

# **Improving Sustainable Development and National Security through Office Technology and Management Programme in Nigeria**

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**ABSTRACT:** The development of skills, knowledge and competence through functional education which is the main focus of office technology and management cannot be over-emphasized. This study is undertaken to examine how sustainable development and national security can be improved through office technology and management. The survey research design was adopted while the population consists of stakeholders in office technology and management in Ekiti State. A sample size of 100 respondents was used. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The research instrument used was the questionnaire and it was validated by experts in the field. The mean and standard deviation was used for the analysis of the data and chi-square was used for the hypotheses formulated. The study revealed that sustainable development and national security could be improved through office technology and management if adequate attention is given to maintenance of standard and funding of the programme. It was therefore recommended that government at various levels and other stakeholders in education should give the needed attention to adequate funding of the programme to achieve better result.

**KEYWORDS:** sustainable development, national security, office technology and management

## **Introduction**

Education as a concept has been viewed by various scholars as the foundation of every society and a fundamental tool for national development. The various descriptions of education have shown that it is the key to national development, modernization and globalization. According to Odiba cited in Olowe and Ogunode (2015), education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate and no despotism can enslave. In addition, they posited that upon the substantial role that education plays in national development and globalization, there has been a global quest for more functional and qualitative education. Olawole (2013) regards functional education as a vital tool, the only means of achieving sustainable development and especially the life ultimate objectives.

For any nation to be economically vibrant according to Adesina cited in Fasae and Elemure (2008), each person that is a consistent of that nation must be fully equipped with skills, knowledge and aptitude that would help him function and contribute effectively both to the development and the growth of achieving the goal of production of manpower, possess the requisite knowledge, skill and attitude for harnessing other resources and bringing them into cooperative relationship, yielding the goods and services provided by the society for the satisfaction of their wants and needs. Office technology and management education programme is believed to be playing a vital role in equipping the recipients with the ability to become economically efficient and effective thus promoting national security.

Noted from the above view therefore is that there is the dare need for an educational programme which can provide a type of training in office education which will inculcate into people particularly the teeming unemployed youth and poverty stricken populace the competencies or skills needed for managing a personal business and at the same time, providing relevant services that will help in improving the economy of the country. Jubril (2010) averred that vocational education could contribute in great measures to the society. According to him, it could stimulate

industrial development by producing competent workers that are capable of developing and utilizing technologies for economic growth leading to general development of any nation. For our economy to be developed and sustained therefore, there is need for a functional education that will enable the recipients to be self-reliant or self-sustained through self-employment and any education that fails this acidic test has failed all (Akintonde, 2008). Therefore this paper empirically examined the significance of office technology and management programme in improving sustainable development and national security in Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

### **An overview of Office Technology and Management Education**

Office technology and management as viewed by Osuala cited in Udoudum and Usoro (2013) is primarily concerned with the acquisition of mastery of office-related skills needed to perform in the business and technological world. This emphasizes the knowledge, skills, attitude and technicalities that learners will be expected to display on completion of their training. Olafare (2007) however gave a more practical approach in describing office technology and management. According to him, it is a curriculum that has as its controlling purpose the preparation of individuals for useful gainful employment and life-long education; hence, it has the potential to effectively empower the citizenry. The empowerment stimulates sustainable national development, enhances employment opportunities, improves the qualities of life, reduces poverty and limits the chances of social vices occasioned by joblessness. Jubril (2010) submitted that vocational office technology and management education in our education system could open wide opportunity to improve industrialization in Nigeria. The use of vocational knowledge by the recipients would help in expansion and establishment of more businesses in the society, ultimately promoting national development and security. Thus, office technology and management is aimed at shifting emphasis from white collar jobs to manipulative skills which will help its beneficiary to be a responsible member of the community.

### **Sustainable development**

Sustainable development as described by Umezulike and Okoye (2013) is a state of having well-balanced, steady and effective use of human, material and capital resources for total economic independence and development of a nation. They however maintained that suitable and sustainable development can only be achieved if government and economic policy makers should be transparent in their dealings. To maintain a high degree of transparency therefore according to Umezulike and Okoye (2013), government should stop paying lip service towards the promotion of business education programmes at various levels of education because its services are the major key and custodian of government vital information for managerial presentation, analysis and judgment of economic activities.

Moreover, Bagudu (2013) maintained that sustainable development is the development geared towards the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This contains two key concepts namely the concepts of needs in particular, the essential needs of the world poor, to which overriding priority should be given and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet the present and future needs.

### **National security**

The state of insecurity in Nigeria today has brought about so many challenges with various negative effects. This has led to political, social and economic disruption which in turn has resulted in slow economic growth and development (Sani, 2013). There is no doubt that a lot of measures would have to be put in place to address security issues in the country. Folaranmi and Adegbenro (2007) admitted that graduate unemployment in the country today has become a serious problem and has constituted a serious threat to the nation's economy with its attendant social problems of armed robbery, youths' restiveness, prostitutions, female trafficking, insurgency and advance fee fraud which has reached an

alarming height and every efforts the federal government of Nigeria had put in place to solve the problems seem to have failed.

Eme and Anthony (2011) posited that matter of safety and security are topical issues in today's Nigeria and life has always been precarious in the country as it is subject to all manners of dangers. They further argue that there is the fear of kidnappers, political and economic related assassination and extra-judicial killings which have rapidly become familiar features of our landscape. The impact of this massive sense of insecurity on both psychic and overall functioning of Nigerians cannot be overestimated. In view of this, Adetokunbo (2011) admitted that there is the challenge to rethink and improve on policy and institutional means of dealing with security concerns in the country.

Olanipekun and Alabi (2007) further viewed that Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity which has ranked the country low in the Global Peace Index signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. The most serious security threats according to them in Nigeria at the moment are those in the category of the violent religious extremism of Boko Haram, the Niger Delta militants, the discontent and separatist call by IPOB and MASSOB, high rate of kidnapping, robbery, the Fulani herdsmen and many other violent acts. The activities of these sects have led to the untimely death of many Nigerians including foreigners. The Boko Haram terrorists employ such tactics as suicide bombing, organized attacks on security men and rural communities while the militants and others engage in kidnapping for ransom. Amen (2018) asserted that clashes between herdsmen and farmers in Adamawa, Benue, Taraba, Ondo and Kaduna have resulted in 168 deaths in January 2018 alone. According to her, in 2017, clashes between nomadic herdsmen and local farmers resulted in at least 549 deaths and thousands displaced across Enugu, Benue, Taraba, Zamfara, Kaduna, Plateau, Cross Rivers, Adamawa, Katsina, Delta and Ekiti States. Sustainable development cannot be achieved in a country where security challenges are monumental.

The insecurity in Nigeria is sending a wrong signal to the international community. As a result of this, many international agencies and countries according to Adesina cited in Gbadamosi and Omidiji (2017) have intensified their warning to their citizens of the risks involved in traveling and doing business in some part of the country. The question for everyone in Nigeria today is 'can there ever be security of lives and properties in Nigeria?' This can only be answered when attempt is made to lay emphasis on educational programme that can engage the teeming youth in self employment and sustain the economy.

### **Office Technology and Management, the concept of sustainable development and national security**

For development to occur in a nation, the people in the community must be well organized and properly oriented so that there can be remarkable prosperity through efficient management of scarce resources (Akorede 2005). According to him, an assessment of the kind of education offered today in our nation needs to be taken. This becomes imperatives because the needed skills are virtually not seen upon graduation in most citizens and this call for re-orientation and finding ways of making the teeming population to be equipped with necessary skills that will make them to be self reliant. Umezulike and Okoye (2013) opined that a nation's developmental viability depends largely on the productive and innate wealth potentials of their selfless and dedicated citizens who built their wealth of experiences out of small and medium scale enterprises.

Accordingly, Umezulike and Okoye (2013) further asserted that great nations are those that stand and defend even the single soul within their environment but the reverse is the case in Nigeria, which cannot defend itself due to security problem which was brought about by high rate of unemployment in the country. In his observation, the unemployment problem was caused by the government neglect in promotion and sponsoring functional business education programme in both formal and informal settings. Akintonde (2008) observed that office technology and management education can play effective role in getting graduates to function effectively in the world of work

because it is an education that helps to serve individuals in making adjustments in economic arena as a worker, citizen and consumer.

### Purpose of the study

1. To identify the potentialities of office technology and management education in improving sustainable development and national security.
2. To determine measures that can be taken in the quest for improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study

- Are there potentials inherent in office technology and management for improving sustainable development and national security?
- Are there measures needed to be taken in the quest for improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management?

### Null Hypotheses

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There are no potentials inherent in office technology and management education for improving sustainable development and national security.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There are no measures needed to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education.

### Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey research approach to find out how sustainable development and national security could be improved through office technology and management education. The population of the study consists of education stakeholders such as lecturers, graduates and graduating students in Office Technology and Management education in Ekiti State. Simple random sampling was used in selecting a polytechnic, a university and a college of education for the study and 100 respondents were randomly selected for the study. A 20 item self administered questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the respondents that were used for the study. The instrument was validated by experts in business education. A four-point Likert type rating scale was used with value assigned to the four response categories as follows: Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using mean ratings, standard deviation and chi-square. Consequently, any factor with a mean score of 3.00 and above was considered an important factor while any response below 3.00 was regarded as not important for the study.

### Data Analysis

#### Research Question 1

Are there potentials inherent in office technology and management for improving sustainable development and national security?

Table 1: Potentials in Office Technology and Management for improving sustainable development and national security

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD	Decision
1.	Reduction in unemployment and crime level in the country	3.19	0.88	Accepted
2.	Increase employment prospects for graduates and youth	3.32	0.82	Accepted
3.	Effectiveness and progress of graduates in employment	3.18	0.82	Accepted
4.	Reduction in the level of poverty among citizens	2.98	0.92	Rejected
5.	Inculcation of relevant skills and ability needed for self reliance	3.35	0.68	Accepted

6.	Promotion of private enterprise that reduces dependence on government jobs	3.13	0.86	Accepted
7.	Entails entrepreneurial skills needed to grow the economy	3.36	0.77	Accepted
8.	Makes the recipients to be financially independence hence reducing agitation and insecurity	3.06	0.89	Accepted

The analysis of the result presented in the table above shows that Office Technology and Management has the potentials needed in improving sustainable development and national security. This can be deduced from the response of the respondents which has a mean of not less than 3.00 in all the items except that it was agreed that Office Technology and Management may not be all that is needed to reduce the level of poverty among citizens.

### Research Question 2

Are there measures needed to be taken in the quest for improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management?

Table 2: Measures needed to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education

S/N	Item Statement	X	SD	Decision
1.	Provision of educational facilities and infrastructure to implement OTM curriculum	3.47	0.71	Accepted
2.	Adequacy and availability of teaching staff	3.42	0.64	Accepted
3.	Adequate security and proper maintenance of OTM equipment in institutions	3.45	0.41	Accepted
4.	Adequate and timely funding of OTM programme by relevant authorities	3.25	0.74	Accepted
5.	Availability and reduction in the prices of OTM books	3.19	0.71	Accepted
6.	Updating the knowledge of teachers through relevant developmental programmes	3.50	0.61	Accepted
7.	Ensuring strict adherence to curriculum implementation for quality output	3.14	0.81	Accepted
8.	Integration of more entrepreneurial contents into the curricula to meet current needs	3.20	0.79	Accepted
9.	Appropriate policy that will encourage more enrolment in OTM programme	3.24	0.72	Accepted

The result of the data presented in the above table shows that the entire item raised stand as measures needed to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education. This can be inferred from the response of the respondents which has a mean of not less than 3.00 in all the items.

## Testing of Hypotheses

Table 3: Chi-square tests on the potentials in office technology and management for improving sustainable development and national security

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.927 <sup>a</sup>	21	.047
Likelihood Ratio	33.098	21	.045
Linear-by-Linear Association	.203	1	.652
N of Valid Cases	799		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.95.

A critical examination of table 3 indicated that the P-value (0.047) is less than the level of significance of 0.05. It is very clear therefore that the result is highly significant. The  $H_{01}$  is therefore rejected. That is, there are potentials inherent in office technology and management education for improving sustainable development and national security.

**Table 4:** Chi-Square tests on measures needed to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	43.759 <sup>a</sup>	24	.008
Likelihood Ratio	45.555	24	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.834	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	900		

a. 9 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.89.

Table 4 shows that the P-value (0.008) is less than 0.05 level of significance. With this value, it is therefore evident that the result is highly significant. The hypothesis that states that there are no measures needed to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education is not accepted.

## Discussion

This study centres on improving sustainable development and national security through Office Technology and Management education. The result of the study shows that there are lots of potentials inherent in office technology and management education for improving sustainable development and national security. This view was corroborated by Ade cited in Olafare (2007) who submitted that business education exposes its recipients to wide opportunities for careers in the world of work and helping them to understand what contributions these careers can make to their own lives and public welfare and it further equips its recipients with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for their contributions to nation building both as producers and consumers of goods and services. This also agrees with the view of Jubril (2010) who posited that vocational office education could help to reduce

the rate of unemployment in Nigeria by the development of saleable skills in students who could become employable after schooling. According to him, it could stimulate industrial development by producing competent workers that are capable of developing and utilizing technologies for economic growth leading to general development of any nation.

In the view of Omeje cited in Kolawole and Elemure (2007), Office technology and management education places a significant role in equipping its recipients, youths and other individuals with entrepreneurial skills, competencies and attitudes for self-reliant and sustenance. These skills are the business skills acquired to enable them function effectively in a turbulent society as ours. Kolawole and Elemure (2007) further pointed out that youths development and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to establish small business ventures comes through business education which has the potential of equipping youths with appropriate entrepreneurial skill, adequate knowledge, abilities and competencies that will in turn enable the individual to be self-employed and self reliant leading to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.

The result of the study also shows that there are measures to be taken in improving sustainable development and national security through office technology and management education. This view was in agreement with the view of Akintonde (2008) who opined that for a develop and sustainable economy to be achieved, there is need for a functional office technology and management education that promotes self sustainability through self employment which serves as part of the measures to improve the economy of the country. He further pointed out that to achieve any meaningful development; citizens must possess the requisite knowledge, skills and attitude for harnessing other resources and bringing them into a cooperative relationship yielding goods and services demanded by society. Fasae and Elemure (2008) further noted that in order to achieve the goal of empowering the citizen with the needed skills for the purpose of sustaining the development of the nation, there is the need for the re-orientation of the citizenry towards office technology and management education programme and a heavy injection of funds to improve the delivery of office technology and management programme in schools.

However, for office technology and management programme to be meaningful and be a wheel of development of the nation, Olafare (2007) viewed that there must be adequate funding to enable institutions to provide adequate and latest facilities that will make the trainees acquire the most relevant skills and the curricula will need to be re-designed to meet the challenges of modern society in training recipients to be self-employed, self-reliant and self-sufficient.

## **Conclusion**

The deplorable state of the nation's economy calls for an education programme that will address the mirage of problems and the challenges currently facing our country. Office Technology and Management education which include knowledge in vocational education, business education and occupational skill development is no doubt needed to fill the gap. A lot of opportunities abound for recipients of office technology and management education programme which make them fit into many sectors of the economy having been exposed to the development of the right and needed employability and entrepreneurial skills to enable them function effectively in the world of work. To ensure that this noble objective is achieved, necessary support will be needed for the promotion of a vibrant office technology and management programme in the country.

## **Recommendations**

- Funds needed for the development and sustenance of office technology and management education programme in various institutions of learning should be adequately provided by government and other stakeholders in the education sector.
- There is need for the provision of office technology and management education in a distance learning programmes for more enrolments of young and interested youths as a strategy for sustainable development and ensuring national security.

- There is the need for the integration of office technology and management education programme in all the tertiary institutions in the country including the universities.
- There is need for re-orientation of the public on the need to embrace vocational education programmes so as to reduce the menace of unemployment and other social vices in the country.

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