

The Role of Office Technology and Management and Information Management towards Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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Office Technology Management is a very fundamental course and discipline in both the social and technological sciences. Study by people who are the engine room of any organisation or establishment. On the other hand, as the popular saying goes “information is power” the management of information is also a task responsible for the effective running of an organisation, establishment or the nation at large. This paper has linked the essence of Office Technology Management(OTM) with Information Management(IM) in an attempt to achieve sustainable development. The source of data was primarily, secondary. The paper explored the important roles OTM and IM play in ensuring sustainable development examining the challenges faced by the discipline.

Keywords: Office, Technology, Management, Information, Development.

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Introduction

Office Technology and Management (OTM) is a course that is studied in Polytechnics and colleges with the soul aim of guiding the office personnel on the management of office equipments and data. It is also referred to as secretariat studies. One of the imperativeness of OTM is that it is one discipline that facilitates the ability to be self-reliant. OTM is one that equips learners with skills both physically and mentally which makes them very functional in the office effectively. With the present trend of what is happening in the world today with regards to high demand for Jobs where there is none, most specifically here in Nigeria.

(Adamu, 2008) asserted that office technology and management training is a study that lay emphasis on learning by which doing eventually lead to the acquisition of practical skills and applied skills. Office technology and management is a vocational programme which is an integral part of Business education that is offered to students in commercial secondary school, colleges of education, polytechnics and universities for them to become competent secretariat teachers and

administrators with appropriate skills and knowledge to take up career in teaching, business and office occupation, (Abubakar, Hauwau and Ordu, 2010).

Office technology and management (OTM) is one of the major components of vocational education. It is concerned with training and preparing of students for gainful employment in the office and management related works within the labour market. It is taught as business studies in form of Shorthand, Typewriting, Office Practice, Commerce, Book-keeping, for junior secondary school and Economics, financial Accounting, Shorthand, Typewriting and Business Management for senior secondary school, College of Education offer 3 years course in Business Education while Universities and Polytechnics in Nigeria offer four years course in Office Technology and Management (Oyedele and Grace, 2018).

Office technology and management is very vital in training and development of human potentials in any nation, as it inculcates appropriate skills, knowledge, attitude and work competencies in individual for meaningful life and national development. Office technology and management is therefore a sure way to a nation's development and sustainability.

Information management is in a simple term the management of data. It is very essential to manage information as its mismanagement will lead to a lot of negative circumstances that would hinder development. The management of data as simple as it may sound actually is not that easy. It encounters a lot of challenges such as the lack of an institutionalized and integrated approach to data collection, which will ultimately avoid duplication of resources; the issue of governance and how to address making data available while also ensuring that confidentiality of some data is maintained; the need for a greater emphasis on metadata in ensuring that the user can better understand the data and the data set and the limitations of existing systems, which are often not hierarchical in nature and do not allow for targeted analysis of data from local level to broad national level. This paper thus examines the role of these two concepts of OTM and IM in attaining sustainable development in Nigeria.

The Concept of Office Technology and Management

Office Technology and Management (OTM) as the title implies is a course designed to equip students with the basic skills of secretariat work. One that is groomed in this field is expected to know all that entails office work from typing documents, documenting documents by way of filling and other means. Uteh and Iheukwumere cited the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2004) states that office technology and management programme is structured to achieve the following objectives; Equipping individuals with office secretarial skills; Creating general entrepreneurship awareness in the students with a view to inculcating in them the right knowledge for productive purpose; Laying foundation for advance studies; The course is to provide the business world with highly skilled knowledge workers who manage information, efficiently equipped with comprehensive range of skills including managerial, technological (multimedia) and

communication. Though these objectives have been achieved, the significant impact of these objectives by way of the effective use of these skills is not achieved in Nigeria. This has become a major challenge for students of OTM in Nigeria. Digitalisation has brought about transition from the use of old equipments to modern ones around the world, unfortunately the case is different in Nigeria.

Most of our tertiary institutions are still using old type-writers instead of modern laptops for practice.

The Concept of Information Management

Information Management is at it sounds- the collection and management of information which can come from various sources stored in a variety of formats and distributed to more than one audience. This can be either electrically or physically. As a field, information management determines how people and organisations work with this information. The significance of IM is that it is the blood life of any business or organisation. It helps dictate how businesses form strategies and implement processes based on them and that is why businesses and organisations pump a lot of resources into their information management systems.

The Concept of Sustainable National Development

The concepts of sustainability of National development go hand in hand. For development to be consistent, it has to be sustained.

(Azuka, 2009), states that development is increasing the production system of a nation population, reducing poverty, creating employment and creating equality of opportunities and increasing the welfare of its citizens. On the other hand, Ohakwe as cited in (Ezeani and Falde, 2018), described development as: Event causing change; process of change; a specified stage of growth or advancement; a new product or idea; an event constituting a new stage in a change situation.

The Significance of Office Technology and Management and Information Management towards Sustainable National Development

The impact of office technology and management cannot be over emphasised. OTM has the capacity to develop the nation's economy. It prepares students with multi-skills necessary to function effectively in the technological era. With OTM and the ability to manage information, there will certainly be productivity which will lead to sustainable national development. Though OTM is faced with challenges such as poor funding, lack of modern infrastructure, no motivation etc, it is one programme that will bring about self-reliance. This is what a country like Nigeria needs today, we need to move from wealth consumption to wealth creation and that can be achieved through OTM.

Office technology and management is a potential economic energizer that helps to keep the economy afloat. It is an efficient, effective, productive and functional education which leads students/graduates to be self-reliant, self-employed, paid employment and consequently selfactualization, Okoro and Amagoh in Oyedele and Grace (2018). Baba and Akarahu (2012), noted that Office technology and management is imperative in the economic development by providing practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

Conclusion

OTM is a very significant aspect of development. it is so important that one will almost not be wrong to say that it is only through OTM and information management that sustainable national development can be achieved. Therefore, the fact that office technology and management and information management is significant towards sustainable national development is unquestionable.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- i. The government should provide funds for the procurement of modern equipments to enhance effective and productive learning in the field.
- ii. Government and other non-governmental parastatals should ensure the adequacy and consistency of teachers of OTM.
- iii. Proper orientation/awareness should be given to the public in regard to OTM programme.
- iv. There should be a link between the ICT unit and OTM department so that they can have access to efficient data and steady power supply for effectiveness.
- v. Only qualified office technology and management lecturers should be recruited to teach office technology and management courses.

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