

**FACTORS AFFECTING AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL  
MATERIALS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OFFICE  
TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT IN POLYTECHNICS IN NIGER  
STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study assessed the factors affecting availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning office technology and management in Polytechnics in Niger State. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of probability. The population of the study consisted of all the 327 lecturers and students of the Department of Office Technology and Management in Polytechnics in Niger State. The data for the study was collected through questionnaire which was duly validated by three experts. Mean and standard deviation were the tools used to analyze the research questions while student t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The study found that some instructional facilities for teaching and learning office technology and management programme were not available. Equipment and supplies in the typing laboratories, shorthand studios and model offices were found to be grossly lacking in all the Polytechnics studied as a result of poor funding. Based on these findings, it was concluded that lecturers and students of office technology and management in two Polytechnics were without the necessary and required instructional materials in the teaching and learning process. To this end, it was recommended among others that Government should provide funds for the purchase and maintenance of instructional facilities and see to it that the fund is judiciously utilized. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) should also carry

out regular accreditation and re-accreditation exercise and emphasize on maintaining standard.

**Keywords:** Instructional material; Learning; Office Technology and Management; Teaching

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## **Introduction**

The place of instructional materials in teaching and learning of Office Technology and Management (OTM) cannot be overstressed. This is due to the fact that the present OTM curriculum can only be effectively implemented where instructional facilities stipulated in the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) course manual are available. Modern day instructional materials include ICT facilities, lecture halls, laboratories, equipment and resource centres among others. Oyinloye and Oluwalola (2014) described instructional facilities used in OTM as various office machines, equipment and devices for the purpose of imparting knowledge and training of students.

According to NBTE (2004), Onah and Okoro (2010), instructional materials for teaching office technology and management courses include hardware, software and telecommunications in the form of personal computers, scanners, digital cameras, phones, faxes, modems, teleconferencing, compact disks, projectors, digital video disk player

recorders, radio and television and programme such as data base systems used in education, digitalized laboratories, workshops and model offices.

Availability of instructional materials which ensures accreditation and reaccreditation of academic programmes have generated serious issues and concern among scholars, researchers and business educators. However, there have been reports of abysmal state of public educational institutions, especially Polytechnics in Nigeria as manifested in inadequacy, or outright non-availability of instructional materials in the teaching and learning processes. Acharu and Solomon (2014) supported the above assertion and stated that, one of the major challenges facing the Polytechnics is inadequate infrastructural facilities and the continuous breakdown and deterioration of existing facilities for teaching of OTM courses which has affected students' achievement and academic performances. It is in view of this that this study is carried out to assess the extent of availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning Office Technology and Management (OTM) in Polytechnics in Niger State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to assess the availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning Office Technology and Management (OTM) in Polytechnics in Niger State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine the extent of availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State; and
- ii. identify factors affecting availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State.

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were stated to guide the study and would be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H<sub>0</sub> 1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State.
- H<sub>0</sub> 2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the factors affecting the availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State.

## Literature Review

There cannot be effective teaching and learning of OTM without the availability of instructional facilities. Effective teaching and learning in OTM is sine qua non to availability of instructional materials needed for the smooth implementation of the programme. The goal of the new OTM curriculum which advocates more on ICT can only be achieved when instructional facilities are available and accessible to both students and lecturers. Availability of educational facilities enhances students' learning by allowing them to be involved in demonstrations and practice which would continue to build their skills (Oyinloye and Oluwalola, 2014).

According to Uzuegbu, Mbadiwe and Anulobi (2013), the term "availability" relates to how much instructional materials are on hand, to which teachers and learners have access. It refers to the condition of being obtainable or accessible at a particular point in time. It expresses how materials can easily be gotten and used for a particular purpose and time. It also states how operable or usable resources are upon demand to perform its designated or required functions. In this study, availability means the condition with which teachers have access and make use of functional instructional materials for effective teaching of office

technology and management courses to students in Polytechnics in Niger State. It refers to the quality, quantity, functionality and disposability of such instructional materials to teachers at every point in time for effective utilization. As a concept, it is an umbrella term that denotes the serviceability, resilience, reliability and maintainability of a component instrument. It is vital to note that the development of education in any society irrespective of its level depends largely on availability and adequacy of educational materials

Bongotons and Onyenwe (2010) mentioned that one of the pillars of a successful implementation of effective business teacher education (OTM inclusive) is the availability and adequacy of teaching and learning materials. These materials are in form of facilities and equipment needed to foster skill development and allow for standards and quality in products. In their view, availability or adequacy of teaching and learning materials implies that they are easily, readily, publicly and generally found and enough in quantity and quality for use. Unfortunately one of the major challenges facing the Polytechnic and indeed office education is inadequate infrastructural facilities; which are inadequate class rooms, laboratory equipment, inadequate teaching and learning resources. The above assertion is also supported by Ayelotan and Sholagbade (2014), when they mentioned that physical facilities and equipment are inadequate in the Polytechnics offering office technology and Management in Ogun State. They further maintained that availability of appropriate infrastructural facilities will enhance students learning by allowing them to be involved in demonstrations and practices which will build and concretize their skills.

Aina (2000) identified dearth of teachers and equipment as one of the problems in teaching and learning business education (office education inclusive). That the provision of equipment and other teaching/learning materials is of paramount importance in teaching and learning of office technology and management. It is only when these needed equipment are provided and adequately maintained, that products will become proficient in the world of

work, through the acquired skills, without necessarily being retrained when employed. Aina further argued that teaching and learning will become theoretical and ineffective where the needed equipment/materials are not provided or available.

According to Umunadi (2007), studios, laboratories, resource centers and the total environment where vocational and technical education (office education inclusive) is offered must be available and adequately equipped to reflect the actual working environment. He further maintained that the institution's laboratories should have the same equipment, tools and materials in terms of types, designs and specification with the office where the students will work after training.

Aliyu (2004) argued that one of the primary responsibilities of teachers in Business Education and Office Technology in particular is to show the students how various response patterns are made. The students on the other hand, have the responsibility of imitating the response patterns. He went on to say that those response patterns can only be implemented when instructional materials are available and properly managed in the teaching and learning process. It was also discovered in Borno State among the findings of Orheruata, Abubakar and Aminu (2014) that without the available infrastructural (instructional) materials students will not perform well. This is to say that effective performance of student is also dependent on the availability of teaching and learning materials in office technology and management in Polytechnics in Nigeria.

Obasi (2005) maintained that a student will become more focused in his academic pursuit without much distraction, if the environment is conducive and the facilities are available and utilized for studies. The provision of instructional materials is supposed to cut across the four sensory organs: sight, hearing, touch and feeling. Unfortunately, instructional facilities are always provided at a very low level thus, affecting the standard of teaching and learning. Learning, according to Obasi is in the doing; and for the purpose of this study; the

aim is to deal with instructional materials for the purpose of effective teaching and learning. Thus, any institution training office technology and management students should have adequate and functional equipment for effective service delivery. Equipment such as e-learning facilities when made available strengthens classroom delivery. The availability of instructional materials such as e-learning facilities saves cost, time and lessons delivered conveniently to learners.

Emesini (2009) mentioned that e-learning with its web-based facilities provides the learners with exciting opportunities to search for more educational information. This therefore makes them to develop inquiry mind, creativity and good study habits. Oyedele (1992) stated that availability of different instructional materials offer teachers and students the opportunity to enriching and improving their teaching and learning abilities. He further explained that the provision and/or availability of teaching and learning facilities in office technology and management in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are of great importance if the lecturers and students' performance is to be enhanced.

### **Factors affecting availability of instructional materials in OTM**

**Inadequate Funding:** According to Acharu and Solomon (2014), inadequate infrastructural (instructional) facilities are evidently linked to inadequate funding by Governments. This situation is so bad that funding is usually in response to conditionality's imposed by International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Despite the foregoing, Nigeria still remains a major defaulter in complying with the UNESCO recommendations that at least 26% of the National Budget must be committed to education. The result of the above is the current pathetic state of OTM programme in most Polytechnics in Nigeria today.

**Poor Policy Formulation and Implementation:** There is lack of well-articulated educational policy by the Nigerian government. More attention is given to other sectors than to education. This is posing problems to the provision of instructional facilities especially

ICT teaching and learning materials. The level of literacy in ICT learning facilities is still at the low level just because they are lacking in our tertiary institutions; the polytechnics in particular. Thus, most schools do not yet offer ICT training programmes (Goshit, 2006).

**Lack of maintenance:** According to Udin and Uwaifo (2005), most equipment and infrastructure in Nigeria are in despair and decay due to poor maintenance culture. Absence of maintenance culture in our school systems has caused a major setback to effective implementation of OTM programme. Equipment that break down in public organizations are sometimes difficult to repair. In such a case damaged equipment continue to depreciate till it finally become dead. Miller and Akume (2009) noted in their work that all stakeholders in the educational sectors are expected to be partners in the maintenance of school equipment while parents and government are to provide finance for maintenance activities. In the same way, school authorities are to detect fault and utilize fully the available equipment.

**Capital intensive:** Equipment and machines such as computer, internet and networking, overhead projector, printers etc. needed to run OTM programme and its maintenance is capital intensive (costly). In consonant with this assertion, Nnaji and Bagudu (2012) stated that OTM programme is capital intensive and sometimes the fund provided to department is not always sufficient to provide all the necessary training materials needed.

**Corruption in education system:** The Nigeria education system has witnessed unprecedented anomalies in terms of fund diversion, bribery and falsification of unverifiable projects to the personal gains of individuals and to the detriment of education in Nigeria. Corruption has crippled the provision of educational materials to a sorry level that some government owned institutions do not have the necessary materials for effective teaching and learning. Laboratories and classroom are empty, no befitting office accommodation and furniture for lecturers. This indeed is affecting teaching and learning in our Polytechnics. Priye (2016) lamented that corruption began to have its serious and negative effects on



education in the middle and late 1980s as the psychosocial beast beclouded the minds of those who ruled Nigeria. According to him, the scrambled to loot as much as possible by those in position of power resulted in the neglect of the educational sector.

Students' attitudes toward educational facilities: The belief that government property is nobody's property sometimes affects the availability, maintenance and continuity of instructional equipment in our tertiary institutions. The syndrome of "It is government property" has become a canker worm eating deep into the very fabric of our educational system as students mishandle equipment and go scot-free. This does result to inadequacy of instructional materials and the blame to educational authorities. Puyate in Acharu and Solomon (2014) supported this when they said that "there is little or no concern on the part of government, lecturers and students for the improvement of the present state of facilities" in our tertiary institutions. Students must be sensitized on how to take good care of educational facilities for the benefit of effective teaching and learning.

Increase in student enrolment: Onyesom, Egbule and Okwuokenye (2012) stated that business education of which OTM is an integral part has been experiencing incremental movement in the number of students' enrolment as a result of the quest for a discipline that can make one self-reliant and productive after graduation. As a result, the number of ICT-instructional based equipment such as computers, laboratories and classrooms are always insufficient for effective teaching and learning of OTM programme.

Compromise by the supervisory body: Essen (2012) in Robert (2014) reported that the Federal Republic of Nigeria set up the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) by Decree (Act) No. 9 of 11<sup>th</sup> January, 1977 as the higher education supervisory parastatal in charge of Polytechnic education to coordinate activities of technical and vocational education and to ensure that courses offered reflect national needs, interest and aspirations of the society. This body accredits and reaccredits programmes of study in the Polytechnics. Many

a times the people send to accredit programmes compromise their authority by taking gratification to accredit programmes without adequate facilities.

Nwachukwu (2012) supported the above statement when he said the most administrative and supervisory agencies have lost credibility in their areas of function. Where an officer will take bribe and sweep his power under the carpet or where the opposite sex will demand gratification before carrying out his/her responsibilities make the functionaries not to take them serious.

### **Research Methods**

Descriptive survey design was used for this study. The design is therefore suitable for this study since it involves assessment of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of office technology and management in Polytechnics in Niger State.

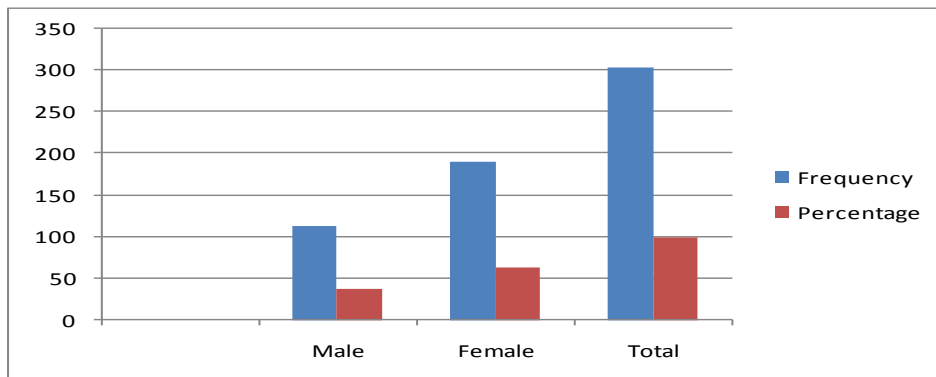
Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study consisted of all the 327 lecturers and students of office technology and management in Polytechnics in Niger State of Nigeria. There was no sampling since the population was not too large. The data for the study was collected through questionnaire which was duly validated by three experts. With the use of Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test (CART), the reliability co-efficient calculated for the study was found to be 0.71 which indicated that the instrument for the study was reliable. Mean and standard deviation were the tools used to analyze the research questions while student t-test was used to test the null hypotheses.

### **Data analysis and discussion**

A total of three hundred and twenty seven (327) copies of questionnaire were distributed and three hundred and four (304) copies were retrieved representing 93% return

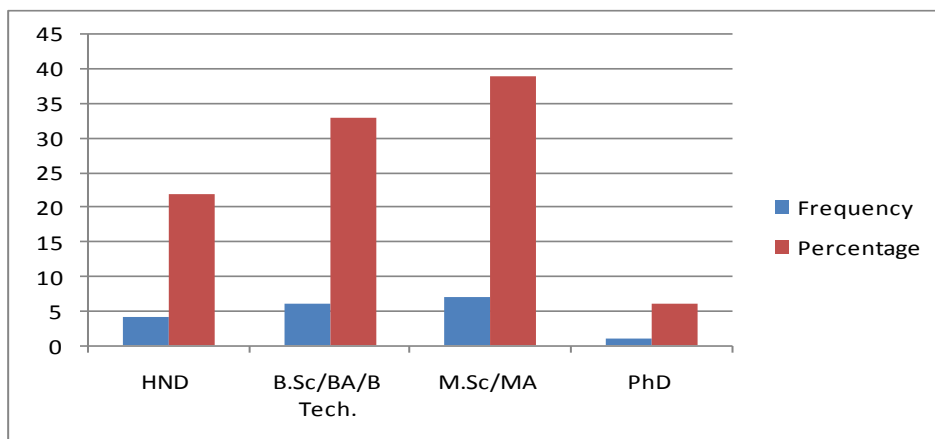
rate. The breakdown of the retrieved copies of questionnaire was 18 and 286 from lecturers and students respectively.

**Bio-data of Respondents**



**Figure 1: Gender of Respondents.**

Figure 1 above shows that majority of the respondents were females.



**Figure 2: Educational qualifications of Respondents.**

Figure 1 above shows that majority of the respondents possessed M.Sc/MA.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the extent of availability of instructional materials in teaching OTM**

		$N_L = 18$ and $N_S = 286$		
S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Computer and shorthand laboratories	3.04	0.56	High Extent
2.	Computer and shorthand equipment in the laboratories	1.96	0.65	Low Extent
3.	Electronic typewriters laboratories	1.81	0.67	Low Extent
4.	Marker boards	2.75	0.85	High Extent
5.	Electronic smart boards	1.71	0.72	Low Extent
6.	Projectors	1.85	0.58	Low Extent
7.	Model office	2.28	0.65	Low Extent
8.	Internet facilities such as video conferencing	1.62	0.68	Low Extent
9.	Rizo, Damalog, scanning and photocopying machine	1.63	0.62	Low Extent
10.	Lecture halls, chairs, fans, lightning system	2.86	0.59	High Extent
11.	E-library and recent textbooks and journal in manual library	1.61	0.76	Low Extent
12.	Standby generator	2.90	0.69	High Extent
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.17</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>

Table 1 revealed that model office, computer and shorthand equipment in the laboratories, projector, and electronic typewriters were available to a low extent based on the responses of lecturers and students. In addition, respondents indicated that electronic smart boards, Rizo, Damalog, scanning and photocopying machine were also rated available to a low extent based on the responses of lecturers and students. E-library and recent textbooks and journal in manual library as well as Internet facilities such as e-mail, video and audio conferencing were rated available to low extent. On the other hand computer and shorthand laboratories, standby generators, lecture halls, chairs, fans, lightning system were available to a high extent based on the responses of the respondents. On the overall, all the constructs in the table above are available to low extents. This means that instructional materials for teaching OTM in polytechnics in Niger State are available to a low extent.

All the 12 items have a standard deviation ranges from 0.56 to 0.85 which are below the fixed value of 1.96. This means that the responses of the respondents are not wide spread as it is close to the mean.

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the factors affecting the availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning OTM**

		$N_L = 18$ and $N_S = 286$		
S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Institutions to provide instructional materials from internally generated revenue.	1.83	0.52	Disagreed
2.	Inadequate funding	3.24	0.41	Agreed
3.	Capital intensive	3.26	0.56	Agreed
4.	Lack of maintenance	3.19	0.53	Agreed
5.	Poor policy formulation and implementation	3.14	0.58	Agreed
6.	Corruption in education system	3.06	0.63	Agreed
7.	Students' attitudes towards educational facilities	2.76	0.68	Agreed
8.	Periodic increase in tuition fee	1.80	0.58	Disagreed
9.	Compromise by regulatory body	2.92	0.73	Agreed
10.	Increase in student enrollment	3.05	0.69	Agreed
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.83</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 2 revealed that the respondents agreed that inadequate funding is a factor affecting the availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning of OTM; the respondents also agreed that capital intensive is a factor affecting availability of instructional materials in teaching OTM. The table also showed that the respondents agreed that lack of maintenance is a factor affecting availability of instructional materials. In addition, the respondents also agreed that poor policy formulation and implementation is a factor affecting availability of instructional materials. The table also revealed that lecturers and students disagreed with Institutions using internally generated revenue to provide instructional materials as one of the factors affecting the availability of instructional materials. The same way they disagreed that Periodic increase in tuition fee is a factor affecting availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM in polytechnics in Niger State. All the 10 items has standard deviation ranges from 0.41 to 0.73 which is below the fixed value of 1.96. This means that the responses of the respondents are not wide spread as they are close to the mean.

On the overall, all the constructs in the table above are factors affecting the availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM in polytechnics in Niger

State because the mean is far above the fixed decision mean of 2.50. This implied that respondents agreed to all the constructs as factors affecting the availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM.

### Hypotheses Testing

The two null hypotheses of the study were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of probability to find the difference between the mean responses of lecturers and students. The summary of the test of hypotheses are presented as follows:

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State.

**Table 3: Summary of t-test of the difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of OTM**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Lecturers	18	2.13	0.53	1.33	302	0.184	NS
Students	286	2.21	0.21				
Source:	Field survey, April, 2016						P>0.05

The data in Table 3 revealed that there are 18 lecturers and 286 students. The lecturers and students responses showed that there is low extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM ( $\bar{X} = 2.13$ ;  $SD = 0.53$ ) and ( $\bar{X} = 2.21$ ;  $SD = 0.21$ ). Their responses are close to the mean as the standard deviations are very low. The table revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of OTM ( $t_{302} = 1.33$ ,  $P>0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no

significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State was not rejected. This implied that lecturers and students did not differ in their responses regarding extent of availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning OTM. Though there was a slight difference between their mean responses with students having higher mean responses, but the difference was not statistically significant (mean difference = 0.08).

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the factors affecting the availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State.

**Table 4: Summary of t-test of the difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the factors affecting the availability of instructional materials for teaching and learning of OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Lecturers	18	2.86	0.46	0.877	302	0.381	NS
Students	286	2.80	0.27				

Source: Field survey, April, 2016

$P > 0.05$

The data in Table 4 revealed that there are 18 lecturers and 286 students. The lecturers had mean score of 2.86 and standard deviation of 0.46 ( $\bar{X} = 2.86$ ;  $SD = 0.46$ ) while students had mean score of 2.80 and standard deviation of 0.27 ( $\bar{X} = 2.80$ ;  $SD = 0.27$ ). The calculated value of t is 0.877 ( $t_{cal} = 0.877$ ). The observed p-value is 0.381 ( $P = 0.381$ ) which is greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05 ( $P > 0.05$ ). Since the observed p-value is greater than the fixed p-value, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the factors affecting the availability of instructional

materials for teaching and learning of OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State was therefore not rejected. This implied that lecturers and students' responses do not statistically and significantly differ.

### **Discussion of findings**

The result of the analysis on the availability of instructional materials in teaching and learning of OTM in Polytechnics in Niger State showed that instructional materials are available at low extent. The findings are in accordance with Zakka and Priscilla (2009) who found that facilities required for teaching of office technology and management in Polytechnics are grossly inadequate; hence OTM teachers adopt lecture method which has been found inappropriate and ineffective in teaching skill based courses.

The result of respondents as analyzed in Table 2 showed that inadequate funding, capital intensive, poor or lack of maintenance, increase in students' enrolment and student attitudes to educational facilities were the factors affecting or militating availability of instructional materials in OTM. This agreed with the findings of Acharu and Solomon (2014) who strongly maintained that inadequate infrastructural (instructional) facilities are evidently linked to inadequate funding by Governments at all levels. According to Acharu and Solomon, Nigeria still remains a major defaulter in complying with the UNESCO recommendations that at least 26% of the National Budget should be committed to education. The result of the above is the current pathetic state of OTM programme in most Polytechnics in Nigeria.



## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that office technology and management which is responsible to produce effective and efficient secretaries and office managers are without necessary and adequate instructional materials.

That poor or low provision of instructional materials has been linked to inadequate funding, poor maintenance, erratic power supply and lack of technical manpower.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government and the school management should endeavour to provide enough instructional materials to the Polytechnics. Conducive learning environment would have been provided for both teachers and students, and teaching and learning will more effective if this is done.
2. Students who damage any educational facilities should be made to pay for it. This will make the students to be careful in using educational facilities.
3. Educational policies that are formulated should be implemented for effective teaching and learning of OTM. This could ensure smooth running of academic calendar with less or no agitations from both lecturers and students.
4. National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is the body charged with the responsibility of accrediting and de-accrediting programme of study in the Polytechnics should insist on adequate provision of instructional materials before a programme is accredited.

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