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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

ARTICLE CONTENT

The basis of an article may be research, but research is not the only basis for an article, cases, concepts and industry reviews and practices may be put forth with equal acceptabi1ity. Each article should contain:

1. Background with short references to previous articles, if they are pertinent. Specifically, omit endless strings of quotations by other authors, especially if the ideas are currently well accepted. This is particularly true of citations in the literature that are five or more years old. If previous material is pertinent, please paraphrase it and eliminate authors. Citations should be used only for significant and timely contributions.
2. Basic Premise major thoughts problems or concept.
3. A discussion of the theory incorporating any research.
4. A clear argument supporting the premise or concept
5. A summary to wrap-up the key ideas.

The Review Process

Each paper is reviewed by the editors and if it is judged suitable for this publication, it is then sent to three referees for double blind peer review. Based on their recommendations, the editor then decides whether the paper should be accepted as is, revised or rejected.

Manuscript Requirements

Two copies of the manuscripts should be submitted in double line spacing with wide margins. All authors should be shown and author's details must be printed on a separate sheet and the author should not be identified anywhere else in the article.

As a guide, articles should be between ten and fifteen pages. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, and contact address. Authors must supply an abstract or 100— 150 words up to six keywords should be included which encapsulate the principal subjects covered by the article.

Where there is a methodology, it should be clearly described under a separate heading. Hleadings must be short, clearly defined and not numbered. Figures, charts and diagrams should be kept to a minimum.

Tables should be kept to a minimum. They must be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and a brief title.

Reference
References to other publications must conform to the current APA style. At the end of the article a reference list in alphabetical order must be given.

Submission of Articles
Submissions must reach the Editor-in-chief by 31st of June each year and all submissions must be accompanied with N500.00 in cash to cover editing and other handling charges.

Editorial

Welcome to the second issue of Vol. 1 number 2 November 200!, of the Journal of Business and Office Education. This second issue consists of papers with strong element of research, conceptual and theoretical perspectives. We start out this volume with a focus on the new and emerging concepts in business and office pedagogies. I am delighted to have our first six articles focused on empirical research studies. These landmark studies examine topical issues relating to modern business and office paradigms.

The first article in this issue is an economics of technology perspective presented by J. 0. Oborah and C.A Obi. The Research papers by A.N. Achilike and S. I. Okwuanaso return to the perennial favourites, namely, competencies and skills, which they argue have been lacking strategic perspective.

There is an insight from industry which highlights the current academic thinking on workshop and laboratory safety. In this paper, E.A.O. Anaele enhances our knowledge and understanding of the myriad issues which are of interest and concern to industrial safety. In the last article of this issue, we view an old topic through a new lens. The article by H. A. Ezeji helps us to "see" the distinctive and innovative strategies for implementing basic business education curriculum.

Despite the considerable progress, which has been made in Business and Office Education over the past decade, there is still much work to be done. This issue of the Journal has a typically eclectic mix of papers, to set the tone for the new millennium. Further issues of the Journal will continue the combination as well as the inclusion of conceptual and theoretical papers.

Professor E.C. OSUALA

JOURNAL OF BUSINESS AND OFFICE EDUCATION

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Research Papers

Communication Technology

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Research Paper

1. **Information Technology Skills Required By Business Office Workers.**
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Abstract

The applications of the modern information technology (IT) to office function for information processing and management imply that the business office workers now require new sets of skills. The effective applications of the information technology, according to Osuala (1998) and Alozie (1998) are very important to effective job performance. This paper is therefore, a report of a study conducted to determine the information technology skills required by office workers in the modern business offices. Questionnaire was administered on a sample of 250 office workers in Kogi State, in order to answer a research question formulated and to test the hypothesis. Mean statistic was used to answer the research question, while the null hypothesis was tested, using the t'test at 0.05 level of significance. The results reveal that office workers require skills in technical, conceptual, communication and interpersonal clusters. The test of the hypothesis revealed no significant difference between the perceptions of the urban and rural office workers on the information technology skills required. Based on these findings, it was recommended that in-service training be urgently organized for the business office workers to update their skills. Henceforth, the identified skills should be incorporated into the school curriculum for training the business officer workers.

Introduction

The modern business offices are characterized by automation or mechanization. This scenario, according to Osuala (1998) is the process whereby functions previously painstakingly performed by people (office workers) were replaced by the use of automatic machines. Although, this development took place pre-dominantly in the factory, during the Industrial Revolution of 1750 — 1900, the application of the information technology to information processing has now made it an indispensable feature of today's offices. In fact, the application of the modern information technology has been claimed to be responsible for effective and efficient information management in business offices (Agomuo, 1997, Alozie, 1998. Osuala. 1998 and Nwosu, 1998). This is probably the reason for the presence of items of information technology equipment in the offices in Nigeria today. When one visits the offices, one could encounter equipment such as the computer, fax machine and other telecommunication equipment, etc.

Today, the concept of Information Technology (IT) generally covers the harnessing of electronic technology for information processing needs of business organizations. It covers both the computer and telecommunications based equipment for storage, processing and dissemination of information. The core of information technology is however, the computer technology. The office workers in the modern offices are expected to be familiar with these technologies and be able to effectively operate them.

The trend in the modern business organizations, is a remarkably growth sophistication in operations, occasioned by the growth in size and the volume of paper works. Also, the current globalization efforts, whereby. the world has been reduced to a 'global village', has made it imperative for business organizations to adopt a system of information management based on the modern information technology. The implication of this problem, an attempt was made to find answer to the research question formulated. A null hypothesis was also formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Research Question

1. What are the information technology skills required by offices workers in the business offices?

Null Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the urban and rural office workers in the rating of the information technology skills required by the business office workers.

METHODOLOGY

Population and sample for the Study

The population for the study was made up of 600 business office workers, in the 233 limited liability companies registered with the Kogi State Ministry of Commerce and Tourism, Lokoja, as at June, 999. A sample of 250 business office workers was randomly selected for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

A two-section questionnaire was used for data collection. Section (A) was designed to elicit information on the background of the respondents and Section (B) elicit information oil the IT skills required. This is in clusters of technical, conceptual, communication and interpersonal skills. The questionnaire has a five-point scale ranging from least requires (I) to very much required (5). The instrument was pilot-tested to determine the reliability. By the use of the Split-Half method, and with the use of Spearman-Brown formula, it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.95.

The data collected from the 206 respondents were analysed using the mean statistic in order to answer the research question. Any skill statement with a rating of 3.50 or more was accepted as the IT skill required by the business office workers. The t'test statistic was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

FINDINGS

Tables I — 4, contain data that answer the research question. Also, tables 5 — 8 were used for analysis of data that tested the null hypothesis. The tables are presented in clusters of technical, conceptual, communication and interpersonal IT skills required by the business office workers. They include the following:

Research Question 1: What are the information technology skills required by office workers in the business offices?

Table 1:
Mean Responses on the Information Technology Skills (Technical) required by the business office workers [N-206]

S/no	Skills	Means	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Ability to demonstrate knowledge of computer operating systems	3.78	1.10	required
2	Ability to process orders using computers	3.52	1.18	required
3	Ability to operate computer printers	3.67	1.07	required
4	Ability to use the telephone effectively	4.18	0.90	required
5	Ability to use word processing software	3.62	1.20	required
6	Ability to work with accounting software	3.51	1.19	required
7	Ability to make use of spreadsheet software	3.57	1.17	required
8	Ability to work with business graphics and Presentation software	3.55	1.17	required
9	Ability to use Database software	3.56	1.24	required
10	Ability to operate photocopier	4.00	1.07	required
11	Ability to operate Fax Machine	3.55	1.23	required
12	Ability to store/retrieve documents in the Computer	3.68	1.18	required
13	Ability to demonstrate knowledge of system Arch 3.38	3.38	1.26	not required
14	Ability to work utility software	3.46	1.18	not required
15	Ability to use Anti-virus software	3.66	1.14	required
16	Ability to use telex machines	3.20	1.24	not required
17	Ability to use communications software	3.59	1.33	required
18	Ability to use electric typewriter	4.12	1.10	required
19	Ability to demonstrate the knowledge of office Automation systems	3 60	1.21	required
20	Ability to work with decision support software	3.47	1.25	not required
21	Ability to use statistical analysis and forecasting Software	3.50	1.25	required
22	Ability to use desktop publishing software	3.50	1.18	required

The data presented in table I reveal that out of 22 technical related information Technology skills listed, 4 skills were not required. These include those listed on items 13, 14, 16, and 20. These are the abilities to demonstrate knowledge of system architectures (3.38), work with utility software (3.46), use telex machine (3.20) and work with decision support software 3.47). However the respondent's means ratings on the remaining 18 skills range from 3.50 (e.g. ability to use desktop publishing software) to 4.18 (i.e. ability to use the telephone effectively). Therefore, the business office workers require 18 technical related information technology skills. On the conceptual skills required by the office workers, the data collected are presented in table 2

Table 2:
Mean Responses on the Conceptual skills required by the Offices Workers (N-2O6)

S/no	Skills	Means	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Ability to define information Technology of the organization.	3.72	1.10	required
2.	Ability to choose appropriate hardware.	3.64	1.15	required
3.	Ability to select appropriate application Package.	3.70	1.09	required
4.	Ability to access the appropriateness of Information Technology equipment.	3.65	1.08	required
5.	Ability to manage effectively information Technology resources of the office.	3.84	1.01	required
6.	Ability to safeguard information technology Equipment.	3.96	0.93	required
7.	Ability to follow trends in information Technology.	3.83	1.04	required

The data, in table 2 show that, all the seven listed information technology skills (conceptual), are required by the office workers. For example, the abilities to choose appropriate hardware (3.64) and safeguard information technology equipment (3.96) are some of the conceptual skills required by the office workers.

Furthermore, the communications skills related to information technology skills are presented in table 3 which shows the means and standard deviation of the item listed.

Table 3:
Mean Responses of the information technology Skills communication required by the office workers [N-206]

S/no	Skills	Means	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Ability to demonstrate knowledge of good Grammar.	4.31	0.71	Required
2	Ability to punctuate correctly	4.00	1.00	Required
3	Ability to capitalize correctly	4.01	1.03	Required
4	Ability to proof-read documents correctly	4.33	0.81	Required
5	Ability demonstrate good oral communication	4.06	0.99	Required

The responses from the respondents presented in table 3 reveal that all the listed items relating communication skills necessary for information technology are required. All the items have means ratings of not less than 4.00 and standard deviations of not more than 1 .00. These means could be considered high, which signify the extent to which they skill are required by the office workers. Thus communication skills are much required by office workers working with information technology.

Finally, on the interpersonal skills required by the office workers, table 6 reveals the data collected for the study.

Table 4:
Mean Ratings on the Interpersonal Skills required by Office workers (N-206)

S/no	Skills	Means	Std. Dev.	Decision
I.	Ability to cooperate with other workers	4.07	0.95	required
2.	Ability to work under supervision	3.79	1.12	required
3.	Ability to tolerate routine work	3.69	1.27	required
4.	Ability to cope with pressure	4.00	1.00	required
5.	Ability to accept criticism	3.96	1.00	required
6.	Ability to concentrate at work	4.27	0.88	required
7.	Ability to exercise loyalty	4.24	0.78	required
8.	Ability to demonstrate tact	3.99	0.99	required

Table 4 reveals that the ratings on all the 8 items of interpersonal skills relating to information technology have means of not less than 3.50. Therefore, the business office workers require all the interpersonal skills.

Null Hypothesis1: There is no significant difference between the urban and rural office workers in the rating of the information technology skills required by the business office workers.

Table 5:
Comparison between the mean responses of the urban and rural office workers on the technical information technology skills (N-206) required

S/no.	Skills required — abilities to:	Means		Std. Dev.		t'cal	Decisions
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural		
1.	demonstrate knowledge of Computer operating systems	3.62	3.61	1.24	0.97	0.07	Not Sign.

No.	Skill					t	Decision
2	process order using c'puters	3.54	3.90	1.23	0.99	-2.32	Significant
3	operate computer printers	3.65	3.90	1.16	0.88	1.79	Not Sign.
4	use the telephone effectively	4.25	4.05	0.98	0.97	1.44	Not Sign.
5	use word processing software	3.67	3.98	1.29	0.87	-2.07	Significant
6	work with accounting S/ware	3.53	3.83	1.28	1.11	-1.79	Not Sign.
7	make use of spreadsheet S/w	3.52	3.98	1.21	0.87	-3.17	Significant
8	work with business graphics and presentation software	3.51	3.88	1.22	1.02	-2.36	Significant
9	use database software	3.62	3.83	1.29	1.09	-2.26	Not Sign.
10	operate photocopier	3.94	4.13	1.22	0.79	-1.36	Not Sign.
11	operate fax machine	3.65	3.54	1.36	1.24	0.60	Not Sign.
12	store/retrieve documents in the computer	3.81	3.88	1.27	1.02	-0.44	Not Sign.
13	demonstrate knowledge of system architectures	3.61	3.59	1.30	1.22	0.11	Not Sign.
14	work with utility S/ware	3.69	3.71	1.19	1.16	-0.12	Not Sign.
15	use Anti- virus S/ware	3.63	3.88	1.19	1.05	-0.59	Not Sign.
16	use telex machine	2.96	3.12	1.25	1.20	-0.92	Not Sign.
17	use of communication S/ware	3.91	3.83	1.08	1.06	0.53	Not Sign.
18	use electronic t/writer	4.15	4.12	1.22	0.88	0.21	Not Sign.
19	demonstrate knowledge of office automation systems	3.90	3.73	1.04	1.09	1.13	Not Sign.
20	work with decision support software	3.90	3.61	1.10	1.17	1.79	Not Sign.
21	use statistical analysis and Forecasting software	3.84	3.73	1.08	1.13	0.70	Not Sign.
22	use desktop publishing S/W	3.56	3.61	0.87	1.04	-0.36	Not Sign.

Table 5 reveals, that there were significant differences among the respondents in four out of the 22 listed technical skills. These 4 items have the calculated t' less than the tablet' of 1.96 or —1.96. These includes: the abilities to: process others using computer (-2.32), use word processing software (-2.07), working accounting software (-3.17), and ability to make use of spreadsheet software (- 2.36). The implication of these results is that the rural office workers perceive the skills to be of higher requirements than the urban office workers. On the other hand, the results of the remaining 18 skills show no significant differences among the categories of the

respondents. Therefore, the null hypothesis in respect of the 4 skills is rejected, but accepted in respect of the remaining 18 listed skills.

The analysis of the conceptual information technology skills required is presented in table 6 as follows:

Table 6:
Comparison of the mean responses of the urban and rural office workers on the Conceptual information technology skills required

S/no.	Skills required — abilities to:	Means		Std. Dev.		t'cal	Decisions
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural		
1.	define information needs	3.75	3.85	1.19	0.93	-0.07	Not Sign
2.	choose appropriate hardware	3.62	3.88	1.22	1.00	-1.67	Significant
3.	select appropriate application package	3.75	3.85	1.15	0.98	-9.20	Not Sign
4.	assess appropriateness of information technology equipment	3.58	3.88	1.16	0.95	-2.03	Not Sign
5.	manage effectively information technology resources	3.87	3.95	1.10	0.89	-0.58	Not Sign
6.	safeguard information technology equipment.	4.02	3.98	0.93	0.93	0.30	Not Sign
7.	follow trends in information technology	3.89	3.96	1.05	1.03	0.20	Not Sign

Table 6 reveals that there is significant difference among the urban and rural office workers, on one out seven listed conceptual information technology skills. This is listed on item 4; their ability to asses their appropriateness of information technology equipment (cal. T' of 2.03). The results further show that there is no significant difference on their perception on the remaining six skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis in respect of the only skill is rejected but accepted for the remaining six skills.

Furthermore, the analysis of the communication related to information technology is presented in table 7

Table 7:
Comparison of the mean perception of the urban and communication skill required for information technology

S/no.	Skills required — abilities to:	Means		Std. Dev.		t'cal	Decisions
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural		
1.	demonstrate knowledge of good grammar	4.30	4.34	0.80	0.61	-0.41	Not Sign
2.	punctuate correctly	4.02	4.10	1.03	0.91	-0.59	Not Sign
3.	capitalize correctly	4.07	4.00	1.05	0.97	0.49	Not Sign
4.	proofread documents correctly	4.31	4.32	0.82	0.75	-0.09	Not Sign

5.	demonstrate good oral communication	4.06	4.12	1.00	0.92	-0.44	Not Sign

The data analysis in table 7, show that there are no significant difference in the mean perception of communication skill required among the urban and rural office workers. The t' calculated for the five listed communication skills are less than the table t of +1.96 or —1 .96. Therefore, the null hypothesis in respect of these skills is rejected.

On the interpersonal information technology skills required between the two categories of workers, the analysis is shown in table 8.

Table 8:
Mean responses between the urban and rural office workers on the interpersonal information technology skills required

S/no.	Skills required — abilities to:	Means		Std. Dev.		t'cal	Decisions
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural		
1.	cooperate with other workers	4.02	4.02	1 .09	0.93	0.00	Not Sign
2.	work under supervision	3.72	4.02	1.22	0.93	-2.00	Sign
3.	tolerate routine work	3.61	3.73	1.35	1.33	-0.63	Not Sign
4.	cope with pressure	3.94	4.07	1.00	0.90	-0.97	Not Sign
5.	accept criticism	3.99	3.98	0.99	0.98	-0.07	Not Sign
6.	concentrate at work	4.30	4.15	0.84	0.93	1.18	Not Sign
7.	exercise loyalty	4.23	4.15	0.76	0.93	0.65	Not Sign
8.	demonstrate tact	3.99	4.05	0.96	0.97	-0.44	Not Sign

The data analyzed in table 8, indicate that, there is significant difference in the mean perception on only one interpersonal, information technology skills. This is the ability to work under supervision (t' calculated of —2.00). This implies that the office workers in the rural areas rated the skill higher than the urban office workers. However, there is no significant difference in the mean perception between the two categories of workers on the remaining seven skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis in respect of the only one skill (ability to work under supervision) is rejected, but accepted for the remaining seven interpersonal information technology skills.

Discussion
This study sought to identify and validate technology skills required by office workers in the business offices. From the analysis of the data presented in tables - 4, it was revealed that business office workers require all skills listed in the conceptual (7), communication (5), and interpersonal skills (8). However, in the technical cluster, four skills out of 22 were not required. These include the, abilities to: demonstrate knowledge of system architectures, work with utility software, and use telex machine and work with decision support software. These findings show' that, an office worker is expected to be versatile in the use of information technology. This is in accordance with the findings of a study by Ohakwe (2000) and Atueyi (2000). They found out that the contemporary office workers is required to acquire broad-based skills in computer applications and knowledge of information technology.

On the other hand, the abilities to work with utility software and decision support software were not-required. This might be due to the fact that these packages are mostly

applicable to the maintenance engineers, and the top management respectively, (Boritz, 2000). The telex machine has become traditional information technology equipment in most offices in Nigeria, and as such, is no longer in demand in the offices.

Tables 5 — 8, contained data used to test the null hypothesis. The results show no significant difference in the perception of the urban and rural business office workers on the IT skills required. This underscores the similarity of office functions (Popyk, 1983) irrespective of the location. Thus, whether the office is located in the urban or rural areas, the basic function of information processing and management are necessary. The tools for carrying out these functions are also required irrespective of the location of the office.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that business office workers communication and the interpersonal aspects of information technology skills.

1. In-service training programme should be organized for the business office employees by their employers to update skills in information technology. These training programmes should incorporate the technical, conceptual, communication and the interpersonal aspects of information technology skills.
2. The current business education curricula in the schools should be reviewed by the business educators to include the current skills requirements of information technology.
3. Appropriate and relevant information technology equipment should be provided in schools by the school authorities for practical training in office occupations.
4. Business educators, who are the trainers of office workers, should constantly update their knowledge and skills in information technology, through in-service training, workshops, seminars, conferences and personal study.

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(2) Identification and Evaluation of Material
Resources Available for Teaching Computer
Appreciation in Selected Colleges of Education in Nigeria
C.E. Eze and
E.C. Osuala. A

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify and evaluate the material resources available for teaching computer appreciation in selected colleges of education in Nigeria. 15 heads of business education departments and 15 computer appreciation teachers in the selected colleges of education were used for the study. Two research questions were answered while one hypothesis was tested. A 25-item questionnaire was used to elicit information for the study. Frequencies, percentages and means were used to analyse the research questions while the hypothesis was tested using t distribution. It was found that computer units, computer appreciation textbooks. Software packages etc were available for teaching computer appreciation. However, it was found that the number of computer units, the workstations provided the computer laboratories for teaching computer appreciation were inadequate.

Introduction

The contemporary society clearly exemplifies the impact of technological innovation on both individual and society. Information technology, particularly, computer technology has become an indispensable ally and tool for the everyday chores of many civilized societies. The use of computers is also spreading in almost all sectors of the economy of developing countries (Eze, 1999). Consequently, the teaching of computer is being introduced into all levels of the education system of many nations. In Nigeria, computer appreciation/literacy is being taught in the N.C.E. business education programmes of colleges of education to prepare prospective business teachers in the use and teaching of the new technology. Computer literacy is a study of the skills necessary to operate a computer and the principles of the working of the hardware as well as the major computer applications and their social implications (Bostock and Seifert. 1987).

The effective preparation of any caliber of teachers is dependent on the availability and quality of teacher trainers and the availability and adequacy of material resources for their training. The ability of N.C.E. Business Education teachers to use the computer or to teach computer appreciation/literacy in secondary and primary schools will depend to a large extent on the availability and adequacy of material resources used in teaching them computer literacy in

colleges of education. However, little or no empirical data exist on the availability and adequacy of material resources for teaching computer appreciation. Apart from the findings of Ibe (1994) and Njoku (1997) that there were inadequate computers in business education departments of colleges of education, much of the submissions made by educators on the issue of computer education were based on generalized faulty statements and educated guesses. For instance. Smith (1989) and Braun (1981) stated that lack of qualified teachers, hardware and software militate against the introduction of computer education in schools while Aina (1991 and Olaitan 996) highlighted that the material resources for teaching vocational education in Nigerian schools were substandard. Since most of the above submissions centre on the field of vocational education, the major purpose of this study therefore was to empirically identify and evaluate the human and material resources available for teaching computer appreciation in selected colleges of education in Nigeria.

Research Questions
        The study answered the following research questions:
1. What are the material resources available for teaching computer appreciation in selected colleges of education in Nigeria?
2. How adequate are the material resources for teaching computer appreciation in the selected colleges of education?

Hypothesis
Ho: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of computer appreciation teachers and heads of business education department on the adequacy of material resources for teaching computer appreciation at 0.05 alpha level.

Population
        The population of the study consisted of 16 computer appreciation teachers and 16 heads of departments of business education drawn from the 16 colleges of education in the selected states of Nigeria. The population distribution is shown in Table I on page 17

Design of the study
        The survey research design was used because the study elicited the opinions of computer appreciation teachers and heads of business education departments. Studies on opinion usually adopt the survey research design.

Description of instrument used
        A structured questionnaire containing 25 items was designed for this study. The items were grouped under three sections numbered A to C.
        Section A was designed to obtained background information about the respondents and contained three items numbered 1 to 3.
        Section B contained 14 likert items numbered 4 to 17 for verifying research question I — the availability of material resources. The response categories were very much available, available, no opinion, unavailable and very much unavailable.

Section C contained 8 items numbered 18 to 25 for verifying research question 2 — the adequacy of material resources for teaching computer appreciation. These items contained five response categories of very adequate, adequate, moderately adequate, inadequate and very inadequate.

Validation and Reliability of the instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to face validation by two specialists in measurement and evaluation and three experts in Business Education at the University of Nigeria. Nsukka. Thereafter, the instrument was subjected to test-retest reliability to further evaluate the consistency of the items. A reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained, implying a very high reliability of the questionnaire items.

Data collection and Analysis Technique

A total of 32 questionnaire copies were administered on 16 heads of business education and 16 computer appreciation teachers in the selected colleges of education. On the whole, 30 copies were retrieved —15 from computer appreciation teachers and 15 from heads of business education departments.

Frequencies, percentages and means were used to analyze the data pertaining to the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. A mean cut-off point of 3.5 was accepted as available or adequate while a mean cut-off point of 3.49 was rejected. The null hypothesis was accepted where the t-calculated at 0.05 alpha level was less than the table t for the given degree of freedom.

Findings

Based on the mean responses of the items in table 2 (see p 1 8) it was found that the following material resources were available for teaching computer appreciation.
1. computer units (4.03)
2. software packages (3.83)
3. computer appreciation textbooks (3.8)
4. computer coding sheets (3.6)
5. computer Laboratories/rooms (4.37)
6. air-conditioning system in the computer laboratories (3.93)
7. computer tapes (3.63)
8. diskettes (4.23)
9. carbon ribbon (3.7)
10. disk drive (3.7)
11. modem (3.6)

Conversely, it was found that punch cards (2.97), punching machine (2.37) and uninterrupted power supply (2.9) were unavailable for teaching computer appreciation in the selected colleges of education.

Based on the mean responses of the items in table 3 (see p 19) it was found that air conditioning system (3.67) and the illumination in the computer laboratories (3.83) were adequate whereas the number of computer units (2.57) the work stations provided (2.73) the computer

laboratories (3.17) and the number of current software packages (3.17) available for teaching computer appreciation were inadequate.

An analysis of the ratio of computer units to students table 4 (see p 1 8) showed that about half of the colleges studied had more than 30 students to one computer unit, which is the maximum ration of students to one computer unit recommended in the NCCE Minimum Standards for N.C.E. Business Education (1996) while about half had less than 30 students to one computer unit. The mean ratio of student to one computer unit in alt the sixteen colleges of education is 31 .6 approximately. 32 students to one computer unit implying that the computer unit available for teaching computer appreciation in the selected colleges were inadequate vis-à-vis the N.C.C.E. minimum standards.

The t-test analysis in table 5 (see p20) showed that there were no significant difference in the mean ratings of computer appreciation teacher and heads of business education departments on

1. the adequacy of work stations provided for the number of students enrolled in computer appreciation (t-cal 1 .51)
2. the adequacy of air-conditioning system provided in the computer laboratories (t-cal 1.32)

Conversely, there were significant differences in the mean responses of computer appreciation teachers and heads of business education department on the adequacy of

1. the adequacy of work stations provided for the number of students enrolled in computer appreciation (t-cal 1 .51)
2. the adequacy of air-conditioning system provided in the computer laboratories (t-cal 1.32)

Conversely, there were significant differences in the mean responses of computer appreciation teachers and heads of business education department on the adequacy of

1. the number of computer units used when compared in the number of students enrolled and activities taking place (t cal. 4.08)
2. the computer laboratories within the college or department for use in teaching computer appreciation (t cal. 3.8)
3. the number of current software packages used in teaching computer appreciation.

Discussions of the findings
1. The findings pertaining to the research questions revealed that computer units, software packages, computer coding sheets, computer 1aboratories, air-conditioning system in the computer laboratories, computer tapes, diskettes, carbon ribbons, disk drive and modem were available. Only three of the material resources – punch card, punching machine and uninterrupted power supply (UPS) were unavailable. The availability of most of the resources for teaching computer appreciation is in disagreement with Braun (1981) and Smith (1989) that lack of hardware and software militate against the introduction of computer education in schools.
2. It was found that basic material resources for teaching computer appreciation course namely computer units, the work stations provided, the computer laboratories and the number of current software packages were inadequate. The above findings are in agreement with Aina (1991) and Olaitan (1996) that the material resources for teaching

vocational education in Nigerian schools were substandard. The findings also agree with the findings of Ibe (1994) and Njoku (1997) that there were inadequate instructional equipment for effective teaching of business education in colleges of education. The implications of the above findings are that the N.C.C.E should reduce the ratio of students to one computer unit if adequate computer practice is to be ensured while colleges should provide more materials for computer appreciation.

The findings pertaining to the hypothesis revealed that the teachers and the of departments disagreed on the adequacy of computer units, computer laboratories, the illumination in the computer laboratories and the number of current software packages. The heads of departments considered the computer units moderately adequate while the teachers considered them inadequate. Similarly, the heads of departments considered the computer laboratory, the illumination in the laboratories and the number of current software packages adequate. while the teachers considered them inadequate. It is possible that in an effort to cover up the administration. the heads of departments claimed that the material resources were adequate while the teachers objective reported the inadequacy of the material resources. It is also possible that the heads of departments based their judgment on the N.C.C.E. computer student ratio of 1:30 whereas the teachers based their judgment on the extent to which the materials were actually adequate in meeting the instructional objectives

Conclusion
Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.
1. Most of the material resources for teaching computer appreciation courses in the selected colleges of education were inadequate. The inadequacy of the material resources will certainly militate against the effective teaching and learning of computer appreciation course.
2. The significant difference found in the mean ratings of heads of departments and computer appreciation teachers on the adequacy of material resources demonstrated the tendency of heads of departments to protect the administration by being positive in their responses.

Recommendations
The following recommendations were made:-
1. Heads of departments of business education should liaise with their college managements to ensure that adequate material resources are provided for the teaching of computer appreciation.
2. The N.C.C.E. should reduce the ratio of students to one computer unit in the minimum standards for Business Education to possibly 15 students to 1 computer unit. This will ensure that students get sufficient hands experience on the computer.

Table 1
Population Distribution

Colleges	Heads of Business Education Dept.	Computer Appreciation Teachers	Total
Federal College of Education Eha-Amufu Enugu State	1	1	2
IMT Enugu. Enugu State	1	1	2
Osisatech Enugu. Enugu State	1	1	2
Institute of' Ecumenical Studies Enugu	1	1	2
Federal College of Education (T) Umunze	1	1	2
College of Education. Nsugbe Anambra State	1	1	2
Federal College of Education (T) Asaba Delta State	1	1	2
College of Education Agbor Delta State	1	1	2
College of Education, Warri Delta State	1	1	2
College of Education Ekidialor Benin	1	1	2
Federal Polytechnic Auchi, Edo State	1	1	2
Federal College of Education Okene Kogi State	1	1	2
College of Education. Ankpa Kogi State	1	1	2
College of Education Kastina Ala	1	1	2
College of Education, Oju Benue State	1	1	2
Total	**16**	**16**	**32**

Table 2
Material Resources Available for Teaching Computer Appreciation in selected Colleges of Education in Nigerian

S/No.	Material Resources	Very much Available	Available	No Option	Unavailable	Very much Unavailable	$\overline{X}$	Remarks
4	Computer units	10 33%	17 57%	-	3 10%	-	4.03	Available
5	Software	3 10%	24 80%	-	-	3 10%	3.8	Available
6	Computer appreciation textbook	10 33%	20 67%	-	-	-	4.33	Available
7	Punch cards	-	17 57%	4 13%	9 30%	-	2.97	Unavailable
8	Punching machine	-	11 37%	4 13%	15 50%	-	2.37	Unavailable
9	Uninterrupted power supply	7 23%	3 10%	-	20 67%	-	2.9	Unavailable
10	Computer coding sheet	4 13%	16 53%	7 23%	3 10%	-	3.6	Available
11	Computer laboratory/room	11 37%	19 63%	-	-	-	4.37	Available
12	Air-conditioning system in the computer laboratory	7 23%	20 67%	-	3 10%	-	3.93	Available
13	Computer tapes	4 13%	17 57%	3 10%	6 20%	-	3.63	Available
14	Diskettes	7 23%	23 77%	-	-	-	4.23	Available
15	Carbon ribbon	3 10%	23 77%	-	4 13%	-	3.7	Available
16	Disk drive	3 10%	23 77%	-	4 13%	-	3.7	Available
17	Modem	3 10%	18 60%	3 10%	6 20%	-	3.6	Available

Table 3
Adequacy of Material resources for Teaching Computer Appreciation

S/No.	Material Resources	VAD	AD	MAD	INA	VIN	$\overline{X}$	Remarks
18	Number of computer units used when compared to the number of students enrolled and activities taking place	-	8 27%	10 33%	3 10%	9 30%	2.57	Inadequate
19	The work stations provided for the number of students enrolled in computer appreciation	-	7 23%	11 37%	9 30%	3 10%	1.7	Inadequate
20	Computer laboratory within the department or college for use in teaching computer appreciation	-	14 47%	10 33%	3 10%	3 10%	3.17	Inadequate
21	Air conditioning system in the computer laboratory	6 20%	11 37%	10 33%	3 10%	-	3.67	Adequate
22	The general illumination and type of illumination	7 23%	14 47%	6 20%	3 10%	-	3.83	Adequate
23	The number of current software packages	3 10%	8 27%	10 33%	9 30%	-	3.17	Inadequate

Table 4
Ratio of Computer Appreciation Students
To 1 Computer Unit (System)

Colleges	Number of Students	No. of computers	Ratio of Students to 1 computer
PCE Eha-Amufu	40	1	40
IMT Enugu	180	3	60
Osisatech	90	6	15
F.C.E Okene	230	8	28.75
C.O.E Ankpa	60	1	60
Institute of Ecumenical Studies Enugu	35	1	35
C.O.E Oju	43	1	43
C.O.E Katsina Ala	49	1	49
C.O.E Nsugbe	80	2	40
F.C.E. (T) Umunze	180	8	22
F.C.E. (T) Asaba	240	8	30
C.O.E Agbor	220	8	27.5
C.O.E Warri	200	8	25
C.O.E Benin	170	7	24.29
Federal Polytechnic Auchi	46	3	15.3
Federal Polytechnic Okoh	32	2	16
N = 16, $\sum$ Ratio			**506.18**

$$\overline{X}\text{Ratio} = \frac{506.18}{16}$$

31.6

Table 5
t-test Analysis of Mean Ratings of Computer Appreciation Teachers and Heads of Business Education Departments on the adequacy of material resources for teaching computer appreciation

S/No.	Material Resources	HODS $\overline{X}_1$ N=15	CA Teachers $\overline{X}_2$ N=15	t Cal	t table	Remarks
18	Number of computer units used when compared to the number of students enrolled and activities taking place	2.3	2	4.08	2.05	Reject
19	The work stations provided for the number of students enrolled in computer appreciation	2.93	2.4	1.61	"	Accept
20	Computer laboratory within the department or college for use in teaching computer appreciation	3.73	2.6	3.8	"	Reject
21	Air conditioning system in the computer laboratory	3.93	3.4	1.32	"	Accept
22	The general illumination and type of illumination	4.27	3.4	2.92	"	Reject
23	The number of current software packages	3.53	2.8	2.15	"	Reject

Critical or table t value = 2.05
Degree of freedom (df) = $N_1 + N_2 - 2 = 28$

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(3) Evaluation of Business Subject Teachers In the Secondary Schools In Cross River State.
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Abstract

This study investigated the availability and adequacy of business subject teachers for Senior Secondary business education in Cross River State. The research design was a survey, and the subjects were the 258 business subject teachers in the 139 Senior Secondary schools in the state. A structured questionnaire was employed. Three research questions guided the study. Data generated by the instrument was analysed using frequency tables and percentages. Results obtained indicate that there is a paucity of business educators in the senior secondary schools. It was thus concluded that the quality of business education given in the Senior Secondary schools in the state was below the standard required for self-reliance or employment in industry or ministry. It was therefore recommended that the federal and state governments should employ more business educators and together with the appropriate professional bodies step up their involvements in monitoring standards in Senior Secondary business education.

Introduction

Business education came into line light in Nigeria with the issue of the national policy on education (1977) later revised (1981). The policy is aimed at among other things, the acquisition of the appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (FME 1998). Business education was thus given prominence in the school curriculum. The programme is multifaceted, and its principles and techniques are needed in all walks of life.

The curriculum includes offerings in bookkeeping and accounts, stenography, typewriting, clerical work and distributive education.

Several definitions of business education have been given, some of which focus on the content of the programme, (Moistad, 1995) the level where it is delivered (US Bureau of

Education, 1991) or both (Osuala, 1995). According to Osuala (1995) business education consists of that group of related, occupationally arranged courses which are prescribed for graduation and for possible certification in the field of business placement. Business education comprises:

i.   Vocationa1 or job education for initial office or selling jobs and for management of individually owned controlled and operated enterprises.

ii. General or basic knowledge and understanding of business essential for all persons regardless of age, occupations, professions, social or economic status. At the tertiary level, the term business education is sometimes used as synonymous with education in the broad area of business administration in which the objective is primarily preparatory for professional careers in management and administration of business enterprises. This term is also used to designate the preparation of teachers of business and economics for both secondary and higher education. At the senior secondary school level the business education programme is aimed at preparing students for initial employment in the general administrative sections of business enterprises and government.

iii. Preparing them for further studies in the tertiary institutions.

iv. Fostering the acquisition of technical knowledge and vocational skills, which could lead to agricultural, commercial and economic development (FME 1998). The realization of this aim depends to a great extent on the business educators.

According to Okoro (1990), the mere possession of skills will not lead to employment unless there are vacancies in industry and commercial establishments requiring those skills. Cross River State has recently been availed with such employment opportunities by the establishment of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) (Areola, 1995; Akpan 1995).

The Export Processing Zone project is an industrialization drive which will attract investments from foreign investors, indigenous investors, governments and private individual. When fully operational. the project will "... serve as an avenue for promoting export oriented industrial development, exposing Nigerian Craftsmen, engineers and technicians to modern technology, generating employment, and creating backward linkage for primary industry" (Akpan 1995). Business subject students must therefore, be prepared so that they can be utilized to the optimum, the job opportunities provided by the Export Processing Zone Project.

The senior secondary schools constitute the feeder system for the business education departments in the tertiary institutions. There are four tertiary institutions in the state — The Polytechnic in Calabar, two colleges of education and the University of Calabar. It therefore becomes imperative for business education to be effective and functional at the secondary school level to be able to produce students who are qualified to proceed to tertiary level business education or who are adequately prepared for their career responsibilities.

Effective implementation of the business education curriculum calls for competency on the part of the teachers who handle the subjects even in the senior secondary schools. The adaptation of the curriculum to meaningful learning experiences depends solely on the teachers. This makes them almost the most important in the teaching and learning situation. Good education and professional training are indispensable in equipping teachers with skills knowledge and ability to disseminate information in their subject areas so as to facilitate student learning. For effective student learning it is recommended that business subject teachers in secondary schools should have a minimum of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (N.C.E). This

should qualify them to teach in the junior classes, that is, JSS 1-3. Only those who hold at least a first degree in business education may teach the senior secondary classes.

In addition to the basic academic qualification, business subject teachers are expected to acquire a reasonable level of industrial experience and, in fact, continue to interact with the business/industrial world so as to keep abreast of new technological innovations. With these. they will be able to prepare students as effective consumers and workers. Hence this stud\ was intended to evaluate the adequacy of business subjects teachers in senior secondary schools in Cross River State for effective teaching.

In order to achieve the objectives of this study. an attempt was made to answer the following research questions:
1. To what extent do teachers of business subjects meet the basic requirements for teaching in the senior secondary schools?
2. What is the level of their industrial experience?
3. To what extent are they involved in professional improvement programmes?

METHODOLOGY

Population for the study: The population consisted of 1258 business subjects teachers in the 139 senior secondary schools in Cross River State. No sampling was done because this population was small (less than 300) and could, according to research experts, be studied in its entirety (Nwarina 1980, Osuala 1987, Ali 1996).

Method of Data Collection

The instrument employed for data collection was a questionnaire, which had six items. It was designed to elicit information on the adequacy of business subjects teachers in senior secondary schools in Cross River State. It was constructed by the researchers and validated by experts in research and in business education in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The questionnaire was administered by hand and collected after completion.

Data Analysis
Data collection from 241 subjects were analysed using frequency and percentages. The following decision was made: only teachers holding a minimum qualification of the B.Sc degree in Business Education or other related areas were considered qualified to teach the business subjects in the senior secondary schools.

FINDINGS

Research questions I
To what extent do the business subject teachers meet the basic requirements for teaching in the senior secondary schools?
The data related to this research question 1 are presented in table 1.

Table I presents the business teacher distribution in senior secondary schools by academic qualification. As can be seen from the table, teachers with a B.Sc in business education

numbered 56 in the state and three in the Federal schools. The total 59 constitutes only 23% of all the business teachers in the state. Those with a B.Sc in other business areas numbered 25 in the state schools and seven in the Federal schools. The table also shows that there are 88 teachers with NCE business education in the whole state 87 of whom are employed in the state and only one in the federal school. This group of teachers ranks 35% of the total business teachers in the senior secondary schools in the state.

Table I
Business teacher distribution in senior secondary schools by academic qualification

School	state $n_1 = 230$		Federal $n_2 = 11$		Total $N = 241$	
Qualification	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
B.Sc. Bus. Edu.	56	23	3	27	59	23
B.Sc./B.Ed in other areas	25	10	7	64	32	13
NCE Business	87	36	1	9	88	35
HND	46	19	-	-	46	18
ND in Business areas	2	1	-	-	2	1
NCE in other areas	14	6	-	-	146	-
ND in other areas	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	230	95	11	100	241	95

According to table 1, no teacher with any qualification other than those mentioned above is employed to teach business subjects in the federal secondary schools. However, in the state schools there are 46 teachers with HND; two with ND in business areas and 14 teachers holding the NCE in areas other than business education. These constitute 19%. 1%, and 6% respectively, of teachers of business subjects in senior secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research question 2

What is the level of industrial work experience of the business teachers in the senior secondary schools?

Table 2
Business Teacher Exposure to Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)

Period of Industrial Experience	Participation No.	Teacher (%)
No experience in SIWES	46	19
Up to 12 week experience	128	53
12 – 64 weeks	67	28
Total	241	100

Table 2 which concerns the business teachers exposure to industrial work experience shows that 67 teachers (28%) received industrial training for periods beyond 12 weeks: 128 or 53% trained for up to 12 weeks; and only 46 or 19% did not receive any industrial training at all.

Research question 3
To what extent are the business subject teachers involved in professional improvement Programmes?

Table 3
Business Teachers Participation in Workshops, Seminars, In-Service Training and Membership of Professional Bodies

School type (N=241)	seminar		Workshop		In-service		Membership	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
State (n=230)	70	30	44	19	18	8	34	15
Federal (n=11)	4	36	5	45	3	27	3	27
Total	74	66	49	64	21	33	37	42

The data on table 3 which concerns the business teacher participation on workshops, seminars, in-service training and membership of professional bodies shows that only 74 or 30% of the 241 respondents attended seminars; 49 or 20% attended workshop 21 or nine percent benefited from in-service training and 37 or 15% belonged to any professional body.

Summary of findings
The findings of the study show that business subjects are taught by both business educators and teachers who do not qualify to teach such in the senior secondary schools in Cross River State. The business educator numbered 147 constituting 61 % of business teachers in the senior secondary schools. Out of this number, only 59 or 24% qualified to teach at the senior secondary level.

The findings also indicate that teachers with only the NCE were allowed to teach the business subjects at the senior secondary level. The NCE teachers numbered 88. 87 of these were found in the state schools while only one was found in the federal secondary schools.

The findings indicate that people who did not have any teaching qualification were allowed to teach business subjects even at the senior secondary level. Those who hold a B.Sc degree in areas other than business education numbered 32 or 13%. HND 46 or l9%. In the state schools only there were 14 teachers (6%) holding the N.C.E certificate in areas outside business education, and two teachers (1%) holding the national diploma certificate in business areas.

Of the 241 teachers who responded to the instrument, 195 or 81% have had industrial experience for periods ranging from 12 to 64 weeks. Only 46 or 19% had no industrial experience of any form.

To further qualify to teach business subjects, 37 or 15% only of the respondents belonged to professional bodies, 74 or 30% attended seminars. 49 or 20% participated in workshops, and 21 or 9% only benefited from ill-service training.

Discussion of findings
According to the findings of the this study the number of teachers who qualify to teach business subjects in senior secondary schools in Cross River State is very low, 59 teachers or 23%. As many as 88 teachers or 35%, though business educators by qualification and training are not competent to handle the business subjects at the senior secondary level because they hold only the N.C.E The other 96 or 38% of the teachers lack either the academic or pedagogical background required for teaching business subjects in the senor secondary schools. These unqualified teachers cannot possibly demonstrate skills, which they themselves do not possess. It is against this background that Olaitan (1982) suggested that the job of teaching skill subjects be left only in the hands of competent technical/business teachers, or the right techniques would not be followed and acquisition of skills would be hampered.

According to this study, 195 or 81% of the business subject teachers in the state have industrial experience, which is indispensable in effective instruction in business education. Therefore, experts like Nwaokolo (1990) and Obi (1990) would consider them adequately prepared for their career responsibility. The teachers cannot, therefore, attribute the job incompetence demonstrated by the products of senior secondary schools business education to a complete lack in industrial training.

Conclusions
Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:
1. There is a paucity of business educations in Cross River State of Nigeria
2. The available business educators do not all qualify to teach the senior secondary classes.
3. The business subject teachers did not participate actively in self-improvement and updating programmes such as seminars, workshops and in-service programmes.
4. The appropriate professional bodies do not seem to be working hard enough to maintain high standards in business education in the secondary schools.

Implications for Quality Business Education
The findings of this study have profound implications for the quality of education received in the senior secondary schools in Cross River State. The quality of education that the senior secondary school student receives bears direct relevance to the availability of business among other factors. It is therefore, feared that the prevalent dearth of business educators would pre-dispose the secondary schools to a haphazard implementation of the business education curriculum in the senior secondary schools. This does not make room for skill acquisition, which is one of the aims of business education.

Although education is learner—centered, the teacher occupies a prominent position in the educational system. As such, his knowledge of the subject matter he teaches and skills in teaching them are very important factors which have educational implications for student learning. The teacher with only the national certificate in education (N.C.E.) is not expected to have acquired enough knowledge of subject matter to be able to handle business education in the senior secondary schools.

The wealth of industrial work experience of the business teachers under study imply that they have the know-how of the machines, equipment amid facilities needed for effective teaching

and learning in business education. But studies by Aquah (1998) indicate that these teachers do not utilize the available instructional materials for business education. It is possible that the available instructional materials are newer and more sophisticated than what the teachers experience as student teachers.

Poor attendance at workshops, seminars or in-service training, as indicated by this study implies that the business teachers are not current on technological developments. They would therefore be unable to handle and manage instructional materials which they themselves were not exposed to as student teachers. This could explain the findings of Aquah (1998) of poor utilization of instructional materials in senior secondary business education in Cross River Slate.

Finally, the paucity of business educators for senior secondary business education implies that products of senior secondary business education will not be well equipped for the world of work. Such students may not be able to take advantage of the employment opportunities created by the Export Processing Zone nor he self-reliant or benefit from further education at the university level.

Recommendations

Based on the findings made and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The state government should employ more business educators and insist that only those with a B.Sc degree should leach at the senior secondary level.
2. The government should make it mandatory for those without the teaching qualification to get it within a stipulated time.
3. The ministry of education should see that attendance at workshops and seminars, and membership of the appropriate professional bodies be emphasized especially during business teacher appraisal for promotion, confirmation or regularization.
4. All boards of education e.g. the National Business and Technical Education Board (NABTEB) the Post Primary Schools Management Board (PPSMB): and Professional bodies, such as the Nigeria Vocational Association (NVA) and the National Association of Business Education (NABE), should monitor the standard of business education in the secondary schools.

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(4) Level of Performance of Office Information Processing Systems in Nigerian Universities As Perceived B' Administrative Officers.
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Abstract

The study focused on the determination- of the level of performance of office information processing units in the Universities. This study was necessitated by the introduction of management information services (MIS) into Federal Universities administrative office systems; to assess the level of performance of office information processing operations in the various units feeding the MIS Centre. The instrument for gathering the data was questionnaire and 525 administrative officers were used as the population for the study. The data were analysed using mean ratings and F-ratio statistic. It was found that the level of performance in most of the office Information Processing units was generally low across the Universities used for the study.

Introduction

"Information Management" which has today become a worldwide terminology, has also gradually become synonymous with Office Management". Since information is an important component of the office, it therefore, holds that in this "information age" effective information management is a necessary tool for effective office management. This is the philosophy which under-girds Management Information Systems (MIS) one of the concepts which according to Osuala (1998) has come into the vocabulary of the office and stands for a series of integrated procedures, usually aided by the computer to provide management with need information.

Quibble (1977) has traced the prompting of Management Information Systems to the rapid growth in size and complexity of many organizations, resulting in vastly increasing volumes of paperwork. As a result, such organizations were finding it increasingly difficult to obtain the desired information in the desired format at the desired time. According to him, although the computer has helped to solve this problem to a large extent, yet there is still ample evidence that the computer compounds the problems by generating more volume of paperwork. Therefore, to overcome such problems associated with vast volume of paperwork and be able to obtain the information needed by management for quick and accurate decision-making, management Information Systems was developed.

Carnoy (1994) has pointed out that with the enormous change in the world economy towards an information-based system education, universities would become even more crucial to the economic growth and transformation in developing countries. He further stressed that for universities to fulfill this function, they would have to give up much of their traditional roles and become centers of scientific research and training. Therefore, if the universities would give up

much of their traditional roles because of the present information—based world economy, so will the university officers responsible for processing information needed for decision—makings in such centers. Scientific research and training would definitely need a change in operations, from the traditional office systems to some sort of integrated set-ups. This is the most reasonable-way can meet the demand-level of sophisticated information needed for today's university academic and administrative activities. For this reason, today's emphasis is on change from the isolated traditional office activities to a network of information processing systems.

Thus, the development of Management Information System in Nigeria, particularly in the universities, has become very necessary for the same reasons which prompted same development in several other organizations and institutions. According to the University of Nigeria MIS Brief (2001). the idea of management Information Systems for National Universities was conceived during a conference jointly organized by Nigerian Universities Commission NUC) and the British council in Kaduna in 1987. During this conference, the introduction of management systems was recommended. The reason for the recommendation of MIS services in Nigerian Universities was to overcome the difficulties encountered in data collection, processing and storage. One of the major objectives included the development of viable computerized Management Information Systems, to organize the volume of data which exist in the universities on students, staff and financial records. A second objective is to provide the university administration with timely and accurate information for planning and decision—making. The introduction of MIS into the Nigerian university office administrations began actually in 1990 with lout pilot universities, sponsored by NUC and Overseas Development Administration (ODA). These pilot universities have been responsible for setting up MIS services in other universities.

One major problem identified by the MIS Brief (2001) is that the timely and reliable" information which the MIS is set tip to provide for effective management planning and decision-making, must be based on reliable data obtained from the various Departments/Units. This therefore, constituted the problem of this study. There is the need to find out the level of performance of the office information processing systems in the various Departments/Units which feed the MIS Centre. This is important since the effectiveness of the office information processing systems in the Departments/Unit to a large extent determines the effectiveness of the MIS Services as a coordinating centre.

Office Information Processing Systems are the policies and procedures for the efficient flow of data, text, images and voice, organized to meet the needs of the organization (Oliverio & Pasewark, 1988). According to them, the most commonly identified sub-systems or components of office information processing systems include: Word/Text Processing: Data Processing: Records Management: Reprographics: and Distribution. Owens (1982) has added other sub systems, namely: Telecommunications (voice, data and video): Mailroom and Courier Services: Form Management: Report Management: Micrographics; Electronic Mail: Facsimile and Telecopiers; Decision Support Systems, Graphics, Image Processing and Holography: and Ergonomics—fitting equipment and the work environment to the employee.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the level of performance of the office Information Processing systems in the universities as perceived by administrative officers?

NULL HYPOTHESIS

There are no significant differences (p 0.05) in the mean ratings of Administrative officers on the level of performance of office information processing systems in the various Nigerian Universities.

METHODOLOGV.

Area of study

The study was conducted in the universities located within the Eastern States of Nigeria.

Population

The population for the study comprised of 525 Administrative officers of various positions within the administrative cadres of' the eight Universities tinder study. No sample was taken as the population was sizeable for the study. Administrative officers were chosen to constitute the respondents for the study because they represent "Supervisors" and Office Managers" in the universities like their counterparts in business organizations.

Instrument

The instrument for the collection of data used in the study was questionnaires structured into two sections. Section "A" sought demographic data, while section "B consisted of Office Information Processing Systems tasks arranged in groups of' function. namely: Records Management: Forms Design/Control: Data/Word   Processing: Reprographics; Mailing/transmission: and Office Supplies/Accessories.

The instrument was content—validated on a 5—point scale with the modified Version of Kuder-Richardson Formula (K-R 21). This yielded a reliability coefficient value of 0.91. Furthermore, the respondents rated each performance task comprising the functions on a 5-point Scale of: Always", "Most times". Often". "Sometimes" and "Seldom".

Data collection and Analysis

Copies of the questionnaire distributed to the 525 administrative officers out of which 420 copies were properly filled out and returned. To answer the research question, the level of performance of each task within a function was determined by the mean rating. The Null hypothesis was tested with the use of one—way analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

FINDINGS

1. It was found that there is generally a low level performance in most of the office information processing units in the Universities Office Supplies/Accessories Function has the highest grand mean performance rating of 3.5, followed by Mailing/transmission function with 3.4. Records Management and Reprographics Functions have a grand mean performance rating of 2.8 each. Forms Design/Control Function has a performance grand mean rating of' 2.6: while Data/Word Processing function has the lowest performance grand mean rating of 1.7. The performance mean rating of the various tasks comprising the functions are' as follows:

Records Management Function

S/No	Tasks Performance	Mean	Frequency of performance
(1)	Determining what records to keep and how long	3.2	Often
(2)	Determining when and under what circumstances records should be centralized or decentralized	3.1	"
(3)	Maintaining a high level confidentiality of record	3.1	"
(4)	Maintaining filing and electronic data storage systems capable of meeting management information systems needs	3.0	"
(5)	Ensuring adequate protection of records and storage systems at all times.	3.0	"
(6)	Accepting responsibility for records management systems design and for actual administration sometimes	2.6	"
(7)	Training and supervising office employees for records management programmes to ensure greater efficiency.	2.5	"
(8)	Maintaining a periodic review of records management practices in line with new changes	2.5	"
(9)	Adopting sound and clearly understood records creating data-based as directed by the MIS centre from time to time	2.4	"
(10)	Reviewing records management guidelines for creating data-based as directed by the MIS Centre from time to time	2.4	often

Forms Design and Control Function

(11)	Establishing the need for any and its primary purpose before creation.	3.2	often
(12)	Ensuring simplicity and economy in forms design	3.0	"
(13)	Determining the type of forms to be used by each department/unit to avoid duplication of efforts sometimes	2.9	"
(14)	Instituting a carefully planned programme for design, control and disposal of forms	2.6	"
(15)	Establishing effective forms standardization procedure to enhance central utilization and control	2.6	"
(16)	Ensuring compatibility of forms used throughout the offices/units to facilitate systems integration	2.5	"
(17)	Ensuring proper coding cataloguing and classification of forms in line with MIS operations	2.2	"

(18) Maintaining a period review of the relevance of existing forms and the 2.1 "
effectiveness of the control measures

Data/Word Processing Function

(19) Understanding and utilization of electronic data and word processing 2.3 sometimes
systems applications and appreciating their indispensability in today's
office operations

(20) Directing office systems applications to facilitate effective MIS 2.1 "
operations.

(21) Ensuring the relevance of the systems operations to the needs of the 2.1 "
particular department/unit and also to the needs of the entire
administrative network

(22) Ensuring high degree of flexibility in the systems operations to provide 1.8 Seldom
for growth and accommodate changes

(23) Carrying out continuous exploration for alternative cheaper and more 1.7 "
efficient data and word processing application packages

(24) Application of data/word processing configurations necessary for shared 1.6 "
logics when central processing is required

(25) Ensuring efficient systems analysis to enhance work flow and reduce 1.5 "
processing time loss

(26) Ensuring training and re-training of office personnel to fit into the 1.4 "
present electronic office systems operations

(27) Providing effective supervision for work standards in data/word 1.4 "
processing operations

(28) Carrying out periodic reviews and maintenance of data/word systems 1.3 "
operations for greater efficiency

Reprographic Function

(29) Determining the types of jobs requiring particular reprographic methods 3.5 Often
(such as duplicating, copying, imprinting, etc.)

(30) Establishing the need for office reprographic service 3.2 Often

(31) Ensuring effective supervision and control of reprographic services and 3.2 "
use of materials

(32) Analyzing the flow of work and office practices which give rise to 2.8 Sometimes
reprographic needs

(33) Maintaining period reviews of office reprographic services for 2.7 "
continuous improvements

(34) Centralizing or decentralizing reprographic services in the offices as the   2.3   "
     need arises
(35) Surveying and comparing the utility available reprographic equipment   2.2   "
(36) Standardizing reprographic services equipment to simplify maintenance   2.1   "
     and supplies problems

Mailing/Transmission Function

(37) Providing effective dispatch and transmission operations   4.1   most
                                                                      times
(38) Determining the mailing and transmission needs of the various   3.7   often
     offices/unit under supervision
(39) Coordinating mailing services with the Post Office Authorities, E-   3.7   "
     mail service centers. Courier Firms, etc
(40) Developing mail routing patterns that provide the quickest, fastest   3.4   "
     and most direct flow- sender to receiver.
(41) Developing and standardizing the mailing procedures   3.3   "
(42) Planning the mailing and transmission services and organizing a   2.8   sometimes
     mailing/transmission centre as the need arises
(43) Procuring efficient mailing and/or transmission equipment that   2.6   "
     would serve the need of the office

Office Supplies/ Accessories Function

(44) Inculcating in office staff the habit of economy in the use of supplies,   4.2   most
     accessories and stationery for office operations   times
(45) Determining the right type of supplies and accessories for the office   4.0   "
     operations
(46) Maintaining a good storage system and control for supplies, stationery   3.7   often
     and accessories
(47) Maintaining a reasonable inventory level of stationery and supplies for   3.6   "
     sustained operations
(48) Standardizing the type of accessories and supplies used in the office   3.2   "
(49) Ensuring the availability of supplies and accessories at the right time,   3.0   "
     correct quantity and desired quality
(50) Determining appropriate purchase mode for supplies and accessories   3.0   often
     (direct purchase and/or contracting)
(51) Determining the appropriate re-order quantity level of replenishment of   2.9   sometime
     supplies and accessories (Economic order Quantity)

(52) Streamlining purchasing arrangements for supplies and accessories   2.5   "
(such as centralized or decentralized)

2. It was found that no significant differences existed in the level of Office Information Processing Systems Functions in all the universities. At 0.05 level of significance, the observed F- ratio values were less than their critical values for all the functions. (Table 1)

Results of one-way ANOVA test on the level of Performance of Office information Processing Systems Functions in the Universities

Functions	d.f			SDD			MSD		F(Obs.)	F(Crit.)	Rmks
	Tot.	B/n	W/n	Tot.	B/n	W/n	B/n	W/n			
Records Management	79	7	72	6.61	0.99	5.62	0.14	0.08	1.75	2.15	N/S
Forms Design/Control	63	7	56	9.80	1.96	7.84	0.28	0.14	2.00	2.19	"
Data/Word Processing	79	7	72	8.10	0.84	7.26	0.12	0.10	1.20	2.15	"
Reprographics	63	7	56	10.09	1.99	8.10	0.28	0.14	2.00	2.19	"
Mailing/transmission	55	7	48	5.10	0.70	4.40	0 10	0.09	1.10	2.24	"
Office Supplies/Accessories	71	7	64	6.11	0.56	5.55	0. 08	0.09	0.89	2.16	"

0.05   N/S = Not Significant

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed a pattern in the levels of performance of the Office Information Processing Systems Functions in the universities. Two functions, namely: Office supplies and Accessories, and Mailing/Transmission Functions, have the highest aggregate performance mean ratings of 3.5 and 3.4, respectively. These two functions comprise of operational tasks which are mostly traditional in nature, hence the relatively higher performance level. Records Management and Reprographics Functions which have lower aggregate performance mean ratings of 2.8 each, together with Forms Design/Control Function with 2.6, represent a mixture of some of the traditional office operations and others which have been expanded to accommodate tasks involving new office technologies.

Data/word Processing Function has the lowest aggregate mean performance rating of 1.7. It could be observed that within this function, most of its operations require new technological skills acquisition. The study shows that out of the 10 tasks comprising the function, only three tasks are "often" performed; while the rest seven tasks are 'seldom' performed. The reason for the seldom performance of Data/word Processing function is obvious, since the modern methods of performing the tasks comprising the function are largely computer-based. Drum (1985) and Anderson (1985) are agreed to the fact that Data and Word processing's are not new to the office world, rather the methods of performing them are rapidly changing, thus requiring specialized operations and trainings for every future office personnel. This also affirms the assertion of Kallaus (1985) that within the total area of the office, there is developing a new environment along with broader qualifications needed for its management. This means that, as the simple traditional office of the past gives way to make room for its more complex counterpart, new breed office personnel will be required.

One of the constraints affecting the office \l1ich has been proved by this particular finding of the study, even as has been identified by Bruno(1985) and asserted by Osuala (1998), is the slow response by many organizations to changes which the modern office operations demand. From the result of this study, it seems apparent that the Nigerian universities tend to be very slow in introducing the use of electronic data and word processing operations into their offices. This is true of the observation of Michael (1987) that Nigeria, as a developing nation, is "unfortunately a slow developer" in various aspects of modern office technologies. This slow development syndrome in Nigerian offices is what Osuala (1998) has described as "number one problem" rooted in resistance to change. According to him, resistance to change is a natural human tendency based on fear of the unknown. He further explained that such fears are not unfounded, for true changes in jobs do occur. There has been the fear that many office personnel would lose their jobs if office operations become highly mechanized, just like the same fear which automation has generally created in the minds of many industrial workers. Osuala (1998) has postulated that there is only one cure to this major problem of resistance to change. Since resistance to change is not only a worker's problem but also that of an administrator, efforts should he made to involve those who will be affected by the change. In this vein, both the university administrators and their office personnel should be in involved.

CONCLUSIONS

Today's society has invariably become an information society, while information itself is a corporate resource which is the sole product of the office. The utilization of emerging office technologies has become incumbent upon the offices, no matter where it is located and for what purpose it is established. Therefore, modern office information processing systems functions must be performed irrespective of the fears of both administrators and office personnel. Information needed for decision-making is an invaluable product to every management, therefore, effort towards its -efficient processing in order to facilitate the functions of management information systems (MIS) is worthwhile.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. University administrators should no longer be slow in responding to changes needed in their office information processing systems. Modern office technologies are the answer to the provision of information needed for effective administration, in the desired format and at the right time and place.
2. A corollary to the above recommendation is that efforts should be made by the university administrators to equip the department/unit offices with computers and other related electronic systems and accessories, not only in the MIS centres.
3. Necessary computer networking should be embarked upon. This will facilitate direct links with the MIS centres.
4. To overcome resistance to the change, both university administrators and their office personnel should benefit from in-service trainings and workshop in modern, office information processing systems. Tl will make them feel secure and a part of the office revolution.

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**5)   Competencies Expected of National Diploma Accounting
Graduates of Polytechnics As Perceived By Employers of Labour.**
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Abstract

Competencies are those abilities of power and authority of knowledge, attitudes and facts necessary for accomplishing tasks. There is, therefore, the need for employers (end-users of graduates) to be satisfied with the abilities displayed by these graduates on the job.
This article sought to determine the ND accounting competencies of Polytechnic graduates as perceived by employers of labour. Also investigated was the effect of capital base on the level of competencies expected of the graduates by employing agencies.

Introduction

        The employers of labour who pay for the services of graduates expect to be satisfied in terms of the competencies, which the graduate employees put in the job. Competencies are the abilities of powers and authority of skills, knowledge; attitudes that are needed to accomplish tasks on the job. For Oladebo (1990), competency comprises knowledge/know-how required for job occupation; skills in the application of the knowledge/know-how; selecting and applying the knowledge/know-how successfully in one's sphere of work in order to accomplish occupational roles.

        In line with the above, Taylor (1992), saw the availability of sound and effective citizenship as hinging on the acquisition of appropriate skill, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society. Several researchers have identified a lot of competencies as required by accountants on the job (Faluyi 1992, Agbogbu 1992, Egunyork 1996) and these could be categorized into: attitudinal, problem-solving, professional (technical), public relations and communication skills.

        Attitudinal competencies, according to Water, Jr. (1991) goes beyond the traditional functional competencies which have to do with compatibility or 'fit'. It involves that totality of one's personality (Merrit 1977). The totality of personality on the job would involve a complex orchestration of knowledge, psychomotor skills and attitudes towards job, employer and peers. The competencies would enable employees surmount problems accruing from the fact that the world exposes people to come in contact with others whose language, values, methods and

prejudices are quite different from their own (Agee 1978). According to Morish (1974), education which is for life should inculcate the ability to absorb new situations, new experiences and novel ideals as well as the capability to initiate activity. This type of education is what would provide the enablement for solving problems on the job.

Professional competencies involve the use of knowledge and facts learnt in training for the performance of task relevant to a course of study. For Evans and Herr (1978) and Coleman (l972). Work success is related with basic academic has academic skills, while Okorie and Ezeji (1988) viewed competencies as embracing well established habits of doing something involving acquisition of capabilities in the most economic way. Manual dexterity through repetitive performance of professionally related tasks culminates into the acquisition of problem solving competencies since this involves mental and physical activities. Public relations competencies would include the communication of ideas and facts to organizations' environment in order to promote better understanding. For Simon (1976), this skill involves deliberate, planned, sustained efforts to establishing and maintaining mutual understanding between organizations and their environment. An employee with the skill would be able to relate well with superiors, subordinates colleagues and customers. Communication skills would enable the employee to understand and be understood by those with whom he relates. Thus, Alford (1986) say the competencies of communication (in varying degrees) as important for success on the job.

Accounting Education of the Polytechnic inculcates in the students, the ability to accomplish tasks requiring the background skills and knowledge prior to certification (Sheahan and Brown, 1977 and Agbobu. 1992). The ability thus acquired, provides the enablement for efficient financial computations necessary for occupational competence and economic self-reliance. In the process of this function, data relating to economic activity of an organization are measured, recorded and communicated to interested parties for analysis and interpretations — thus using the above explained five categories of competencies.

It is therefore, not in doubt that employers need to be assured that they are hiring graduates in the profession who can gather and communicate accounting information accurate and effectively emphasized Trahan and Swindle (1988). This gives rise to determine the needs of employers in terms of National Diploma (ND) accounting competencies.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed in recent times that the accounting curriculum of the polytechnics no longer meets the demands of employers of labour. A 1981 curriculum is certainly inadequate for the needs of 2lst Century (Faluyi 1992). The use of this curriculum has led to disappointments on the part of both employers and employees. Banks have failed, organizations have folded up, staff have been retrenched, suspended or dismissed on account of inability to satisfy the requirements of occupational roles. Sometimes, differences in expectations of ND accounting competencies by employers have been the source of the said disappointment. Where expectations appear similar, the degrees of the expectations have often differed. Schools often have differing perceptions of what employers require on the job. Even the size of the organization could be a source of difference in the expectations of ND accounting competencies.

The above situation in the workplace informed the need for this study, aimed at identifying the expected competencies of this level of graduates that would satisfy the needs of employment agencies. Specifically, the study aimed at determining the competencies of attitudinal, problem-solving professional (technical), public relations and communication skills

which employers of labour perceive as important for National Diploma (ND) accounting graduates to function successfully in the workplace.

An attempt was made to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudinal competencies expected of ND accounting graduates by employers of labour?
2. What are the problem-solving competencies which heads of accounting units regard as important?
3. What constitutes the technical competencies which heads of accounting units perceive as important for the graduates to perform well on the job?
4. What are the public relations competencies expected of accounting graduates of ND level by the labour market?
5. What constitutes the communication skill competencies, which the labour market perceive as important for ND accounting graduates on the job?

To further guide the study, the following null hypotheses were developed and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho_1: Employers of labour in organizations with low, medium, and high capital bases do not differ significantly in their rating of expected attitudinal competencies of ND accounting graduates.

$H0_2$: The capital base of an organization is not a source of significant difference among employers of labour in their rating of expected problem-solving competencies of the graduates.

HO_3: There is no significant difference among employers in high, medium, and low capital base organizations over their importance rating of professional (technical) competencies expected of the ND accounting graduates.

HO_4: Employers of labour in organizations with low, medium, and high capital based, do not differ significantly in their rating of expected public relations competencies of the graduates.

HO_5: The capital base of an organization is not a source of significant difference among employers of labour in their rating of the expected communication competencies of the ND accounting graduates of Polytechnics.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

The survey design was used for this study. It is preferable, according to Asika (1991) and Ali (1996) to use a survey design when the subject of a described investigation centers on individual opinions, attitudes and perceptions.

Population for the Study

A population of 372 heads of accounting units of small, medium and large-scale organizations registered with Aba Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ACCIMA) was involved in the study. While six (two each of small, medium, and large scale) of these organisations were used for pilot-test, 366 of them were used for the research. The population was too small to be sampled.

A36-item questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was 'structured with the aim of getting data concerning the identified five clusters of competencies perceived by employers as important for ND accounting graduates to possess. The questionnaire was divided into sections (A and B). Section A sought for demographic information while Section B sought for rating on the five categories of competencies based on the Likert-type 5-point scale. The instrument, as validated by experts in accounting and teaching professions were tested for reliability with a 0.85 coefficient using the Kuder-Richardson KR-2 I formula.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered on 366 heads of accounting units in ACCIMA registered organizations in Aba metropolis. While 268 were returned, 267 of them were' usable for analysis, giving a response rate of 73%. The research questions were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation while the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in testing the null hypotheses formulated for the study. Items with mean rating of 3.50 and above were accepted as important for accounting job. A null hypothesis was accepted if the calculated F-ratio is less than the critical value of F while same, was rejected where the calculated F-ratio is greater than the critical value F.

Data Analysis
The data analysis are presented in tables, in line with the research questions and hypotheses as follows:

Research questions: What constitutes the five categories of ND accounting competencies which employers perceive as important?

Table I: Mean Rating of the five categories of Competencies Expected of ND Accounting graduates

N = 267

S/No	Competencies	Mean	S.D	Remark
	Attitudinal			
1.	Exhibiting honesty	4.17	0.88	Accept
2.	Accepting responsibility	3.67	1.02	Accept
3.	Exhibiting moral integrity	3.72	0.92	Accept
4.	Showing critical and responsible attitude	3.54	0.83	Accept
5.	Adapting to situations	3.45	0.90	Reject
6.	Emotional control	3.34	1.08	Reject
7.	Finishing jobs on time	3.68	0.92	Accept
	GRAND MEAN (X)	**3.67**	**0.94**	**ACCEPT**
	Problem-Solving			
8.	Identifying causes of problems	3.74	0.89	Accept
9.	Revealing ideas for problem-solving	3.81	0.92	Accept
10.	Solving job problems without help	3.89	0.93	Accept
11.	Exhibiting sense of creativity	3.43	0.89	Reject
12.	Showing commitment on the job	3.75	0.97	Accept
13.	Facilitating work of others	3.45	0.88	Reject
14.	Exhibiting intellectual agility	3.48	0.79	Reject
	GRAND MEAN(X)	**3.65**	**0.90**	**ACCEPT**

	Professional (Technical)			
15.	Taxation job skill	3.34	1.20	Reject
16	Budgeting job skill	3.72	0.89	Accept
17	Auditing job skill	3.20	1.28	Reject
18.	Handling books of accounts	3.90	0.93	Accept
19.	Costing job skill	3.76	0.92	Accept
20.	Jobs on monthly returns	3.91	1.04	Accept
21.	Interpretation of financial reports	3.25	1.39	Reject
	GRAND MEAN (X)	**3.59**	**1.09**	**ACCEPT**
	Public Relations			
22.	Good relationship with colleagues	3.82	0.92	Accept
23.	Good relationship with subordinates	3.54	1.17	Accept
24.	Good relationship with superiors	3.56	1.23	Accept
25.	Good relationship with outsiders	3.71	0.94	Accept
26.	Confidence and good judgment	3.66	0.94	Accept
27.	Proper organisation of groups	3.41	0.97	Reject
28.	Considering others feelings	3.57	0.92	Accept
	GRAND MEAN (X)	**3.61**	**1.01**	**ACCEPT**
	Communication Skill			
29.	Good listening ability/understanding	3.82	0.94	Accept
30.	Discussing well with others	3.68	0.93	Accept
31.	High degree of writing skill	3.23	1.08	Reject
32.	Expressions skill	3.26	1.05	Reject
33.	Articulation of thoughts	3.45	0.96	Reject
34.	Public speech making	3.25	1.20	Reject
35.	Seeking proper advice	3.64	1.04	Accept
	GRAND MEAN (X)	**3.48**	**1.03**	**REJECT**

Table 2: Summary of Employers' Mean Rating of the competencies Expected of ND Accounting Graduates

N =267

Competencies	Mean	S.D	Remark
Attitudinal Competencies	3.67	.94	Accept
Problem-solving Competencies	3.65	.90	Accept
Professional (technical) Competencies	3.59	1.09	Accept
Public Relations Competencies	3.61	1.01	Accept
Communication Skill competencies	3.48	1.03	Reject

An observation of data in Table 2 above reveals that employers of labour endorsed four out of the five categories of competencies listed and identified as very important for the graduates to perform well on the job. The summary is coined from the grand means of the five categories of competencies listed in Table 1. Communication skills were not seen by the employers as necessarily important for the ND accounting graduates to perform better on the job. Most of the communication skills were rejected by them and thus the low grand mean of 3.48 which was not acceptable.

Hypotheses: The capital base of an organisation is not a source of significant difference among employers of labour, in their rating of the five clusters of ND accounting competencies.

After testing the null hypotheses with the ANOVA, results obtained were as presented below in Table 3 ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Table 3: Summary of ANOVA of Responses by Employers regarding their Perception of Expected ND Accounting Competencies

Competencies Clusters	Sum of Sqs. bt/within	Mean Sqs bt/within	F-Cal.	Remark
Attitudinal	13.1642/137.2331 = 150.3973	6.5821/0.5798	12.6625	Reject
Problem-solving	10.2061/117.8373 = 128.0433	5.1030/0.4481	11.3894	Reject
Professional (technical)	89.1043/134.6845 = 233.7887	44.5521/0.5102	87.3283	Reject
Public Relations	30.7257/152.6237 = 183.3494	15.3628/0.5781	26.5738	Reject
Communication Skill	28.5635/172.1709 = 200.7344	14.28 18/0.6522	21 .899l	Reject

F-Crit = 3.00
df bt/within = 2/264 = 266

From the analysis in Table 3 above, it can be deduced that the size of business (small, medium, and large scale), .Is not a source of significant differences among employers of labour in their rating of the five clusters of ND accounting competencies. The hypotheses were therefore rejected.

Discussion

The research questions addressed the competencies to be possessed by ND accounting graduates of polytechnics as perceived by employers. Results from the data indicated that the employers accepted that the graduates require attitudinal cornpetencies to work in the field, apparently because, according to Merritt (1977), these competencies are dynamic, influencing the total personality and the desirable personal attributes of individual workers. Conover and Dagget (1976) also agreed with this view while Kazanas (1978 included the competencies as

employability skills usually required by organizations. Also accepted by employers was the ability of the graduates to solve problems as they arise.

Although Hum (1968) saw intellectual potentials as imperative in the ability to solve problems. The employers did not seem to agree with this. Professional (technical) competencies necessary for the level of accounting graduates in question were endorsed as important. Employers view in this regard, affirmed the opinion of Hippo (1986) that financial planning is an essential and integral part of effective administration and management of business organization. The graduates are expected also to possess public relations competencies in other to satisfy their employers on the job. Polytechnic that ND accounting students must register for business communication courses.

In negation of the null hypotheses, the employers' opinion is that the capital base of an organisation determines the level of ND accounting competences that would be expected of the graduates. This confirms the view of Finch, Scheuermann, Cook and Reedy (1991) that the Size of the organisation as well as the competency expectations determine employers placement of their workers on the job: while Arukwea (1990) attributed the variation to evolving economic needs of the society. In other words, the competencies acquired by the graduates could he fully utilized in small-scale organizations since the employee could be the jack—of—all—trades while the skills may he inadequate to serve the purpose of medium and large-scale businesses.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the light of the results of this study, the conclusions that the ND accounting graduates require, as a matter of importance, the competencies of attitudinal, problem-solving, professional and public relations, for efficient performance of their job; while communication skill competencies are necessarily important for the graduates to perform their jobs satisfactorily. The capital base of an organization is a source of significant difference among employers on their rating of the importance of ND accounting competencies.

Recommendations were made that polytechnics should apply simulation teaching and the use of case studies in teaching ND accounting students in order to acquaint them with industrial work environment. Small scale Accounting, human Relations, Organization Behavior and Industrial Relations were recommended to take the place of communication courses which the employers rejected as important.

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(6) Communication Skills Needed by University Graduate Employees for Successful Job Performance us Business Organisations.
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Abstract

Ability to communicate effectively (in writing or orally) is an indicator of sound education. However, literature outside Nigeria is replete with employers' dissatisfaction with today's university graduates' inability to communicate effectively. Ability to communicate is one of the keys to job success. A study was conducted to determine the communication skills employers and their university graduate employees considered important for successful job performance in some business organizations (193) whose shares are quoted on the Nigerian stock exchange. Data collected from 193 employers and 772 university graduate employees were analysed using the arithmetic mean and t-test tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study revealed that employees differed on their rating of the importance of writing, speaking, reading and listening skills required by university graduate employees for success job performance, but not significantly. The university graduate employees were perceived deficient in all the four clusters of communication skills.

Introduction

Education is complete and meaningful only when it equips the individual to communicate orally and/or in writing. Knowledge is education and vice versa. Knowledge is meaningless unless it is communicated to others. For example, if the scientists who discovered the airplane, the locomotive and the ships had not made their discoveries known, we would not be where we are today and their knowledge would have died with them. Therefore, ability to communicate and effectively too, is a gift from God for which human beings will forever be grateful. It could be said to be an indispensable skill.

According to Dewey (1958), communication referred to symbols and signs which could be oral or written speech, gestures, rites, ceremonies, monuments, documents or products of fine art, which have assigned meanings. To him, meaning was the rule for using and interpreting things. Dewey believed that the meaning of a thing was whatever people said it was (that is feedback). How other people understood you or your opinion, letter, circular or memorandum would tell whether you had succeeded in passing the message or not. Omolo (1991) defined communication as the exchange of meaning between individuals through a common system of symbols such as report writing, telephone calls, interviews etc. therefore, the definition has not changed.

When a learner is at school his performance depends on his ability to comprehend, retain and communicate. Even if he comprehends and retains properly, nobody will know unless he

communicates. In this context communication is used to describe exchange of ideas. In the real sense of the word, communication involves comprehension since ability to comprehend depends on some extent on the ability of the receiver to decode the message based on his intellectual retention) and the ability of the sender to encode the message, all other things being equal.

As the learner graduates from university and goes in search of employment, his ability to communicate becomes more important. No matter the type of job he is looking for, he will be required to write a letter of application. The letter of application will determine whether he will be short—listed for interview or not. If the letter does not contain the requirement for employment, the candidate will not he invited to an interview, it, thus, becomes necessary for the candidate to learn how to market his skills and knowledge on paper in order to be invited to an interview. Obi (1998) identified 12 application skills and 15 interview skills including communication skills to aid university graduate applicants to gain employment.

At each stage in life man requires communication skills to meet his needs. According to Solomon (1986), reading, speaking, writing and listening which are communication skills are products of the same tree. In spite of their relatedness and interdependence, it is possible for one or two of them to operate at a particular time within the individual's communication spectrum. All in all, a child in school, and an adult in school or at work must grapple with all these skills in his daily encounters with friends, colleagues, books, magazines, newspapers, radio and television, and with any other human being who speaks or writes (Solomon, 1 986). Therefore, the communication skills of an individual are expected to be improving as he progresses in learning for example, he acquires more vocabulary.

According to Baker (1978) the marketability of any product depends on good communication skills. Hence, many companies and employers place high premium on the acquisition of communication skills by their employees. Horn (1987) stated that the prospective employer's invitation to an applicant to appear for an interview is an indication that so far most or all impressions of the applicant on paper are favourable. Actually, the interview affords the prospective employer the opportunity to clarify some issues in the letter of application.

Kaisershot (1987) found in his study involving office supervisors that most companies would employ individuals who are able to communicate both orally and in writing and who are able to present themselves well. Especially important, the supervisors said, are proper use of eye contact and evidence of self—confidence. Oral communication was considered more critical than written communication by 14 of the 15 supervisors involved in the study.

According to Allen (1979), most common deficiencies noted by employers in his study are related to poor communication skills. He reported that employers in his study identified the following faults in employees' written communication: misspelling, lack of sentence variety, poor writing, little knowledge of grammatical classification, that is, ability to recognize the four basic sentence-types, namely-simple, compound. complex and compound-complex. Effective writers, he said, should know that English is rich in nuances of meaning and that they need not settle for less than exact tone, shade, intensity or image desired. In fact, Hullbert (1991) reported that employers are becoming increasingly concerned about employees' deficiency in communication.

Kaisershot (1987) also found that some respondents in his study indicated that they look for good listening skills, university level vocabulary usage, and a succinct expression of oneself in a direct and positive manner. Kaiseshot gave eight common qualities of business communication in order of importance as clarity, correctness, consciousness, completeness,

coherence, concreteness, consideration and courtesy. Rasbemy and Lemoine (1986) reported a study in communication conducted by Dr. Lyman Stell for Sperry Corporation. Some of the results are shown below.

Table I
How often each of the four skills is learned, used and taught

	Listening	**Speaking**	**Reading**	**Writing**
Learned	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Used	Most	Next most	Next least	Least
Taught	Least	Next least	Next most	Most.

In other words, listening is learned first and writing last, while writing is taught most and listening least. Prior to this study, Roberta (1983) had observed that the four areas of communication skills are recognized by school but the schools have basically ignored listening skills.

Having been in educational institutions for a long time (primary through university) it is expected that the university graduate must have acquired enough vocabulary and style in using the four groups of communication skills. However, many have lost their jobs in business offices probably because they have failed to communicate effectively or the communication skills they emphasize differ from what the business organizations want. Therefore, there is a need to identify and validate the communication skills required by graduate employees in business organizations for effective job performance.

In order to address the problems of this study an attempt was made to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the communication skills required by university graduate employees in some business organizations for job success?
2. What clusters of communication skills are possessed by the university graduate employees for job success in some business organizations as perceived by their employers?

To further guide the study a null hypothesis was developed and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO1: There is no significant difference between employers and employees in the rating of the importance of clusters of communication skills required for the job success of university graduate employees in some business organization.

METHODOLOGY

Population and sample for the study: The population comprise 193 personnel managers representing employers and 4363 university graduate employees (employees only in 193 business organization registered with the Nigerian Stock Exchange, Lagos, as at June 1997. The entire population of personnel managers was not sampled. A sample of 772 university graduate employees simply called employees was randomly selected. The employees and the personnel managers totaled 965 subjects for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis Technique

A two-part questionnaire was used for data collection. Part A was designed to elicit information on the level of importance of communications skills needed for successful job performance by university graduate employees. There were 40 communication skills grouped in four clusters of writing, reading, speaking and listening. Each cluster contained 10 communication skill statements. Part B sought data on the possession of these skills by the university graduate employees. The questionnaire carried a four-point scale ranging from highly important (4) to not important (1).

Data collected from 181 personnel managers (employers) and 736 university graduate employees were analysed utilizing the arithmetic mean and standard deviation. The t-test was used to compare the mean ratings of employers and employees on the required communication skills and the employers' perceived level of performance of the skills by the employees. Any skill statement that obtained a rating of 2.50 or more on the four-point scale was accepted as important for or possessed by the employees.

All tests were conducted at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1: Table I shows the ratings of the employers and employees of the importance of the communication skill required for the employees' job success. The two groups of respondents rated the writing cluster as the most important followed by the speaking cluster of skills for employees and the reading cluster skills for employers and finally the listening skills cluster, for both.

Table 1
Respondents' mean rating of the importance of the writing skills for employees' job success

Writing Skills		Employers' mean Rating and Standard Deviation N = 181		Employees' Mean Rating and Standard Deviation N = 736	
	Cluster A	X	SD	X	SD
1.	Analyse audience	3.47	0.65	4.40	0.60
2.	Present points logically	3.14	0.53	3.04	0.68
3.	Organize work in simple and clear language	3.30	0.59	3.30	0.60
4.	Adapt to reader's level	3.10	0.51	3.03	0.60
5.	Use proper sentence structure	3.49	0.60	3.39	0.60
6.	Select ideas best suited for the purpose	3.45	0.70	3.44	0.70
7.	Appreciate big "idea" more than big words	*3.91	0.68	3.38	0.60
8.	Avoid surplus words and misspelling	*3.91	0.62	*3.77	0.50
9.	Write to ensure accurate interpretation	3.32	0.60	3.35	0.50
10.	Express oneself courteously Highest mean rating	3.18	0.48	3.61	0.58
	Highest mean rating	**3.43**	**0.61**	**3.37**	**0.43**

The ability to appreciate big ideas more than big words (X= 3.91) and the skill of avoiding surplus words and misspelling (X= 3.91) obtained the highest mean rating in this cluster as well as overall from employers. Employees rated the skills of avoiding surplus words and misspelling highest (x = 3.77) in this cluster. Dressing to suit the occasion, i.e. (x = 3.99) and

the skill of avoiding surplus words and misspelling obtained the highest mean rating from the employees.

Table 2
Respondents' Mean Ratings of the Importance of Reading Skills for Employees' Job Success

	Reading Skills	Employers' Mean Rating & Standard Deviation N = 181		Employees' Mean Rating and Standard Deviation N = 736	
		X	SD	X	SD
11	Survey materials properly	*3.88	0.68	2.73	0.80
12	Understand technical vocabulary	3.13	0.60	3.19	0.70
13	Set purposes	2.88	0.60	2.75	0.54
14	Skin for basic information	3.22	0.54	3.18	0.61
15	Handle graphic and illustrated materials carefully	3.28	0.66	3.19	0.70
16	Criticize the writer's thought after reading a text	2.79	0.66	2.98	0.60
17	Anticipate what comes next	3.38	0.60	3.27	0.70
18	Read with understanding	3.15	0.49	3.01	0.71
19	Get the idea needed from printed words	3.42	0.60	3.35	0.60
20	Perceive and interpret message	3.61	0.49	*3.61	0.58
	*Highest mean rating.	**3.27**	**0.56**	**3.13**	**0.68**

The skill of criticizing the thought of the writer after reading was rated lowest by employers (X=2.99) while employees rated the skill of surveying materials properly (X=2.73) lowest.

Table 3
Respondents' Mean Ratings of the importance of the Speaking Skills for Employees' Job Success

	Speaking Skills	Employers' Mean Rating and Standard Deviation		Employees' Mean Rating and Standard Deviation	
		X	SD	X	SD
21	Speak clearly and fluently	*3.68	0.60	3.59	0.48
22	Capture and retain the attention of audience	3.28	0.74	3.27	0.58
23	Speak on points of mutual interest and concern.	3.19	0.51	3.36	0.66
24	Provide theme for speech	3.20	0.60	3.14	0.60
25	Use voice variation	2.99	0.60	2.99	0.46
26.	Pronounce syllables	3.02	0.60	3.05	0.49

27	Speak politely to customers	3.40	0.70	3.00	0.47
28	Dress to suit the occasion	3.57	0.71	3.77	0.54
29	Use natural gestures	2.64	0.78	2.62	0.46
30	Answer phone calls correctly	3.11	0.56	*3.73	0.80
	* Highest mean rating.	**3.21**	**0.70**	**3.25**	**0.55**

The ability to use natural gestures obtained the lowest rating by both employers and employees. (Employers' X = 2.64. SD = 0.78; Employees' X = 2.62, SD = 0.46).

Table 4
Respondents' Mean Ratings of the importance of the Listening skills for Employees' Job Success

Listening skills		Employers' Mean Rating & stand. Dev. N= 181		Employees means Rating & Stand. Dev. N =736	
		X	SD	X	SD
31.	Acquire facts and ideas while listening.	3.00	0.77	3.00	0.62
32.	Analyse facts and ideas	3.00	0.82	2.87	0.72
33.	Evaluate facts and ideas	2.95	0.74	2.85	0.59
34.	Make sound judgment	3:51	0.72	*3.45	0.72
35	Appreciate others feelings	3.09	9.76	3.17	0.54
36.	Improve listening habit	2.64	0.89	2.80	0.60
37	Respond to the speaker with nods, smiles, etc. when necessary	2.73	0.71	2.73	0.60
38.	Receive inspiration from speaker when necessary.	2.73	0.14	2.73	0.80
39.	Derive entertainment, anger, joy, etc.	2.96	0.78	2.80	0.60
40.	Draw mental outline of a speech	*3.55	0.71	3.12	0.60
	* Highest mean rating.	**3.02**	**0.69**	**2.95**	**0.64**

In table 4 the employers' rated improve listening habit' lowest while employees' lowest mean rating was on responding to the speaker with nods, etc and receiving inspiration from speaker.

t-test results showed no significant difference between employers and employee on their rating of importance of the communication skills (Table + = 1.96; 9 = 0.05)

Research Question 2

The ratings of the employers are shown in table 5.

Table 5

Employers' Mean Rating of The Employees' Possession Of The Clusters of Communication Skills In Rank Order

Clusters of Communication Skills

Employers' (N = 181) Ratings

	X	SD
Speaking Skills	2.47	0.78
Reading Skills	2.45	0.75
Listening Skills	2.18	0.82
Writing Skills	2.17	0.81

The results obtained indicate that employees possess four speaking skills, namely:
1. Answer telephone calls correctly   2.95
2. Dress to suit the occasion   2.68
3. Capture and retain listener's attention   2.59
4. Speak on points of mutual interest and concern   2.56

They possess six reading skills, namely:
1. Perceive and interpret messages   2.56
2. Read with understanding   2.56
3. Criticize the thought of the writer after reading   2.53
4. Get the idea needed from printed words   2.51
5. Anticipate what comes next   2.50
6. Understand technical vocabulary   2.50

The employees also possess three listening skills. namely:
1. Derive entertainment, anger, joy. etc.   2.58
2. Respond to the speaker with nods, smiles. etc.
   when necessary   2.55
3. Appreciate others feelings and one writing
   Skill which is the ability to express oneself
   Courteously   2.50

Null Hypothesis (Ho$_1$): There is no significant difference between employers and employees in rating of the importance of clusters of communication skills required for the job success of the employees.

Table 6
t-test Results of the mean rating of Employers and Employees of the clusters of Communication Skills

Clusters of communication skills	Employers		Employees		t-Cal	Remark
	X	SD	X	SD		
Writing	3.43	0.61	3.37	0.43	0.46	NS
Reading	3.27	0.56	3.13	0.68	0.66	"
Speaking	3.21	0.79	3.25	0.55	0.07	"
Listening	3.01	0.69	2.95	0.64	0.11	"

Table   t = 1.96
        p = 0.05

The employers and the employees did not differ significantly in their rating of the clusters of communication skill required by the employees for job success. They differ in their rankings of the clusters.

Discussion
The study set out to identify and validate the communication skills required by university graduate employees in some business organizations registered with the Nigerian stock Exchange. Results obtained, show that the 40 communication skills grouped into four clusters were rated as required for job success of the university graduate employees.

Respondent's ratings of the communication skills show that writing skills are more important than any other category of communication skills for job success. The findings of this study in relation to writing skills agree with the results of Stained and Skerzensk (1979). The identified logic audience analysis organization clarity and simplicity, brevity or conciseness and fact sincerity and courtesy as six important writing skills. In fact it is through writing that one can get the first opportunity to gain employment. As Wilson (1986) pointed out tidy and legible handwriting is important for business graduates preparing to work in an office. This explains why business organizations require the applicant to apply in their own hand-writing. Apart from good hand-writing, a good writer must have the ability to inform, persuade, correct or compel the reader that is why writing opens the door to employment.

Speaking skills are rated second in importance by the employees and third by the employers. The differences in rating are not significant. In most business organizations, an above average ability in expressing oneself as obtained in this study, is a definite assert in moving up the career ladder (Perkins and Robertson. 3973). They found in their study that 30% of an executives time is spent on speaking. Contrary to this result of this study Kaizershort (1987) revealed that oral communication was more important than written communication to 14 out of 15 supervisors in his study. Speaking skills are actually more handy, than writing skills to an office employee who is faced with visitors for most part of his time in the work place. They provide instant assessment of the speaker and are thus important for the job success of university graduate employees who will need to give instructions to subordinates orally in addition to meeting visitors.

Reading skills as rated in this study are as important as speaking skills. While employers rated them second, employees said they should be third. The higher up the career ladder, the less contact with many subordinates down the ladder. At this level, communication with many subordinates is mainly written. That must have influenced the employers' rating of the reading skills.

The results of this stuck relating to listening are similar to research findings by Steil in Raspberry and Lemoine (1986) that though listening is first learned at birth, and the most frequently used, it is often neglected. Both employers and employees rated the listening cluster of skills lowest. According to Dr. Lyman Steil in Raspberry and Lemoine (1986), the human being listens 45% of the time and only writes nine percent of the time; the average listener retains' 50% of what he hears following remarks and within 24-48 hours retention drops to 25%. However, Weinrauch and Swanda (1981) in their writing maintained that listening skills are as important as other skills for job success and are a few of the communication skills not really taught.

Results of this study also show that employers are satisfied with employees uses of some skills of the four clusters of communication skills in this order; speaking, reading, listening and writing. The speaking skills include answering telephone calls correctly; dressing to suit the occasion capturing and retaining listener's attention and speaking on points of mutual interest concern. The listening skills are: derive entertainment, etc. respond to the speaker with nods, smiles etc., and appreciate others' feelings. The only writing skills the employers adjudged possessed by the employees is the ability to express oneself courteously. Finally, only four of the reading skills are acknowledged by the employers as- not possessed by the employees. They are: survey materials, set purposes, skill for basic information while reading, and handle graphic and ted materials carefully.

Employees have problems with all other skills of writing, speaking and listening clusters listed. Results show that university graduate employees-have problems with applying the four clusters of communication skills generally. Since communication skills can be acquired, proper training can be used to inculcate these skills in university graduates.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is evident that the 40 communication skills identified are important for the job success of university graduate employees in business organizations. Also, employers show that the university graduate employees do not possess the four clusters of communication skills required for their successful job performance. Finally, employers and the employees did not differ significantly on the importance of the clusters of communication skills for the job success of the university graduate employees. If this is the case, a few questions need be addressed, namely; why do university graduate employees have communication problems? How can these problems be addressed in the universities?

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:
1. The universities should be better equipped to teach communication skills as a separate course to produce better quality employees for the ever-changing business world. The skills can also be taught under the General studies use of English course.
2. Students do not read. This country unfortunately does not have a reading culture. Students should read more and make concerted efforts to speak and write English Language which is their lingua Franca better than they' are doing presently.

3. Workshops and seminars should be recognized for in-service university graduates to enable them improve on their communication skills.

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Communication Technology

(7) Nonverbal, Listening and Speaking Skills: A Desideratum for Business Communication
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Abstract

Effective writing, speaking, listening and nonverbal communication skills are essential to the success of a business communicator. Understanding messages often involves more than merely listening to spoken words. Non-verbal communication includes all unwritten and unspoken messages. whether intended or not. Messages are harder to decipher when the verbal and nonverbal codes do not agree. Before making an oral presentation, good speakers analyze the audience, define the purpose, organise the content, prepare the outline and plan effective visual aids.

Introduction

"If I went to college again, I'd concentrate on two areas: learning to write and to speak before an audience. Nothing in life is more important than the ability to communicate effectively, Ford, 1974".

Effective writing, speaking, listening and nonverbal communication skills are essential to the success of a business communicator. The former U.S. president, Gerald Ford would use his college education differently. He would focus on learning to write and to speak because nothing is more important than the ability to communicate. According to him, the most important communication skills are writing and speaking.

Understanding messages often involves more than merely listening to spoken words. Non- verbal clues, in fact, can speak louder than words. These clues include eye contact facial expression, body movements, space, time, distance and appearance. All these nonverbal clues affect how a message is interpreted, or decoded, by the receiver. In studies of interpersonal communication, researchers have found that only 7 percent of the "attitudinal" meaning of a message comes from the words spoken. An astounding 93 percent of the meaning results from nonverbal cities (Mehrabiam, 1971).

Nonverbal communication includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, whether intended or not. These silent signals have a strong effect on receivers. But understanding them is not simple. Take these as example; does a downward glance indicate modesty or fatigue? Does a

constant stare reflect coldness or dullness? Do crossed arms mean defensiveness or withdrawal? Or do crossed arms just mean a person is cold?

Messages are even harder to decipher when the verbal and nonverbal codes do not agree. What would an observer think if she says she is not angry but she slams the door when she leaves? What if John assures the mother that the meal is excellent but he eats very little? The nonverbal messages in these situations speak more loudly than the words. When verbal and non-verbal' messages conflict, research shows that receivers put more faith in nonverbal cues. In one study speakers sent a positive message but averted their eyes as they spoke. Listeners perceived the total message to be negative. Moreover, they thought that averted eyes suggested lack of affection, superficiality, lack of trust and non receptivity (Burgoon e t al, 1986).

Successful communicators recognize the power of nonverbal message. Although it is unwise to attach specific meanings to gestures or actions, some cues broadcast by body language are helpful in understanding the feelings and attitudes of senders.

How the Eyes, Face and Body Send Silent Messages

Words seldom tell the whole story. Indeed some messages are sent with no words at all. The eyes, face, and body can convey a world of meaning without a single syllable being spoken.

The eyes have been called the "windows to the soul". Even they do not reveal the soul, the eyes are often the best predictor of a speaker's true feelings. Most of us cannot look at another person straight in the eyes and lie. As a result, in most cultures, people tend to believe those who look directly to them. Sustained eye contact suggests trust and admiration while brief eye contact signals fear or stress. Good eye contact enables the message sender to see if a receiver is paying attention, showing respect, responding favourably, or feeling distress. From the receiver's viewpoint, good eye contact reveals the speaker's sincerity, confidence and truthfulness.

Some eye contact is learned, however, an individual should be aware that a steady gaze is viewed differently in some other cultures. For instance, a well-bred Hispanic girl will not make eye contact with a man who is not a relative. In their culture, it is just considered too bold.

The expression on a person's face can be almost as revealing of emotion as the eyes. Experts estimate that the human face can display over 250000 expressions (Birdwhistell, 1970). To hide their feelings, some people can control these expressions and maintain "poker faces". Most of us, however, display our emotions openly. Raising or lowering the eyebrows, squinting the eyes, swallowing nervously, clenching the jaw, smiling broadly are some of the voluntary and involuntary facial expressions that can add to or entirely replace verbal messages.

Nonverbal messages often have different meanings in different cultures. A person's posture can convey anything from high status and self-confidence to shyness and submissiveness, leaning towards a speaker suggests attraction and interest; pulling away or shrinking back denotes fear, distrust, anxiety or disgust. Similarly, gestures can communicate entire thoughts through simple movements. However, meanings of these movements differ in other cultures. Unless a person knows the local customs, communicating through gestures can get him in trouble. In Nigeria, and most of the world nodding the head generally indicates agreement. In the Middle East however, a single nod means no. In England and Scotland tapping the nose with one's finger means that two persons are in on the secret. In wales, it means that the other two persons are nosy. Furthermore, in Holland pointing a finger at one's forehead means

"How clever" In the rest of Europe the same gesture means "you are crazy" or "That's a crazy idea! (Arthur, 1996).

Tuning in on body language and other nonverbal messages requires that a person be aware that they exist and that their importance is valued. To take stock of the kinds of messages being sent by a person's body, he can ask his friend to critique his use of eye contact, facial expression and body movements. Another way to analyze one's nonverbal style is to videotape one's self-making a presentation and study one's performance.

How time, space and territory send silent messages

People convey meaning in how they structure and organize time and how they order the space around themselves. In addition to nonverbal messages transmitted by the body, three external elements convey information in the communication process. They are time, space and distance.

The manner we structure and use time tells observers about our personality and attitudes. For example, when a bank executive gives a visitor a prolonged interview, he signals his respect for, interest in and approval of the visitor or the topic to be discussed. Similarly, when Mr. Toby twice arrives late for a meeting with a Chief Executive, it could mean that the appointment is unimportant to Mr. Toby)', or he is a self-centred person, or that he has little self—discipline. In some other cultures punctuality may be viewed differently.

The way we structure time and organize space sends silent messages about our personalities and goals. In short, how we order the space around us tells something about our objectives and ourselves. Whether the space is a bedroom, a hostel room, an office or a department, people reveal themselves in the design and grouping of furniture within that space. Generally, the more formal the arrangement, the more formal and closed the communication environment. The way office furniture is arranged sends cues on how communication is to take place. A lecturer who arranges chairs informally in a circle rather than in straight rows convey his desire for a more open, egalitarian exchange of ideas. A manager who creates an open office space with few partitions separating employees' desks seeks to encourage an unrestricted flow of communication and work among areas.

The distance required for comfortable social interaction is controlled by culture. Each individual has certain areas that he feels that is his own territory. It can be a specific spot or just the space around him. A father may have a favourite chair in which he is most comfortable. A mother might not tolerate intruders in her kitchen and certain employees may feel that certain work areas and tools belong to them. All persons maintain zones of privacy in which all feel comfortable.

According to Guffey (1998), there are four zones for social interaction, namely, intimate zone, personal zone, social zone and public zone. Intimate zone maintains 0 to $1^1/_2$ feet distance and it is reserved for members of the family and other loved ones. Personal zone maintains a distance of $1^1/_2$ to 4 feet and this is for talking with friends privately. The outer limit enables the speaker to keep someone at arm's length. Social zone maintains 4 to 12 feet distance and is reserved for acquaintances, fellow workers and strangers. It is close enough for eye contact yet far enough for comfort. Public zone maintains 12 feet and over and is for use in the classroom and for speeches before groups. Nonverbal cues become important as aids to communication.

How Appearance sends Silent Messages

The appearance of a massage and of an individual can convey positive or negative nonverbal massages. The physical appearance of a business document, as well as the personal appearance of an individual transmits immediate nonverbal messages. The way a letter, memo, or report looks can have either a positive or a negative effect on the receiver. Envelopes through their postage, stationery and printing can suggest routine, important or junk mail. Letters and reports can look neat, professional, well organized and attractive or just the opposite. Sloppy, hurriedly written documents convey negative nonverbal massage regarding both the content and the sender.

The way an individual looks, his clothing, grooming and posture telegraphs an instant nonverbal massage about him. Based on what they see viewers make quick judgments about an individual's status, credibility, personality and potential. Because appearance is such a powerful force in business, some aspiring professionals are turning for help to image consultants for a fee. As one human relations specialist observed, "if you do not look and act the part, you will probably be denied opportunities", (Blergoon, 1986).

Tips for Improving Nonverbal Skills

Nonverbal communication can outweigh words in the way it influences how people perceive one another. The power of silent message can be harnessed by reviewing the following tips for improving nonverbal communication skills:

1. Establish and maintain eye contact. Remember that appropriate eye contact signals interest, attentiveness, strength and credibility.
2. Use posture to show interest. Encourage communication interaction by learning forward, sitting or standing erect and looking alert.
3. Improve your decoding skills. Watch facial expressions and body language to understand the complete verbal and nonverbal message being communicated.
4. Probe for more information. When you perceive nonverbal cues that contradict verbal meanings, politely seek additional clues. For example, I am not sure I understand. Please tell me more or do you mean that etc.
5. Avoid assigning nonverbal meanings out of context. Make nonverbal assessment only when you understand a situation or a culture.
6. Associate with people from diverse culture. Learn about other cultures to widen your knowledge and tolerance of intercultural nonverbal messages.
7. Appreciate the power of appearance. Keep in mind that the appearance of your business documents, your business space and yourself send immediate positive or negative messages to receivers.
8. Observe yourself on videotape. Ensure that your verbal and nonverbal messages are in sync by taping and evaluating yourself making a presentation.
9. Enlist friends and family. Ask them to monitor your conscious and unconscious body movements and gestures to help you become a more effective communicator.

Improving Listening Skills

To improve a person's communication skills not only involve being alert to nonverbal clues but also means working on the person's listening skills. Most people have developed poor listening habits. In fact, some researchers suggest that most people listen at only 25 percent

efficiency (Fast 1991). Such poor listening habits are costly in business. Letter must be rekeyed, shipments reshipped, appointment rescheduled, contracts renegotiated and directions.

For most people, listening is a passive, unconscious activity. We do not require our minds to work very hard at receiving sounds and we do not give much thought to whether we are really listening. It is only when a message is urgent do we perk up and try to listen more carefully. It is then that we become more involved in the communication process. We reduce competing environmental sounds; we concentrate on the speaker's words: we anticipate what is coming; we ask questions. Good listeners arc active learners. Passive listeners do not get involved: active listeners make a physical and mental effort to hear.

To improve listening skills, we must first recognize barriers that prevent effective listening. Then we need to focus on specific techniques that are effective in improving listening skills.

Barriers to Effective Listening

According to Osuala (1996) barriers and noise can interfere with communication process. These barriers and noises include: physical, psychological, language, nonverbal distractions, thought speed, faking attention and grandstanding.

Physical barriers. A person cannot listen if he cannot hear what is being said. Physical impediments include hearing disabilities, poor acoustics and noisy surroundings. It is also difficult for a person to listen if he is ill, tired, uncomfortable or worried.

Psychological barriers. Every person brings to the communication process a different set of cultural, ethical and personal values. Everybody has an idea of what is right or what is important. If other ideas run counter to our preconceived thoughts, we tend to tune out the speaker and thus fail to hear.

Language problem. Unfamiliar words can destroy the communication process because they lack meaning for the receiver. In addition, emotion-laden or "charged" words can adversely affect listening.

Nonverbal Distractions. Many people find it hard to listen if a speaker is different from what we view as normal. Unusual clothing, speech mannerisms, body twitches, or a radical hairstyle can cause enough distraction to prevent a person from hearing what the speaker has to say.

Thought speed. Because thought speed is over three times as great as speech speed, listener concentration flags. The individuals' minds are to process thoughts much faster than speakers can say them. Therefore, the individuals become bored and their minds wander.

Faking attention. Many people have learned to look as if they are listening even they were not. Such behaviour was perhaps necessary as part of socialization. Faked attention, however, seriously threatens effective listening because it encourages the mind to flights of unchecked fancy. Those who practice faked attention often find it hard to concentrate even when they want to.

Grandstanding. Naturally, most people would rather like to talk than to listen. Since our own experiences and thoughts are most important to us, we grab the limelight in conversations. We sometimes fail to listen carefully because we are just waiting politely for the next pause so that we can have our turn to speak.

How to Become an Active Listener

The following techniques will help a person to become an active and effective listener.

1. Stop talking. The first step to becoming a good listener is to stop talking Let others explain their views. Learn to concentrate on what the speaker is saying not on what your next comment will be.
2. Control your surroundings. Whenever possible remove competing sounds. Close windows turn off radios and noisy appliances, and move away from loud people or engines, choose a quiet time and place for listening.
3. Establish a receptive mindset. Expect to learn something by listening. Strive for a positive and receptive frame of mind. If the message is complex, think of it as mental gymnastics. It is hard work but good exercise to stretch and expand the limits of your mind.
4. Keep an open mind. Many people sift and filter information through their own biases and values. For improved listening, discipline yourself to listen objectively. Be fair to the speaker. Hear what is really being said, not what you want to hear.
5. Listen for main points. Concentration is enhanced and satisfaction is heightened when you look for and recognize the speaker's central themes.
6. Capitalize on key time. Make use of the quickness of your mind by reviewing the speaker's points. Anticipate what is coming next. Evaluate evidence the speaker has presented. Do not allow yourself to daydream.
7. Listen between the lines. Focus both on what is spoken and what is unspoken. Listen for feelings as well as for facts.
8. Judge ideas and appearance. Concentrate on the content of the message, not on its delivery. Avoid being distracted by the speaker's looks, voice or mannerisms.
9. Hold your fire. Force yourself to listen to the speakers entire argument or message before reacting, such restraint may enable you to understand the speaker's reasons and logic before you jump to false conclusions.
10. Take Selective Moves. For some situations thoughtful note taking may be necessary to record important facts that must be recalled later. Select only the most important points so that the note-taking process does not interfere with your concentration on the speaker's total message.
11. Provide Feedback. Let the speaker know what you are listening. Nod the head and maintain eye contact. Ask relevant questions at appropriate times. Getting involved improves the communication process for both the speaker and the listener.

Improving Speaking Skills

As a person advances to his career, the ability to express his ideas orally takes on greater significance. Listening and speaking make up a large part of the time a person spend in communication. How much time a person devotes to speaking and more particularly, to making oral presentation and participating in meetings, depends on his occupation and on the level he has reached in his career. Few business people regularly deliver formal speeches. Instead, most of them communicate orally in informational conservations, small group discussions, and meetings.

Yet, every University graduate aspiring to a business career is well advised to develop speaking skills, a computer hardware sales representative pitches products before a group of potential customers. An accountant explains the financial position of an organization to management. A travel agent describes an excursion package to a single client or to a group. An

office manager clarifies new office procedures, and a structural engineer explains load bearing to a land developer. In today's information society nearly all careers require speaking skills. And the higher a person is promoted. the more he will have to express his is ideas in writing and in speaking. It is no coincidence that most people promoted to high-level positions are effective writers and speakers.

One of the most common speaking functions for business people is the most frequently made informally to a manager or to a small group of colleagues. Only occasionally do business people make formal speeches before large groups.

No matter the size of the audience, the best oral reports begin with planning. The presenter needs to analyze the audience, organize the content and plan visual aids. Knowing about his audience helps the presenter to decide how to structure his report. The size of the audience affects the formality of the presentation. A large audience generally requires a more formal and less personalized approach. Other factors, such as age, sex, education, experience and attitude toward the subject, also affect the presentation. These factors must be analyzed before the presenter can decide on his strategy, vocabulary, illustrations and level of detail.

A precise statement of purpose helps the presenter of an oral report to organize the content of his presentation. He should begin to organize his oral report by defining its purpose. After a firm statement of purpose, he should organize the report to reach his goal. He should limit himself to two to four main points because this is about as much as listeners can absorb at one sitting.

Oral presentation often contains three parts, namely, introduction, body and conclusion. Guffey (1998) explains the organization of speeches as follows: (1) tell them what you are going to tell them, (2) tell them what you have to say, and then (3) tell them what you have just told them. This type of redundancy may seem deadly, but repetition helps the audience retain information. Another important point to remember about audience is that they are not reading. They cannot control the rate of presentation or reread main points. It is easy for them to get lost. Therefore, good speakers help their listeners recognize the organization and main points in an oral report by emphasizing and repeating them. Good speakers also keep the audience on track by including helpful transitions, reviews and previews.

Summary

Nonverbal skills involve being aware of the silent messages sent by a person's eyes, face, body and appearance. When verbal and non-verbal messages contradict each other, receivers are more likely to believe the silent message, so a person should be aware of the nonverbal messages he is sending. Improving one's listening skill begins with recognizing that physical, psychological, language and nonverbal barriers can destroy the communication process. Good listeners become actively involved by controlling the environment, keeping an open mind, listening for main points, capitalizing on lag time, and judging ideas instead of appearances. They also force themselves to hear an entire message before reacting, they take selective notes, and they provide feedback.

Before making an oral presentation, good speakers analyze the audience, define the purpose, organize the content, prepare the outline, and plan effective visual aids.

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(8) Promotion of Safety Practices in Business and Technical Education Workshop and Laboratories.
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Abstract

This paper deals with the promotion of safety practices in business and technical education workshops and laboratories. Workshop/laboratory-related accidents have resulted in instructors' and students' temporary or permanent disability and even loss of life. It is important to establish safety rules and observe them, but strict enforcement of safety rules without a corresponding development of safety-consciousness will not produce lasting results. Safety in business and technical education workshop/laboratories in relation to safety factors, equipment, fire, electrical, mechanical, colour codes and safety lines are discussed. Recommendations on how to reduce workshop/laboratory accidents through safety consciousness are made.

Introduction

The importance of safety in the business and technical education workshops and laboratories cannot be over-emphasized. According to Walton (1974) 'Safety First' involves planned measures or precautions that should be taken to control situations and acts in an endeavour to prevent injury to the person concerned, injury to others, damage to the laboratories, its equipment and materials. Hence safety represents an escape from an unpleasant situation or an impending misfortune. Foster (1972) criticized business and technical educators for remaining behind in developing safety and accident prevention programmes. This implies that safety education is important in both industries and business/technical education workshops and laboratories.

For effective knowledge of accident prevention, it is important to have knowledge of the possible causes of accidents. Erinoso (1988) stated that in any case of accident occurrence, it was observed that some agency such as a machine, tool, object or material was involved; somebody has been injured and contact was made in some manner between his body and the agency; material, property or both have been incurred. Walton (1974) had observed that accidents in school workshops and laboratories occur when: -

(a) handling and using machine tools
(b) stepping on or striking obstructions left on the floor
(c) lifting, moving and storing materials and jobs
(d) using inflammable and corrosive liquids and gases.

Irwin (1984) observed that many causes of accidents are based on the physical and emotional make-up of the individual, environmental hazards, knowledge and understanding of safety or accident prevention. However, some of the immediate causes of accidents include human and mechanical failures, environmental hazards, improper habits of safety, emotional adjustment, lack of skills, improper use of alcohol and drugs, mental and physical fatigue, carelessness, illness and under-developed or improper attitude to work. Accidents do not just happen, they are caused by negligence of duties, violation of rules, regulations and procedures that have been designed to make it possible to operate safely.

Accident causes financial loss both to school and parents of the student/s involved. The injury or death of a student as a result of accident in the workshop/laboratory causes emotional and psychological problems to the other members of the class and the teacher also. Schools loose money when student's and/or teachers are absent as a consequence of accidents. In addition to the salary of the injured instructor, substitute teachers must to be paid.

There are also hidden costs of accidents, which are more difficult to identify and estimate. Instructional time is lost when accidents disrupt class or laboratory activities, and a subsequent accident investigation is made. Preparing accidents reports requires the teacher's limited time, which could otherwise be spent on instructional activities. Corwin (1972) observed that economic losses are inherent as a result of legal costs in connection with laboratory accidents.

School laboratory safety education is especially useful to business/technical instructors whose job is to prepare students for employment. Instructors should be familiar with the training methods of the future employers of their graduates. Accident-prevention programmes in the school workshop/laboratory must take into consideration the inexperience of the students. The student who is just learning to use hazardous equipment presents a different safety problem from that of the experienced employee (Newkirk, 1977). Students may possess very positive attitudes toward safety, but still lack the manual dexterity of experienced workers. To compensate for this problem, instructors try to reduce environmental hazards to a minimum and place great emphasis on safety student behavior because when an accident occurs, it reveals ineffective safety programme implementation.

Safety Factors
The following elements as indicated by Marwin (1983) are important for safety in school workshops and laboratories:
1. Safe apparel plus special protective apparel in specific workshops/laboratories should be worn always.
2. Buildings should be fireproof and have at least two exits opening outwards, skip proof floors, adequate number of electrical outlets and pleasant colour scheme.
3. Equipment, tools and instruments should be clean, in proper working order and painted in appropriate colours.
4. Housekeeping practices should keep the workshop/laboratory and orderly and provide adequate space for materials and supplies.
5. Sufficient illumination should be placed where it is needed, without direct or reflected glare.
6. Ventilation system should supply an adequate quantity of fresh air with optimum humidity and temperature, and should remove odours, dust and fumes.

7. Instructional methods should take into consideration students' abilities and capacities.
8. General working conditions should include adequate space and workstations, low noise level and constant supervision. Enrollment should not exceed the number of work stations.
9. Safe storage should be provided for all materials, especially acids and combustibles.
10. Emergency provision should include strategically located fire extinguishers, first-aid kits and posted disaster information.

WAYS OF PREVENTING ACCIDENTS AND ENSURING SAFETY IN WORSHOPS AND LABORATORIES.

Safety Equipment

Modern technology is constantly developing improved aids and devices to provide a safer working environment. Some of the common safety devices according to Storm (1989) include:
1. Panic buttons, which shut off electricity to all moving equipment in the event of an emergency. These emergency switches should be spaced out around the workshop/laboratory such that the instructor is never more than 7.5m from one.
2. Explosion-proof cabinets and spark-proof non-flammable containers for flammable materials.
3. Plastic containers for acids and other dangerous chemicals to prevent breakage.
4. Key-controlled gas valves for furnaces and burners, and key-controlled main electric power switches, only instructors should possess control keys.
5. Explosion-proof switches and electric fixtures for laboratory areas, which may accumulate volatile, vapour and fumes, for example, a finishing room.
6. Magnetic switches shut the machines off in the event of a break in the electric circuit.
7. Load-shielded walls to house x-ray and other radiation equipment.
8. Exhaust fans to provide fresh air and remove toxic fumes.
9. Retraceable reels for compressed-air hoses and electrical extension lights to prevent obstruction of passageways.
10. Interlocking machine guards, which prevent operation unless guard is in correct position. The guards stop the machine if they are removed or if guarded area of the machine is entered.
11. Automatic machine guards which function independently of the operator. They stop the machine so long as any part of the operator's body is within danger zone of the machine.

Fire Safety

Greene (1982 and Storm 1989) stated that fires constitute a greater danger in school workshops and laboratories than in other instructional areas. The workshops/laboratories has the potential for the most common causes of fires which may include leaking gas, spontaneous ignition of unprotected combustible materials, short circuit due to deficient wiring, or equipment, matches and smoking, using open flames for welding, soldering, heating operations. Other fire

hazards may occur when heated surfaces touch combustible materials, molten metal is used in welding and foundry operations, and vapours escape from evaporating volatile liquids.

Fire, according to Storm (1989) can start when there is:
(a) an adequate supply of oxygen
(b) a combustible material such as wood, paper and oil
(c) a temperature above the ignition point of the combustible material.
(d) a flame or spark-ignited chain reaction, which combines fuel molecules with oxygen and results in combustion.

Workshops/laboratories where flammable liquids are handled are always considered extra-hazard areas. Fires are extinguished by cooling and or quenching, by smothering from oxygen, by removing or diluting fuel and by inhibiting the ignition chain reaction by slowing the chemical action. Fire extinguisher should be located at strategic position in the workshop/laboratory and especially where fire is most likely to occur. The local fire service should inspect and service the extinguishers and instruct the students in their proper use. Students' knowledge of fire-fighting techniques is essential since quick control of small fires usually prevents major ones.

In case of any fire, the workshop/laboratory instructor must turn off each piece of operating and heating equipment, the main power switch, all gas valves and torches. Students should be shown the switch or box used for sounding fire alarms during the workshop/laboratories orientation and should also know the location of fire (Williams, 1972). It is advisable that students follow predetermined building evacuation plans during fire alarms which are practiced during periodic fire drills. The instructor should ensure that the students follow fire drill instructions and should not panic.

Electrical Safety

Electricity is used so commonly that electrical shock and burns injure many each year in the schools' business/technical workshops and laboratories. Many of such injuries can be prevented by recognizing the potential danger of electricity and planning accordingly for safety.

Gorwin (1972) recommended a specific electric preventive maintenance programme, which includes these categories:
1. Power load check of available service in relation to consumed load.
2. Leakage current check of all portable and stationary electronic equipment.
3. Utility outlet check for proper grounding, polarity and tension.
4. Current leakage and proper grounding checks of small and major appliances.
5. Safety checks of service outlets for cable television and other audio-visual equipment.
6. Check for proper grounding and current leakage of audio-visual equipment.
7. Keep service and preventive maintenance records.

Visual inspection and observations are inadequate for discovering all potential electrical hazards. Moreover, the instructor may not have the competencies to carry out electrical or electronic inspection. However, the instructor is accountable for the safety and welfare of those under his supervision. The instructor should request for regular electrical and electronic inspection by a competent engineer or technician. In addition to safety checks with test instruments, weekly visual inspection of motors, generators, panels, transformers, controls, switches, lights, outlets, conduits and cords are still necessary. While visual inspections alone

cannot uncover all potential electrical hazards, such inspections can reveal these warning signs as noted by William (1987): external damage on insulation, wires, receptacles, plugs, switches and other extraneous material on or near electrical equipment.

It should be noted that the safest approach to electric current is to avoid any bodily contact with it. The current should be shut off when any type of repair work is performed on electric wiring or on electrically operated equipment.

Mechanical Safety

Mechanical safety in the technical laboratory is very important because mechanical faults can be really dangerous. Walton (1974) and Wilber (1978) stated that mechanical faults occur as a result of poor machine maintenance and lubrication, worn or damaged machine parts, over loading the machine and forcing it to work beyond its capacity, incorrect setting-up of the machine, using blunt or damaged cutting tools, using wrong cutting tools and incorrect working practices. Machine with faulty parts cause accidents and should not be used at all.

Safety Colour Code

A colour code identifies and locates safety hazards and equipment. The code that meets the requirements of occupational safety and approved by U.S. National Safety Council are as follows:

RED indicates fire equipment such as alarm, hydrants, extinguishers and/or wall panels where they are hung, sirens, sprinkle pipes and valves, fire exit signs and or wall panels where they are hung, and fire-hose reels.

Red indicates danger at barricades and temporary obstruction, danger signs, containers of flammable liquids with flash point of less than 800. Red also indicates stop-stop bars; stop buttons and emergency electrical stop switches on machinery.

YELLOW or YELLOW and BLACK stripes mark construction equipment such as bulldozers, scrapers and forklifts. They also mark unguarded edges of platforms, pits, and walls. Physical hazards such as beams, pipes, pulleys, blocks, guardrails, hand rails posts or pillars and edges of sliding doors are yellow. A yellow band painted on a can, about one-third of its height, with its content printed in red baud identifies a waste container for explosive or combustible materials.

BLUE designates caution. It is used for caution signs such as warnings against starting or moving equipment under repair.

ORANGE designates dangerous parts of machines or energizes equipment, which may cut, crush, shock or injure. It also emphasizes hazards, which may occur when enclosure doors are open or when guards for gears of other moving equipment are removed.

PURPLE designates radiation hazards. Purple or purple and yellow stripes designate indoor and outdoor areas for the storage and handling of radioactive and contaminated materials, equipment, containers and disposable cans. Purple signal lights indicate when radiation-producing equipment is operating.

GREEN indicates safety and the location of first-aid equipment. It designates first-aid kits, stretchers, gas masks, safety lockers dispensaries, safety-deluge showers and safety bulletin boards.

BLACK and WHITE marking indicates floor space that must remain clear. This floor marking is used around first-aid-, fire fighting and other emergency equipment.

Safety Lines
Safety lines in laboratories serve two main functions:
  (a) White lines mark passage/ways and aisles which should be kept free from obstructions.
  (b) Yellow lines indicate danger zones beyond which only the operators of the equipment may proceed during hazardous operations. The bright colour enables the instructor to notice violators of this rule instantly.
A minimum of I.2m^2 of work area is recommended for the operator of stationary equipment. The safety zone is larger because of the irregular shape of the equipment or the location of its controls. The safety zone should be large enough to provide adequate space for operators to work safely without interference from others working nearby. This serves as protection to the student who is running the machine and to others who might be injured while standing close by. Serious accidents have occurred where a student unintentionally shoved the operator of a power machine. Another indirect benefit of using safety lines is the orderly appearance these lines lend to the laboratory. This makes a favorable impression on students and visitors alike.

CONCLUSION
Developing a positive attitude towards safety is one of the chief goals of the business/technical education instructors. Robert (1972) emphasized that a safe environment is essential to develop positive safety attitudes. A clean and orderly laboratory with regularly serviced equipment and the necessary protective devices is essential for safety education. Teaching laboratory skills while using safe and correct procedures is most important. Planning, rehearsing and perfecting laboratory demonstrations prior to presentations minimize transmitting incorrect or confusing information. Demonstrations which emphasize correct and safe procedures will lead to safer workshop and laboratory practices.
Safety reminders to students must be supplemented with the instructor's own strict observance of safety rules. It is important for instructors to wear appropriate apparel for laboratory work and demonstration, especially if the students are required to do so. If safety rules are violated by the instructor, safety lectures and demonstrations become meaningless academic exercise.
Think safety, avoid your first workshop/laboratory accident, it may be your last. The following recommendations to maximize safety in the business/technical laboratory are made:

RECOMMENDATION FOR PROMOTION OF SAFETY IN WORKSHOPS/LABORATORIES

1. Instructors should never leave the students in the workshop/laboratory unsupervised.
2. Instructors should never leave the workshop/laboratory with an unqualified person in charge of the class.
3. Instructors should not send students outside the laboratory to perform hazardous activity without acceptable supervision.
4. Instructors should not allow students with limited physical or mental ability' to use hazardous equipment.
5. Instructors should inspect equipment before permitting operation.
6. Instructors must not remove or modify factory installed safety devices on instructional equipment.
7. Instructors must not fail to keep written reports of accidents and must obtain statement from witnesses of accidents.
8. Instructors must provide proper safety instruction and enforce workshop/laboratory rules.
9. Students must not be allowed to use unapproved equipment in the workshop/laboratory.
10. Students should not work in the workshop/laboratory after or before regular class periods without acceptable supervision.
11. Students should be involved in safety promotion by holding safety meetings during which they present safety reports.
12. Safety inspection assignments in the laboratory, establishment of laboratory safety committees and student-maintained safety bulletin boards are ways of involving students and which can develop positive safety attitudes in them.
13. Instructors should organize field trips for them to observe safety practices in operation.
14. Safety posters should be hanged in the laboratory.

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(9) The Significance of Informal Organizations to Management, Productivity and Job Satisfaction
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Abstract

Informal organization exists permanently with employers because it arises naturally from the interaction of people. It is indirectly subject to some management influences. The long-run objective in this instance is to integrate interests of the formal and informal system. Informal organization brings a number of benefits, but present certain areas of difficulty, namely. resistance to change role conflict, rumour and conformity. It establishes standards and norms, invokes sanctions and develops cliques. Information communication, called the grapevine, develops in the form of a cluster chain.

Introduction

The history and dynamics of organizations are replete with dogmatic axioms. Whitehead (1935) states, "Besides the technical organization, absorbed in its logical procedures, every firm contains a social group". Similarly, Bakke (1950, p. 194) states that "As factors influencing human behaviour, the formal and informal systems are not separable." Parkinson (1957), in a delightful spoof of the effects of size and other organizational variables states that "in administrative organizations the number of persons multiplies at a predeterminable annual rate, regardless of the work to be done- and even if the work load is decreasing. Managers feel that their status grow as they acquire more employees; hence they employ more clerks, assistants and specialists, which in turn requires more people for servicing and coordinating those newly hired, and so on". This disquieting part of Parkinson's spoof is that there is much truth in it.

Beneath the cloak of formal relationships in a business there exists a more complex, complicated system of informal relationships. The informal organization is significant to management because of its powerful influence upon productivity and job satisfaction. Both formal and informal systems are necessary for group activity, just as two blades are essential to make a pair of scissors workable. Together, formal and informal organizations comprise the social system of work groups.

Nature of Informal Organization

According to Davis (1972), informal organization is that network of personal and social relations, which is not established or required by formal organization. It arises from the social interaction of people which means that it develops spontaneously as people associate with one

another. The emphasis within informal organization is on people arid their relationships, whereas formal organization emphasizes positions in terms of authority, therefore, attaches to a persons while formal authority attaches to a position and a person wields it only by virtue of his position. Informal authority is personal, but formal authority is institutional.

Characteristics of Informal Organization

Managers sometimes wish they could order the informal organization abolished with the stroke of a pen. Most of them would prefer to work with only the formal organization because this would make their job simpler and involve less worry. From their point of' view the informal organization is a thorn in the side, which regularly offers resistance to their formal orders, or amends them, or accomplishes them by a procedure different from the intended one. A manager can rescind any formal organization he has established but he did not create the informal organization and he cannot rescind it. As long as there are people, there will be informal groups.

Authority in informal organization is earned or given permissively, rather than delegated. Informal authority comes from those who are the objective of its control; but formal authority comes from outsiders who are higher up the line rather than from people who are controlled by it. In contrast to the downward flow of formal authority, informal authority more often flows upwards or horizontally. It is more of a privilege than a right. It is usually more unstable than formal authority since it is subject to the sentiments of people. Because of its subjective nature, informal organization is not subject to management control in the way that formal organization is.

As a consequence of the differences between the two sources of authority, formal organization may grow to immense size but informal organizations tend to remain smaller in order to keep within the limits of personal relations within a large employing institution. They exist at all levels. Some of them are wholly within the institution; others are partially external to it.

Informal leaders

The leaders of informal organizations arise from various causes. Some of these causes are age, seniority, technical competence, and work location, freedom to move around the work area, and a pleasant, responsive personality (Dalton, 1988). The causes are actually as multitudinous as the situations because each leader arises under slightly different circumstances. Informal organizations overlap to the extent that one person may be a member of several different groups, which means that there is not just one leader but also several of varying importance. The group may look to one employee on matters pertaining to wages and to another to lead in recreational plans. In this way each person in a department may be some type of informal leader. Perhaps there is an old-timer who serves as a counselor, and a spokesman who is depended upon to convey key problems to the manager. In return for his services, each leader usually enjoys certain rewards and privileges. One significant reward is normally the esteem in which the leader is held.

Although each person in a work group may be leader of some small informal organization, there is usually one primary leader who stands out above the rest. His influence is predominant. Each manager needs to learn who the informal leader of his subordinates is and to work with that person to assure that his leadership is furthering the employer's objectives, rather

than hindering them. When the informal leader is working against his employer, his effect is far greater than his numerical proportion in the group. He is in a biological sense the "dominant gene" in his interaction with others.

According to Kaliski (1983). the informal organization is a good place for potential formal leaders to develop, but it should be remembered that an informal leader does not always make the best formal manager. History is replete with incidents of good informal authority. Some informal leaders fail as formal ones because they fear formal responsibility, something they do not have authority as informal leaders. They often criticize management for lacking initiative, not daring to be different, or being overcautious but when they take a management job, they become even more conservative because they are afraid to make a mistake. Other formal leaders fail because their area of formal management responsibility is much broader than the tiny functional area of informal authority. The fact that James is the reader in departmental social activities does not mean that he will be equally good as the departmental manager.

Functions of Informal Groups

Informal groups arise and persist because they satisfy wants of their members. These wants are determined by the group members themselves. A want, which seems to be felt by all groups, is the necessity to perpetuate the cultural value they hold dear. This function of informal organization helps preserve the group's integrity as a group. A second function is the provision of social satisfactions. Informal organizations give a man recognition, status and further opportunity to relate to others. When an employee thinks of meeting his friends, sharing their jokes and eating with them, his day takes on a new dimension that makes easier any disagreeableness or routine in his work. On the contrary, a group may not accept a worker, hereby making his work more disagreeable and driving him to transfer, absenteeism or a resignation (Osuala. 1993).

A third informal group function is communication. In order to meet wants and to keep its members informed of what is taking place that may affect want satisfaction, the group develops systems and channels of communication. A fourth function is social control by which the behaviour of other is influenced and regulated. Guffey (notes that social control is both internal and external. Internal control according to him is directed toward making members of the group conform to its culture. External control, on the other hand, is directed toward those outside the group such as management, union leadership, or other informal groups. Pressures of external control can be quite strong, as when a walkout strike occurs.

Some Areas of Difficulty

Out of each of the above four functions of informal organization has developed a major danger or difficulty which requires careful management attention (Keith, 1971, p. 2-7):

1. **Resistance to change:** With regard to the first function, perpetuation of culture, there develops a tendency to perpetuate the status quo and to stand like a rock in the face of change. What has been good, is good and shall be good. If, for example, job A has always had more status than job B, then it must continue to have more status and more pay, even though conditions have change to make job A now inferior. Furthermore, if restriction of productivity was necessary in the past with an autocratic management then, it is

necessary now, even though management is becoming participative. Although informal organizations are bound by no chart on the wall, they are hound by convention, custom and culture. Manager who deal with change need especially to understand informal organization and prepare their groups in advance for change.

2. **Role Conflict:** With regard to the second function, keith also observed that the provision of social satisfactions, the quest for group satisfaction may lead members away from organisation objectives. What is good for them is not always good for his employer. For example, coffee brakes may be desirable, but if employees spend an extra fifteen minutes socializing in the morning and afternoon, productivity may be reduced to the disadvantage of both employer and general public. Essentially what occurs is a role conflict. A worker wants to meet the requirements of both his group and his employer but two roles in conflict are required, as in the case of a motivated employee who wants to be productive in his role of employee but he also wants to be less productive "good Ocy" in his role as a fellow work.

Much of this role conflict can be avoided by carefully cultivating mutual interests with informal groups. The more the interests, goals, methods and evaluation systems of formal and informal organizations can be integrated, the more productivity and satisfaction can be expected. However, there must always be some formal and informal difference. This is not an area where perfect harmony is feasible.

3. **Rumour:** The third function of informal organizations, namely communication, leads to that well—known phenomenon called rumour. The whole informal communication system is familiarly known as grapevine and rumour is the injudicious or untrue part of it. True grapevine is a devastating disease that sweeps through an organisation as fast as lightening. Rumour should be fought firmly and consistently, but how and what to strike must be known. It is a serious mistake to strike at the whole grapevine merely because it happens to be the agent which carries rumour; that approach would be as injudicious as throwing away a typewriter because of misspelt word.

The best approach in dealing with rumour is to get at its causes, rather than try to kill it after it has already started. Getting at causes is wise use of the preventive approach, instead of a tardy curative approach. A cooperative high-morale group has very little rumour mongering, for the simple reason that its members have little cause to start rumours. When people feel reasonably secure, understand the things that matter to them, and feel on the team, there are few rumours. But when people are poorly placed in the group, emotionally maladjusted, or inadequately informed about their environment, they are likely to be rumour mongers. This is a normal defensive reaction attempting to make their situation more meaningful and secure.

But in spite of all that can be done, rumours do start. In-general, an attempt should be made to stop the ones that are important enough to be of concern. They should be stopped as early as possible because research findings by Hill (1993), Hook (1994) show that once a rumour's general theme is known and accepted, then employees ignore future happenings to conform to rumour. Naturally, not all rumours should be fought but the damaging ones must be dealt with. Rumours are stopped or weakened by getting out the facts in any way possible.

Usually face-to- face supply of facts is the most effective way but a word of warning is in order. The facts must be given directly without first mentioning the rumour because research by Kaliski (1983) suggests that when a rumour is repeated, it is remembered just as well as the refutation. Participation should also help to combat rumours because it gives members some part in determining the things, which affect them. It is a well-recognized principle that rumours will tend to rise in situations where developments especially relevant to people's existence lie largely outside their control. (Festinger et al, 1987)." Managers sometimes ask for help of the union in combating rumour. Although the union does not control the grapevine any more than the management does, it does have influence. If the union is stimulating rumour, then an appeal to cooperate might produce improvements. It is recognized that rumour are worst when management and labour are in conflict therefore, any reduction of conflict should reduce rumours. Regardless of a rumour's importance, it should be listened to carefully because, even though untrue, it usually carries a message.

4. **Conformity**. The fourth function of informal organisation, namely, social control exerts strong pressures for conformity. There are two types of conformity, of action and of attitude. Uniformity of action is called group standards are essential to coordinate large work groups. The most serious conformity is of attitude. If attitude conformity can be induced, then man losses his individuality and can be manipulated by unscrupulous leaders. Group requirements for attitude consistency are known as norms and the group whose norms a person accepts is a reference group, whether he belongs to it or not. Informal norms and reference groups are powerful forces in work society. They consistently guide opinion and wield power contrary to the leadership of formal organisation. Non-conformer may be ostracized until they capitulate or resign.

The great danger of informal group conformity is not its dull loss of personal difference, which is bad enough, but rather that members become subject to the willful control of the informal leader. Thus, they can be skillfully manipulated by him for bad as well as good. He is their leader in just as strong a sense as a formal leader is but without the controls and weight of responsibility, which constrain the formal leader. In this way, the informal group becomes a prime instrument of manipulators and inciters of conflict who move into the informal structures of society in order to influence them toward selfish ends.

Benefits of Informal Organization

Although informal organizations have their disadvantages, they also bring a number of benefits. Most important is the fact that they blend with formal organizations to make a workable system for getting the work done. Formal organizations' plans and policies cannot meet every problem in a dynamic situation because they are reestablished and partly inflexible and spontaneous. Dubin and Shartle (1987) were among the first to recognize this necessary complementarity of formal and informal Organizations. Dubin states "Informal relations in the organization serve to preserve the organization from the self destruction that would result from literal obedience to the policies, rules, regulations and procedures. Shartle, in reporting his field research on leadership, comments, "The Informal organization is one index of the dynamic of getting work done, and it appears that for efficiency, it will necessarily deviate from the formal organization". If the manager accepts and respects this union with the informal, permitting

informal groups to have certain privileges and practices without management harassment, there is evidence that it gets better cooperation from informal systems.

Another benefit of informal organization is to lighten the workload of the formal organization manager. If employees know that their manager has the support of the existing informal organization, they are more likely to respond to his ideas, to be motivated to work efficiently, and to proceed with their assigned tasks without bothering their manager.

Informal organization acts to fill in gaps in formal orders or in a manager's abilities. If a manager is weak in. planning ability, one of his employees may informally help with planning, either through suggestions or open action, so that overall result is the same as if the manager did good planning.

A significant benefit of informal organization is that it gives satisfaction and stability to work group. It is the means by which workers achieve a sense of belonging and security.

A well-known benefit of informal organization is that it can be a useful channel of employee communication. Management, in fact, often depends on the informal system to convey certain types of information. Another benefit is that it is a safety valve for the frustrations and other emotional problems of group work. If a man is unhappy and feels he cannot talk to his supervisor, perhaps he will talk to a friend.

A benefit of informal organization which is seldom recognized is that its presence encourages a manager to plan and act more carefully than he would otherwise. Any manager who recognizes its power knows that it is a check and balance on his unlimited use of authority. He will introduce changes into his group only after careful planning because he knows that the informal group could provide the impetus to undermine an ill-conceived and shaky project. He wants his project to succeed because he will have to answer the formal authority if they fail.

Informal Communication

The informal grapevine coexists with management's formal communication systems. The term "grapevine" arose during the American civil War days. Intelligent telephone lines were strung loosely from tree to tree in the manner of a grapevine and the message thereon was after garbled; hence any rumour or informal communication was said to be from the grapevine (Davis, 1987). Today the term applies to all informal information, whether truth or rumour. As a matter of fact, research shows that in normal work situations over three-fourths of grapevine information is accurate (Livington, 988).

The grapevine arises from the social interaction of people, which means that it is as fickle, dynamic and varied as people are. It is the expression of their natural motivation to communicate. It is the exercise of their freedom of speech and is a natural, normal activity. In fact if employees are so uninterested in their work that they do not engage in shoptalk about it, they are probably maladjusted. If employees are so uninterested in their associates that they do not exchange talk about who will likely get the next promotion or who recently had baby, they probably are abnormal.

Since grapevine cannot be held responsible for errors and is somewhat of an unknown, managers sometimes succumb to the wish that it would go away; but we have learned from experience and research that homicide will not work with grapevine. It cannot be abolished, rubbed out, hidden under a basket, chopped down, tied up, murdered or stopped. If we suppress it in one place, it will pop out in another. If we cut off one of its sources, it merely moves to another one, quite similar to the way we change from one channel on our TV set. It is as hard to

kill as the mythical glass snake which, when it is struck, it breaks into fragments and grows a new snake out of each piece. In a sense, the grapevine is man's birthright because whenever man congregates into groups of two or more, the grapevine is sure to develop, it may use smoke signals, taps on the back, ordinary conversation or some other methods but it will always be there.

The grapevine is more a product of the situation than it is of the person. This means that given the proper situation and motivation any of us tend to become active on the grapevine. Since people tend to be active on the grapevine when they have cause to be, they are acting partly in a predictable way. This element of cause and predictability is important because it offers management a chance to influence the grapevine. People also are active on the grapevine when their friends and work associates are involved. This means that if Mary is to be promoted or Beatrice is dismissed, employees need to know the full story as soon as possible. If they are not informed, they will fill in the gaps with their own conclusions. That is people fill in missing signals according to their own perception. Research by Riegel (1989) shows that the greatest spread of information happens immediately after it is known so it is important to get out the right story in the beginning.

The grapevine exists largely by word of mouth and by observation; hence, procedures, which regularly bring people in contact, will encourage them to be active on grapevine. For example, employees having adjacent desks are likely to communicate more than two employees in separate buildings. One favourable quality of the grapevine is that it gives a supervisor insight into employee attitudes. It also is a safety valve for employees' emotions. Another important function is that it helps spread useful information. It can, for example, interpret management's formal orders into the language of the workers, in this way making up for management's failure to give workers readable writing. In several instances the grapevine carries information which the formal system does not carry and purposely leaves unsaid.

Another grapevine quality is its fast pace. Being flexible and personal, it spreads information faster than most management communication systems operate. With the rapidity of a speeding bullet, it filters out of the walls, past the manager's office through the locker room and along the veranda. This makes it quite difficult for management to combat undesirable rumours or to release significant news in time to prevent rumour formation. One grapevine characteristic long evident is its canny skill at cracking even the tightest company security screen.

All evidence shows that the grapevine is influential, either favorably or unfavorable. Managers are coming to the realization that they need to learn its habits and seek to guide it. Though they need to learn its habits and seek to guide it. They used to ignore it, they now study it. The object is to turn this "weed" into a desirable "fruit". To integrate its interest with those of the formal organization. The first toward integrating the grapevine is to listen to it. Modern managers are getting on the grapevine in order to learn who its leaders are, how it operates and what information it carries. As they learn who its leaders are, they encourage the leaders to learn how the grapevine operates; they are better able to influence it. As they learn what information it carries, they are enabled to attack directly whatever untruth there is.

A second step is to "feed' water, and cultivate the grapevine". Facts are fed into it so that motivation for rumour mongering is not there. Facts discourage rumour and maliciousness, but do not prevent them. Some mangers object to feeding the grapevine because they reason that such action gives tacit management approval to its mode of operation. They prefer to keep hands off, letting the grapevine know that it is unapproved and unwelcome.

Influencing Informal Organization

It has been noted that management do not establish informal organizations and neither can management abolish them. But management can exercise a measure of influence. Since informal organizations operate during work as well as away, management exercise partial influence by such means as what management communicates, what people are permitted to work close together, and how management recognizes informal leaders. Management's job. according to Davis (1987), is:

(1) To let employees know that management accepts and understands informal organization.
(2) To consider influence upon informal systems when taking any action.
(3) To integrate interests of informal groups with those of the formal organization.
(4) To keep informal activities from unnecessary threatening or disrupting formal systems.

The formal organization has one set of values and system of evaluating people. The informal has another. If these two evolution systems are far apart, there will be conflict. If the two evaluation systems can be brought into closer agreement, there tends to be less conflict and better morale and productivity. Care should be taken to make sure that informal systems remain secondary to formal ones; else the long-run employer objectives may be lost in a maze of small group interests.

Summary

Informal organization exists permanently with employers because it arises naturally from the interactions of people. It is indirectly subject to some management influences. The long-run objective in this instance is to integrate interests of the formal and informal systems so that they will operate to evaluate and reward people in about the same way. Informal organization brings a number of benefits, but it also presents certain areas of difficulty: resistance to change, role conflict, rumour and conformity. It establishes standards and norms, invokes sanctions and develops cliques. Informal communication, called the grapevine, develops in the form of a cluster chain.

In the relationship of formal and informal systems, formal organization needs to dominate in order to maintain continuity toward objectives.

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(10) Curriculum Forum
Strategies for Implementing Curriculum Innovations in Basic Business Education.
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Abstract

Curriculum innovation is a planned change in the course content of an educational institution. Among the reasons for curriculum innovation in vocational education are to ensure that educational objectives are achieved, to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to the needs of the students and the society and to facilitate teaching and learning. The concept of innovation are discussed in the paper. The paper also discussed strategies for the implementation of curriculum innovation originating within and outside the school.

Introduction

Nigeria inherited from the colonial masters a system of education that gave prominence to general education in total disregard to vocational education, which leads to technological development, and the acquisition of skill for gainful employment. In her effort to correct this problem, many curriculum innovations have been introduced into the education system. Incidentally, most of the curriculum innovations have probably failed to yield appreciable results for reasons of poor implementation. This paper is therefore designed to discuss some key strategies in implementing curriculum innovation in basic business education.

The Concept of Innovation

Innovation has to do with the introduction of something new. What is introduced could be ideas, methods and devices, among others. Osuala (1998) defined innovation as a significant effort for the creation of a new system or to modify an existing system. He noted that innovation might cover a wide range of events including curricula, teaching and learning methods, equipment, teachers training institutes and all kinds of non-formal and adult programmes.

Mile in Angelo (1973) indicated that innovation is a deliberate novel and specific change which is thought to be efficacious in accomplishing the goals of a system. According to Boflam in Okwuenu (1996), innovation is a process which involves a lot of actions and reactions. It involves certain questions relating to the person making the change, the reasons for the change, the users of the change and the timing of the change (Okwuenu, 1996). He considers these factors as important considerations to be made implementing curriculum innovation.

The Concept of Curriculum and Curriculum Innovation

Curriculum as seen by Zais (1973) is a plan for the education of the learners. He indicated that presently, there is a significant disagreement among curriculum specialists with regard to what constitutes the plan. The disagreement and confusion is justified because what one educational institution considers to be a good plan may be considered inadequate by another.

Okwuenu (1996) defined curriculum as all the consciously planned programmes of and for the school, the aim of which is to educate the learner. Okwuenu said that curriculum includes various government policies, aims, goals and objectives, policies of implementations and personnel, seasonal and termly calendar, facilities and services and all that government and its employees plan and execute in their bid to get the learners educated. This rather broad definition of the term curriculum goes to indicate that a well-developed and designed curriculum touches all aspects of education. Curriculum touches the teacher, the learner, aims and objectives of education implementation strategies, policies and facilities among other things. Curriculum innovation may be described as a partial or complete change in the plan for the education of the learner. Curriculum innovation as noted by Ogwo (1999) is a specific educational measure or change, the purpose of which is to make teaching and learning easier. Ogwo indicated that curriculum innovation as a concept describes all well conceived and properly directed ideas in education.

Innovation is introduced to improve the content of the curriculum in order to make it more relevant to the different needs of the society. It is also intended to improve the organisation of learning experiences so that teaching and learning activities will be more meaningful and- less tedious. Furthermore, it aims at improving instructional strategies and to improve the design and production of basic and enrichment materials. Finally, it is expected to improve the utilization of facilities, which are designed to support and promote the achievement of curriculum aims and objectives.

In contrast to curriculum innovation as a concept, Ogwo noted that curriculum innovation as specific educational measure, involves the introduction of specific changes in content, new practices or methods and materials to solve identified and specified educational problems. He indicated that such problems may include lack of relevance in curriculum contents, lack of adequate or appropriateness of materials, poor performance by the learners, shortage of adequately trained or qualified teachers and lack or interest by learners in the existing curriculum.

Osuala (1998) described curriculum innovation as a strong desire for a radical change. The strength of the desire for change, he said, is usually induced by the extent to which the existing curriculum has failed to meet its objectives.

Curriculum Innovation in Basic Business Education

Basic business education is an aspect of vocational/technical education, which aims at training individuals for the acquisition of practical skills needed for gainful employment. Since the needs of the labour market change with technological development, basic business education curriculum must keep abreast with the needs of those receiving business education for vocational use. Basic business education curriculums as noted by Roberts (1971) include offerings in stenography, typewriting, bookkeeping, clerical work and distributive occupations. Each of these areas has witnessed one type of innovation or the other. For example in typewriting, the usual

method of having the students to master the home keys before adding other letters in the keyboard has been modified to a method where the students start learning with the typing of meaningful words. The second method is considered better because students are motivated to learn when they know that they are able to type something meaningful, unlike in the traditional method, where arrays of meaningless letters are produced. The typewriters have also undergone incredible modification, from manual typewriter where the carriage return level is pushed hard to move to a new line, to the electric typewriter where a line move to a new line by pressing a button. All these changes are designed to make learning easier and relevant to the needs of the learner.

Other curriculum innovations have also taken place on paper in this country. These include the findings of empirical studies relating to business education curriculum. In one of the studies, lyare (1994) recommended

1. A periodic evaluation of the accounting textbooks used by the students
2. The inclusion of chapter summaries
3. Student-centred activities in textbooks and
4. The consultation of other accounting textbooks and teachers outside the ones prescribed by the state.

In another empirical study relating to basic business education curriculum, Oyapidan (1999) recommended the inclusion of office machines in the secondary school curriculum based on the findings of this study, it becomes necessary to develop the implementation of curriculum innovation in basic business education

Strategies for Implementing Curriculum Innovation

For curriculum innovation in basic business education to be implemented, the following strategies must be incorporated.

Angelo (1973) identified two sets of strategies for the implementation of curriculum innovation in basic business education. The two sets of curriculum innovation implementation strategies are:

(a) Innovations originating from the educational institutions, and for (b) curriculum innovation originating from outside the school.

To facilitate the implementation of curriculum innovation originating within the educational institution;

(1) The innovation must be congruent with the main objectives of the programme of basic business education.
(2) The innovation should be sufficiently modified for it to be blended with the cultural values and past experience of adopters.
(3) The opinion leaders must be identified and they must be convinced of the importance of the curriculum innovation to the students, members of the educational institution and the society at large. The opinion leaders according to Angelo are the most important individuals in the adoption and implementation process.
(4) A committee whose job will be to identify the opinion leaders could be formed.
(5) The intended users or the implementation agents must understand the nature and need for the incorporation of such innovations into the educational system. This is very necessary as it is sometime. This is very necessary as it is sometimes unclear whether curriculum innovations are accepted by the users because they really see the need for such

innovations or because they really see the need for such innovations or because they feel it is safer to passively accept the innovations rather than resist their adoption. Lack of understanding and commitment to the curriculum on the part of the intended users can prevents a successful implementation of curriculum innovation on a longer term basis.

(6) The intended users of a curriculum innovation must also be made to understand how the innovation will facilitate their occupational marketability, their teaching and administrative competencies respectively. Angelo (1973) observed that a major problem of a curriculum innovation is to have the potential users develop the feeling that the promotion of the innovation itself is all that matters.

(7) It is also important to ensure that qualified teachers are employed. Teachers are directly at the center of every educational programme and they play important role in curriculum implementation. Therefore, teachers who are committed and knowledgeable in the new ideas and practices must be proved in sufficient number. Similarly, facilities — building, equipment, tools, laboratories, classroom and consumable laboratory materials must be adequately provided.

(8) The social consequences associated with the adoption and implementation of curriculum innovation should be carefully identified. Social consequences that might be undesirable should be prevented or minimized by thoughtful planning.

In Nigeria most of the major curriculum innovations in vocational education are known to have originated outside the educational institutions where they are implemented. This tendency may be explained by the over-centralized nature of the educational system. To a large extent, the implementation of curriculum innovation originates from outside the school.

Method of Dissemination of Information

1. Methods of dissemination of information must be determined.
2. As is the case with innovations, which originate within the educational institutions, individuals with the capacity to influence the users of the innovation must be identified so that they will educate the students, the teachers, the school heads and the guidance counselors, among others, on the need for the curriculum innovation. In the case of private educational institutions, assistance of the key information within the institutions may be sought.
3. On the identification of the Opinion leaders, techniques and methods for winning their support should be fashioned out.
4. Seminar should be organized for the identified opinion leaders from the different educational institutions. The seminar should be organized by the appropriate state or local government change agents who should draw heavily from the resource persons who must see the innovation as desirable for the respective schools.
5. There should also be seminar for the teachers and administrators of the individual schools where the innovation will be implemented. The opinion leaders previously identified will now serve as seminar/workshop directors for their different institutions.
6. Ogwo (1999) and Angelo (1973) are in agreement that there should be in-service training for the teachers and all others who are going to be involved in the execution of the curriculum innovation. According to the authors, this will ensure that teachers and those to be involved in the implementation of the curriculum receive the necessary

developmental skills and knowledge, which are required for the implementation of the curriculum innovation.

7. As a general rule, information about curriculum innovation should be disseminated through different methods and media. The individuals expected to implement the innovation should be prepared to see the need and usefulness of the innovation. Ogwo further suggests that it is necessary to clarify the roles of the various groups of people who will implement the innovation, where such clarification is necessary and important. He advised that teachers and all individuals involved in the implementation of the innovation should be trained to acquire attitude and skills necessary for the implementation of the innovation

8. The professional associations should be educated on the need for the innovation.

9. The labour market must also have need for products of the innovation.
    At the end of the training of all those to be involved in the implementation of the innovation, there should be continuous encouragement and rewarding of teachers and administrators for making the innovation workable.

10. Finally there should be frequent follow-up study and remediation to ensure that the innovation is being implemented.

Conclusion

Curriculum is a necessary component of every educational system. Education as a system comprises many component parts. For the education system to work, all the components must work together to ensure the continued existence of the system. Therefore, for Nigeria to have a functional business and office education, curriculum innovation should be regularly introduced in the school system in order to help the teachers to keep abreast with the technological development in business and office organizations.

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