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MARKETING MIX AND SUSTAINABILITY OF MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN AKWA IBOM STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent to which marketing mix influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The variables examined included products and price. Descriptive survey research design was employed for the study. The population of this study comprised 900 managers from the 275 registered medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The sample size for this study comprised 269 managers of registered medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The researcher-made instrument titled "Marketing Mix and Sustainability of Medium Scale Enterprises Questionnaire" (MMSMSEQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three research experts. The reliability coefficient index of 0.81 was obtained and adjudged the instrument reliable. Simple Linear Regression was used in answering the research questions and testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that products and price significantly influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The study concludes that sustainability thrives where thoughtful marketing decisions are consistently made, monitored, and adjusted to meet the dynamic realities and needs of the business environment. It was recommended among others that medium-scale enterprise owners and managers should regularly reassess their pricing strategies to ensure they reflect customer purchasing power, cost realities, and competitive conditions.

Introduction

It is a common phenomenon that the contemporary society is overwhelmed with business activities. Business encompasses essential ingredients for the development of any economy. Usip and Ukoima (2023) explained that as government could no longer employ school leavers, several economic programmes were initiated to encourage individuals to establish private business for self-reliance. Business serves as a means where goods and services needed by individuals are produced and distributed with the motive of making profit and satisfying the wants of consumers. Similarly, Etok, *et al.* (2025) defined business as an economic activity which involves a continuous and regular production and distribution of goods and services for satisfying human wants and profit maximization. Therefore, there is no gainsaying that all profit-oriented and lawful economic activities that are organized and directed towards creating goods and services for mankind are business enterprises and can be small, medium or large-scale enterprise in nature. In this study, the emphasis is on the medium scale enterprises (MSEs).



A medium scale enterprise is generally referred to as enterprise either owned by an individual or group of individuals with a total employee of not less than 50 but below 250 and a total capital of between ₦25,000,000 and ₦100,000,000. A medium scale enterprise according to Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA), Law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (LFRN) is a company with an annual gross turnover of twenty-five million (₦25,000,000) naira and above but below one hundred million (₦100,000,000) naira (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2020). Nigerian Institute of Management (2019) in addition noted that the activities of medium scale businesses are varied in nature. These include a wide range of economic activities such as supermarkets, transport companies, chain stores, pharmaceutical outfits, eateries, hotel services, among others.

Medium scale enterprises are essential to the development of any economy as they provide great potentials improvement of local technology, output diversification and development of indigenous entrepreneurship. Here, Solomon in Archibong (2022) maintained that large percentage of Nigerians survive by operating medium scale businesses, and only a small segment of the population holds full time employment in the civil service and large-scale corporations. Nigerians in general and Akwa Ibom people in particular in their millions engage in medium scale enterprises in areas of farming, manufacturing, distributive trade, repairs, transportation, maintenance services, hotel and catering services, to earn their living. The contributions of the medium scale enterprises in the world economy could therefore be recognized as the route through which rapid industrialization and other development can be achieved.

Sustainability is an important phenomenon in any business; it has to do with survival of a business for a long time without failing or winding up. Emas (2015) stated that the overall goal of sustainability is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; which is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision-making process. This in recent years has become a critical concern for businesses worldwide (Porter and Kramer, 2021). Sustainability encompasses environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations that impact a company's long-term success (Schwab, 2020). Medium-scale enterprises are no exception, as they must adopt sustainable practices to remain competitive and contribute to a sustainable future (United Nation Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG, 2015). For any business to survive in today's competitive market place, the consumer must be aware of the existence of the products and services it provides. Hence, there is great need for effective marketing mix to be adopted for sustainability of a business.

The marketing mix is a comprehensive framework that encompasses all the strategic decisions a business makes to create, communicate, and deliver value to its target market. Porter (2018) described marketing mix as a dynamic process that requires continuous monitoring and adjustment. It also involves understanding the needs and wants of the target market, creating a unique value proposition, and using a range of tactics to reach, engage, and retain customers. It is often described as a "recipe" for business success, as it requires the right combination of ingredients (strategies and tactics) to achieve the desired outcome. Marketing mix involves a combination of various marketing elements to ensure goods and services are provided to the targeted customers to satisfy their needs. Kotler *et al.* (2019) identified various frameworks of marketing mix such as the 4Ps, 7Ps and 4Cs frameworks but this study will focus on just two: product and price



The product refers to the goods or services offered by a company to its customers. There are two types of product: tangible goods which can be touched and intangible goods (services) which cannot be touched, but people can get benefit from it. Companies must carefully design and manage their product offerings to meet the needs and wants of their target market. The product element of the marketing mix is essential for MSEs to develop sustainable products that meet the needs of their target market. According to Prahalad and Hart (2022), MSEs that develop eco-friendly products can attract environmentally conscious customers, which can lead to increased sales and revenue. Production of goods and services that are not customer friendly or do not meet the need of customers can lead to business failure. In addition, products must be offered to customers at affordable price.

The price component of marketing mix refers to the amount that customers pay for a product or services. According to the Chartered Institute of Purchase and Supply (CIPS, 2023), price is the amount of consideration to be paid or given to a supplier for an article, good or service, or for something desired, offered or purchased. Pricing decisions are critical for sustainability of business because they affect revenue and profitability (Nagle and Holden, 2017). Price is one of the main influences on the quantity of product that people buy. Companies must consider various factors when setting prices, including production costs, market conditions, and customer perceptions (Hinterhuber and Liozu, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which marketing mix influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. determine the extent to which products influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. determine the extent to which price influences sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

- i. What is the extent to which products influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State?
- ii. What is the extent to which price influences sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁. There is no significant influence of products on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.
- H₀₂. There is no significant influence of price on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Hierarchical-Response Model by Lavidge and Steiner (1961)

Hierarchical-Response Model was developed by Robert J. Lavidge and Gary A. Steiner in 1961. The model states that buyers' purchase decision is preceded by steps such as conviction about product benefits, preference for the brand, liking for the brand, knowledge relating to the benefits and features of the product, after an awareness of the product has been gained. It shows how advertising influences the decision to either buy or not purchase a given service or product. It is a hierarchy of effects because the quantity of customers decreases from one phase to another which implies that business organizations should struggle to attain a lot of customers to the final phase of buying through innovative promotional mix messages that transmit distinctive value or service intentions to the target audience. The theory is relevant to the present study as it helps



MSEs to have understanding of how customers become aware of different product options and brands, identify products, pricing, etc.

Product

Product refers to the goods or services offered by a company to its customers (Kotler *et al.*, 2019). It is the final outputs of all in the inputs in the production process known as final goods and services either for consumption or for production of further goods or services. Levy *et al.*, (2015) stated that products can be tangible or intangible, and they can be marketed as individual items or as a bundle. Companies must carefully design and manage their product offerings to meet the needs and wants of their target market (Lambin *et al.*, 2017). A sustainable product is one that is designed, produced, and consumed in a way that minimizes environmental impact and supports social and economic development (Kumar *et al.*, 2020). By adopting sustainable product strategies, MSEs can minimize environmental impact, support social and economic development, and achieve long-term sustainability. Davenport (2017) who found out that product has the potential to transform traditional business models and industries. Companies that leverage product effectively in marketing mix can create new markets, disrupt existing ones, and establish themselves as leaders in their line of business.

Price

Pricing implies ability to set a profitable monetary value for a product to be sold. It is the monetary value of goods and services to be purchased by customers. In business law, price is defined by Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) (2023) as consideration or amount to be paid for goods or services. It is a consideration to be paid for an offer or amount of money given to a supplier for an article, good or service, or for something desired, offered or purchased. It is usually the most visible part of purchase costs and embodied training costs, test and support equipment costs, inventory and marketing costs, customer service costs, transport and handling costs, technical data cost and disposal costs. Price according to Baig (2020) is seen as the settlement and is often regarded as a trade of cash for goods and services. It is a settlement for goods and services offered for sales by the supplier. Once the price is paid by the buyer and accepted by the supplier, it means there is settlement for any offer. Agbebi (2020) who found out that price is one of the main influences on the quantity of product that people buy because the higher the price, the lower the quantity demanded. The quantity of goods demanded is inversely influenced by price, because as price increases, less quantity of goods will be demanded, while a fall in price will lead to an increase in quantity of goods demanded.

Research Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised 900 managers from the 275 registered medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State (Statistic Unit, Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Investment Report, 2025). The sample size for this study comprised 269 managers of registered medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The sample size was statistically determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size table. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study. The researcher-made instrument titled "Marketing Mix and Sustainability of Medium Scale Enterprises Questionnaire" (MMSMSEQ) was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by the use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The reliability coefficient index of 0.81 was obtained and adjudged the instrument reliable. Simple Linear Regression was used in answering the research questions and testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The choice of simple linear regression was based on the fact that it can be used to quantify the extent of influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable.



Results

Research Question One

What is the extent to which products influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Summary of the extent of influence of products on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State n=239

Source of Variation	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Products	.652	.429	.427	.44750	LE
Sustainability					

Source: Field data (2026); LE = Little Extent

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which products influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. Table 1 revealed the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.429. This implies that 42% is the overall contribution of all items on products on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. In line with the decision rule, this therefore means that there is little extent of influence of products on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

4.1.2 Research Question Two

What is the extent to which price influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2: Summary of the extent of influence of price on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State n=239

Source of Variation	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Price	.814	.663	.554	.46174	GE
Sustainability					

Source: Field data (2026); GE = Great Extent

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which price influence sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. Table 2 revealed the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.663. This implies that 66% is the overall contribution of all items on price on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. In line with the decision rule, this therefore means that there is great extent of influence of price on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of products on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Table: 3 Summary of Regression Analysis of products on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Regression	169.416	1	169.416	162.843	.000	Significant
Residual	246.567	238	1.040			
Total	415.983	239				

Source: Field data (2026), Significant at 0.05 alpha level



The computed F-value of (162.843) has the probability level of 0.00 which is less than the probability level of 0.05. This is interpreted to be statistically significant at the degree of freedom of 1 and 238. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of products on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State is rejected. This means products significantly influence the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of price on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Table: 4 Summary of Regression Analysis of price on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision
Regression	120.611	1	120.611	96.773	.000	Significant
Residual	295.372	238	1.251			
Total	415.983	239				

Source: Field data (2026), Significant at 0.05 alpha level

The computed F-value of (96.773) has the probability level of 0.00 which is less than the probability level of 0.05. This is interpreted to be statistically significant at the degree of freedom of 1 and 238. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of price on sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State is rejected. This means price significantly influence the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of Findings

Products and Sustainability of Medium Scale Enterprises

The finding of this study shows that there is little extent of influence of products on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The corresponding null hypothesis tested revealed that products significantly influence the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. This implies that product is a significant influence of consumer engagement to achieve sustainability goal. With the rise of e-commerce and the increasing impact of globalisation, and peer influence in the course of making purchase, the role of product is critical to generate reliable and genuine product for sustainability of medium scale enterprises. The finding of this study aligns with that of Davenport (2017) who found out that product has the potential to transform traditional business models and industries. Companies that leverage product effectively in marketing mix can create new markets, disrupt existing ones, and establish themselves as leaders in their line of business. This means that product creates room for new development in any business organization and this development projects the brand positively before the public and attracts more customers. Subsequently, consumers who have positive attitudes toward a product will be willing to pay more for personalized products and services. Therefore, product can help medium scale enterprise to improve customer experiences, increase sales, customer loyalty and retention.

The little extent of influence observed in this study is noteworthy and requires practical reflection. One credible explanation is that in the current Nigerian economic climate, characterized by rising inflation and purchasing power erosion, consumers have increasingly shifted their evaluation criteria from product attributes to price considerations. This means that while product quality and differentiation remain strategically important, their direct impact on sustainability outcomes is being moderated by macroeconomic pressures peculiar to the Nigerian business environment. The implication for medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State is that



product development efforts must be pursued in tandem with sensitivity to the prevailing economic realities of the target market. A well-developed product that is perceived as unaffordable will fail to drive the customer acquisition and retention needed for business sustainability.

Price and Sustainability of Medium Scale Enterprises

There is great extent of influence of price on the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. The corresponding null hypothesis tested revealed that price significantly influence the sustainability of medium scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State. This implies that price is a crucial tool for businesses to consolidate on their strength and stay competitive in the market. Price helps businesses to identify opportunities to increase revenue, improve profit margins, and enhance customer satisfaction.

The finding of this study is in tandem with that of Agbebi (2020) who found out that price is one of the main influences on the quantity of product that people buy because the higher the price, the lower the quantity demanded. The quantity of goods demanded is inversely influenced by price, because as price increases, less quantity of goods will be demanded, while a fall in price will lead to an increase in quantity of goods demanded. This implies that medium scale enterprises that understands and operate appropriate pricing system will definitely generate revenue that will make the business sustainable. Therefore, price of goods and services can significantly impact revenue, profitability, and competitiveness of medium scale enterprise and ultimately affecting its sustainability.

The great extent of influence recorded for price in this study is consistent with the prevailing consumer behaviour patterns in the study area. Unlike in more economically stable environments where brand perception and product quality may dominate purchasing decisions, some consumers in Akwa Ibom State, tend to evaluate price as a primary determinant before committing to a purchase. This finding has direct practical implications for medium scale enterprise owners and managers: the pricing strategy adopted must reflect an acute understanding of the purchasing power and economic sensitivity of the target consumer base. Enterprises that price their goods and services without reference to the local economic realities risk pricing themselves out of the market, thereby threatening their own long-term sustainability. Conversely, those that adopt competitive, value-aligned pricing are better positioned to attract and retain the volume of customers necessary for sustained business operations.

Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that each component of the marketing mix: products and price significantly influence survival growth and relevance of medium scale enterprises in an increasingly competitive environment. The findings emphasize that sustainability is not accidental; it emerges from deliberate strategic choices that align business offerings with customer expectations and market realities. The results also highlight the interconnected nature of these variables. When pricing strategies reflect market sensitivity, when products meet evolving customer needs, when distribution systems provide timely access.

Medium-scale enterprises that fail to pay attention to these elements risk losing ground, regardless of other strengths they may possess. The study concludes that the marketing mix serves as a practical framework through which medium-scale enterprises in Akwa Ibom State can strengthen their operations and secure their future. It affirms that sustainability thrives where thoughtful marketing decisions are consistently made, monitored, and adjusted to meet the dynamic realities and needs of the business environment.



Recommendations

- i. Medium-scale enterprise owners and managers should regularly reassess their pricing strategies to ensure they reflect customer purchasing power, cost realities, and competitive conditions.
- ii. Firms should invest in continuous product improvement and innovation. Product development teams should actively gather customer feedback, monitor market trends, and refine offerings to stay relevant.

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**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING STRATEGIES AND ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING IN
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM NORTH-EAST
SENATORIAL DISTRICT.**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent to which experiential learning strategies influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Two specific purposes of the study, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The area of this study is Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The population of the study comprised 2236 senior secondary three (SS3) students in 2025/2026 academic session offering Financial Accounting in all the 86 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The sample size for this study comprised 329 senior secondary three (SS3) students offering financial accounting in the 86 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The researcher-made instrument entitled "Experiential Learning Strategies Questionnaire" (ELSQ) was used to collect data for the independent variable while a standardized test (Result from Senior Secondary two (2) Mock Examinations) was used to obtain data on the academic performance of financial accounting students. The instrument developed by the researcher was given to three research experts for face-validation. Cronbach's Alpha statistics was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.86. The data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression for the research questions as well as test the statistical significance of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that experiential learning strategies influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. It was concluded that students learn financial accounting concepts more effectively when they are actively involved in the learning process rather than positioned as passive recipients of information. It was recommended among others that Financial accounting teachers should regularly incorporate simulation activities such as mock business transactions, ledger preparation, and financial statement exercises into classroom instruction.



Introduction

Education refers to the process by which an individual acquires physical and social capabilities demanded by the society to function meaningfully. Education involves the transmission of knowledge, values and skills from one generation to another, ensuring the continuity and advancement of civilization (Doharey *et al.*, 2023). Education plays a great role in shaping individuals and the society in diverse ways. For this reason, a substantial share of a nation's resources is to be invested in education. The performance of candidates on their final examinations after these investments has long been a matter of concern to many well-meaning individuals, institutions and organizations, as well as to various levels of government. One of the vocational subjects in the secondary school curriculum is Financial Accounting.

With this, Ukoima, Akpanobong, Usip and Uke. (2024) asserted that Financial Accounting is the process of recording, classifying, selecting, measuring, interpreting, summarizing and reporting financial data of an organization to the users for objective assessment and decision making. Financial Accounting data are processed into Financial Accounting information through the use of Financial Accounting principles and conventions which are the basic fundamentals which guide accountants in recording, appreciating and assessing Financial Accounting information as well as the preparation and interpretation of financial statements.

Considering the importance of Financial Accounting in every field of human endeavour, it becomes very necessary that efforts are geared towards finding a lasting solution to students' poor performance in the subject. As a result, Osuafor and Okonkwo (2023) noted that several factors have been identified by researchers as being responsible for the persistent poor performance recorded in Financial Accounting especially at Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations. Sakina (2016) stated that some of these factors include lack of teachers, lack of educational facilities, overloaded syllabuses, poor attitude and lack of interest on the part of the students and poor teaching methods by teachers. Therefore, to seek solution to the dwindling academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary in Akwa Ibom State, it is pertinent to investigate the influence of experiential learning strategies.

Experiential learning strategy involves learners using their thinking faculty effectively in problem-solving situations. It directs learners towards better achievement. Experiential learning is seen as a transformative educational approach that emphasizes hands-on experience and direct engagement with the learning environment as noted by Kolb and Kolb (2017). This concept, as stated by Boud and Garrick (2018) holds that learning is most effective when learners are actively involved in the process, rather than merely passively receiving information. Experiential learning emphasises on practical learning and active involvement of students in the learning process. Hence, it could enhance students' performance, because of the tendency to increase retention rates, and foster deeper understanding and interest.

According to Mohammed (2018), students' ability to think about their learning and to have feelings and knowledge about that process is one of the things that make learning so fascinating. Experiential learning strategy is goal oriented and is suitable in critical thinking development of the learners. It helps students in undertaking thinking process and is also useful in problem-solving and effective communication. Teachers need to create learning environments and activities that promote students' beliefs that their abilities to learn can be improved through effort and experience. Hence, the focus of this study is to investigate experiential learning strategies and how they could influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting.



Statement of the Problem

Financial Accounting is one of the subjects offered at the Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) in Nigeria. The understanding of the Federal Government of Nigeria is that Financial Accounting as part of business subjects contributes to the national goal of education for self-employment. One of the objectives of Financial Accounting is the provision of orientation and basic clerical skill to students to start life for those who may not undergo further training. In spite of this laudable objective, it is observed that the performance of students is still below the expectation in their Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE).

Over the years, especially since the inception of the free and compulsory education programme in Akwa Ibom State, the standard of education has continued to decline. This is shown in the low performance of many students in financial accounting. These poor performances have caused a lot of problems such as inability to get admission into tertiary institutions. The researcher observed that a number of students write WAEC and NECO examinations a number of times before they passed Financial Accounting and other important subjects. Some of these students still failed after several attempts, resulting to inability to get admission into institutions of higher learning. Such students continue to roam about the streets without being useful to themselves, their parents and the society at large.

Government, parents, teachers and students blame one another for students' poor performance in financial accounting, parents blame teachers for lack of dedication to duties. The teachers blame government for poor salaries hence they are poorly motivated, parent also accuse government for not equipping the schools with learning materials, government blame parents for not doing home works and the students are blamed for lack of discipline and dedication to their studies. The researcher being worried about the low performance of students in financial accounting and the rampant blame-game between the government, teachers and parents, decide to embark on this study to determine the extent to which experiential learning strategies influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which experiential learning strategies influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- i. the extent to which simulation influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.
- ii. the extent to which field trip influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- i. What is the extent to which simulation influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?
- ii. What is the extent to which field trip influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?



Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at .05 level of significance.

- H₀₁. The influence of simulation on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. is not significant.
- H₀₂. The influence of field trip on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. is not significant.

Social Impact Theory by Bibb Latané (1981)

Social impact theory was propounded by Bibb Latané in 1981. Social impact theory is defined as any of the great variety of changes in physiological states and subjective feelings, motives and emotions, cognitions and beliefs, values and behavior, that occur in an individual, human, or animal, as a result of the real, implied or imagined presence or actions of other individuals or objects. Social impact is the result of social forces including the strength of the source of impact, the immediacy of the event, and the number of sources exerting the impact. The theory is related to this study as it emphasizes on the strength of the source of impact, the immediacy of the event, and the number of sources exerting the impact. This implies that the social impact of Financial Accounting felt by students will likely motivate them to learn the subject.

Experiential Learning Strategies

Experiential learning is a pedagogical approach that involves students in direct experience and hands-on activities to promote learning and skill development. This learning strategy involves an application of knowledge and theory to real life experience. It fosters attainment of specific learning outcomes and encourages reflection and application of skills and knowledge and prepares future citizen for productive life. Experiential learning integrates with direct experience and focus on reflection. It is constructed on previous knowledge and experience and requires active involvement in constructions. It also encourages, exchanges and collaborate ideas and perspectives, as well as takes place in classroom, workplace and community.

Academic Performance

Academic performance has been an important issue for secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State in particular and Nigeria at large. Academic performance is the extent to which student, teacher or institution has achieved their short or long-term educational goals (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024). According to Anthony (2018), academic performance of students is a key feature in education it is the center around which the whole education system revolves. Narrad and Abdullah (2016) opined that the performance of students decides the success or failure of any academic institution. It is a measure of output compared to the input. The main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of their experiences within the school system.

Simulation Learning Strategy

Simulation is an innovative teaching method which is a learner-centred, activity-oriented teaching strategy. The word simulation comes from Latin word 'similis' meaning 'like', that is to act like, to resemble, to pretend to be (Uguma and Obiekezie, 2018). Thus, simulations are activities or materials that present real life situations, past events or organisations in such a way that students will learn and understand more about them (Uchegbu, 2016). Albrecht and Sack (2020) noted that simulation learning strategy has gained popularity in recent years as an effective pedagogical approach in accounting education. Lee *et al.* (2020) found that students



who used simulation-based learning showed significant improvements in their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The implication is that simulation learning strategy can provide students with opportunities to develop their technical skills in financial accounting. Also, it is possible for students to practice preparation of financial statements, analysis of financial data, and making of financial decisions by using simulation software.

Field Trip

Field trip is an important learning strategy that can be used in teaching and learning of financial accounting in order to aid improvement in academic performance of students in secondary schools. Field trip is that instructional strategy that allows students to obtain direct experience from a natural setting (Abdul *et al.*, 2018). Ogar and Effiong (2022) described field trip method of teaching as a study trip taken outside the classroom to obtain direct experience of a natural environment. For effective teaching of financial accounting, the use of field trip, which makes use of the real work environment could achieve much and bring home the actual meaning of concepts, principles and practices. Adeyemi (2020) found that students who participated in a field trip to a financial institution showed significant improvements in their understanding of financial accounting concepts. Ogar and Effiong (2022) found that field trip had significant effect on students' achievement. Also, students taught environmental hazards using field trip retained significantly higher than those taught with expository method.

Research Method

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. The area of this study is Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The population of the study comprised 2236 senior secondary three (SS3) students in 2025/2026 academic session offering Financial Accounting in all the 86 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The sample size for this study comprised 329 senior secondary three (SS3) students offering financial accounting in the 86 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample table. Cluster sampling technique was used in segmenting the study area into three (3) clusters: Etinan/Nsit Ibom/Nsit Ubium; Itu/Ibiono and Uyo/Uruan/Nsit Atai/Ibesikpo Federal Constituencies. Finally, simple random technique was used in selecting the respondents from each of the clusters to serve as sample for the study. The researcher-made instrument entitled "Experiential Learning Strategies Questionnaire" (ELSQ) was used to collect data for the independent variable while a standardized test (Result from Senior Secondary two (2) Mock Examinations) was used to obtain data on the academic performance of financial accounting students. The instrument developed by the researcher was given to three research experts for face-validation. Cronbach's Alpha statistics was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.86. The data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression for the research questions as well as test the statistical significance of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One

What is the extent to which simulation learning strategy influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?



Table 1: Summary of the extent of influence of simulation learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District n=329

Source of Variation	R	R Square	Remarks
Simulation Learning Strategy	.82	.67	Great Extent
Academic Performance			

Source: Field data (2026)

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which simulation learning strategy influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Table 1 revealed the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.67. This implies that 67% is the overall contribution of all items on simulation learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. In line with the decision rule, this therefore means that the extent to which simulation learning strategy influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is great.

Research Question Two

What is the extent to which field trip learning strategy influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District?

Table 2: Summary of the extent of influence of field trip learning strategies on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District n=329

Source of Variation	R	R Square	Remarks
Field trip learning strategy	.73	.53	Great Extent
Academic Performance			

Source: Field data (2026)

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which field trip learning strategy influence the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. Table 2 revealed the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.53. This implies that 53% is the overall contribution of all items on field trip learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. In line with the decision rule, this therefore means that the extent to which field trip learning strategy influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is great.

Research Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of simulation learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.



Table: 3 Summary of Regression Analysis of simulation learning strategy and academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Regression	69.426	1	69.426	52.103	.000	Significant
Residual	146.367	328	1.241			
Total	215.793	329				

$p < .05$; Source: Field data (2025)

The computed F-value of (52.103) has the probability value of 0.00 which is less than the probability level of 0.05. This is interpreted to be statistically significant at the degree of freedom of 1 and 328. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of simulation learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is rejected. This means simulation learning strategy significantly influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Research Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of field trip learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Table: 4 Summary of Regression Analysis of field trip learning strategy and academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Regression	57.550	1	57.550	43.110	.000	Significant
Residual	158.243	328	1.021			
Total	215.793	329				

$p < .05$; Source: Field data (2025)

The computed F-value of (43.110) has the probability value of 0.00 which is less than the probability level of 0.05. This is interpreted to be statistically significant at the degree of freedom of 1 and 328. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of field trip learning strategy on the academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is rejected. This means field trip learning strategy significantly influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Discussion of Findings

Simulation Learning Strategy and Academic Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

The finding of this study shows that the extent to which simulation learning strategy influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is great. The corresponding null hypothesis tested revealed that simulation learning strategy significantly influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This implies that simulation learning strategy enhances students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills which leads to high academic performance. When students



are exposed to simulated financial accounting scenarios, they are encouraged to think critically and develop solutions to complex problems.

The finding of this study agrees with that of Lee *et al.* (2020) who found that students who used simulation-based learning showed significant improvements in their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The implication is that simulation learning strategy can provide students with opportunities to develop their technical skills in financial accounting. Also, it is possible for students to practice preparation of financial statements, analysis of financial data, and making of financial decisions by using simulation software. Students who used simulation-based learning in financial accounting courses showed significant improvements in their technical skills, including their ability to prepare financial statements and analyze financial data.

Field Trip Learning Strategy and Academic Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

The finding of this study shows that the extent to which field trip learning strategy influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District is great. The corresponding null hypothesis tested revealed that field trip learning strategy significantly influence academic performance of students in Financial Accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This implies that field trip is fundamental to financial accounting which derive much of its impetus from the interrelationships between the students and the business environment.

The finding of this study corroborates with that of Adeyemi (2020) who found that students who participated in a field trip to a financial institution showed significant improvements in their understanding of financial accounting concepts. Similarly, the finding of this study also aligns with that of Ogar and Effiong (2022) who found that field trip had significant effect on students' achievement. Also, students taught environmental hazards using field trip retained significantly higher than those taught with expository method.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of experiential learning strategies on students' academic performance in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. The findings clearly established that experiential learning is not merely a supportive teaching approach but a decisive factor in improving students' academic outcomes. Specifically, simulation and field trips were found to significantly enhance students' understanding and performance in financial accounting. The conclusion drawn from these findings is that students learn financial accounting concepts more effectively when they are actively involved in the learning process rather than positioned as passive recipients of information. Experiential strategies expose learners to real-life accounting situations, encourage critical thinking, and help bridge the persistent gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Recommendations

- i. Financial accounting teachers should regularly incorporate simulation activities such as mock business transactions, ledger preparation, and financial statement exercises into classroom instruction.
- ii. School principals should facilitate and approve organized educational field trips to banks, accounting firms, and business establishments within the district.



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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDIES TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

By

Chinyere Goodluck Ahaneku and Dr. Samuel D. Udo

ABSTRACT

This study examined emotional intelligence and stress management among Business Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study was guided by five specific objectives, five research questions and five research hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised 720 Business Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. A sample size of 257 Business Studies teachers obtained using Taro Yamane's formula and selected using a multistage sampling technique was used for the study. The researcher developed instrument used in collecting data for the study was titled "Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management of Business Studies Teachers Questionnaires (EISMBSTQ)". The instrument was structured using a four-point rating scale and duly validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, all in University of Uyo, Uyo. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.861 for the EISMBSTQ. Regression analysis statistic was used in answering the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness and empathy significantly influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State. Recommendations made among others included. teacher-training institutions should incorporate self-awareness development programmes into their instructional curriculum to help Business Studies teachers identify and understand their emotional triggers. This will enable teachers to recognize stress early and apply appropriate coping strategies. Also, education authorities should strengthen programmes that enhance social awareness through cooperative learning, peer interaction and communication training. Improved social awareness will help teachers build supportive relationships that reduce overall stress levels.

Introduction

Teachers are responsible for educating, guiding and shaping the behaviour of students, often under significant time and resource constraints. These responsibilities place them under considerable pressure, making teaching one of the most stressful profession globally. Factors such as heavy workloads, large class sizes, administrative demands, low motivation, and students' behavioural issues among others are often associated with the work of teaching. These factors contribute to the prolonged exposure to stress and can lead to burnout, fatigue, anxiety and decreased job satisfaction. It also affects classroom performance, student outcomes and the overall school environment. As teachers struggle to cope with these challenges, their welfare and professional effectiveness are put at risk. Without appropriate strategies to manage



stress, many teachers face emotional exhaustion and early career exit (Richard and Levesque, 2016).

Business Studies is an educational subject that focuses on teaching students the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to understand and participate effectively in the world of business. It covers areas such as commerce, accounting, marketing, entrepreneurship, office practice, and management. The subject aims to prepare learners for both paid employment and self-employment in a competitive economic environment (Philip, 2024). Business Studies also helps students develop critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills related to business activities. It promotes financial literacy and responsible economic behavior among students. Through Business Studies, learners gain practical skills that are useful in everyday life and the workplace. According to Charles and Asuquo (2017) Business Studies teacher is one who possesses either Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), B.Sc. (Ed), M.Sc. (Ed), Ph.D. in Business Education and is familiar with the current technological changes in the offices and the world of work as well as plans the learning activities with the view of current and global changes and practices in the business world. They play a key role in translating theoretical business knowledge into practical classroom experiences. These teachers guide students in understanding how businesses operate within local and global economies.

Stress is a physical and emotional response that occurs when an individual perceives a threat or challenge beyond their coping abilities (Harry, 2024). It can be triggered by various external or internal factors and often affects both mental and physical well-being. Stress management refers to the techniques and practices used to control an individual's level of stress. It is imperative for teachers to actively engage in stress-reducing strategies in order to maintain emotional balance and remain motivated in their roles (Caleb and Leo, 2019). Such strategies may include time management, exercise, mindfulness and professional support. Obi (2024) posited that many ways including time management, physical activity, relaxation techniques, healthy lifestyle choices, social support, professional counseling, hobbies and leisure activities, setting boundaries and problem solving can be used in managing stress, but stress can be best managed through effective individual's application of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage and influence emotions in oneself and others (Okpeyemi, 2020). It is a form of social and emotional awareness that enables individuals to navigate complex interpersonal situations effectively. The five outstanding segments of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Silas, 2023). Emotional intelligence is particularly valuable in emotionally demanding professions such as teaching, healthcare, and leadership roles. In social interactions, individuals with strong emotional intelligence can read non-verbal cues, respond appropriately to others' emotions, and foster a positive environment (Wilson, 2022). Emotional intelligence also promotes resilience by helping individuals cope with failure, criticism, or pressure in constructive ways. In organizational settings, emotional intelligence contributes to teamwork, employee satisfaction, and leadership effectiveness. Individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to experience lower levels of anxiety, depression, interpersonal conflict and stress. Robert (2023) opined that many variables of emotional intelligence such as optimism, adaptability, stress tolerance, impulse control, conflict resolution, mindfulness, assertiveness, interpersonal relationship management and emotional expression can be used in the reduction of stress. However, this study will be focusing on two outstanding ones which include self-awareness



and empathy. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in various situations. Udo and Ukpong (2016) defined self-awareness as the ability to understand one's feelings, attitudes and behaviour. For teachers, self-awareness means being conscious of how their feelings influence their teaching practices and interactions with students and colleagues. It helps them identify stress triggers and understand how they typically respond under pressure. With this insight, teachers can pause and reflect before reacting, allowing for more thoughtful and constructive responses (Benson, 2022). This ability to regulate emotional reactions contributes significantly to reducing stress and preventing burnout. Self-awareness also encourages teachers to evaluate their strengths and areas for growth, promoting continuous personal and professional development. It helps them maintain realistic expectations and avoid unnecessary self-criticism.

Empathy involves the capacity to emotionally relate to others by perceiving and resonating with their feelings and experiences. It goes beyond recognizing social cues to forming an emotional connection that allows one to appreciate another person's internal state. In the context of teaching, empathy allows educators to respond with compassion to students' academic difficulties as well as their emotional and social challenges. This understanding helps create a supportive classroom environment where students feel valued and heard. When teachers practice empathy, they can respond to students' needs with patience and compassion, which often reduces classroom conflicts and stress (Owen, 2018). Empathy also allows teachers to build strong relationships with colleagues, fostering collaboration and mutual support. By being empathetic, teachers can better manage their own emotional reactions, as they gain perspective on others' behaviours and motivations. This perspective helps lessen frustration and burnout by promoting a more compassionate mindset. Additionally, empathy encourages teachers to seek solutions that address the root causes of issues rather than reacting to surface behaviours.

Despite growing global recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence, limited research has been conducted to the best of the researcher's knowledge on how it predicts stress management among Business Studies teachers, particularly within the context of public secondary schools. Therefore, this study sought to explore the extent to which emotional intelligence predicts stress management among Business Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State to offer insights that can inform teacher training, emotional wellness programme, and educational policy, ultimately contributing to improved teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Effective stress management is essential for teachers because it helps them maintain their mental and physical well-being, reduces burnout, and improves job satisfaction. It also enhances teachers' concentration, classroom performance, and their ability to create a positive learning environment for students. However, in the teaching profession today, many educators experience high levels of stress arising from heavy workloads, challenging student behaviours and increasing societal expectations, which may negatively affect their overall well-being and professional effectiveness. For teachers, stress is not only harmful to their mental and physical health but may also influence the quality of teaching and students' academic outcomes. In particular, the inability to effectively manage stress may result in uncomfortable and challenging situations in the school environment. Stress among teachers may manifest in different ways such as increased absenteeism, reduced motivation, and various physical and psychological challenges. It may also lead to reduced teaching



effectiveness and increase the likelihood of teachers leaving the profession. Furthermore, stress can affect teachers' emotional regulation, strain teacher–student relationships, and make it difficult to maintain a healthy work–life balance. Other possible consequences include lowered classroom morale, reduced cognitive functioning, shortened career longevity, and limited opportunities for professional growth and development.

In an attempt to address this issue, several researchers have investigated different teacher-related and student-related factors as possible causes of stress with the aim of providing solutions to the problem. However, the continuous existence of stress among teachers suggests that previous efforts have not provided a sufficiently reliable solution to the problem. This persistent situation prompted the researcher to question whether the problem could be linked to teachers' inability to effectively apply emotional intelligence in managing stressful situations. Considering the importance of emotional intelligence in handling emotions and workplace pressures, and based on the issues highlighted in the background of the study, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study to determine the extent to which emotional intelligence influences stress management among Business Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the extent to which emotional intelligence influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- i) The extent to which self-awareness influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State.
- ii) The extent to which empathy influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State

Research Questions

- i. The following research questions were raised to guide the the study.
- ii. To what extent does self-awareness influence stress management among Business studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State
- iii. To what extent does empathy influence stress management among Business Studiteachers in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the researcher in the study.

- Ho1: Self-awareness does not significantly influence stress management among BusinessStudies teachers in Akwa Ibom State.
- Ho2: Empathy does not significantly influence stress management among Business Studiteachers in Akwa Ibom State.

Literature Review

Self-Awareness and Stress Management of Teachers

Self-awareness is the conscious knowledge of one's own character, emotions, motives, and desires (Raymond, 2021). Self - awareness is the key to sensitize a person strength and weakness(Udo and Ukpong, 2016). For teachers, self-awareness is a critical aspect of professional and personal development. Teaching is a highly demanding profession that requires emotional resilience and adaptive behavior. Teachers face numerous challenges daily, including classroom management, student behavior, curriculum



demands, and administrative pressure. These factors can lead to significant stress, impacting their performance and well-being. Developing self-awareness allows teachers to better understand their emotional responses. This understanding can help them navigate challenging situations calmly and thoughtfully. Tunde (2018) submitted that self-aware teachers are more likely to reflect on their actions and make intentional choices. This promotes a healthier classroom environment and a more balanced professional life. Therefore, self-awareness forms the foundation for effective stress management in teaching.

Teachers with strong emotional awareness can model calm and constructive behavior for their students. This contributes to a more positive and respectful classroom climate. Furthermore, emotional control helps teachers preserve their mental energy for decision-making and instruction. It also fosters a sense of internal stability, even amid external chaos (Daniel, 2019). Caleb and Leo (2019) posited that self-awareness improves teachers' interpersonal skills, which is vital in the school environment. Understanding one's own emotions helps in interpreting and responding to the emotions of others. This emotional intelligence fosters empathy, patience, and better communication with students, colleagues, and parents. Positive relationships reduce workplace tension and create a supportive environment. When teachers feel emotionally connected and supported, their stress levels naturally decrease. Self-aware teachers are more likely to handle conflicts professionally and constructively. Self-aware teachers are more likely to recognize when their work is negatively impacting their personal lives. They can identify signs of emotional exhaustion and take necessary actions to rest and recharge.

Patrick (2017) posited that self-aware teachers are more likely to practice empathy and compassion, both with others and themselves. By understanding their own struggles, they become more attuned to the difficulties faced by students and peers. This understanding fosters more compassionate interactions, which reduce tension and promote positive relationships. Classroom and staffroom conflicts are inevitable, but self-awareness helps prevent their escalation (Suleiman, 2017). Teachers who are aware of their emotional state can pause before reacting impulsively to a student or colleague. They can identify when they are acting from a place of stress or frustration rather than reason. Asogwa and Okwu (2021) stated that self-awareness enables teachers to express their thoughts and feelings clearly and respectfully.

Empathy and Stress Management of Teachers

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. In teaching, empathy means recognizing students' emotions and perspectives, and responding with care and understanding (Raymond, 2021). This ability goes beyond sympathy, as it involves actively placing oneself in another's shoes. For teachers, empathy is not just a moral value but a professional skill. It affects how they relate to students, colleagues, parents, and school leadership. When empathy is embedded in teaching practices, it enhances relationships and classroom dynamics. Importantly, empathy also plays a major role in managing teachers' own stress. By fostering understanding and emotional connection, it reduces conflict and enhances cooperation. A teacher who uses empathy can defuse tense situations and avoid emotional burnout. Thus, empathy serves as a cornerstone of effective stress management in the teaching profession (Caleb and Leo, 2019).

Empathy allows teachers to approach these challenges with emotional balance (Ifeanyi, 2018). It helps teachers remain patient and responsive rather than reactive. When educators understand the emotions behind behaviors, they respond more wisely. This ability reduces their own emotional overload. Empathy is thus a buffer against the



pressure inherent in teaching. In furtherance, student misbehavior is one of the primary causes of teacher stress. Empathetic teachers try to understand why a student is acting out rather than simply punishing the behavior. This often reveals underlying issues like anxiety, trauma, or unmet needs. By addressing the root cause, teachers can reduce recurring problems. Students who feel understood are more likely to trust and respect the teacher. This trust fosters cooperation and reduces classroom disruptions. Fewer behavioral issues mean less stress and more time for teaching (Chukwuemeka and Okoro, 2021). Empathy transforms discipline from a battle to a dialogue.

RESEARCH METHOD

A correlational research design was adopted in the study. This design was used because it describes the relationship that exists between two variables, the strength and direction of the relationship without manipulating them. Akwa Ibom State is the research area for this study. The state is one of the thirty-six states of the federation of Nigeria, created from the former Cross River state on the 23rd September 1987 the state capital is in Uyo with over 500,000 inhabitants. The population for the study consisted all the 720 Business Studies teachers in the 245 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State (Akwa Ibom State Secondary Education Board, 2025). A sample size of 257 Business Studies teachers was used for the study. Taro Yamane's formula was used in obtaining the sample size for the study. The researcher developed instrument was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was tagged "Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management of Business Studies Teachers Questionnaires (EISMBSTQ). The instrument was structured using a four-point scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), Very Low Extent (VLE). Face validation of the instrument was carried out by three experts. One expert from Educational Evaluation Unit of the Department of Psychological Foundations of education, Faculty of Education and Two experts in the Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, all in University of Uyo, Uyo. To establish the reliability of the instrument, an internal consistency approach was adopted. The Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management of Business Studies Teachers Questionnaires was administered to 30 Business studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State which is the study Area, who were not part of the main study to ensure that the instrument measures what it is designed to measure consistently. After which a suitable reliability coefficient 0.86 was obtained for the instrument using a Cronbach Alpha Statistics. A simple regression analysis statistic was used in answering the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of data analyses are presented and discussed in this section.

Research Question One

To what extent does self-awareness influence stress management among Business Studiteachers in Akwa Ibom State?



Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis of the extent to which Self-Awareness influence Stress Management among Business Studies Teachers in Akwa Ibom State (N=247).

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted
R ²			
Self-Awareness (X)	.880	.775	.774
Stress Management (Y)			

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 4.1 reveals that the coefficient of determination (R^2) of .775 is obtained. This is interpreted that 77.5 % is the overall contribution of all items on self-awareness to stress management of Business Studies teachers with a percentage of 77.5, it therefore means that, there is a high extent to which self-awareness influences stress management among Business Studiesteachers in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question Two

To what extent does empathy influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis of the extent to which Empathy influence StressManagement among Business Studies Teachers in Akwa Ibom State (N=247).

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted
R ²			
Empathy (X)	.718	.516	.514
Stress Management (Y)			

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 4.2 reveals that the coefficient of determination (R^2) of .516 is obtained. This is interpreted that 51.6 % is the overall contribution of all items on empathy to stress management ofBusiness Studies teachers with a percentage of 51.6, it therefore means that, there is a high extent to which empathy influences stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa IbomState. The results of Table 4.2 shows that the p-value of .000 is less than .05 at 1 and 245 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that self- awareness does not significantly influence stress management among Business Studies teachers inAkwa Ibom State is rejected. Hence, self-awareness significantly influences stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of Findings

4.1.1 Self Awareness and Stress management among Teachers

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that self-awareness significantly influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State. This is achievable because self-awareness enables teachers to recognize early signs of stress



before it escalates. It helps teachers understand their emotional triggers, allowing them to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. With self-awareness, they can identify how workload, student behavior, or administrative demands specifically affect their well-being. This understanding allows them to adopt personalized coping strategies that effectively reduce tension. Self-aware teachers are better able to reflect on their teaching practices and adjust them to minimize unnecessary stress. They can also maintain healthier boundaries between professional responsibilities and personal life. By knowing their strengths and limitations, they can seek support or delegate tasks appropriately. Self-awareness enhances emotional regulation, which is crucial for maintaining composure during challenging classroom situations. It further promotes resilience by helping teachers learn from stressful experiences instead of being overwhelmed by them. The findings of the study is in line with the submission made by Tunde (2018) that self-aware teachers are more likely to reflect on their actions and make intentional choices. This promotes a healthier classroom environment and a more balanced professional life. Therefore, self-awareness forms the foundation for effective stress management in teaching.

4.1.2 Empathy and Stress management among Teachers

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that empathy does not significantly influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State. This is possible because empathy enables teachers to understand and manage both their own emotions and those of other effectively. When teachers are empathetic, they are better able to interpret students' behaviors and challenges without becoming emotionally overwhelmed. This understanding reduces frustration and emotional tension in the classroom. Empathy also promotes positive relationships with students, colleagues, and school administrators, which creates a supportive work environment. A supportive environment helps reduce work-related stress and feelings of isolation. Empathetic teachers are more likely to use constructive communication rather than conflict-driven responses when challenges arise. This approach minimizes workplace conflicts that often increase stress levels. Empathy encourages patience and emotional regulation, which are essential for coping with heavy workloads and time pressure. It also helps teachers feel a sense of purpose and fulfillment in their profession. Feeling fulfilled increases resilience against occupational stress. Therefore, empathy serves as an important emotional resource that enhances effective stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State. The findings of the study is in agreement with the submission made by Caleb and Leo (2019) that a teacher who uses empathy can defuse tense situations and avoid emotional burnout. Thus, empathy serves as a cornerstone of effective stress management in the teaching profession

Conclusion

It is concluded that self-awareness significantly influence stress management among Business Studies teachers in Akwa Ibom State, as it help teachers understand their emotions, control stress responses, remain motivated, and interact positively within the school environment. The emotional intelligence component enable teachers to cope effectively with professional demands, reduce tension, and maintain psychological balance at work. However, empathy did not significantly influence stress management, indicating that the ability to understand others' emotions alone may not directly reduce personal stress levels among the teachers.



Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended that:

- 1) Management of teacher-training institutions should incorporate self-awareness development programmes into their instructional curriculum to help Business Studies teachers identify and understand their emotional triggers. This will enable teachers to recognize stress early and apply appropriate coping strategies
- 2) Training programs and professional development workshops for Business Studies teachers should emphasize the development of empathetic skills. School administrators should also encourage supportive and empathetic school cultures that promote understanding, collaboration and emotional support to help teachers manage stress effectively.

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MENTORING STRATEGIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AKWA IBOM NORTH-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the influence of mentoring strategies on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The research design for this study was a cross-sectional survey. The population for the study was 3,533 secondary school teachers in 99 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District comprising ten local government areas. A sample size of 346 secondary school teachers was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination Table while multistage sampling process of simple random sampling, systematic random sampling and proportionate random sampling techniques were used to sample the respondents. The data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Mentoring Strategies and Teachers' Professional Development Questionnaire" (MSTPDQ). The trial test approach of reliability was adopted and the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86 using Cronbach Alpha statistics. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of three research assistants who were duly briefed on the administration procedure. Mean statistics was used to answer the research questions and independent t-test was deployed to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Findings of the study showed that there is a high influence of goal setting and best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of mentoring strategies on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. It was concluded that goal setting and best practice modelling mentoring strategies highly influence the professional development of secondary school teachers irrespective of gender in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. It was recommended among others that Ministry of Education should organise training programmes that prioritise the demonstration and discussion of effective teaching strategies for mentoring teachers among Heads of Departments as this would help them empower teachers to adopt and adapt these best practices.

Key Word: Best practices, Development, Goal setting, Profession, Mentoring, Teachers

Introduction

The development of secondary schools (which is multifaceted and comprehensive) is a crucial factor in promoting economic and social progress within a region or country. According to United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2015), the development of secondary schools typically involves a comprehensive and coordinated approach that addresses these interconnected elements in the school system such as physical infrastructure, curriculum design, teaching and learning methodologies, teacher quality, professional



development, and the engagement and support of various stakeholders. A crucial component of secondary school development is the investment in the continuous learning and growth of teachers.

Teachers occupy a central position in any educational system; they influence to a great extent the quality of the educational output (Ukoh, Usoro and Ukoima, 2026). The role of teachers are crucial to effective and efficient learning and teaching process and it extends into lesson planning, effective delivery of lesson, proper monitoring and evaluation of students. Teacher's instructional ability is displayed into knowledge of the subject matter. This means that teachers need to be greatly empowered through professional development in order to carry out the enormous tasks of rendering quality services to the school and students. Professional development (PD) has become a critical component of the educational landscape, as it plays a pivotal role in enhancing the effectiveness and growth of teachers. In the ever-evolving field of education, the need for continuous learning and skill development among teachers has become increasingly evident. Professional development according to Defourny and Bardon (2019) fosters high-quality teaching and is the one of the important in-school factor influencing student achievement. Additionally, professional development can foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement within the teaching profession, as teachers share best practices, engage in peer learning, and explore innovative teaching methods (Dogan *et al.*, 2016). The concept of professional development encompasses a wide range of activities and initiatives including mentoring aimed at equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to improve their teaching practice and positively impact student learning outcomes.

Mentoring is a personal support a mentee (beginner) receives from a more knowledgeable person (mentor) with the goal of gaining more knowledge in a field. It is the process of encouraging a less experience person to achieve its professional goal. Mentoring according to Gontur *et al.* (2024) is defined as a relationship between a more experienced teacher and a less experienced teacher in which the more experienced teacher provides the less experienced teacher with support and guidance to accomplish a given task. Nolan and Tortorici (2019) noted that mentoring process enables experienced teachers to share their knowledge, skills, and best practices with less experienced colleagues, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment for professional growth. In the context of secondary education, mentoring programmes can help novice teachers navigate the complexities of the teaching profession, develop their pedagogical skills, and build resilience in the face of challenges (Gontur *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, mentoring can also benefit experienced teachers by providing them with opportunities for reflection, continuous learning, and leadership development. Therefore, there is need for context-specific approaches to mentoring such as goal setting and best practice modeling strategy that consider the unique cultural, social, and institutional factors that shape the teaching profession.

Goal setting according to Latham and Locke (2019) is the process of establishing specific and effective targets for task performance. Goal setting is a fundamental component of mentoring, as it provides a clear and focused direction for the mentee's professional growth. Goal setting defines outcomes or results by outlining steps required to reach the outcome and establish a timeframe for completion. In essence, goal setting gives direction to actualizing an objective by tracking the progress, identifying obstacles and making adjustment where necessary. Kandie and Kipsang (2023) found that a positive and significant effect between work goal setting and employee performance thus concluded that the absence of goal ambiguity and the presence of goal clarity will lead to multiple positive outcomes for an organization that will improve employee performance and thus, overall organizational performance. In addition, Cheruiyot *et al.* (2023) noted that goal setting practices has a significant effect on service delivery among public



secondary school teachers. Goal setting is an integral part of best practice modelling by enhancing clarity, motivation and adaptability in achieving goals.

The concept of best practice modelling in mentoring involves the mentor sharing their expertise, knowledge, and successful strategies with the mentee, providing a tangible example to emulate. Best practice is the action that produces the most desirable outcomes based on evidence and real life evidence. This is assumed that relationship plays a key role in any successful mentoring experience as evidence by the focus of the best practice themes as it pertains to the way it initiates, build, solidify, advocate or integrate the relationship (Jan *et al.* as cited in Reeves, 2022). Best practice in mentoring ensures development of strong beneficial relationship, incorporate constructive feedback to empower mentees and foster meaningful and productive mentoring relationship. Suchánková and Hrbáčková (2017) reported that the higher the level of mastery of professional coaching competencies that the teachers attain in their own opinion, the better mentors feel they are, the more they perceive mentoring as beneficial, and the more they use it in practice. Gontur *et al.* (2024) highlighted that mentoring significantly improves teachers understanding of subject content, classroom management strategies, and their engagement in professional growth activities. Providing constructive feedback is one of the best practices and is a crucial component of effective mentoring.

It is obvious that mentoring is a necessity for professional teachers' development in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District as providing comprehensive support, fostering skill-building opportunities, implementing structured performance monitoring, and cultivating strong mentoring relationships can empower educators to enhance their teaching practices, adapt to evolving educational demands, and ultimately contribute to the overall success of their mentee teachers and the school community. This study is geared towards empirically ascertaining the influence of mentoring strategies on the professional development of teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of mentoring in the development of secondary school teachers cannot be overemphasized. Effective mentoring programme can help new teachers navigate the challenges of the teaching profession, provide guidance and support in lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional strategies, and foster the development of essential teaching skills and competencies. Moreover, mentoring could contribute to teacher job satisfaction, retention, and overall professional growth, which are crucial factors in ensuring the quality and stability of the teaching workforce. Without adequate mentoring support, teachers may struggle to navigate the complexities of the teaching profession, develop essential pedagogical skills, and effectively address the diverse needs of their students.

Though mentoring is known to be important for improving secondary school teachers professional growth, many secondary schools seems to have difficulty putting mentoring programme in place. This difficulty include lack of professionalism and training among educators, lack of trust and communication between mentors and mentees, lack of instructional resources and inadequate organizational planning. These difficulty in mentoring programme seem to frequently fall short of their potential to improve secondary school teachers overall performance and teaching quality improvement. It therefore behoves of the researcher to determine if mentoring could ameliorate some of these challenges. This has prompted the curiosity to research on mentoring strategies and professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.



Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of mentoring strategies on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of:

- i. goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.
- ii. best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- i. What is the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?
- ii. Of what influence is best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design of the Study

The research design for this study was a cross-sectional survey design. According to Creswell (2018), the cross-sectional survey design is commonly used in educational research to gather information on the attitudes, beliefs, and practices of a specific population. The survey-based approach, with a representative sample of teachers, enables the researcher to obtain findings on influence of mentoring strategies on the development of secondary school teachers that can be generalized to the broader population of teachers in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria. The Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District is made up of ten local government areas, namely Abak, Etim Ekpo, Essien Udium, Ini, Ika, Ikono, Ikot Ekpene, Obot Akara, Oruk-Anam and Ukanafun. The area was chosen for this study due to the limited research on mentoring strategies for secondary school teachers in the study area. By focusing on this area, the study can provide insights that may be beneficial to a broader understanding and application of effective mentoring strategies in secondary school settings.

Population of the Study

The population was 3,533 secondary school teachers (comprising 1696 male teachers and 1837 female teachers) in 99 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District comprising ten local government areas (Ini, Ikono, Abak, Etim Ekpo, Essien Udium, Obot Akara, Ika, Ukanafun, Oruk Anam and Ikot Ekpene) (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education, 2024).



Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 346 secondary school teachers was used. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination Table. The sample was selected for the study using a multistage sampling process. First, a simple random sampling technique was used to select four out of the ten local government areas in the senatorial district. Then, within each of the selected local government areas, a systematic random sampling technique was used to select five schools from each of the local government areas. Finally, a proportionate random sampling technique was used to select teachers from each of the sampled secondary schools, resulting in a total sample size of 346 secondary school teachers which constituted of 166 male teachers and 180 female teachers.

Instrumentation

The data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire titled 'Mentoring Strategy and Teachers' Professional Development Questionnaire (MESTPODQ). The instrument was divided into three sections A, B and C. Section A elicited information on the respondents' demographic characteristics, Section B sought information on mentoring strategies while Section C obtained information on teacher's professional development. This was based on the scale of Very High Influence (VHI), High Influence (HI), Low Influence (LI) and Very Low Influence (VLI). The instrument was responded to by secondary school teachers in the study area.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was submitted to three experts for face validation, two from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, and one from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, Faculty of Education, all in the University of Uyo. The experts scrutinized the items on the instrument by checking for the relevance, the wordings to avoid ambiguity and to ensure it is useable as well as measures what it is designed to measure.

Reliability of the Instrument

The validated instrument was administered on 30 teachers in the study area who were not part of the study for internal consistency. The trial test approach of reliability was adopted. Data collected were analysed using Cronbach Alpha statistics to establish the reliability coefficient of 0.86 which implies that the instrument had a high internal consistency and was useable for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The data for this study were collected through the use of questionnaire which was administered by the researcher with the help of three research assistants who were duly briefed by the researcher on the administration procedure. The researcher visited the selected secondary schools and distributed the questionnaires to the sampled teachers. The respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire and the researcher was available to provide any necessary clarification or assistance. To ensure a high response rate, the researcher established rapport with the school administrators and teachers, emphasize the importance of the study, and provide assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, the 346 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the selected teachers and retrieved on the spot. This guaranteed 100% retrieval rate.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean statistics was used to answer the research questions and independent t-test was deployed to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The mean value was used to answer the research questions and to determine the extent to which the independent variable influences the dependent variable as follows:



Mean value	Interpretation
3.50 to 4.00	Very High Influence
2.50 to 3.49	High Influence
1.50 to 2.49	Low Influence
0.00 to 1.49	Very Low Influence

The decision for accepting a null hypothesis was that if $p > .05$, there was no significant influence, which means that the hypothesis were retained, but if $p < .05$ there was significant influence, which implies that the hypothesis was rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?

Table 1: Mean Statistics showing influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District
n = 346

S/N	Items on Goal Setting	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Mentor work collaboratively with newly recruited teachers to set clear professional development objectives	2.43	.83	Low Influence
2	Drawing an outline for mentoring involves regular discussions between mentors and newly recruited teachers	3.00	.82	High Influence
3	Newly recruited teachers are actively involved in the process of setting their own professional development targets	2.77	.78	High Influence
4	Mentor teachers provide guidance to newly recruited teachers in developing action plans to achieve their goals	2.78	.42	High Influence
5	The professional targets set for newly recruited teachers are aligned with the school's overall objectives	2.99	.82	High Influence
6	Setting targets helps newly recruited teachers identify their strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement	2.89	.88	High Influence
Grand Mean		2.81	.76	High Influence

The data in Table 1 indicate that setting professional objectives has the mean score of 2.43, drawing an outline for mentoring 3.00, active involvement of mentee in setting their professional development targets 2.77, guidance for development of action plans 2.78, aligning targets with school objectives 2.99, identifying strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement 2.89. this implies that the mean score of five of the items are between 2.50 and 3.49 indicating high influence while mean score of one of the items falls within the range of 1.50 and 2.49 indicating low influence. The grand mean of 2.81 implies that there is a high influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.



Research Question 2

Of what influence is best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?

Table 2: Mean Statistics showing influence of best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District
n = 346

S/N	Items on Best Practice Modelling	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Mentor teachers showcase effective instructional strategies for newly recruited teachers	2.78	.79	High Influence
2	Newly recruited teachers have opportunities to observe their mentors' lessons and learn from their best practices	3.11	.74	High Influence
3	Mentors provide constructive feedback to newly recruited teachers after observing their teaching practices	2.88	1.29	High Influence
4	Newly recruited teachers are encouraged to reflect on best practices modeled by their mentors	2.44	.96	Low Influence
5	Newly recruited teachers are given opportunities to co-teach with their mentors and receive immediate feedback	2.11	1.00	Low Influence
6	The adoption of best practices by mentors helps newly recruited teachers develop a deeper understanding of effective instructional techniques.	2.55	1.34	High Influence
Grand Mean		2.65	1.02	High Influence

Table 2 indicates that showcasing effective instructional strategies has the mean score of 2.78, opportunities to observe their mentors lesson 3.11, providing constructive feedback 2.88, encouragement to reflect on best practices 2.44, opportunities to co-teach with their mentors 2.11, developing a deeper understanding of effective instructional technique 2.55. It implies that the mean score of four of the items are between 2.50 and 3.49 indicating high influence while mean score of two of the items falls within the range of 1.50 and 2.49 indicating low influence. The grand mean of 2.65 implies that there is a high influence of best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District?

Table 3: Summary of Independent t-test analysis showing the difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers

Categories	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Male Teachers	166	2.81	0.37	344	0.09	.928	Not Significant
Female Teachers	180	2.81	0.36				

Not Significant at $p < 0.05$

Source: (Field Survey 2025)



The independent t-test result in the above Table 3 shows that t-calculated is 0.09 and the p-value is 0.928 at 344 degree of freedom. Since the probability value of 0.928 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was retained. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Table 4: Summary of Independent t-test analysis showing the difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of best practices on the professional development of secondary school teachers

Categories	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Male Teachers	166	2.64	0.53	344	0.11	.909	Not Significant
Female Teachers	180	2.65	0.54				

Not Significant at $p < 0.05$

Source: (Field Survey 2025)

The independent t-test result in the above Table 4 shows that t-calculated is 0.11 and the p-value is 0.909 at 344 degree of freedom. Since the probability value of 0.909 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was retained. Hence, there is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of best practices on the professional development of secondary school teachers.

Discussion of Findings

Influence of Goal Setting on the Professional Development of Secondary School Teachers

The findings of this study revealed a high influence of goal setting as a mentoring strategy on the professional development of secondary school teachers in the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. This finding highlights the substantial impact that intentional and structured goal-setting can have on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and overall professional growth of teachers within study area. This points to the fact that goal settings for mentoring programme fosters a sense of purpose, motivation and direction among mentee teachers as it helps them identify their strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement which are essential for continuous growth and improvement. The finding is in agreement with the finding of Kandie and Kipsang (2023) who found that a positive and significant effect between work goal setting and employee performance thus concluded that the absence of goal ambiguity and the presence of goal clarity will lead to multiple positive outcomes for an organization that will improve employee performance and thus, overall organizational performance.

The findings also showed that there was no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of goal setting on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. This implies that irrespective of the gender of mentor and mentee teachers, goal setting is vital and it triggers teachers' professional growth and development. The finding aligned with the findings of Cheruiyot *et al.* (2023) who concluded that goal setting practices has a significant effect on service delivery among public secondary school teachers. Thus, goal setting strategy in mentoring fundamentally provides direction for professional development of secondary school teachers.



Influence of best practice modelling on the Professional Development of Secondary School Teachers

The findings of this study revealed that there is a high influence of best practice modelling as a mentoring strategy on the professional development of secondary school teachers in the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The findings may be triggered by the fact that the observational learning and replication of effective teaching practices can have on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and overall professional growth of recruit educators. Through best practice modeling mentee teachers are provided with access to innovative lesson planning, effective instructional strategies, opportunity to practice through co-teaching and evaluation of instructional process. This increases the knowledge and efficiency of mentee teachers in the discharge of professional service delivery. The finding corroborates with the finding of Suchánková and Hrbáčková (2017) who reported that the higher the level of mastery of professional coaching competencies that the teachers attain in their own opinion, the better mentors feel they are, the more they perceive mentoring as beneficial, and the more they use it in practice.

Findings also showed that there was no significant difference in the mean response of male and female secondary school teachers on the influence of best practice modelling on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. This implies that irrespective of the gender of mentor and mentee teachers, best practice modelling is necessary for professional growth and development of teachers. The finding aligned with the findings of Gontur *et al.* (2024) who established that mentoring significantly improves teachers understanding of subject content, classroom management strategies, and their engagement in professional growth activities. Hence, incorporating best practices into the mentoring programme would in no small measure foster professional development of mentee teachers.

Conclusion

Mentoring strategies particularly goal setting and best practice modelling highly influence the professional development of secondary school teachers irrespective of gender in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. Therefore, leveraging the power of mentoring strategies can contribute to the professional development of secondary school teachers, enhance the quality of instruction, and drive the overall improvement of the education system in the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Educational authorities and school administrators in the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District should prioritize the implementation of structured goal-setting frameworks within their mentoring programmes that foster a sense of purpose, motivation, and direction for the teachers' professional growth.
- ii. Ministry of Education should organize training programme that prioritizes the demonstration and discussion of effective teaching strategies for mentor teachers like Head of Department as this would help them empower teachers to adopt and adapt these best practices



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WORK PLACE DESIGN AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN STATE POLYTECHNICS, IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined workplace designs and job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and three research hypotheses. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted 1762 academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. A sample size of 326 academic staff in State polytechnics was obtained using Taro Yamane's formula. The sample was selected for the study using proportionate and simple random sampling technique. The researcher-developed instrument used in collecting data for the study was titled "Workplace Designs and Job Performance Questionnaire (WDJPQ)". The instrument was structured using a four-point scale and duly validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, all in University of Uyo, Uyo. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.86 for the WDJPQ. Regression analysis statistics was used in answering the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicate that office layout, furniture and lighting significantly influence job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria. Recommendations made, among others, include; Polytechnic management should ensure that office layouts are well planned to promote effective movement, accessibility and interaction among academic staff. Adequate office space should also be provided to enable staff perform their teaching, research and administrative responsibilities efficiently. Also, Polytechnic authorities should provide comfortable and ergonomic office furniture that supports the health and productivity of academic staff. The furniture provided should be durable, functional and suitable for the academic tasks carried out by staff members.

Introduction

Education is an instrument for conserving, transmitting and renewing culture through the process of teaching and learning. It is also a holistic process of transferring norms and values to individuals across the community, town and nation. It is one of the basic social responsibilities provided by a responsible government to its citizens. The State polytechnics is a part of the educational sector of the country. A good quality polytechnic education system is one that provides all students with capabilities required to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual well-being. The objectives of polytechnics education include the development of intellectual capacity to understand and appreciate the environment and the acquisition of appropriate physical and intellectual skills necessary for the development of both the individual and his society (Jameson, 2023). State polytechnics are centers for imparting knowledge and skills for self-reliance. Whatever skills acquired must be translated into practicality for it to benefit the individual and the society at large. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) defines tertiary



education as “the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, state polytechnics, monotechnics including those institutions offering correspondence courses”.

The Polytechnic academic staff uses work instructions, methods, and instruments to create the product- learning, just like a factory worker. If the product produced (learning) has problems or defects (i.e. learning is not occurring as expected) then the teacher must change his work instructions, methods, or instruments in order to decrease the defect rate and increase the quality of the product. Nwafokwa and Odey (2018) stated that preparing the individual for useful living in society means that after acquiring polytechnic education, the individual must be self-reliant, contribute meaningfully to the development of the society, be morally and culturally sound, be of good character and participate actively in decision-making in matters affecting the entire society. However, these responsibilities of polytechnic education, rest squarely on the polytechnic academic staff as the manager of the entire instructional processes. One of the agitations of the various unions in the polytechnic systems has been the revitalization of state polytechnics which includes but not limited to creating a better workplace that can boost job performance of staff and academic performance of students.

Workplace design is defined by Wilson (2023) as the way a workplace is organized and equipped. The aim is to create the space to allow optimal productivity by workers as well as maximum safety and job performance for workers. The most commonly used terms to describe optimal workplace design include flexibility, connectivity and ergonomics. According to Alvin (2021), workplace design aims to use evidence-based design principles to improve clinical outcomes, economic performance and productivity, and customer and staff performance. Workplace design has more than merely decorative purposes. In general, it aims to use evidence-based design principles to improve clinical outcomes, economic performance and productivity, and client and staff performance.

Workplace design deals with the shape, the dimensions and the layout (i.e. the placement and orientation) of the different material elements that surround one or more working persons (Marmaras and Nathanael, 2021). Examples of such elements are the seat, the working surfaces, the desk, the equipment, the tools, the controls and displays used during the work, but also the passages, the windows, as well as the heating/cooling equipment. The ergonomic of workplace design aims at improving work performance (both in quantity and quality), through minimizing the physical strain and workload of the working person, facilitating task execution, that is, ensuring effortless information exchange with the environment, minimizing physical constraints, ensuring occupational health and safety and achieving ease of use of the various workplace elements.

Based on the above, this study adopts the concept stated by Crun (2022) arrangement in the workplace has the objective of overcoming employee alienation and job dis-performance that emanates from mechanical and repetitive tasks in the workplace. It is also used by organizations to boost productivity by offering employees non- monetary rewards such as performance from a greater sense of personal achievement.

Work systems are inherently variable because workers differ in age, body size, strength, and daily energy levels, all of which influence how tasks are performed. A worker may be young or elderly, tall or short, refreshed or fatigued, and each condition affects comfort and efficiency. Task requirements are equally dynamic, especially in roles such as secretarial work where computer use, data entry, and customer service alternate throughout the day. Work stations must also be strategically positioned to ensure visibility of entrances and supervisory offices. Environmental conditions such as temperature, airflow, lighting, and noise levels may change during working hours. Financial limitations and aesthetic expectations further complicate



workplace design decisions. Because of this complexity, some argue that workplace design is more art than discipline. However, informed understanding of users, tasks, and environmental factors improves design outcomes. Workplaces should enable most employees to perform tasks safely and effectively. Thomas (2021) emphasizes that ergo-friendly design fulfills functional requirements while promoting safety, comfort, and teamwork.

Effective ergonomic design requires attention to anthropometric dimensions, reach distances, muscle strength, and visual capacity. Designing workstations to match employee capabilities reduces physical strain and injury risks. The Occupational Safety and Health Academy (OSHA) (2017) states that aligning work practices and work flows with worker abilities reduces sprains, strains, and cumulative trauma disorders. (OSHA) (2017) identifies office layout, furniture, lighting, technology integration, acoustics, and aesthetics as key elements that enhance academic staff performance. Office layout according to Asuquo and Ukoima (2016) involves arranging furniture, equipment, and personnel to optimize productivity and appearance. Crun (2022) notes that office layout reflects corporate identity and contributes to organizational pride. A well-designed layout fosters comfort while maintaining efficiency. Usen (2021) describes office layout as the blueprint of the office floor, incorporating décor, equipment, and spatial organization. Proper layouts ensure that procedures and personnel function effectively within available space. Thus, office layout is central to operational smoothness and productivity.

Poor office layouts often result in unnecessary movement and wasted time as employees travel long distances between desks. Effective office spaces are outcomes of careful scientific planning rather than coincidence. Designers must understand workflow patterns, employee needs, and the best methods for task completion. Anticipating future space requirements is equally important for sustainable planning. Efficient space management ensures optimal use of limited organizational resources. Office layout therefore becomes indispensable in achieving smooth workflow and judicious space utilization. Beyond layout, office furniture significantly influences workplace performance. Uyi (2019) highlights that ergonomic furniture reduces fatigue and enhances posture, thereby improving productivity. Ergonomic chairs, adjustable desks, and supportive accessories promote physical comfort. When furniture supports natural body alignment, employees can focus better and sustain performance.

Ergonomic office furniture is adjustable, adaptable, and scientifically designed to enhance well-being. Height-adjustable desks allow workers to alternate between sitting and standing, improving circulation and preventing stiffness. Lumbar-support chairs maintain spinal alignment during extended work hours. Monitor stands positioned at eye level prevent neck pain and reduce eye strain. Wrist-friendly keyboards and anti-fatigue mats further support comfort and reduce physical stress. Proper furniture selection reduces distractions caused by discomfort and enhances concentration. Acoustic solutions integrated into furniture design also minimize noise disruptions. Thoughtful space planning can create collaborative zones alongside quiet work areas. When physical comfort is ensured, mental alertness and productivity increase. Therefore, investment in ergonomic furniture contributes directly to sustained job performance.

Lighting is another crucial component influencing biological rhythms and workplace productivity. Traditional lighting systems, such as low-pressure mercury lamps, often caused glare, over-illumination, and energy inefficiency. In contrast, modern LED systems provide energy efficiency and adjustable photometric properties. These systems allow regulation of brightness and color temperature to suit various tasks (Kalani and Kalani, 2022; Adjustable lighting supports circadian rhythms and enhances well-being. Despite their advantages, LED technologies also have limitations like any other innovation. In Nigeria, office technology



adoption has transformed business operations and competitiveness. Boladele, (2019) observes that although awareness of technology benefits is increasing, limited infrastructure and training remain challenges. Boladele (2019) emphasizes that office workers depend on both technological and human organizational support. Technological advancements such as word processors and email have reshaped secretarial roles (Nonye, 2018), while modern systems enhance collaboration and decision-making (Protected Trust, 2020). It is based on the benefits of work place designs parameters namely: office layout, furniture and lighting that this study was carried out to determine the extent to which workplace designs influence job performance of academic staff in State polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Job performance among academics in the polytechnic sector is imperative for achieving optimal performance, fostering innovation and maintaining a conducive teaching and learning environment. However, workplace design ranging from office furniture, lighting, technology integration, office acoustics and the aesthetics can significantly influence employees productivity, focus and interpersonal dynamics. Despite its importance, the specific relationship between workplace designs and job performance among academic staff in the state polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria, remains underexplored. Designing a workplace meeting ergonomics principles is a challenge, as one should consider an important number of interacting and variable elements, and try to meet an important number of requirements, some of which may be contradictory. In fact, there is interdependence between the workplace components, the working person, the task requirements, the environment and the habitual body movements and postures the working person will adopt.

Many academics face greater challenges such as distractions, lack of privacy and limited opportunities for collaboration due to the poor workplace designs. These issues can hinder their effectiveness in meeting professional demands such as research, teaching preparation and administrative duties. While research had explored the impact of general work environments on employees performance, a knowledge gap exists regarding how different workplace designs uniquely affect job performance in the academic context, particularly within state polytechnics. Lastly, due to the general public outcry on the quality of graduate and research output from the Nigeria citadels of learning, attention as shifted to the conditions under which academic staff work. Since staff performance directly impact teaching quality, research productivity and graduate competence, it has become imperative to investigate how work place design influences job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in south-south Nigeria.

It is against this shortcoming that this study was conducted to investigate the influence of workplace designs on the job performance of academics in South-South state polytechnics. The findings aims to provide evidence based recommendations for designing workplace that enhance maximum job performance among academics.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent of influence of workplace designs on the job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study aimed to examine the extent to which:

- i. Office layout influences job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.
- ii. Office furniture influences job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.
- iii. Office lighting influences job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.



Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the research processes:

- i. To what extent does office layout influence job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the extent to which office furniture influence job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the extent to which office lighting influence job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho1: The extent to which office layout influence job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant.
- Ho2: The extent to which office furniture influence job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant.
- Ho3: The extent to which office lighting influence job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant

Research Method

A correlational research design was adopted in the study. This design was considered appropriate for the study because it examined the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. Its primary function is to determine whether a relationship exists, the direction of the relationship (positive or negative), and the strength of that relationship. This type of research design is also valuable for identifying patterns and trends in data, allowing researchers to make predictions based on observed correlations. This study investigated into the extent to which workplace designs sub-variables of office layout, furniture, lighting, technology integration, acoustics and aesthetics influence job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria.

The area covered in this study is the South-South region of Nigeria, which is one of the six geopolitical zones in the country. This region represents both a geographic and political zone located along Nigeria's eastern coastline. It comprises six states: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers. The South-South stretches along the Atlantic seaboard, extending from the Bight of Benin in the West to the Bight of Bonny in the East. Geographically, it lies between latitudes 5°25'N and 5°32'N North of the Equator, and Longitude 7°29'E of the Greenwich Meridian. The region encompasses much of the Niger Delta, a vital area for Nigeria's environmental and economic development. Ecologically, the zone features diverse landscapes: the Central African mangroves dominate the coastal areas in the far South, while inland regions include the Cross Sanaga-Bioko coastal forests, Cross-Niger transition forests, Niger Delta swamp forests and Nigerian lowland forests, extending from East to West.

Although the South-South region accounts for only about 5% of Nigeria's total land area, it plays a crucial role in the nation's economy due to its vast reserves of oil and natural gas. The region hosts two of Nigeria's major oil refineries, one located in Eleme, a Local Government Area in Rivers State, and the other in Warri, Delta State. The zone has an estimated population of 26 million people, representing approximately 12% of the country's total population. The most populous cities in the region are Port Harcourt and Benin City, ranking as the fourth and fifth most populous cities in Nigeria, respectively. Port Harcourt, along with its surrounding suburbs collectively known as Greater Port Harcourt, forms the largest metropolitan area in the South-South, with a population of about three million. Other major urban centers in the region, in



descending order of population, include Warri, Calabar, Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Ugep, Sapele, Buguma, Uromi, Ughelli, Ikom and Asaba.

The South-South region is linguistically diverse, with major languages spoken including Annang, Boki, Edo, Efik, Ekoi, English, Esan, Etsako, Ibibio, Igbo, Ika, Isoko, Itsekiri, Izon, Kalabari, Obolo, Ogba, Ogoni, Obolo, Oro, Urhobo, Ukwuani, Yala, Yakö, among others. The reason why the researcher is interested in this location is that the location has state polytechnic academic staff who oftentimes have huge complains with their job due to poor working conditions and these academic staff are of great interest to the researcher. Furthermore, the close proximity of the researcher to the location is also a great interest to the researcher due to the high cost of transportation

The population of the study comprised all the 1762 academic staff of State Polytechnics in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States (Personnel records, State polytechnics under study year (2025)). Out of this number 1011 were from River state Polytechnic while 751 were from Akwa Ibom state Polytechnic

A sample size of 326 academic staff of the state polytechnics, from two States Akwa Ibom and Rivers State were used for the study. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine the sample size for the study Proportionate and simple random sampling techniques were used to select sample for this study. Therefore 18.5 percent of the number of academic staff in each polytechnic was determined resulting in 187 and 139 academic staff from Rivers and Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic respectively. Simple random method via toss of coin was use to select the respective number of academic staff.

A researcher designed questionnaire titled "Workplace Designs and Job Performance Questionnaire (WDJPQ)" was used to gather data from respondents. The WDJPQ (Shown in Appendix I) was divided into three sections: Sections A, B and C. Section A deals with the bio-data of the respondents. The section B contained items on the independent sub-variables of the study including office layout, office furniture, office lighting, office technology integration, office acoustic and office aesthetics. Section C part of the instrument contained items on job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics. The instrument was constructed on a four-point rating scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Small Extent (SE), and a Very Small Extent (VSE). The instrument contained a total of 30 questionnaire items. (See Appendix II). The response options have a corresponding value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face-validated by three research experts. Two experts in the Department of Business Education and one expert from Department of Psychological Foundations of Education all in Faculty of Education and Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Sciences, University of Uyo, Uyo. The experts were given initial draft of instrument for the determination of it comprehensiveness, relevance of contents, appropriateness of directives, clarity of statement, ambiguity, possible errors as well as omissions. All the advice, comments, suggestions and criticisms were incorporated in the final version of the instrument. The instrument was subjected to a trail test in which, copies of the instrument were administered on 30 academic staff of state polytechnics from the population of study who were not included in the main study. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.86 (Shown in Appendix II) for the Workplace Designs and Job performance Questionnaire (WDJPQ). According to Nonye, (2018), a reliability coefficient above 0.70 is deemed reliable, with higher values indicating greater reliability.

Data for this study was collected from academic staff of state polytechnics who are respondents through the administration of the questionnaire. The researcher was assisted by two research assistants who were duly briefed on the administration of the questionnaire. While the researcher obtained data from respondents in Akwa Ibom state polytechnic, the research



assistants also collected data from two state polytechnics in Rivers State, making it a total of three state polytechnics that was used for the study. The instrument recorded a 98% return rate. This was observed in the 319 questionnaire properly filled and returned for analysis out of the 326 questionnaire that were administered to the respondents, showing that seven questionnaire were not properly filled and returned for analysis (just 2% attrition rate). Simple regression analysis was used to analyze the data for both research questions and in testing the null hypotheses

Results

Research Question One

To what extent does office layout influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office Layout influences Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South South Nigeria. (N=319).

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Remarks
Office Layout (X)				Very great extent
	.842	.709	.708	
Job Performance of Staff (Y)				

Source: Field Work (2026)

Data in Table1 shows the extent to which office layout influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics. The coefficient of correlation (R) of .842 shows that office layout influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics. Also, the coefficient of determination (R²) value of .709 indicates that office layout influences up to 70.9 percent variation in job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. This result shows that office layout influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria to a Very great extent.

Research Question Two

To what extent does office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria?

Table2: Summary of Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office Furniture influences Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. (N=319).

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Remark
Office Furniture (X)				Very great extent
	.713	.508	.507	
Job Performance of Staff (Y)				

Source: Field Work (2026)



Data in Table 2 shows the extent to which office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics. The coefficient of correlation (R) of .713 shows that office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics to a small extent. Also, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value of .508 indicates that office furniture influences up to 50.8 percent variation in job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. This result shows that office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria to a Very great extent.

Research Question Three

To what extent does office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria?

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office Lighting influences Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. (N=319).

Variables	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Remarks
Office Lighting (X)				Very Great extent
Job Performance of Staff (Y)	.767	.588	.587	

Source: Field Work (2026)

Data in Table 3 shows the extent to which office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics. The coefficient of correlation (R) of .767 shows that office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics to a high extent. Also, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value of .588 indicates that office lighting influences up to 58.8 percent variation in job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. This result shows that office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria to a Very great extent.

Research Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of office layout on job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office Layout influence Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. (N=319)

Models	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Decision
Regression	1472.315	1	1472.315	336.914	.001	Significant
Residual	1385.523	317	4.370			
Total	2857.838	318				

S*= Significant at .05 alpha level. Source: Field Work (2026)



The results in Table 4 shows that the p-value of .001 is less than .05 at 1 and 317 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of office layout on job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is rejected. Hence, the study reveals there is a significant influence of office layout on job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis Two

The extent to which office furniture influence job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant

Table 5: Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office furniture influences Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. (N=319)

Model	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Decision
Regression	2096.528	1	2096.528	610.699	.000	Significant
Residual	1242.617	317	3.433			
Total	3339.145	318				

S*= Significant at .05 alpha level. Source: Field Work (2026)

The results in Table 5 shows that the p-value of .000 is less than .05 at 1 and 317 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of office furniture on job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is rejected. Hence, the study reveals that there is significant influence of office furniture on job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is significant.

Research Hypothesis Three

There is no significant influence of office lighting on job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is not significant

Table 6: Regression Analysis of the extent to which Office Lighting influence Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria (N=319)

Model	Sum of Square	DF	Mean square	F	Sig	Decision
Regression	2315.518	1	2315.518	483.104	.000	Significant
Residual	1519.512	317	4.793			
Total	3835.300	318				

S*= Significant at .05 alpha level. Source: Field Work (2026)

The results in Table 6 shows that the p-value of .000 is less than .05 at 1 and 317 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of office lighting on job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is rejected. Hence, the study reveals that there is significant influence of office lighting on job performance of academic staff of State polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is significant.

Findings

The findings of the study are as following:

- There is a very great extent to which Office layout influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.



- ii) There is a very great extent to which Office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.
- iii) There is a very great extent to which Office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.
- iv) There is a significant influence of office layout on the job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in south-south, Nigeria.
- v) There is a significant influence of office furniture on the job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in south-south, Nigeria.
- vi) There is a significant influence of office lighting on the job performance of academic staff in state polytechnics in south-south, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Office Layout and Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics in South – South Nigeria

The result of the first hypothesis showed that the extent to which office layout influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is significant. This is achievable because the physical work environment directly affects how effectively lecturers can carry out teaching, research, and administrative duties. A well-organized office layout promotes concentration by reducing noise, overcrowding, and unnecessary distractions. Adequate space, proper furniture arrangement, and access to essential equipment enable academic staff to prepare lectures, mark scripts, and conduct research more efficiently. When offices are comfortable and ergonomically arranged, lecturers experience less fatigue and stress, which improves productivity. Good office layouts also encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among colleagues, which can enhance academic innovation and problem-solving. Conversely, poorly designed offices with limited space and inadequate facilities can hinder workflow and reduce motivation. Such conditions may lead to delays in completing academic tasks and lower overall job satisfaction. In state polytechnics where academic staff handle multiple responsibilities, a functional office environment becomes even more critical. Improved office layouts can therefore support better time management and more effective academic engagement. The findings of the study is in line with the submission made by Wilson (2023) who carried out a study to determine the influence of office layout on academic staff performance in state tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study found that office layout influences the job performance of academic staff: and further supported by Crun (2022) who assessed office layout and technology integration as predictors of job performance of academic staff in Federal Universities in South East Nigeria. The result showed that office layout and technology integrated do predict job performance of academic staff.

Office Furniture and Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that the extent to which office furniture influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is significant. This is possible because furniture plays an important role in creating a comfortable and functional working environment. Appropriate office furniture such as ergonomic chairs, spacious desks, and adequate storage facilities helps lecturers carry out academic tasks efficiently. Comfortable seating reduces physical strain and fatigue, allowing academic staff to spend longer periods preparing lectures, marking scripts, and conducting research. Proper desks and tables also provide sufficient space for computers, books, and other instructional materials needed for effective academic work. When furniture is well-designed and properly arranged, it improves posture and reduces health problems associated with prolonged sitting. In addition, adequate furniture helps maintain an organized workspace, which enhances concentration and



productivity. Conversely, old, broken, or inadequate furniture can cause discomfort and distraction, thereby reducing the efficiency of academic staff. Such conditions may lower motivation and negatively affect the quality of teaching and research activities. In state polytechnics where academic staff performs multiple responsibilities, supportive furniture becomes essential for effective performance. The findings of the study is in agreement with the finding made by OSHA) (2017) in a study carried out to determine the influence of office furniture on job performance of academic staff in University of Ibadan, Oyo State and found that office furniture influence job performance of academic staff. Furthermore; Boladele, (2019) conducted a study to determine the relationship between office furniture, lighting, arrangement and academic staff performance in State tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. The findings of the study showed that office furniture, lightning, arrangement relate significantly with academic staff performance which also is in agreement with the findings of this study.

Office Lighting and Job Performance of Academic Staff of State polytechnics

The result of the third hypothesis showed that the extent to which office lighting influences job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria is significant. This is attainable because proper lighting is essential for effective academic work. Adequate lighting enables lecturers to read, write, and work on computers without experiencing eye strain or discomfort. When offices are well-lit, academic staff can prepare lecture notes, mark examination scripts, and carry out research activities more efficiently. Good lighting also improves visibility and reduces the likelihood of errors when handling academic documents and instructional materials. In addition, proper lighting contributes to a comfortable and conducive working environment that enhances concentration and productivity. Natural and artificial lighting, when properly balanced, can improve mood and increase motivation among staff. Conversely, poor or inadequate lighting can lead to eye fatigue, headaches, and reduced focus during academic tasks. Such conditions may slow down work processes and negatively affect the quality of teaching and research output. The findings of the study is in lined with the submission made by Jameson (2023) in a study carried out to determine the influence of office lighting on job performance of academic staff in Bayero University, Kano State. The finding showed that office lighting do influence job performance of academic staff. The finding of this study is also supported by the study of Alvin (2021) who found that office lightning significantly influence academic staff performance.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that office environment factors significantly influence the job performance of academic staff of state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, office layout was found to have a significant effect on how effectively academic staff performs their teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. The study also established that office furniture plays a vital role in supporting staff comfort and efficiency, thereby enhancing their productivity. Furthermore, office lighting was shown to significantly influence academic staff performance by creating a conducive atmosphere for concentration, reading, and other scholarly activities. In addition, the integration of office technology was found to significantly improve the job performance of academic staff by facilitating research, communication, and instructional delivery. The findings also indicated that office acoustics significantly affect staff performance, as a well-controlled sound environment helps minimize distractions and improves focus. Moreover, office aesthetics were found to significantly influence the motivation and overall work attitude of academic staff in state polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.



Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended that:

- i. Management of State Polytechnics should ensure that office layouts are well planned to promote effective movement, accessibility, and interaction among academic staff. Also, adequate office space should also be provided to enable staff perform their teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities efficiently.
- ii. Management of State Polytechnic should provide comfortable and ergonomic office furniture that supports the health and productivity of academic staff. Furthermore, the furniture provided should be durable, functional and suitable for the academic tasks carried out by staff members.
- iii. Management of state polytechnics should ensure the provision of adequate natural and artificial lighting in academic offices to enhance visibility and concentration. Also, regular maintenance and upgrading of lighting facilities should also be carried out to maintain a conducive working environment.

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STRESS CONTROL AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION LECTURERS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH- SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between stress control and job performance of Business Education lecturers in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. Two objectives were used to formulate two research questions and hypotheses. The literature review was carried out based on the sub-independent variables. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study comprised 160 business education lecturers in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. The researcher developed a structured questionnaire entitled “Stress Control and Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers Questionnaire (SCJPBELQ)”, which was used for data collection. The instrument was given to three research experts, two from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science and one from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, University of Uyo, for face-validation. The findings revealed positive and significant relationships between stress control measures and job performance, indicating that lecturers who exercise regularly and balance workloads, perform better in teaching, research, and service. The study concluded that stress control is essential for productivity, job satisfaction, and institutional effectiveness. It was recommended among others that government and each university should adopt supportive policies such as equitable workload distribution, wellness programmes and awareness on healthy living to sustain lecturers’ wellbeing and enhance educational outcomes.

Introduction

University education occupies a unique place in the social, economic, and political development of any nation. It is widely acknowledged as the highest level of formal education where students acquire advanced knowledge, critical thinking skills, and professional expertise that prepare them to function effectively in the wider society. Beyond its role in teaching and certification, the university also serves as a center for research, innovation, and community service, thus helping societies address developmental challenges while nurturing human capital. In Nigeria, the university system was designed to produce skilled manpower that would contribute to the realization of national goals such as economic growth, technological advancement, and social cohesion. Lecturers within these institutions are responsible for delivering quality teaching and to sustain research output, participate in institutional governance, and engage in the broader social mandate of community development (Adebayo and Etuk, 2019). Their performance directly influences the extent to which universities achieve their objectives, and by extension, the degree to which society benefits from higher education.



Public universities form the backbone of the tertiary education system. These universities are funded and managed either by the federal government or the various state governments, and they admit the majority of students seeking higher education due to their affordability compared to private institutions. Within the South-South geopolitical zone, which includes Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States, public universities play an especially important role. The region is known as Nigeria's oilproducing belt, yet despite its economic significance, it faces complex socio-economic issues such as environmental degradation, unemployment, youth restiveness, and underdevelopment. Public universities in this region are therefore not just centers of learning but also agents of regional transformation, preparing graduates who can address these challenges through knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship (Eze and Okon, 2020). However, the work environment in these institutions is fraught with peculiar stressors. Many public universities in the South-South are characterized by inadequate infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, irregular academic calendars due to industrial disputes, and limited resources for research and teaching. Lecturers often deal with administrative bottlenecks, unpredictable salary structures, and societal expectations that they should provide guidance beyond the classroom. Such conditions increase the level of occupational stress, and unless effectively managed, they can significantly undermine the performance of lecturers. This reality makes it essential to investigate how stress can be controlled in order to safeguard and even enhance job performance, especially of business education lecturers who play a vital role in preparing students for the world of business and entrepreneurship.

Business education as a discipline is specifically designed to equip learners with the skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to function productively in business organizations, entrepreneurial ventures, and administrative environments (Charles, Ukoima and Etuk, 2025). It emphasizes both theoretical grounding and practical applications in areas such as accounting, office technology, marketing, management, entrepreneurship, and communication. Business Education lecturers in Nigerian universities are therefore tasked with the dual responsibility of preparing students to be employable in corporate organizations and to develop the entrepreneurial spirit needed for self-employment (Olatunji and Ige, 2018). Their performance is assessed through teaching effectiveness, student engagement, research publications, supervision of projects and theses, curriculum development, and contributions to institutional and professional development.

The job demands on Business Education lecturers are substantial. They are expected to teach multiple courses, supervise large numbers of undergraduate and postgraduate students, carry out research that contributes to knowledge advancement, publish in recognized journals, and participate in departmental and faculty administration. Added to this are the professional pressures to attend conferences, engage in community development projects, and mentor students on career readiness. When these expectations are considered alongside the infrastructural challenges of public universities in South-South Nigeria, it becomes evident that stress is almost an unavoidable element of their professional lives. If stress is left uncontrolled, it can manifest as burnout, chronic fatigue, reduced job satisfaction, absenteeism, and poor classroom delivery, which all have negative implications for the quality of Business Education graduates produced. This underlines the need to examine stress control measures that can enhance lecturers' capacity to function effectively.

Stress control refers to the conscious strategies, practices, and lifestyle adjustments individuals adopt to reduce, manage, or cope with the pressures and demands of daily life in order to maintain physical, mental, and emotional balance. It is not the absence of stress but the



ability to regulate its impact, ensuring that it does not interfere with health, productivity, and overall wellbeing. Effective stress control is especially critical in high-demand professions such as academia, where constant teaching, research, administrative duties, and personal expectations converge to create significant psychological strain. Through approaches such as physical activity, time management, workload regulation, adequate sleep, and proper nutrition, individuals can build resilience, enhance focus, and sustain performance even in challenging environments. By practicing stress control, lecturers safeguard their health, maintain job satisfaction, and ensure long-term effectiveness in their roles. One of the most recognized strategies for managing stress is physical activity. Research has shown that regular exercise has profound benefits for reducing stress, improving mood, and maintaining physical health (Chikezie and Adebayo, 2017). For lecturers, whose work often involves long hours of sedentary activity such as sitting in offices, lecturing, or grading papers, engaging in physical activity can counteract the negative effects of such routines. Exercise increases blood circulation, releases endorphins that elevate mood, and provides an outlet for relieving built-up tension. In practical terms, a lecturer who maintains a routine of walking, jogging, or other simple exercises is more likely to experience improved energy, sustained concentration during lectures, and greater classroom vitality. In contrast, a lack of physical activity contributes to fatigue, lethargy, and susceptibility to stress-related illnesses, all of which reduce job performance. Physical fitness is therefore not just a personal health issue but also a professional asset that enhances teaching quality and research productivity.

Another critical measure for controlling stress is load management. Workload is a common source of stress among lecturers in public universities where staff shortages are prevalent. Business education lecturers may be required to teach more courses than is ideal, supervise an overwhelming number of student projects, and still engage in research and community service. Without proper load management strategies, these demands can lead to chronic stress and burnout. Effective load management entails setting priorities, delegating tasks where possible, negotiating realistic course loads with administrators, and learning to say no to excessive responsibilities. When lecturers succeed in balancing their workload, they are able to prepare adequately for lectures, deliver higher quality teaching, and engage in research without being constantly overwhelmed. Studies have shown that workload balance is positively associated with job satisfaction and performance among academic staff (Okorie and Ume, 2020). Conversely, uncontrolled workload pressures negatively impact creativity, efficiency, and long-term career development.

Taken together, these stress control measures, physical activity and load management offer practical pathways for improving the well-being and productivity of lecturers in public universities. Their relevance is heightened in South-South Nigeria, where institutional and environmental challenges amplify stress levels. Lecturers who adopt these measures are better able to meet the multifaceted demands of teaching, research, and service without compromising their health or performance. On the other hand, neglecting these measures exposes lecturers to chronic stress, burnout, and reduced effectiveness, which ultimately undermine the mission of university education in the region. It is against this background that this study sought to investigate how stress control measures relate to job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in South-South Nigeria, with a view to providing recommendations that can improve both staff well-being and institutional outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing recognition of the vital role universities play in national development, the job performance of lecturers, particularly in the field of business education, continues to face significant challenges in public universities across South-South, Nigeria. These



lecturers undertake multiple responsibilities, ranging from teaching and research to student supervision, administrative duties, and community service. Unfortunately, their work environment is riddled with poor infrastructure, unstable academic calendars, large class sizes, and limited access to resources. Such conditions exert enormous pressure on lecturers, creating stress that threatens to undermine their job performance. As expectations from students, institutions, and society increase, business education lecturers are often left struggling to meet these demands effectively, leading to diminished productivity and reduced job performance. The persistence of stress of business education lecturers has created recurring issues that directly affect their ability to function at optimal capacity. Many lecturers experience burnout, fatigue, and a loss of motivation, which reflect in poor lecture delivery, delays in grading assignments, lower quality of research output, and reduced commitment to mentoring students. In addition, the inability to manage stress effectively often leads to absenteeism, strained relationships with colleagues, and a lack of innovation in teaching methods. These challenges not only weaken the performance of lecturers but also compromise the overall quality of graduates produced in the region, thereby affecting the universities' ability to meet their mandate of producing employable and entrepreneurial graduates.

Stress control measures such as physical activity, time management, load management, quality sleep, and proper nutrition have the potential to mitigate these challenges and improve the job performance of lecturers. For example, lecturers who engage in regular exercise are more energized to face the demands of teaching, while effective time and load management enable them to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines without feeling overwhelmed. Similarly, adequate sleep restores their mental clarity and focus, while balanced nutrition sustains their physical and emotional resilience. These measures can collectively reduce stress levels, enhance efficiency, and improve lecturers' capacity to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. However, in the absence of deliberate and consistent application of these stress control practices, lecturers may continue to struggle under the weight of occupational stress, with adverse consequences for their performance.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher sought to address the challenge of stress and its impact on the job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. If the issue is not adequately addressed, the gap between the expectations placed on lecturers and their ability to perform effectively will continue to widen. This would seriously implicate, not only for the lecturers' wellbeing but also for the quality of education delivered, the preparedness of graduates for the world of work, and the socio-economic development of the region. Therefore, this study was necessary to explore how stress control measures relate to job performance of business education lecturers, with a view to offering solutions that can enhance both their productivity and the effectiveness of public universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between stress control measures and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

- i. relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria.
- ii. relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria.



Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What is the relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

- Ho₁ There is no significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.
- Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. Ho₃ There is no significant relationship between time management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Research Method

This study was adopted the correlational survey research design. This design was considered appropriate as the study sought to determine the relationship between selected stress control variables (physical activity, workload management, time management, sleep quality, nutrition, and financial stability) and job performance of Business Education lecturers. The correlational design allowed the researcher to examine the relationships between variables without manipulating any of them, hence, its suitability for the study that was conducted in natural setting which were the selected universities. The area of this study was the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. This zone which is located in the Niger Delta region comprises six states, namely: Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta, and Edo. The South-South zone is homes to numerous public universities and colleges of education, many of which offer Business Education programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. These states have a rich endowment of natural resources, especially crude oil, which significantly contributes to Nigeria's economy. However, despite its economic relevance, the region continues to grapple with various developmental and institutional challenges, including issues in the educational sector. These institutions include the University of Uyo (Akwa Ibom), University of Calabar (Cross River), Niger Delta University (Bayelsa), University of Port Harcourt (Rivers), Delta State University (Delta), and Ambrose Alli University (Edo), among others. These institutions provided a suitable academic setting for investigating the relationship between stress control strategies and job performance of Business Education lecturers.

This area was purposively selected for study because the researcher has observed that the job performance of lecturers has been poor in recent times and was interested in determine the relationship between stress control measures and job performance of lecturers with a view to finding a solution to the problem. The population for this study comprised 160 Business Education lecturers in public universities across the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Based on available data from the respective universities as at the 2024/2025 academic session. A sample size of 160 Business Education lecturers was used for the study, hence the census sampling technique was adopted. This approach was considered appropriate for the study because the population was relatively small, manageable and feasible because the researcher could include every lecturer, without drawing a representative subset. It also enabled the researcher to eliminate sampling error and ensure maximum accuracy, gaining a comprehensive picture of what the study proposed to examine. It also guaranteed that variations in institutional



contexts and individual experiences would be fully captured, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire entitled Stress Control and Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers Questionnaire (SCJPBELQ). The instrument is divided into three sections. Section A: Demographic data (age, gender, marital status, academic rank and so on). Section B: Items on stress control variables (25 items across physical activity, workload management, time management, sleep quality and nutrition. Section C: Items on job performance indicators (10 items reflecting teaching effectiveness, research productivity, student engagement.). All items were based on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

The questionnaire was subjected to face validation by three research experts, two from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science and one from the department of Measurement and Evaluation, University of Uyo. Their suggestions were incorporated and used for the modification of the final copy of the instrument.

To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was conducted using 20 Business Education lecturers from a public university who were not part of the sample group for the study. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha method. The application of Cronbach Alpha using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 yielded reliability coefficient values of 0.85, 0.80, 0.83, 0.91 and 0.91 for the six clusters with an overall reliability value of 0.86. This high coefficient value indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study as recommended by Uzoagulu (2011) that the coefficient value of 0.70 and above is considered reliable for survey studies. The computation is attached as Appendix on page 86.

The questionnaire was administered on the respondents by the researcher with the help of two research assistants who were briefed on the procedures to follow. Copies of the instrument were delivered to the respondents in their offices and a period of five working days was allowed before retrieval. The research team collected the contacts of the respondents for reminders before revisiting them to collect completed copies of the questionnaire. This procedure was to ensure that a high response rate is achieved. All the 160 copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved giving a 100 percent return rate. Data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the five research questions and test the five null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria?

Table 1: Relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in South-south, Nigeria (n=160)

Variables	df	r-cal	Remark
Physical Activity (X)	1	0.714	High Positive Relationship
Job Performance (Y) 158			

The result presented in Table 1 reveals that the correlation coefficient (r) is 0.714. This means that physical activity has a very high positive relationship with the job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. This shows that



engaging in physical activities enhances the job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between workload management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria?

Table 2: Relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south, Nigeria (n= 160)

Variables	df	r-cal	Remark
Work Load Management (X)	1	0.543	Positive Relationship
Job Performance (Y)	158		

The result presented in Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient (r) is 0.543. This means that workload management has a positive relationship with the job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. This shows that effective work load management enhances the job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Table 3: Relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. n=160

Variables	df	r-cal	p-value at 0.05	Decision
Physical Activity (X)	1	0.714	.000	Reject H ₀
Job Performance (Y)	158			

Sig = Significance at P = 0.05

The result presented in Table 6 reveals that the P-value of .000 is less than the significant level of 0.05 at 158 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis one which stated that there is no significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria, is rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria n= 160

Variables	df	r-cal	p-value at 0.05	Decision
Work Load Management (X)	1	0.543	000	Reject H ₀
Job Performance (Y)	158			

Sig = Significance at P = 0.05



The result presented in Table 7 shows that the P-value of .000 is less than the significant level of 0.05 at 158 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis two which stated that there is no significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria is rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Findings of the Study

The following findings emerged from the study:

- i. There is a significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.
- ii. There is a significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed under the following subheadings:

Physical Activity and Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers

The result from research question and hypothesis one indicated a positive relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers and that there is a significant relationship between physical activity and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. This finding is due to the fact that physical activity has long been recognized as an essential factor in improving overall human productivity and well-being. In the academic setting, where lecturers often juggle long teaching hours, research responsibilities, and administrative tasks, the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle cannot be overstated. This finding is in line with the findings of Ochor (2025), who conducted a study on the influence of sport participation on the job performance of university lecturers in the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The findings revealed that lecturers who regularly participated in physical activity reported higher teaching effectiveness, reduced stress levels, and improved administrative output. This study directly supports the present research by establishing a link between regular physical activity and improved job performance among university lecturers.

This finding corroborated that of Orji, Emmanuel and Nweke (2024) revealed that schools with physical activity-friendly environments, such as playgrounds and walking space, had teachers who reported greater energy, better concentration, and overall improved performance in their teaching tasks. This study underpins the needs to adds an environmental dimension by demonstrating that a workplace conducive to physical activities enhances teachers' energy and concentration, which in turn improves job performance. This makes the case for integrating environmental considerations in lecturer stress control approaches. The current study applied this insight by considering physical activity not only as an individual coping mechanism but also as a stress control strategy that can be adopted to institutional support (for example., provision of facilities for staff wellness).

Work Load Management and Job Performance of Business Education Lecturers

The result from research question and hypothesis two indicated that there is positive and significant relationship between work load management and job performance of business education lecturers in public universities in south-south Nigeria. This finding is due to the fact that workload management has emerged as one of the central concerns in higher education, particularly for lecturers who face increasing pressures of teaching, research, and service obligations. The situation in public universities in Nigeria is compounded by staff shortages, overcrowded classrooms, and limited resources. This finding is in line with the finding of Okon



and Etim (2021) that a significant negative relationship exist between excessive workload and teacher performance, with respondents reporting burnout and reduced instructional effectiveness due to administrative and nonteaching responsibilities. This study is closely aligned with the present research as it examines the negative impact of excessive workload on teacher performance. Although the setting is secondary education, the findings underscore the importance of workload management in maintaining instructional quality and preventing burnout, which are key concerns in university teaching as well. The current study extends this insight to Business Education lecturers in public universities, thereby validating workload as a critical stress control variable affecting academic staff performance.

The finding is equally in agreement with the finding of Oladipo (2022) who found that lecturers with manageable workloads were more effective in lesson delivery, research, and administrative functions, while those overwhelmed by heavy schedules showed lower productivity and job satisfaction. This study is highly relevant because it targets tertiary level academic staff, similar to the focus of the current study. Oladipo's findings that manageable workloads improve job effectiveness reinforce the conceptual foundation of this study, which posits that workload management is a stress control strategy that enhances job performance. The use of regression analysis also provides methodological support for examining the predictive strength of workload control on job outcomes.

Conclusion

The findings of this research provided strong evidence that stress control is a vital determinant of Business Education lecturers' job performance in public universities in South-south, Nigeria. The study confirmed that high stress levels interfere with effective teaching, reduce commitment to research, and negatively affect administrative participation. When lecturers fail to manage stress, the ripple effects extend to students' academic experiences, institutional output, and even the reputation of the entire educational system. It was concluded that although stress is unavoidable in the academic profession, its harmful effects can be minimized through deliberate management strategies. Lecturers who develop the discipline to organize their workload, practice self-care, and seek support from colleagues and professional networks were seen to sustain higher performance levels.

Stress management is, therefore, an indispensable skill for every academic staff member. The study also concluded that universities have a collective responsibility in creating an environment that reduces unnecessary stressors. Institutions that invest in modern teaching facilities, ensure fair workload allocation, and provide professional development programs promote not only the well-being of their lecturers but also the overall academic output of the institution. Stress control is thus a policy matter as much as it is an individual matter.

Another important conclusion is that lecturers' mental and emotional health cannot be separated from their professional performance. The research further concluded that stress has collective consequences. Beyond the personal discomfort and reduced productivity experienced by individual lecturers, stress affects student learning outcomes, institutional reputation, and even the nation's goal of producing highly skilled graduates. Stress control is, therefore, a national educational priority that deserves attention from policy makers, university administrators, and academic unions.

Recommendations

1. Universities should integrate stress management training into staff development programmes to enhance lecturers' teaching performance.
2. Workload should be distributed adequately with facilities in an equitable manner to minimize stress among lecturers in public universities.



3. Lecturers should be trained on time management strategies that could help them utilize their time effectively. This will help them to control stress.
4. Lecturers should ensure they have adequate and quality sleep every day in order to avoid chronic stress that could put a strain on their health.
5. Lecturers should ensure that they eat nutritious food regularly in order to cataract the effect of stress associated.
6. Government and educational administrators should improve remuneration and welfare packages of lecturers to reduce financial stress and enhance job satisfaction.

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STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices on organisational performance (OP) within the Nigerian National Assembly (NASS), with specific focus on the implications for Business Education. This study became necessary due to the paucity of literature on SHRM and OP in the Nigerian Legislature. A descriptive research design was adopted. The population of the study was 3,000. The sample size comprised 353 staff members, determined using the Taro Yamane formula. A stratified sampling technique was used. The instrument used for data collection was the “Strategic Human Resource Management and Organisational Performance Questionnaire (SHRMOPQ). Simple regression analysis was used in testing the null hypotheses. The results indicated a positive, significant influence of strategic resourcing, learning and development, and performance-based rewards on OP in NASS. The findings provide critical insights for business educators to redesign strategic management and HR curricula, ensuring future graduates possess the competency to leverage human capital for optimal OP. The study concluded that SHRM is the fundamental engine required to drive OP within the NASS. It was, therefore, recommended that NASS should, in future recruitment exercises, move beyond state-by-state distribution to include competency-based examinations specifically designed to test internet networking and current technology competencies. It was also recommended that NASS should institutionalise work-based learning partnerships with Business Education in Universities like the University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria.

Keywords: SHRM, Organisational Performance, Business Education.

Introduction

The contemporary global landscape of governance demands that public institutions transcend traditional bureaucratic administration to achieve institutional excellence. In Nigeria, the National Assembly (NASS) serves as the engine of democracy, tasked with lawmaking, representation, and executive oversight. However, the effectiveness of these mandates is intrinsically tied to the quality of its workforce. SHRM has emerged as the definitive framework for transforming human capital from an operational cost into a sustainable strategic asset (Barney, 1991). Within the Nigerian public sector, SHRM is increasingly recognised as the catalyst for improving OP and service delivery (Okolie, 2025).

For the Business Educator, the NASS represents a critical intersection where the “competency-performance gap is most visible. While institutions like the University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria, produce highly skilled administrative professionals, the practical application of these skills within NASS is often hindered by systemic rigidities. Research suggests that the strategic alignment of human resources is essential to ensure that the “saleable skills” taught in Business Education Curricula – such as office technology and administrative management are effectively utilised (Egbri and Ojo, 2023). Without this alignment, institutional performance remains



suboptimal, leading to delays in bill processing and weak committee oversight (Academia. edu, 2025).

Despite the established link between HR practices and performance, the Nigerian legislative sector faces multifaceted challenges. Factors such as political interference in recruitment and the complexities of the federal character principle often conflict with merit-based SHRM ideals (Tiamiyu, 2026). Furthermore, the recent national momentum to professionalise the field through the Chartered Institute of Human Resources and Strategic Management Bill underscores an urgent need for standardised training and strategic resourcing (NASC, 2025). This study, therefore, evaluates how the SHRM bundles of strategic resourcing, learning and development and performance-based rewards influence the OP of the NASS, providing a roadmap for both legislative reform and the evolution of Business Education Curricula.

Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the critical role of the NASS as the heart of Nigeria's democratic governance, the institution is plagued by persistent suboptimal performance. While SHRM is globally recognised as a driver of institutional excellence, the National Assembly Service Commission (NASC) appears to struggle with a transition from traditional, reactive personnel administration to a strategic model. This institutional lag has created a significant "competency-performance gap" that directly affects the utility of Business Education in the Nigerian public sector. Specifically, the following issues constitute the research problem:

- **Non-Strategic Resourcing and Patronage:** There is a great disconnect between the recruitment of legislative staff and the actual technical needs of the Assembly. Frequent reports of non-meritocratic hiring and political patronage (Tiamiyu, 2026) mean that highly skilled Business Education graduates from institutions like the University of Uyo are often bypassed for less qualified individuals. This undermines the technical quality of bill drafting and Committee oversight.
- **Ineffective Vocational Training Alignment:** Although the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) conducts frequent training, there is evidence that these programmes lack "strategic fit" with contemporary industrial and administrative realities (Egbri and Ojo, 2023). This mismatch leaves staff unable to effectively utilise modern **Office Technology Management (OTM)** tools, hindering the Assembly's digital transformation.

Unless these SHRM gaps are addressed through a framework that prioritises strategic resourcing, learning and development, vocational professionalism, and performance-based rewards, NASS will continue to function below its constitutional potential. This study, therefore, seeks to evaluate how the integration of strategic HR practices can bridge these gaps to enhance institutional performance in NASS.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of SHRM practices on OP in the NASS and its implications for Business Education. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS.
2. Investigate the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS.
3. Evaluate the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised for the study.

1. What is the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS?



2. What is the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS?
3. What is the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses, testable at 05 level of significance, were formulated to guide the study.

- HO₁. There is no significant influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS.
HO₂: There is no significant influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS.
HO₃. There is no significant influence of performance-based reward on OP in the NASS.

Conceptual Framework

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)

SHRM is conceptualised as the pattern of planned human resource deployment and activities intended to enable an organisation to achieve its goals (Wright and McMahan, 1992). Unlike traditional personnel management, SHRM focuses on the “strategic fit” between HR practices and institutional objectives (Armstrong, 2024). Etudor-Eyo and Ukoima (2016) viewed SHRM as a collection of tasks and processes shared jointly by line managers and HR to solve business issues based on people. It focuses on actions that differentiate the organisation from its competitors (Leug, 2003 and Udukeke, 2025).

According to Michie and Sheehan (2025), SHRM is the pattern of scheduled tasks and development intended to enhance an organisation to gain its aims. Cheng (2005) described it as the collection of actions and decisions resulting in the implementation and formulation of strategies configured to gain the organisational objectives. SHRM has become an important concept in organisations that are adopting a holistic approach to managing their human resources. Inclusive workplace practices are an important component of SHRM, aimed at creating a workplace culture that embraces diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all employees regardless of their demographic backgrounds (Ukoima and Udukeke, 2015).

According to Martin et al. (2016), SHRM places a strong emphasis on the relationship between management policies and practices and organisational business strategy, but several commentators have noted that this literature has neglected to address the larger context in which firms, strategies, human capital and human resources (HR) actors are integrated (Wright et al., 2014). SHRM focuses on how to effectively align HR practices to organisational goals and objectives. In the NASS, this framework is anchored on the premise that human capital is the primary engine for legislative effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored on the Resource-Based View (RBV), Human Capital Theory, the AMO theory, and Contingency theory, which collectively provide a robust lens for evaluating how human resource strategies translate into institutional excellence within the NASS.

1. Resource-Based View (RBV) - Birger Wernerfelt (1984), Jay Barney (1991)

RBV posits that an organisation’s performance is determined by its internal resources, provided they are Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-Substitutable (VRIN). In the context of the NASS, human capital represents the most vital VRIN resource. This study utilises RBV to argue that while political structures change, the specialised competencies of the NASS staff, such as legislative drafting and policy research, are the primary drivers of sustainable OP. For Business Educators, this theory validates the production of high-level administrative professionals whose rare technical skills are essential for institutional competitive advantage.



2. Human Capital Theory - Gary Becker (1964), Theodore Schultz (1961)

This theory views education and training as a deliberate investment in human “stock” to increase productivity. It provides the theoretical justification for the learning and development sub-variable in this study. It suggests that when the NASS invests in the continuous professional development of its staff, it is directly enhancing the “legislative brainpower” required for effective oversight. Within Business Education, this theory is foundational as it supports the Department’s assets through vocational and administrative training.

3. Ability, Motivation, Opportunity (AMO) Theory - Eileen Appelbaum, Thomas Bailey, Peter Berg, Arne Kallerberg (2000)

AMO theory suggests that OP is a function of three interrelated components: Ability (A), Motivation (M), and Opportunity (O). This study applies the model to explain the synergy between SHRM sub-variables:

- **Ability:** developed through strategic resourcing (recruitment) and training (L and D).
- **Motivation:** driven by effective reward systems
- **Opportunity:** created through strategic staffing and high-involvement work practices. For the NASS, the theory implies that even highly skilled Business Education graduates (Ability) will underperform if the reward system fails to provide motivation or if the bureaucratic structure denies them the opportunity to apply their technical expertise.

Empirical Review

The relationship between SHRM and OP has been extensively debated in the literature. Okolie (2025) investigated the impact of SHRM on performance in the Nigerian public sector and found that strategic bundles, specifically recruitment and training, significantly improved service delivery across various ministries. However, the study noted that bureaucratic rigidities often slowed the pace of these improvements. The relevance of the work to the present study is based on SHRM bundles of recruitment and training (L and D).

In a similar vein, Tiamiyu (2026) focused on the Nigerian civil service and observed that performance-based rewards had the lowest implementation rate among SHRM practices. This aligns with the institutional realities of the NASS, where salary structures are often rigid and disconnected from individual technical output. Furthermore, Egbri and Ojo (2023) explored the “skill gap” in Nigerian business environments, arguing that traditional HR practices fail to leverage the technical competencies of Business Education graduates, leading to institutional inefficiency.

Globally, research in legislative settings remains sparse compared to the corporate sector. An empirical study on the NASS (Academia, 2025) highlighted that while staff welfare was a priority, the “strategic fit” between staffing and legislative drafting requirements was weak. Most of these studies, however, failed to address the Business Education angle, specifically how the administrative training provided by institutions like the University of Uyo can be strategically utilised to solve the recurring technical failures in NASS oversight functions. While the reviewed studies confirm the positive influence of SHRM on OP, several gaps justify the current investigation:

1. **Disciplinary Gap:** existing literature is largely rooted in general management or public administration. This study fills a disciplinary gap by evaluating SHRM through the lens of Business Education, emphasising the utility of vocational and administrative competencies in parliamentary efficiency.
2. **Methodological Gap:** Many local studies are purely descriptive. This study utilizes Simple regression analysis and a scientifically determined sample (n = 353) via Taro



Yamane's formula to provide more statistically reliable findings for the University of Uyo, Uyo academic community.

In conclusion, while the foundational theories are well-established, this study is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap by providing an indigenous, legislature-specific, and Business Education-oriented evaluation of SHRM practices in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted the Descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 3000 (Staff Nominal Roll, 2026). The sample size for the study was 353, determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level. The stratified random sampling technique was used. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Strategic Human Resource Management and Organisational Performance Questionnaire (SHRMOPQ). The instrument was administered to the sampled legislative staff and aides within the NASS Complex, Abuja. To ensure a high response rate, a personally administered approach was combined with the assistance of trained research assistants who were familiar with the bureaucratic layout of the NASS. Scoring of the research instrument was done using a Likert Scale. In the questionnaire, agreement or disagreement with each statement was indicated by ticking the column provided. Scoring of the questionnaire was graded as follows: Strongly agree (SA)-4; Agree (A) - 3; Undecided (UN)- 0; Disagree (D) - 2; Strongly disagree (SD) - 1.

A total of 353 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 347 copies were correctly filled and returned, representing a 98.3 percent returned rate. Simple linear regression analysis was used to answer the research questions and was also used to test hypotheses formulated at .05 level of significance. To decide the research questions, any R-value that fell between 0.10-0.39 was regarded as low, 0.40 - 0.59 moderate, 0.60-0.79 high, and 0.80-0.99 very high. In terms of the hypotheses, whenever the p-value was less than the .05 level of significance, the null hypotheses were rejected, and whenever the p-value was greater than the .05 level of significance, the null hypotheses were accepted.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Research Question One

What is the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS?

Table 1: Results of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS (N=347)

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Strategic resourcing	0.807	0.651	0.650
Organisational performance			

The result in Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.807, indicating a very high positive relationship between strategic resourcing and OP in the NASS. The coefficient of determination (R² value) of 0.651, also shown in Table 1, indicates that 65.1 per cent of the variance in OP in the NASS is explained or predicted by strategic resourcing. This means that there is an influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS.



Research Question Two

What is the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS?

Table 2: Results of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS (N=347)

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Learning and development	0.847	0.718	0.717
Organisational performance			

The result in Table 2 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.847, indicating a very high positive relationship between learning and development and OP in the NASS. The coefficient of determination (R² value) of 0.718, also shown in Table 2, indicates that 71.8 per cent of the variance in OP in the NASS is explained or predicted by learning and development. This means that there is an influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS.

Research Question Three

What is the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS?

Table 3: Results of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS (N=347)

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Performance -based rewards	0.722	0.521	0.520
Organisational performance			

The result in Table 3 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.722, indicating a high positive relationship between performance-based rewards and OP in the NASS. The coefficient of determination (R² value) of 0.521, also shown in Table 3, indicates that 52.1 per cent of the variance in OP in the NASS is explained or predicted by performance-based rewards. This means that there is an influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS.

Table 4: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS (N=347)

SPSS ANOVA (continued)						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4195.00	1	4195.00	76.19	.00 ^b
	Residual	18994.25	345	55.06		
	Total	23189.25	346			
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	2.40	.83		2.89	.00
	Strategic resourcing	1.67	.07	.81	25.44	.00

The result in Table 4 shows the F-ratio of 76.19 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .00 alpha at 1 and 345 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05, on which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 4 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 1.67, which indicates that



for every one-unit increase in strategic resourcing, OP in the Nigerian NASS increases by 1.67. Furthermore, the t-value of 25.44, with a corresponding significance level of .00, which is also less than .05, reinforces that there is a significant influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS.

Table 5: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS (N=347)

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4639.00	1	4639.00	86.28	.00 ^b
	Residual	18550.25	345	53.77		
	Total	23189.25	346			
	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.89	.61		9.72	.00
	Learning and development	1.81	.07	.85	26.69	.00

The result in Table 5 shows the F-ratio of 86.28 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .00 alpha at 1 and 345 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05, on which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 5 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 1.81, which indicates that for every one-unit increase in learning and development, OP in the NASS increases by 1.81. Furthermore, the t-value of 26.69 with a corresponding significance level of .00, which is also less than .05, reinforces that there is a significant influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant influence of performance -based rewards on OP in the NASS.

Table 6: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS (N=347)

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3879.14	1	3879.14	69.31	.00 ^b
	Residual	19310.11	345	55.97		
	Total	23189.25	346			
	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.48	.98		4.58	.00
	Performance - based rewards	1.57	.07	.72	22.42	.00

The result in Table 6 shows the F-ratio of 69.31 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .00, with alphas at 1 and 345 degrees of freedom. This level of



significance is less than .05, on which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 6 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 1.57, which indicates that for every one-unit increase in performance-based rewards, OP in the NASS increases by 1.57. Furthermore, the t-value of 22.42, with a corresponding significance level of .00, which is also less than .05, reinforces that there is a significant influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS.

Discussion of Findings

The first objective of the study was to assess the influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS. The result of testing hypothesis one revealed a positive, significant influence of strategic resourcing on OP in the NASS. The finding of the study corroborates a study by Okolie (2025) who found that recruitment and training significantly improved service delivery across various ministries in Nigeria.

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS. The result of testing hypothesis two revealed a positive significant influence of learning and development on OP in the NASS. The finding supports a study by Okolie (2025) who found that training (continuous professional development) significantly improved service delivery across various ministries.

The third objective of the study was to investigate the influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS. The result of testing hypothesis three revealed a positive significant influence of performance-based rewards on OP in the NASS. The finding of the study underpins a study by Tiamiyu (2026) who found that performance-based rewards had a positive significant influence on employees in the Nigerian civil service.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that SHRM is the engine required to drive OP within the NASS. Based on the findings and the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Future recruitment exercises by NASC should move beyond state-by-state distribution to include competency-based examinations, specifically designed to test internet networking and current technology competencies. Hiring panels should include Business Educators as technical consultants to ensure that candidates possess the 21st-century skills needed for modern legislative oversight. NASC should also collaborate with Business Education Lecturers to design professional development modules for her staff members. These modules should focus on electronic publishing and advanced business communication, bridging the “relevance gap” in public sector administration.
2. To reduce the “competency gap”, the NASS should establish formal work-based learning agreements with the Department of Business Education, University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria. This will ensure that students are exposed to parliamentary administrative protocols before graduation, making them “ready-to-work”.
3. NASC should pay adequate attention to the welfare of the staff members. Adequate compensation should be given to staff members with excellent job performance.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study makes several significant contributions to the fields of strategic management and Business Education. The research has successfully bridged the Resource-Based View (RBV) within the unique bureaucratic environment of the Nigerian legislature. It has demonstrated that the “strategic fit” of HR practices is not just a private-sector necessity but a prerequisite for public-sector institutional stability. Also, for the field of Business Education, this study provides a framework for OTM and administrative training. It identifies the specific technical



competencies (example legislative drafting and policy analysis) that should be integrated into the Business Education Curriculum to produce graduates capable of performing in high-level government secretariats.

Implications of the Study

The study has various implications for Business Educators, NASC and Legislators.

For Business Educators, the study implies that the Business Education curriculum should evolve to include parliamentary administration and Public Sector HRM. Graduates need more than generic secretarial skills; they require specialised training in legislative drafting and policy analysis to remain competitive in government secretariats. Educators should transition from teaching “personnel management to “strategic management”, emphasising how human capital, as a rare resource, creates institutional excellence.

For NASC, the implication is that it should move from being a “regulatory gatekeeper to a strategic partner. This involves strictly observing strategic resourcing (merit-based rules) in recruitment and promotions to avoid the influx of inexperienced staff. The commission is urged to implement the NASS regulations and code of conduct to eliminate maladministration and corruption.

The study for legislators implies that there is a need for strategic alignment of their legislative aides to ensure that lawmakers have access to high-quality technical research and drafting support, enhancing their individual and committee-level performance. Management of NASC should break down organisational silos and adopt flexible structures that allow for inter-departmental support and knowledge sharing.

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**INFLUENCE OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT AS
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON TEACHERS'
JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA
IBOM NORTH-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised 3144 teachers of the 102 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. A total of 355 teachers constituted the sample size for the study. An instrument titled the Influence of In-service training and recruitment on Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (IIRTJPQ) was used for data collection. Three experts from the University of Uyo, Uyo validated the instrument. Cronbach Alpha statistical technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded 0.97 reliability co-efficient. The data were analysed using simple regression. R^2 was used to answer the research questions, and the regression's F-value was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that the extent to which in-service training and recruitment influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is very low. The extent to which in-service training and recruitment influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is statistically significant. It was recommended among others that Government should organise regular in-service training programmes to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge for optimum performances.

Keywords: *Human Resource, Human Resource Management, In-service Training, Recruitment and Teachers' Job Performance*



INTRODUCTION

Over the years, human resource management has been found to be challenged by many factors the world over. The environment in which human resource managers operate and in which they interact, is constantly changing, creating new issues and concerns. Given how challenging these new difficulties and concerns are, human resource managers have a considerable amount of options on how to handle them. The role of human resource management in the long-term performance of any school is enormous and significant. The overwhelming roles of human resource management in schools appear to be compromised to the extent of misplacing its role in the achievement of schools' objectives. The attention given to human resource in Nigeria schools is not encouraging considering teachers' motivation and performance.

Schools face many challenges in the management of human resources. These challenges range from constant changes in school environment, through unmotivated workforce to shortage of skilled manpower even in the face of heavy unemployment syndrome. It is believed that what sets most successful schools apart is how they manage human resource. Maulana (2017) defined human resources as people who are in institutions working to contribute to the running of the organisation. Human resource, according to Udukeke (2021) refers to the people manning various responsibilities in an organisation for the achievement of set goals. Mercy and Okwori (2022) noted that for educational institutions to achieve their goals and objectives, proper management of resources is essential. Nurjaman (2023) stressed that managing human resources in the education sector presents some challenges, particularly regarding managing teachers. While Darling-Hammond (2017) posited that teachers came from different backgrounds, personalities, and motivations and work in complex and dynamic school environment.

Again, human resource management entails planning, organising, directing, and managing the development, acquisition, compensation, integration, upkeep, and separation of human resources in order to accomplish personal, organisational, and societal goals. Human resource management is the systematic and strategic way of managing the employee of an organisation with the aim of maximising their performance and general well-being. It is the act of recruiting, training, developing, compensating, and maintaining the employees to achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation. Further, Arop, *et al.*, (2019) stressed that the objectives of human resource management are advise management on human resource management policies, maintain and implement human resource management policies and procedures, overcoming crises and difficult situations in relations between employees, provide a means of communication between employees and organisational management, assisting the development of the overall direction and strategy of the organisation, assist and create conditions that can assist line managers in achieving goals. Arop, *et al.*, (2019), the need for human resource management in the school system is integral and offers a wide range of channels through which the school administrator carryout statutory duties. Human resources within the formal school system can be effectively managed through in-service training and recruitment.

In-service training is a programme that improves the teachers' capacity and intellectual development (Marchie and Ntuno, 2024). According to Ntuno, *et al.*, (2024) in-service training programme is a comprehensible set of activities that helps in broadening the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of teachers for effective service delivery. Similarly, Ogunbodede (2016) stated that in-service training is a kind of education which is done to help the individuals in organisation to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in their jobs. In-service is a professional training aimed at broadening teachers' intellectual knowledge on skills for continuous professional growth. Fejoh and Faniran (2016) found that in-service training and staff development had insignificant combined effects but significant relative effects on workers' optimal job productivity. Udofia and



Ikpe (2012) found that the administration of in-service training programme significantly influences teachers' attitude to work in private secondary schools.

Recruitment is one of the human resource management functions. According to Ukoima and Udukeke (2015), recruitment is the process of attracting qualified individuals to apply for job openings in an organisation. The author noted that the aim of recruitment in education is to develop and maintain adequate human resources upon which a school can depend when it needs additional teachers. Olatoye, *et al.*, (2020) opined that recruitment is the most important human resource management practice in that it involves searching, assessing and picking the right set of people who can facilitate the attainment of organisation goals. It is a process of searching the applicants for employment, encouraging potential candidates to apply for jobs and examining those that applied to select the best for the job (Jouda, *et al.*, 2016). Mercy and Okwori (2022); Agashua *et al.*, (2024) mentioned that recruitment have significant impact on teachers' job performance. To further support the findings of this study, Azunwanne and Nkechi (2019) also found that recruitment processes have a significant impact on teachers' productivity.

Ramada (2020) mentioned that in the educational system, the most important human resource is the teacher. The teacher helps to provide the essence of and orchestrates the learning process. The author noted that the values of the teacher are his normative views of what is good and desirable which are associated with teachers' job performance. Teachers' job performance is very crucial in determining the extent to which learners learn and it is their duty to ensure they raise good students in character and in learning. Arop, *et al.*, (2019) stated that teachers' job performance is the statutory curricula function that is performed by the teachers to enable learners to achieve the set educational goals in the schools.

The researchers noted human resource management standards for teachers' job performance to include clear job descriptions, merit-based selection, transparent selection process; induction programmes, regular training opportunities, among others which upon strict adherence can create a supportive work environment that enhances teachers' job performance and ultimately improves students' outcomes. However, some schools lack these standards and do not adhere to them leading to the truant nature of secondary school teachers as exhibited in their poor attitude towards instructional duties, lateness to work, inconsistent attendance to school or classes, and their poor disciplinary behaviour. Teachers' poor performance cannot be overemphasized as it had affected the quality of students which contributed to the poor quality of leadership in Nigeria. It was based on these setbacks that the researchers carried out this study to ascertain the extent to which in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District

Statement of the Problem

Human resource management practice in schools involves recruitment and selection of teachers, administrators, and other staff based on merit, qualifications, and experience; training and development of staff; performance management, providing feedback and guidance; employee relations, resolving conflicts, and addressing staff welfare; compensation and benefits to attract and retain qualified staff. It helps to create a productive and efficient workforce that supports the delivery of quality education. However, this is not the ideal when it comes to the actual practice of human resource management practices in schools as there is room for improvement. Many schools face challenges in attracting, retaining, and developing qualified educators and staff. This can be attributed to factors such as limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and inefficient human resource systems. Ineffective human resource management can lead to poor performance and low output, as seen in Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North



West Senatorial District. Human resource management appears to be poorly implemented in Secondary Schools due to poor economy, performance evaluation, training and development, positive environment and technology.

The researchers observed that the government and other pertinent players in the education sector do not give human resource management the attention it deserves, which has a detrimental impact on the job performance of teachers at secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. Public Secondary Schools as observed do not adopt innovative human resource management practices to enhance overall productivity. There is paucity of study, nevertheless, that examines the influence of in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The study sought to fill this gap by investigating the extent to which in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. Specifically, the study determined:

4. the extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District.
5. the extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What is the extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District?
- To what extent does recruitment influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- Ho₁: The extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is not statistically significant.
- Ho₂: The extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is not statistically significant.

Research Method

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. Questionnaire was used to examine the opinions, preferences and perception of persons of interest to the researcher. Inyang (2022) posited that this design is appropriate for the collection and analysis of data using questionnaire. This design suits the study because it enables the collection of information on the construct of human resource management and teachers' job performance. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The population for the study comprised 3144 teachers from 102 public secondary schools in the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District (State Secondary Education Board, 2025). A total of 355 teachers comprised the sample



size for the study. Taro Yamane formula was adopted to determine it. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling approach, which was reasonable.

The researchers developed an instrument titled the Influence of In-service training and recruitment on Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (IIRTJPQ) for data collection. The instrument had a total of 15 items. The instrument was presented on a 5-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) =5, High Extent (HE) = 4, Moderate Extent (ME) = 3, Low Extent (LE) =2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) =1. Three experts from the University of Uyo, Uyo validated the instrument. Twenty (20) teachers who were not part of the actual study took part in a trial test to ensure the instrument's reliability using split half method of reliability. Cronbach's Alpha statistical technique was thereafter used to assess the reliability of the instrument which yielded 0.97 reliability co-efficient that qualified it for use in the study. Three hundred and fifty-five (355) copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved. The data were analysed using simple regression. R^2 was used to answer the research questions, and the regression's F-value was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District?

Table 1 Regression Analysis of in-service training and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R^2
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.035	.107			
In-Service Training	-.304	.036	-.413	.413 ^a	.171

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 1 presents the summary of the regression test for how in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. The results revealed the coefficient of determinant (R^2) value of .171. This means that 17.1% is the overall contribution of in-service training to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. Thus, the extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is very low.

Research Question 2

What is the extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District?

Table 2 Regression Analysis of recruitment and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	R^2
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.166	.112			



Recruitment	-.335	.036	-.445	.445 ^a	.198
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Source: Field Work (2025)

The analysis presented in Table 2 showed the regression results of how recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. The analysis showed the coefficient of determinant (R^2) value of .198 which means a 19.8 % contribution of recruitment to teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. Therefore, the extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is very low.

Null Hypothesis 1

The extent to which in-service training influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is not statistically significant.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of in-service training and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	1.031	1	1.031	72.584	.000 ^b	*
	Residual	5.013	353	.014			
	Total	6.043	354				

*significant at .000 ($p < .05$) (Source: Field Work (2025))

The analysis for hypothesis one in Table 3 showed that the F-value was 72.58 with degree of freedom of 1 and 353 at the p-value of .000. Since the probability level was less than the significant level ($p < 0.05$), the result was statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that the extent to which in-service training influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is not statistically significant was rejected. This implies that the extent to which in-service training influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is statistically significant.

Null Hypothesis 2

The extent to which recruitment influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is not statistically significant.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of recruitment and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	1.197	1	1.197	87.160	.000 ^b	*
	Residual	4.847	353	.014			
	Total	6.043	354				

*significant at .000 ($p < .05$) (Source: Field Work (2025))

The analysis for hypothesis two presented in Table 4 revealed that the F-value was 87.16 with degree of freedom of 1 and 353 at the p-value of .000. Since the probability level was less than the significant level ($p < 0.05$), the result was statistically significant. Hence, the null



hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the extent to which recruitment influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is statistically significant.

Findings of the Study

The following findings were presented for research questions and hypotheses:

1. The extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is very low.
2. The extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is very low.
3. The extent to which in- service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is statistically significant.
4. The extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is statistically significant.

Discussion of Findings

Discussion of findings was based on the research objectives

In-service training and teachers' job performance

The result of analysis in Table 1 revealed that in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. The corresponding hypothesis in Table 3 further revealed that the extent to which in-service training influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is significant. This implies that in-service training had very low influence on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District.

To a very low extent, the abysmal teachers' performances in public secondary schools are as a result of the lack of rigorous in-service training that could assist teachers in achieving their teaching goals. The findings of this study would inform the government about the issues of in-service training of teachers, hence their intervention through educational policies and rigorous in-service training. The finding of this study was in agreement with the findings of Fejoh and Faniran (2016) who found that in-service training and staff development had insignificant combined effects but significant relative effects on workers' optimal job productivity. The findings of this study also lends credence to the findings of Marchie and Ntuno (2024) who stated that there is a significant relationship between teachers' participation in in-service training and teachers' attitude to work. The findings of Udofia and Ikpe (2012) also supported this finding as they found that the administration of in-service training programme significantly influences teachers' attitude to work in private secondary schools.

Recruitment and teachers' job performance

The result shown in Table 2 showed that recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. The hypothesis in Table 4 further showed that the extent to which recruitment influences teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District is significant. The implication of this is that recruitment had very low influence on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. To a very low extent, teachers' poor performances in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District came as a result of poor and bias recruitment processes. The findings of this study would assist government and educational administrators in conducting an objective recruitment of teachers that would be free from bias and injustice. Recruitment influences



teachers' performance in any school.

The finding of this study was in agreement with the findings of Mercy and Okwori (2022) who found that recruitment, promotion and training, have significant impact on teachers' job performance. The finding also lends credence to the finding of Agashua *et al.*, (2024) who stated that recruitment and training have significant impact on teachers' job performance. To further support the findings of this study, Azunwanne and Nkechi (2019) also stated that recruitment processes, training and development and staff welfare have a significant impact on teachers' productivity.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that in-service training and recruitment as human resource management practices influence to a very low extent teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The findings further showed that these influences were significant though the very low extent of influences. It was also concluded that public secondary school teachers do not enjoy a robust human resource management practices as in-service training and recruitment revealed a very low extent of influence on their performances. A good human resource management practices would enhance teachers' job performance to optimum level.

Recommendations

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

1. Government should organise regular in-service training programmes to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge for optimum performances.
2. Government and other stakeholders should ensure that recruitment processes are merit-based, focusing on qualifications, experience, and competence.

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ENTREPRENEURIAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE OF SMALL-SCALE BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN EKET LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, AKWA IBOM STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 1389 managers in registered small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The sample size for the study was 311 respondents drawn from the target population using Taro Yamane formula through simple random sampling technique. The instrument entitled “Entrepreneurial Management Skills and Performance of Small-scale Business Enterprises Questionnaire (EMSPSBEQ)” was used to generate data for this study. Face validation of the instrument was adopted in this study. The reliability of the instrument in this study was established using trial test reliability method. The data collected from the two instrument were subjected to analysis using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient statistics and the overall reliability coefficient of 0.88 and 0.83 was obtained which was deemed adequate for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in answering the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result from the study indicated that there is a relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The study recommended that entrepreneurs should strive to acquire entrepreneurial management skills as this will help to improve performance of their businesses. Also, training on entrepreneurial management skills should be carry out periodically to enable them to develop the ability to their business enterprises effectively.

Introduction

The relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises has a topic of great concern. Small scale enterprises has been a topical issue in the entirety of the sphere of life due to its countless different responsibilities in the world in general. Small scale enterprises make up the majority of the businesses operating around the world. Small scale enterprises are those enterprises where business is done on a small scale (Brandy, 2020). According to Dilak (2022), a small enterprise is a business enterprises that is not large, in terms of its size, scope of operation, financial involvement and the workforce



involved in the enterprises. It is business enterprises that help in stimulating economic growth through the generation of employment, development of local technology and conservation of foreign exchange earnings, favours flexibility and innovations. Small scale enterprises also help to create a more competitive and healthier economy job opportunities.

The small scale business enterprises have the potentiality to reduce the rate of unemployment and also contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and economic growth of the nation (Oshagbemi, 2020). The small scale enterprises also helps to foster innovation, industrialization, poverty reduction, and local entrepreneurship. Despite the importance of small scale business enterprises, the performance of small scale business enterprises especially in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The management of the small scale enterprises especially in Eket Local Government Area has been a challenge. This is because it has been observed by the researchers that some Small Scale business enterprises are still failing in the area and some are forced to shut down within the few years of their existence. However, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021) reported that, over 20% of small businesses fail within their first year, and nearly 50% fail within five years due to issues such as limited market access, competition, and poor management. This has negative effect on the internally generated revenue accruable to the State and also increased the rate of unemployment and poverty.

The performance of a small scale business enterprise is a measure of how a manager efficiently and effectively utilizes the resources of the firm to accomplish its goals as well as satisfying all the stakeholders. The performance of small-scale business enterprises relies on a mix of profitability, market share, and operational efficiency (Olowu and Aliyu, 2025). Performance of small scale business enterprises is the measure of how effectively a business utilizes its resources and operational processes to achieve its strategic and financial objectives. Performance of a small scale business enterprise evaluates overall commercial success by combining financial metrics like revenue and profitability with non-financial indicators such as customer satisfaction and operational efficiency (Okhonina, 2024). The performance of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) depends to a large extent on the management skills of the owner of the business who is also regarded in the business parlance as an entrepreneur. It is logically discernible and plausible that successful business enterprise depend on the managerial skills and ability of the entrepreneur that owns and manages the business.

The entrepreneur is also described as an individual who establishes a business concern for the principal purposes of profit and growth (Ukoima, Charles and Nworgu, 2022). According to Windapo (2018) the perceived lack of managerial skills among entrepreneurs in Eket Local Government Area arguably accounts for high mortality and business failures among SMEs in Eket. According to Atandi (2021), when managers of small scale business enterprise manages their enterprises with effective entrepreneurial management skills, it helps to improve the performance of the enterprise. Olawale and Garwe, (2020) reported that entrepreneurship is seen as a driver of sustainable economic growth as entrepreneurs create new businesses and employment. Because entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth, it is important to have the skills needed to be successful in business venturing.

Entrepreneurial management skills according to Agha, (2024) are the competencies required to identify opportunities, take calculated risks, and allocate resources efficiently in small businesses. Entrepreneurial management skills combine the visionary drive of a startup founder with the operational discipline of a manager (Abor and Quartey 2020). Key examples of entrepreneurial management skills include strategic planning to guide long-term growth, financial literacy for budgeting and cash flow management, and leadership to build and motivate teams. Asabi et al (2023) stressed that entrepreneurial management skills specifically marketing,



innovative planning, and ICT competencies have a direct and significant positive effect on the operational efficiency, market share, and profitability of small-scale enterprises. The entrepreneurial management skills needed by entrepreneurs to enhance the performance of small scale business enterprise are financial management, human resource management, start-up, social and interpersonal, leadership, personality, marketing, technical and business management skills.

Entrepreneurial management skills are set of competencies and abilities that enable individuals to identify, evaluate, and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities (Mensah *et al*, 2024). It helps entrepreneurs to make informed business decisions and choose who to do the business with. For efficient performance of small-scale business enterprises, entrepreneurial skills such as marketing, creativity, decision-making, organising, recognising and utilising opportunities, communication, networking, team-building, goal-setting and problem-solving skills are needed to survive. Acquisition of effective entrepreneurial skills in small-scale businesses promotes profitability and ensures their operational sustainability. Entrepreneurial skills, according to Mohammed and Obeleagu-Nzelibe (2024), help small-scale business enterprise to maintain optimal and effective operations. It is therefore crucial for owners of small-scale businesses to adopt suitable entrepreneurial skills in their daily business operations.

The entrepreneurial management skills that has the potential to enhance the performance of small scale business enterprises. According to Ayiku and Grant (2021) entrepreneurial management skills includes marketing skills, financial management, strategic planning and financial management skills. As observed by Fatoki, (2021), entrepreneurial management skills includes communication skills, time management skills, innovative skills, customer retention skills, marketing skills, teamwork, problem solving, leadership skills, planning and organising, self-management, learning skills and technology skills, among others. Logose (2022) noted that in this competitive business environment, whether entrepreneurs are starting a new venture or driving growth in an existing business, having a strong entrepreneurial management skill set is a key determinant of long-term success and financial stability. Financial management skills are required to manage capital in an efficient and effective way so as to accomplish the financial obligations of the business. Although there exist several entrepreneurial management skills that can promote performance small-scale business enterprises, this study focuses financial management skills and marketing skills

Financial management skills entail the ability to manage cash flow, budgeting, and financial projections to enhance the performance of small business enterprises. Financial management skills refer to the ability to plan, organize, direct, and control the financial resources of an organization or individual (Abdul, 2018). These competencies are essential for effective performance of small business enterprises, minimizing risks, ensuring regulatory compliance, and maximizing profitability and sustainable long-term growth. According to Ng'ora et al (2022) financial management skills are the cornerstone of small business survival and profitability. Owners who master budgeting, cash flow tracking, and bookkeeping avoid critical pitfalls like fund mismanagement and illiquidity, ultimately boosting overall return on investment and business sustainability

Financial management skills are critical for small-scale business enterprises. They enable optimal resource allocation, optimize cash flow, and guide informed decision-making. These skills directly enhances profitability, ensures daily liquidity, mitigates financial risks, and provides the structured financial reports required to secure external funding Orji *et al* (2023). Effective financial management directly drives business performance and long-term sustainability through several key advantages such as cash flow optimization, enhanced



profitability, data-driven decision making, easier access to credit and risk mitigation (Orji *et al* 2023). Sound financial management skills empower owners to identify financial pitfalls early, navigate market volatility, and build financial reserves to buffer against unexpected economic shocks. Effective financial management and marketing skills limit the vulnerabilities of small scale business enterprises to adverse economic conditions.

Marketing skills are the abilities used to promote business performance, advertise, and sell products or services. They blend creativity with analytical thinking to understand customer behaviour, build brand awareness, and drive sales effectively. These are broadly categorized into technical (hard) and interpersonal (soft) competencies. Marketing skills are about communicating the value of the tangible and service products to the customers, for the purpose of selling. Marketing skills are abilities and competencies that enable small-scale business enterprise owners to effectively identify, reach and satisfy their target customers (Kotler and Keller, 2020). These skills encompass a range of activities, including market research, product development, pricing strategies, promotional techniques and customer relationship management. For small-scale businesses, marketing skills are crucial for their effective performance and overall competitiveness (Reijonen, 2020). Marketing skills are certain invaluable skill sets that have incredible potential to persuade, sell and build lasting customer relationships. Effective marketing strategies can help small-scale businesses to better understand their target market, differentiate their products or services, and create customer loyalty, all of which contribute to their performance.

Small-scale business owners who possess strong marketing skills are better equipped to make informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, and respond to changes in the market. According to Olawale and Garwe (2020), marketing skills are skills that allow marketers to build a brand, explain that brand, identify a target market and sell products within the market. It is the strategy that drives a business to growth and operational sustainability. Instead of focusing on short-term results, marketing skills help win customers for the long haul by ensuring long-term brand affinity and loyalty (Popescu, *et al* 2019). With the right tactics, marketing skills boost product sales, increase profit and performance (Popescu, *et al* 2019). Effective marketing skills help to build a company's reputation. Proper marketing skills help to bring consumers and products together. Wale-Awe (2024) reported that the importance of marketing skills in a business is that it makes the customers aware of products or services, engages them and helps them make the buying decision. Based on this background, the present study intend to investigate relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Statement of the problem

Small-scale business enterprises are expected to operate profitably, retain market share, and remain solvent long enough to contribute meaningfully to employment and internally generated revenue. In Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, however, the performance of these enterprises falls short of this expectation. Preliminary visits by the researchers to registered small-scale enterprises in the area revealed declining sales turnover, difficulty meeting recurrent financial obligations, shrinking customer bases, and a pattern of premature closure, with several enterprises ceasing operations within the first few years of establishment. This pattern is consistent with wider evidence on early-stage business mortality: Fatoki (2021) reports that a substantial proportion of small enterprises in developing economies fail within their first five years, largely as a result of weak management rather than adverse market conditions alone.



The consequences of this poor performance extend beyond the individual enterprise. Business closures reduce the internally generated revenue accruable to the state, displace workers into an already saturated labour market, and erode the local entrepreneurial base that new ventures would otherwise draw upon. Where enterprises survive but underperform, they operate below capacity, absorb resources without generating commensurate returns, and remain unable to access the credit that would allow expansion. What remains unclear is why performance is so uneven among enterprises operating within the same market, under the same regulatory conditions, and facing the same infrastructural constraints. This suggests that the determinants of performance may lie less in the external environment than in the managerial competence of the owner-managers themselves. Windapo (2018) attributes high SME mortality to a perceived deficiency in managerial skills among entrepreneurs, while Atandi (2021) maintains that enterprises managed with sound entrepreneurial management skills record measurably better performance outcomes. Yet these claims have not been empirically tested among small-scale enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, and the specific skill areas most closely associated with performance in this setting remain unidentified. It is against this background that the problem of this study is posed as a question: to what extent do entrepreneurial management skills (specifically financial management skills and marketing skills) relate to the performance of small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State
2. To determine the relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Research questions

The following research questions was raised for the purpose of the study.

1. What is the relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?
2. What is the relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State
2. There is no significant relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Research method

This study adopted a correlational research design. This design is appropriate for this study because it helped to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The population of the study comprise 1389 managers in registered Small-scale business enterprises, Nigeria. This population is considered appropriate for the study because it is expected that the managers and employees of Small-scale business enterprises have



experience about the impact of entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises and would be able to supply responses for the questionnaire used in the study. The sample size for the study was 311 respondents drawn from the target population using Taro Yamane formula through simple random sampling technique. A cluster and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study from the list of the registered small scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

The instrument entitled “Entrepreneurial Management Skills and Performance of Small-scale Business Enterprises Questionnaire (EMSPSBEQ)” was used to generate data for this study. It was structured to cover all variables under the study. The instruments was divided into three parts A, B and C. Part A sought information on respondents’ demographic variables while Part B contained items on the independent variables (Entrepreneurial Management Skills) and part C contained information on the dependent variable (Performance of Small-scale Business Enterprises). Respondents were expected to indicate by ticking (✓) the information provided as they relate with the items.

Face validation of the instrument adopted in this study. This would involve giving out the instrument to three experts from the Department of psychological foundations of Education, Faculty of Education and two in the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, University of Uyo to scrutinize, assess the items and make corrections on the items. The suggestions of these experts would be incorporated into the final copy of the instruments before administration to the target respondents. The reliability of the instrument in this study established using trial test reliability method. The researcher administered the questionnaire on 30 manager in small scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, who were not take part in the main study. At the end of test administration, data collected from the two instrument were subjected to analysis using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient statistics and the overall reliability coefficient of the two instruments stood for 0.88 and 0.83 respectively which was deemed adequate for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in answering the research questions and in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

Results

The result of this study is presented based on research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Variables	Σx Σy	Σx^2 Σy^2	Σxy	r-cal	Decision
Financial management skills	22455	649150	547941	0.89	Strong positive relationship
Performance of Small-scale business	421025	751715			

n=311

The result in Table 1 above reveals that the correlation coefficient (r) between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State is 0.89. This indicated that strong positive relationship



between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2: Relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Variables	Σx Σy	Σx^2 Σy^2	Σxy	r-cal	Decision
Marketing skills	52485	748038			Strong positive relationship
Performance of Small-scale business	421025	751715	446477	0.77	

n=311

The result in Table 2 above reveals that the correlation coefficient (r) between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State is 0.77. This shows that strong relationship exists between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of the relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Variables	Σx Σy	Σx^2 Σy^2	Σxy	r-cal
Financial management skills	22455	649150		
Performance of Small-scale business	421025	751715	547941	0.89*

n=311, *Significant $P < .05$, $df = 198$; critical r-value = 0.139

The result presented in Table 3 reveals that the calculated r-value of 0.89 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.111 at 309 degrees of freedom and .05 alpha levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is a significant relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Research Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State



Table 4: Correlation Analysis of marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Variables	Σx Σy	Σx^2 Σy^2	Σxy	r-cal
Marketing skills	52485	748038	446477	0.77*
Performance of Small-scale business	421025	751715		

$n=311$, *Significant $P < .05$, $df = 198$; critical r -value = 0.139

The result presented in Table 4 revealed that the calculated r -value of 0.77 is greater than the critical r -value of 0.11 at 309 degrees of freedom and .05 alpha levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Findings of the Study

The results of the data analysis revealed the following findings:

1. Strong positive relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State
2. Strong relationship exists between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State
3. There is a significant relationship between financial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State
4. There is a significant relationship between marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

Discussion of Finding

Financial Management Skills and Performance of Small-Scale Business Enterprises

The finding presented in Tables 1 and 3, showed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between financial management skills and the performance of small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area ($r = 0.89$, $df = 309$, $p < .05$). The coefficient indicates that enterprises whose owner-managers reported higher competence in budgeting, cash flow tracking, record-keeping, and financial projection also reported higher performance across profitability, liquidity, and operational measures. The magnitude of the association is notable: a coefficient of this size suggests that financial management competence accounts for a substantial share of the variation in performance observed among enterprises operating in the same market.

A plausible explanation lies in the immediacy of financial decisions in small-scale operations. Unlike larger firms, small enterprises rarely employ dedicated accounting staff, so the owner-manager's personal capacity to track receipts, separate business from personal funds, and anticipate cash shortfalls determines directly whether the enterprise remains solvent from month to month. Where this capacity is absent, the enterprise may be profitable on paper yet still fail through illiquidity. This interpretation is consistent with Ng'ora et al. (2022), who identified financial literacy as a determinant of survival and profitability among small enterprises in low-income economies, and with Orji et al. (2023), who found that managerial financial competence in Jabi District, Abuja, predicted both profitability and the ability to secure external funding. The present finding extends that evidence to a South-South Nigerian setting not previously examined. The result also lends empirical support to Windapo's (2018) contention that deficiencies in managerial skill account for much of the observed mortality among small enterprises. Where



Windapo inferred this from firm outcomes, the present study measures the skill dimension directly and finds it strongly associated with performance in the expected direction.

Marketing Skills and Performance of Small-Scale Business Enterprises

The finding, presented in Tables 2 and 4, showed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between marketing skills and the performance of small-scale business enterprises ($r = 0.77$, $df = 309$, $p < .05$). Owner-managers who reported greater competence in identifying target customers, promoting products, pricing, and maintaining customer relationships also reported stronger enterprise performance.

This is consistent with Ayiku and Grant (2021), who reported a positive association between entrepreneurial marketing competence and small-business performance in Ghana, and with Popescu et al. (2019), who found managerial marketing capability to be a determinant of SME performance across European Union contexts. It also aligns with Asabi et al. (2023), whose study of small businesses in Oyo State identified marketing competence as one of three managerial skills with a direct effect on market share and profitability. That the relationship holds in Eket — a smaller and more informal market than those examined in the Ghanaian, European, or Oyo State studies — suggests the association is not confined to comparatively formalised business environments.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, it is concluded that there is a relationship between entrepreneurial management skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The result also indicated that strong positive relationship existed between financial management skills, marketing skills and performance of Small-scale business enterprises in Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. It is also concluded that entrepreneurial management skills help small-scale business enterprise to maintain optimal and effective performance. It is therefore crucial for owners of small-scale businesses to adopt suitable entrepreneurial skills in their daily business operations. The entrepreneurial management skills that has the potential to enhance the performance of small scale business enterprises

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Entrepreneurs should strive to acquire entrepreneurial management skills if it is not innate in them as this will help to improve performance of their businesses.
2. Financial management skills should be acquired by entrepreneurs to enable them manage financial flow of their business.
3. Training on entrepreneurial management skills should be carry out periodically to enable them to develop the ability to their business enterprises effectively.
4. Marketing skills should be acquire by business entrepreneurs as this will help to enhance the performance of their businesses.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SKILLS AND THE EMPLOYABILITY OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT (OTM) GRADUATING STUDENTS IN PUBLIC POLYTECHNICS IN SOUTH SOUTH, NIGERIA

By

Mbetobong John AKPAN and Dr. U. E. Akpanobong

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to examine the extent to which Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in Public Polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two research hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 2,254 Office Technology and Management graduating students. Taro Yamane's formula was used to obtain a sample size of 375 Office Management and Technology graduating students for the study. The sample was obtained using a ltistage sampling technique. The researcher developed an instrument tagged "Information and Communication Technology Skills and Employability of Students Questionnaire (ICTSESQ)" for collecting data. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Faculty of Education and Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science respectively, all in University of Uyo, Uyo. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.86 for the ICTSESQ. Regression Analysis statistics was used in answering the research questions and in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that internet surfing and video conferencing skills significantly predict the employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in public Polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. It was recommended that Office Technology and Management curricula should incorporate structured training on effective internet surfing skills, including information search, evaluation and ethical use of online resources. Students should be encouraged to engage in research-based and online collaborative tasks that enhance their ability to use the internet productively for office-related functions. Also, polytechnics should integrate video conferencing tools into teaching and learning processes to familiarize students with virtual communication platforms. Regular use of online meetings, presentations and virtual collaborations will help students develop confidence and professionalism required in modern workplaces.

Introduction

The employability of students is a growing concern in today's fast-changing and competitive job market. As more students graduate each year, the ability to secure relevant employment has become a key indicator of educational success. Employability goes beyond earning a degree, it includes the skills, competencies and attributes that make graduates desirable to employers. Many employers now emphasize soft skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving and adaptability over technical knowledge alone. However, many students complete their education without fully developing these essential skills (Kim and Park, 2023). This disconnect has raised questions about the relevance of academic programs in preparing students for the workforce. Rapid technological changes and global economic shifts are also redefining job requirements. As a result, there is increasing pressure on educational institutions to improve their teaching methods and curricula. Internship programs, job placement



services and industry collaborations are being used to bridge the gap. Still, the unemployment and underemployment of graduates remain persistent issues in many regions.

Lee (2020) posited that several factors influence the employability of students, including academic performance, work experience, personal motivation and access to career support services. The field of study also plays a major role, as some disciplines offer more direct employment opportunities than others. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often face additional barriers such as limited resources and fewer networking opportunities. In response, many universities are developing career development centers and integrating employability training into their academic programs. Despite these efforts, a significant number of graduates still report difficulties in finding suitable employment. Employers frequently cite a lack of real-world experience and job-readiness among new graduates. This has led to calls for stronger partnerships between academic institutions and industries. Hence, there is need to ensure that students are equipped with both academic knowledge and practical skills to enhance future success. Osei (2022) opined that there are so many factors that can influence the employability of students but the most outstanding, is having Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Skills.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the use of digital tools, systems, and networks to access, store, transmit, and manage information for communication and various technological purposes (Chen, 2023). It can be viewed as abilities required to effectively use digital tools and technologies for accessing, managing, creating and communicating information. ICT skills are essential in today's digital world, as it enable individuals to perform tasks efficiently in both academic and professional settings (Asuquo and Ukoima (2016). It support problem-solving, collaboration and decision-making in technology-driven environments. With the rise of remote work and online learning, ICT skills have become increasingly important across all sectors. These skills also involve video conferencing, trouble shooting and data processing skill. Developing ICT skills helps individuals adapt to new technologies and remain competitive in the workforce. As technology continues to evolve, continuous learning and digital literacy are vital components of strong ICT competence.

Ali (2020) stated that students ICT skill is seen in the ability to effectively use digital technologies to access, evaluate, create and communicate information. These skills include basic tasks such as using word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software, as well as navigating the internet and digital communication tools. Students with strong ICT skills can conduct online research, collaborate through digital platforms and complete assignments using various software applications. In today's technology-driven learning environments, these skills are essential for academic success and lifelong learning. ICT skills also help students develop critical thinking, problem-solving and digital literacy. Since education increasingly integrates technology, students must continually adapt to new tools and platforms. Developing ICT skills prepares students not only for academic tasks but also for future careers in a digital world. Yeoh (2023) posited that different ICT skills enhance students' employability, but the most outstanding ones are internet surfing, video conferencing, data processing, document management and trouble shooting skills.

Internet surfing skill is an information and communication technology (ICT) skill that refers to the ability to effectively use the internet to search for, access, evaluate, and apply digital information for academic and professional purposes. It involves knowing how to use search engines, online databases, and digital platforms efficiently (Li, 2020). This skill enables users to identify credible sources and distinguish reliable information from misinformation. Internet surfing skill also includes the ability to navigate websites, use hyperlinks, and manage



multiple online resources simultaneously. It supports academic activities such as research, assignment completion, and data gathering. In the workplace, it enhances productivity by enabling quick access to relevant information and office tools. Amare (2021) asserted that the skill promotes independent learning and continuous professional development. It also improves problem-solving and decision-making by providing timely and accurate information. Ethical and responsible use of online resources is an essential component of internet surfing skill. Another ICT skill that determines employability of students is video conferencing.

Video conferencing is a communication technology that allows people in different locations to hold face-to-face meetings in real time using audio and video transmission over the internet (Silva, 2022). It enables users to see and hear each other through devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones equipped with cameras and microphones. Video conferencing is widely used in education, business, healthcare and other sectors to facilitate remote communication and collaboration. In educational settings, it allows students and teachers to interact virtually, attend online classes, and participate in group discussions from different geographical areas. This technology reduces the need for physical travel, saving time and costs while maintaining effective communication. Popular platforms for video conferencing include Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet and Skype. It also supports features such as screen sharing, file sharing and recording for future reference (Obasi, 2021). Video conferencing promotes flexibility and accessibility, especially for distance learning and remote work. It helps students build digital communication skills, which are valuable in today's job market. Data processing is another ICT skill that would enhance individuals employability. Based on the background of the study and the recognized roles of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, such as internet surfing and video conferencing the researcher is motivated to examine the extent which ICT skills predict the employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in public Polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The employability of Office Technology Management students is crucial for enhancing prospects of securing meaningful employment after graduation and achieving sustainable career development. Strong employability supports the development of competencies that make graduates attractive to employers and better prepared for workplace demands. However, the current labour market situation in the nation reveals persistent challenges affecting graduate employability. These challenges are evident in rising unemployment rates and the gap between graduates' skills and labour market requirements. Deficiencies in communication, résumé preparation, and interview performance further limit employment opportunities. In addition, insufficient digital competence reduces graduates' ability to function effectively in modern workplaces. Weak problem-solving abilities also hinder their capacity to adapt to organizational challenges. Limited access to career guidance and professional networking opportunities negatively affects career readiness. Consequently, these combined factors contribute to reduced self-confidence, poor work attitudes, and difficulty in achieving successful employment outcomes.

In an effort to address the problem of joblessness among Office Technology Management students, numerous researchers have conducted studies focusing on economic and school-related factors to identify its causes and propose possible solutions. Despite these efforts, the persistent nature of the problem suggests that previous studies have not produced sufficiently reliable or impactful results. This continuing challenge raises the question of whether joblessness among these students may be influenced by their low level of ICT skills. Considering the growing



importance of ICT skills in enhancing students' employability, the researcher is motivated to further examine this issue. Based on the background of the study, the present research is therefore undertaken to determine the extent to which ICT skills predict the employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the extent to which ICT skills predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in public Polytechnic in South South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of Office Technology Management graduating students.
2. The extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of Office Technology Management graduating students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent does internet surfing skill predicts employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students?
2. To what extent does video conferencing skill predicts employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students?

Research hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

1. Internet surfing skill does not significantly predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students.
2. Video conferencing skill does not significantly predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students.

Research Method

A correlational research design was adopted in the study. This design was considered appropriate for the study because it is used to examine the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. Its primary function is to determine whether an association exists, the direction of the relationship (positive or negative), and the strength of that relationship. This type of research design is also valuable for identifying patterns and trends in data, allowing researchers to make predictions based on observed correlations. This study investigates into the extent to which ICT skills predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students (Dependent variable). The area of this study is South South, Nigeria. South South is one of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. It designates both a geographic and political region of the country's eastern coast. It comprises six States of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers.

The zone stretches along the Atlantic seaboard from the Bight of Benin coast in the west to the Bight of Bonny coast in the East. It is lying between the latitude of 5°25'N and 5°32'N North of the equator and longitudes 7°29' of East of Greenwich Meridian. It encloses much of the Niger Delta, which is instrumental in the environment and economic development of the region. Geographically, the zone is divided with the Central African mangroves in the coastal far south while the major inland ecoregions are from east to west of the Cross Sanaga Bioko coastal forests, Cross Niger transition forests, Niger Delta swamp forests, and Nigerian lowland forests. Although the South South represents only 5% of Nigerian territory, it contributes greatly to the Nigerian economy due to extensive oil and natural gas reserves. With two of the major oil refineries being located there, one in Eleme, a Local government area in Rivers State and the



other being in Warri, Delta state. The zone has a population of about twenty six million people, around twelve percent of the total population of the country. Port Harcourt and Benin City are the most populous cities in the South-South, and the fourth and fifth most populous cities, respectively, in all Nigeria. Port Harcourt and its suburbs, together called Greater Port Harcourt, form the largest metropolitan area in the zone, with about three million people. Other large South-South cities include in descending order by population include Warri, Calabar, Uyo, Ikot Ekpene, Ugep, Sapele, Buguma, Uromi, Ughelli, Ikom, and Asaba.

The major languages of the people in the area are Annang, Boki, Edo, Efik, Ekoi, English, Esan, Etsako, Ibibio, Igbo, Ika, Isoko, Itsekiri, Izon, Kalabari, Obolo, Ogba, Ogoni, Oro, Urhobo, Ukwuani, Yala, Yakö, among others. The major reason for choosing this area for the study is on the basis of workforce detachment of Office Technology Management students in the public Polytechnics in the study area, as the findings of the study will enhance taking appropriate steps to enhance Office Technology Management students employability.

The population of the study comprised all the Office Technology and Management graduating students in public Polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. According to data from statistics unit of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), there are 2254 Office Technology and students in the 6 State Polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. Taro Yamens' formula was used in obtaining a sample size of 375 respondents for the study (as shown in Appendix IV). Multistage sampling technique was used in obtaining the sample size for the study. According to Uyanga and Etudor-Eyo (2015), a sample proportion of 10% of the population of respondents in any research study is effective enough to represent the population, and the higher the proportion, the more accurate the research findings. At the first stage, sampling will be based on the States in the South South, Nigeria. A proportion of 50% of the six States in South South, Nigeria, will be used for the study and this will give a total of three states. The adoption of 50% of the States at this stage is to ensure geographical and demographic representation while keeping the study manageable.

At the second stage, the researcher randomly selected one public polytechnics from each of the three States of Akwa Ibom, Rivers and Delta for the study. The total number of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in the three public Polytechnics will sum up to 1037 students (sampling Frame Shown in Appendix III). At the third stage 40% of the OTM students was selected across the public polytechnics in the three States and this summed up to 375 OTM students that was used for the study (Sampling Frame shown in Appendix III). The use of a 40% selection rate at this stage was intended to **maintain representativeness** while reducing the sample size to a manageable level.

The researcher develop instrument that was used in collecting data for the study was tagged "ICT Skills and Employability of Students Questionnaire (ICTSESQ)". The ICTSESQ have two sections, A and B (Shown in Appendix II). The A section of the instrument was used in measuring the sub-independent variables of ICT skills of internet surfing, video conferencing, data processing, document management and trouble shooting skills while the B section of the instrument was used in measuring the dependent variable of employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students. The A section of the instrument consisted of 25 items with five items used in measuring each of the independent sub-variables of ICT skills. Also, the B section of the instrument consisted 15 items that was used in measuring the dependent variable of employability of students, making it a total of 40 items for the ICTSESQ. The ICTSESQ was scored using a four point scale as described below; 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree. The instrument was face validated by three experts. The experts included one lecturer of Educational Evaluation and two lecturers of Business



Education in the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Sciences respectively, all in University of Uyo, Uyo. The experts were asked to examine the items in the instrument to see if they align with the requirements for ICT skills and employability of students. The experts were also be provided with the purpose of the study, research questions, and null hypotheses for review. Their feedback lead to necessary adjustments in the final version of the instrument.

An instrument is said to be reliable when it measures what it is designed to measure consistency. To determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument, the “ICT Skills and Employability of Students Questionnaire (ICTSESQ)” was administered to 30 Office Technology Management students in public Polytechnics in South South, Nigeria, who were not part of the sample. After which Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.86 for the ICTSESQ (Shown in Appendix VI). According to Benson (2017), a reliability coefficient above 0.7 is deemed reliable, with higher values indicating greater reliability. The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Information and Library Sciences, University of Uyo, Uyo, for permission to carry out the study in the selected polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. After which the researcher visited the selected Polytechnics for the study and explained the purpose of the study to the head of personnel that the findings of the study would help in determining the extent to which ICT skills predicts employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students. After the explanation, the researcher with the help of a train research assistant administered the questionnaire to the OTM students. The instrument recorded a 97 % (Percent) returned rate and this gave a total of 364 questionnaire that were properly filled by respondents and returned for analysis, out of the 375 questionnaire that were administered to the respondents. Regression Analysis was used in answering the research questions and in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent does internet surfing skill predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students?

Summary of extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students.

(n=364)

Variables	R	R ²	% of Prediction
Internet Surfing Skill	.53	.28	28.00
Employability of Graduating Students			

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 1 showed the extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of office technology management students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria. The coefficient of correlation (R) of 0.53 showed that internet surfing skill predicts employability of Office Technology Management graduating students to a moderate extent. The coefficient of determination (R²) value of .28 indicates that internet surfing contributes up to 28 percent variation in employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students. This implies that the extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate.



Research Question Two

To what extent does video conferencing skill predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students?

Summary of extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students (n =364)

Variables	R	R ²	% of Prediction
Video Conferencing Skill	.49	.24	24.00
Employability of graduating Students			

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 2 shows the extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria. The coefficient of correlation (R) of .49 showed that video conferencing predicts employability of OTM graduating students to a moderate extent. The coefficient of determination (R²) value of 0.24 indicates that video conferencing skill contributes up to 24 percent variation in employability of OTM graduating students. This implies that the extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate.

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Internet surfing does not significantly predict employability of Office Technology Management graduating students?

Regression analysis of internet surfing skill as a predictor for employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision
Regression	3658.70	1	3658.70	140.53	0.00	Significant
Residual	9424.74	362	26.04			
Total	13083.44	363				

Not Significant at .05 alpha level. R = 0.529, R² = 0.280

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 3 shows that the calculated R-value of 0.53 and F-value 140.53 is significant since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 at 1 and 362 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that internet surfing skill does not significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students is rejected. Hence, internet surfing skill significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis Two

Video conferencing does not significantly predict employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students.

Regression analysis of video conferencing as a predictor for employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F	p-value	Decision
Regression	3106.38	1	3106.38	112.71	0.00	Significant
Residual	9977.06	362	27.56			
Total	13083.44	363				



Significant at .05 alpha level, $R = .487$, $R^2 = .237$

Source: Field data (2025)

Table 4 shows that the calculated R-value of .49 and F-value of 112.71 is significant since the p-value of 0.00 is less than .05 at 1 and 362 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that video conferencing does not significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students is rejected. Hence, video conferencing skill significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria.

Findings

The findings of the study revealed the following:

1. The extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate.
2. The extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate.

Discussion of Findings

Internet Surfing Skill and Employability of Office Technology and Management Graduating Students.

The findings in Table 4.1 revealed that the extent to which internet surfing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate. The findings in Table 4.6 also revealed that internet surfing skill significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria. This is possible because modern offices rely heavily on digital information access. Graduates who can efficiently search, evaluate, and retrieve online information complete tasks faster and with greater accuracy. These skills support core office functions such as document preparation, data management, scheduling, and communication. Effective internet use enables graduates to adopt new software, platforms, and cloud-based tools with minimal training. Employers value employees who can independently solve problems by locating credible online resources and best practices. Internet surfing competence also enhances professional communication through email etiquette, virtual collaboration and online research. It improves decision-making by allowing access to up-to-date policies, market trends and organizational information. Graduates with strong online navigation skills demonstrate adaptability in fast-changing, technology-driven work environments. Such competence reduces supervision needs and increases productivity, which positively influences employer preference.

Video Conferencing and Employability of Office Technology and Management Graduating Students

The findings in Table 4.2 showed that the extent to which video conferencing skill predicts employability of OTM graduating students is moderate. The findings from the corresponding hypothesis showed that video conferencing skill significantly predict employability of OTM graduating students in public polytechnics in South-South, Nigeria. This is achievable because modern organizations increasingly operate in virtual and hybrid work environments. Graduates who can confidently use video conferencing tools support effective meetings, interviews and organizational communication. This skill enhances professional interaction with clients, supervisors, and team members across different locations. Competence in video conferencing reflects strong digital literacy, which is a key requirement in contemporary office settings. Employers value graduates who can manage virtual meetings, schedule sessions, share screens, and handle basic technical issues. Video conferencing skills also improve



collaboration, teamwork and productivity in remote work situations. It helps organizations reduce travel costs while maintaining efficient communication. Graduates with these skills demonstrate adaptability to technological changes in office operations. Effective use of video conferencing platforms also supports training, presentations, and administrative coordination. The finding of the study is in agreement with that of Uche (2024) who found that video conferencing significantly predict job readiness of Information Management and Technology students in tertiary institutions in Anambra Central Senatorial District based on students' technical proficiency, adaptability, professional etiquette and privacy awareness.

Conclusion

The study found that internet surfing and video conferencing skills all significantly predict the employability of Office Technology and Management graduating students in public polytechnics in South South, Nigeria. These findings indicate that proficiency in core ICT skills enhances graduates' readiness and competitiveness in the labour market. Moreover, the study demonstrates that ICT competence is a critical determinant of employability among Office Technology and Management graduates in the region.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended that:

- i) Greater emphasis should be placed on training students in data processing software and applications relevant to office operations. Lecturers should assign practical tasks that involve data entry, analysis, and reporting to strengthen students' accuracy and efficiency in handling organizational data.
- ii) Instructional activities should focus on digital document creation, storage, retrieval, and security to improve students' document management competence. Institutions should provide access to modern document management systems to enable students gain practical experience in organizing and maintaining office records.
- iii) Office Technology and Management Students should incorporate problem-solving and basic technical trouble shooting training to help students handle common ICT challenges independently. Practical exercises that simulate real office technical issues should be used to enhance students' confidence and adaptability in technology-driven work environments.

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**EFFECT OF BLENDED AND FLIPPED CLASSROOM TEACHING
STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
BUSINESS STUDIES IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA
IBOM STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of Blended and Flipped classroom teaching strategies on students' Academic performance in business studies in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Two research objectives, questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study comprised 7,5000 Junior Secondary Two (JSS 2) students in private secondary school in Akwa Ibom State. 200 students constitute the sample for the study. The research instrument employed for data collection was Business Studies Performance Test (BSPT). A quasi-experimental design was used, involving Blend teaching strategy and the other with flipped classroom teaching strategies in two business studies topics, reception office and office correspondence. The participants' performance was measured and compared using pre-test and post-test. The instruments consisted of thirty (30) multiple questions. The instruments were presented to two research experts for face validation from the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational Education, Library and Information Science, University of Uyo. Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and a reliability co-efficient of 0.87 was obtained. The researcher developed two lessons plan for the study. These were blended and Flipped classroom lessons plan. Mean statistics was used in answering research questions, while analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to test research hypotheses at 0.05 level of students' academic performance in the study area. The study concludes that Blended and Flipped classroom teaching strategies positively impact students' academic performance in Business Studies. This study recommends among other that Blended and flipped classroom teaching strategies should be included into the curriculum. This would enhance students' engagement and provides valuable insight for educators, curriculum planners and policy makers aiming to improve teaching strategies in Business Studies.

Keywords: *Business Studies, Blended learning, Office Correspondence, Receptionist*



Introduction

Business Studies is a subject taught at the junior secondary school level that prepares students for the world of work by exposing them to both theoretical and practical knowledge in business practices. It covers core concepts that enable students to gain skills for managing various aspects of office operations and commercial activities. Oladunjoye (2016) defined business studies as a multidisciplinary subject that helps students acquire values, competencies, and skills necessary for participation in commercial activities, ensuring individuals are well-prepared for roles in the modern business environment. Through this process, students gain essential skills that can lead to both entrepreneurship and employment opportunities. Additionally, Business Studies is vital for equipping students with practical knowledge in the commercial sciences, making it essential for national development.

Teaching strategy encompasses a broad perspective on how teaching and learning should be conducted, while a teaching method refers to the specific steps and procedures used in the instructional process. According to (Kiviniemi, (2014), a teaching approach represents the overall philosophy and conceptual framework guiding educational practices, describing the underlying beliefs about teaching and learning. In contrast, a teaching method involves the detailed, systematic procedures employed to deliver educational content to students. Thus, a teaching strategy provides the overarching ideology or general view of instructional practices, whereas a teaching method details the practical techniques used in implementing that strategy.

Blended teaching strategy (BTS), specifically, combines face-to-face instruction with online learning, creating a more flexible and student-centered instructional environment. It is the hybrid of the two approaches to form a blend. Blended teaching strategy is that approach that bridges the gap between the fully online learning approach and the conventional classroom approach. It integrates online learning with in-person instruction from the teacher. BTS involves combining classroom instruction and e-learning (Kiviniemi, 2014) which is increasing in schools around the world (Graham, et al., 2022). Blended learning has gained significant traction in educational institutions worldwide, offering students the opportunity to engage with learning materials both online and in person (Graham, et, al., 2022). It includes various models, such as the rotation model and its subsets, like the flipped classroom model.

In the conventional classroom approach, the teacher delivers lesson materials directly to students during class and assigns homework for them to complete outside of class. In contrast, the blended learning approach, specifically the flipped classroom model, provides resources online through a virtual learning environment. Students are expected to review these materials at home, at their own pace, before coming to class. During class time, the focus shifts to hands-on exercises and activities. This approach can enhance student participation, as it allows them to engage with the content independently before actively applying it in class.

Statement of the Problem

Students of business studies lack the requisite motivation and interest when confirmed to tight classroom conditions under the chalk and board system. Upsurge in technology and advancement in interest have brought about modern learning systems which include Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies which have some positive impact on academic performance of students. This situation has implication on student's performance in advanced commercial subjects like Commerce. Accounting and Economics in Senior Secondary Education Programme. It would also barrier career advancement of business students in higher institutions of learning. Parents alike are equally affected as inability of their wards to perform efficiently in their academics could lead to wastage of their hard-earned resources: employers of labour would



be starved of qualified personnel as well. Planted on this background, the researcher intends to investigate the effect of Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies on academic performance of students of Business Studies in Private Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the effect of Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies on students' academic performance in Business Studies in Private Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the:

- i. Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught reception office with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies.
- ii. Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught office correspondence with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies.

Research Questions

The following research questions were poised in order to guide the study:

- i. What is the Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught reception office with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies?
- ii. What is the Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught office correspondence with Blended and Fipped Classroom Teaching Strategies?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of Business Studies students when taught office reception with Blended and Flipped Classroom teaching Strategies.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of Business Studies students when taught office correspondence with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies.

Literature Review

Blended Teaching Strategies

Blended teaching strategies have gained substantial attention in recent years, as educators seek to combine traditional classroom instruction with online methodologies. At the heart of blended teaching strategies is the integration of face-to-face and digital learning environments, creating a cohesive approach that maximizes the benefits of both modes of instruction. According to Noni, *et al* (2020), blended teaching strategies represent a comprehensive method that merges conventional classroom activities with digital tools, offering flexibility and enhanced engagement for learners. The aim is not simply to incorporate technology, but to design a seamless pedagogical model that improves the overall educational experience. Graham (2021) emphasized that blended teaching strategies combine face-to-face interactions with online components in a synchronized manner, creating a unified course structure. This model facilitates flexible learning, allowing students to interact with instructors and peers in real-time while also engaging with digital content at their own pace

Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies

A flipped classroom teaching strategy inverts the traditional classroom structure, where students typically listen to lectures in class and engage in homework or other learning activities afterward. In this traditional model, students are taught content during class through lectures, and



deeper understanding is pursued independently through homework. However, in the flipped classroom teaching strategy, students are introduced to new content before class, typically through video lectures or readings, and in-class time is dedicated to engaging activities that promote deeper understanding (Staker and Horn, 2021). The essence of the flipped classroom teaching strategy is to reverse the flow of instruction: content is delivered before class, allowing in-class time to be used for more interactive and hands-on activities.

Business Studies

Business Studies is one of the core pre-vocational subjects offered in junior secondary schools in Nigeria. Asuquo (2016) defined Business Studies an integrated subject which exposes students to pre-vocational ideas in business. It covers Commerce, Book-keeping, Office Practice, Typewriting and Shorthand. According to Asuquo, Business Studies is meant to educate students in a cluster of occupational skills for specific jobs and equip them with competences for starting a trade of their own. Business Studies is considered as a foundational subject or prerequisite for effective learning and understanding of some senior secondary school subjects like financial accounting, commerce, marketing, office technology etcetera as well as key programmes in tertiary institutions such as Business Education and Business Administration.

Reception Office

Students' performances in topics like reception office have shown notable variation when different teaching strategies, such as Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies, are employed. Blended teaching combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning components, allowing students to benefit from both methods (Graham, 2020). Studies suggest that blending these approaches can enhance students' engagement and understanding, particularly in practical topics like reception office, where both theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills are essential. The incorporation of online resources allows students to learn at their own pace, while in-class sessions focus on reinforcing practical skills. This balance can improve overall performance scores, especially in vocational subjects like reception office management.

Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies, where students are introduced to new content outside the classroom through videos or readings and then engage in problem-solving activities during class time, also positively affect students' performance in reception office tasks (Hamdan *et al*, 2021). By reversing the traditional teaching model, students come to class with foundational knowledge, allowing more time for practical exercises and deeper exploration of key concepts. In reception office tasks, such as managing phone calls, scheduling appointments, and customer interactions, students benefit from the in-class focus on skill development after digesting theoretical aspects beforehand. Studies indicate that flipped learning approaches can lead to improved test scores and retention of practical knowledge (Bergmann, 2020).

Office Correspondence

Office correspondence, a critical component of business studies, involves the ability to effectively communicate within an organizational setting through letters, emails, memos, and reports. Teaching this subject using Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies has proven to be an effective approach to improving students' performance scores. Blended teaching strategies, which combine face-to-face instruction with online learning, provide students with the flexibility to engage with course content both in and out of the classroom (Graham, 2020). This flexibility enables students to review office correspondence materials, such as sample letters or templates, at their own pace. Studies have shown that this approach significantly improves students' understanding and performance scores in communication-related tasks.



Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies, on the other hand, reverse the traditional model by having students engage with learning materials before class, typically through videos, readings, or online exercises (Hamdan *et al.*, 2021). When applied to office correspondence, this approach allows students to familiarize themselves with different formats and styles of business writing before attending class. This preparation enables them to spend class time focusing on practical exercises, such as drafting letters or writing memos. The flipped classroom model encourages deeper understanding and application of concepts, resulting in improved performance scores (Bergmann, 2020). Students arrive at class ready to practice, making the learning process more interactive and productive.

Research Method

The study employed a quasi-experimental non randomized control group, pre-test-post-test design. Defines experimental design as a specific investigation in which an investigator manipulates and control one or more independent variables and observes the dependent variable or variable for variation concomitant to be manipulations of the independent variable. This design is most appropriate for the study as randomization of the students into experimental and control groups are not very possible in the present situation. The area of the study conducted in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The population of the study was 7500 Junior Secondary School Two (JSSS II) students in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State Senatorial District. A sample size of 200 was drawn from the population. The sample was determined using purposive sampling technique and intact classes. A performance test was used for data collection. The Business Studies Performance Test (BSPT) was developed by the researcher. The test was reshuffled before it was given to the students as post-test. For the experimental group, the test was taken on computer each student. The method of validation was face validity. The instrument for data collection was a test. The method of data collection was the pre-test activated on a Learning Management System. Method of data analysis mean statistics.

Results

Research Question One

What is the Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught reception office with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies?

Table 1: Mean Performance Scores of Students when Taught Reception Office using Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies

Group	Pre-Test	SD	Post-Test	SD	Mean
N	Mean $\bar{x}$		Mean ($\bar{X}$)		Gain
Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies	51.76	17.98	77.48	8.21	26.22
Blended	44.47	12.33	57.10	19.41	12.63
71					
129					

The data presented in Table 1 shows the difference in the scores of students taught reception office using flipped classroom and blended teaching strategies. The pre-test mean score for the experimental and control groups were 51.76 and 44.47 with Standard Deviation (SD) of 17.98 and 12.33 respectively. The experimental group taught reception office had a mean achievement score of 77.48 with Standard Deviation (SD) of 8.21 while that of control group has a mean score of 57.10 and Standard Deviation (SD) of 19.41; showing that the performance of student taught reception office using flipped classroom teaching strategy is higher than the performance of those taught with blended teaching strategy. This implies that, the use of flipped



classroom teaching strategy in instruction makes students perform higher in reception office than blended teaching strategy.

Research Question 2

What is the Mean difference in students' performance scores when taught office correspondence with Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies?

Table 2: Mean Performance Scores of Students when Taught Office Correspondence using Blended and Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies

Group	Pre-Test	SD	Post-Test	SD	N	Mean
N	Mean		Mean ($\bar{X}$)			Gain
(X)						
Flipped Classroom Teaching Strategies	50.70	17.23	80.07	8.86	71	29.37
Blended	43.93	12.86	56.71	20.08	129	12.78

The data presented in Table 2 shows the difference in the scores of students taught using flipped classroom and blended teaching strategies. The pre-test mean score for the experimental and control groups were 50.70 and 43.93 with Standard Deviation (SD) of 17.23 and 12.86 respectively. The experimental group taught office correspondence had a mean achievement score of 80.07 with Standard Deviation (SD) of 8.86 while that of control group has a mean score of 56.71 and Standard Deviation (SD) of 20.08; showing that the performance of students taught office correspondence using flipped classroom teaching strategy is higher than the performance of those taught with blended teaching strategy. This implies that, the use of flipped classroom teaching strategy in instruction makes students perform higher in office correspondence than blended teaching strategy.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding in table 1 revealed a mean difference of academic performance of students in office reception when taught using blended and flipped classroom teaching strategies. It also indicated a significant difference. This implies that, the use of flipped classroom teaching strategies is preferred to blended teaching strategies. The finding is in line with Bergmann, (2020) who noted that in reception office tasks, that such as managing phone calls, scheduling appointments, and customer interactions help students benefit from the in-class focus on skill development after digesting theoretical aspects beforehand. Studies indicate that flipped classroom learning approaches can lead to improved test scores and retention of practical knowledge.

The finding in table 2 revealed a mean difference of academic performance of students in office correspondence when taught using blended and flipped classroom teaching strategies. It also indicated a significant difference. This implies that, the use of flipped classroom teaching is preferred to blended teaching strategies. The finding is in line with Hamdan *et al.*, (2021) who posited that flipped classroom teaching strategies reverse the traditional model by having students engage with learning materials before class, typically through videos, readings, or online exercises. When applied to office correspondence, this approach allows students to familiarize themselves with different formats and styles of business writing before attending class. This preparation enables them to spend class time focusing on practical exercises, such as drafting letters or writing memos.



Conclusion

Based on the results of the data analysis this conclusion was reached. That, there is significant difference in academic performance of students' in Business Studies taught using flipped classroom teaching and blended teaching strategies in Junior Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom State. In other words, students who were exposed to flipped teaching strategy learning on the concepts of office reception, office correspondence, office documentation, trade and market performed better than those who were taught these concepts using blended strategy.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study. The following recommendations were made:

- a. Government should encourage schools to embrace the latest teaching strategies by way of providing the platform to use the strategies.
- b. Parents should assist their wards to key into the fast innovation in education by giving them what they can afford in terms of the gadgets and materials needed for flipped teaching strategy.
- c. Teachers especially those teaching business studies should endeavour to explore more teaching strategies in the course of leading the students.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION: MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO TRANSFORMING LEARNING, INNOVATION AND INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This paper, titled Artificial Intelligence on business education; a multidisciplinary approach to transforming learning, innovation and industry, shows how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is fundamentally reshaping business education by transforming both the content and methods of teaching, preparing graduates for data-driven, algorithmically enhanced workplaces. Unlike prior technologies, AI introduces predictive analytics, automation, adaptive decision-making, and autonomous systems, demanding that graduates possess technical fluency, strategic integration skills, and ethical awareness. Employers increasingly require professionals capable of applying AI to create business value while addressing challenges such as bias, privacy, and transparency. Business faculties are responding by embedding AI across curricula, offering experiential learning through AI labs, simulations, capstone projects, and executive programs, thereby bridging theory and practice. A multidisciplinary approach is essential, combining computer science, statistics, business knowledge, organizational behaviour, design thinking, ethics, and pedagogy. This convergence ensures students develop both technical competence and managerial, ethical, and strategic insights. AI also enhances learning through personalized adaptive pathways, intelligent tutoring, automated assessment, immersive simulations, and faculty augmentation, fostering engagement, critical thinking, and applied problem-solving. Key competency areas for students include foundational literacies in AI and data, applied technical skills, business integration, governance and ethics, human–AI teamwork, and innovation. Ethical, legal, and social considerations, such as academic integrity, bias mitigation, privacy, equity, and institutional governance, must underpin AI education. Successful integration also requires institutional transformation, including faculty development, industry partnerships, robust infrastructure, and policy frameworks. In conclusion, AI is both a technological imperative and pedagogical responsibility. When strategically embedded, it enables business schools to cultivate graduates who can lead AI-driven transformation responsibly, ethically, and effectively across industries

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming industries and redefining business operations, making it a critical focus for modern business education. Unlike earlier technologies, AI introduces capabilities such as predictive analytics, automation, and adaptive decision-making, which directly impact competitiveness and innovation. Employers now expect graduates to possess technical fluency with AI tools, the strategic ability to integrate AI into business models, and the ethical awareness to address challenges like data privacy and algorithmic bias. Business



schools are responding by embedding AI across curricula, using AI-powered simulations, and fostering experiential learning opportunities that prepare students for AI-driven workplaces. At the same time, the growing adoption of AI worldwide underscores the urgency of aligning education with industry needs. Ultimately, AI matters to business education because it is both a technological imperative and a pedagogical responsibility: equipping graduates to lead responsibly in intelligent, data-driven organizations.

WHY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE MATTERS TO BUSINESS EDUCATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is very important in business education today because it is not just about automating simple tasks. Instead, it is a powerful force that is changing how businesses operate, make decisions, and manage their workforce. Unlike past technologies that only improved existing processes, AI brings new abilities such as predicting outcomes, creating new designs, making adaptive decisions, and running systems independently. These changes affect how businesses compete and what skills graduates need to succeed (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017; Wilson & Daugherty, 2018).

Employers now expect graduates to do more than just understand basic business skills. They want people who can use AI tools to analyze data, make smart decisions, and handle the ethical and management challenges that come with AI. Surveys show that companies look for candidates who know how to design AI-enabled products and services and who understand issues like fairness, bias, and transparency (Bughin et al., 2018; Dwivedi et al., 2021). This means AI knowledge is no longer optional, it is a basic requirement for business professionals. Business programmes are beginning to respond to this demand. Instead of offering only a few separate courses on data science or analytics, many schools are now embedding AI into their main programs. They provide executive training, real-world projects, and simulations where students practice using AI in areas such as supply chain management, financial forecasting, and marketing. Some schools also use AI to improve teaching, for example, through tutoring systems or administrative support (Chakraborty et al., 2020; HolonIQ, 2020).

The need for this change became even more urgent after the COVID-19 pandemic, which sped up digital transformation. A McKinsey (2021) report showed that AI adoption doubled between 2017 and 2021, with companies seeing higher revenues and lower costs. This means today's graduates must not only work with AI but also lead in environments where AI is a key driver of success. Without these skills, they risk falling behind in a world increasingly shaped by algorithms and digital intelligence (Shrestha et al., 2019).

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONVERGENCE

A strong framework for teaching Artificial Intelligence (AI) in business education cannot come from a single subject. Instead, it requires the blending of technical, managerial, social, and ethical knowledge. Businesses don't just need people who know how AI works technically; they need professionals who can connect algorithms with **business value, legal rules, and human needs** (Shrestha, Ben-Menahem, & von Krogh, 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

1. Computer Science and Machine Learning

AI is built on algorithms and machine learning. Business students do not need to become expert programmers, but they should understand the basics: how models are trained, what metrics measure performance, and why interpretability matters. Tools like SHAP or LIME help managers question AI decisions and ensure accountability (Molnar, 2020; Carvalho et al., 2019).



2. Statistics and Data Science

AI relies on good data and sound analysis. Students must know how to clean and prepare data, test for accuracy, and separate correlation from causation. Without these skills, managers may misread AI results and make poor business decisions (Varian, 2018; Jordan & Mitchell, 2015).

3. Business Domain Knowledge

AI only creates value when applied to real business areas like marketing, finance, or operations. For example, AI can personalize marketing campaigns, optimize supply chains, and improve financial forecasting. Business Education must teach students how to link AI with value creation in specific industries (Chatterjee et al., 2020; Bughin et al., 2018).

4. Organizational Behavior and Change Management

Many AI projects fail, not because of poor technology, but because of resistance within organizations. Business students must learn leadership, communication, and change management. They need to address concerns about job loss, build trust in AI decisions, and guide organizations through transformation (Davenport & Miller, 2020; Raisch & Krakowski, 2021).

5. Design Thinking and User Experience (UX)

AI must be user-friendly and human-centered. With design thinking, students learn to design solutions that are ethical, intuitive, and meet user needs. Poorly designed systems can frustrate users, while thoughtful design improves trust and engagement (Brown, 2019; Shneiderman, 2020).

6. Ethics, Law, and Public Policy

As AI spreads, concerns about fairness, bias, privacy, and regulation grow. Business students must understand government policies or Act that regulate how to manage ethical issues in AI. Embedding ethics ensures that graduates use AI responsibly and protect company reputation (Jobin, Ienca, & Vayena, 2019; Floridi, 2021).

7. Educational Design and Pedagogy

AI should not only be taught but also used as a teaching tool. Adaptive learning platforms, AI tutors, and dashboards can personalize student learning and build critical thinking. By experiencing AI in their own education, students better understand its strengths and weaknesses in real-world use (HolonIQ, 2020; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).

The Reason for the Convergence

A convergence model of AI-in-business education teaches students to think across technical, managerial, and societal dimensions. This reflects the real-world reality of AI adoption, where success depends not only on coding or algorithms but also on leadership, governance, and trust. Studies show that focusing only on technical training is not enough, because it leaves future managers unprepared for the ethical, organizational, and adoption challenges that AI brings (Ransbotham et al., 2021).

On the other hand, when business schools integrate multiple perspectives—technology, management, ethics, and innovation, they produce graduates who can align AI with business strategy, lead responsible adoption, and drive continuous improvement.

In the end, schools that embrace this convergence approach prepare their students not just to use AI tools, but to become strategic leaders of AI transformation across industries.

TRANSFORMING LEARNING THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI is changing not only what business education students learn but also how they learn. It creates flexible, adaptive, and engaging environments that mirror modern organizational realities.



In business education, AI bridges the gap between traditional teaching and digital, data-driven learning. Its impact can be seen in several key areas:

1. Personalized Learning and Adaptive Pathways

AI-powered platforms personalize learning by identifying each student's strengths, weaknesses, and progress. Instead of pushing everyone through the same syllabus, these systems adjust pace and content until mastery is reached. This is especially valuable in business schools, where students often come from different academic backgrounds. Research shows adaptive learning improves engagement, reduces dropout rates, and supports equity by meeting learners at their level (Kerr et al., 2020; Holmes et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2021).

2. Intelligent Tutoring and Coaching

AI tutoring systems act like personal mentors, offering real-time feedback in both technical and soft skills. In business education, this may include coding, data analysis, leadership, or negotiation. These systems often use Socratic-style questioning to guide problem-solving. Recent tools, like AI-driven negotiation simulations, show strong potential in building managerial skills while remaining scalable (Nye, 2021; Woolf, 2020).

3. Automated Assessment and Learning Analytics

AI reduces the burden of grading by using Natural Language Processing (NLP) to evaluate essays, reports, and business plans. Students receive instant feedback, while instructors can focus on deeper mentoring. Learning analytics also track participation and performance to spot at-risk students early, enabling timely support. This approach ensures success in large or online classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2021; Ifenthaler & Yau, 2020).

4. Simulation, Digital Twins, and Immersive Learning

AI enhances experiential learning through realistic simulations. With digital twins, students can test supply chain strategies, financial forecasts, or marketing campaigns in risk-free environments. These simulations mimic real-world complexity, allowing learners to experiment, see consequences, and refine strategies. For example, AI-driven marketing simulations can model consumer behavior at scale (Balakrishnan & Dwivedi, 2021; VanDerAalst, 2018). Such tools build adaptability, critical thinking, and system-level reasoning.

5. Faculty Augmentation and Teaching Support

AI complements rather than replaces instructors by enhancing their capacity to teach effectively. Intelligent teaching assistants can generate datasets, design practice exercises, and respond to routine student inquiries. In large classes, these AI systems are capable of managing thousands of questions simultaneously, ensuring faster response times and greater student satisfaction. By automating repetitive tasks, AI allows instructors to dedicate more time to mentorship, innovation, and higher-order teaching responsibilities (Luckin, 2018; Felsberger et al., 2020).

CONCRETE APPLICATION OF AI IN BUSINESS EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY

AI's real value in business education is best seen through practical applications. By embedding AI tools directly into teaching, business education departments bridge theory and practice, ensuring graduates can apply classroom knowledge in real business settings. Below are some key examples:

1. AI Labs and Capstones

Many schools now have AI labs and industry-linked capstone projects. Students work in teams to create prototypes like chatbots, product recommendation engines, or smart dashboards. These projects combine technical skills with business planning and mentorship from industry experts. Such experiences build technical literacy, teamwork, and entrepreneurial problem-solving, skills employers actively seek (Chakraborty et al., 2020; Davenport & Mittal, 2022).



2. Data-Driven Strategy Modules

AI is being added to strategy courses through machine learning (ML) pipelines. Students use real datasets to forecast market trends, test pricing strategies, or simulate market entry decisions. These exercises strengthen both analytical skills and strategic reasoning, showing the importance of data-driven thinking in competitive business environments (Bughin et al., 2018; Iansiti & Lakhani, 2020).

3. AI for Accounting and Finance

Finance and accounting education students now use AI tools for fraud detection, anomaly spotting, and algorithmic trading simulations. Students also practice risk modeling and predictive analytics for portfolio management. These tools provide exposure to both the technical side of finance and the ethical challenges of automation in high-stakes contexts (Kokina & Davenport, 2017; Luo et al., 2018).

4. Marketing Personalization Projects

AI helps marketing students explore predictive analytics and customer insights. Projects include segmenting markets with clustering algorithms, building recommendation engines, and calculating customer lifetime value. These tools show how personalization boosts ROI and loyalty, while also raising concerns about privacy and consumer trust (Wedel & Kannan, 2016; Chatterjee et al., 2020).

5. Operations and Supply Chain Simulations

AI-driven simulations in operations management enable students to experiment with inventory management, scheduling, and logistics under real-world conditions. Digital twins allow them to model disruptions like strikes or pandemics and see how systems respond. This builds resilience and adaptability, preparing students for uncertain business environments (Ivanov & Dolgui, 2020; VanDerAalst, 2018).

6. Executive Education Programs

AI is also a growing part of executive training. Short programs give managers technical overviews and case-based lessons on governance, investment, and organizational change. While not focused on coding, these courses help executives understand AI's strategic and ethical implications, preparing them to lead AI adoption in their organizations (Raisch & Krakowski, 2021; Wilson & Daugherty, 2018).

FROM CONTENT-HEAVY TEACHING TO COMPETENCY-BASED MODEL- A NEW STRATEGY

Business education in the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI) must move from content-heavy teaching to competency-based learning, focusing on what students can *do* with knowledge rather than just what they *know*. Employers increasingly expect graduates to combine technical literacy, strategic insight, and ethical judgment to use AI responsibly (Bughin et al., 2018; Huang & Rust, 2021).

The key Competency Clusters include the following:

1. Foundational Literacies

Basic AI and data literacy, including machine learning concepts, probability, statistics, and ethics.

Ensures leaders can critically evaluate AI outputs and make informed decisions (Davenport & Miller, 2022).



2. Applied Technical Skills

Hands-on fluency in data wrangling, model evaluation, and ML platforms (Python, R, low/no-code tools).

Prepares students to collaborate with technical experts and bridge tools with business value (Shrestha et al., 2019).

3. Business Integration Skills

Translating AI outputs into strategic action tied to KPIs and business goals.

Tackles the “last mile” challenge: turning algorithms into real organizational value (Wamba-Taguimdje et al., 2020).

4. Governance and Ethics

Addressing fairness, transparency, bias, privacy, compliance (e.g., EU AI Act).

Builds trustworthy adoption by equipping leaders to manage risks (Jobin et al., 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

5. Human–AI Teamwork

Designing workflows where human judgment complements AI recommendations.

Encourages hybrid intelligence for improved decision-making (Raisch & Krakowski, 2021).

6. Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Skills in prototyping AI products, assessing market fit, and scaling solutions.

Prepares graduates to create AI-driven ventures and transform industries (Cockburn et al., 2018).

INNOVATIONS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION

1. Intelligent Tutoring and Adaptive Learning Systems

AI-driven platforms analyze student performance in real time and provide personalized learning paths tailored to individual strengths and weaknesses. These systems allow:

Customized case studies and problem sets for each learner.

Real-time feedback on decision-making exercises in finance, marketing, or operations.

Adaptive simulations that progressively increase in complexity based on learner proficiency (Luckin et al., 2017).

2. Data Analytics and Predictive Modelling

Business students are trained to use AI tools for forecasting market trends, consumer behavior analysis, and risk assessment. Machine learning models help students develop skills in:

Analyzing large datasets to extract actionable insights.

Developing predictive models for business strategy and investment decisions.

Integrating ethical considerations in algorithmic decision-making (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018).

3. AI-Powered Virtual Simulations

Virtual business environments powered by AI allow students to experiment with strategic decision-making under uncertainty. Applications include:

Simulated stock market platforms.

Supply chain optimization exercises.

Marketing campaign planning with AI-generated consumer behavior predictions (Makridakis, 2017).

4. Chatbots and Automated Assistance

AI-powered chatbots support both teaching and administrative functions, providing:

Instant feedback on assignments and case studies.



Assistance with learning resources, scheduling, and academic queries.

Facilitation of peer collaboration and group projects through intelligent coordination systems (Luckin et al., 2017).

5. Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Text Analytics

NLP tools enable students to conduct sentiment analysis, market research, and consumer feedback assessment from large volumes of textual data, including social media posts, online reviews, and survey responses. This enhances analytical reasoning and strategic planning skills.

BENEFITS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION INTO BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1. Enhanced Learning Outcomes – Personalized learning paths improve comprehension, retention, and application of complex business concepts.
2. Industry-Relevant Skills – Students develop competencies in AI, data analytics, and digital decision-making, enhancing employability.
3. Efficiency and Engagement – Automated feedback, adaptive simulations, and interactive learning environments increase student engagement and reduce administrative burdens.
4. Strategic Thinking and Innovation – Exposure to AI-driven tools encourages students to experiment, iterate, and innovate in simulated business scenarios.

ETHICAL, LEGAL AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AI IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

AI in business education cannot be separated from its ethical, legal, and social responsibilities. As AI tools enter classrooms, assessments, and research, schools must prepare students not only technically but also ethically. Without this foundation, AI education risks reproducing bias, dishonesty, and inequality (Jobin, Ienca, & Vayena, 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

1. Academic Integrity and Misuse

Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Jasper, Copilot) makes plagiarism harder to detect.

Traditional detection-based policies are insufficient.

Business education departments must adopt assessment models that focus on originality, problem-solving, and authentic project work (Cotton et al., 2023; ISCAP, 2023).

2. Bias and Fairness

AI systems often reflect imbalanced datasets, creating bias in hiring, lending, or marketing.

Business education programmes must train students to identify, question, and mitigate bias in data and algorithms.

Fairness-aware exercises and critical case studies help students see that AI is not neutral (Mehrabi et al., 2021; O’Neil, 2017).

3. Privacy and Data Governance

Using real firm datasets raises issues of privacy, intellectual property, and compliance.

Universities must ensure anonymization, cybersecurity, and legal safeguards.

Adherence to frameworks like GDPR is essential in academic–industry collaboration (European Commission, 2020).

4. Over-Reliance and Deskilling

Excessive dependence on AI weakens skills in critical reasoning, judgment, and strategy.

Pedagogy must encourage “AI-assisted critical reasoning,” where students use AI but also question and contextualize outputs (Raisch & Krakowski, 2021).

5. Equity and Access

Unequal access to AI resources may widen educational and professional gaps.



Inclusive education must provide open-source tools, institutional support, and exposure for all learners (UNESCO, 2021).

AI applications must be designed with cultural and socioeconomic inclusivity in mind (Floridi et al., 2018).

6. Institutional Governance and Ethics-by-Design

Universities need AI governance frameworks with transparent documentation, audit trails, and ethics-by-design curricula.

Ethical literacy should be core to every AI-related course, not an elective (Stahl et al., 2022).

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Successfully integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into business education requires institutional transformation at structural, human, and policy levels. AI cannot be treated as a temporary add-on; it demands systematic rethinking of organizational design, faculty capacity, partnerships, infrastructure, and governance (Thomas et al., 2023). Institutions that act proactively will not only prepare AI-ready graduates but also respond to the fast-growing demand for executive AI programs (Financial Times, 2023).

1. Cross-School Institutes and Centers

Breaking down silos is essential for embedding AI across curricula.

AI-and-Business centers can unite strategy, computer science, ethics, and social sciences into a holistic learning ecosystem (George, Lakhani, & Puranam, 2020).

These centers can also co-develop case studies and teaching tools, ensuring students learn from real-world AI applications.

2. Faculty Development and Hiring

Faculty expertise is a major bottleneck: many business professors lack AI/data science skills.

Solutions include: professional workshops, technical upskilling, industry sabbaticals, and joint appointments with computer science schools (Sage Journals, 2021).

Hiring interdisciplinary scholars who combine business and technical expertise ensures courses reflect AI's organizational complexity (Popenici & Kerr, 2017).

3. Industry Partnerships

Collaboration with industry keeps curricula relevant and practical.

Firms can provide datasets, case studies, capstone projects, and lab sponsorships (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

These partnerships also create internships, mentorship, and recruitment pipelines for students.

4. Infrastructure Investments

AI education requires robust infrastructure:

- Cloud computing credits

- High-performance computing facilities

- Secure data sandboxes for sensitive datasets

Without such investments, AI teaching risks being theoretical and disconnected (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017).

5. Policy and Governance Frameworks

Clear policies ensure safe and ethical AI use in coursework and research.

Frameworks should address tool usage, privacy, IP rights, and data governance.

Transparent rules prevent misuse in assessments, safeguard academic integrity, and build industry partners' trust (Stahl et al., 2022).



6. Executive Education and Employer Demand

Employers increasingly seek managers who understand AI's technical and strategic dimensions.

Business schools must respond by offering AI-focused undergraduate, MBA, and executive programs.

Executive AI courses and certificates position schools as lifelong learning providers, directly aligned with workforce needs (Financial Times, 2023).

RECOMMENDATIONS

To harness the full potential of AI in business education, institutional leaders should prioritize the following actions:

1. Adopt an interdisciplinary governance body to coordinate AI curricula, research, ethics, and industry partnerships.
2. Design competency-based curricula that emphasize applied projects, professional portfolios, and ethical literacy rather than rote examinations.
3. Invest in faculty development by reskilling existing staff, rewarding interdisciplinary teaching, and incentivizing applied collaborations.
4. Forge strong industry partnerships to co-develop datasets, case studies, internships, and capstone sponsorships that ensure real-world relevance.
5. Implement transparent governance frameworks covering data protection, auditing processes, tool documentation, and academic integrity policies.
6. Pilot, measure, and iterate, using evidence-based metrics to evaluate impact and scaling only what demonstrably works.

CONCLUSION

Artificial Intelligence presents business education with an inflection point that extends far beyond the integration of technical tools. Its true promise lies in reimagining curricula, pedagogy, assessment, and institutional structures so that graduates are equipped to thrive in environments where data, algorithms, and human judgment must operate in concert.

Doing this well requires multidisciplinary collaboration, ethical foresight, deep engagement with industry, and a sustained commitment from institutions to invest in faculty, infrastructure, and governance. AI should not be treated as a peripheral technical add-on but as a cross-cutting capability that permeates all dimensions of business education.

When approached strategically, AI can accelerate innovation, enhance student readiness, and strengthen the relevance and impact of business education in an AI-driven economy. Recent policy reports, systematic reviews, and institutional case studies consistently affirm this trajectory and highlight the urgency of adopting AI responsibly, transparently, and inclusively in the business education programme.

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DIGITAL LEARNING TOOLS AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT IN FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AKWA IBOM NORTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the extent to which Digital Learning Tools predict students' academic engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of the study, three objectives and research questions were raised, and three null hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive research design was used. Population comprised 473 senior secondary school (SS1-SS3) students offering Financial Accounting in fourteen private secondary schools, in Akwa Ibom North-East. Sample size was 303 Financial Accounting Students, determined via Taro Yamane (1967) formula. "Digital Learning Tools and Students' Academic Engagement Questionnaire (DLTSAEQ)" was used for data collection, validated by three experts. Reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha statistics. R and R² values of simple linear regression were used to answer the research questions, while F-values of simple linear were used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that, digital textbooks, learning management systems, accounting simulation software, educational mobile applications and online assessment tools significantly predict students' academic engagement in Financial Accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria. The study concluded that digital learning tools highly predict students' academic engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria. It was recommended, among others, that regular capacity building programmes should be organised for teachers and school administrators to enhance their ICT literacy and digital teaching competence.

Introduction

Today, the world is witnessing an accelerated technological development in all sectors, including the educational sector, so technology and its tools have become very crucial in the implementation of the educational process since Students and teachers today rely on digital learning and its tools, as a result of its benefits which enrich the learner with information and data and ultimately enable them to access information with the least effort, time and cost. In the education of the digital era, it is of crucial importance to create digital-based learning environments and provide opportunities for students to meet the needs of contemporary, 21st century education. It is thus essential to shift from traditional and teacher-fronted classrooms to modern, student-centered and computerized learning environments. Teachers need to facilitate and promote digital teaching practices and, as a result, enrich students' digital learning experiences. Education in the 21st century has undergone significant transformations, driven by rapid technological advancements, globalization, and evolving pedagogical approaches. The traditional teacher-centered model has therefore shifted towards more interactive, student-centered learning that prioritizes critical thinking, problem-solving and digital literacy due to technology...

Technology plays a crucial role in this transformation, with digital learning tools such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), Educational apps, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Classrooms redefining how knowledge is developed and consumed. Additionally, education now



emphasizes skills such as collaboration, creativity, and adaptability among others, to prepare students for a dynamic and technology-driven world. The integration of digital tools not only enhances accessibility and inclusivity but also fosters deeper engagement, personalized learning experiences, and real-world applications of knowledge. As education continues to evolve, the focus remains on equipping students with the necessary skills to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and digitalized global society. The use of digital learning tools foster students' academic engagement by promoting active participation, critical thinking, and motivation, therefore enhancing their understanding and retention of financial accounting concepts.

In recent years, the integration of digital learning tools in educational settings have gained significant momentum through digital tools, such as online simulations, interactive software, and collaborative platforms which offer promising opportunities to enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes. The use of digital learning media is growing along with advances in Information and Communication Technology. Technology in this modern era not only influences the way we communicate and work, but also the way we learn (Putri and Jayanta, 2023) implementation for the integration of digital media in the learning process in schools, especially at the basic education level, has commenced as a strategy to improve the quality of student learning outcomes (Siregar and Sumantri, 2024).

Secondary education, which encompasses both junior and senior secondary levels for students aged 11 to 18, plays a crucial role in personal and academic development. Belle (2017) hinted the secondary education is vital for achieving the four pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. The primary goals of secondary education include preparing individuals for productive societal roles and further education. Bookkeeping/Financial Accounting is a key vocational subject within the Nigerian secondary school system that supports the development of practical entrepreneurship skills (Obayi, Etuk and Oriola 2021). Financial accounting, as a vocational subject, focuses on teaching accurate bookkeeping and recording of business transactions. This process is essential for identifying potential financial issues and making informed decisions. Ukoima, Akpanobong, Usip, and Uke, (2024), described financial accounting as the practice of recording, classifying, analyzing, measuring, interpreting, summarizing, and reporting financial data to aid objective assessment and decision-making. The subject is designed to prepare students with the necessary competencies to manage financial transactions effectively in any business setting (Ishola *et. al.*, 2020). Financial accounting is one of the components of business studies taught in senior secondary schools and it requires specialized teachers who are professionals in the field that can engage the students academically to achieve the objectives and aims of the subject.

Students' academic engagement is a critical factor in the learning process, influencing their motivation, participation, and overall academic success. According to Ghasemi *et al.* (2018), academic engagement refers to students' participation in or attention to their academic work. Some other terms used to describe the concept of academic engagement are student engagement, study engagement and educational engagement (Alrashidi, Phan and Ngu, 2016). Simply put, the term 'academic engagement' is the attention students pay to school work and their interaction with fellow students, teachers, school activities and school environments. Academic engagement could be in the form of behavior or cognition. Behavioral engagement involves students' participation in academic and extracurricular activities, while emotional engagement relates to their sense of belonging and investment in learning. In support, Fredricks *et. al.*, (2021), refers to cognitive engagement as the willingness to exert effort in understanding complex ideas. Also, Bond *et. al.*, (2020), observed that students who demonstrate high academic engagement are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes, develop critical thinking skills, and persist in



their educational pursuits. Therefore, students' academic engagement is significantly enhanced through digital learning tools.

Digital Learning Tools (DLTs) are technological resources designed to enhance teaching and learning by making education more interactive, accessible, and engaging. These tools include Learning Management Systems (LMS), digital textbooks, educational mobile applications, online assessment platforms, and virtual classrooms, all of which facilitate personalized learning experiences. According to Tsulaia (2023), digital learning tools include a wide variety of applications and learning platforms that facilitate teaching, learning, interaction and assessment. There are hundreds of digital learning tools that improve the academic process, grant autonomy to students, encourage collaboration, and strengthen communication between learners and teachers. Digital learning tools may be assessment tools (tools for creating quizzes, tests, etc.), tools for creating educational games, platforms that serve as communication channels, platforms that allow producing creative and interactive content, and so forth. By integrating multimedia elements such as videos, animations, and interactive exercises, digital tools cater to different learning styles, allowing students to grasp complex concepts more easily and effectively. These tools also provide real-world simulations, automated assessments, and instant feedback, which help students apply theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios. Moreover, digital learning tools promote self-paced learning, collaboration, and real-time communication between students and teachers, fostering deeper engagement and improved academic performance. Okafor and Ogbu, 2023 opined that as education continues to embrace technology, the role of digital learning tools becomes increasingly essential in preparing students for the demands of the knowledge-driven economy.

This study focused on private secondary schools which are those secondary schools that are not administered or funded by the government and other non-public sources for funding but rather relied on tuition fees and other private sources for funding and offering education at the secondary level. In private secondary schools, where there is greater flexibility in curriculum implementation and resource allocation and digital learning is expected to be more advanced compared to public schools. However, several challenges still hinder the full integration of digital tools in Financial Accounting education. Digital learning tools encompass a wide range of technological resources designed to enhance the teaching and learning process by making education more interactive, accessible and engaging. For the purpose of this study, digital textbooks, learning management systems, accounting simulation software, educational mobile applications and online assessment are the focus of this study.

Digital textbooks have emerged as a means for students to shift their focus from the monotony of reading to the excitement of discovery. Unlike static textbooks, digital versions integrate videos, hyperlinks, and interactive quizzes that cater to diverse learning styles, thereby promoting a deeper understanding of accounting concepts. Additionally, digital textbooks are more accessible, allowing students to study anytime and anywhere, which enhances their engagement with the subject matter. Salman *et. al.*, (2019) describes digital textbooks as electronic versions of traditional printed materials. In a similar view, Okafor and Ogbu, (2023), stated that students using interactive e-books demonstrate higher retention and improved comprehension in technical subjects like accounting. Digital textbooks complement Learning Management Systems by providing interactive and accessible content that seamlessly integrates with learning management systems platforms, enabling students to engage with course materials, hence sustains student learning management system. The methods used to facilitate student learning have always been critical in shaping students' engagement and academic success. Traditional teaching methods like face-to-face interactions and printed materials have dominated



educational systems for decades. However, the rapid advancement of technology has introduced innovative tools like Learning Management Systems (LMS) that have transformed the educational landscape (Bonsu *et. al.*, 2021).

Learning Management System (LMS) according to Brush (2019), is a software application or web-based technology used to plan, implement and assess a specific learning process. It is an e-learning-based platform built on two major elements - a server that performs the base functionality and a user interface that is operated by an instructor, students and administrators. The LMS, according to the author, enables an instructor to create and deliver content, monitor students' participation and assess students' performance. According to Brown (2020), the LMS provides an avenue for the delivery and tracking of e-learning initiatives in one place. LMSs are Web-based software used mainly for asynchronous interaction between instructors and students by delivering a course's information, materials, and activities (Raza *et. al.*, 2021). Learning Management Systems provides an organized digital space where educators can structure course materials, assignments, and assessments while fostering collaboration through discussion forums and messaging systems. In Financial Accounting education, Learning Management System (LMS) platforms such as Google Classroom, Moodle, and Blackboard integrate lecture notes, case studies, and practice exercises, making learning more structured and engaging. It is a platform that enables the delivery of educational content, assessment, and collaboration for students, teachers, and their stakeholders. The use of LMS enables learners to access educational materials from anywhere, anytime, creating a more flexible and efficient learning environment. With the rapid development of technology, the use of LMS has become increasingly popular in the educational system, leading to a growing interest in understanding its influence on student academic engagement.

Accounting Simulation software is a type of software that bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application by providing hands-on experience in real-world accounting scenarios. Accounting simulation software has emerged as a transformative tool in education, offering dynamic and interactive learning experiences that enhance student engagement and understanding. These programs create virtual environments where students can experiment and explore complex concepts in a controlled setting, thus facilitating experiential learning (Kaysi, 2025). These simulations allow students to practice bookkeeping, financial reporting, and auditing tasks in a controlled environment, enhancing their understanding of accounting principles. Software such as QuickBooks, Sage, and Xero enable students to apply accounting theories to real-life business transactions, thereby increasing their confidence and engagement. Eze and Nwosu (2023) stated that students who use simulation-based learning tools exhibit higher problem-solving abilities and professional preparedness compared with those who rely solely on traditional instruction. Accounting simulation software integrates seamlessly with educational mobile applications, enabling students to practice real-world accounting scenarios on mobile platforms, enhancing accessibility, flexibility, and engagement and enable proper educational mobile application to be used.

Online Assessment Tools (OATs) are digital platforms and applications used to create, deliver, and grade tests, quizzes, assignments other forms of assessments over the internet. They are used by educators, institutions, and organizations to evaluate learners' knowledge, skills, and progress remotely. Online assessment tools have become an integral part of modern education, enabling educators to evaluate students' performance, understanding, and skills in a flexible, efficient, and often more personalized manner. These tools facilitate the digital collection and evaluation of students' responses, providing insights into learning outcomes, while also offering benefits such as real-time feedback, accessibility, and the ability to manage large groups of



students. According to Mahajan (2023), assessment is the most essential and strong component of an educational experience, as it provides observable evidence of learning, determines student progress, and reveals an understanding of the educational programs. Assessment in the student-centered paradigm is used to diagnose learning problems and promote further learning, in addition to evaluating learning outcomes. In the changing world of education, online learning assesses in digitalized manner. Online assessment tools provide immediate feedback, allowing students to track their progress and identify areas for improvement.

Unlike traditional paper-based assessments, digital quizzes and automated grading systems facilitate timely evaluation, which is crucial in subjects like Financial Accounting where continuous practice is necessary for mastery. According to Mahajan (2023), online assessment customized the students' learning and evaluates their performance via Google form, online quizzes, polls, among others. The words similar to online assessment are e-assessment, digital assessment, electronic assessment, and computer-based assessment. Online assessment can assist as a potential catalyst to translate conventional assessment practices in response to emerging assessment challenges such as distance learning, high student-faculty ratio, and objective and high-quality feedback. Online assessment is considered a distinctive mode of recording students' responses and providing feedback. Feedback can perform several functions depending on the purpose of the assessment. Platforms such as Kahoot, Quizizz, and Google Forms allow educators to design interactive assessments that challenge students while keeping them engaged. In a similar vein, Kuhn as cited in Usen and Umosen (2021) refers to digital learning tools as a paradigm shifts which is a cross over hit, changing in position and thinking. Today, the Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used in Private Schools from Primary to Tertiary for teaching and learning but there seem to be a lukewarm attitude on the part of government who own public schools and fail to make provision for the new technology (Etuk, Umoh and Ukpoho 2024). Government is to have a paradigm shift with regarding the use of technology in schools. In order have a turn-around if Nigerian Educational System is to be revolutionized. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many private schools operated from homes (online classes) but this was impossible for government owned institutions.

The integration of these digital learning tools in financial accounting education not only enhance cognitive engagement by promoting critical thinking and active learning but also boosts emotional and behavioral engagement by making lessons more interactive and relevant to real-world applications. As the accounting profession continues to improve with technological advancements, incorporating these tools into educational practices is essential to preparing students for the demands of the modern workplace. Therefore, understanding the impact of digital learning tools on students' engagement in financial accounting is critical for teachers seeking to predict learning outcomes and equip students with the necessary skills for professional success. In Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District, Nigeria, it is imperative for private secondary schools to make use of learning management system to predict the extent to which digital learning tools encourage students' engagement in financial accounting.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, the integration of DLTs such as digital textbooks, LMS, interactive accounting simulation software, educational mobile applications, and online assessment tools has gained global recognition for enhancing teaching and learning processes. In the field of financial accounting, these tools have the potential to improve students' academic engagement by making abstract concepts more concrete, fostering collaborative learning, and enabling self-paced study.



However, despite these perceived benefits, there are growing concerns that many students in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria still display low participation in classroom activities, minimal enthusiasm for learning, and poor mastery of core financial accounting concepts. Several factors could contribute to these gaps such as lack of adequate access to relevant digital tools, incomplete integration of these tools into their accounting curriculum due to limited teacher competence, inadequate training, poor institutional support or unavailability of these tools, and epileptic electricity to operate them. In some cases, even when the tools are available, there is underutilization and diminished impact on academic engagement.

In Nigeria, there are hardly studies on the extent to which DLTs predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria. All studies in the past investigated the relationship between DLTs and students' academic engagement, but none focused on private secondary schools. This study is, therefore, conducted to fill this gap by determining the extent to which DLTs predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the extent to which digital learning tools predict students' academic engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Determine the extent to which digital textbook predict students' engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.
- ii. Assess the extent to which learning management systems predict students' engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.
- iii. Evaluate the extent to which accounting simulation software predict students' engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent do digital textbooks predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent do learning management systems predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent do accounting simulation software predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

- i. Digital textbooks do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.
- ii. learning management systems do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.
- iii. Accounting simulation software do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The design allowed the researcher to observe the phenomenon in its natural school setting without interference (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Ebieme et al, 2026). The study area was Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.



The area was chosen because, there are many prominent private secondary schools operating there, and due to poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations such as internal mock for senior secondary two, West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), and National Examination Council (NECO).

The population of the study comprised 473 Senior Secondary School (SS1 – SS3) students for the 2024/2025 school session offering Financial Accounting in fourteen (14) private secondary schools drawn from some Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

A total of 303 Financial Accounting students made up the sample for the study using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations cited in Etuk, and Charles, (2022) and Ebieme and Bassey, (2026). To guarantee fair representation across schools and class levels, purposive random sampling technique was adopted.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire 'Digital Learning Tools and Students' Academic Engagement. Questionnaire (DLTSAEQ)', validated by three experts Computer and Robotics, Business Education, and Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability was confirmed through a pilot test on 30 students outside the main study pool, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.83. This was deemed high enough for the study and was supported by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) cited in Ebieme and Bassey (2026) and Etuk, and Charles, (2022) who asserted that a reliability coefficient of 0.70 should be accepted particularly at the early state of the research.

The researcher and trained research assistants handled the administration of the copies of the questionnaire. Simple random technique was used to administer the copies of the questionnaire during break time, having obtained permission from Principals. In the copies of questionnaire, the respondents responded by indicating their extent of agreement or disagreement to each statement by ticking along the column provided. Scoring of the instrument was on a four-point rating scale weighted as follows: Very High Extent (VHE)-4, High Extent (HE)-3, Low Extent (LE)-2, Very Low Extent (VLE)-1. 260 copies of the questionnaire out of 303 copies administered, representing 86% were returned in useable form.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Simple linear regression was used to answer research questions, and to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. In order to take decision as regard research questions, any r-value that fell between 0.10-0.39 was regarded as low. 0.40-0.59 moderate, 0.60-0.79 high and 0.80-0.99 very high. In terms of the hypotheses, whenever the p- value was less than or equals .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected and also whenever the calculated p-value was greater than the alpha value of .05 level of significance, the null hypotheses was accepted. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used for data analysis.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent do digital textbooks predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?



Table 1: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the Extent to which Digital Textbooks Predict Students' Academic Engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria (n=260)

Variables	R	R ²	Percentage of Decision Prediction	
Digital textbooks	0.551	0.303	30.3	High Extent
Students' academic engagement				

The result in Table 4.1 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.551, indicating a high positive relationship between digital textbooks and students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The coefficient of determination (R^2 – value) of 0.303 also shown in Table 4.1 indicates that 30.3 percent of the variance in student academic engagement is explained or predicted by digital textbooks. This means that digital textbooks predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District to a high extent.

Research Question 2

To what extent do learning management systems predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the extent to which Learning Management Systems Predict Students' Academic Engagement in financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria (n=260)

Variables	R	R ²	Percentage of Decision Prediction	
Learning Management Systems	0.947	0.896	89.6	Very High Extent
Students' Academic Engagement				

The result in Table 2 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.947, indicating a very high positive relationship between learning management systems and students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The coefficient of determination (R^2 – value) of 0.896 also shown in Table 2 indicates that 89.6 percent of the variance in student academic engagement is explained or predicted by learning management systems. This means that learning management systems predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District to a very high extent.

Research Question 3

To what extent do accounting simulation software predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria?



Table 3: Result of Simple Linear Regression of the Extent to which Accounting Simulation Software Predict Students' Academic Engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria (n=260)

Variables	R	R ²	Percentage of Decision Prediction	
Accounting simulation software	0.975	0.951	95.1	Very High Extent
Students' academic engagement				

The result in Table 3 shows a correlation coefficient (R-value) of 0.975, indicating a very high positive relationship between accounting simulation software and students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. The coefficient of determination (R^2 – value) of 0.951 also shown in Table 3 indicates that 95.1 percent of the variance in student academic engagement is explained or predicted by accounting simulation software. This means that accounting simulation software predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District to a high extent.

Hypothesis 1

Digital textbooks do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Table 4: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Students' Academic Engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria by Digital Textbooks (n=260)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	323.293	1	323.293	112.214	.000 ^b
	Residual	743.307	258	2.881		
	Total	1066.600	259			
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.840	.656		14.998	.000
	Digital_textbooks	.425	.040	.551	10.593	.000

The result in Table 4 shows the F-ratio of 112.214 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .000 alpha at 1 and 258 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05 in which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 4.6 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of .425 which indicates that for every one-unit increase in digital textbooks, students' academic engagement in financial accounting increases by .425. Furthermore, the t-value of 10.593 for digital textbooks, with a corresponding significance level of .000 which is also less than .05, reinforces that digital textbooks significantly predicts students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.



Hypothesis 2

Learning management systems do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Table 5: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Students' Academic Engagement in Financial Accounting in private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria by Learning Management Systems(n=260)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	956.148	1	956.148	2233.435	.000 ^b
Residual	110.452	258	.428		
Total	1066.600	259			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
1 (Constant)	.941	.336		2.802
Learning_management_systems	.938	.020	.947	47.259

The result in Table 5 shows the F-ratio of 2233.43 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .000 alpha at 1 and 258 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05 in which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 4.7 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.938 which indicates that for every one-unit increase in learning management systems, students' academic engagement in financial accounting increases by 0.938. Furthermore, the t-value of 47.26 for learning management systems, with a corresponding significance level of .000 which is also less than .05, reinforces that learning management systems significantly predicts students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 3

Accounting simulation software do not significantly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria.

Table 6: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Prediction of Students' Academic Engagement in Financial Accounting in Private Secondary Schools in Akwa Ibom North-East, Nigeria by Accounting Simulation Software (n=260)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1014.477	1	1014.477	5021.443	.000 ^b
Residual	52.123	258	.202		
Total	1066.600	259			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	



	(Constant)	.288	.233	1.235	.218
1	Accounting_simulation_ Software	.980	.014	.975	70.862 .000

The result in Table 6 shows the F-ratio of 5021.44 with the corresponding probability level of significance of .000 alpha at 1 and 258 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05 in which the decision is based. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result in Table 4.8 also shows an unstandardized coefficient (B) of .980 which indicates that for every one-unit increase in accounting simulation software, students' academic engagement in financial accounting increases by .980. Furthermore, the t-value of 70.86 for accounting simulation software, with a corresponding significance level of .000 which is also less than .05, reinforces that accounting simulation software significantly predicts students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Findings

The following findings were made:

- i. Digital textbooks significantly highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.
- ii. Learning management systems significantly very highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.
- iii. Accounting simulation software significantly very highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District.

Discussion of Finding

Digital Textbooks and Students' Academic Engagement

The result of the first hypothesis shown that digital textbooks significantly highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This is possible because digital textbooks provide interactive features that make complex accounting concepts easier to understand. Unlike traditional textbooks, digital textbooks often include multimedia elements such as videos, animations and simulations that illustrate accounting procedures clearly. These tools help students visualize processes like journal entries, ledger postings, and financial statement preparation. As a result, learners become more interested and motivated to participate actively in their studies. Digital textbooks also allow instant access to definitions, examples, and additional resources through hyperlinks. This immediate access supports deeper exploration of financial accounting topics. Furthermore, many digital textbooks include built-in quizzes and self-assessment activities that encourage continuous practice. Frequent practice helps students stay focused and reinforces their understanding of accounting principles. The portability of digital textbooks also allows students to study anytime and anywhere using phones, tablets, or laptops. This flexibility increases the time students spend engaging with financial accounting materials. The findings of the study is in agreement with the submission made by Bikowski and Casal (2018) that the use of digital textbooks enhances students engagement in learning in a study to investigate interactive digital textbooks and students engagement in learning.



Learning Management Systems and Students' Academic Engagement

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that learning management systems significantly very highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This is achievable as learning management systems enhanced a structured digital environment for learning activities. These systems organize course materials such as lecture notes, accounting examples and financial statement exercises in one accessible platform. Students can easily access resources related to financial accounting whenever they need them. Learning management systems also support interactive tools like discussion forums and chat features that encourage collaboration among students. Through these platforms, learners can ask questions and receive feedback from instructors and peers quickly. The availability of online quizzes, assignments, and practice problems helps students regularly test their understanding of accounting concepts. Continuous assessment keeps students actively involved in the learning process. Additionally, learning management systems often send notifications and reminders about deadlines and course updates. These reminders help students stay organized and committed to their financial accounting tasks. The system also allows instructors to monitor student progress and provide timely guidance where necessary. The findings of the study is in line with the assertion made by Swart (2016) that the adoption of learning management system increase students engagement in learning different subjects in a study to examine the how effective the use of a learning management system promotes student engagement in different subjects to promote academic achievement.

Accounting Simulation Software and Students' Academic Engagement

The result of the third hypothesis shown that accounting simulation software significantly very highly predict students' academic engagement in financial accounting in private secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District. This is attainable because accounting simulation software boosts a practical and interactive learning environment for students. Unlike traditional teaching methods that rely mainly on theoretical explanations, simulation software allows students to practice accounting procedures in a virtual business setting. Through these simulations, learners record transactions, prepare financial statements, and analyze financial outcomes in a realistic context. This hands-on experience makes financial accounting concepts clearer and easier to understand. Studies show that simulation-based learning helps students apply accounting principles in real-world scenarios, thereby strengthening their skills and understanding. Students also receive immediate feedback from the software, which helps them identify errors and improve their performance quickly. The interactive and problem-solving nature of simulation activities encourages students to participate actively in the learning process. In addition, simulations often include game-like features that increase motivation, curiosity, and sustained attention during accounting lessons. Such features make complex accounting topics more engaging and meaningful for learners. Furthermore, simulation tools enable students to observe the consequences of their financial decisions, which strengthens critical thinking and analytical skills. The findings of the study agree with the submission made by Suryani *et. al.* (2023) that increasing learning interest in accounting students is promoted through game simulation accounting cycle.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it concludes that the adoption of digital learning technologies transforms traditional instructional practices into interactive, learner-centered experiences that stimulate students' curiosity, motivation, and participation. Through multimedia resources, collaborative platforms, real-time simulations, mobile accessibility, and continuous online assessments, students are better equipped to understand complex accounting concepts and



remain actively involved in the learning process. In conclusion, the study establishes that the deliberate integration of digital textbooks, learning management systems, accounting simulation software, educational mobile applications, and online assessment tools can significantly improve students' academic engagement and learning outcomes in financial accounting.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made possible;

- i. Teachers of financial accounting should integrate digital textbooks into their teaching practices to enhance students' comprehension and participation. Digital textbooks that include interactive elements such as embedded videos, quizzes, and hyperlinks should be adopted to replace or supplement traditional printed materials.
- ii. Private secondary schools should adopt and effectively utilize learning management systems such as Google Classroom, Moodle, or Canvas to facilitate instructional delivery, assignments, and communication. Administrators should ensure that both teachers and students receive adequate training on the use of LMS platforms to promote continuous engagement, collaboration, and feedback.
- iii. Accounting teachers should incorporate simulation software such as QuickBooks, Tally, or Peachtree into the teaching of financial accounting to provide students with hands-on experiences that bridge theory and practice. Training workshops should be organized regularly to enhance teachers' proficiency in using simulation tools.
- iv. Schools should integrate online assessment tools such as Quizizz, Google Forms, and Kahoot into classroom assessment practices to promote continuous feedback and learner motivation. Teachers should use these platforms to conduct formative and summative evaluations that engage students actively and provide immediate feedback.
- v. Regular capacity-building programmes should be organized for teachers and school administrators to enhance their ICT literacy and digital teaching competence. Such professional development should focus on instructional design, content creation, online assessment, and classroom management in digital environments.
- vi. Curriculum planners should revise the financial accounting curriculum to incorporate digital learning objectives, simulation exercises, and technology-based assignments. At the policy level, the Ministry of Education should create and enforce guidelines for the systematic integration of digital learning tools across all subjects.
- vii. Future researchers should derive further studies from this by examining the moderating effects of variables such as gender, socio-economic background, teacher competence, and school type on the relationship between digital learning tools and academic engagement.

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