



## **STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ATTITUDINAL AND CLASSROOM COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY LECTURERS FOR MOTIVATING BEGINNERS IN OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT**

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### **Abstract**

*The study was carried out to examine attitudinal and classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management (OTM) in selected public polytechnics in North Central Nigeria. Survey design was the method adopted to carry out the study. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were formulated for the study. The population of the study comprised 570 OTM Students from three polytechnics in the North Central Nigeria. Simple Random Sampling technique was adopted to sample 171 students representing 30% of the population. A four Point Likert Rating Scale questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in OTM, The Federal Polytechnic, Bida. Mean and Standard Deviation were the statistical tools used to analyze the data while Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test (CART) was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha Reliability co-efficient of the instrument calculated gave a coefficient of 0.97 which indicated that the instrument for the study was reliable. t-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the data indicated amongst others that accessibility of lecturers to students, care for students, ability to interact with students, ability to exert control and good communication skills in the classroom, and good knowledge of the subject area, were the attitudinal and classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in OTM. It was therefore concluded that attitudinal and classroom competencies of lecturers are germane to students' performance and where this is lacking students are likely to perform at a low extent. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that lecturers in the polytechnics should make themselves accessible to students, show attitudes of care and encouragement towards the students, possess good communication skills, ability to control the class and good knowledge of the subject area they are meant to teach.*

**Key Words:** Office Technology and Management, Competencies, Attitudinal and Classroom competencies

### **Introduction**

OTM programme is a skill, administrative and management programme of study aimed at preparing the recipient for office jobs and/or to become self-employed. The teaching of this course requires great skills and competencies needed to impart knowledge into the recipients. Some years ago OTM replaced the former secretarial studies as a result of the yearning of the practitioners and technology advancement in modern office. The new curriculum emphasizes more on Information and Communication Technology (ICT), administrative and management courses (NBTE, 2006).



Ojohwoh (2014) described OTM as an effective, efficient, productive and functional educational programme which prepares graduates for self-employment, paid employment, self-reliance and self-realization. The Curriculum and course specification by NBTE (2004) stated that OTM programme is designed to equip students with the competencies required to work in a modern office environment. It went further to outline the objectives of OTM to acquisition of secretarial skills, acquisition of general education and laying foundation for advance studies.

Aminaya (2014) stated that the goal of OTM is to develop skilled manpower for national development. In order to achieve these lofty objectives, practitioners of office technology and management need to possess certain competencies such as attitudinal and classroom competencies to effectively motivate beginners who are studying office technology and management. Buttressing the above statement, Okoro and Ozoemenam (2016) observed that teachers' attitude and behavior are very important for learners and that teachers can do a lot to help beginners develop the motivation for learning in office technology and management. Akiri and Ugborugbo (2009) reported that, lecturer competence is regarded as a multi-dimensional construct of teaching which encompasses numerous interconnected elements towards transformation of knowledge to learners. Lecturers' competencies include subject knowledge, teaching skills, attitude and class attendance. These skills are needed for the future directions of OTM programme and for effective impartation of knowledge and skills into the students in order to prepare them for future directions and challenges in a competitive world of work.

On the other hand, motivation is quite important in learning OTM as it is acknowledged to be one of the most important factors that influences students' behavior towards effective learning. Daskalovka, Gudeva and Ivanovska (2012) asserted that learners with strong motivation can achieve a lot regardless of circumstances. The question is whether lecturers possess attitudinal and classroom competencies that will motivate beginners for future direction of OTM.

Competencies are abilities and skills applied to solving problems. It has to do with lecturers' subject knowledge, attitude, classroom management, communication skills used to impart knowledge and character to the learners. According to Sultan and Shifi (2014), competencies are particular and self-evident qualities that are unavoidable for instructors to make a persuading and student favourable climate. According to them, competencies are concerned with three areas of students' behaviour which are basic for teachers to shoulder as prime obligations. Such competencies include: Helping students to create basis and investigative disposition, assisting students to predict progressions in all circles of life and its effect on the social order and to aid students in moderating and transmitting qualities supported by the social order.

Arikwandu, Okoro and Ozoemenam (2016) opined that competency is the capability of applying or using knowledge, skills, abilities personal characteristics to successfully perform crucial work tasks, specific functions or operate in a given role or position. Ganyanpfu (2013) asserted that the teaching skills of a lecturer can be determined by his/her ability to comprehend and transform knowledge concepts to be imparted to students.

Attitudinal competencies therefore encompass one's behavior, character, honesty and objectiveness in handling matters. It has to do with one's socio-interpersonal relationship with others. Attitude can also be seen as a way of thinking and the way individuals relate with the world. According to Barros and Elia (2014), attitude is the individuals' prevailing tendency to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object (person or group of people), institution or events.

Akinleke (2018) described a lecturer's attitude as a consistent tendency to react in a particular way, whether positively or negatively toward an academic matter. Akinleke emphasized that lecturers' positive attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching and students' academic attainments. According to him, certain elements constitute teachers' attitude that will facilitate a caring and supportive classroom environment. Such elements include caring, enthusiasm, teaching efficacy, democratic practices to promote students' responsibility, effective use of lecture, constructive interaction with students and high expectation to promote students' motivation.



In their views, Arikwandu, Okoro and Ozoemenam (2016) stated that knowledge, attitudes and skills are content areas needed to produce well trained professionals. A competent teacher therefore, is the one who is consistently warm and cheerful; has a clear vision of the set targets; carefully executes whatever is arranged; handles administrative issues inside and outside classroom in a practical manner; and presents academic themes in such a way that even the weak students are motivated. Classroom competencies on the other hand, deals with lecturers' abilities and skills to effectively control, manage and coordinate students in such a manner that the instructions are well delivered to the students while attending the class regularly. According to Falsario, Muyong and Nuevaespana (2014), an effective classroom competence of a teacher is the one in which his authority to organize and manage the learning activities is accepted by the students and his mutual respect and good rapport, as well as the conducive atmosphere which he creates during the teaching and learning process. They further pointed out that a key consideration in effective classroom management is the extent to which the teacher is able to foster favourable perceptions towards learning among students by establishing in students self-respect and self-esteem regarding themselves as learners.

Falsario, Muyong and Nuevaespana (2014) further argued that the classroom climate and competencies of a teacher influence students' achievement, their self-esteem, and participation in class work. In their opinion, the most important aspect of classroom climate is the relationship between teacher and students as there must be elements of caring, trust, and respect in the relationships between teachers and students.

However, Allexande (2013) reported that the overall academic performance of students in academic institution is negatively affected by high teacher absenteeism. He further stated that teachers who posted high level of classroom absenteeism recorded the lowest scores of students' academic performances. The higher the teacher's class absenteeism becomes, the lower the students' academic performances become.

### **Statement of the problem**

Office Technology and Management programme is a course of study which prepares the recipients to gain paid job or become self-employed. The teaching of this course requires high competencies and skills on the part of the lecturers in order to motivate the students to learn effectively and efficiently. This is because, most students get frightened the first time they come in contact with certain courses such as, keyboarding, web design and data management system. This is why lecturers in Office Technology and Management in Public Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria need attitudinal and classroom competencies to motivate beginners for effective performance. Students' performance on the other hand, has been linked to teachers' subject knowledge, teaching competencies, relationship with students, classroom attendance and management. This is why Allexanda (2013) mentioned that lecturers are the most imperative school-based factor that influences students' achievement levels as they can help change students' attitude and help them to accomplish better performance. However, it seems that students' low academic performance could be as a result of teachers' high rate of class absenteeism and low level of subject knowledge. Allexanda further argued that the overall academic performance of students in academic institution is negatively affected by high teacher absenteeism. The higher, the teacher's class absenteeism rate becomes, the lower the students' academic performances become. It was against this background, that the study was carried out to investigate attitudinal and classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management in Public Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria.



### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management in selected Public Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria?
2. What are students' perceptions of the classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management in selected Public Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference between male and female students' perceptions on the mean rating of attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management.
- H<sub>02</sub> No significant difference exists between Male and Female students' perceptions on the mean rating of classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners for future in Office Technology and Management.

### **Methods**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Two research questions were raised to guide the study and two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 570 HND and ND Students in OTM from three selected public polytechnics in North Central, Nigeria, namely: Federal Polytechnic, Bida – 95; Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa – 330 and Kogi State Polytechnic – 145. Hat and draw method of simple random sampling technique was adopted to sample 30% of the population which yielded 171 students. Students' Perception of the Attitudinal and Classroom Competencies Needed by Lecturers for Motivating Beginners in Office Technology and Management Questionnaire (SPACCNLMBOTMQ) was the instrument used for data collection. It was structured according to the modified four Point Likert Rating Scale of Strongly Agreed (4), Agreed (3), Disagreed (2) and Strong Disagreed (1). The questionnaire was validated by three experts in Federal Polytechnic, Bida. The researchers with one research assistant distributed 171 copies of the questionnaire and collected 156 copies. Mean and standard deviation were the statistical tools used to analyze the data while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test (CART) was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument which yielded a coefficient of 0.97 indicating that the instrument for the study was reliable. The Decision Rule was set at any mean point equal to or greater than 2.50 as agreed and any mean point less than 2.50 as disagreed.

### **Results**

Research Question 1:

What are students' perceptions of the attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management in Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria?



**Table 1: Analysis of responses on students' perceptions of attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners** N=156

S/N	STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ATTITUDINAL COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY LECTURERS FOR MOTIVATING BEGINNERS	MEAN	STD	REMARK
1	Accessibility of lecturers by students	2.93	0.50	Agreed
2	Cheerful look of lecturers	2.46	0.75	Disagreed
3	Ability to be patient and tolerant	2.53	0.85	Agreed
4	Care for students	2.53	0.79	Agreed
5	Being humble but firm in dealing with students	2.60	0.72	Agreed
6	Ability to encourage and advise students	2.58	0.77	Agreed
7	Ability to interact with students	2.63	0.73	Agreed
8	Composure of the lecturers	2.56	0.78	Agreed
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.60</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

(Field data survey 2021)

Table 1 shows that respondents agreed with all the constructs to be the perceptions of students on attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management with a high Mean Rating of 2.96 and Standard Deviation of 0.50. However, some respondents disagreed with item no. 2 which has a Mean rating of 2.46 and Standard Deviation of 0.75. On the overall, the weighted mean of 2.60 and standard deviation of 0.74 indicated that majority of the respondents confirmed that the constructs in the table were the students perceptions on the attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners for future direction in Office Technology and Management.

**Research question 2:**

What are the students' perceptions of the classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners for future direction in Office Technology and Management in selected Polytechnics in North Central Nigeria?

**Table 2: Analysis of responses on classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners** N=156

S/N	STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CLASSROOM COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY LECTURERS FOR MOTIVATING BEGINNERS	MEAN	STD	REMARK
9	Ability to exert control in the classroom	2.67	0.76	Agreed
10	Lecturers' good communication skills in the classroom	2.72	0.66	Agreed
11	Lecturers' punctuality to the classroom	2.71	0.60	Agreed
12	Good knowledge of the subject area by the lecturers	2.51	0.74	Agreed
13	Ability to demonstrate accordingly	2.58	0.69	Agreed
14	Ability to entertain and answer questions	2.67	0.78	Agreed
15	Ability to discover students with learning challenges	2.71	0.71	Agreed
16	Ability to captivate students' attention	2.68	0.72	Agreed
17	Ability to monitor students participation in the class	2.57	0.79	Agreed
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>2.65</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

(Field data survey 2021)



Table 2 above reveals that respondents were in agreement with all the constructs to be the perceptions of students on the classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management. The items in the table has a high Mean Rating of 2.72 and Standard Deviation of 0.66. Furthermore, a weighted mean of 2.65 with a standard deviation of 0.72 buttress the respondents agreement on the classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners for future direction in Office Technology and Management.

**Test of Hypotheses**

H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference between Male and Female students' perceptions on the mean rating of attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management.

**Table 3: Summary of t-test result of Male and Female students rating of attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management.**

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	P-Value	Alpha	Decision
Male	54	1.76	0.56					
				154	1.02	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	102	3.04	0.24					

Table 3 above reveals that there was no significant difference between Male and Female students perceptions on the rating of attitudinal competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management with N=156, df=154, P=0.05, t-calculated was 1.02 and the alpha value of t-test ± 1.96. The Calculated t-test is not statistically significant at 0.05 level as it is less than the alpha value of t-test. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted.

H<sub>02</sub> No significant difference exist between Male and Female students' perceptions on the mean rating of classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management.

**Table 4: Summary of t-test result of Male and Female students rating of classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management.**

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	P-Value	Alpha	Decision
Male	54	1.86	0.60					
				154	0.97	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	102	3.06	0.29					

Table 4 above reveals that there was no significant difference between male and female students' perceptions on the rating of classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating



beginners in Office Technology and Management with  $N=156$ ,  $df=154$ ,  $P=0.05$ ,  $t$ -calculated was 0.97 and the alpha value of  $t$ -test  $\pm 1.96$ . The Calculated  $t$ -test is not statistically significant at 0.05 level as it is less than the alpha value of  $t$ -test. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The data analysis in Table I revealed amongst others that; accessibility of lecturers to students, ability to be patient and tolerant, care for students, ability to interact with students were the attitudinal competencies perceived to be needed by lecturers according to the responses of respondents. These findings aligned with the study of Arikwandu, Okoro and Ozoemenam (2016) who argued that certain elements constitute teachers' attitudes which facilitate a caring and supportive classroom environment. Such elements include caring, enthusiasm, teaching efficacy, democratic practices to promote students' responsibility, effective use of lecture, constructive interaction with students and high expectation to promote students' motivation.

The result in Table II revealed that, ability to exert control in the classroom, good communication skills in the classroom, good knowledge of the subject area, ability to discover students with learning challenges were the perceived classroom competencies needed by lecturers for motivating beginners in Office Technology and Management for future direction. These findings agreed with the work of Falsario, Muyong and Nuevaespana (2014) when they mentioned that effective classroom competencies of a teacher is the one in which his authority to organize and manage the learning activities is accepted by the students and his mutual respect and good rapport (interaction), as well as the conducive atmosphere which he creates during the teaching and learning process.

### **Conclusion**

The study therefore concludes that attitudinal and classroom competencies of lecturers are germane to students' future direction and performance. They are strong tools that motivate students' desire and achievements in office technology and management; the absence of any might mar students' academic performance and may have some deterring factors on prospective or future students' desire for office technology and management. Low students' interest and academic performance have been attributed to teachers' high level of classroom absenteeism. This feeling can only be reduced by lecturers exhibiting high level of attitudinal and classroom competencies that potent future academic direction for office technology and management.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were suggested.

1. Lecturers in Office Technology and Management in the polytechnics studied should make themselves accessible to students, show attitude of care and encouragement towards the students. These will probably promote students' desire and performance.
2. Lecturers in Office Technology and Management in the polytechnics studied should possess good communication skills, ability to control the class and good knowledge of the subject area they are meant to teach.

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