality, and social marginalization is pivotal to achieving social equity. Recent research underscores the importance of fostering community resilience and social cohesion to support long-term developmental success (Mori & Christodoulou, 2021). Empowering disadvantaged groups and ensuring the equitable distribution of developmental benefits are central to creating a just and inclusive society.

Economic sustainability forms a vital component of the sustainable development paradigm, emphasizing the ability of economies to achieve long-term growth while avoiding environmental harm and social disparity. This involves crafting economic systems that prioritize value creation alongside waste reduction, fostering innovation, and promoting inclusive growth. A truly sustainable economy transcends profitability by ensuring fair labor practices, alleviating poverty, and broadly distributing economic gains across society. Sachs (2022) underscores the importance of adopting green technologies and circular economy models as essential strategies for fostering sustainable economic growth while minimizing ecological impacts.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in 2015, provide a global roadmap to achieve sustainable development by 2030. These 17 interconnected goals address a wide array of issues, from eradicating poverty and promoting gender equality to advancing clean energy, climate action, and responsible consumption. The SDGs offer a comprehensive framework for governments, businesses, and civil society to align their initiatives with sustainability principles. However, realizing these ambitious goals requires collaborative efforts across all societal sectors. The Global Sustainable Development Report (2023) highlights the need for cohesive policies that integrate environmental, economic, and social objectives to create synergies and expedite progress toward achieving the SDGs.

In practice, sustainable development demands transformative shifts and the adoption of sustainable practices across sectors such as agriculture, industry, energy, and transportation. For example, agriculture is increasingly embracing techniques like agroecology and precision farming, which boost productivity while reducing environmental damage. Similarly, industries are adopting circular economy principles that prioritize product longevity, reuse, and recycling. By curbing waste and optimizing resource utilization, circular economy models contribute to sustainable resource management and minimize ecological footprints (Geissdoerfer et al., 2020).

Technological advancements are pivotal in driving sustainable development forward. Innovations such as electric vehicles, smart grids, and digital tools are enabling more efficient resource use and sustainable practices across various industries. Technologies like big data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) are optimizing energy consumption, enhancing agricultural productivity, and streamlining supply chains, thereby accelerating sustainability (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017). However, widespread adoption of these innovations necessitates addressing their environmental implications and ensuring equitable access.

Despite notable progress, significant challenges persist. The transition to sustainable development is hindered by political and economic systems that often prioritize immediate gains over long-term sustainability, alongside entrenched practices that exacerbate environmental degradation. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains and inequities in healthcare systems, emphasizing the need for resilience in the face of global crises. Sachs (2022) advocates for a "building back better" approach, emphasizing resilience, inclusivity, and environmental responsibility in recovery efforts. Sustainable development is an ongoing endeavor to align human advancement with ecological boundaries while fostering equity and inclusivity. It calls for collective action by governments, businesses, and individuals to create a world where today's needs are met without compromising future generations. As we grapple with pressing challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and inequality, sustainable development offers a pathway to building a fairer, more resilient, and ecologically balanced future.

Economic Uncertainty

Economic uncertainty refers to the unpredictable factors that influence an economy's functioning, creating a state where individuals, businesses, and policymakers cannot confidently forecast key economic variables like growth, inflation, employment, or interest rates. This uncertainty stems from a variety of sources, including geopolitical tensions, shifts in policy, technological disruptions, or natural disasters. It complicates decision-making, potentially undermining economic stability by discouraging investment, reducing consumer spending, and slowing growth. At its core, economic uncertainty revolves around the unpredictability of future conditions—both within the economic environment and the larger global context. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 revealed the vulnerability of global economies through widespread shutdowns, supply chain disruptions, and rapid changes in consumer behavior, triggering significant economic volatility. Similarly, geopolitical events like the war in Ukraine have disrupted global energy markets, amplifying instability and making accurate forecasting more challenging (Fleming et al., 2023). Such events hinder long-term planning and increase risk aversion among businesses and consumers.

Economic uncertainty is often assessed using metrics like market volatility, risk premiums, and confidence indices. Market volatility, in particular, serves as a key indicator of uncertainty, reflecting the magnitude and frequency of price fluctuations in stocks, bonds, or currencies. High volatility suggests diminished confidence and heightened risk in financial markets, signaling broader economic instability. The VIX index, commonly referred to as the "fear gauge," measures the implied volatility of the S&P 500 and acts as a benchmark for economic uncertainty. Research by Baker et al. (2023) indicates that spikes in the VIX index are closely tied to periods of economic downturn, as investors seek to safeguard against potential financial disruptions.

Policy uncertainty represents another significant dimension of economic unpredictability. Ambiguity or inconsistency in government actions—such as changes in taxation, trade policies, regulations, or monetary strategies—can create an environment of hesitation for businesses and consumers alike. For instance, the protracted uncertainty surrounding the U.S-China trade conflict and the Brexit negotiations led to disruptions in global supply chains and diminished foreign direct investment, complicating long-term business planning (Bloom et al., 2023). When governments fail to provide clear direction on critical issues like tax reform or trade agreements, this uncertainty can stifle innovation and impede economic progress. In essence, economic uncertainty is a multifaceted challenge that disrupts stability and dampens confidence across various sectors. By understanding its drivers and mitigating its impacts, economies can work toward fostering a more predictable and resilient future.

Technological uncertainty has become a prominent driver of economic instability in today's fast-paced world. While rapid advancements in technology offer unprecedented opportunities, they also pose significant challenges for businesses and workers striving to keep pace with evolving systems and tools. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and blockchain hold the potential to revolutionize industries, reshape labor markets, and redefine economic power dynamics. However, predicting their long-term effects remains a daunting task, adding layers of uncertainty to sectors as diverse as manufacturing and finance (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017). The unclear trajectory of technology adoption and regulation further exacerbates unpredictability in labor and capital markets, as companies grapple with how these innovations might influence their operations and profitability.

The interplay between uncertainty and economic behaviour is intricate and far-reaching. Elevated levels of uncertainty often result in reduced investment and dampened consumer spending, both of which hinder economic growth. Faced with an unpredictable environment, businesses may postpone capital investments, scale back expansion plans, or limit hiring. Similarly, consumers, wary of future instability, may prioritize saving over spending, thereby curbing overall demand. Research by Golosov et al. (2022) reveals that during periods of heightened uncertainty, economic activity slows substantially, leading to lower output and rising unemployment rates. Uncertainty is also a key factor in decision-making within the economic sphere. When future outcomes are uncertain, individuals and firms often adopt more cautious approaches. Behavioral economics delves into how people's choices are shaped under such conditions, showing that uncertainty frequently prompts reliance on heuristics or cognitive shortcuts. While these strategies can be helpful, they may also lead to suboptimal or irrational decisions. This tendency, known as "uncertainty aversion", can intensify economic downturns as consumers and businesses shy away from risk-taking and innovation (Gennaioli et al., 2022).

From a policy perspective, economic uncertainty significantly influences macroeconomic stabilization efforts. Governments and central banks deploy fiscal and monetary tools to counterbalance uncertainty and foster stability. Central banks, for instance, may adjust interest rates or implement quantitative easing to encourage investment and spending. However, during periods of high uncertainty, even well-crafted policies can struggle to achieve their desired impact. Aghion et al. (2023) argue that interventions lacking credibility or perceived as insufficient can fail to alleviate uncertainty, prolonging economic stagnation and complicating recovery efforts. In essence, economic uncertainty is an unavoidable but disruptive element of the global economy. It complicates decisions for businesses, consumers, and policymakers, often resulting in slower growth, reduced investment, and cautious spending. While eliminating uncertainty entirely is impossible, understanding its roots—be they technological, geopolitical, or policy-driven—can enable more effective navigation of volatile periods. As modern economies become increasingly influenced by rapid technological change and global interconnectedness, managing uncertainty will be crucial to fostering long-term resilience and sustainable growth.

Challenges of AI in Electrical Technology

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionize electrical technology, offering innovations in automation, energy management, predictive maintenance, and more. However, the integration of AI into this field also presents several challenges. Here are 15 key challenges of AI in electrical technology:

1. Data Quality and Availability: AI algorithms require large volumes of high-quality data to function effectively. In electrical technology, data may be noisy, incomplete, or inconsistent, hindering accurate predictions and decision-making (Jouini et al., 2023).
2. Data Security and Privacy: With the increasing use of AI to monitor and control electrical systems, there is a heightened risk of cybersecurity breaches, unauthorized access, and data manipulation. Ensuring data privacy and security is a significant challenge (Rong et al., 2023).
3. Complexity of AI Models: The complexity of AI models, particularly in power systems and grid management, can make them difficult to interpret and optimize. Black-box models may not offer the transparency needed for effective decision-making in critical electrical infrastructure (Xia et al., 2023).
4. Integration with Legacy Systems: Electrical systems often rely on outdated, legacy infrastructure. Integrating AI solutions with these existing systems can be technically challenging and costly, requiring significant retrofitting or upgrades (Pereira et al., 2023).
5. High Computational Requirements: AI, particularly machine learning and deep learning, often requires significant computational power. Electrical systems may not always have the infrastructure to support these heavy computational demands, limiting AI's real-time application (Liu et al., 2023).
6. Real-Time Decision Making: AI algorithms often need to operate in real-time environments, such as in smart grids or automation systems. Achieving low latency and fast response times in high-demand, dynamic conditions can be difficult (Gong et al., 2022).
7. High Initial Costs: The development and deployment of AI systems in electrical technology involve substantial upfront costs. This includes the costs of hardware, software, and skilled labor for implementation and maintenance (Khan et al., 2023).
8. Model Generalization: AI models trained on specific datasets may struggle to generalize to different conditions, such as new geographical regions or unforeseen grid disturbances. This can reduce the reliability and robustness of AI solutions (Zhao et al., 2022).
9. Lack of Skilled Workforce: There is a shortage of professionals with expertise in both electrical engineering and AI. Bridging this skills gap is necessary to ensure the successful deployment and maintenance of AI technologies in electrical systems (Bianchi et al., 2023).
10. Bias in AI Algorithms: AI models can inherit biases present in the data they are trained on, leading to unfair or suboptimal decisions. In power systems, this might manifest as suboptimal load distribution or mismanagement of resources, especially if the model has been trained on limited or non-representative data (Zhang et al., 2023).
11. Energy Consumption of AI Models: While AI can optimize energy use in some applications, the process of training and running AI models itself consumes significant energy. This is especially problematic in energy-intensive systems like power grids (Cheng et al., 2023).
12. Scalability Issues: Scaling AI applications across large and diverse electrical networks is a significant challenge. As systems grow in size, the complexity of AI solutions also increases, often requiring more data, more computing resources, and more advanced models (Rennie et al., 2022).

13. Regulatory and Ethical Concerns: The integration of AI into electrical technology, particularly in areas like predictive maintenance or grid management, raises ethical and regulatory concerns, including accountability, transparency, and compliance with local laws and standards (Zhao et al., 2022).
14. Uncertainty in AI Predictions: AI systems in electrical technology often involve predicting future events, such as energy demand or grid failures. However, due to the inherent complexity of power systems and external variables, these predictions may not always be accurate, leading to risks in planning and operation (Jouini et al., 2023).
15. Reliability and Fault Tolerance: In critical applications such as power grid management, AI systems must be highly reliable and fault-tolerant. Any failure or error in AI-based decision-making can lead to significant disruptions in power supply, highlighting the need for robust AI models that can handle faults gracefully (Pereira et al., 2023).

AI, Electrical Technology for Sustainable Development and Economic Uncertainties

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to significantly enhance electrical technology, contributing to sustainable development, particularly in regions like Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Amid prevailing economic uncertainty, AI can provide innovative solutions to optimize energy systems, improve efficiency, reduce costs, and foster resilience. Below are 15 ways AI can leverage electrical technology for sustainable development in Bayelsa State:

1. Smart Grid Optimization: AI can enhance grid management by predicting energy demand patterns, optimizing energy distribution, and integrating renewable energy sources efficiently, reducing energy waste, and ensuring a more reliable electricity supply (Zhao et al., 2023).
2. Energy Demand Forecasting: By using machine learning algorithms to analyze historical usage data, AI can predict future energy demand with higher accuracy. This helps in efficient energy planning, reducing unnecessary energy generation costs, and minimizing the impact of supply fluctuations (Chen et al., 2023).
3. Renewable Energy Integration: AI can optimize the integration of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind into the power grid, managing intermittency and balancing supply with demand. This will enable Bayelsa State to transition to cleaner energy, even during periods of economic uncertainty (Wu et al., 2023).
4. Energy Efficiency Optimization: AI-based systems can help optimize the energy consumption of residential, commercial, and industrial facilities by adjusting energy use based on real-time data. This reduces energy waste, lowers utility bills, and minimizes environmental impacts (Hernandez et al., 2023).
5. Predictive Maintenance for Electrical Infrastructure: AI-driven predictive maintenance can help monitor and detect early signs of wear and tear in electrical infrastructure, such as transformers and power lines. Early intervention reduces downtime, prevents costly repairs, and enhances the longevity of electrical assets (Jouini et al., 2023).
6. Microgrid Management: In remote or underserved areas like Bayelsa, AI can enable the efficient operation of microgrids that operate independently from the main grid, improving energy reliability and resilience in the face of economic instability (Khan et al., 2023).
7. Grid Stability and Fault Detection: AI can enhance grid stability by identifying faults and anomalies in the system in real-time. It can also predict potential disruptions, ensuring that maintenance teams respond quickly, minimizing power outages and associated economic losses (Liu et al., 2023).
8. Decentralized Energy Systems: AI can facilitate the development of decentralized energy systems, including solar rooftop panels and battery storage solutions. This empowers households and businesses to generate and store their own energy, reducing reliance on centralized grids and lowering costs (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017).
9. Smart Metering and Billing: AI can enable the use of smart meters to track and optimize

electricity consumption, providing real-time insights to consumers and utilities. This encourages efficient usage, reduces energy waste, and supports fairer billing practices (Saha et al., 2022).

10. Energy Storage Optimization: AI can enhance energy storage systems, such as batteries, by predicting when and how energy should be stored or discharged based on supply-demand fluctuations. This improves the efficiency of energy storage and helps mitigate the intermittency of renewable energy (Gao et al., 2023).
11. AI-Driven Energy Policy Planning: AI can support government and utility companies in creating evidence-based energy policies by analyzing large datasets related to energy consumption, infrastructure, and environmental impact. This aids in decision-making and the implementation of long-term sustainable energy strategies (Bianchi et al., 2023).
12. Energy Supply Chain Optimization: AI can optimize the supply chain for energy, from generation to distribution, ensuring more efficient logistics, reducing fuel costs, and improving the speed and reliability of energy delivery. This is particularly beneficial in regions with challenging terrain like Bayelsa (Pereira et al., 2023).
13. AI for Climate Resilience: AI can help model and predict the impact of climate change on local weather patterns, allowing electrical systems to be better prepared for extreme weather events. This is crucial for Bayelsa State, which is prone to flooding and other climate-related challenges (Khan et al., 2023).
14. AI-Powered Environmental Monitoring: AI can be used to monitor environmental factors such as air quality, emissions, and water usage in real time. This supports sustainable development goals by ensuring that energy production processes are environmentally responsible and comply with regulatory standards (Gong et al., 2023).
15. AI-Enhanced Education and Skill Development: AI-powered educational tools can be used to train the local workforce in advanced electrical technologies, including smart grids, renewable energy, and energy efficiency practices. This helps build the skills necessary for the transition to a sustainable energy future, providing jobs and fostering economic resilience (Gennaioli et al., 2022).

Conclusion

In the face of prevailing economic uncertainty, the integration of AI into electrical technology presents a transformative opportunity for sustainable development in Bayelsa State. Through the optimization of energy systems, improved efficiency, and the integration of renewable energy sources, AI can help address critical challenges related to energy access, reliability, and environmental sustainability. By leveraging AI for smart grid management, predictive maintenance, and energy demand forecasting, Bayelsa can reduce costs, enhance system resilience, and foster economic stability. AI also holds promise in empowering local communities, improving the operational capacity of microgrids, and enabling decentralized energy solutions, thereby promoting energy independence. Moreover, AI can facilitate climate resilience and environmental monitoring, ensuring that energy systems are both sustainable and adaptive to the challenges posed by climate change. As the state strives to overcome its socio-economic challenges, AI offers innovative pathways to unlock the potential for green growth and energy security. However, for AI to fully realize its potential in Bayelsa, addressing challenges such as data quality, infrastructure integration, and the need for skilled human capital is essential. Furthermore, ensuring cybersecurity and regulatory compliance is crucial to maintaining the integrity and trust of AI-powered systems. With a strategic approach to training the local workforce and fostering collaboration between government, industry, and academia, Bayelsa can leverage AI as a powerful tool for achieving sustainable energy goals and fostering long-term economic resilience. AI offers a unique opportunity to drive both technological advancement and socio-economic development in Bayelsa State. By embracing AI in electrical technology, the state can pave the way for a more sustainable, resilient, and economically secure future.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered:

1. Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders should endeavor to prioritize investment in education and skill development programs for its workforce. This includes training engineers, data scientists, and technicians in both AI and electrical engineering, fostering a cross-disciplinary skillset that will drive innovation and the effective implementation of AI technologies in local energy systems. Partnerships with universities, research institutions, and industry leaders should be established to build local expertise and ensure the sustainability of AI-driven projects.
2. Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders must endeavour to invest in robust data infrastructure to collect, store, and process the vast amounts of data required for AI-driven energy management. This includes implementing smart meters, sensors, and IoT devices across the electrical grid to enable real-time monitoring and data-driven decision-making. Additionally, the state must ensure strong cybersecurity measures are in place to protect sensitive data and prevent cyberattacks that could disrupt AI-based systems.
3. Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders should endeavour to foster public-private partnerships (PPPs) that bring together private sector expertise in AI with public sector investments in energy infrastructure. Collaborations with tech companies, renewable energy providers, and AI startups can help accelerate the adoption of AI technologies in the electrical sector, ensuring that AI solutions are tailored to local needs and economic realities.
4. In line with sustainable development goals, Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders should endeavour to promote the integration of AI with renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, particularly in rural and off-grid areas. AI can optimize the management of microgrids, enabling more efficient energy use and increasing energy access. Incentives for businesses and households to invest in solar power systems, backed by AI-driven energy management, will not only reduce reliance on fossil fuels but also increase energy security.
5. Bayelsa State Government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders should endeavour to develop and implement policies that support the integration of AI into the energy sector. These policies could include regulatory frameworks for AI applications in grid management, energy consumption optimization, and sustainability goals. Moreover, by using AI to simulate different policy outcomes, the state can make data-driven decisions that balance economic growth with environmental sustainability, ensuring long-term energy resilience and reducing the state's carbon footprint.

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ASSESSMENT OF PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study assessed principals' administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research designs were adopted to achieve the goal of the study. The schools in Edo State were stratified on the basis of senatorial districts, namely: Edo North (120), Edo Central (80), and Edo South (145) respectively. A sample size of 5 teachers each was selected from 69 secondary schools in Edo state, totaling 345 teachers. Descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation was used to analyze the research questions raised in the study. The analyses revealed the level of principal's administrative effectiveness was high. Further analyses showed that the principals were rated highest on maintenance culture, followed by motivation and before staff development. Based on the findings, principals should be encouraged to develop their communication skills by adopting two-way approach and providing suggestion boxes to encourage free and fair expression. Principals should also plan to strategically mentor teachers on the right career path towards effective teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Edo State, Nigeria, effectiveness, principals' administrative, Public Secondary Schools.*

Introduction

Every organization needs an effective leader to achieve its goals and objectives. The role of the principal as a leader in the effective and smooth running schools cannot be overemphasized. The principal coordinates the entire school activities, ensuring harmonious relationship with the teachers as subordinates and other stakeholders to achieve set goals in an effective manner. In the opinion of Hillinger and Lee (2014), the principal as an administrative head of secondary schools is occupied with administrative tasks of planning, organizing, leading, controlling as well as coordinating the human, material, financial and time resources, which aimed at achieving the goals and objectives of secondary schools.

Administrative practice involves the use of expert knowledge and experiences to oversee and coordinate the process of improving teaching and learning activities in school (Ndege, 2017). It involves principals' coordination in checking teacher's day-today activities towards enhancing instructional or teaching performance in school (Igoni, 2020). Therefore, a secondary school as an organization may be termed effective if it accomplishes specific goals and objectives. The concept of administration has been given a wide range of interpretations by several scholars and researchers based on their school of thought. For instance, Filade, Bello, Uwaoma, Anwanane and Nwangburuka (2019) defined administration as a process of social influence, which maximizes the effort of others towards the achievement of a goal. Wilson (2016) saw administration as a particular behaviour applied by a leader to motivate subordinates to achieve the set goals of the organization.

An effective principal fosters the school's administration to achieve a greater goal and objective. The school principals play important role in the success or failure of the school organization. They perform their duties and responsibilities by providing the right kind of leadership that would guarantee and ensure the right and appropriate kind of climate conducive for teaching, learning and development of teachers and students' skills and knowledge. Generally, leadership involves good decision making, effective communication, creating conducive environment for teaching and learning, as well as provision, maintenance and good use of instructional materials, time management, self-motivation, delegation of duty, giving and receiving feedback, managing conflicts and resource allocation and utilization.

Understanding the role of an effective principal is not only critical for school survival but more importantly for the nation's economic, technological and societal well-being. The premature knowledge regarding the level of principal administrative effectiveness has far reaching effects because it is often believed that the nation's educational system determines its competitiveness and survival both at home and in the global environment. The alarming decadence regarding the rates of graduates from Nigerian schools and the alleged low performance of job of secondary school teachers may be connected to the quality of principal's administrative effectiveness. Auditing principal administrative effectiveness will help to uncover the areas in which their skills and knowledge are inadequate and deficient. The outcome of a study of this nature will reveal the areas in which the principals need training and development. Many studies relating to this present study have been conducted in Nigeria. For instance, the study conducted by Manafa (2020) in Rivers State, showed that supervision, organization skills and communication skills have significant implication for principals' administrative effectiveness. Ehimwenma and Igenegbai (2021) conducted a study to examine the influence of principals' characteristics on administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State. The study conducted by Ehimwenma and Igenegbai (2021) generally revealed that principals' administrative effectiveness is high but the relative effectiveness in the different managerial skills was not investigated. But no study to the best of the authors knowledge have examined the levels of principal's administrative effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Edo State. Therefore, this present study aims to investigate the levels of principal's administrative effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Edo State.

Theoretical Framework

Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership was adopted as the theoretical framework for this research. Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership states that the effectiveness of a leader is determined by how well leadership style matches the work situation. In other words, a leader's effectiveness is based on the work situation. Fiedler came up with a contingency model which argues that there is no one best style of leadership. The theory is based on the premise that each of us has only one leadership style which can be scored on the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) scale. Using the LPC scale one can be either a relationship-oriented leader or a task-oriented leader. According to Fiedler, task-oriented leaders get the best results when faced with strongly favourable or strongly unfavourable situation. In situations of mixed favourableness, the relationship-oriented leaders get the best results.

Task-oriented leader direct followers towards goal attainment, give instructions, spend time to plan, emphasize deadlines and provide explicit schedules of work activities, simply to get the job done. Relationship-oriented leaders are mindful of followers, respect their ideas and feelings, establish mutual trust, are friendly, provide open communication, develop teamwork, and are oriented toward their followers' welfare. According to Fiedler, a leader with good interpersonal skills can create a positive group atmosphere that will improve leader-member relations, clarify tasks and create more structure, and establish a stronger position power. This means that a principal with a good interpersonal relationship and good communication skills can influence teachers and students towards excellent in their job and academic performance respectively.

Fiedler argues that a leader should take a number of environmental or situational factors into account before deciding on the appropriate leadership style (i.e., task-oriented or relationship-oriented) to employ in any work situation. A leader would be very unlikely to be successful if he or she cannot 'match' personal leadership style to the demands of the situation. Thus, the most effective way to handle the situation is to change the leader itself based on the situational factors (leader-member relations, task structure, and the leader's position power) or to change the situation to suit the leader.

Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership is relevant to this present study because it helps the principal as a leader or administrator to know that administrative effectiveness is determined by how well his or her leadership style matches the situation in the school at a particular time. Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership helps a principal to know that no one leadership style is best but that the situation that a principal is addressing at a particular time determined the leadership style to be used in the performance of his or her administrative or managerial functions. A principal adapts a style to match teachers' characteristics and requirements. Fiedler's theory of leadership depicts that for a principal to be effective as a leader or an administrator, the principal should have good relationships with teachers, structure their duties and responsibilities clearly and demonstrate appropriate authority to foster compliance.

Leadership and Delegation of Duties

Leadership and delegation of duties are administrative performance in decision making, delegation of duties and setting of good examples. The leadership role of the school administration may determine the effectiveness of a school principal. A school principal who delegates authority to teachers, involves subordinates in decision making and lead by example could be more effective. Baumeyer (2018) noted that an effective principal builds an inclusive work environment, through collaborative planning and implementation as a way of celebrating diversity culturally and socially. The roles performed by a principal also include encouraging teachers' involvement in administrative duties and sharing mutual understanding in terms of accepting your staff suggestion during meetings. Involving teachers in taking decision in issues that affect their welfare in schools remain not only an important strategy but also a vital leadership style that ensures increased teachers' job performances (Ajayi & Afolabi, 2012).

Communication

The principal is responsible to both students and staff. He also takes responsibility for the financial transactions, public relations and the evaluation of schools' programmes. In doing this, the principal establishes channels of communication between himself, his students and his staff. Effective communication between the head teacher and his staff can be brought about through the administration of instructional programmes, personnel, school community relations as well as the administration of school business such as budgeting, financing and purchase of materials.

Instructional Supervisory Roles

A principal who is a visionary leader and enforces discipline could be an effective leader. Provision of teaching aids, ensuring teachers prepare and use lesson notes, conducting credible examinations and ensuring continuous assessments are conducted by teachers can determine the principal effectiveness. A school principal that ensures teachers' compliance on assessment and grading procedures in educational system calendar would be effective. According to Basha (2015), to create and sustain high quality learning environment, there is need for skilled and committed instructional leaders. A principal who monitors and supervises teachers' works and is not partial in the assignment of responsibilities. The principal is responsible for the day to day supervision of the school, school administration, human resources (i.e., students and teachers' management) as well as management of personnel from outside agencies (Edikpa & Chibuko, 2022).

Motivation and Inter-Personal Relationship

Encouraging and training students and teachers in the care and use of library, classroom facilities and the school premises could be seen as added value for effective Principals. When there is cordial relationship between the leader and his subordinates, it will lead to conducive work environment; motivate the teachers for effective teaching and learning. Geoffrey (2018) conceded that highly effective principals must learnt to develop strong and effective relationship with teachers to boost their morale and trust toward improved teaching, learning and academic excellence. If the principal is friendly towards teachers, respects them as co-workers and shows genuine interest in their welfare, it will motivate the teachers to work effectively. When the school principal recognizes and praises teachers for jobs well done, easily accessible and not repulsive, the teachers will be encouraged to work with positive attitude. The power of the school administration is increased by its creative contribution when it adopts the concepts of equality and respect, which provide satisfaction and comfort and increased sense of belonging, which deepen the collaboration among humans (Onye & Anyaogu, 2017). Teachers who work with relational Principals, develop trust, optimism, persistence, resilience, empathy and self-awareness.

Information and Record Keeping

When a principal has a good and adequate record keeping skills, such as adequate and accurate record on students' performance and progress and proper financial records of the school, it will help the school principal to evaluate the school's performance and plan properly on the management of the school. Ability of the school head to provide accurate and timely information, maintain and provide accurate staff records may determine their effectiveness. A school principal, who operates open door policy in communication in the management of the school, holds regular meetings with the staff and employed a two-way communication strategy such as allowing the staff or the teacher to make suggestions and contribution in the matters affecting the school would be affective.

Conflict Resolution and Management

Timely resolution of conflicts and misunderstanding between/among teachers, between teachers and students and between teachers and parents of the students by the principal could determine the effectiveness of the principal. If a school principal does not show favoritism, gives fair and unbiased judgments, discourages backbiting, controls rumour mongering, follows due process in resolving conflicts, there will be peace and the school environment and climate will be friendly for the staff especially the teachers to teach. Effective Principals resolve conflict productively, proactively and promptly.

Methods

Research Design

Research design refers to the procedures selected by the researcher for conducting a study and for validating the formulated hypotheses. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design which employs the quantitative and descriptive survey research designs to determine the levels of principals' administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised of all the teachers in the 306 Public Secondary Schools in Edo State. The sample size of the study comprised of five teachers in each of the sixty 69 sampled Public Secondary Schools. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. Stage 1: The schools in Edo State were stratified on the basis of senatorial districts. Edo North (120), Edo Central (80) and Edo South (145). Stage 2: Simple random sampling technique using balloting method was used to select 20% of the schools, 24 schools from Edo North, 16 Schools from Edo Central and 29 schools from Edo South Senatorial District. Stage 3: Five (5) teachers in each of the public secondary schools selected to rate their principals on administrative effectiveness.

Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, titled: 'Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire. The respondents were to tick [√] against their options to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree by means of a four point Likert scale as shown below for the principal administrative effectiveness questionnaire, namely: Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

The validity of instrument was determined by three experts, each in Educational Management, Counselling Psychology, and Measurement and Evaluation. All the necessary corrections and suggestions were effected to ensure the validity of the instrument. The instrument was also subjected to a reliability test using test-retest reliability method. This was carried out by administering the instrument to 20 respondents who were not included in the sample of the study. This process was repeated after two weeks with the same content of the research instrument. The reliability was determined and established at 0.922 for the principal administrative effectiveness.

Data Collection and Analysis

The IBM-SPSS version 23.0 were used for the data analysis. The statistical tools used for analyzing the research questions was descriptive statistics such as Mean and Standard Deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of principal's administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Principal's Administrative Effectiveness.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	Principal instructional supervision.	3.30	.641
2.	Motivation/interpersonal relationship.	3.38	.674
3.	Leadership.	3.35	.609
4.	Information and record keeping.	3.25	.646
5.	Communication.	2.91	.700
6.	Staff development.	2.65	.853
7.	Maintenance culture.	3.52	.595
8.	Conflict resolution/management.	3.33	.638
9.	Overall Mean.	3.27	.552

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

Table 1 shows that the mean rating of the level of principals' administrative effectiveness ranges from 2.65 to 3.52. the Table also revealed that the teachers in the sampled schools rated the principals high in all the parameters measuring principals' administrative effectiveness: principal's instructional supervision, motivation and interpersonal relationship, information record keeping, communication, maintenance culture and conflict resolution/management except in leadership and staff development where they performed moderately. The grand mean and standard deviation of 3.27 and .552 respectively, which implied that the level of principals' administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State is high.

Research Question 2: What is the level of principal's instructional supervision in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Instructional Supervision.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal provides teaching aids.	2.94	.924
2.	My Principal ensures teachers uses lesson notes.	3.33	.767
3.	My Principal monitors classroom teaching.	3.48	.653
4.	Overall Mean.	3.30	.641

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

On the evaluation of Principal instructional supervision, Table 2 indicates that a total of 247 (75.1%) either agreed or strongly agreed that their principal provide teaching materials to aid their teaching. The remaining 82 (24.9%) disagreed /strongly disagreed that they were not provided any teaching aids. On this dimension, a mean of 2.94 was recorded; approximately indicate agreement on a scale of the measurement scale. Still on supervision, a mean of 3.33 was recorded indicating that principal were effective in ensuring that teachers use teaching aids to spur students to learn. Finally, on supervision, a mean of 3.36 succinctly shows that principals effectively monitor teachers' classroom situations to observe the effectiveness of their teaching style. In conclusion, Table 2 evidently showed a high level of principals' effectiveness in the area of supervision of teachers' job delivering with a mean value of 3.30.

Research Question 3: What is the level of principal's motivation/interpersonal relationship skills in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Motivation/Interpersonal Relationship Skills.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal is friendly to co-workers.	3.47	.678
2.	My Principal shows genuine interest in teachers' welfare.	3.31	.740
3.	My Principal recognizes teachers for jobs well done.	3.36	.683
4.	Overall Mean.	3.38	.674

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

The principals were anonymously rated with a mean of 3.47 indicating that the principals were friendly to their co-workers. Only 21 (6.3%) of the teachers disagreed that their principals were weak on interpersonal relationship skill. On teachers' welfare, a total of 304 out of 341 surveyed teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their showed interest in their wellbeing. Only 10.1% disagreed or strongly on the issue of staff welfare. From the mean index of 3.31, it can be concluded that principals were generally caring, showing concern for others' wellbeing. The mean of 3.36 revealed that the principal was effective in appreciating teachers' inputs and contributions to the development and training of the students. Collectively, the principals were rated with an overall mean of 3.38 (see Table 3).

Research Question 4: What is the level of principal's leadership skills in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 4: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Leadership Skills.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal delegates' authority to teachers.	3.37	.673
2.	My Principal involves subordinates in decision making.	3.23	.718
3.	My Principal monitors teachers' works.	3.35	.609
4.	Overall Mean.	3.32	.579

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

Table 4 showed principals were effective in delegating authority to teachers to act on their behalf with a mean index of 3.37. Only a 6.6% of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed to issue of delegation of authority. In a similar manner, more than 89% of the teachers acknowledged that their principals involved them in decision making. The decision making factor was rounded off with a mean of 3.23. The teachers also rated principals' leadership high indicating with a mean of 3.35 that principals effectively monitor their works. Overall, principal's leadership skill was rated high with a mean index of 3.32.

Research Question 5: What is the level of principal's information and record keeping skills in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 5: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Information and Record Keeping Skills.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal ensures that teachers keep accurate records on students' performance.	3.48	.594
2.	My Principal keeps proper financial records of school administration.	3.36	.768
3.	My Principal adopts the use of computer in storing of data.	2.79	.947
4.	Overall Mean	3.25	.646

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

On principal's information and record keeping skills, teachers generally rated the principals high on the three parameters: accuracy of record keeping, efficiency of financial record keeping and use of computer in record keeping with means of 3.48, 3.36 and 2.79 respectively (Table 5). The lowest mean score of 2.79 was obtained on the use of computer in storing of data. Nevertheless, the overall mean index on this factor was 3.25 implying high effectiveness in information management and record keeping.

Research Question 6: What is the level of principal's communication keeping skills in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 6: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Communication Skills.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My principal employs a two-way communication strategy.	2.98	.794
2.	My principal holds regular meetings.	3.11	.781
3.	My principal provides suggestion boxes for enhancement of open door communication policy.	2.55	.945
4.	Overall Mean.	2.91	.700

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

The Teachers' evaluation of principals' communication skills could be adjudged average given the frequency distribution arrayed on Table 6. The least mean (2.55) effectiveness was recorded on the provision and use of suggestion boxes in communication. The highest mean score here was 3.11 which indicated that principal held regular meeting to keep teachers abreast of what is happening in the school system. The overall mean of 2.91 on Table 6 conclusively revealed that though the principals possess good communication skill, there was a lot to be done to improve this skill.

Research Question 7: What is the level of principal's concern for staff development in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 7: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Concern for Staff Development

S/N	Items	Mean	S/D
1.	My Principal encourages in-service trainings for teachers.	2.66	.934
2.	My Principal organizes seminars to update personal and teachers' knowledge.	2.44	.959
3.	My Principal is foremost in mentoring teachers' on the right career path.	2.74	.898
4.	Overall Mean.	2.65	.853

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

The findings on staff training and career development were somewhat poor compared to other dimensions of Principal administrative effectiveness. But a closer evaluation of the individual parameters showed that principals were majorly rated poor with a mean of 2.44 for lack or low organization of seminars to upgrade teachers' knowledge and teaching skills. Of the three areas of assessment, the principals were scored highest on career path mentorship for teachers with mean value of 2.74 and followed by 2.66 on support for in-service training. On a general note, 2.65 mean index was recorded on staff development (Table 7 for details).

Research Question 8: What is the level of principal's maintenance culture in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 8: Teacher's Assessment of Level of Principal's Maintenance Culture

S/N	Maintenance Culture	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal ensures general environmental sanitation of school premises.	3.52	.683
2.	My Principal ensures safety of school facilities.	3.53	.629
3.	My Principal ensures classrooms are regularly cleaned .	3.49	.628
4.	Overall Mean.	3.52	.595

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

The three means values on the parameters measuring principals' maintenance culture were generally above 3.0 revealing high level of effectiveness. The principals scored highest on safety/preservation of school facilities with a mean of 3.53, followed by 3.52 and 3.49 for environmental sanitation and classroom cleanliness respectively. Finally, on this parameter, a mean of 3.52 was found indicating high maintenance culture (See Table 8).

Research Question 9: What is the level of principal's conflict resolution and management skills in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 9: Teacher's Assessment of Principal's Conflict Resolution and Management Skills.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
1.	My Principal is timely in the resolution of conflicts.	3.33	.689
2.	My Principal does not show favoritism in resolving conflicts.	3.33	.700
3.	My Principal discourages backbiting.	3.32	.700
4.	Overall Mean.	3.33	.638

Key: 1-2.0 = Low; 2.01 - 2.99 = Moderate; 3.0 – 4.0 = High.

Table 9 clearly indicates a good performance for the principals as all the mean values were above 3.0. the principals were nearly rated equal on all the factors with average mean of 3.33 for timeliness in conflict resolution, impartiality in resolving conflicts and mitigation of backbiting. In conclusion the principals were rated high on conflict management and resolution.

Discussions

The findings in this study relating to communication skills support that of Reith-Hall and Montgomery (2022) observation that poor communications skills were exhibited among the principal of the three schools surveyed. Also, Bass (2009) equality observed that when principals are effective in their administration, the teachers are not only happy in the performance of their duties but are made to improve their performance function for increased productivity in the school system. In the opinion of Basha (2015), to create and sustain high quality learning environment, there is need for skilled and committed instructional leaders. Geoffrey (2018) conceded that highly effective principals must learnt to develop strong and effective relationship with teachers to boost their morale and trust toward improved teaching, learning and academic excellence. Baumeyer (2018) noted that effective principals build an inclusive work environment, through collaborative planning and implementation as a way of celebrating diversity culturally and socially.

This finding is in agreement with Luthans and Peterson's (2002) who asserted that employees' participation and managers' effectiveness affects each other. The result of this study is in agreement with Olaleye's (2013) finding who indicated that free flow of information, open-minded policy and team spirit of principal of secondary schools facilitate high teachers' productivity. This was also supported by Ibukun (2003) who asserted that communication functions, human relation function and decision making functions are essential for effective personnel management. In support of Ibukun (2003), the findings in this study showed that there was significant relationship between principals' decision making and teachers' job performance. The results of the present study are in line with Ajayi and Afolabi (2012) who noted that teachers participate in the administration of their schools correlates with high morale and productivity. In the same study, Ajayi and Afolabi (2012) found a significant relationship between supervisory functions of principals and teachers' performance. The discovering in this study on the weak performance of Principals in the area of staff development supports that of Akpan (2006) which noted among other things, that principals performed poorly in the area of staff motivation, encouragement and recommendation of staff for in-service training programs and in communicating the staff needs of the school to the schools' administration board.

Conclusions

The study sought to investigate the levels of principals' administrative effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State, Nigeria. The study concluded that the levels of Principal's administrative effectiveness is high. Further findings concluded that principals were rated highest on maintenance culture, followed by motivation and least on staff development. On the bases of the findings, principals are encouraged to develop their communication skills by adopting two-way approach and providing suggestion boxes to encourage free and fair expression. Principals should plan to strategically mentor teachers on the right career path towards effective teaching and learning.

Recommendations

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

1. Though moderately rated on communication skills particularly among teachers above 50 years of age, Principals are encouraged to develop their communication skills by adopting two-way approach and providing suggestion boxes to encourage free and fair expression.
2. The principals were rated least on staff development, hence the need for Principals to regularly organize seminars for their personal update and teachers' knowledge upgrade. Principals should plan to strategically mentor teachers on the right career path towards effective teaching and learning. Not minding the above average performance in the area of leadership, the principals are encouraged to create more opportunities to involve the teachers more in decision making process.
3. As a way of improving their present level of administrative effectiveness, there is need for regular training of the principals to constantly upgrade their managerial skills.
4. The principals should endeavor to develop a routine programme to monitor the teachers' classroom teaching and enforce the use of lesson notes.

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MEDICINAL USES OF SNAIL MEAT FOR BOOSTING AGRIBUSINESS IN AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This present study investigates medicinal uses of snail meat for boosting agribusiness in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Data were collected using structured questionnaire. Purposive sampling precedure was used to select 320 respondents from the four Agricultural blocks in Akinyele LGA. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results on medicinal uses of snail meat to human and animal health showed highest mean values for snail meat but low in fat content (2.97) for healing acne causing bacteria (2.60) and for skin repair and regeneration issues (2.59). The results on how medicinal uses of snail meat could boost agribusiness showed that snail meats are sources of income for snail farmers (3.99), wealth creation (3.96), employment opportunities (3.73), food for man and animals (3.70) and a lucrative agribusiness for youths (3.56). The results further showed that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on medicinal uses of snail meat for boosting agribusiness in the study area ((t = 2.597; p = 0.031). The authors concluded that snail meat is medicinally useful for human and animal health. The authors, therefore, recommended that there is need for more public awareness about the medicinal nature of snail meat and funding schemes should be established in order to encourage youth involvement.

Keywords: Boosting, Medicinal, Snail Meat, Health Benefit, Agribusiness.

Introduction

Snail meat is obtained from processed snail. It has many important nutrients, are low in fat, rich in protein and vitamins along with some essential minerals for the body such as magnesium, selenium, vitamin E and phosphorus (Kehinde, 2024). Therefore, the nutritional components in snails will have the following effects on the human body: Magnesium: Magnesium has the effect of supporting energy metabolism, making bones and teeth strong, and magnesium is also involved Regulate nutrients such as zinc, calcium, potassium and vitamin D. In 85g of snails contain about 212mg of magnesium, with that amount of magnesium providing up to 53% of the recommended daily magnesium for adult men and 68% of the recommended daily magnesium for women. Selenium is a part of the enzyme selenoprotein, which helps support endocrine and immune system function in the body (Oyewole et al, 2022). According to some recommendations, adult women and men need about 55 mcg of selenium each day (Okwuokenye et al, 2023). In 85g snails contain 23.3 mcg of selenium, providing 42% of the daily need. In addition, selenium also has antioxidant capabilities, reducing the risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, recurrent infections. Vitamin E: In snails contain vitamin E, this is a vitamin that plays an important role in the synthesis of red blood cells, metabolizing vitamin K and protecting cells against free radical damage. A lack of vitamin E can make it more difficult to control muscles, abnormal eye movements, or liver and kidney problems. Therefore, adequate vitamin E intake will reduce the risk of age-related macular degeneration, diabetes, cancer, neurological and cardiovascular disorders. Phosphorus: In snails contain Phosphorus, this is a substance that maintains bone density and regulates nutrients, supports energy metabolism and it provides many essential nutrients for the human body. Fresh snails can be processed in many ways such as steaming, lemon grass and chili, baking with salt (Babatunde et al, 2019).

In Nigeria, snail meat is often used for cooking various sauces, stew, and soups. It is a dietary product, that be safely used by those people who are on a diet. Health benefits of snail during pregnancy cannot be overestimated (Kehinde, 2024). This meat contains plenty of useful minerals, which pregnant women need very much. There are plenty of calories in snails. Snail meat consists of protein. Moreover, it has no bad cholesterol. That is why snails are so useful. Snail meat contains plenty of calcium, iron, and magnesium. Therefore, it is actively used in cosmetology and medicine (Teixeira et al, 2018). In addition to containing significant sources of protein and low amounts of fat, snails are also good sources of iron, calcium, Vitamin A, and a number of other minerals. Vitamin A helps your immune system fight off diseases and strengthens your eyes. It also helps cells in your body grow. Babatunde et al. (2019) reported some disadvantages of eating snail meat on human health. Again, as a matter of note, because snails contain a lot of cholesterol, they increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases if eaten regularly. Medicinal uses of snail meat are numerous, but snails contain many types of parasites that cause disease in humans. If parasites in snails enter organs such as lungs, bile, intestines, liver, brain, kidneys, etc., it will seriously affect human health due to parasites causing cancer and organ failure. Therefore, this study was to investigate medicinal uses of snail meat for boosting agribusiness in Oyo State, Nigeria. The specific aims of the present study were to identify the medicinal uses of snail meat to human and animal health in the study area; and to determine how medicinal uses of snail meat could boost agribusiness in the study area. The following research questions was examined in this present study: (1) What is the medicinal uses of snail meat to human and animal health in the present study area? And (2) How does medicinal uses of snail meat boost agribusiness in the present study area?

Methods

Research Design

Quantitative research design by means of administration of structured questionnaire was utilized for executing the study. This design was adopted to offer the authors opportunity to have personal contact and interaction with the study participants (Bryman, 2007).

Study Area

The study was carried out in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. Akinyele LGA was formed in 1976, out of which Ido Local government was carved out in 1989, leaving it with its present structure of 12 wards with headquarters at Moniya. It is bounded in the east by Lagelu LGA, by Afijio LGA in the North, by Ibadan North LGA in the South, and in the West by Ido LGA. It had a population of 211, 811 in 2006 with 105,594 male and 106,217 female, at 4.14% population growth rate. It is 222 square kilometers in area. Akinyele LGA has been divided into 3, as follows; Akinyele Main Local Government Headquarters at Moniya, Akinyele East LCDA Headquarters at Ikereku and Akinyele South LCDA Headquarters at Igbo Oloyin. The economic activity is predominantly dominated by Farming as Agriculture claims major engagement of the population. People also engage in Artisan works, Communication services, Recreation service providers, Transportation, Construction works as well as Trading.etc. The prestigious International Institute of Tropical Agriculture is established in Akinyele Local Government.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire has 2 sections: Section A comprised of the medicinal uses of snail meat and response options were measured on a three-point scale of highly medicinal (3), moderately medicinal (2), medicinal (1) and not medicinal (0) and the individual mean scores were found for each responses and the decision rule was based on a mean value of 1.5 for each item. Section B comprised of how medicinal uses of snail meat boost agribusiness in the study area and the response options were measured on a four-point scale of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) and the individual mean scores were found for each responses and the decision rule for the research questions was based on a mean value of 2.5 for each item.

Validation and Reliability of Research Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by 3 experts in health sector and the reliability coefficient value was ($r = 0.98$) using split-half method.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 80 respondents each from the four agricultural blocks (Moniya, Ijaye, Alabata and Olorisaoko) in Akinyele LGA, Oyo State making the sample size 320 respondents.

Method of Data Collection

The data collection method includes direct visits to the snail farmers, marketers, processors and traditional healers in the study area, personal observation and structured questionnaires were used to obtain data from the respondents. The questionnaire titled: Medicinal Uses of Snail Meat for Boosting Agriculture in Oyo State, Nigeria (MUSMBA) developed by the researcher through literature review.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and inferential statistic such as t-test. The Mean and Standard Deviation was used to analyzed the research questions and the t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at a significance level of 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the medicinal uses of snail meat to human and animal health in the present study area?

Table 1 showed that the entire respondents agreed that snail meat is medicinally useful to human and animals in the study area. Snail meat for correcting male potency and female libido (2.00), snail meat for healing atherosclerosis and liver diseases (2.32) and snail meat for normalizing protein deficiency (2.12) while It is used for correcting calcium and magnesium deficiency (1.99) with higher mean value. Except that the respondents disagreed that snail meat aids the process of protein excretion out of the body (1.34) which is the lowest mean value. It could be noted that snail meat has several medicinal benefits and many more yet to be discovered.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Medicinal Uses of Snail Meat to Human and Animal Health in the Present Study Area.

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Snail meat for correcting male potency and female libido.	2.00	0.92	Agree
2. Snail meat for healing atherosclerosis and liver diseases.	2.32	1.00	Agree
3. Snail meat for normalizing protein deficiency.	2.12	0.95	Agree
4. It is used for correcting calcium and magnesium deficiency.	1.99	0.76	Agree
5. Snail meat for restoring bone strength cartilaginous.	1.76	0.62	Agree
6. Snail meat contains useful minerals for pregnant women.	2.61	1.02	Agree
7. It is used for weight watching due to low cholesterol level.	2.03	0.84	Agree
8. Snail meat is a rich source of vitamins.	1.93	0.70	Agree
9. Snail meat contains Tryptophan and Selenium.	1.91	0.69	Agree
10. Snail meat improves blood count.	2.01	0.90	Agree
11. Snail meat acts against certain forms of cancer and cough.	1.54	0.72	Agree
12. Snail meat is a healthy source of Omega-3.	2.52	1.01	Agree
13. It improves heart health in human beings.	1.66	0.59	Agree
14. Snail meat and water prevent and used to treat stroke sickness.	1.93	0.71	Agree
15. Snail meat is very low in fat content.	2.97	1.06	Agree
16. It is used for cosmetology and medicine.	2.21	0.99	Agree
17. It is used to repair and regenerate skin issues.	2.59	1.00	Agree
18. It is used for healing acne causing bacteria.	2.60	1.02	Agree
19. Snail meat aids the process of protein excretion out of the body.	1.34	0.66	Disagree
20. Snail meat as snacks when drinking alcohol is harmful to health.	1.52	0.76	Agree

Note. n=320, SD = Standard Deviation.

Research Question 2: How does medicinal uses of snail meat boost agribusiness in the present study area?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on How Medicinal Uses of Snail Meat Boost Agribusiness in the Present Study Area.

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Source of food for man and animals.	3.70	0.67	Very High
2. Source of income for snail farmers.	3.99	0.99	Very High
3. Source of employment opportunities.	3.73	0.92	Very High
4. Lucrative agribusiness for youths.	3.56	0.71	Very High
5. Employment for snail farmers.	2.93	1.00	High
6. Employment for snail markers.	3.11	0.90	High
7. Opportunity for snail processors.	2.52	0.62	High
8. Availability of snail products for trading.	2.50	0.60	High
9. Source of wealth creation.	3.96	0.98	Very High
10. Source of agribusiness expertise.	2.55	0.67	High
11. Snail farming is a career in agribusiness.	3.06	0.91	High
12. Snail farming training for youths.	2.51	0.77	High

Note. n=320, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2 showed that the entire respondents agreed that snail meat is medicinally useful and could boost agribusiness in the study area. Snail meat are sources of income for snail farmers (3.99), wealth creation (3.96), employment opportunities (3.73), food for man and animals (3.70) and a lucrative agribusiness for youths (3.56) with highest mean values. It could be deduced that snail meat is not only medicinal but could be a booster for agribusiness and can reduce youth dependency on white collar job and can as well contribute to food security.

Hypothesis Testing

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on medicinal uses of snail meat boosting agribusiness in the study area.

Table 3: Summary of t-test between Medicinal Uses of Snail Meat and Boosting Agribusiness.

Variable	t-value	p-value	Decision
Medicinal uses of Snail Meat	2.579	0.031	Significant
Boosting Agribusiness			

Note. Level of Significant at p<0.05.

Table 3 showed that (t=2.59; p=0.031) testing at 0.05 level of significance simply means that the null hypothesis one was rejected and restated that 'there is significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on medicinal uses of snail meat boosting agribusiness in the study area. This connotes that the medicinal uses of snail meat listed in this study could positively boost agribusiness with various employment opportunities such as snail meat rearing, marketing, processing and training of youths in the study area.

Discussions

The analysis of research question 1 revealed that the entire respondents agreed that snail meat is medicinally useful to human and animals in the study area. This result corroborates the findings of Olawumi et al., (2021) who found that snails are also non-timber forest product and have multipurpose benefits. Babatunde et al., (2019) reported that all forest products are beneficial to humanity and snails are used to treat sicknesses in both human and animal health management.

The analysis of research question 2 revealed that the entire respondents agreed that snail meat is medicinally useful and could boost agribusiness in the study area These results support the findings of Teixeira et al., (2018) who found that processed snail meats attracts more profit and is a good source of wealth creation in agribusinesses. Oyewole et. al., (2022) concluded that breaking, cracking and boiling are commonest method of processing snails in Nigeria.

The analysis of research hypothesis revealed there is significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents on medicinal uses of snail meat boosting agribusiness in the study area. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Olawumi et al., (2021) who discovered that socio-economic contributions of forest products to livelihoods can boost agribusiness. Kehinde (2024) also found that wealth creation and empowerment through snail production and research can boost agribusinesses.

Conclusions

This study concluded that snail meat is medicinally useful for human and animal health and more medicinal benefits are yet to be discovered. It was also concluded that snail meat is capable of boosting agribusiness in the study area by serving as sources of income, employment opportunities, food for man and animals and a lucrative agribusiness for youths in the study area.

Recommendation

The study therefore recommended that there is need for more public awareness about the medicinal nature of snail meat and funding schemes should be established in order to encourage youth involvement.

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FAMILY COHESION AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC STUDIES: EVIDENCE FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between family cohesion and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state. The study sought to find out the extent to which family cohesion influences students' academic studies. The study also determined the level of relationship between family cohesion and academic studies. Five research questions and their corresponding hypotheses were raised and tested to guide the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population for this study consists of 3641 SS2 students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state as at the time of this study. From the thirteen secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area with a sample of 182 students which were randomly selected using the simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used as an instruments for obtaining data in the study. The data collected with the instrument was analyzed using Pearson's Product Momentum Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistic to determine the stability reliability coefficient and the coefficient obtained was 0.951. The data obtained in the study were analyzed using simple percentage and linear regression. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant relationship between family cohesion and students' academic studies The finding also showed that there is no significant partial relationship between closeness with siblings and students' academic studies in public secondary schools. The authors recommended, among others, that family members, school administrators and policymakers should endeavor to consider promoting programmes or initiatives that would foster family cohesion as it has been shown to positively influence students' academic performance in schools.

Keywords: Academic Studies, Cohesion, Closeness, Emotional Support, Family, Supportive Communication.

Introduction

Academic studies refer to the pursuit of knowledge and learning in a formal educational setting, typically at a college or university. This can encompass a wide range of subjects and disciplines, including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and professional fields such as business, engineering, and medicine. Academic studies often involve rigorous research, critical thinking, and the development of specialized knowledge and skills within a particular area of study. Academic studies are used to refer to activities that take place in schools, colleges, and universities, particularly those that focus more on study and critical thinking than on practical or technical skills. Education is essential for producing skilled labour that accelerates economic growth and addresses a community's pressing issues. Students must graduate with strong academic standing and are expected to devote a significant amount of their time to academic pursuits. However, the trend of students graduating is not equal to the trend of students enrolling, and there are more students than ever. Has trouble focusing and participating in academic activities for a better and more effective study experience. Sometimes, students' academic participation hints at poor academic performance.

Family cohesion helps to improve student's academic studies. The process of passing on valuable information to members of the society is known as education. All of an experiences a person has that lead to knowledge acquisition and intellectual enlightenment are included in their education. It goes on from one generation to another generation. In this context, education refers to the informal, formal, and non-formal processes used to socialize the child to develop into a happy member of society. Informal education is the process of learning about the world around you and beyond through interpersonal interaction. Formal education is a deliberately designed method of socialization in a structured environment, like school. They emphasized that all those organized programmes and procedures for education and training that take place outside of a formal educational setting are included in non-formal education and without the support of the family, none of these forms of education are possible.

The child's first social environment is their family. The child's primary environment is still his or her family, and this environment has a greater impact on the child's intellectual development. The primary purpose of the family, a small kinship structural group, is the natural socialization of the newborn. Similar to how a family is a primary social group made up of parents, children, and possibly other housemates, a family is defined as a group of two or more people who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and who live together. The nuclear family and the extended family are the two main types of families. The immediate group of a father, mother, and children who reside together is referred to as a nuclear family. The nuclear family is part of the extended family, which also includes other relatives like relatives, in-laws, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. Families can be divided into various categories. According to Anderson and Taylor (2000), there are four main types of families: traditional families, where the father provides the majority of the family's income and the mother stays at home to raise the kids; divorced families, which have been reconstituted after a marriage has ended; single parent families, which are typically led by women; and step families, which are made up of new siblings and new parents as a result of remarriage. This is the typical family structure in African nations. Anderson and Taylor (2000) opined that families classified as nuclear have a married couple living together with their children. In Western countries, this kind of family is characteristic.

The family one is born into is referred to as the family of orientation, whereas the family one is married into is the family of procreation. Families are regarded as the fundamental social structure that connects all societies through kinship or matrimonial ties. The ideal family provides its members with companionship, safety, support, socialization, and security. Whatever one's definition of a "family" may be, different societies have different family structures and needs that are met by various families. Muola (2010) opined that the conditions and circumstances in the family that have an impact on the child's physical, intellectual, and emotional development are referred to as the family background. Such family circumstances have varying effects on children from different family backgrounds. Due to the fact that backgrounds can change over time for the same people, some children come from good families while others do not. Therefore, formal education continues to be the means of promoting human development, which must begin in the home. Families can come in a variety of sizes. Alio (2015) defined family size as the overall population of a single family, which may include the father, mother, children, and even extended family members, all of whom reside in the same hamlet. The size of the family has an impact on education. The author emphasized that the relative amount of physical attention and time that each child receives from his parents depends greatly on the size of the family. Among the lower classes, big families are more prevalent lower class in the society. Smaller family size has been linked to high academic studies; students with fewer siblings are likely to receive more parental attention and have family support, which results in better academic studies. Children in large families may experience poverty and lack parental encouragement and stimulus that motivates their academic studies. Every child's primary environment is still their family, no matter how big or small.

Cohesion means sticking together. It refers to the action or fact of forming a united whole. There are two components of family cohesion: (1) the emotional bonding members have with one another and (2) the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system. Family cohesion is studied in various discipline. As such, family cohesion is conceptualized, defined, and operationalized in several different ways. Drawing from a family science perspective, Alio (2015) defined family cohesion as the emotional bonding members have with one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system. It relates to the emotional bonding that occurs between family members. When family members have healthy levels of cohesion, interact with one another in a way that shows a harmony between the needs of each individual family member and the needs of the whole family. Families' strength and resource in overcoming life's daily challenges is a strong and cohesive family unit. The point of view holds that family cohesion is a measurement of the current emotional and practical dependence among family members. Increase the children's focus, attendance, and academic performance by operationalizing family cohesion through their family. Cohesive families, for instance, give their members a sense of security and refuge, which promotes better communication and a strong sense of self-esteem towards one another.

Statement of the Problem

While the school is an important factor in a child’s success, the family is the basic institution through which children learn who they are and where they can fit into society. Parenting styles, discipline techniques, involvement with the child, and the home environment have been shown to affect a child’s ability to achieve much academically. Challenges faced by students in their Family environment continues to be of crucial importance through adolescence and early adulthood. In cohesive family, parents will be more engaged in children’s education. They will keep a close eye on children and guide them how to think, to interact with friends and to deal with other social problems. And they will restrict children from misconduct. Through this process, Children acquire social skills, become well received among peers, and develop strong school belonging. On the contrary, students from home without love and unity are more prone to aggression, hostility and problem behaviors, which will make them less productive in their academic activities. Students from cohesive family show more prosocial behavior and better social inclusion. Hence they may get more involved in school-based activities and develop strong school belonging. This may not be so with students from disunited family without love and harmony. Most of these students from home with aggressive parents tend to exhibits aggression on other students in school and hence they are always socially and emotionally backward which lead to a decline in their academic studies. It is based on these precarious challenges the authors of this study decided to investigate the extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the purpose of the study is to examine:

1. the extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students.
2. the extent to which closeness with siblings associate with academic studies of secondary school students.
3. the extent to which family emotional support associate with academic studies of secondary school students.
4. the extent to which family supportive communication associate with academic studies of secondary school students.
5. the extent to which closeness with parents’ associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Research Questions

Five research questions were raised to guide this study.

Research Question 1: What is extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Research Question 2: What is extent to which closeness to sibling associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Research Question 3: What is extent to which family emotional support associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Research Question 4: What is extent to which family supportive communication associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Research Question 5: What is extent to which closeness with parents' associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Hypothesis 1: Family cohesion does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Research Hypothesis 2: Closeness to sibling does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Research Hypothesis 3: Family emotional support does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Research Hypothesis 4: Family supportive communication does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Research Hypothesis 5: Closeness with parents' does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Methods

Research Design

A correlational survey research design was utilized for the study. It is a non-experimental quantitative research design to achieve the specific objectives. According to Bhandari (2021), a correlational research design investigates the relationships between variables without the researcher physically controlling or manipulating any variable. The use of correlational research design is appropriate for this study due to the fact that it provides insight into the strength of the relationships between the study's various independent variables and the dependent variables. The correlation survey design allows for investigation of how different factors influences students' academic studies in the area of study.

Population and Sampling Procedure

One hundred and eighty-two (182) students from the 14 public secondary schools in the study area, which represent 5% of the entire population represent the study sample size. In order to collect data from the 14 schools in the Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, simple random sampling technique where used. Hence, 182 respondents formed the sample that were examined in the study.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data gathering and collection. The questionnaire consists of 33 items that seek respondent views on family cohesion. The items were weighed on a five-point rating scale for the respondents to make their opinions.

Validation and Reliability of Research Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts, two from Educational Psychology and one from Measurement and Evaluation. A copy of the questionnaire was given to each lecturers who made relevant suggestions and adjust various aspects of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Pearson's Product Momentum Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistic. A test-retest was performed by administering questionnaires to 20 students who were not part of the sample. The first and second administration spans within 7 days, which yielded a reliability coefficient value of 0.951.

Data Collection and Analysis

The instrument was administered to the respondents, with the help of four research assistants who were briefed on the research procedures. The respondents were contacted through letters before the instrument were administered on them. The respondents were given the chance to complete and return the instrument immediately. The SPSS version 23.0 was used as the package for data analyses. Inferential statistics (Partial Correlation and Linear Regression) were used as the statistical tools for data analysis.

Results

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Table 1: Summary of the Correlation Analysis Between Family Cohesion and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remark
1	.427[a]	.182	.163	7.30208	MC

Note. MC = Moderate Correlation.

Table 1 showed that the extent to which family cohesion associate with academic studies of secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area is .427. This means that there is moderate correlation between family cohesion and academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: What is extent to which closeness to sibling associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Table 2: Summary of the Correlation Analysis Between Closeness to Sibling and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Variable	mean	S	Covariance	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	r	Remark
CS	20.52	4.02	9.58	1657.48	.298	MC
SAS	36.17	7.98				

Note. MC = Moderate Correlation.

Table 2 showed that the extent to which closeness to sibling associate with academic studies of secondary school students is .298. This means that there is a moderate correlation between closeness with siblings and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Question 3: What is extent to which family emotional support associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Table 3: Summary of the Correlation Analysis Between Family Emotional Support and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Variable	Mean	S	Covariance	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	r	Remark
ESF	23.53	4.55	11.75	2033.14	.323	MC
SAS	36.17	7.98				

Note. MC = Moderate Correlation.

Table 3 showed that the extent to which family emotional support associate with academic studies of secondary school students is .323. This means that there is a moderate correlation between emotional support in family and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Question 4: What is extent to which family supportive communication associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Table 4: Summary of the Correlation Analysis Between Family Supportive Communication and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Variable	Mean	S	Covariance	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	r	Remark
SCF	23.04	5.02	10.66	1843.79	.266	MC
SAS	36.17	7.98				

Note. MC = Moderate Correlation.

Table 4 showed that the extent to which family supportive communication associate with academic studies of secondary school students is .266. This means that there is a moderate correlation between supportive communication in family and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Question 5: What is extent to which closeness with parents' associate with academic studies of secondary school students?

Table 5: Summary of The Correlation Analysis Between Closeness with Parents' and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Variable	Mean	S	Covariance	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	R	Remark
CP	24.93	3.08	16.89	2922.07	.397	MC
SAS	36.17	3.73				

Note. MC = Moderate Correlation.

Table 5 showed that the extent to which closeness with parents' associate with academic studies of secondary school students is .397. This means that there is a moderate correlation between closeness with parents and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Testing Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: Family cohesion does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Table 6: Summary of the Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Family Cohesion and **Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	2005.694	4	501.423	9.404	.000[a]	Reject Ho
	Residual	9011.134	169	53.320			
	Total	11016.828	173				

Note. df = Degree of Freedom, MS = Mean Square, Sig. = Significant.

Table 6 showed that the coefficient of the linear regression analysis of the relationship between family cohesion and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (.427, see Table 1) is significant at .000 probability value. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that there is a significant relationship between family cohesion and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area**.**

Research Hypothesis 2: Closeness to sibling does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Table 7: Summary of the Partial Correlation Analysis Between Closeness with Siblings and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	16.374	3.470		4.719	.000			
	CS	.176	.173	.089	1.018	.310	.298	.078	.071

Table 7 showed that the coefficient of the partial correlation between closeness with siblings and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (.078) is significant at .310 probability value. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that there is no significant partial correlation between closeness with siblings and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Hypothesis 3: Family emotional support does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Table 8: Summary of the Partial Correlation Analysis Between Emotional Support in Family and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	16.374	3.470		4.719	.000			
	ESF	.192	.167	.109	1.148	.253	.323	.088	.080

Table 8 showed that the coefficient of the partial correlation between emotional support in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (.088) is significant at .253 probability value. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that there is no significant partial correlation between emotional support in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Hypothesis 4: Family supportive communication does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Table 9: Summary of the Partial Correlation Analysis Between Supportive Communication in Family and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	16.374	3.470		4.719	.000			
	SCF	.052	.142	.033	.365	.716	.266	.028	.025

Table 9 showed that the coefficient of the partial correlation between supportive communication in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (.028) is significant at .716 probability value. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that there is no significant partial correlation between supportive communication in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Research Hypothesis 5: Closeness with parents' does not significantly associate with academic studies of secondary school students.

Table 10: Summary of the Partial Correlation Analysis Between Closeness with Parents and Academic Studies of Secondary School Students.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	16.374	3.470		4.719	.000			
	CP	.420	.129	.281	3.249	.001	.397	.242	.226

Table 10 showed that the coefficient of the partial correlation between closeness with parents and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area (.242) is significant at .001 probability value. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that there is a significant partial correlation between closeness with parents and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area.

Discussions

The first finding of this study revealed that there is significant relationship between family cohesion and students' academic studies in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. The finding is in agreement with the finding of Vahabi's (2018) who found that there is a relationship between family cohesion and students' academic self-efficacy in Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences. However, the finding is in contrast with the finding of Jincong Yu et al. (2021) who found that family cohesion significantly influences the academic burnout of Chinese college students.

The second finding of the study showed no significant partial correlation between closeness with siblings and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. This finding could be due to several factors. Firstly, the influence of sibling relationships on academic performance may vary depending on individual family dynamics, the quality of relationships with siblings, and other external factors. While sibling relationships can play a crucial role in social and emotional development, their impact on academic success may not always be direct or easily measurable. Furthermore, the study's focus on public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area may have limited the scope of the findings, as the dynamics of sibling relationships and their influence on academic studies can differ across different educational settings and age groups. Factors such as age differences between siblings, parental involvement, and family structure may also play a significant role in shaping the relationship between closeness with siblings and academic performance. The second finding of this study is in agreement with the finding of Poisall (2022) who found that siblings' influences math's achievement.

The Third finding of this study showed no significant partial correlation between emotional support in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. This finding could be attributed to several factors. One possible explanation is that emotional support from the family, while important for overall well-being and development, may not directly translate into improved academic performance. Academic success is influenced by a myriad of factors such as student motivation, teacher quality, school resources, and individual learning styles, which may overshadow the impact of family emotional support on academic studies. Also, the nature of the emotional support provided by families may vary widely, and not all forms of support may be conducive to academic success. For example, if the emotional support is overly controlling or enabling, it could potentially hinder students' autonomy and academic growth. Additionally, students may receive emotional support from other sources such as friends, teachers, or mentors, which could also play a significant role in their academic studies. The third finding of this study is in harmony with the findings that family emotional support influences students' academic persistence and achievement.

The fourth finding of the study shows is no significant partial correlation between supportive communication in family and academic studies of secondary school students in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. The finding could be attributed to various factors. One possible explanation could be that other external factors such as peer influence, school environment, or individual student motivation may have a stronger impact on academic performance compared to family communication. Additionally, the quality and frequency of family communication may vary among different families, leading to inconsistencies in its impact on academic outcomes. The finding is in contrast with the study of Campos and Kim (2017) who found that supportive communication influences family cohesion.

Conclusion

Following the findings of the study, the authors can categorically assert that family cohesion plays a significant influence on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. This suggests that a strong sense of unity and togetherness within the family can positively influence students' educational outcomes. It also showed that the insignificant partial correlations between closeness with siblings, emotional support in the family, and supportive communication in the family with students' academic studies indicates that these factors may not have a direct influence on academic performance in this context. The significant partial correlation between closeness with parents and students' academic studies highlights the importance of the parent-child relationship in shaping academic success. Therefore, there is a need for all these variables to be empirically investigated in order to positively improve students' academic performance in schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. School administrators and policymakers should endeavor to consider promoting programmes or initiatives that foster family cohesion as it has been shown to positively influence students' academic performance.
2. While closeness with siblings, emotional support, and supportive communication may not directly impact academic studies, they are still important aspects of family dynamics that contribute to overall well-being. Encouraging positive interactions in these areas can enhance family relationships.
3. Parents should endeavor to be encouraged to maintain close relationships with their children as it has been found to have a significant impact on academic success. Parental involvement and support are crucial factors in students' educational journeys.
4. Students should endeavor to be encouraged to cultivate the habit of always relating with siblings, about their study purposely for better learning.
5. Students should endeavor to take academic studies seriously and also improve on themselves personally in all ramification.

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TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF BUSINESS STUDIES SUBJECTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study examined the competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study was 1,901 business studies teachers who are teachers of business studies subjects in the 264 public secondary schools in the 6 Educational Zones in Anambra state. The sample of the study consists of 330 business studies teachers. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select three Educational Zones, 6 LGAs and sixteen schools from the LGAs. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire comprising of 30 items. Two experts validated the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was checked, using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded the coefficient values of .897, .917, and .996. Weighted mean and improvement need index (INI) were employed to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The study found that Business studies teachers who are teachers of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State needs much improvement in the areas of social and motivational competencies, hence they need much additional training in these areas to facilitate effective teaching of business studies subjects. It was however recommended that the Anambra State Ministry of Education and Secondary School Education Board should endeavor to organize regular training and re-training programme for business studies teachers on the areas where they are found in this study to be deficient so as to ensure effective teaching of business studies subjects.

Keywords: Business Studies Teachers, Competencies, Improvement Needs, Business Studies Subjects.

Introduction

Education is regarded as a powerful tool for social change and national development. It is the process of imparting knowledge, skills, values, ethics, principles and rules with a view to improve the quality of life of an individual. Education is seen as the light that drives away darkness of ignorance and enables mankind to find its way through the tortures and labyrinth of development and civilization (Chetlal & Pushpa, 2020). This is to say that any nation which have a decline in the quality of education at any level will have a far reaching negative impact on the nation's moral, civic, cultural and economic sustainability. For a nation to achieve the goals and objectives of education, teachers (key implementers of educational programmes) must be put into perspective.

Teachers has been recognized as indispensable human resources and indeed the single and most vital element in the educational system. Etuk (2010) noted that new schools may be built, syllabuses revised, new teaching methods and aids recommended and new textbooks provided but in the end, everything lies in the quality and quantity of teachers. The author added that teachers play a crucial role in the development of the education system as a whole and in imparting and maintaining the standard of education. Teaching is an important activity that helps people to gain knowledge and attitudes in order to be responsible citizens, earn a living and lead a peaceful life. Teaching is said to be effective if the planned goals are being accomplished. Oyetunde (2014) saw effective teaching as a deliberate and planned activity, it is purposeful (goal-oriented), coherent (structured), meaningful (bridges the gap between the known and the unknown). In all, effective teaching consists of helping students to acquire knowledge and learn to think and solve problems.

The teacher's level of competency and experience determine his level of effectiveness. According to Ogwunte (2016), teachers' quality, effectiveness, experience and competency are very vital, since it is the teacher that will determine the extent of achievement of the goals and objectives of the subject matter. Iseac (2019) opined that it is expedient to note that the primary source of producing professional teachers in Nigeria is through teacher education programme offered in teacher training institutions such as universities and colleges of education. Akpan and Silas (2013) also noted that the initial training teachers receive during their teacher education programmes is inadequate to enable them continue to perform the complex changing tasks of the teacher for many reasons. First, the inadequacy of teacher preparatory programmes. Secondly, the society is continuously undergoing changes in values, attitudes and knowledge as a result of the ever increasing rate of technological advancement. Thirdly, new and more sophisticated technologies are developed for use in schools and teachers who fail to stay abreast with these changes can be declared obsolete. Akpan and Silas (2013) added that there is a great need for teachers to be constantly trained and retrained to improve their competency needs.

Competency improvement needs is the development of circumstances where the shortfalls in the teaching of business subjects are identified, corrected and upgraded to a high quality standard. According to Marcus (2015), there is an urgent requirement to make the teaching of skills, knowledge, abilities and commitments better than it were before. The need for improvement of business teacher's competence always arises when there is a gap to fill. Business subjects taught at the secondary school level includes those subjects taught at the junior secondary as prevocational and integrated subjects such as book keeping (business success), shorthand (skill for business), office practice (effective office practice) keyboarding as a communication tool and commerce (the heart of business), and at the senior secondary school level is financial accounting, store management, insurance, commerce and office practice, trade and marketing. Business teachers who teaches any of the afore mentioned business subjects needs to stay abreast with the 21st century professional competencies needed in our modern world.

Kiymet (2010) outlined the 21st century professional teacher competencies to include: communication competencies, emotional competencies, environmental competencies, field competencies, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) competencies, literature learning competencies, pedagogical competencies, research competencies and socio-cultural competencies, instructional materials development and utilization competencies, social competencies, motivational competencies, political competencies, critical thinking competencies, affective work competencies, intra personal competencies, inter personal competencies, practical demonstration competencies etcetera. However, for the purpose of this study subject matter, social and motivational competencies will be given a priority.

Subject matter competency remains a key competency in effective teaching of business subject. Obot (2022) opined that a good subject matter knowledge helps the teacher to teach learners correctly, this in turn leads to achievement of set objectives and the consequent interest of the learners to continue in the learning process. This scholar adds that there is a high correlation between what teachers know and what they teach. Knowledge of subject matter by teachers does not only inspire the students to achieve academic success but also improve the quality of teaching as well. The teacher's mastery of the knowledge of subject matter should go beyond the limits of the curriculum, for them to be able to explain to the learners.

People as social beings who constantly deal with others need certain skills that would enable them achieve their ends without offending others. Osman (2011) asserted that the skills needed for effective interpersonal functioning includes both verbal and non-verbal behaviours that are socially valued and are likely to elicit positive response from others. It is unequivocally clear that the social life of human beings demands constant interaction with people of all social standings and status. Human beings, as gregarious as we are, interact with other people on daily basis. Tariq and Masood (2018) pointed out that human survival naturally demands living in groups, where members form relationships, share their feelings, have contact and gain knowledge.

Motivation according to Reginald (2015), is the arousal of tendency to act to produce one or more effects this simply implies that behind any motivation, there are some elements of needs demanding satisfaction. Oyewole and Alonge (2013) asserted that motivation is the arousal of tendency to behave in a particular way. This means that the teacher needs to possess the ability to gear learning situation so that the learner will have the urge to learn and perform better from the learning experiences.

From the above, it can be seen how essential the possession of necessary competencies for effective teaching are germane to successful implementation of business subject curriculum in secondary schools. Regrettably, Oluseyi and Omoh (2020) argued that observations from research conducted by scholars in the field of business studies in recent time shows that there is a consistent decline in the academic performance of students in some business studies subjects. This could be as a result of business studies teacher’s poor acquisition of necessary competencies needed for effective teaching. It is also worthy to note that the society is changing, and so is knowledge. Business studies teachers having been trained some years back may be deficient in new knowledge in the field. Hence the need to determine the competencies improvement needs which is the focus of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to determine business studies teachers’ competencies improvement needs for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study aims to examine:

1. The subject matter competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. The social competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. The motivational competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following research questions.

Research Question 1: What are the subject matter competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Question 2: What are the social competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Question 3: What are the motivational competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Methods

Research Design

The present study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is primarily a quantitative research design in which the authors administers a structured questionnaire to a sample of respondents in order to describe their attitudes, opinions, behaviours and experiences (Creswell, 2005). Therefore, a descriptive survey research design is appropriate for this study in that it would help the authors to collect data from business studies teachers so as to determine their perceptions regarding their levels of competencies improvement needs for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study was all the 1901 business studies teachers who are teaching business studies subjects in all the 264 public secondary schools in the six educational zones in Anambra state. Out of total population a sample size of 330 business studies teachers was selected using a stratified random sampling technique.

Measuring Instrument

A structured questionnaire was designed as the instrument used for data collection. It had items with two categories of response scales of possessed and needed. The possessed category scale had five point-response scales of very highly possessed (VHP), highly possessed (HP), moderately possessed (MP), slightly possessed (SP), and lowly possessed (LP) with the corresponding values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. It was meant to determine the extent of competencies possessed by business studies teachers. The needed category scale had five point-response scales of very highly needed (VHN), highly needed (HN), moderately needed (MN), slightly needed (SN), and lowly needed (LL) with the corresponding values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. It was meant to determine the extent at which the competencies are needed by the business teachers.

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

The structured instrument for data collection was validated by two experts, one from Business Education and the other from Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability coefficient values of .897, .917, and .996 was obtained, which yielded an adequate reliability and internal consistency index, using the Cronbach's alpha method.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using weighted Mean. The weighted Mean with Improvement Need Index (INI), which represents the performance gap, was used to answer the research questions and take decision. In taking the decision, the following steps were followed: (1) The weighted mean of the Needs category as well as the weighted mean of the performance category were determined (2) The performance gap was determined by finding the difference between the weighted mean category and the weighted mean of the performance category (3) Where the performance gap is (+), it means that the item is needed because the level of competencies needed id greater than the level of competencies possessed (4) Where the performance gap is (-), it means that the item is not needed because the level of competency needed is lower than the level of competency possessed and (5) Where the performance gap is (0), it means that the item is not needed because the level of competency needed equals to the level of competency possessed.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the subject matter competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Subject Matter Competency Improvement Needs of Business Studies Teachers for Effective Teaching of Business Studies Subjects in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

S/N	Items	X_N	SD_N	X_P	SD_P	X_{PG}	Remark
1.	In-dept. understanding of business subjects.	4.85	0.353	3.89	0.398	0.96	Needed
2.	Align instruction with learning objectives and standards.	4.85	0.353	3.87	0.406	0.98	Needed
3	Communicate effectively with students.	4.85	0.359	3.78	0.444	1.07	Needed
4	Design and develop curriculum that aligns with learning objectives and standards.	4.82	0.386	3.76	0.453	1.06	Needed
5	Effective planning and delivery of lessons that promotes students learning.	4.81	0.396	3.73	0.458	1.08	Needed
6	Tailor instruction for inclusive learning environment.	4.79	0.409	3.71	0.482	1.08	Needed
7	Construct valid and reliable tests to evaluate students' performance.	4.79	0.409	3.70	0.460	1.09	Needed
8	Give feedback regularly to students on their academic performance.	4.79	0.424	3.69	0.462	1.1	Needed
9	Effective use of subject-specific resources and materials.	4.81	0.406	3.69	0.462	1.12	Needed
10	Effective use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.	4.81	0.406	3.65	0.491	1.16	Needed

Note. Xn=Mean of Needed; xp =Mean of Performance; XPG=Mean of Performance Gap.

Table 1 showed that the Mean responses of the competencies possessed by business studies teachers on subject matter competencies ranged from 3.65 to 3.89, while the Mean responses of subject matter competencies needed by business studies teachers ranged from 4.79 to 4.85. The Mean value of subject matter competencies performance gap ranged from 0.96 to 1.96. Since all the values of the subject matter competencies performance gap analysis are positive, it means that the business studies teachers need improvement on their subject matter competencies for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools. However, the extent to which improvement is needed reduces as the values of the subject matter competencies performance gap analysis decreases or approaches zero.

Research Question 2: What are the social competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Social Competency Improvement Needs of Business Studies Teachers for Effective Teaching of Business Studies Subjects in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}_N$	SD_N	$\bar{X}_P$	SD_P	$\bar{X}_{PG}$	Remark
1	Socialize freely with students, parents, colleagues, and community where the school operates.	4.18	0.675	2.91	0.711	1.27	Needed
2.	Be sensitive to others feelings and problems in your workplace.	4.10	0.670	2.96	0.620	1.14	Needed
3	Negotiate and resolve disagreement among colleagues/students easily.	4.10	0.668	2.9	0.600	1.2	Needed
4	Use effective tactics for persuasion.	4.07	0.662	2.86	0.596	1.21	Needed
5	Inspire and lead other individuals/group in the school.	4.05	0.659	2.82	0.628	1.23	Needed
6	Initiate change in a group or organization.	4.06	0.663	2.85	0.545	1.21	Needed
7	Establish beneficial relationships in one's place of work.	4.05	0.659	2.77	0.551	1.28	Needed
8	Work well with other individuals/groups in the school towards common goals.	4.05	0.668	2.82	0.590	1.23	Needed
9	Create group synergy in pursuing collective goals.	4.06	0.663	2.83	0.581	1.23	Needed
10	Communicate openly and convincingly with both students and colleagues.	4.09	0.675	2.84	0.666	1.25	Needed

Note. Xn=Mean of Needed; xp =Mean of Performance; XPG=Mean of Performance Gap.

Table 2 showed that the Mean responses of the competencies possessed by business studies teachers on social competencies ranged from 2.77 to 2.96, while the Mean responses of social competencies needed by business studies teachers ranged from 4.05 to 4.18. The Mean value of social competencies performance gap ranged from 1.14 to 1.28. Since all the values of the social competencies performance gap analysis are positive, it means that the business studies teachers need improvement on their social competencies for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools. However, the extent to which improvement is needed reduces as the values of the social competencies performance gap analysis decreases or approaches zero.

Research Question 3: What are the motivational competency improvement needs of business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Motivational Competency Improvement Needs of Business Studies Teachers for Effective Teaching of Business Studies Subjects in Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}_N$	SD_N	$\bar{X}_P$	SD_P	$\bar{X}_{PG}$	Remark
1	Reinforce student's behavior during lesson delivery.	4.49	0.585	3.45	0.657	1.04	Needed
2.	Use varied method of motivation.	4.57	0.532	3.51	0.590	1.06	Needed
3	Stimulate inductions in lessons to aid students learning.	4.57	0.519	3.42	0.595	1.15	Needed
4	Encourage students participation in classwork.	4.57	0.519	3.38	0.619	1.19	Needed
5	Focus on positive behaviors of students to find ways of satisfying their needs for attention.	4.53	0.535	3.32	0.641	1.21	Needed
6	Reward students' effort for answering questions correctly or participating. outstandingly in personal or group project.	4.48	0.536	3.29	0.619	1.19	Needed
7	Identify each student's talents, strength, weakness and interest to encourage and motivate them.	4.45	0.533	3.21	0.638	1.24	Needed
8	Call students by their names each time you want to give them individual instructions or ask questions.	4.44	0.532	3.22	0.595	1.22	Needed
9	Politely correct students' wrong behaviors or attitudes in and outside the classroom.	4.46	0.511	3.18	0.567	1.28	Needed
10	Give feedback to students to aid learning.	4.49	0.536	3.21	0.578	1.28	Needed

Note. Xn=Mean of Needed; xp =Mean of Performance; XPG=Mean of Performance Gap.

Table 3 showed that the Mean responses of the competencies possessed by business studies teachers on motivational competencies ranged from 3.18 to 3.51, while the Mean responses of motivational competencies needed by business studies teachers ranged from 4.44 to 4.57. the Mean value of motivational competencies performance gap ranged from 1.04 to 1.28. Since all the values of the motivational competencies performance gap analysis are positive, it means that the business studies teachers need improvement on their motivational competencies for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools. However, the extent to which improvement is needed reduces as the values of the motivational competencies performance gap analysis decreases or approaches zero.

Discussions

Table 1 showed that the 10 subject matter competencies for instruction, having the values of subject matter performance gap of 0.96 to 1.96 apparently are slightly needed for effective teaching of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State. The findings are in agreement with that of Akhyak, Idrus and Bakar (2013) who identified the ability of describing objectives, selecting materials and organizing materials logically as some of the important competencies business studies teachers should possess. They noted that business studies teachers need to be competent in subject mastery because it helps them to plan teaching and learning programme, to execute the interaction, manage the learning process and also make proper assessment. They emphasized that this competency is very indispensable for teachers as it facilitates effective planning of lessons, making decisions about lesson pace, explaining materials clearly, and responding to individual differences in how students learn.

Table 2 showed that social competencies for instruction, having the values of social performance gap of 1.14 to 1.28 apparently are moderately needed by business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects. These findings are in agreement with that of Alio(2006), Robles (2012) and Selvi (2010) who found that there is a close relationship between teachers' social competencies, particularly, emotional competencies and students' performance. According to them, this is because teachers' emotional competencies are very important as it can help students to learn and also help teachers become effective teachers. Learning is an emotional activity hence student's willingness to learn can be increased if teachers know how to improve the emotional dimension of students' learning. In addition, learning requires an emotional support that create positive feelings for learning-teaching process.

Table 3 showed that motivational competencies for instruction having the values of motivational performance gap of 1.04 to 1.28 are moderately needed by business studies teachers for effective teaching of business studies subjects. The findings of the study with respect to teachers' motivational competency lend credence to the views of Ndukwu and Edo (2020), Imo, Essien and Imaobong (2014) who noted that motivation influences teachers job performance in respect of building attitudes and beliefs towards teaching and learning. According to them, motivation rewards creates interest in the students. They added that the teacher needs to possess ability to gear learning situation so that the learner has the urge to learn and perform better from the learning experiences.

Conclusions and Recommendation

It is a well-known fact that the quality of any educational programme is dependent on the quality of the teachers. The quality of business studies subjects teaching in secondary schools in Anambra state appears to be ineffective, hence their poor performance in some business studies external examinations. This prompted the need for identifying the competencies needed by the teachers for effective teaching. It was therefore concluded that business studies teachers who are teaching business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State are generally competent in areas of pedagogy, social; motivational and instructional materials development and utilization. Hence, they do not need much additional training in these areas. Also, it was observed that the teachers of business studies subjects in secondary schools in Anambra State needs more improvement in the areas of social and motivational competencies to improve the academic performance of students in business studies subjects. In line with the findings, it is recommended that the Anambra State Ministry of Education and Secondary Education Board should endeavor to constantly organize regular training and re-training programmes for business studies teachers in the State on these areas where they are found in this study not to be abreast, as this would obviously facilitate effective teaching delivery of business studies subjects in secondary schools in the State.

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DIGITAL SKILLS POSSESSED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

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Abstract
The study focused on upscaling teachers' digital skills for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State for global competitiveness. The study was guided by three research questions and three null hypotheses were tested. The population of the study was all 544 (218 males and 326 females) teachers in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. The sample of the study was 218 (87 males and 131 females) teachers drawn from senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State using simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was structure questionnaire developed by the researcher and validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was 0.76 obtained using Cronbach Alpha. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation and t-test to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that; teachers did not possess adequate computer appreciation, power point preparation and presentation and internet skills for instructional delivery in senior secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Government of Abia State through the Ministry of Education should provide teachers with adequate training to upscale their computer appreciation, power point preparation/presentation and internet skills for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Abia State.

Keywords: Teachers, Digital skills, Instructional delivery, Computer appreciation, PowerPoint presentation, Internet Global Competitiveness.

Introduction

Education is the bedrock and vehicle for the development of any nation. It is a fulcrum of any societal change that will ever occur. Education involves the transmission of society's cultural heritage, societal values, norms, indigenous knowledge, and technology from one generation to another to enhance expected future change (Otakpo, Wike, & John-Nelson, 2020). This explains why one of the national education goals involves the acquisition of useful skills and development of mental, physical, and social abilities and competences as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2014).

However, Secondary education is the form of education which learners receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage (FRN, 2014). Therefore, the goals of secondary school education in Nigeria cannot be achieved unless teachers have necessary training where they are adequately equipped with knowledge, necessary teaching skills and digital skills. McDiarmid and Clevenger-Bright (2018) tells us that a teacher is a person who helps others to acquire knowledge, competencies, or values. In essence, a teacher plays an immeasurable role in ensuring that the learners at all levels of education acquire desirable knowledge which can enhance their development as individuals and that of the economy. This implies that there is need for teachers' development regarding the use of digital skills and resources as a means to bridge the knowledge gap in teaching different concepts using diverse digital tools, facilities and equipment. Therefore, the need for the continual development of digital skills and resources among teachers cannot be overemphasized in the modern times.

According to Thokozani, Sylvia, and Moses (2019), the digital world is increasingly penetrating the education space, with digital technology gradually being used as a vehicle to deliver educational knowledge and skills in new and innovative ways. The need for upscaling teachers' skills in using digital resources as means to bridge the knowledge gap in the teaching and learning process in secondary schools is of utmost importance in this 21st century. Skill is perceived as the ability to carry out a task effectively. Mbah and Umurhurhu (2016) defined a skill as the ability to make purposeful movements that are necessary to a particular task. Digital skills, as defined by Asli (2022) are those skills needed to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information from basic online searching and emailing to specialist programming and development. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018), digital skills refer to a range of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information. Digital skills enable people to create and share digital content communicate, collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative self-fulfilment in life, learning, work, and social activities at large.

In this study teachers' digital skills refer to the ability to utilize trending technological devices in carrying out different instructional activities for quality teaching and learning activities and for the achievement of instructional objectives and educational goals by extension. Fernando (2021) identified some digital skills, that could be possessed by teachers to include: computer appreciation, Internet, programming, Web, App development, and content creation, among others. Onyebuenyi and Oluka (2022) added that these digital skills involve a range of skills, which include computer appreciation, power point preparation and presentation, digital communication, digital creativity, and internet skills. It is therefore imperative that teachers possess strong digital skills that enable sound technology integration and utilization for effective instructional delivery. A teacher who possesses strong digital skills may share and monitor knowledge utilizing a variety of digital tools and applications with students. This implies that to ensure that teachers are digital equip there is need to upscale teachers' digital skills.

Up-scaling represents deliberate efforts to improve the knowledge and skills possessed by the teachers for enhancing their effectiveness. Up-scaling teachers digital skills is bound to increase their quality and ensure better lesson planning, instructional delivery and student learning outcomes (Perlman,Winthrop & Mcchivney,2016). Computer appreciation skills can be described as the ability's individuals develop that make them capable of operating and using the computer efficiently in performing basic operations like starting a computer, using the mouse, managing various windows among others. (Emmanuel, 2022). The computer appreciation skills of teachers include the ability to connect basic computer components, boot computer switch on the accessories and use the keyboards and mouse efficiently.

PowerPoint presentations can be regarded as a good instructional medium and a key for facilitating an effective teaching and learning process (Amosa, Hamdalat & Sherifat, 2018). PowerPoint is becoming more and more widespread as a teaching tool among teachers who wish to integrate multimedia technology into their teaching. The sheer popularity of this presentation tool comes from the belief that representation of information using auditory and visual inputs improves learning (Abubakar, Muhammad, Umar & Mahmud, 2020). PowerPoint skills include the ability to prepare and incorporate visual and auditory content, make changes to the lessons by editing or text modification, removal of existing slides and addition of new slides to make lesson more organized and flexible and finally use printout materials for students' personal use along with the Internet. The use of the Internet in gathering instructional materials also requires skills on the part of teachers. The Internet is a computer-based global information system (Offia & Isaac, 2021). According to Muendo (2020), the Internet provides students and teachers the opportunities to communicate with one another through zoom cloud application and WhatsApp technologies thereby providing a quicker and easier access to more extensive and current information necessary to enhance instructional delivery.

Instructional delivery embraces all human interactive skills employed by the teacher to promote/facilitate learning in the classroom situation thereby leading to improved performance on the part of a learner (Chukwunyere, 2015). It is also a process of logically presenting instructions in line with the subject theme to the students (Ogwunte & Amadi, 2020). This means that teachers at all levels of education with adequate skills can play the decisive role in pivoting the direction of the instructional activities to equip learners for global competitiveness. Global competitiveness refers to the phenomenon where the borders separating countries are disappearing which allows the flow of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, economy, knowledge, people, values, and idea across borders. However, bridging the global competitive gap through teachers may partly depend on the content of their training programme for equipping trainee teachers with worldwide knowledge and skills needed for global competiveness (Uka & Oleabhiele, 2022). Since all teachers, both male and female require adequate training and skills to function effectively, it is important to conduct this study to ascertain the level of digital skills possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery.

Statement of the Problem

The skills possessed by teachers are essential for contemporary educational development of any nation in the 21st century. This is because when the teachers are equipped with the 21st century skills (digital skills) for instructional delivery, it can accelerate, enrich, deepen, motivate, and engage students to learn. Unfortunately, the majority of teachers in public secondary schools in Nigeria and Abia State inclusive do not take advantage of technological tools for lesson planning and preparation as well instructional delivery due to lack of basic digital skills such as computer appreciation, power point preparation and Internet skills among others. Instead, they prefer to use conventional educational materials like textbook alone at this global age where current and useful materials are available on the internet. This can be a major contributory factor to the poor performance of students in internal and external examination in the country.

The phenomenon of poor performance of students in internal and external examinations has become a source of worry to both parents and educational authorities including teachers where students engage in different forms of examination malpractices and miracle centres where they provided with the answers during external examinations as well as writing their examination by proxy to record good performance. This ugly trend has become a source of worry among stakeholders. The problem of this study, therefore, is that whereas ample utilization of digital tools by teachers has the capacity to improve performance of students' digital skills possessed by teachers for effective use of the tools is not clearly known. The solution to this precarious problem has motivated the authors to carry out this present study on digital skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Abia State.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of the study was to examine the level of digital skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Abia State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.
2. the PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

3. the Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Research Question 2: What are PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Research Question 3: What are the Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Methods

Research Design

This present study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This research design is regarded as a non-experimental approach, that produces an accurate representation of participants, events or situations (Robson, 2002). This research design also involves a structured collection of data through the use of questionnaire from a sizable population (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007).

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study was all the 544 teachers (218 males and 326 females) in the area of study. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw 218 teachers (87 males and 131 females) for the study.

Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, titled: "Digital skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery".

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the items in the instrument yielded a coefficient value of 0.76, using Cronbach's alpha statistic.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collected from the participants with the help of some research assistants were analysed using Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test. Mean and Standard Deviation were employed to answer the research questions and t-test were employed to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Decision on the research questions based on the cluster mean score in real limit value of numbers to answer the questions relation to the real limits of numbers on a four-point scale as Little Possessed (LP) 1.00 – 1.49, Moderately Possessed (MP) 1.50 – 2.49, Greatly Possessed (GP) 2.50 – 3.49 and Very Greatly Possessed (VGP) 3.50 – 4.00. The hypotheses of no significant difference were upheld where the t-calculated value is less then t-table value and otherwise rejected.

Results

Answering Research Questions and Testing Null Hypothesis

Research Question 1: What are the computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Computer Application Skills Possessed by Secondary School Teachers for Effective Instructional Delivery Based on Gender.

		Male		Female				
S/N	Items	$\bar{X}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{X}_2$	SD_2	$\bar{X}g$	SDg	Remarks
1.	Ability to boot computer and switch on the accessories.	3.09	0.96	3.02	0.89	3.05	0.92	Possessed
2.	Ability to connect basic computer components.	3.14	0.92	3.08	0.88	3.11	0.90	Possessed
3.	Ability to use the computer keyboards/mouse efficiently.	3.22	1.32	2.18	1.25	2.22	1.28	Not Possessed
4.	Ability to install computer programmes and software.	2.38	1.28	2.30	1.27	2.34	1.27	Not Possessed
5.	Ability to store and retrieve documents in the computer for instructional activities.	2.30	1.36	2.23	1.29	2.26	1.32	Not Possessed
6.	Ability to open programmes from the start menu.	3.08	0.92	3.06	1.01	3.07	0.96	Possessed
7.	Ability to close the file or folder after use.	3.05	0.93	2.98	1.24	3.01	1.08	Possessed
8.	Ability to shut down computer after use.	3.25	0.86	3.20	0.97	3.22	0.91	Possessed
9.	Ability to disengage computer and accessories from power supply.	3.29	0.75	3.24	1.02	3.26	0.88	Possessed
	Cluster mean	2.86	1.05	2.80	0.97	2.83	0.99	Possessed

Note. X_1=Male Teachers, X_2= Female Teachers, Xg=Grand Mean.

Table 1 showed that computer appreciation skills possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State have the Mean scores ranging from 3.02 to 3.29. Meanwhile, items 3, 4, and 5 had the mean scores ranged from 2.18 to 2.44 and Standard Deviation of 1.25 to 1.36 respectively, which indicated that three items of computer appreciation skills were not possessed by teachers. However, the cluster Mean of 2.83 and Standard Deviation of 0.99 revealed that the respondents were not far from each other in their responses and from Mean.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Differences between Male and Female Teachers on Computer Application Skills Possessed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary Schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Variables	$\overline{X}$	SD	N	df	t-calculated	t-tabulated	Decision
Male Teachers	2.86	1.05	87	216	0.42	1.96	Accepted
Female Teachers	2.80	0.97	131				

Note. $\overline{X}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 2 showed that the calculated t-value is 0.42 while the t- critical value is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant and at 216 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on computer application skills possessed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Research Question 2: What are PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the PowerPoint Presentation Skills Possessed by Secondary School Teachers for Effective Instructional Delivery Based on Gender.

S/N	Item statement	Male X_1	SD_1	Female X_2	SD_2	Grand X_g	SD_g	Remark
10.	Ability to create a slide show.	2.41	1.34	2.35	1.26	2.38	1.30	Not Possessed
11.	Ability to insert lesson contents including graphs and charts in a slideshow.	2.45	1.29	2.39	1.22	2.42	1.25	Not Possessed
12.	Ability to add animations and transitions to make the instructional contents more enticing.	2.40	1.29	2.35	1.22	2.37	1.25	Not Possessed
13.	Ability to design the slideshows.	2.41	1.20	2.37	1.28	2.39	1.24	Not Possessed
14.	Ability to add background in a slideshow for effective presentation of instructional content.	2.34	1.27	2.31	1.23	2.32	1.25	Not Possessed
	Cluster Mean	2.40	1.27	2.35	1.24	2.37	1.25	Not Possessed

Note. X_1=Male Teachers, X_2= Female Teachers, Xg=Grand Mean.

Table 3 indicated the PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. The Table revealed that item 10 to 14 had their Mean scores ranging from 2.21 to 2.45 and Standard Deviation of 1.20 to 1.34 respectively. The Mean values of each items were below 2.50, which indicated that the five items were the PowerPoint presentation skills not possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. Meanwhile, the Grand Mean of 2.37 and Standard Deviation of 1.25 revealed that the respondents were not far from each other in their responses and from Mean.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on PowerPoint presentation skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Differences between Male and Female Teachers on PowerPoint Presentation Skills Possessed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary Schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Variables	X	SD	N	df	t-calculated	t-tabulated	Decision
Male Teachers	2.40	1.27	87	216	0.29	1.96	Accepted
Female Teachers	2.35	1.24	131				

Note. $\overline{X}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 4 indicated that the calculated t-value is 0.29 while the t- critical value is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant and at 216 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on PowerPoint skills possessed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Research Question 3: What are the Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Internet Skills Possessed by Secondary School Teachers for Effective Instructional Delivery Based on Gender.

		Male		Female				
S/N	Items	X_1	SD_1	X_2	SD_2	Xg	SDg	Remarks
15.	Ability to download files from internet for teaching and learning.	3.06	0.89	2.98	0.83	3.02	0.86	Possessed
16.	Ability to save and organize files for various software applications.	2.44	1.36	2.40	1.31	2.42	1.33	Not Possessed
17.	Ability to subscribe to network of choice to acquire data bundle.	3.02	0.92	2.92	0.83	2.97	0.87	Possessed
18.	Ability to choose a suitable connection method to access the Internet.	2.48	1.31	2.45	1.28	2.46	1.29	Not Possessed
19.	Ability to use basic browser facilities for different browsers.	2.42	1.29	2.41	1.28	2.41	1.28	Not Possessed

20.	Ability to use the internet for basic research.	2.98	0.87	2.97	0.97	2.97	0.92	Possessed
21.	Ability to use Blogs and other forms of web communication; such as email, Polycom, online discussions.	2.44	1.28	2.42	1.33	2.43	1.30	Not Possessed
22.	Ability to use internet services such as: internet relay, chat, video conferencing to connect with students.	2.38	1.28	2.32	1.24	2.35	1.26	Not Possessed
	Cluster Mean	2.65	1.15	2.60	1.13	2.62	1.14	Possessed

Note. X_1=Male Teachers, X_2= Female Teachers, Xg=Grand Mean.

Table 5 showed the internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. The Table revealed that items 15, 17, 20 and 21 had the Mean scores ranging from 2.60 to 3.06 and Standard Deviation of 0.83 and 0.97 respectively. The Mean values of each items were above 2.50, which indicated that the 4 items were possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. Also, items 18, 19, 21 and 22 had the Mean scores ranging from 2.32 and 2.48 and Standard Deviation of 1.24 and 1.36 respectively. The Mean values of each items were below 2.50, which indicated that the 4 items were not possessed by teachers for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. Meanwhile, the Grand Mean of 2.63 and Standard Deviation of 1.14 revealed that the respondents were not far from each other in their responses and from Mean.

Research Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Differences between Male and Female Teachers on Internet Skills Possessed for Effective Instructional Delivery in Senior Secondary Schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Variables	X	SD	N	df	t-calculated	t-tabulated	Decision
Male Teachers	2.65	1.15	87	216	0.31	1.96	Accepted
Female Teachers	2.60	1.13	131				

Note. $\overline{X}$ = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 6 indicated that the calculated t-value is 0.31 while the t- critical value is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant and at 216 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on Internet skills possessed for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State.

Discussions

The findings of the study on research question one revealed that the computer application skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of

Abia State includes the abilities to boot computer and switch on the accessories, connect basic computer components, open programmes from the start menu, close the file or folder after use shut down computer after use and disengage computer and accessories from power supply. Also, the corresponding hypothesis test indicated that there is no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on the computer appreciation skills possessed for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. Consequently, this finding conforms to the study of Emmanuel (2022) who found that ICT skills such as computer appreciation skills are required by teachers to operate computer for the effective teaching of Basic Electronics. The finding also conforms to the study of Opie and Oko-Ngaji (2021) who found that the level of ICT competence of science teachers was significantly below the expected minimum competency level.

The findings of the study on research question two indicated that teachers did not possess PowerPoint presentation skills for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. Also, the corresponding hypothesis test indicated that there was no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on PowerPoint presentation skills for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. The finding is in harmony with the study of Onipede, Lawal, and Samuel (2020) who reported that teachers in senior secondary schools needed training in Power Point for efficient teaching in senior secondary schools in Ekiti State. Also, Mehari, David and Bernard (2020) found that majority of Biology teachers did not have sufficient computer skills to integrate ICT in teaching and learning practices.

The findings of the study on research question three revealed that the Internet skills possessed by secondary school teachers for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State includes the abilities to download files from internet for teaching and learning in physics, subscribe to network of choice to acquire data bundle and use the internet for basic research. Also, the corresponding hypothesis test indicated that there was no significant difference between the Mean ratings of male and female teachers on Internet skills for effective instructional delivery in Umuahia Education Zone of Abia State. The findings agree with the study of Obiekwe and Obadigie (2019) which revealed that principals of secondary schools in Anambra state need internet/networking competency for administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Conclusions

It was concluded that digital skills have globally become one of the strategies for enhancing instructional delivery in schools since it helps both students and teachers alike. Apart from enabling students to expand their learning possibilities, it also improves teacher efficiency, give teachers access to more information and allows teachers to modify their teaching techniques to suit the learning concepts to be taught. Consequently, the findings revealed that teachers possessed some computer appreciation skills, but did not possessed PowerPoint presentation skills and as such possessed some few Internet skills. Thus, training and retraining of teachers on digital skills are required to enhance effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools in Abia State.

Recommendations

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

1. Government of Abia State through the Ministry of Education should endeavour to provide their teachers with adequate training to upscale teachers' digital skills on computer appreciation skills for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools.
2. Teachers should be given opportunity to participate in workshops programme to develop their proficiency in power point preparation and presentation skills for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools for global competitiveness.
3. There is need for teachers to avail themselves to acquire adequate skills on the use of Internet for effective instructional delivery in senior secondary schools for global competitiveness.

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ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES' STRIKE ACTIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The present study has investigated the role of academic staff union of universities' (ASUU) strike actions on students' academic activities in AAU, Ekpoma, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design to examine the influence of ASUU strike on students' academic activities in a State Public University in Nigeria. The study participants consist of 4,987 undergraduates of the 2023/2024 academic session. A sample of 350 students, representing 20 percent of the entire population was used for the study. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, which was subjected to a content validity. The reliability of the questionnaire was performed using a split-half method. A Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to calculate the internal consistencies of the items in the instrument, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.78. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyzed the research question and test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that ASUU strike actions has a significant influence on students' academic activities in AAU, Ekpoma. The findings of the study further confirmed that strike actions destabilize the calendar of universities education in Nigeria. The disruption affects the followings, curriculum implementation, quality of lesson delivery, period of graduation, hampered students' performance and quality of education in the country. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that ASUU strike actions has a significant influence on students' academic activities.

Keywords: ASUU, Academic Activities, Strike, Students, Students Learning, State Public Universities

Introduction

Education is undoubtedly the greatest instrument which man has devised for his own progress. It is a salient tool or instrument for societal reconstruction, transformation, growth, sustainable development and the maintenance of good life. However, the dispute between Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Government has in one way or the other affected the goal of Education in Nigeria for over three decades. The persistent ASUU strikes in Nigeria have disrupted school academic activities, left academic activities of universities disjointed and distract the normal learning process (Kazeem & Ige 2015). The instability in school calendar through strike elongate study period and hamper their academic activities (Olusegun, 2019). Despite the importance of stability on school calendar, the incessant strikes action in the country has become worrisome and destabilized the programme of educational sector. Disruptions in academic programmes serve as non-motivational factor to the students, which discourages them from learning.

An effective learning or an enhanced academic performance is achieved by the successful covering of the course outline before the examination (Odubela, 2017). The quality and quantity of students' learning determined their individual study habit (Maliki & Ekpekin-Ekanem, 2016). During strike actions, some students may engage themselves in unproductive activities such as sexual immorality, cyber scam, pool betting, playing video games, gossips, watching films and reading comic materials for entertainment purposes rather than reading the school notes. These strike actions always lead to disruption of academic calendar and programme, which may expose students to disjointed learning and encourage poor study habit among students (Erasmus, 2022). The idling young youths at home could cause security issues and problems (Arukaino, 2013). The way a stimulus excites or influences on an individual would trigger his/her responses (Isangedighi, 2016). These assertions are indications that students may lose the skill for preparedness and readiness to learn at the time of the strike. Hence, their educational attainment becomes hindered.

The disruption of academic programme occasioned by strike action breeds disappointment, frustration, emotional and psychological trauma, unpreparedness on the part of the students and lack of motivation, which sum up to a non-conducive environment for active learning in Nigerian Universities, a situation that dampens human development (Odubela, 2017). However, dedicated attention has not been given to the impact of strike actions on academic activities of students in Nigerian Universities. Public universities have become ineffective because of strike over the years. The aim of this present study was to examine the influence of ASUU strike on students' academic activities in a State Public University in Nigeria. The question bothering the authors of this present study at this juncture is that does ASUU strike have any influence on students' learning in a State Public University in Nigeria? The outcomes of this study could help the government to develop actions such as organizing meetings and interaction that could help the students in the development of more interests in academic activities. The findings of this study would provide policy makers a reference point in curriculum review as well formulate other educational policies where necessary.

Academic Staff Union of Universities

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is recognized as Union whose primary assignments are instructional delivery, research and public service (Abiodun-Oyebanjo, 2015). The salient role and impact of academic staff in the development of higher institutions cannot be underestimated because they are the implementer of the instruction in education institutions (Ogunode, Jegede & Musa, 2021). Professional skills of academic staff include excellent interpersonal, oral/written communication skills; ability to conduct high quality research which is reflected in the authorship of high quality; publications, or other research outputs, in the areas of computer science; the ability to manage time and work to strict deadlines as well as the ability to teach, and of course, to supervise the academic work of Undergraduates, Masters, and Doctoral students (Ogunode, Jegede, & Musa, 2021).

The Academic Staff Union of Universities was formed in the year 1978. Its predecessor, the Nigerian Association of University Teachers was formed in 1965. ASUU covers all registered academic staff members in all the Public Federal and State Universities in the country. The union has been active in struggles against the military regime during the 1980s. In 1988, the union organized a national strike to obtain fair wages and University Autonomy. As a result, ASUU was proscribed on 7th August, 1988 and all its property seized. It was allowed to resume activities in 1990, but after another strike was again banned on 23rd August, 1992. However, an agreement was reached on 3rd September, 1992 that met several of the union's demands including the right of workers to collective bargaining. ASUU organized further strikes in 1994 and 1996, protesting against the dismissal of University academic staff by the Sani Abacha Military Regime.

Strike Actions

Strike action is a period when no work is done because of disagreement over wage, promotion, hours of work or other conditions of employment (Idogho, 2016). It could be seen as an effort by employees to withhold work so that the employer will make greater concessions at the bargaining table. Strike action is a major bargaining weapon used by the labour union. It is varied from economic strike, where the employees stop work until the demand for better condition of employment is met, to sit-down strike, where employees strike but remain at work place. Strikes are too often a weapon of first rather than last resort.

Strike is the refusal to work as protest for inadequate service or poor condition (Edinyang & Ubi, 2018). In the education sector, teachers' strike can be compared to students' examination malpractice, corruption and other social vices in the society. Strike is a social ill not different from corruption because it eats into students' time which makes it difficult for students to be fully and properly 'baked' within the designated educational time frame. As a result, graduates or 'products' that are ill-equipped in both character and learning are turned out to the society (Edinyang & Ubi, 2018).

Strike as a temporary stoppage of work aimed at forcing the employers to accept employees demand. It is a collective organized, cessation or slowdown of work by employees, to force acceptance of their demands by the employer. The legality of the strike action requires: approval by the majority of employees by ballot; independent verification to ascertain the majority support the vote; the notice of impending strike must be given to employer in advance; the employer must be provided with the result of the ballot; final notice to embark on the strike must be issued to the employer (Business Dictionary, 2015). Strike is the most visible and controversial form of collective action in the event of a labour dispute (International Labour Organisation, 2016).

Generally, ASUU uses strike as a means to force the Government to respect the demands of the Union. Almost all the past Heads of State and Presidents of the Federal Republic of Nigeria between 1988 and 2022 have been compelled by the ASUU through strike to meet their demands. Strike action is an endemic problem facing the administration of Public Universities in Nigeria (Ogunode, 2020). Nigerian Public Universities are known for continuous strike actions by different union groups within the system. The actions are frustrating the administration and efforts of Public Universities in Nigeria. The reasons for the strike actions by Union Groups included underfunding of the Public Universities, inadequate supply of infrastructural facilities, and poor implementation of agreements reached with union groups, and poor working conditions. Continuous strike actions in Public Universities has caused disruption in the academic programme, poor quality of education, bad image for universities, poor ranking internationally, and poor patronage of Public Universities in Nigeria.

Causes of Strike Actions in Public Universities

There are many causes of strike actions in Nigerian Public Universities which includes: poor funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, the use of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS), inconsistent payment of salaries, poor conditions of Service, political interference in University management, and poor implementation of agreements reached. Poor salaries and unstable payment of earned allowances is among the major reasons public university workers most times go on strikes (Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede, 2022; Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022; Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran & Ibidiran, 2022). ASUU developed and offered an alternative payment system, known as: The University Transparency Account System (UTAS) to meet the transparency and accountability requirements lacking in IPPIS. Poor conditions of service and lack of autonomy have also contribute to strikes in Nigerian Public Universities (Odim, Annastashia & Solomon, 2018). Another major causes of strike actions by different union groups in the Nigerian higher institutions are the non-implementation of the agreement reached with the government. But till date this agreement has not been honoured by successive Government (Lawan & Ogunode, 2021).

Academic Staff Union of Universities Strike Actions and Students Academic Activities

Strike actions have great implication on academic research in education. Academic research is an integral aspect of education because of its role in revamping and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in education. Once there is incessant strike action, students and researchers may not be motivated to go into academic research. During this period, research students find it difficult to gain access to their supervisors and to even find students to administer research instruments to. This has a way of negatively affecting the volume of research works and thereby leading to a state of comatose in education research. Incessant strike actions may not be too healthy for the equipment and facilities used in the teaching and learning.

What makes strike a nightmare is its frequency and on that note affects the academic year, which was already disrupted early in the year (Albert, 2015). It is pitiable how students are the scapegoat of the situation and nothing is dohne to salvage their conditions. Constant or incessant strike interfering with students' learning and education creates a systemic self-destruction mechanism in education and character building. The college cannot condone industrial action that will influence on the quality of our students' education (Crawford, 2018). Families are suffering and sharing in this distress. Mothers and wives are concerned about the present situation and the consequences to our children who will be leaders of tomorrow and the social and economic decline of our beloved country (Fatunde, 1996). It seems that everyone, even the system and society, have their share of the consequences of university strike in the long run. Obviously, when students are poorly educated at university level, they are ill equipped to assume leadership and are exposed to crime and dangerous conditions that will inevitably destroy the system. As a consequence, the system is generating uneducated-graduates within the system capable of self-destruction in the form of social chaos.

An academic institution disrupted with so many strikes cannot produce quality education. The time that is to be spent learn and carrying out research is spent in crisis and conflict, yet strikes take place more than once in every four years. While quoting the verdict of International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Governor of Ekiti State (one of the States in the South-West, Nigeria), recently lamented that a sizeable number of graduates in Nigeria are half-baked and un-employable in a formal employment setting. (Ige, 2018). This is a case of bad system producing a bad product. This however would continue to be the trend in Nigeria's higher education system as long as strikes continue to disrupt academic calendars and activities. Learning activities in Universities has been made irregular as students may have forgotten what they have learnt before the disruption of an academic session upon their resumption to school. Memory is lost if what is being learnt is not reactivated over time. Statistical reports have shown that majority of failures in University are recorded in examinations taken immediately after students return from a long break. The situation witnessed in the University academics has resulted in the turning out of half-baked graduates into the labour market. These half-baked produced cannot live up to expectation in their various chosen professions. However, several undergraduates die in road accidents during the period of the strikes in an attempt to visit friends to vitiate boredom and idleness (Ogunode, Ugochukwu & Iroegbu, 2022).

It is a well-established fact that education is geared towards skill acquisition; and for one to be efficient and proficient in the field of education, there must be functional equipment and facilities on ground. Once there is strike action, the equipment and facilities are abandoned and they are not maintained in line with the guidelines for maintaining equipment and facilities. Most of the facilities begin to wear out or depreciate. Some of these facilities need to be cleaned and oiled from time to time to avoid rusting or depreciation (Ogunode, Akinjobi & Musa, 2022).

Academic Staff Union of Universities Strike Actions and School Curricula

The financial and other costs of university education in Nigeria treats to the future of literacy campaign in the country. Further, the recurrent strike actions by academic unions have discourages both current students and admission seekers. ASUU strike actions have usually affected the students in a number of ways. This includes but not limited to lack of opportunities to make up for lost times and inadequate implementation of curriculum (Adesulu, 2018).

Strike actions render both students and lecturers emotionally and psychologically unstable (Isangedighi, 2017; Ibrahim, 2015). Strike action usually prolongs students' academic years and most of the students end up missing the Federal Government Compulsory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programme as a result of over age. ASUU strike usually has a culminating effect on programmes, and other important Bodies not limited to National Youths Service Corps (NYSC), Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), National Examination Council (NECO) and West African Examination Council (WAEC). The academic calendar on the other hand, does not get exhausted, learners become half-baked as a consequence, and in the end there is a mismatch between what the society demands from education and what education supplies to the society. This further has an effect on national development (Ogunode, Ugochukwu & Jegede, 2022).

Strike actions often times bring about disruption in the institution's academic calendar. Once there is strike action, it will give room for calendar adjustment which will inevitably affect the smooth running of Technical education programme in the country (Adesina, 2018). Once there is strike action, institutions/schools are forced to close down and there will be a temporary stoppage of teaching and learning activities in the concerned institutions. This temporary refusal of lecturers to work will in turn result in developing and redesigning new academic calendar in order to make up for the period. Due to this strike action, students may not be able to complete their academic work within the prescribed period as stated in the prospectus. For instance, a 4-year degree course may take more than 4 years due to the strike action as it is currently being experienced in the country. The skills acquired by education graduates are also greatly affected by the incessant strike actions in Nigeria (Edinyang & Ubi, 2018).

Methods

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive survey design to examine the influence of ASUU strike on students' academic activities in a State Public University in Nigeria. This survey design was considered appropriate because of opinions of a large sample was sought for in their natural context in order to solicit for inference.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The study participants consist of all the 4,987 undergraduates of the 2023/2024 academic session (Source: The Academic Planning Unit). A sample of 350 students, representing 20 percent of the entire population was used for the study.

Validation and Reliability of Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection in the present study, which was accorded content validation. The reliability of the questionnaire was carried out using a split-half method. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to calculate the internal consistencies of the items in the instrument, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.78.

Data Collection and Analysis

A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were dully administered on the respondents with the help of research assistants who were briefed on the procedure to follow. The questionnaire was filled and retrieved for data analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyzed the research question and test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question: Does ASUU strike influence students' learning in AAU, Ekpoma?

Table 1: Influence of ASUU strike on Students' Learning in AAU, Ekpoma

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike may affect students' academic activities	21 (6%)	220 (62.9%)	9 (2.6%)	10(2.9%)
2	Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike could hinder students quality learning	230 (65.7%)	19(5.4%)	2(0.6%)	9(2.6%)
3	Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike may encourage poor study habit among students	2 (0.6%)	240 (68.6%)	10(2.9%)	8(2.3%)
4	Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike can affect conducive environment for active learning	188(53.7%)	60(17.1%)	3(0.9%)	9(2.6%)
5	Academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike can affect effective learning process	5 (1.4%)	245(70%)	5(1.4%)	5(1.4%)
6	Incessant strike actions may increase to stress level on lecturers for quality teaching and learning.	42 (12%)	200 (57.1%)	11(3.1%)	7(2%)
7	Incessant strike action may lead to poor education quality.	62 (17.7%)	188(53.7%)	7(2%)	3(0.9%)
8	Incessant strike may hinder motivation for academic research	197 (56.3%)	53 (15.1%)	3(0.9%)	7(2%)

Note. SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree,

Table 1 showed that frequencies and percentages of responses on influence of ASUU strike on students learning in AAU, Ekpoma. Result reveals that that respondents were of the opinion that ASUU strike may affect students' academic activities (94.0%); ASUU strike could hinder students quality learning (87.4%); ASUU strike may encourage poor study habit among students (89.2%); ASUU strike can affect non-conducive environment for active learning (95.2%), ASUU strike can affect effective learning process (94.4%); incessant strike actions may increase to stress level on lecturers for quality teaching and learning (96.2%) and incessant strike may hinder motivation for academic research.

Testing of Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis: ASUU strike does not significantly influence on students' learning in AAU, Ekpoma, was tested at 0.05 confidence level of significance.

Table 2: Linear Regression on the Significant Influence of ASUU Strike on Students' Learning in AAU, Ekpoma.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	Sig.
ASUU Strike					
	260	3.1707	0.32	259	0.063
Students' Learning					

One sample t-test applied to find out if ASUU strike has influence on students learning activities in AAU, Ekpoma. As P < α value of P (0.063) is higher than the level of significance α (0.05), so our null hypothesis that ASUU strike has no significant influence on students learning in AAU, Ekpoma is rejected. Therefore, it was concluded that AAU strike has a significant influence on students' learning in AAU, Ekpoma.

Discussions

The result showed that ASUU strike actions has a significant influence on students' academic activities in AAU, Ekpoma. This finding agreed with the study of Odubela (2017), who stated that an effective learning of students is achieved by successful covering of the course outline timely and before the examination. This is rarely achieved with strike action in place. This is true because disruption in academic programme caused by strike action breeds disappointment, frustration, emotional and psychological trauma, unpreparedness on the part of the students and lack of motivation, which sum up to non-conducive environment for effective academic activities in Nigerian universities; a situation that dampens human development.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, it was concluded that ASUU strike has a significant influence on students' academic activities in AAU, Ekpoma. The study confirmed that strike actions destabilized calendar of universities education in Nigeria. The disruption affected the followings: curriculum implementation, quality of lesson delivery, period of graduation, hampered students' performance and quality of education in the country. Strike actions make planning for universities' academic and nonacademic activities to be very difficult. Everyone must play his or her role by abiding to agreements signed. Educational managers face the challenge of re-planning educational activities, re-preparing the school calendar, reassigning old task to new staff and not achieving certain long term goals due to the prolonged un-accomplishment as a result of the strike.

Recommendations

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

1. The government should ensure that all agreements signed and reached with the ASUU in public universities were implemented as agreed.

2. The ASUU members in public universities should embrace Productive Dialogue rather than employing strikes to resolve issues at stake

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EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTINUOUS PROCESS STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN UNIVERSITIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study examined the effectiveness of continuous process strategy for the improvement of operational excellence in Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study answered four research questions. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 7627 academic and non-academic staff of three (3) Public Universities out of the four (4) in Lagos State. A sample of 366 was drawn using Taro Yamane's formula. The proportionate sampling technique was employed to select 366 respondents from three Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire survey. 279 copies of questionnaires were retrieved, representing a 76.2 percent response rate. The research questions were analysed using Mean and Standard Deviation. The findings revealed that relationship management strategies such as continuous improvement process, enterprise alignment, cultural enablers and organizational learning culture have improved operational excellence to a moderate extent, while environmental analysis and organizational control system were improved to a low extent. The study, therefore, concluded that there is still need for the implementation of effective relationship management strategies for the improvement of operational excellence of universities in Lagos State. The authors recommended, among others, that Universities should endeavour to encourage employees to identify areas for improvement and provide training and resources in order to support continuous learning.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Operational Excellence, Relationship Management, Universities, Strategies. Continuous Process.

Introduction

Universities play a critical role in advancing knowledge, fostering innovation, and developing human capital, all of which are essential for national development. In Nigeria, the University education is considered as an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2004). Every researcher and scholar irrespective of the school of taught agrees to the fact that education is the bedrock of economic, business, vocational, political and technological development of any nation whether the developed and or the less developed (Ogunnaike & Damiduro, 2014). In all human societies, education is meant to pass on to the new generations the existing knowledge of their physical environment, to introduce individuals to the organization of society, teach them skills for performing their jobs and enjoying their leisure, as well as to inculcate sound moral values in them for their own benefit and that of the society. Thus, there is a symbiotic relationship between the education industry and society at large. Education derives inspiration and nourishment from society and in turn, its output contributes to the growth, renewal and development of society. Tertiary education, especially

University education, is relevant for the training of highly skilled specialists in the fields of arts, humanity, science, vocational and technology at various segments of the higher institutions (Olubadewo, 2016). The objectives of tertiary education as stipulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria in its education policy document emphasize the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies, both mentally and physically as means for the individual to be self-reliant and also contribute to the development of the society (FRN, 2014).

Tertiary education is the education given to an individual after post basic education in institutions such as the universities, the polytechnics, the colleges of education and those institutions offering correspondence courses at the tertiary level stated that, tertiary institutions (Universities) worldwide, are regarded as the citadel of knowledge, the fountain of intellectualism, the most appropriate ground for the incubation of leaders of tomorrow. The researcher further stated that the tertiary institutions are knowledge and value providers that they stand or fail in their abilities or inabilities to deliver on the criteria laid by the FRN in 2013. This, according to Nwankwo (2017), explains why merit has been the watch word in the university education system - a system where an undergraduate must first be certified worthy in character and learning before being graduated into the labor market. Society depends on institutions of learning to produce well-adjusted individuals who can fit properly into the human environment. Tertiary institutions, especially the Universities as higher educational institutions, are statutorily charged with the responsibility of producing high level manpower or human capital capable of piloting the affairs of the society. As Allports (2017) puts it, learning at the university level could be described as effective if it results in bringing about the expected transformation in the attitudes, skills and knowledge of the recipient(s) or student(s) over a period. According to the researcher, effective learning at the university level should result in producing graduates who are adequately informed, technically equipped and morally and ethically prepared to become agents and good citizens who would be selfless leaders in society. Education derives inspiration and nourishment from society and in turn, its output contributes to the growth, renewal and development of society.

Operational excellence in higher education institutions is essential to meeting academic goals, enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, and achieving sustained organizational growth. Operational excellence, a concept originally associated with manufacturing and business environments, has increasingly gained relevance in higher education. It involves optimizing processes to improve efficiency, reduce waste, and provide high-quality services. When applied to universities, operational excellence can improve student satisfaction, support faculty productivity, and enhance administrative efficiency (Achumba & Azoroh, 2021). The concept of operational excellence goes beyond using individual tools and techniques. It incorporates Lean principles with organizational culture and management at a strategic level. Operational excellence has been defined because of an enterprise-wide practice of ideal behaviors based on the correct principles or simply as a state where every employee can see the flow of value to the stakeholder and fix that flow before it breaks down. Although these definitions may seem broad, they are the correct principles categorized under six dimensions; Cultural Enablers, Continuous Process Improvement, Enterprise Alignment, Environmental Analysis, Organizational Learning Culture and Organizational Control System that are fundamental to achieving Operational Excellence. To achieve operational excellence, not only do organizations have to implement the correct principles, but the principles must also be deeply embedded within the organization's culture. The culture of excellence ensures that everyone within the organization knows the 'why' behind the how and the what. It is also known as the continuous improvement of processes to deliver superior services and outcomes for all stakeholders (Dahlgaard & Dahlgaard-Park, 2006).

Relationship management, in this context, involves strategically engaging with various stakeholders such as students, faculty, administrative staff, alumni, and external partners to foster positive, mutually beneficial relationships, commitment, loyalty, and cooperation, all of which are necessary for achieving organizational goals (Kotler & Fox, 1995). Strong relationship management strategies can enhance operational performance in numerous ways, from improving communication channels to ensuring smoother cooperation and greater commitment to institutional goals (Palmatier et al., 2006). For instance, building collaborative relationships with faculty and administrative staff can improve teamwork, facilitate resource sharing, and lead to streamlined decision-making processes, all of which are vital for operational excellence in educational institutions (Gronroos, 2011). Relationship management plays an essential role in operational excellence by fostering trust and collaboration among stakeholders, which are necessary for effective governance and decision-making. Studies on relationship management in various sectors indicate that strong stakeholder relationships contribute to better organizational outcomes, including improved service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Studies in higher education have demonstrated the positive impact of relationship management on operational effectiveness. For example, research shows that institutions that prioritize stakeholder engagement and collaborative relationships often experience improved performance, greater satisfaction among students and staff, and enhanced institutional reputation (Arnett, German, & Hunt, 2003). However, there remains limited research specific to Nigerian universities, where unique social, economic, and cultural dynamics might influence the effectiveness of relationship management strategies. Given the growing pressure on Nigeria universities to meet both local and international standards, it is crucial to understand how relationship management can help overcome existing operational challenges and achieve excellence (Ajadi, 2010). Also, in the Nigeria context, where resources are often limited, and administrative challenges are prevalent, relationship management strategies may be particularly crucial for optimizing performance and supporting long-term success (Aina, 2010). In the context of higher education, relationship management strategies are crucial for building positive interactions between the university and stakeholders. These strategies often include effective communication, collaboration, and engagement mechanisms that encourage the sharing of information and resources (Donaldson & O'Toole, 2007). For Universities in Lagos State, implementing these strategies could improve operational efficiency by aligning stakeholders with the institution's mission and objectives. Additionally, it could foster an inclusive culture that supports continuous improvement and encourages a more cohesive and supportive academic community (Afolabi, 2020).

In Lagos State, Nigeria, universities face unique operational challenges, including resource limitations, complex administrative structures, and a diverse range of stakeholders. These issues often hinder universities' ability to achieve operational excellence. To address these challenges, effective relationship management has emerged as a crucial strategy, as it can strengthen internal and external collaboration, enhance service quality, and promote stakeholder satisfaction (Gummesson, 2008). In recent years, universities worldwide have increasingly recognized the importance of relationship management as a critical component of operational excellence. Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria, face numerous operational challenges that hinder the delivery of high-quality education and services. Among these are limited funding, bureaucratic delays, poor communication channels, and the difficulty of maintaining robust engagement with diverse stakeholders. These issues contribute to inefficiencies, lowered morale among faculty and students, and a general decline in service quality and reputation (Oladipo, 2015). Research suggest that effective relationship management strategies could help alleviate these issues by promoting trust, enhancing information flow, and aligning stakeholders with institutional goals, ultimately leading to operational excellence (Pansiri, 2008). However, there is limited research on how these strategies specifically impact Nigerian universities, particularly those in Lagos State.

Strategic management is the process where managers establish an organization's / institutions' long-term direction, set the specific performance objectives, develop strategies to achieve these objectives and undertake to execute the chosen action plans. Strategic management is a combination of strategy formulation and strategy implementation, it is the highest level of managerial activity, and it provides overall direction to the institution. The strategic management function directly involves all managers with line authority at the corporate, line-of-business, line-of-business, functional area and major operating departmental levels. David (2020) defined strategic management as a set of managerial decisions and actions that helps an organization achieve its objectives and vision. In other words, strategic management is the ability of an institution to be able to look deep into a situation and be able to identify the action suitable to be implemented in order to get to its destination. Hitt et al. (2019) opined that strategic management involves analyzing the organization's internal and external environments, setting strategic goals, and implementing strategies to achieve those goals. Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2017) said strategic management is concerned with the long-term direction and scope of an organization, and involves making strategic choices about markets, resources, and capabilities. From all these definitions, we can see common threads linking all of them. These common threads are decisions, actions, strategies and objectives. According to Fidler (2015), opined that strategic management is significant for institutional progress and it is usually linked to success in the university organization or institutions. This is corroborated by Henry (2018). Strategic management approaches are linked to the success of the university business due to the institution's ability to understand its environment. Such institution will formulate strategies that prepare the institution to best adapt to the ever-changing environment in ways that make it stand out from the competitors. Institution with well implemented strategies in the context of environment is thus competitive.

Managers of the nation's universities are individuals who manage the tertiary institutions and they are responsible for determining the direction to be excellent or otherwise. Abas (2017) stated that without learning the skills of strategic management models or approaches, the school leaders will only realize that they are not involved in anything except crisis management. A school manager that does not have a clear strategic management model will be facing difficulty in managing his/her institution effectively. Strategic management in administration, will impact the institution managers to take initiative to act as a change in controlling the new situation and creating strategies. According to Middlewood and Lumby (2014), in order to improve institutional performance, the principles and practices of strategic management should be exploring and its importance be emphasized among the institution managers. He further argued that strategic management is essential for institutions to achieve their goals and improve performance. According to David (2009), among the problems that are associated with the school administration are bureaucratic attitudes and conflicts that occur among the managers and lecturers, imperfection of the school's infrastructure, personnel management and low student" academic performance, non-conducive school climate and the complication within the administration itself. Institutions are loaded with many problems mainly because of the weak practice of the strategic management approaches.

Strategy are essentials for achieving excellence in education system because they, clarify goals and objectives, guide decision-making, enhance collaboration and coordination, measure progress and evaluate effectiveness. Strategy according to Grant (2020), 'Strategy is the framework of choices that determines an organization's goals, resources, and actions. Strategy can also be term to be a long term direction and scope of an organization, and involves making strategic choices about markets (Johnson et al., 2017). Strategy as a pattern of actions that organizations use to achieve their goals, and can be deliberate or emergent (Mintzberg, 2018). According to Porter (2019), strategy is the creation of unique and valuable position that enables an organization to sustain competitive advantage. Strategy is important for effective resource utilization, better decision-making, enhance institutional effectiveness, supports continuous improvement and many more. Strategy are essentials for achieving excellence in education system because they, clarify goals and objectives, guide decision-making, enhance collaboration and coordination, measure progress and evaluate effectiveness.

The quality of the relationships differentiates one organization from another. Also, because relationships determine the future value of an organization, there is a need to keep a relationship score card that describes the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the relationships (Achumba, 2012). Adopting relationship management effectively tends to give an organization distinctive or comparative advantage over competitors, because it enables them to communicate effectively with the stakeholders and know their needs and wants. It also highlights the reasons why stakeholders continue to patronize the organization's products and services, why some leave the organization, and the strategies to use to manage such relationships effectively. When long-term relationships exist between organizations and stakeholders, the distance between them becomes shorter and the organization benefits from repeat purchase and the goodwill of the stakeholders. (Jackson, 2015; Gronroos, 2015).

Relationship management is intended for building long-term relationship. Relationship management is a system of managing a company's interactions with current and future stakeholders. Relationship Management can be further characterized as a comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining and partnering with selective stakeholders to create superior value for the institution and the stakeholders. Relationship Management is one on one affiliation with the organization and its stakeholders. Organizations has to shift from the old paradigm paralysis of mass production to the new technology of mass customization to meet the pressing demands of the stakeholders. Relationship management strategies refer to the processes and activities used to establish, maintain, and strengthen relationships with customers, suppliers, partners, and other stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits and long-term success. Mason (2015) hold the opinion that, the application of relationship management strategies helps to enhance the operational excellence in an organization in formulation and implementation of goals, objectives and initiatives taken by the organizational leaders or executives based on considerations of resources and an assessment of both internal and external environments in which the organization competes.

Adeleye (2018) highlighted that, in recent years, the application of relationship management strategies by Nigerian Universities has become widespread due to the fact that many institutions now find themselves in circumstances where old methods of planning and management are no longer effective in guaranteeing a steady future. The application of relationship management strategies in order to improve operational excellence in the universities is about developing a good match between an institution's activities and the demands on the environment in which it operates. For Nte (2017), Esy and Tunaid (2020), relationship strategy management focuses on the institution's mission, objectives, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Strategic management is seen as one of the effective management strategies for achieving positive effect in the management of various aspects of higher educational institutions such areas as staff management, institutional performance management, financial management and the student management. In essence, strategic management aims at ensuring effective and efficient management of organization, establishment or institution and strategic management has some approaches.

Continuous process strategy refers to the ongoing improvement and refinement of business processes to achieve efficiency, reduce waste, and increase productivity. Continuous process strategy according to Stephen and David (2020), involves ongoing incremental improvements to existing processes, rather than radical changes or innovations. It is a strategy that focuses on ongoing, incremental improvements to existing processes, leveraging employee knowledge and experience (Kaplan and Norton, 2019). Cultural enabler's according to Schein (2020), are the underlying values, norms, and assumptions that facilitate or hinder organizational change and innovation. Cultural enablers are the shared values, attitudes, and behaviors that support or undermine an organization's ability to adapt and change (Kotter, 2019). According to Yukl (2018), cultural enablers include leadership behaviors, organizational values, and norms that facilitate or hinder effective organizational performance. Cultural enabler plays a very vital role in the improvement of operational excellence. This is designed to help all organizations on their journey towards excellence. This enable the institution to understand the concepts of respect & humility and how these two principles can be brought to life through the creation of its own ideal behaviours.

Enterprise alignment is getting every person in the organization to row in the same direction which makes the organization stronger and allows achievement of better results. According to Kaplan and Norton (2020), enterprise alignment involves integrating strategy, organization, and culture to achieve common goals and objectives. Enterprise alignment involves integrating business strategy, technology, and organizational capabilities to achieve competitive advantage (Davenport, 2018). Enterprise alignment is said to require aligning organizational strategy, culture, and operations to create shared value (Porter and Kramer, 2019). Environmental Analysis assists organizations in defining factors that can influence their business operations. This is a strategic tools used to identify and assess all external and internal elements in a business environment. It examines organizational and industry factors that can positively or negatively affect the business and its success. Environmental analysis involves scanning and evaluating external factors that affect an organization's performance and strategy (Kotler and Keller, 2020). According to Mintzberg and Lampel (2019), Environmental analysis involves understanding the external context in which an organization operates, including market, economic, and social factors. Macmillan and McGrath (2018) Stated that environmental analysis involves identifying and evaluating external opportunities and threats that impact organizational performance.

Despite the benefits of relationship management, the extent to which Nigerian universities employ these strategies effectively is unclear. Oladipo (2018) noted that Universities in Nigeria often struggle with outdated administrative structures that inhibit efficient communication and stakeholder engagement. Additionally, Okebukola (2015) observed that Universities in Nigeria frequently lack a strategic focus on relationship-building, which may impede efforts to achieve operational excellence. Given these challenges, exploring the role of relationship management strategies within the operational context of Public Universities in Lagos State is essential to understand how these strategies can be leveraged to improve institutional performance and service quality. This study, therefore, seeks to ascertain the effectiveness of relationship management strategies as a means of enhancing operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State. By evaluating cultural enablers, continuous process improvement, enterprise alignment, and environmental analysis, that are fundamental to achieving operational excellence, this present research provided the insights into how these institutions can implement targeted strategies to overcome operational challenges and improve their performance.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria, have encountered numerous challenges, which impacted their operational efficiency, quality of service, and overall academic excellence. Among these challenges are inadequate resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, poor stakeholder engagement, and difficulties in fostering productive relationships with students, staff, and external partners. These challenges often lead to reduced service quality, low morale, diminished students' satisfaction, and limited collaboration with external stakeholders, all of which, in turn, hinder the attainment of operational excellence. Absolute use of bureaucracy in the management of tertiary institutions often creates disconnect in the sustainable relationship that should exist among holders of managerial positions, the students, the alumni, and the external partners in the global world. If this precarious situation is left without urgent intervention, it would lead to a decline in students' satisfaction and academic performance, diminish faculty service delivery and staff morale, result in poor alumni relations, and lead to poor reputation and branding of the institution, to mention but a few. Effective relationship management strategies have been identified as key drivers of success across various sectors, enabling organizations to foster engagement, increase loyalty, enhance communication, and improve service delivery. However, in the context of Public Universities, especially in Lagos State, there is a notable gap in understanding how these strategies can be tailored to address the unique needs of educational institutions. This gap includes understanding which relationship management strategies are most impactful for universities, how they can be implemented with existing frameworks, and the extent to which they influence operational outcomes such as efficiency, academic reputation, and stakeholder satisfaction. This present study seeks to address these issues by exploring the effectiveness of relationship management strategies for improvement of operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of the study is to provide insights into the development of effective relationship management strategies that enhance operational excellence in the Universities. Specifically, the study intends to investigate:

1. the influence of continuous process strategy on relationship management strategies.
2. the relationship between cultural enablers and relationship management strategies.
3. the impact of enterprise alignment on relationship management strategies.
4. the effect of environmental analysis on relationship management strategies.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the roles continuous process strategy play in facilitating relationship management?

Research Question 2: What are the roles cultural enablers play in facilitating effective relationship management?

Research Question 3: What are the roles enterprise alignment play in facilitating relationship management strategies?

Research Question 4: What are the roles environmental analysis play in facilitating relationship management strategies?

Methods

Research Design

This present study adopted a descriptive research survey design. This research design is considered appropriate for collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting already existing conditions and other phenomena.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The target population comprised of 7627 all the academic and non-academic staff in three (3) out of the four (4) of the Public Universities (e.g., University of Lagos, Lagos State University, and Lagos State University of Technology), all domiciled in Lagos State, Nigeria. The population involves the entire universe from where the samples or participants were drawn.

Table 1: Total Population of Academic and Non-Academic Staff of Public University in Lagos State.

Categories	LASU	LASUT	UNILAG	Total
Academic	781	245	1285	2311
Non-Academic	2301	647	2368	5316
Total	3082	892	3653	7627

There is a simplified formula used in calculating a sample size: Taro Yamane: Where; n = sample size; N = population size; e= Level of significance, 1 = constant. In this work, the formula proposed by Yamane has been used. In determining the sample size, the following variables were used: Confidence interval = 95 % e = Margin of error = 5%. Proportional allocation formula was applied thus: nh- nNh/N = Where nh = number allocated each class of customers/ participants, n = total sample size Nh = total population of each class of customer/ participants, N = overall respondents that is, total population.

The sample size for this study was 366 participants, which made up of 108 academic staff and 258 non-academic staff. Yamane (1973) statistic was used to determine the sample size. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the academic and non-academic respondents for this study in each sampled University. However, only 279 participants responded. The breakdown of the distribution is shown in the Table below.

Table 2: Population Sample of Academic and Non-Academic Staff of Public Universities.

Categories	LASU	LASUT	UNILAG	Total
Academic	35	12	61	108
Non-Academic	112	32	114	258
Total	147	44	175	366

Results

Research Question 1: What are the roles continuous process strategy play in facilitating relationship management?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Continuous Process Strategy and Facilitating Relationship Management.

S/N	Items	n	Mean	SD
1	Our institution uses direct observations to evaluate the processes.	279	3.12	.673
2	Employees in our institution are empowered to pursue elimination of defects in the processes.	279	3.06	.626
3	In our institution, managers are empowered to stop a process when defect in a process is identified.	279	3.03	.749
4	Our institution takes counter measures to prevent the reoccurrence of defects in the process.	279	3.26	.773
5	In our institution, improvement in our processes is an integral part of daily work.	279	3.33	.650
6	Our institution has effective tools for gathering reliable data.	279	3.16	.690
7	Our institution immediately provides services on stakeholders demand.	279	3.03	.797
8	Services provided by our institution are flexible according to the demand of stakeholders.	279	3.10	.651
9	Our institution continuously monitors deterioration in services in order to maintain standard.	279	3.27	.572
10	Our institution ensures value addition at each step/processes of services.	279	3.15	.699

Table 3 showed that the institutions use direct observations to evaluate the processes with (Mean = 3.12, SD = 0.673), employees in the institutions are empowered to pursue elimination of defects in the processes with (Mean = 3.06, SD = 0.626), in the institutions, managers are empowered to stop a process when defect in a process is identified with (Mean = 3.03, SD = 0.749), the institutions takes counter measures to prevent the reoccurrence of defects in the process with (Mean = 3.26, SD = 0.773), In the institutions, improvement in our processes is an integral part of daily work with (Mean = 3.33, SD = 0.650), the institution has effective tools for gathering reliable data with (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.690), the institutions immediately provides services on stakeholders demand with (Mean = 3.03, SD = 0.797), services provided by the institutions are flexible according to the demand of stakeholders with (Mean = 3.10, SD = 0.651), the institutions continuously monitors deterioration in services in order to maintain standard with (Mean = 3.27, SD = 0.572), the institutions ensures value addition at each step/processes of services with (Mean = 3.15, SD = 0.699). Furthermore, since the reference point is 2, and all the items had their Mean greater than 2.0, hence, continuous process strategy has a role to play in facilitating relationship management in the institutions.

Research Question 2: What are the roles cultural enablers play in facilitating effective relationship management?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Cultural Enablers and Effective Relationship Management.

S/N	Items	n	Mean	SD
1	In our institution, planning process extends respect to the inputs from different levels.	279	3.06	.673
2	In our institution, planning process involves input from different levels of individuals.	279	3.16	.685
3	In our institution, work description is defined for every individual at all levels.	279	3.49	.667
4	In our institution, work description is standardized for every individual at all levels.	279	3.13	.800
5	Our institution encourages employees to adjust personal values to achieve organizational objectives.	279	3.22	.727
6	Our institution defines relevant metrics/data necessary for designated users.	279	2.93	.685
7	In our institution, relationship management initiatives have positively influenced operational excellence in our university.	279	3.13	.809
8	Relationship management strategies are actively implemented in my university to enhance operational processes.	279	3.03	.704
9	In our institution, focus on process is standardized for every individual at all levels.	279	2.94	.854
10	In our institution, all departments are involved in planning process.	279	3.06	.807

Table 4 showed that in the institutions, planning process extends respect to the inputs from different levels with (Mean = 3.06, SD = 0.673), in the institutions, planning process involves input from different levels of individuals with (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.685), in the institutions, work description is defined for every individual at all levels with (Mean = 3.49, SD = 0.667), work description is standardized for every individual at all levels with (Mean = 3.13, SD = 0.800), the institutions encourage employees to adjust personal values to achieve organizational objectives with (Mean = 3.22, SD = 0.727), the institutions defined relevant metrics/data necessary for designated users with (Mean = 2.93, SD = 0.685), relationship management initiatives have positively influenced operational excellence in our University with (Mean = 3.13, SD = 0.809), relationship management strategies are actively implemented to enhance operational processes with (Mean = 3.03, SD = 0.704), focus on process is standardized for every individual at all levels with (Mean = 2.94, SD = 0.854), all departments are involved in planning process with (Mean = 3.06, SD = 0.807). Furthermore, since the reference point is 2.0, and all the statements had their Mean greater than 2.0, hence, there is an enhanced enterprise alignment strategy in the institutions.

Research Question 3: What are the roles enterprise alignment play in facilitating relationship management strategies?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Enterprise Alignment and Relationship Management Strategies.

N/S	Items	n	Mean	SD
1	Our institution demonstrates respect for every individual outside the organization such as stakeholders.	279	3.16	.742
2	Our institution demonstrate respect for every individual within organization.	279	3.12	.623
3	Our institution is concerned about the health of their employees.	279	3.17	.780
4	Our institution is concerned about the safety of their employees.	279	3.16	.789
5	Our institution is careful about rights of social community.	279	3.06	.727
6	Our institution considers trainings as an investment for its future improvements.	279	3.37	.751
7	Our institution considers hands-on exposure of its employees as a future investment.	279	3.10	.747
8	Our institution regularly solicits stakeholders' feedback to improve services.	279	3.13	.682
9	Our institution is concerned about the safety of their community.	279	3.29	.749
10	Our institution demonstrates respect for the communities that host them.	279	3.20	.840

Table 5 showed that the institutions demonstrate respect for every individual outside the organization such as stakeholders with (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.742), the institutions demonstrate respect for every individual within organization with (Mean = 3.12, SD = 0.623), the institutions is concern about the health of their employees with (Mean = 3.17, SD = 0.780), the institutions is concern about the safety of their employees with (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.789), the institutions is careful about rights of social community with (Mean = 3.06, SD = 0.727), the institutions consider trainings as an investment for its future improvements. With (Mean = 3.37, SD = 0.751), the institutions consider hands-on exposure of its employees as a future investment with (Mean = 3.10, SD = 0.747), the institutions regularly solicit stakeholders' feedback to improve services with (Mean = 3.13, SD = 0.682), the institutions are concerned about the safety of their community with (Mean = 3.29, SD = 0.749), and the institutions demonstrate respect for the communities that host them with (Mean = 3.20, SD = 0.840). Furthermore, since the reference point is 2.0, and all statements had their Mean greater than 2.0, hence, enterprise alignment play a role in facilitating relationship management strategies.

Research Question 4: What are the roles environmental analysis play in facilitating relationship management strategies?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Environmental Analysis and Relationship Management Strategies.

S/N	Items	n	Mean	SD
1	Without environmental analysis strategy, it will be difficult to carry out operational excellence by the University authorities.	279	3.53	.622
2	Environmental laws are considered as a service requirement.	279	3.39	.613
3	Environmental regulations are considered as a service requirement.	279	3.50	.568
4	For Universities to improve their operational excellence, they	279	3.80	.404

	must train administrators on the application of environmental analysis.			
5	Environmental analysis strategy is very effective for the improvement of operational excellence.	279	3.49	.772
6	Environmental impacts are considered as a technical characteristic to allow for their correlation with the stakeholder's quality requirement.	279	3.37	.702
7	Environmental standards are considered as a service requirement.	279	3.16	.697
8	Environmental requirements are considered for the entire service.	279	3.23	.617
9	High levels of cash flow gives institutions discretion to provide new service if they wish to.	279	3.14	.887
10	Good leadership improve operational excellence.	279	3.49	.678
11	Good ethical behaviours improve operational excellence.	279	3.46	.728

Table 5 showed that without environmental analysis strategy, it will be difficult to carry out operational excellence by the University authorities with (Mean = 3.53, SD = 0.622), environmental laws are considered as a service requirement with (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.613), environmental regulations are considered as a service requirement with (Mean = 3.50, SD = 0.568), for Universities to improve their operational excellence, they must train administrators on the application of environmental analysis with (Mean = 3.80, SD = 0.404), environmental analysis strategy is very effective for the improvement of operational excellence with (Mean = 3.49, SD = 0.772), environmental impacts are considered as a technical characteristic to allow for their correlation with the stakeholder's quality requirement with (Mean = 3.37, SD = 0.702), environmental standards are considered as a service requirement with (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.697), environmental requirements are considered for the entire service with (Mean = 3.23, SD = 0.617), high levels of cash flow provides institutions discretion to provide new service if they wish to with (Mean = 3.14, SD = 0.887), Good leadership improve operational excellence with (Mean = 3.49, SD = 0.678), and ethical behaviours improve operational excellence with (Mean = 3.46, SD = 0.728). Furthermore, since the reference point is 2.0, and all the items had their Mean greater than 2.0, therefore, environmental analysis play a role in facilitating relationship management strategies in the institutions.

Discussions

The study revealed that continuous process strategy has a role to play in fostering and improving operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent (see Table 2). The study of Hammond and Chen (2023) found that there should be integration of continuous process strategies with operational excellence to ensure that organizations are not only improving their processes but also aligning these improvements with their strategic objectives, it supports the creation of culture of excellence where continuous improvement is a fundamental aspect of daily operations, leading to enhanced overall performance and competitive advantage. The study of Ogunleye and Bello (2017) also found that continuous process strategies resulted in improved resource management and administrative efficiency. The study also showed that enterprise alignment strategy has a role to play in fostering and improving operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent (see Table 3). The study of Afolabi and Olayiwola (2018) found that aligning university strategies with institutional goals significantly improved operational performance. Also, the study of Adewale and Oladipo (2021) showed that effective alignment strategies are crucial for operational success.

The study also disclosed that cultural enablers has a role to play in fostering and improving operational excellence in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria to a moderate extent (see Table 4). The findings from the present study corroborated the study of Schein (2017) who found that cultural enablers' strategies play a crucial role in achieving operational excellence within organizations. The strategies involve fostering an organizational culture that support continuous improvement, employee engagement, and the alignment of individual and organization goals. It also corroborated the study of Ibrahim and Suleiman (2021) who found that cultural enablers', including leadership support and employee involvement, were crucial for achieving operational excellence. The study also disclosed that environmental analysis strategy has a role to play in fostering and improving operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria to a low extent (see Table 5). The study of Nguyen and Phan (2019) dound that the environmental analysis strategies a role to play in fostering and improving operational excellence of Public Universities in Latin America also buttressed this finding. Also, the study of Adebayo and Ojo (2020) attested to the fact that the environmental analysis strategies on the operational performance of Public Universities in Nigeria improves operational excellence.

Conclusion

The authors of the present study concluded that despite the effectiveness of relationship management strategies for the improvement of operational excellence in Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria, there is still a need to build more collaborative relationship, strategies of the Universities should be made know to the stakeholders, the environmental factors that will support the improvement of operational excellence need to be discover. The authors of the present study also concluded that, the relationship management strategies are still greatly not fully implemented and applied in Public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The authors of the present further concluded that the effectiveness of these relationship management strategies would, in turn, lead to the improvement of operational excellence.

Recommendations

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

1. The University should endeavor to encourage employees to identify areas for improvement and provide training and resources to support continuous learning. Also, to collect and analyze data on key performance indicators (KPIs) to identify areas for improvement and measure the effectiveness of continuous process strategy. Also to establish a dedicated Relationship Management Office to oversee the development and implementation of relationship management strategies across various departments and units.
2. The University should endeavor to ensure that all employees understand the university's goals and objectives. Conduct regular stakeholder engagement activities, such as surveys, focus groups, and town hall meetings, to understand the needs and expectations of stakeholders, to involve them in the development of a strategic plan that aligns with the University's vision and mission and to identify areas for improvement.
3. The University should endeavor to promote a culture of respect and inclusion, and provide training and resources to support diversity and inclusion initiatives, also provide training and development programmes for all staff members on relationship management skills, including communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution and also recognize and reward employees who demonstrate the university's values and behaviors.
4. The University should endeavor to monitor trends and changes in the external environment, including demographic, economic, and technological changes. Also, the Universities should identify and mitigate risks that could impact her operations,
5. The University should endeavor to provide training and development opportunities for employees to enhance their skills and knowledge, encourage employees to reflect on their experience and identify areas for improvement and capture and share knowledge and best practices across the university.
6. The University should endeavor to ensure that all employees understand the university's goals and

objectives, measure and evaluate employee performance against clear goals and objectives and ensure that employees are held accountable for their actions and outcomes.

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL-RELATED FACTORS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study examined was to investigate the relationships between school-related factors and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Four research questions were raised to guide the study and three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The research design adopted for the study was a correlation survey research design. The population of the study was 3641 which comprises of all the SS2 students in the 14 public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The sample size of the study was 187 SS2 students selected from the 14 public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The simple random sampling technique was used to the sample of the study. A structured questionnaire, titled "School-Related Factors and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy" was used in gathering data for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts one in Measurement and Evaluation, and two in Counseling Psychology. The reliability coefficient was established by measuring the internal consistencies of the items in the instrument, using Cronbach's Alpha statistics and it yielded a coefficient values of 0.70 for school-related factors and 0.76 for computer science learning self-efficacy. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression was used for data analysis. The results revealed that students demonstrated high levels of self-efficacy on various aspects of computer science, such as confidence in performing tasks and applying knowledge to real-world situations. It was recommended, among others, that government should endeavor to provide professional development programmes for teachers in order to provide opportunities for teachers to posess the necessary skills and knowledge through ongoing professional development opportunities in computer science pedagogy and effective teaching methods.

Keywords: Computer Science, Learning Self-Efficacy, School-Related Factors, senior secondary schools, Students.

Introduction

Technology is almost an inevitable term, known in all field of work, sectors, professions and even education in the 21st century. This is because in most nations, technology has replaced traditional means of knowledge sharing. Today, technology integration has fundamentally altered how people think, work, and live. In order to help students to prepare for life in a knowledge society, schools and other educational institutions must think seriously about integrating Information and Communication Technology (1CT) into their curriculum. The economy is gradually depending on a high degree of ICT competence from its citizens in order to have access to fundamental services; therefore, learners need to have a substantial level of ICT knowledge, skills, and awareness if they are to succeed in the future. ICT use, for instance, can benefit students in rural locations by allowing them to attend classes remotely and inspiring them to learn. In this regard, the potential of e-learning is quite encouraging, yet knowledge transmission is not only challenging but also expensive due to the differences between developed and developing countries. Students who have strong self-efficacy are confident in their ability to comprehend a lesson, to work through academic challenges, and to choose the most challenging courses.

Self-efficacy is the belief that one can function successfully in a particular circumstance. In the senior secondary context, a student's belief that he or she can succeed at particular tasks such as learning the material from academic textbooks in preparation for an examination as cognitive ability test can be viewed as self-efficacy and crafting an essay to respond to any inquiry. The National Policy on Education in 2008 introduced the 9-year basic education curriculum to achieve the goals of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program. Thus, the Nigerian educational structure became 9-3-4, which means 9 years' basic education, 3 years' senior secondary school education and 4 years' tertiary education. The Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE) is taken at the end of the SS 3. The West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) administer the examinations. Secondary school is a link between the primary and tertiary levels of education which students receive after primary education and before tertiary stage and prepare students for tertiary studies. In this regard, a key objective of pre-university instruction should be to increase students' self-efficacy, or their confidence about succeeding in tertiary institutions, in order to better prepare them for their post-secondary studies. Self-efficacy has been connected to traits that may assist students successfully in dealing with difficulties such as the transition from secondary to university education, in addition to being a predictor of achievement and retention (Els, Ellen & Wim 2017).

Uba (2006) conducted a study on strategies for enhancing the teaching and learning of computer in secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The result of the study revealed that for appropriate methodology, adequate facilities, employment of qualified teachers, establishment of cordial relationship between parents and teachers, instructional materials, practical task, monitoring of students' ability and the need for developing problem solving skills to boost students' learning abilities for teaching and learning of computer in secondary schools. A study by Andreas (2019) on teaching methods for computer science education in the context of significant learning theories answers to the questions of which teaching methods are suitable for school and should be applied in teaching individual subjects. The result of the study makes it clear that the importance of learning theories for certain teaching methods in computer science education is different. Moreover, the result is an important contribution to the development of a theory of teaching methods for computer science education, which is still lacking. Maruff, Gbolagade, Amos and Olawale (2011) carried out a research on instructional materials and students' academic achievement in physics. Findings revealed that there is a significant difference in the achievement of students taught using standard instructional materials, those taught with improvised instructional material and those in the conventional instruction. Students taught with improvised instructional materials obtained the highest achievement score at posttest (F=74.94), followed by those with standard instructional materials (F=63.07), while the control group scored the lowest (F=39.89). Also, there was no significant effect of gender on students' achievement in Physics although, females did better than males. Finally, there was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on student achievement in Physics. Sale (2016) worked on the place of instructional materials in quality teaching at primary school level in Katsina State, Nigeria. The results showed that teachers and students had realized the effectiveness of modern instructional materials in teaching and learning for the attainment of set objectives in the basic primary education policy.

Akomolafe and Olubunmi (2016) carried out a research on the impact of physical facilities on students' level of motivation and academic performance in senior secondary schools in South-West Nigeria. The result showed that there was a significant interplay between physical facilities and students' level of motivation and academic performance. This result is important to this study because if students are motivated through physical facilities, it would build and improve students' self-efficacy in learning computer science. Osaruchi and Kalagbor (2021) conducted a research on perceived influence of school physical facilities on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The findings of the study revealed that physical facilities in secondary schools include teaching facilities, learning facilities and recreational facilities. It also revealed indicated that teaching, learning and recreational facilities had both positive and negative impacts on the academic performance of the students. However, the researcher recommended that government should provide current teaching facilities; government, non-governmental organization or multinational oil companies should provide the students with learning facilities and government should ensure that there are recreational facilities in each of the public secondary schools in the state to enhance teaching and learning. Hinneh and Manful (2019) carried out a study on class Size and Academic performance of students in selected nursing and midwifery training colleges in the central region, Ghana. The sequential explanatory mixed methods design was used for the study. The study revealed that class size had an effect on the academic performance of the students, where students in small class size recorded higher performance than their peers in large classes. Joseph and Philias (2011) researched on class size and academic achievement of secondary schools in Ekiti, State, Nigeria. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the academic achievement of students in small and large classes from urban schools. (t=1.49 ;< p0.05). There was no significant difference between performance of students from rural large and rural small classes (t=0.58; 0.05).

Statement of the Problem

The pressure to catch up with the developed world in areas like global competitiveness is pushing education's importance up. Many people who want a college education had to fight for the few openings granted by public colleges prior to the development of e-learning. Those that received positions had to go through the conventional educational system, thus they had to apply for study leave. The traditional mode of instruction has been used to teach computer science in secondary schools in Nigeria. However, students' performance, particularly at the SSCE level, has continuously lagged behind. This can suggest that using a new teaching approach is not helping students learn. One issue that some senior high school computer science students have is poor performance. Another issue that secondary school students in computer studies are faced with is the laboratory. In the majority of secondary schools, there are not enough laboratories to serve the student population because management didn't have the funds to construct large computer laboratories. The evaluation of computer science packages, teaching methods, physical facilities which includes the classroom and size, application of instructional materials and accessibility of education, teaching and learning processes of students' performance in computer studies, students' self-efficacy are some of the major problems of computer packages for assessing students' learning. This has raised a lot of concerns and the need for the authors of this present study to investigate the relationships between school-related factors and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between school-related factors and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

Research Question 1: What is the level of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teaching methods and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between instructional materials and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?
Research Question 4: What is the relationship between school facilities and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formed and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.
Research Hypothesis 1: Teaching methods do not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.
Research Hypothesis 2: Instructional resources do not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.
Research Hypothesis 3: School facilities are not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Methods

Research Design

A correlation survey design was used to achieve the general aim of this research. It was considered appropriate since the authors used the primary data gathered through a structured questionnaire to establish the relationships between school-related factors and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of this study was 3641 which comprised of all the SS2 students in the 14 public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State (Source: Ministry of Education Office, 2023). The sample size was 187 SS2 students selected from the 14 public senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state. The simple random sampling technique was used to represent student population. The SS2 students were chosen because at this level of education they have started developing self-efficacy for what they want to become and the SS1 and SS3 students seem to be unstable due to the dwindling enrollment pattern.

Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire is titled "School-Related Factors and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools". Likert scale method was used with response format of VE = Very Effective, E = Effective, FE = Fairly Effective, IE = Ineffective and VIE = Very Ineffective valued as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The second part of the questionnaire contained five (5) items on computer science learning self-efficacy with Likert scale response format of MLM = Most Like Me, LM = Like Me, PLM = Partially Like Me, UL = Unlike Me and MUM = Most Unlike Me. The response format is such that the respondents only have to tick an option that is most applicable to them from five options provided for each of the question.

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the validity, the instrument was presented to three experts, one in Measurement and Evaluation, and two in Counselling Psychology for vetting and necessary inputs. This was to ensure the content and face validity of the instrument. To ascertain the reliability, 30 copies of the instrument were administered on students who were not part of the sample of the study. To ascertain the internal consistencies of the items in the instrument, the data collected from the respondents were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha statistic, which yielded a coefficient values of 0.70 for school related factors and 0.76 for computer science learning self-efficacy. This implied that the Instrument was good enough and could be used to elicit responses from the respondents.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was administered on students with the help of a research assistant. The respondents were given enough time to respond to the various items after which the questionnaire was retrieved immediately to avoid misplacement or mutilation on the instrument. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and linear regression were used as statistical tools for data analysis. The PPMC was used to answer the research questions and the linear regression was used to test the research hypotheses. The decision rule for the use of PPMC statistic was based on a range of coefficient value (r) as recommended by Uzoagulu (2011) in the following order: Coefficient r-value between ± .4 and ± .6 means moderate correlation: ± .1 and ±.4 means low correlation; ±1.0 means perfect correlation; For the use of linear regression statistic, the probability p-value less than or equal to 0.5 implies significant (reject Ho) while probability p-value greater than 0.5 implies not significant (accept Ho).

Results

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the level of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 1: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of the Level of Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

S/N	Items	N	Sum	S	Mean	Decision
1	Confidence in achieving most of the goals they have set for themselves in learning computer.	188	830	1.26	4.41	High
2	Certainty of success using the computer base test (CBT) for examinations.	188	773	1.40	4.11	High
3	Confidence in the ability to use the CoreDraw application software to draw very well.	188	666	1.54	3.3.54	Moderate
4	Comparative confidence of performing tasks (calculations) effectively using the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software.	188	679	1.69	3.61	High
5	The hope to succeed at almost any computer program and software to which they set their minds to learn.	188	777	1.64	4.13	High

Table 1 showed that four of the indicators (1, 2, 4, & 5) of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were high with the values of 4.41,4.11, 3.61, 4.13 in a 5-point rating scale, while one indicator (3) is moderately high with the value of (3.35) and their corresponding Standard Deviations were 1.26, 1.40, 1.69, 1.64 and 1.54 respectively. The Table showed the factors that were possibly responsible for the level of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teaching methods and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 2: Coefficients of Partial Correlation between Teaching Methods and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State

Variables	N	Df	r	Remarks
Lecture method.	184	182	.094	Very low
Learners' centered method .	184	182	.283	Low
Demonstration method.	184	182	.179	Low
Project method.	184	182	.273	Low
Field-trip method.	184	182	.345	Moderate

Note. N = Total Population, df = Degree of Freedom, r = Pearson's Correlation.

Table 2 showed that the coefficients of partial correlation between teaching methods (lecture method, learners' centered method, demonstration method, project method and field-trip method) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .094, .283, .179, .273 and .345, which implied very low, low, low, low and moderate responses respectively.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between instructional materials and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 3: Coefficients of Partial Correlation between Instructional Materials and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Variables	N	df	r	Remarks
Computer gadget.	184	182	.358	Moderate
Pie chart.	184	182	.138	Low
Projector gadget.	184	182	.234	Low
White board marker.	184	182	.061	Low
Text books.	184	182	.249	Low

Note. N = Total Population, df = Degree of Freedom, r = Pearson's Correlation.

Table 3 showed that the coefficients of partial correlation between instructional materials (computer gadget, pie chart, projector gadget, white board marker, and text books) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .358, .138, .234, .061 and .249, which implied moderate, low, low, low and low responses respectively.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between school facilities and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 4: Coefficients of Partial Correlation between School Facilities and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Variable	N	df	R	Remarks
Classrooms.	184	182	.657	High
Library.	184	182	.613	Moderate
Laboratory.	184	182	.622	Moderate
Sport complex .	184	182	.531	Moderate
Staff rooms.	184	182	.598	Moderate

Note. N = Total Population, df = Degree of Freedom, r = Pearson's Correlation.

Table 4 showed that the coefficients of the level of partial correlation between school facilities (classrooms, library, laboratory, sport complex, and staff rooms) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .657, .613, .622, .531 and .598, which implied high, moderate, moderate, moderate and moderate responses respectively.

Testing Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: Teaching methods do not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Table 5: Coefficients of Regression Analysis on the Relationships between Teaching Methods and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Variable/Moderator	UC		SC	t	Sig.	Decision
	B	SE	Beta			
Learner centered method.	.995	.250	.280	3.98	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	18.895	2.505		7.54	.000	
Demonstration method.	.688	.280	.177	2.46	.015	Reject Ho
(Constant)	20.555	2.630		7.82	.000	The effect of the method is significantly influenced by class and class size.
Class	-2.160	.968	-.160	-2.23	.027	
Class size	.851	.414	.149	2.05	.041	
Project Method.	.801	.210	.270	3.82	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	22.297	2.187		10.19	.000	The effect of the method is significantly influenced by class and class size.
Class	-2.884	.954	-.213	-3.02	.003	
Class size	.781	.402	.136	1.94	.054	
Field Trip	.784	.158	.339	4.95	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	19.862	2.254		8.81	.000	The effect of the method is significantly influenced by class and class size.
Class	-1.909	.925	-.141	-2.07	.040	
Class size	.873	.393	.153	2.22	.028	
Lecture method	.273	.214	.096	1.28	.204	Don't reject Ho
(Constant)	23.795	2.225		10.69	.000	The effect of the method is significantly influenced by class.
Class	-2.676	1.011	-.198	-2.65	.009	

Note. UC = Unstandardized Coefficient, SC = Standardized Coefficient, SE = Standard Error, Sig. = Significant.

Table 5 showed that the coefficients of multiple regression between teaching methods (learners' centered method, demonstration method, project method, field-trip method, and lecture method) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .280, .177, .270, 339 and .096 respectively with t values of 3.98, 2.46, 3.82, 4.95 and 1.28, respectively. And all the t values apart from the t value for lecture method (1.28) were significant, with p-values ranging from .00 to .05. The effects of demonstration method, project method and field-trip were significantly moderated by classroom and class size while learners' centered method is not significant and the effect is significantly moderated negatively by class.

Research Hypothesis 2: Instructional resources do not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Table 6: Coefficients of Linear Regression Analysis on the Relationships between Instructional Resources and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

	UC		SC			
Variable/Moderator	**B**	**SE**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Decision**
Computer gadget.	1.155	.223	.351	5.180	.000	Reject Ho
(.Constant)	18.540	2.336		7.935	.000	The effect of the resources is significantly influenced by class.
Class	-2.133	.916	-.158	-2.328	.021	
Pie chart.	.351	.187	.137	1.878	.062	Don't reject Ho
(Constant)	22.361	2.396		9.331	.000	The effect of the method is significantly influenced by class and class size.
Class	-2.099	.980	-.155	-2.143	.033	
Class size	.828	.418	.145	1.982	.049	
Projector gadget.	.610	.188	.233	3.248	.001	Reject Ho
(Constant)	20.943	2.372		8.830	.000	The effect of the resources is significantly influenced by class and class size.
Class	-2.073	.957	-.153	-2.167	.032	
Class size.	.953	.412	.166	2.311	.022	
White board marker.	.192	.233	.060	.826	.410	Don't reject Ho
(Constant)	23.400	2.400		9.752	.000	The effect of the material is significantly influenced by class.
Class	-2.347	.979	-.174	-2.398	.018	
Text books.	.786	.227	.244	3.470	.001	Reject Ho
(Constant)	20.550	2.386		8.613	.000	The effect of the materials is significantly influenced by class.
Class	-2.095	.952	-.155	-2.200	.029	

Note. UC = Unstandardized Coefficient, SC = Standardized Coefficient, SE = Standard Error, Sig. = Significant.

Table 6 showed that the coefficients of multiple regression between instructional materials (computer gadget, pie chart, projector gadget, white board marker, and text books) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .351, .137, .233, .060 and .244 with t values of 5.18, 1.88, 3.25, .83 and 3.47, respectively. And all the t values apart from the t values for pie chart and white board marker were -1.37 and .060 respectively were significant, with the p value at .00. The effect of three instructional resources such as computer gadget, white board marker, and text books were significantly moderated by class while the effects of pie chart and projector gadget were significantly moderated by class and class size.

Research Hypothesis 3: School facilities are not significantly associate with computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Table 7: Coefficients of Linear Regression Analysis on the Relationships between School Facilities and Computer Science Learning Self-Efficacy Among Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

	UC		SC			
Variable/Moderator	**B**	**SE**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Decision**
Classrooms.	2.457	.209	.648	11.752	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	12.168	1.958		6.215	.000	The effect of the facility is significantly influenced by class
Class	-1.591	.742	-.118	-2.144	.033	
Library.	1.797	.172	.605	10.457	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	14.731	1.970		7.478	.000	
Laboratory	1.764	.165	.614	10.714	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	15.685	1.907		8.224	.000	
Sport complex.	1.862	.220	.528	8.449	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	16.095	2.107		7.639	.000	The effect of the facility is significantly influenced by class
Class	-1.916	.833	-.142	-2.301	.023	
Staff rooms.	1.457	.145	.589	10.055	.000	Reject Ho
(Constant)	17.047	1.912		8.914	.000	The effect of the facility is significantly influenced by class and class size
Class	-1.613	.790	-.119	-2.042	.043	
Class size	.656	.335	.115	1.960	.052	

Note. UC = Unstandardized Coefficient, SC = Standardized Coefficient, SE = Standard Error, Sig. = Significant.

Table 7 showed that the coefficients of multiple regressions between school facilities (classrooms, library, laboratory, sport complex, and staff rooms) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were .648, .605, .614, 528 and .589 respectively with the t values of 11.75, 10.46, 10.71, 8.45 and 10.06, respectively. And all the t values were significant with the p value at .00. The effect of two school facilities such as classrooms and sport complex were significantly moderated by class while the effect of staff rooms was significantly moderated by class and class size.

Discussions

This present study investigated some school-related factors that could computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The study showed that four out of five of the indicators of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were high with the values of 4.41, 4.11, 3.61, 4.13 in a 5-point scale respectively and one indicator were moderately high (3.35) and their corresponding Standard Deviations was 1.26, 1.40, 1.69, 1.64 and 1.54 respectively. The t-values of the indicators of computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State were 40.25, 29.83, 29.29 and 34.53 respectively and all of them were significant with p-values ranging from .00 to .01. The findings also revealed that students demonstrated high levels of self-efficacy in various aspects of computer science, such as confidence in performing tasks and applying knowledge to real-world situations. This suggests that schools within the local government are providing a relatively supportive learning environment for computer science subject.

The study also revealed a moderately high level of self-efficacy in overcoming challenges related to learning computer science subject. This suggests that while students are generally confident in their abilities to learn, they may face difficulties when confronted with complex problems or setbacks. This finding underscores the need for further efforts to support students in developing their problem-solving skills and resilience in the face of challenges. The study's findings resonate with existing research emphasizing the critical role of school-related factors in shaping students' self-efficacy. This finding aligns with the work of Osaruchi and Kalagbor (2021) who found that instructional facilities have impact on students' academic performance. This study's findings were also consistent with Akomolafe and Olubunmi (2016), who emphasized the need for adequate physical, human, and material resources in public schools to motivate students and enhance learning.

The second set of findings showed that the coefficients of multiple regressions between teaching methods (learners' centered method, demonstration method, project method, field-trip method, and lecture method) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools were .280, .177, .270, 339 and .096 respectively with t values of 3.98, 2.46, 3.82, 4.95 and 1.28, respectively. And all the t values apart from the t value for lecture method (1.28) were significant, with p values ranging from .00 to .05. The effects of demonstration method, project method, and field-trip method were significantly moderated by class and class size, while the learners' centered method is not significant and the effect is significantly moderated negatively by class. This finding aligns with the research of Uba (2006) and Andreas (2019) who found that teaching methods can significantly improve students' self-efficacy in computer studies.

The third findings showed that the coefficients of multiple regressions between instructional materials (computer gadget, pie chart, projector gadget, white board marker, and text books) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools were .351, .137, .233, .060 and .244 respectively with t the values of 5.18, 1.88, 3.25, .83 and 3.47, respectively. And all the t values (apart from the t values for pie chart and white board marker -1.37 and .060 respectively) were significant, with p values at .00. The effects of three instructional resources such as computer gadget, white board marker, and text books were significantly moderated by class while the effects of pie chart, projector gadget were significant moderated by class and class size. Evidence suggests that using improvised instructional materials can boost student self-efficacy in learning. This study's findings resonate with the research of Sale (2016) and Maruff et al. (2011) who demonstrated the effectiveness of modern instructional materials in achieving educational goals and highlighted the efficiency of both standard and improvised materials in teaching and learning physics.

Finally, this present study showed that the coefficients of multiple regressions between school facilities (classrooms, library, laboratory, sport complex, and staff rooms) and computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools were .648, .605, .614, 528 and .589 respectively with the t values of 11.75, 10.46, 10.71, 8.45 and 10.06, respectively. And all the t values were significant with the p values at .00. The effects of two facilities such as classrooms and sport complex were significantly moderated by class, while the effect of staff rooms were significantly moderated by class and class size. This finding support the study of Akomolafe and Olubunmi (2016) who emphasized the need for adequate physical, human, and material resources in public schools to create a stimulating learning environment and foster student engagement.

Conclusions

This present study investigated some school-related factors that could computer science learning self-efficacy among students in senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings revealed that school-related factors play a crucial role in shaping students' confidence and motivation, significantly impacting their learning success in this vital field. The study highlighted the positive influence of well-equipped school facilities, diverse teaching methods, and positive teacher-student interactions in promoting student self-efficacy. Additionally, the findings suggested that class size and composition would moderate the impact of these variables, emphasizing the need for differentiated learning strategies and individual support.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should endeavor to allocate sufficient funds and other resources to improve and maintain school facilities, which include computer laboratories, classrooms, and libraries,
2. Government and educational administrators should endeavor to provide teachers with professional development opportunities in computer science pedagogy and effective teaching methods in order to equip them with the skills and knowledge to implement diverse and engaging teaching strategies.
3. Educational administrators should have a regular review of computer science curriculum in order to ensure its alignment with current technological advancements, industry needs.
4. Teachers should endeavor to be encouraged to integrate technology into their lessons and utilize online learning resources in order to enhance student engagement and access to information and applications.
5. Teachers on the other hand, should endeavor to design assessment template that would accurately help in measuring students' progress in computer science knowledge and skills acquisition, and self-efficacy reinforcement.

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PEER INFLUENCE AND SELF EFFICACY AS CORRELATES OF THE RELIABILITY OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT SCORES

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Abstract
This study examined the influence of peer pressure and self-efficacy on students' perceptions of the reliability of Continuous Assessment (CA) scores in Senior Secondary School (SSS) II in Benin Metropolis. To guide the study, four research questions were raised and four null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significant level. The study sampled 200 SSSII students in Benin Metropolis. A correlational survey research design was employed to achieve the general aim of the study. Data were collected through a structured and validated questionnaire, which yielded a coefficient value of 0.92, using a Cronbach's alpha statistic. Mean, Standard Deviations, One-Sample t-tests and Spearman Correlation statistics were used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The findings revealed that students generally perceived CA as fair and reliable, with peer influence significantly shaping their perceptions. A slight positive correlation was found between self-efficacy and perceived CA reliability, suggesting that students with lower self-confidence were more likely to question the fairness of their assessments. The authors of the study, therefore, emphasized the need for transparent assessment practices and timely feedback to enhance student trust and correct the misconceptions surrounding CA.

Keywords: Benin Metropolis, CA, Peer Pressure, Reliability, Self-Efficacy, Senior Secondary School II, Students' Perceptions, Continuous Assessment Scores.

Introduction

Continuous Assessment (CA) or assessment for learning has gained prominence as a method of evaluating students' progress over time, offering a more comprehensive measure of their abilities compared to traditional one-time evaluation examinations. However, the reliability of CA scores is debatable, as students' perceptions of its credibility can be influenced by psychological and social factors such as peer influence and self-efficacy. Many developed countries, including the United States., the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, have adopted CA frameworks that emphasize formative assessments and coursework. Standardized grading policies and teacher training help maintain CA credibility, although students' perceptions can still be influenced by peer discussions. In African countries such as Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria, CA has been integrated to promote continuous learning and reduce examination malpractice. Teachers' bias and lack of standardization concerns affect its perceived reliability. In Nigeria, CA is a central part of the educational system, applied at all levels as per the national policy on education. Concerns about grading inconsistencies, favouritism, and external influences impact students' trust in CA. Peer discussions play a significant role in shaping the perceptions of students in school environments, where CA is seen as fair tend to trust it, while skepticism grows in settings where manipulation is suspected. Several scholars and researchers have explored the impact of peer influence and self-efficacy in shaping students' perceptions on assessment reliability.

Self-efficacy can be defined as an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks. It plays a significant role in academic performance and perception of assessment reliability (Pajares, 2006; Usher & Pajares, 2008). Students with high self-efficacy tend to exhibit greater confidence in their academic assessments, while those with low self-efficacy may perceive continuous assessment scores as unreliable or unfair (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Similarly, peer influence—the impact of classmates and friends on an individual's attitudes and behaviors—can shape students' perceptions of assessment systems (Wentzel, 2005; Ryan, 2011). Self-efficacy, a core component of Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, has been extensively studied in relation to academic achievement and students' perceptions of assessment fairness (Schunk & Pajares, 2002; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to trust the reliability of CA scores because they believe their performance is a result of their effort and skills rather than external biases (Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Usher & Pajares, 2008). On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy may attribute their poor performance to external factors, including unreliable assessment practices (Zimmerman, 2000; Bong, 2001). Empirical studies have demonstrated that self-efficacy correlates positively with students' perceptions of fairness and reliability in assessment (Bandura, 2006; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). For instance, students who engage in self-regulated learning strategies tend to perceive continuous assessment as more reliable, as they feel in control of their learning outcomes (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Conversely, students with learned helplessness or low academic confidence often doubt the credibility of assessment scores (Dweck, 2006; Elliot & Dweck, 2017).

In many educational settings, students often discuss their scores, grading fairness, and assessment reliability with their peers, which may affect their individual perceptions of the legitimacy of CA scores (Brown & Rollins, 2020). If a student's peers frequently express skepticism about the reliability of CA, this skepticism may spread, influencing the student's own perception regardless of the actual reliability of the assessment system (Perkins, 2003; Allen et al., 2018). Conversely, if a peer group values and trusts the CA system, a student may be more likely to perceive it as reliable (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). Peers play a significant role in shaping students' attitudes toward learning, assessment, and academic success (Ryan, 2000; Wentzel, 2005). Peer influence can be direct, such as through academic discussions and collaborative learning, or indirect, where students adopt the attitudes and behaviours of their peers without direct persuasion (Brown, 2004; Berndt, 2009). Research has shown that students who associate with academically motivated peers tend to develop a positive perception of the reliability of assessment scores, whereas those influenced by disengaged peers may develop skepticism toward assessment practices (Kindermann, 2007; Juvonen & Wentzel, 2013). Additionally, peer influence has been found to impact students' engagement with assessments (Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997; Steinberg, 2011). Studies indicate that students who are part of academic support groups or study circles often develop a stronger belief in the fairness and reliability of assessment systems (Altermatt & Pomerantz, 2003; Hamm & Faircloth, 2005). Conversely, students exposed to negative peer discussions about unfair grading may internalize these perceptions, leading to increased distrust in CA scores (Chen et al., 2010; Allen et al., 2018).

While peer influence and self-efficacy independently affect students' perceptions of assessment reliability, their interaction can further shape students' beliefs and attitudes (Ryan, 2011; Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). Studies indicate that students with strong self-efficacy are less susceptible to negative peer influence regarding assessment reliability (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Bouchard & Berg, 2017). However, when self-efficacy is low, peer influence can significantly alter students' judgment about the fairness of CA scores (Chen et al., 2010; Allen et al., 2018). CA has been widely accepted as a means of ensuring a more holistic evaluation of students' academic performance (Guskey, 2019). Unlike summative assessments or assessment of learning, which provide a one-time evaluation, CA allows educators to track students' progress throughout the academic period, offering opportunities for feedback and improvement (Sadler, 1989; Black & Wiliam, 1998). However, concerns regarding the reliability of CA scores persist, with some studies highlighting inconsistencies in grading criteria, teacher bias, and students' varying levels of engagement (Harlen, 2005; Brookhart, 2011). Reliability in assessment refers to the consistency and dependability of scores obtained through a particular evaluation process (Moss, 2003; Linn, 2006). When students perceive assessment scores as unreliable, it may lead to demotivation, anxiety, and reduced academic effort (Stiggins, 2005; Andrade, 2010). Several factors contribute to students' perceptions of CA reliability, including the transparency of grading, the fairness of assessment practices, and the credibility of the assessors (McMillan, 2013; Wiliam, 2018).

The concept of social comparison theory, proposed by Festinger (1954), had suggested that individuals evaluate their abilities and opinions by comparing themselves to others. This theory is relevant in understanding how students' perceptions of CA reliability are shaped by their peers. If a student perceives that their peers are consistently receiving unfairly high or low scores, they may question the reliability of CA, even if their own scores are fair (Dijkstra et al., 2008; Prinstein & Dodge, 2008). Given these psychological and social influences, this study seeks to explore, with a particular focus on Nigeria, where the education system faces challenges such as examination malpractice, grading inconsistencies, and social pressures among students, the extent to which peer influence and self-efficacy predict students' perceptions of the reliability of continuous assessment scores. By exploring this relationship, this research aims identify factors that contribute to students' skepticism or trust in CA scores and recommend strategies for improving students' confidence in CA as a credible assessment tool. Understanding these relationships is crucial for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers to enhance the validity of assessment practices and improve students' trust in the educational evaluation system (Brookhart, 2013; Andrade & Heritage, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

Continuous Assessment is a crucial method for evaluating students' academic performance, offering a more consistent and comprehensive measure of learning than single high-stakes exams. It includes assignments, quizzes, projects, and participation, ensuring students are assessed on overall engagement. However, the reliability of CA scores is often questioned, with peer influence and self-efficacy playing key roles in shaping students' perceptions. Peer influence significantly affects students' attitudes toward CA, as they often rely on peers for feedback and validation. If students collectively perceive CA as biased or inconsistent, skepticism can spread, regardless of the actual integrity of the system. Negative peer perceptions may lead to disengagement, skepticism, or even unethical behavior, Conversely, if CA is viewed as fair and credible within a peer group, students are more likely to trust the process and engage positively. In other words, positive peer perception can enhance motivation and trust in CA. Despite the widespread use of CA, little research has explored how peer influence and self-efficacy predict students' perceptions of its reliability. Since CA is a salient tool for evaluating academic progress, understanding the extent to which peer influence and self-efficacy plays a crucial role in shaping the beliefs about the fairness, accuracy and consistency of CA is essential. Therefore, it is imperative for examine the extent to which peer influence and self-efficacy shapes students' beliefs regarding CA. The important question at this juncture is: what are students' perceptions of peer influence and self-efficacy on reliability within the CA framework in Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis?

Purpose of the Study

This study examined students' perceptions of peer influence and self-efficacy on reliability of CA scores in Senior Secondary School (SSS) II in Benin Metropolis. The specific objectives of the present study were to examine:

1. students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.
2. the extent to which students' perception on peer influence associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.
3. the extent to which students' perception on self-efficacy associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

4. the differences in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy as correlates with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

Research Question 1: What are the students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Research Question 2: To what extent does students' perception on peer influence associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Research Question 3: To what extent does students' perception on self-efficacy associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Research Question 4: What is the difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy as correlates with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

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

Research Hypothesis 1: The students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Research Hypothesis 2: Students' perception on peer influence does not significantly associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Research Hypothesis 3: Students' perception on self-efficacy does not significantly associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Research Hypothesis 4: The difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy does not significantly correlates with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative survey research design was used in achieving the broad goal of the study. This design was used in achieving the broad goal of the study because the study involves assessing the interplay between and among the variables of the study.

Population and Sampling Technique

The total population of the study was 200 SSSII students in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. To get a representative sample of 133 SSSII students (respondents), the Taro Yamane statistical formula was employed.

Research Instrument: Validation and Reliability

The instrument that was used for data collection in the study was a structured questionnaire, titled "Students' Perception of Peer Influence and Self Efficacy on the Reliability of Continuous Assessment Scores". Face and content validity of the research instrument was conducted by three experts. Their suggestions were considered and the instrument was modified accordingly. The instrument was administered on 30 SSSII students who were not part of the sample employed for the study. Data generated were analyzed using a Cronbach's alpha statistic to ascertain the internal consistencies of the items in the instrument. The obtained reliability coefficient value was 0.82, which is relatively high, which indicated that the instrument was good and reliable for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaires were personally administered on the respondents after due permission was granted by the school authority. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected immediately they were completed, and 100% of the questionnaires were retrieved. Data collected were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, Spearman Rho Correlation, One Sample t-test and Fisher's Z Statistics.

Results

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Students' Perception of the Reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Items	N	Sum	Mean	SD	Remark
I believe my CA score.	133	420.28	3.1600	.54810	Agree
I feel CA scores are fairly awarded by teachers.	133	412.3	3.1000	.88641	Agree
Peer opinions influence how I perceive the fairness of CA scores.	133	335.16	2.5200	.95276	Agree
I trust the assessment process to determine CA scores.	133	436.24	3.2800	.70102	Agree
I believe that external factors do not affect reliability of CA scores.	133	340.48	2.5600	1.03332	Agree

Note. SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 1 showed students' perceptions of the reliability of assessment scores. It is observed from the Table that the Mean perceptions ranging from 2.52 to3.28 with the Standard Deviations ranging from .55 to 1.0. The Table showed that the respondents believed in the reliability of their CA scores. The Table further showed that respondents believed that the reliability of CA scores is free from external factors. However, the respondents believed that peer influence influenced their perceptions.

Research Question 2: To what extent does students' perception on peer influence associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Table 2: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Between Students' Perception on Peer Influence and Reliability of CA Scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variable	N	r	r^2	%	Remark
Peer Influence	133	0.30	0.09	9%	Low
Reliability of CA Scores	133				

Table 2 showed that there is a low correlation of 0.30 between the two variables under study. The coefficient of determination is 09%, thus indicating that peers influence have 9% influence the reliability of CA scores and is considered low because it is closer to zero than the Median.

Research Question 3: To what extent does students' perception on self-efficacy associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSII in Benin Metropolis?

Table 3: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Between Students' Perception on Self-Efficacy and the Reliability of CA scores in SSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variables	N	r	r^2	%	Remark
Self-efficacy	133	0.09	0.008	0.8%	Very Low
Reliability of CA Scores	133				

Table 3 showed that there is a very low positive correlation of 0.09 between the two variables under study. The coefficient of determination is 0.8%, thus indicating that students' perception on self-efficacy has a very low correlation with the reliability of CA scores.

Research Question 4: What is the difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy as correlates of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis?

Table 4: Difference in Students' Perception on Peer Influence and Self-Efficacy as Correlates of the Reliability of CA Scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variables	Coefficient		AD	PD	Remark
	Self-efficacy	Peer influence			
Peer Influence					
	0.09	0.30	0.21	21%	Moderate
Self-Efficacy					

Note. PD = Percentage Difference, Absolute Difference.

Table 4 showed that the difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy are 0.30 and 0.09 respectively. The absolute difference between the coefficients of the two variables is 0.21. The percentage difference is 21%, thus indicating that the difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy are moderately correlated with the reliability of CA scores.

Research Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis 1: The students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Table 5: One Sample t-test on the Students' Perception of the Reliability of CA Scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Perception	MD	SED	T	df	P-value	Decision
I believe my CA score	2.16	0.048	45.46	132	0.00	Significant
I feel like CA scores are fairly awarded by teachers	3.10	0.077	40.35	132	0.00	Significant
Peer opinions influence how I perceive the fairness of CA	2.52	0.083	30.50	132	0.00	Significant
I trust the assessment process to determine CA scores	3.28	0.061	53.96	132	0.00	Significant
I don't believe that external factors	2.56	0.089	28.66	132	0.00	Significant

affect reliability of CA scores

Note. df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 5 showed that students' perception of the reliability of CA scores in SSII in Benin Metropolis are significant at 0.00. Since the p-value (0.00) is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. All in all, this results implies that the reliability of CA scores is significant.

Research Hypothesis 2: Students' perception on peer influence does not significantly associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Table 6: Spearman's Rho Statistics Showing the Relationship between Students' Perception of Peer Influence and the Reliability of Assessments Scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variables	N	R	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Peer influence	50	0.30	48	0.03	Reject Ho
Perceptions reliability of assessment score	50				

Note. df = Degree of Freedom.

Table 6 showed that there is a low correlation of 0.30 between the two variables under study. The coefficient of determination is 0.30 is 0.09 and the relationship is significant at 0.03. Since 0.03 is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that there is a significant relationship between students' perception of peer influence and the reliability of CA scores.

Research Hypothesis 3: Students' perception on self-efficacy does not significantly associate with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Table 7: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient Students' Perception on Self-Efficacy and the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variable	N	R	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Self-efficacy	50	0.09	48	0.50	Retain Ho
Reliability of CA Scores.	50				

Note. df = Degree of Freedom, Sig. = Significant.

Table 6 showed that there is a very low positive correlation coefficient of 0.09 between the two variables under study. The relationship is significant at 0.50. Since 0.50 is higher than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained, which implies that self-efficacy is insignificantly correlated with the reliability of CA scores.

Research Hypothesis 4: The difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy does not significantly correlates with the reliability of CA scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis**.**

Table 8: Z-Test on the Difference in Students' Perception on Peer Influence and Self-Efficacy does not Significantly Correlates with the Reliability of CA Scores in SSSII in Benin Metropolis.

Variable	Self- Efficacy	Peer Influence	AD	Z	Sig.(right-tailed)	Decision
Peer Influence	0.09	0.30	0.21	1.94	0.05	Reject Ho

and Self-Efficacy.

Reliability of CA
Scores.

Note. AD = Absolute Difference, Sig. = Significant.

Table 8 showed that the absolute difference in students' perception on peer influence and self-efficacy as they relate with the reliability of CA scores is 0.21. The fishers' Z of the differential is 1.94. The Z value is significant at 0.05 level. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, which suggests that the coefficient of students' perceptions of self-efficacy is significantly less than that of students' perceptions of peer influence in the reliability of CA scores, which implies also that students' perceptions of self-efficacy has very little moderation on the relationship between students' perceptions of peer influence and the reliability of CA scores.

Discussions

The findings of this study showed that respondents believed that CA process in their schools was fair and reliable. This position was corroborated by their answers to the questions on peer opinion which affirmed its influence on their belief on the reliability of CA scores. This perhaps is the effect of shared experiences where students compare their scores with that of their peers. As they do this, they mentally compare individuals' abilities with their scores. This finding is supported by Wentzel and Muenks (2016), Ryan (2000), Wentzel (2005), Brown (2004), Berndt (2009), who reported that if a peer group values and trusts the CA system, a student may be more likely to perceive it as reliable whereas those influenced by disengaged peers may develop skepticism toward assessment practices. These scholars found that peers play a considerable role in shaping students' attitudes with respect to learning, assessment, and academic results. And that peer influence could be direct, such as in academic discussions and collaborative task, or indirect, when students adopt the attitudes and stereotypes of their peers irrespective of persuasion. Other scholar and researchers such as Altermatt and Pomerantz (2003), Hamm and Faircloth (2005), Kindermann (2007), Juvonen and Wentzel (2013) also corroborate these findings in that students who are part of academic support groups or study circles often develop a stronger belief in the fairness and reliability of CA systems. However, the very low positive correlation coefficient between students' perception of self-efficacy and the reliability of CA scores in this study suggest that some very few respondents with low self-efficacy pointed to the possibility of external influence on the award of scores and grades in their school. This view is supported by research findings that students with low self-efficacy tend to have distrust for the assessment process (Dweck, 2006; Elliot & Dweck, 2017). This may be so because there is no perfect system anywhere.

Conclusion

This present study attempted to address the concerns about credible CA for improving the educational system, ensuring that the process remains effective and reliable method of student evaluation. To assess the impact of students' perception of peer influence on CA scores of 200 students in SSSII in Benin Metropolis was used as a case study. Thus, the study examined the extent of students' perception of peer influence and self-efficacy in shaping the reliability of CA scores. Social interactions and shared experiences contribute to how students interpret the reliability of CA scores. While peer influence may sometimes lead to cynicisms and disengagement, creating a transparent and inclusive assessment environment will help eliminate negative perceptions and build trust for improving students' attitude toward academic studies.

Recommendations

The importance of effective and reliable CA cannot be overemphasized. The government and school administrators should as a matter of necessity ensure that:

1. a more effective and transparent CA process is created to elicit considerable credibility among the students.
2. teachers are encouraged to mark tests scripts and return same to students in good time for the latter inputs and assessment.
3. any wrong impressions about CA are addressed promptly.

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BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME: A PANACEA FOR NATION BUILDING

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Abstract
This paper discussed the role of Business Education Programme as a panacea to Nation Building. The research manuscript discussed the concept and objectives of Business Education in Nigeria. It also discussed the concept and nature of nation building. The research manuscript also ex-ray the role of Business Education programme as a panacea to nation building, with a specific focus on job creation, entrepreneurial mindset, production of qualified teachers and skilled workers. The paper further dealt with the problems militating against the implementation of Business Education programme in Nigeria. The authors concluded that Business Education programme is the solution to national degradation and economic backwardness as it would help in equipping the recipients with both practical-oriented skills and theoretical knowledge in order to contribute positively to any sphere of human and economic endeavours. The authors recommended, among others, that private sector agencies and actors should endeavour to partner with institutions offering Business Education programme in order to facilitate the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills through effective teaching and learning. This will, in turn, provide opportunity for the recipients to contribute productively to national growth and development.

Keywords: *Business Education Programme, Economic Development, Economic Growth, Nation Building, Panacea.*

Introduction

Nation building means creating a nation that functions out of a non-functioning one, either because the old one has been destroyed in a war, has fallen apart or never really worked properly. Nation building refers to the process of developing a nation-state by organizing social groups within a defined territory under common political institutions and an effective government. In a country such as ours where millions of students' graduate from higher institutions and yet roam about jobless, development of business education program will help in addressing such anomaly. Business education is that type of education that impacts not only theoretical knowledge, but equips the students with necessary skills to be self-reliant and entrepreneurs.

Okon (2020) explained that Business Education is a programme of study, which provides individuals with practical learning experiences in specific knowledge and skills in identified business areas as well as general education, thus, equipping them with competencies for the business world. Business Education continuously builds on the knowledge, skills, values and attitude learnt at the lower phases of education. Business Education which encompasses several disciplines enables people to think, speak and behave in ways that support the growth, efficiency and effectiveness of any organization they find themselves. Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN, 2017) opined that Business Education courses prepare students to work in small business and/or setup their own businesses and develop their requisite entrepreneurial attitudes. Thus, the demand for business education is on the increase all over the world as it prepares youths to be responsible, become enterprising individuals or entrepreneurial thinkers by exposing them to real life experience where they will be required to think, take risks, manage circumstances and incidentally learn from the outcome. Business Education as a discipline is expected to expose its recipients to diverse curricula, hence, it is that type of education that inculcate in its recipients' attitudes, knowledge, skills, values that is required in the business world. The focus of Business Education is to give knowledge and skills to its recipients on wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction. This will eliminate youth restiveness, promote national development and produce responsible citizens.

The major components of Business Education Programmes, especially in Nigeria are Accounting, Office Technology and Management, Insurance, Marketing and Entrepreneurship (Okwe, 2023). In Office Technology and Management education programme, the focus is on essential workplace skills like effective communication, time management, record keeping and organizational skills. It also imparts on the individual the requisite information and communication technology (ICT) skills needed to compete in the 21st century ICT world. In Accounting component, the individual is equipped with requisite accounting skills needed for proper booking keeping and systematic recording of business transactions in order to determine, or access the performance of the business or organization. These various components of Business Education Programmes outlined equips the individuals with all-round skills and knowledge to contribute economically in any organization as an employee or an entrepreneur. This contributes to nation building and improves the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In entrepreneurship component, it helps the individual in business planning, feasibility studies, start-up strategies as well as encouraging creativity, innovation and ability to identify new business opportunities. Hence, the objectives of business education as outlined by the Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS, 2022 are to provide opportunity for practical job preparation or vocational studies in order to make students render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupations; prepare students based on interest and aptitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it; provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them to participate actively producers and consumers of goods and services; develop in students the basic awareness of the contribution which business and office employee makes to the nation's economy; develop and improve personal qualities and attitude of students as required in personal and employment situation; serve as a guide for individual student for suitable placement in business and office employment; enable students to have career consciousness and economic understanding of the free enterprise system; and prepare student to assume the role of building a future generation through teaching and knowledge impartation, and prepare students for leadership position in both public and private life.

The actualization of the above objectives and the developmental changes it brings along, is important to state that such may only be possible through adequate provision of funds, adequate provision of infrastructure, proper curriculum content, qualification and quality of teachers and so on. These goals if carefully implemented will provide opportunities for the institutions and teachers to impart the requisite knowledge and skills needed by students and graduates to improve their economic, social and political environment and consequently translate to nation building. The academic exposure enables the students to interact with successful business men in the community and share the benefits of their successes in the comity of their business empires. This in turn will enhance job creation and entrepreneurship development (Rufai, 2013). One of the issues of great controversy among Business Educators in tertiary institutions today is the issue of unemployability and lack of adequate skills of todays' university graduates that would have assist in fostering national development. Business Education graduates are now roaming the streets seeking for white collar job that is no longer available instead of being job creators. It is therefore believed that inadequate facilities for teaching and learning of business education, lack of maintenance of equipment, inaccessibility of Business Education teachers and students to digital technology are the reasons for poor performance of students and lack of ideas to impart the business world. Researchers and scholars have also been emphasizing on the non-availability of qualified teachers to teach Business Education subjects in tertiary Institutions (Edokpolor & Owenvbuigie, 2017; Edokpolor & Oduma, 2018). However, if there are qualified Business Education teachers and there are no adequate textbooks, workbooks, 21st century equipment for practical teaching and business education teaching and learning materials and proper funding, what impact will quality teachers make? This over the years has made graduates of Business Education to become job seekers instead of job creators that will help in nation building and unemployment reduction. The nation is dependent on graduates who can create a business and become employers of labour that will take the youths off the streets and reduce social vices but unfortunately, our graduates of today lack the requisite knowledge and skills required to surmount the problems pointed out above. Therefore, to change this negative narratives, some strategies like review of Business Education curriculum, provision of quality facilities for training, effective students mentoring services and equitable distribution of funds among others will help to improve the quality of teaching and learning and consequently foster nation building.

Nation building involves the process whereby a society with diverse origins, histories, languages, cultures and religions come together within the boundaries of a sovereign state with a unified constitutional and legal dispensation, a national public education system, an integrated national economy, shared symbols and values as equals, to work towards eradicating the divisions and injustices of the past; foster unity; and promote a countrywide conscious sense of being proudly Nigerian, and open to the contribution of her economic, social, cultural and political values. The goal of nation building is to unify the people within the country so that it remains economically and politically viable and stable over the long term. Nation building is a very difficult undertaking, especially in a country such as Nigeria with deep religious, ethnic and political divisions within the population. The task of building Nigeria appears to be possible through effective implementation of Business Education if the country never really functioned effectively. People involved in nation building are called nation builders, they take the initiative and try to foster a feeling through government programs. Nation building can take many forms, including major infrastructure development or propaganda to encourage social harmony and trigger economic growth. By and large, Business Education plays an important role in nation building through empowering students with skills to create jobs for themselves and others after graduation. More so, it is necessary to note that the objectives of business education according to the CCMAS is for adequate knowledge and preparedness of students to face the labour market and contribute to the growth of the economy.

Concept of Business Education

Business Education is an academic programme that equips undergraduate students with entrepreneurial skills in order to be self-reliant in today’s globalized and competitive economy. However, this mandate can only be achieved when the curriculum of Business Education is in line with societal needs and realities at national, regional and international levels. According to Okon (2020), Business Education is a programme of study, which provides opportunity for individuals to be exposed to practical learning experiences in specific knowledge and skills in identified business areas as well as general education, thereby, equipping them with skills and competencies for the business world. The ABEN (2017) explained that Business Education courses prepare students to work in small business and/or set up their own businesses and develop the requisite entrepreneurial attitudes.

The National Universities Commission (NUC), a regulatory body for undergraduate programmes, provides the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS) with a review in 2023 as Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS) for undergraduates' business education programme in Nigerian Universities. The BMAS or CCMAS provides opportunity for Business Education undergraduates to be exposed to entrepreneurship education and other practical-oriented courses that meet the need of the 21st Century. Again, the ABEN (2017) pointed out that business education courses promote creative thinking in students and develop their requisite entrepreneurial attitudes. Okon (2015) averred that Business Education represents a broad field of study (classified under Vocational Education in the Formal Education system and often described as Vocational Training in the Informal Education setting) which offers to every individual the opportunity to develop functional skills, abilities and understanding the necessary to handle competently his personal business affairs and occupational life. Therefore, Business Education curriculum developed for the undergraduate programme must reflect the following components: Theoretical concept, Practical concept, and General education concept. It is therefore imperative to determine how these concepts help in the development of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduates. The theoretical concept of Business Education covers the concepts that students must be exposed towards. All courses in Business Education have the theoretical concept. Students must have the understanding of these concepts and be able to relate them to the contemporary business world.

The practical concept on the other hand form an integral part of the Business Education curriculum. Most courses offered in business education has practical concept. The practical concept gives students opportunity to acquire practical skills for the real work situation. The general education concept involves those courses that are offered by all students in the university system despite the programme of study. The general education concept aims to equip students with general knowledge in specific areas of human endeavor outside of the student's area of specialty. By and large, all Business Education courses have integrated entrepreneurial orientation since the programme promotes self-reliance.

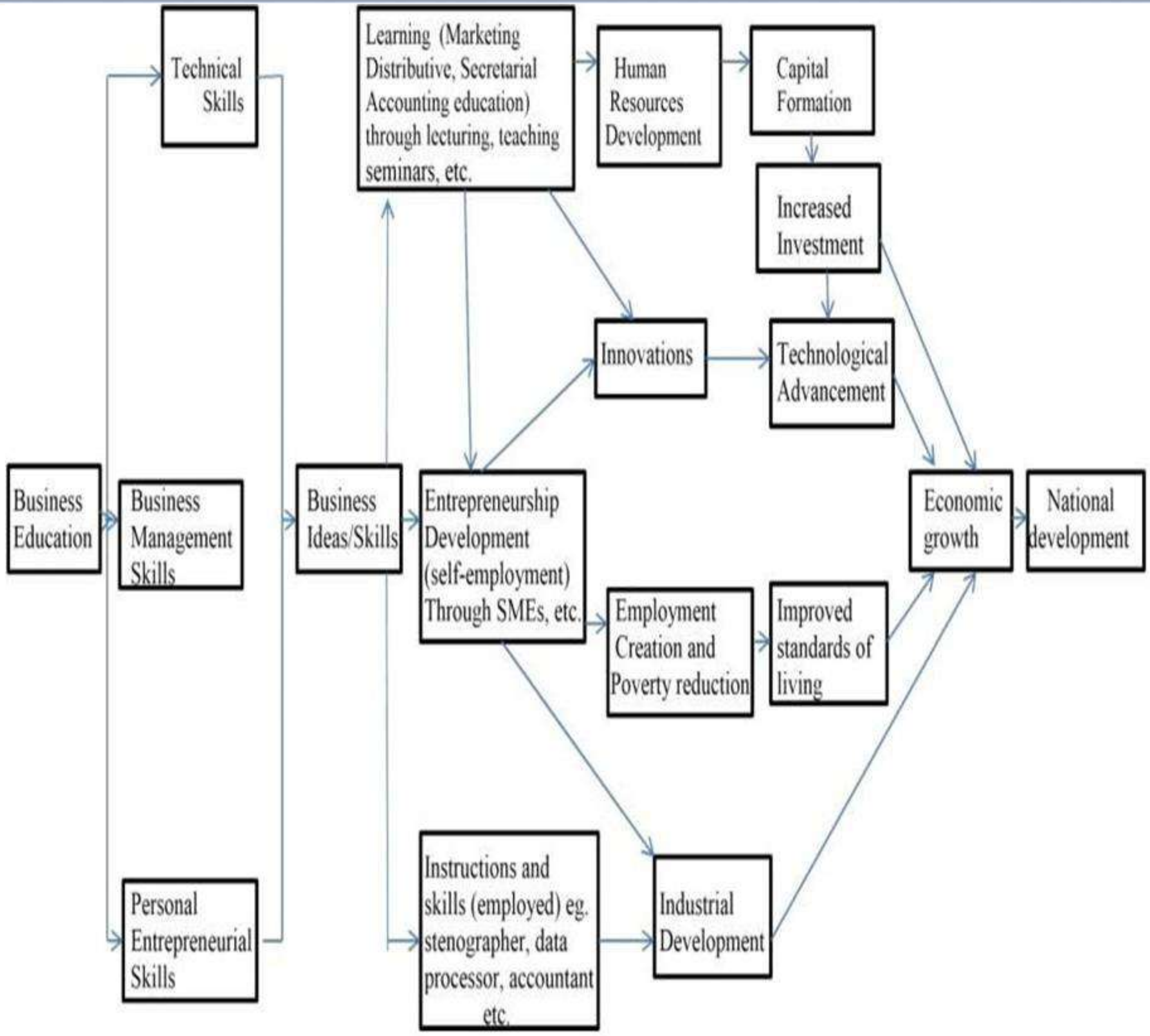
Overview of Nation Building

As earlier pointed out, business education enables the students to explore and learn about the world of work and the relevant career interest of their choice, provide them with the necessary occupational information to enable them understand the various occupation in the world of work and enable them to acquire skills in the field of their choice. Business Education contributes its role for educating citizens of a country to run their own personal businesses more successfully which helps to improve the economy of a country and thus helps directly in nation building economically. Business Education played an important role in the development of Nigerian economy, especially in the areas of employment generation, job creation, industrial development, entrepreneurial strategy, poverty alleviation, promotion of Nigerian economy, culture and value. It is a form of Vocational Education directed towards developing the learner to become productive in teaching, paid-employment and self-employment (Idialu & Amoor, 2010).

According to Ogwuogo (2013), Business Education prepares beneficiaries for gainful employment and sustainable livelihood. It is generally seen as education for and about business. Education "for" business is that aspect of Vocational Education, which provides instruction and preparation for office occupations such as secretary, shorthand-typist or stenographer, bookkeeper, data processor, word processor, computer analyst and accountant. On the other hand, education "about" business provides the knowledge and understanding of the economic, financial, marketing, accounting, management system and other branches of business endeavour. But in the words of Amoor (2010), Business Education plays a significant role in the economic development by providing the knowledge and skills to learners, thereby, enabling them to adequately impart knowledge into others, and handle sophisticated office technologies and information systems. The goal of Business Education is primarily to produce competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work. It has as its primary aim, the preparation of people for roles in enterprises which includes: employees, entrepreneurs, employers or self-employers. According to Ogwuogo (2013), a gainfully employed individual contributes to the GDP, reduces poverty, alleviate unemployment and underemployment, which are some of the indices of development, especially in the context of a business venture.

The current economic crisis confronting the nation is creating severe conflict in education and other sectors of the economy. The teaching and learning of creative and innovative skills can be better done and handled in Business Education classrooms in our higher institutions. Education all over the world faces challenges from different angles, which may be personal, social, economic, technological and political, these calls for a change. This change needs a high level of flexibility and adaptability which can be actualized through Business Education. Business Education is an aspect of education or training process which an individual receives with the primary motive of enabling him or her to acquire adequate attitude, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for personal or vocational usage; and also, for career as an administrator or manager and for career as a business teacher wherever he may find himself in the world of work. It is an aspect of educational process which gives an individual the pedagogy and business competencies necessary for teaching and practicing business attitudes, concepts, skills and knowledge for personal use, for entry into the business world as employer or employee and for participation as a business teacher. Base on the above definition, Okiridu (2016) opined that Business Education can be represented with an acronym 'TOS' where 'T stand for a teacher, 'O' stand for an operator and 'S' stand for a self-reliant; that is Business Education is a tripartite programme of instruction, which enables the recipient to be trained as a teacher in an institution, operator or employee in an industry and to be self-employed or be an entrepreneur or an employer of labour.

In the labour market, because of not having the knowledge and skills required to have gainful employment in the industries, our business education programs in our tertiary institutions should be developed properly to fill the vacuum. There is need to carefully observe from the foregoing that a well-developed Business Education programme will produce a well-equipped graduate who will create job and contribute to the GDP of the country which will help in nation building. The link between Business Education and national development has been depicted on the diagram below:



Business Education programme and Nation Building

Employment Generation

According to Petterson et al (2016), unemployment is one problem that face every developing country such as Nigeria. Business Education is a course that enables a student to have an idea of how to acquire requisite knowledge and skills that are relevant in job creation. These knowledge and skills would be geared towards making them employable in the labour market after graduation. Hundreds of thousands of graduates of different disciplines are roaming the streets or seeking for paid-employment, but the graduates of Business Education who are well grounded and equipped with requisite knowledge and skills, attitudes and competencies that are necessary to earn a living and be self-reliant are less affected. Business Education empowers her graduates with the ability to establish a Small Business Enterprise (SME) and become an employer of labour or captains of industries. To this end, Killinger (2019) opined that to ensure economic vitality, all stakeholders must work together to produce the best educated citizens.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

According to Hisrich, Brush & Aliyu (2010), Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, accompanying financial and social risk, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary, personal satisfaction and independence. Business Education is an academic field of study that equips graduates with entrepreneurial mindset and skills that would enable them to identify viable investment opportunities in the society. Due to their practical training, entrepreneurs see opportunities where others see chaos. Business Education equips entrepreneurs with the skills that would make it possible for them to use the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats) analysis to function well as entrepreneurs. Business Education also promote entrepreneurship by prompting its graduates to strive toward the utilization of the identified opportunities through taking calculative risks.

Production of Qualified Teachers

Effective teaching, in turn, influences effective learning (Singh et al., 2020). Business Education programme produces quality teachers. A quality teacher is that teacher that has mastery of the courses he/she teaches, and know how to teach it to the students, understand how the students learn and what to do when they are having difficulty; to be able to use effective teaching methods for those who are learning easily as well as those who have special needs. The qualityof a teacher is an important aspect of students' output. In a nutshell, the following are the qualities of a Business Education teacher: (1) A business education teacher must have mastery of the subject he/she teaches; (2) A business education teacher must be able to inspire students to learn; (3) A business education teacher must assume the role of a leader and develop leadership qualities in students; (4) A business education teacher must be a person of integrity, and adviser, a guardian and custodian of discipline; and (5) A business education teacher must show good example and maintain good and healthy relationship with business students.

Production of Skilled Workers

According to Jarkas (2017), skilled labour forces are the key productive human resources in the production industry, and for that reason, production performance mostly depends on skilled workforce. Graduates of Business Education have strong written, oral, and entrepreneurial skills and a broad knowledge of management and marketing. They have an amazing array of options as they enter the business world. Our nation is no longer looking for graduates with paper qualification but those with requisite skill to improve and contribute to the growth of the economy and the nation. The relevant skills in ICT, OTM, Accounting, Management, etcetera. equips the graduates of business education to function and contribute anywhere they find themselves. These skills will enable them to identify business opportunities, become creative and innovative, bear risks to utilize opportunities/implement a new plan, good management skills and wealth creation.

Challenges Facing Business Education programme

The realization of the overall aims of Business Education depends on how much the following challenges are tackled. Ogwuogo (2013) outlined the challenges facing Business Education programme to include:

1. *Unqualified Teachers:* The employment of unqualified teachers to teach business courses is a great obstacle to the quality of Business Education graduates. Most of the institutions that offer business education programme suffer from shortage of qualified teachers.
2. *Obsolete Technologies:* Manual typewriters are still largely in use in the computer age. This serves as a challenge to the graduate who intends to put in and practices the business ideas. Some available modern computers are grossly inadequate in terms of teaching and learning.
3. *The Size of Business Education Classes:* Due to the increasing demand for education especially Business and vocational courses amidst the insufficiency of the facilities and human labour, there is always high teacher-student ratio which turns to affect the quality of delivery of some practical courses like word processing, data processing, shorthand, among others.
4. *Poor or Inadequate Funding:* Many administrators fail to understand that Business Education programme is capital intensive. It is a well-known fact that one of the major problems

bedeviling education in Nigeria today is inadequate funding and Business Education is no exception.

Conclusion

From the aforementioned discussions, the authors concluded that Business Education is an indispensable tool in achieving nation building because of its relevance in providing the needed manpower in industries, offices and entrepreneurship. The skills and knowledge acquired by the recipients and graduates could help them to be self-employed by establishing small scale business. By doing so, the national development goals of ending poverty and promoting the well-being of individuals could be achieved through the effective implementation of Business Education programme in Nigeria, which will eventually lead to nation building. Business Education is a sub-set of Vocational Education. It is a programme that has the potentialities to produce qualified and skilled manpower who are capable and prepared to contribute maximally to the development and growth of nations. Based on these logical conclusions, emphasis to the teaching and learning of Business Education in Nigeria will not only solve societal problems but boost immeasurably the economic development of Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Government and all other relevant stakeholders should endeavor to provide adequate funds for Business Education programme. This can be achieved through increase in the budgetary allocation to education by the government.
2. Entrepreneurship education should be made compulsory at all levels of education.
3. Private sectors should partner with tertiary institutions in order to provide skills gap training and facilities that will enhance quality teaching of Business Education.
4. Opportunities for on-the-job-training programmes such as workshops, seminars should be made free and compulsory for lecturers in the field to acquaint themselves with contemporary skills so that they can, in turn, have impact on students.
5. Credit facilities should be made available to the willing entrepreneurs with the necessary skills who are eager to explore them in achieving national development

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