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Improving Funding of Office Technology and Management Programme for Self-empowerment of Graduating Students of Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria

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Abstract:
Funding of education programmes has recently been a matter of concern to stakeholders. The purpose of the study was to determine if there is any relationship between funding and self-empowerment of Office Technology and Management graduating students in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. Two research questions and one hypothesis were raised to guide the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. A sample of 80 academic staff and 205 graduating students were used for the study from the total population of 80 OTM academic staff and 427 HND graduating students in the department of OTM in six polytechnics in South Western States, Nigeria. The research instrument was a 4-point scale Likert-type questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed a significant relationship between funding and self-empowerment of graduating students (r-value = 0.504, p < 0.05). The study concluded that funding plays an important role in the quality of the OTM programme and the self-empowerment of graduating students of polytechnics in South Western States, Nigeria. An increase in funding to the OTM programme is recommended to increase its capacity for effective results.

Keywords: Funding, office technology, and management, polytechnics, self-empowerment

1. Introduction

Education requires adequate financial provision from the government to successfully implement the education programmes (Eze, 2013). According to Ubogu and Money (2018), the reason for funding of Office Technology and Management programme is to equip graduate students with the requisite knowledge, skills, and capacity for self-empowerment and to enhance the quality of life. Funding involves all the inputs that make a programme efficient regarding capital, materials, and human resources. Ezene (2017) averred that part of the measures to determine adequate funding include sources of funds, accessibility to funds, budgetary allocation, and adequacy of available funds.

Most of Nigeria's educational system's problems are tied to inadequate funding (Beweran, Moris & Sokyes, 2014; Aigboye & Ehiaguina, 2016). Sources of funds for the Office Technology and Management programme in polytechnics in Nigeria include the Federal and States government, Education Trust Fund, donor agencies, interventions, and scholarship awards. Funding of the educational sector by the government has been faced by pressures from other sectors of the economy. A nation that would be economically vibrant, according to Oladunjo (2015), must have citizens with the relevant skills and knowledge needed for self-empowerment. When graduates are appropriately trained in the view of Ahmad (2015), the achievements of rapid economic and social development can be guaranteed.

It is not a misplacement to say that the office technology and management programme has not been adequately budgeted considering a budgetary allocation to the education sector. Olorundare and Kayode (2014) viewed diminishing budgetary allocation as the biggest threat to education. According to Atuahene (2018), this inadequacy has adversely affected the overall output of the nation's industrial sector as the Nigerian educational system has been churning out graduates who are best suited and skilled for white-collar jobs, with little or no basic experience and self-empowerment skill. Funding the educational system and financing high technology to support the system have been severe problems in Nigeria. Funds allocated for OTM development purposes, as observed by Eravwoke and Ukavwe (2019), are not adequate, and this inadequacy has created a gap and raised the question of the credibility of the programme.

The funding of the OTM programme in polytechnics in Nigeria, as viewed by Eravwoke and Ukavwe (2019), needs to be improved upon. Regardless of all the advantages derivable from office technology and management programme, this aspect of education, in the view of Atuahene (2018), has not been adequately funded to equip its beneficiaries with the

skills and knowledge needed to contribute meaningfully to the economic growth of the nation. OTM is regarded as an efficient, effective, productive, and functional education that leads itself to self-employment, self-reliance, and, consequently, self-actualization (Amiaya, 2014). According to him, it is meant to equip the individual with the requisite knowledge and skills for self-employment. It is observed that this is a new programme, a new dimension to vocational education, and also an attempt to increase graduates with skills relevant both in the public and private sectors in this technological era.

Adakole, Eiriemiokhale, and Nnaji (2016) submitted that facilities' poor or low provision is linked to inadequate funding. According to Ibrahim (2016), the resultant effects are high brain-drain of professional staff, persistent strike action, rioting, high crime rate, and cultism, extortion of students, admission runs, embezzlement, and all sorts of vices. Inadequate funding seems to deter growth in tertiary institutions. The issue of funding education has been a recurrent one in the history of Nigeria's educational system.   Cultivating business qualities in graduates helps them across every profession. Innovativeness and ambition are critical drivers of professional success, while high self-esteem and self-control provide graduates with the confidence and discipline to realize their dreams. Ejiro and Ladu (2017), however, believe that the acquisition of business skills, such as understanding the client's business, flexibility, exceeding expectations, open line of communication, innovativeness, experience, cultural compatibility, and partnership by office technology and management graduates, opens numerous job opportunities because office managerial manpower and services are needed in all areas of the economy.

In the view of Iheukwumere, Uteh, and Nkoro (2019), the curriculum framework of this programme is geared toward developing skills, competencies, and attributes necessary for the economy's efficiency. The office technology and management programme seek to provide graduates with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial studies in a variety of setting. As observed by Ezeahurukwe and Ameh (2017), it is obvious that a well-implemented Office technology and management programme will climax in economic empowerment and development and enable graduates to acquire specific vital skills for entrepreneurial success.

Self-empowerment of OTM graduating students in polytechnics, as viewed by Idih and Umunnah (2013), entails creating and supporting enabling conditions that would enable them to act for themselves in an environment that supports access to knowledge, information, and skills as well as a positive value system. This will result in the creation of jobs and employment opportunities for graduates. Empowerment focuses on giving OTM graduating students the opportunity to act for themselves and access all the necessary ingredients for their self-employment (Udoudom & Usoro, 2013). Steers and Smith (2015) further stressed that self-empowerment has to do with the conscious pursuit of personal growth of graduating students by improving personal skills, competencies, talents, and knowledge. However, according to them, the key component to self-empowerment is self-growth to seek self-fulfillment and proactively reach full potential.

The ultimate goal of self-empowerment of OTM graduating students in the submission of Steers and Smith (2015) is self-fulfillment. Lack of basic attributes affects activities that improve skills and talents, result in competencies, and ultimately affect the realization of dreams and aspirations. Sokyes, Wetnwan, and Beweran (2018) asserted that among the basic goals of office technology and management programme are the various business attributes acquired in class to real-life situations and personal attributes and competencies required for the performance of a basic business job. Therefore, in the view of Ezeani (2014), in polytechnics, the OTM program is expected to provide occupational skills for graduating students either as employees or self-employed.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Graduating students of the Office Technology and Management programme seem to lack the necessary attributes for self-empowerment. Close observation shows a deficiency in personal and business attributes that would have enabled them to engage in vocational and business skills after graduation. This may also affect the economy as half-baked graduates with no skills and competency for self-empowerment will be produced and might, in turn, run down the educational system. Furthermore, the OTM programme is perceived not to be well-funded in polytechnics, and when there is a fund for the OTM programme, it appears not to be always accessible. All these seem to have adversely affected the quality and self-empowerment of graduating students of OTM in polytechnics.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- Investigate ways in which quality Office Technology and Management programme could be ensured through funding for self-empowerment of graduates in polytechnics.
- Investigate the funding of the Office Technology and Management programme in polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study.
- How could a quality Office Technology and Management programme be ensured through funding for the self-empowerment of graduates?
- To what level is the adequacy of funding for the Office Technology and Management programme in polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria?

1.4. Hypothesis

- H_01: There will be no significant relationship between funding and self-empowerment of Office Technology and Management graduates in government-owned polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria.

2. Methodology

A descriptive design that uses a simple survey design was employed to get the necessary information from the respondents. The population of this study consists of 427 higher national diploma graduating students and 80 academic staff in the department of Office Technology and Management in the state and federal polytechnics in six states of South West, Nigeria. Six (6) government-owned polytechnics from southwest states, Nigeria, were purposely selected for the study because they are the ones offering the office technology and management programme, and they are well-established to give the information required for the study. All the academic staff were sampled because of the small number, and one hundred and eighty (180) higher national diploma students were selected using stratified sampling from the six polytechnics used for the study. A four-point Likert-type rating scale structured questionnaire was used. Both face and content validity of the research instrument was done. Two sets of questionnaires were administered, one for the academic staff and the other set for the graduating students. All the questionnaires distributed to the graduating students were retrieved, while 68 copies were recovered from the academic staff. Descriptive statistics were used for the research questions, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance on the SPSS package.

3. Results

3.1. Research Question 1

How has the quality Office Technology and Management programme ensured the self-empowerment of graduates after graduation?

	Item Statement Areas of Engagement for Self-Empowerment:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	X Mean	Std Dev.
1	Computer business centre	103 (57.2%)	69 (38.3%)	3 (1.7%)	5 (2.8%)	3.500	0.224
2	Commercial programming/software	80 (44.4%)	78 (43.3%)	16 (8.9%)	6 (3.3%)	3.289	0.204
3	Computer sales, bookbinding and photocopying centre	80 (44.4%)	81 (45.0%)	10 (5.6%)	9 (5.2%)	3.289	0.204
4	Printing press	62 (34.4%)	94 (52.2%)	17 (9.4%)	7 (3.9%)	3.172	0.195
5	Internet service (cybercafé)	78 (43.3%)	81 (45.0%)	14 (7.8%)	7 (3.9%)	3.278	0.202
6	Business/computer training schools	66 (36.7%)	97 (53.9%)	11 (6.1%)	6 (3.4%)	3.239	0.200
7	Business registration and employment agency	73 (40.6%)	80 (44.4%)	15 (8.3%)	12 (6.7%)	3.189	0.195
8	Documentary/information centre	49 (27.2%)	108 (60.0%)	15 (8.3%)	8 (4.4%)	3.100	0.195
9	Business curriculum development	66 (36.7%)	89 (49.4%)	16 (8.9%)	9 (5.2%)	3.178	0.195
10	Organizing seminar/short courses	64 (35.6%)	79 (43.9%)	26 (14.4%)	11 (6.1%)	3.089	0.187

Table 1: How Office Technology and Management Graduates Could Be
Self-Empowered after Graduation
Average Mean = 3.232
Key: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1), Std Dev. = Standard Deviation
Mean Threshold: If the Mean Is 0.000-1.499 = Strongly Disagree (SD),
If the Mean Is 1.500-2.499 = Disagree (D), If the Mean Is 2.500-3.499 = Agree (A), And If the Mean Is 3.500-4.449 = Strongly Agree (SA).

The above table reveals how office technology and management graduates could be self-empowered after graduation using their frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. All the items on the table were considered 'adequate' as their means were within 2.500-3.499. The result implies that the extent of self-empowerment for self-reliance of office technology and management graduates through quality office technology and management programme is high. Generally, the table shows a weighted mean of 3.232(0.200) and the overall decision as 'agree'.

3.2. Research Question 2

To what level is the adequacy of funding for the Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria?

	Item Statement	Very Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate	Grossly Inadequate	X Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Funds from Industries and firms	2 (2.9%)	22 (32.4%)	17 (25.0%)	27 (39.7%)	1.985	0.298
2	Donations from politicians, businessmen, etc.	2 (2.9%)	22 (32.4%)	16 (23.5%)	28 (41.2%)	1.971	0.299
3	Endowment and development fund	6 (8.8%)	18 (26.5%)	22 (32.4%)	22 (32.3%)	2.118	0.286
4	Adequacy of funds released for maintenance of facilities	5 (7.4%)	21 (30.9%)	20 (29.4%)	22 (32.3%)	2.132	0.285
5	Adequacy of funds released for seminars and workshops for staff	9 (13.2%)	30 (44.1%)	16 (23.5%)	13 (19.1%)	2.515	0.270
6	Adequacy of funds released for research purposes	11 (16.2%)	24 (35.2%)	22 (32.4%)	11 (16.2%)	2.515	0.270

Table 2: Adequacy of Funding for Office Technology and Management
Programme in Polytechnics in South Western States, Nigeria

Average Mean = 2.206
Key: Very Adequate (4), Adequate (3), Not Adequate (2), Grossly Inadequate (1), Std Dev. = Standard Deviation
Mean Threshold: If the mean is 0.000-1.499 = Grossly Inadequate (GI), If the mean is 1.500-2.499 = Not Adequate (NA), If the mean is 2.500-3.499 = Adequate, and If the mean is 3.500-4.449 = Very Adequate (VA).

The above table reveals the level of adequacy of funding of the Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria, using their frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. All the items on the table were decided as 'not adequate' as their means were within 1.500-2.499 with the exemption of funds released for research purposes, seminars, and workshops. This implies that funding for Office Technology and Management programme in Polytechnics is inadequate. Generally, the table shows a weighted mean of 2.206(0.285) and the overall decision as 'not adequate'.

3.2.1. Hypothesis
There will be no significant relationship between funding and self-empowerment of office technology and management graduates in government-owned polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

		Funding	Self-Empowerment
Funding	Pearson Correlation	1	.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	68	68
Self-Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.504**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	68	68

Table 3: Relationship between Funding and Self-Empowerment of Office
Technology and Management Graduates

The table above shows a significant relationship between funding and the self-empowerment of graduates. The result shows that funding positively correlates with the self-empowerment of graduates in government-owned polytechnics in South Western, Nigeria. The null hypothesis ($H_0 2$) is therefore rejected since r = 0.504, p < 0.05. This implies that if there is an increase in funding, the self-empowerment of graduates of office technology and management programme will increase.

4. Discussion
The study discovered that the extent of self-empowerment for self-reliance of office technology and management graduates through quality office technology and management programme is very high. This study's result is consistent with Irukakusr's (2018) findings. The findings confirmed the employability of office technology and management graduates to creativity and innovation and the core set of 21st-century skills, including analytical problem solving, innovation and creativity, self-direction and initiative, flexibility and adaptability, critical thinking, and communication and collaboration skills. This was further strengthened by Ubulum and Ogwunte (2017), which affirmed that office technology and management assist students in developing positive attitudes, innovation, and skills for self-reliance, rather than

depending on the government for employment and which in-turn produces graduates with self-confidence and capacities for independent thought to discover new information leading to economic development.

The result of the study was also corroborated by the findings of Hassan (2013), which asserted that one of the most critical challenges that face every country in the world is tackling the unemployment endemic. Office technology and management have continued to remain the most influential tool for combating this menace. According to the findings, this is a result of the fact that through office technology and management programme, jobs are created for graduates and other job seekers, thereby contributing to tackling this menace.

This study discovered that funding the quality Office Technology and Management programme for self-empowerment graduates could be highly improved. The result of the study is consistent with the findings of Onyido and Duru (2019), which revealed that the demand for improved funding for office technology and management has become heightened in the face of dwindling financial resource allocation to the education sub-sector. The finding asserted that without adequate and sustained financial support, office technology and management, as important as it is, may not be able to continue as a going and stable concern, and its relevance to societal needs may become questionable. The study further confirmed that adequate and sustained financial support could ensure quality office technology and management. Adeniran (2017) viewed a strong need for adequate and sustained financial support if it would achieve its self-empowerment goals and continue to be relevant to societal needs.

A related study by Faboyede, Faboyede, and Fakile (2017) found that the office technology and management programme is the instrument par excellence for development, and there is the ultimate need to make it relevant and responsive to the needs of society. The findings of Ubogu and Money (2018) agreed with the results of this study. They revealed that the underlying rationale for funding office technology and management is to equip graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills, and capacity to enhance the quality of life and increase productivity and knowledge of new techniques to participate evocatively in the development process.

The study revealed a significant relationship between funding and the self-empowerment of graduates. Lending support to this result was the finding of Vakili, Tahmasebi, Sairan, and Delaram (2016) that affirmed that adequate funding for office technology and management programme would make the programme a medium of transferring, acquisition and developing entrepreneurial skills needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the potential graduates. Furthermore, Gidado (2019) observed that a well-funded office technology and management would generate many business opportunities that could empower and make graduates self-sufficient and reliant.

Dermol, Trunk, and Sirca (2017) found that adequate support for the programme would make it achieve its potential of encouraging employability and self-employment, innovation, and entrepreneurial skills essential for social cohesion, personal development, and active participation in citizenship. The result of this study was corroborated by the findings of Famade, Omiyale, and Adebola (2015), which affirmed that making qualitative office technology and management available to all citizens is a right. However, there cannot be quality without adequate funding. According to the source, inadequate funding has deterred the program's growth in institutions.

This also agrees with the findings of Elemure and Elemure (2016) that funding for office technology and management offers a possible solution to the perennial problem of insecurity and insurgency, unemployment, and poverty if its potentials are carefully harnessed through an enhanced curriculum delivery system. It was further established by Abubakar, Abdullahi, and Gupa (2017) that the office technology and management programme, when funded, encourages graduates to become jobs creator rather than job seekers and equips them with skills for constant improvement and innovations. The study showed that the office technology and management programme is designed to lead the beneficiaries to self-employment, economic self-sufficiency, and employment generation.

5. Conclusion

This study established the determinant role of funding in office technology and management programmes for self-empowerment graduates in polytechnics. Due to the high cost of materials and facilities, the increasing costs of establishing and running office technology and management programme in Nigerian polytechnics require urgent measures to source new funding areas and introduce cost-reducing innovative measures. Financial constraints have made office technology and management programme suffer as the government and other sources have not been able to fund the programme effectively and efficiently. This study concluded that funding directly influences office technology and management programme for self-empowerment in polytechnics. Since the level of funding affects the programme, institutions, especially the polytechnics running the programme, would have to source other alternative sources of funding for the programme to achieve its goals.

6. Recommendations

- The government should increase capital investment in the education sector, such as new infrastructure, provision of basic equipment (educational) needed for training in office technology and management programme, and maintenance of the already available ones. This will aid the continuous development of the programme.
- Institutions should identify possible strategies or explore alternative means to ensure adequate Office Technology and Management programme funding. For example, this can be done by establishing an internally generated revenue machine to avoid the sole dependence on the government for all the basic needs.

- The government should put the national budget in place with the education sector prioritizing allocations of more funds. In addition, an increase in funding for Office Technology and Management programme is required to increase the program's capacity.
- Institutions offering office technology and management programme should partner with individuals and organizations to ensure increased and steady funding. They can do this by instituting distinguished personality chairs in office technology and management.

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