



DEVELOPING MANPOWER NEEDS IN OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper examined manpower needs in Office Technology and Management (OTM) for sustainable development. In going about this study, three research questions were raised to guide the study. The study adopted survey design. The population of the study consisted of 60 office educators drawn from the three polytechnics in Delta State. A structured instrument containing 51 items was used to elicit responses from the respondents. The statistical tool used for data analysis was the descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that the objectives of OTM were realizable; that there were reasons which require the training and development of office educators, and that there were various methods used in developing manpower needs in office technology and management. It was concluded that getting the maximum performance from educators/operators is usually the primary goals of training. Recommendations were made towards ensuring that OTM lecturers constantly developed their skills so as to create a highly qualified pool of human resources for higher level position, including supervision and management.

Keywords: Manpower Needs, OTM, Sustainable Development, Education, Training, Career-oriented, and Human Resources.

Introduction

Office Technology and Management is one of the 88 programmes and 8 disciplines/occupations offered by polytechnics/colleges of technology under the aegis of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). In order to establish and maintain high quality standards, institutions and regulators have a share responsibility in addressing the following keys areas as reported by Esene & Ovbiagele (2014). Minimum academic standards, Accreditation, Carrying capacity, Admission quota and student's enrolment, Visitation, Research, Training and development of staff, Structures, infrastructure and utilities.

The new curricula at the National Diploma (ND) and the Higher National Diploma (HND) have been expanded to include new courses such as

National Diploma Level

- ICT I and II Office Application
- Modern Office Technology
- Desktop Publishing
- People Communication Skills
- Records Management
- SIWES



Higher National Diploma Level

- Webpage Design
- Professional Career Development
- Data Base Management
- Oral Communication Skills
- Advance Desktop Publishing
- Professional Ethics and Social Responsibility
- Advance Webpage Design

The improvement and expansion of the OTM curriculum and course specification requires that lecturers should upgrade and update themselves to be able to face squarely the changes occasioned by the expansion and the challenges imposed on the office educators and lecturers.

Training and development are twin words which are associated and used to describe the process of improving the knowledge, skills and competencies of OTM lecturers. Esene (2012), Nwachukwu (2010) and Aduga (2009) described training as the process of helping lecturers develop maximum efficiency, effectiveness and greater productivity in their present and future jobs. Training and development programmes include numerous activities that inform staff of policies and procedures, educate them in job skills, and develop them for future advancement. Training and development programmes, according to Iredia and Jegede (2014) are important to the staff, institutions and the society. Through recruitment and placement, good staff can be brought in the institution, but they need orientation and continuous education and development so that their needs and the objectives of the institution can be achieved concomitantly and simultaneously.

Section 8, sub-sections 70 (a) and 71 (a) – (e) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2016) declared that since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development”. The goals, according to the policy document are to:

- produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.
- enhance teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession.

As a way to raise the standard of education in the country as well as to ensure that teachers in tertiary educational institutions are effective in their performance, government notes that all teachers in educational institutions are trained both in content and in pedagogy. This is why training and development is seen as a vital function of management which requires each institution to upgrade the quality of staff through various practical and theoretical training and development programmes. To this end, staff need to be developed through various in-house and external workshop



programmes to enable them be a source of competitive advantage to the establishment.

Education is an essential tool for achieving sustainability. People around the world recognize that current economic development trends are not sustainable and that public awareness, education and training are keys to moving society, toward sustainability. For instance the main goal of development is to satisfy human needs, interests and aspirations. It involves the actualization of human potentialities, and proper understanding and management of the working environment and the resources therein for sustained human wellbeing. Sustainable development (SD) is a continual enhancement of the quality of human life both for now and the future.

The concept of development has to do with improvement in the quality of life or well-being of the citizens of a country. Development is associated with modernization, material advancements, industrialization, scientific and technological progress, the emergence of nuclear energy, electronic and biological revolution, new knowledge about man and universe. It further means urbanization, socio-cultural transformation, mass literacy, vertical and horizontal mobility, employment opportunities and the emergence of specialized and independent occupational roles.

According to Ogakwu and Isife (2013), sustainable development (SD) is a phenomenon associated with changes in human conditions through the use of their creative energies. It is the unending improvement of the capacity of individuals and society to control and manipulate the forces of nature in order to live a better and more rewarding live. Development implies creating the skills and capacity to do things, greater freedom, self confidence, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and mutual well-being. Sustainable development is believed to be a holistic approach to improving the quality of life. It postulates that there are intrinsic links among economic and social and environmental well being. Changes in one area will impact upon the other. It is a pattern of resources that aims at meeting human needs of any establishments while preserving the environment so that their needs can be met not only in the present, but also generation to come. It is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Nwaigburu & Eneogwe, 2013).

Office technology and management is a new discipline which replaced the old secretarial studies. It has two programmes, namely: the National Diploma (ND) and the Higher National Diploma (HND). The objectives of office technology and management include:

- i. To prepare the students for employment after graduation.
- ii. To meet the manpower needs of the society.
- iii. To increase the options available to each student and serving as motivation in order to enhance all types of learning.
- iv. To present a laboratory in which students practice skills, knowledge and attitude to make the classroom instruction more meaningful and relevant.
- v. To provide an opportunity through the use of local business for the students to acquire additional skill and knowledge.
- vi. To give the students background of training that would contribute to rapid advancement on the job.



- vii. To make students develop good working habits and attitude needed in the development of personality traits such as punctuality, responsibility, accuracy, fact, adaptability and serves of responsibility that makes for efficient work.
- viii. To help develop the high attitude towards work and the habit of mind conducive to the proper use of technology.
- ix. To provide the knowledge and skills necessary for industrial, commercial and economic development.
- x. To provide persons who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement/solutions, and convenience of man.
- xi. To give training, and impart the necessary skills leading to the promotion of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self reliant.
- xii. It is also out to stimulate and encourage creativity and to enable our young and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of the society (Shaibu & Mbaegbu, 2012).

These authors posit that objectives direct office educator in terms of curriculum coverage and the methods of imparting knowledge and skills to the learners.

Remarkably, these objectives are derived and coined from the polytechnics' vision and mission of OTM which states, inter alia:

Vision of OTM

... to become a leading polytechnic in Delta State and Nigeria in the field of OTM...

Mission of OTM

... to produce modern secretaries and office managers who are proficiently prepared for both public and private enterprises of the global economy...

The new nomenclature (OTM), the expansion of the course curriculum and specifications and the introduction of information and communication and technology, office applications and the equipment and materials needed to implement the new curriculum are all the reasons why OTM educators should be trained and retrained to meet today's changes and face tomorrow's challenges. To meet the manpower needs of the students through the teaching and learning, the educators/lecturers must be sufficiently and adequately skilled and competent in service delivery in both the content and methodology. Sustainable development requires the constant training, retraining and development of lecturers so as to be able to meet challenges. For instance, education enables people to improve their social, cultural and economic situation and strengthens for sustainable development. Knowledge, it is often said is the prerequisite for self determination and self-realization. Being able to engage students in practical and theoretical situation is a



task that must be performed by the lecturer/educator. This facilitates the realization of the students right and social participation in all learning activities. Well-trained skilled educators increase productivity and improve the quality of work. In order to cope with challenges imposed on the office educators as a result of the new OTM curriculum, it requires well-trained lecturers/educators and well-designed instruction. In addition to imparting important skills to individual student, capacity building is essential for better management of curriculum for the sake of quality control, performance-based and resource management. To this end, Esene (2012) noted that the techniques used in teaching and learning are legion, and the OTM educators should consider the factors that can influence their usage, that is, students, materials, objectives, physical environment, cost, lecturer, time, interest and weather. The common techniques used for developing lecturers are determined for updating and upgrading educators for results.

Education, training and development are not carried out for the purpose of it. There are certain conditions, according to Nwachukwu (2010), Maduwesi and Onyeachu (2014) and Esene (2014) that will serve as pointers for the need for training. These symptoms manifest themselves in a variety of ways, the most common ones are documented below.

Lack of interest in ones' job, negative attitude to work, low productivity, tardiness, excessive absenteeism rate, excessive complaints, high rejects or low quality output, high incidence of accidents, and insubordination (Esene, 2012). There is no one individual that will record all these symptoms before manpower development could take place. Depending on the circumstances, when the symptoms appear, instructional leader/head of department put forward recommendation, on the basis of which people can be selected for training and development. The methods chosen by the resource facilitators depends on choice, level of previous attainment and the environment of training. Esene and Olumese (2017), have reported that the techniques of training and development as applied to course improvement must be carefully selected so that trainees could benefit maximally and that its organization must be seen to be relevant to the beneficiaries and the institutions they represent. Bala (2013) noted that the selection of methods for use is one thing, and that the ability to effectively use them to achieve the goals of training is another. The analysis of these methods must be carried out before training and development begins.

Statement of Problem

Office technology and management is a new nomenclature that replaced the old secretarial studies curriculum. Since 2004 when the curriculum emerged, the supervisory and regulatory body, the National Board for Technical Education has carried out a review and revision of the curriculum in view of the changes occasioned by the dynamism of the society. Based on these changes, it is also expected that the operators/implementers of the curriculum (the educators/lecturers) should be trained and retrained in order to fit properly into the growing nature of the institutions as a social system and the society in which we live.

The allegations and counter allegations by the public that the old educators who were trained with the manual equipment needs further training becomes germane



in the present scheme of things. Therefore, this study becomes relevant in order to conduct an investigation with a view to ascertaining the true position and status of the present curriculum and its implementation.

Purpose of the study

The major purpose of this study was to find out the relevance of developing manpower needs in office technology and development for the continued sustainability of the programmes.

Specifically, the study:

1. examined the objectives of OTM curriculum as developed by the National Board for Technical Education.
2. determined the conditions requiring the training and development of office technology and management lecturers/educators.
3. ascertained the most appropriate techniques used when organizing training and development for OTM educators.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. what are the objectives of OTM curriculum as developed by NBTE?
2. what are the conditions that necessitate the selection, training and developing OTM educators?
3. what are the techniques used by organizers when training and development is initiated for OTM educators?

Method

The study adopts survey design. This design was appropriate for this study since questionnaire was used to elicit respondents' opinion on the subject matter. Survey design centres on people, attitudes, beliefs, motivation, behaviours and opinions. The population for the study consisted of 60 respondents (office educators) drawn from the three polytechnics in Delta State.

There was no sample and sampling techniques used as the entire population was reached and managed. A structured questionnaire containing 51 items was used to elicit information from the respondents on a 4-point scale as SA, A, D, and SD. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three lecturers drawn from two polytechnics and the Delta State University. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability formula which yielded 0.74 were used for data analysis. The descriptive statistics was used for data analysis.

Presentation of Data

Tables, 1, 2, and 3 presented the data generated for the study.

Question One

What are the objectives of OTM as developed by NBTE? Table 1 answered this question.



Table I
Objectives of Office Technology and Management.

Q1	OTM objectives	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	To prepare the students for employment after graduation.	4.06	0.51	Agree
2	To meet the manpower needs of the society	4.08	0.50	= ditto =
3	To increase the options available to each student and serving as motivation in order to enhance all types of learning	3.82	0.84	„
4	To present learning environment in which students practice skills, knowledge and attitude to make instruction more meaningful and relevant	3.85	0.82	„
5	To provide an opportunity through the use of equipment for the students to acquire additional skill and knowledge	3.76	0.85	„
6	To give the students background of training that would contribute to rapid development on the job.	3.88	0.58	”
7	To make students develop good working habits and attitude.	4.07	0.60	„
8	To help develop the high attitude towards work and the habit of mind.	3.92	9.56	„
9	To provide the knowledge and skills necessary for development	3.91	0.70	”
10	To provide students with scientific knowledge for growth and development.	3.95	0.61	„
11	To give training, and impart the necessary skills leading to the promotion in a chosen field	4.00	0.62	„
12	To stimulate and encourage creativity in order to have an intelligent understanding of the complexity of the society.	3.41	0.72	„

Source: *Field trip, 2018*

Data in Table 1 show that the highest \bar{X} was 4.07 while the lowest \bar{X} was 3.76. By these results, the respondents agreed that the objectives as specified in NBTE curriculum and course specification are achievable.

Question 1

What are the conditions requiring office educators to be trained and developed? The data in Table 2 answered this question.

Table 2
Reasons Necessitating Training and Development of Office Educators.

Q/1	Reasons Necessitating Training and Development	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
13	Lack of interest in one's job	4.08	0.36	Agree
14	Negative attitude to work	4.07	0.38	= ditto =
14	Low productivity	4.11	0.57	„
16	Tardiness	4.17	0.43	„
17	Excessive absenteeism rate	4.02	0.18	„
18	Excessive complaints	4.09	0.64	„



19	High rejects or low quality output	4.10	0.42	„
20	High incidence of accidents	4.11	0.40	„
21	Insubordination	4.08	0.29	„

Source: Field survey, 2017.

Data in Table 2 show that training becomes necessary when there are symptoms and signs of negative output on the part of OTM lecturer-educators. The highest (x).recorded was 4.17 while the lowest stood at 4.02. It does appear therefore that the continued improvement of office educators could be guaranteed through continuous training and development.

Question 3.

What are the techniques used for training and development of office educators for greater output? The data in Table 3 were used to answer this question

Table 3

Techniques used for Training and Developing Office Educators for greater productivity.

Q/1	Techniques used for Training Office Educators	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
22	Apprenticeship	3.88	0.61	Agree
23	Job rotation	3.85	0.79	ditto =
24	Vestibule	3.86	0.80	
25	Induction	3.89	0.62	
26	Orientation	3.82	0.76	
27	Socialization	3.93	0.90	
28	On-the-job	3.89	0.71	
29	Lecture	4.06	0.48	
30	Role playing	3.88	0.72	
31	Conference	4.08	0.48	
32	Seminar	4.07	0.49	”
33	Workshop	3.88	0.79	
34	Demonstration	3.66	0.71	
35	Part-time	4.02	0.26	Ree
36	Problem solving	3.66	0.81	
37	Discovery	3.65	0.80	
38	Evening class	3.92	0.61	
39	Day Release	3.55	0.82	
40	Debates	3.44	0.84	
41	Quest speaker	4.08	0.50	
42	Field trip	3.92	0.71	
43	Excursion	3.98	0.69	
44	Interview	3.96	0.70	
45	Observation	3.92	0.72	
46	Correspondencecourse	3.44	0.94	
47	Supervisory Training	3.46	0.92	,



48	Management Training	3.50	0.90
49	Special Assignment	3.61	0.86
50	Self-development	4.02	0.56
51	The use of test	3.92	0.68

Source: Field Studies conducted, 2018

Data in Table 3 reveals maximum \bar{X} score of 4.08 while the minimum was 3.44. It is safe to conclude that appropriate techniques should be selected and used towards updating and upgrading lecturer educators for the purpose of meeting the changes and challenges occasioned by the dynamic nature of the OTM curriculum and the society at large.

Discussion of Findings

This study was focused on the development of manpower needs in Office Technology and Management for sustainable development. It was discovered that the objectives of office technology and management as specified by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) are achievable. This finding was supported by earlier study by Shaibu and Mbaegbu (2012) which noted that the objectives developed help to strength the OTM lecturer in terms of areas that call for review and improvement.

The study also revealed that training and development become necessary when employers and management notice some symptoms and sings that have negatively contributed to low output of office educators. This finding was supported by the earlier study by Esene (2012) when he noted that lack of interest in one's job, negative attitude to work, low productivity, tardiness, excessive absenteeism and insubordination are some of the reasons that will call for training and retraining. Finally, the study revealed that training and development play a vital role in the sustainability of educators and that appropriate techniques should be selected and used towards updating and upgrading lecturers who teach office technology and management courses. This finding was supported by the earlier finding by Esene (2012) which noted that the techniques used for developing lecturers are legion and that organizer and/or facilitators should consider some factors before selecting those techniques that could bring positive results.

Conclusion

By education, we refer to all institutionalized instructions or course of study designed to make students or lecturer-trainees experience the type of curriculum that is capable of providing essential learning needs. When education is given, emphasis is on theory, the development of basic mental ability and general knowledge that is broad based. On the other hand, training generates expertise or skill needed to perform a particular job or series of jobs. Training is generally through practical exposure, either informally by practical exposure to job, or in formal institutions established for the purpose of providing exposure to required skills. Emphasis in training is on practical work and demonstration.

Getting the maximum performance from operators/lecturers is the primary goal of training. Office educators properly trained to perform all aspects of their jobs



(academic, supervision and administrative) will make valuable contributions to the institutions and will satisfy their own human need for personal growth on the job. Manpower needs in office technology and management is a crucial need since OTM curriculum is a dynamic one which calls for educators/operators to be updated at all times. Manpower development in OTM describes the various processes of acquiring and increasing the quality of individuals who have knowledge, skills, and experience that are crucial to socio-economic development. The objectives of OTM should be constantly reviewed, reasons for requiring further training should be carefully assessed and methods to be used must be related and applicable to the needs, interests and aspirations of trainees, bearing in mind that training at all level should be career-oriented and develop each educator to maximum potential on a long-range basis. In all, when educators develop that skill, they create highly qualified pool of human resources for high-level position, including supervision and management. Developers and organizers of training programmes should not restrict themselves to the use of particular method since the reasons necessitating training vary from one person to the other.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study and the conclusion reached, it is recommended that:

1. Since OTM curriculum is a dynamic one which calls for regular expansion by way of course inclusion, its objectives should be revised, reviewed and content adjusted to meet the changing needs of students, staff, institutions and the society.
2. The conditions and reasons necessitating further training should not only serve as pointers, but that some indices should be developed and analysed before decisions to select people for training are arrived at.
3. Only methods that will enhance participants training should be selected and used by facilitators with respect to the specific areas needed to be developed.

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