

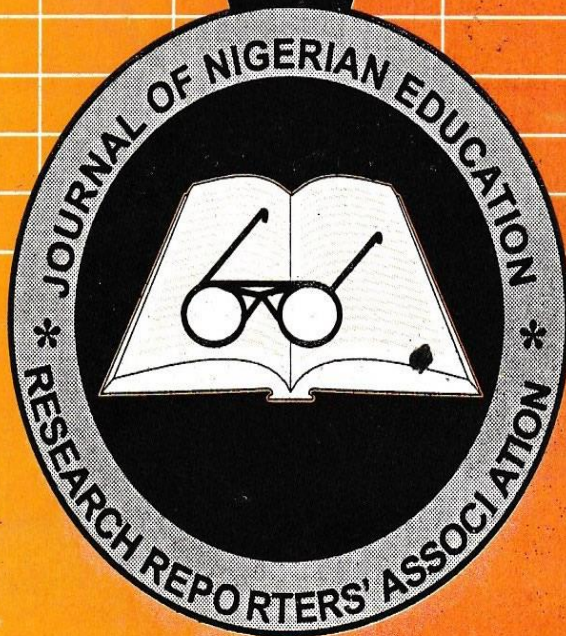
THE

RESEARCHER

ISSN 1119-485

Vol. 9 No 1

**JOURNAL of NIGERIA EDUCATION
RESEARCH REPORTERS' ASSOCIATION**



September, 2007

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKOT EKPENE URBAN

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Abstract

The study examined Information Technology and efficient administration of secondary schools. Four research hypotheses were formulated for the study. Survey research design was used in the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 55 respondents for the study. The researchers designed Information Technology and Efficient Administration Questionnaire and used in data collection. PPMC statistics was used for data analysis. The major findings indicated that Information Technology facilities efficient administration of secondary schools. Recommendations were made to the State Secondary Education Board to provide secondary schools with computer and other Information Technology facilities.

INTRODUCTION

In the Secondary Schools, Principal takes care of administration. He is assisted by the Vice Principals and non-teaching (clerical and supporting staff). Information coming from the State Secondary Education Board or Local Education Committee is received by the office, disseminated and stored for future reference. Information leaving the school is computed, prepared and sent out to the appropriate quarters by the office. School administration like any other administration is done through information. When information is properly computed, prepared, disseminated and stored for future use, efficient administration is achieved (Elendu, 2000).

The advent of Information Technology has brought about the idea of office automation, also known as electronic office (Akpan, 1998). In

office automation, the ultimate aim is to create paperless office, which is an office where the computer is employed in carrying out the general office work. Ayo (2002) noted that it is an electronic equivalent of the typical traditional manual office. Instead of the heaps of files, which are consulted very often to retrieve information, and the volumes of papers sent here and there, the PCs, Fax Machines, E-Mail and the Internet have brought about the envisaged electronic office.

Dele (1999) and Ayo (2002) emphasized that it is the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS), created by Information Technology that has made the envisaged paperless office possible. It enables the storage of documents electronically in a much similar way to manual approach. The other features of EDMS, according to Ayo, include: drastic reduction of paper filing storage space; drastic reduction in time and energy needed to handle and maintain records; provision of immediate access of documents; and provision of sophisticated indexing capabilities to cope with large amounts of documents, among others. Uzoma (1999) pointed out that EDMS is particularly useful to all establishments in a number of ways, which include: shares processing; managing records of staff with respect to training, promotion, transfers, etcetera; and for the processing of legal documents, financial transactions, insurance claims and registration, criminal records and flight data, etcetera.

According to Fapohunda (1995) and Ayo (2002), Information Technology means the use of computer system and telecommunication equipment in information processing. It is made up of three basic components, namely: Electronic Processing using the computer, Transaction of Information using telecommunication equipment, and Dissemination of Information in multimedia. Ayo further stated that Information Technology can simply be defined as the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of vocal, textual, pictorial and numerical information by micro-electronic-based combination of computer and telecommunication.

On the other hand, Elendu (2000) stated that office is a room or building where clerical processes are carried out to start, develop and control the many activities of a business. Warson (1989) described the office as the place where information is received, sorted, acted upon,

filed and passed on; a building or part of a building or room the purpose of which is to carry out administrative and clerical duties of an organization.

Elendu (2000) emphasized that the major functions performed by the business office are: receiving and collecting information; recording of information; arranging and processing of information; giving or communicating information; and, storing of information.

Ayo (2002) stated that Information Technology has touched on every profession, thus changing our ways of life. And that of particular importance is the business office where it has brought about speedy, timely and efficient information processing which is very significant to the success of business organization. According to Onyewuenyi (1994) office automation means a more efficient way of performing the four cardinal office functions of:

Preparation of Information - creating letters, memos, schedules and reports. Information Technology has made the carrying out of these office functions to be easier and efficient. Information required for the smooth operation of office work is prepared efficiently through such equipment as computer; fax machines, Internet, and others.

Computation of Information - compiling data from completed forms, and generating reports. According to Ayo (2002) computation of information is easily and efficiently done through computer based system.

Dissemination of Information - distributing messages and information reports. Ayo (2002) noted that Information Technology has made information dissemination easier, faster and accurate through the use of various Information Technology facilities without the use of paper and postage stamps.

Information Storage - storing, retrieving and maintaining data and information. Kendall (1989) pointed out that Information Technology has made storage of information better and safer through Information Technology facilities. Volumes of information can be stored without the use of paper and files thereby saving a lot of office space.

Uyoc (2001) noted that the benefits of Information Technology are enormous and can be summarized as follows: Accuracy, elimination

of drudgery, speed, electronic saving of office space, enhancing communication; including e-mail, voice mail, computer faxing and teleconferencing.

There has been no empirical evidence to indicate how Information Technology facilitates efficient school administration. This study was therefore undertaken to find out the extent to which information technology facilitates efficient administration of Secondary Schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

An office does to any organization, be it business or non-business oriented, what the heart does to the human body. The office coordinates the activities of an organization through information management, which is the major function of the office. Information management has been made easy through Information Technology. In the secondary schools offices in Ikot Ekpene Urban, the offices are still paper offices making use of huge amount of files. Information is not easily obtained from the office by teachers for effective performance. This could be attributed to poor storage of information, which makes retrieval difficult. Many of the schools offices lack modern Information Technology facilities, such as computers and telecommunication equipment. This has led to delayance in the treatment of issues as directed by the Ministry of Education or State Secondary Education Board. Information leaving the Ministry to Schools or from one school to the other still go through letters, memos and reports written on papers and sent through messengers. This method delays information. Sometimes it leads to misplacement of information or even outright loss.

This study is therefore undertaken to find out the relationship between Information Technology and effective administration of secondary schools.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- H₀₁** There is no significant relationship between information technology and efficient administration of secondary schools through preparation of information.
- H₀₂** Information technology does not significantly relate to efficient administration of secondary schools through computation of information.
- H₀₃** There is no significant relationship between information technology and efficient administration of secondary schools through dissemination of information.
- H₀₄** Information technology does not significantly relate to efficient administration of secondary schools through storage of information.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design adopted in this study was the survey design. The target population for the study consisted of all the 68 office staff, including the principals, vice principals and all the non-teaching staff working in the offices of the five (5) government owned secondary schools located within Ikot Ekpene urban. The subjects were eligible for the study because they are administrative personnel whose functions centered around information processing. Non-government owned Secondary Schools within Ikot Ekpene Urban were purposely excluded from the study because the conditions, in terms of facilities and manpower, may not be the same with that of the government owned secondary schools. The researchers therefore envisaged that their inclusion might influence the result of this study.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select 55 office staff. This resulted in sample size of 55 respondents for the study.

The researchers designed an instrument titled "Information Technology and Efficient Administration Questionnaire" (ITEAQ) and used for data collection. The ITEAQ elicited information on information technology and effective administration of offices. Aspects

of office administration measured included preparation, computation, dissemination and storage of information.

All items in the questionnaire, except those for demographics, were designed in a four-point likert scale format. Two research experts in the University of Uyo, Uyo validated the instrument. The reliability test of the instrument was done, and its analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.80. Data generated in the study were analyzed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) statistics at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULTS

The results are presented in table 1-3 and analyzed under each of the hypotheses.

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between information technology and efficient administration of secondary schools through preparation of information.

Table 1

PPMC analysis of the relationship between information technology and preparation of information

		application of Information Technology	efficient preparation
Application of Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 55	.877** .000 55
Efficient preparation Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.877** .000 55	1.000 . 55

df = 53; r_{cal} = 0.877; r_{cri} = 0.273; P < 0.05

Computer software was used for the analysis. Table 1 shows calculated r -value $>$ critical r -value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is basis to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is significant relationship between information technology and efficient preparation of information.

H₀₂ Information technology does not significantly relate to efficient administration of secondary schools through computation of information of information.

Table 2
PPMC Analysis of information technology and efficient computation

		application of Information Technology	efficient computation
Application of Information Technology	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.879**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	55	55
Efficient computation	Pearson Correlation	.879**	1.000
Information Technology	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	55	55

$df = 53$; $r - cal = 0.879$; $r - cri = 0.273$; $P < 0.05$

Computer software was used for the analysis. Table 2 shows calculated r -value $>$ critical r -value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is basis to reject the null hypothesis. This means that information technology significantly relates to efficient computation of information.

H₀₃ There is no significant relationship between information technology and efficient administration of secondary schools through dissemination of information.

Table 3
PPMC Analysis of information technology and information dissemination

		application of Information Technology	efficient dissemination
Application of Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 .000 55	.881* .000 55
Efficient computation Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.881** .000 55	1.000 .000 55

$df = 53; r_{cal} = 0.881; r_{cri} = 0.273; P < 0.05$

Computer software was used for the analysis. Table 3 indicates calculated r -value $>$ critical r -value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is basis to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is significant relationship between information technology and efficient dissemination of information.

Ho₄ Information technology does not significantly relate to efficient administration of secondary schools through storage of information.

Table 3
PPMC Analysis of information technology and information dissemination

		application of Information Technology	efficient dissemination
Application of Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 55	.881** .000 55
Efficient computation Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.881** .000 55	1.000 55

$df = 53; r_{cal} = 0.881; r_{cri} = 0.273; P < 0.05$

Computer software was used for the analysis. Table 3 indicates calculated r -value $>$ critical r -value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is basis to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is significant relationship between information technology and efficient dissemination of information.

H₀ Information technology does not significantly relate to efficient administration of secondary schools through storage of information.

Table 4
PPMC Analysis of information technology and storage of information

		application of Information Technology	efficient storage
Application of Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 55	.884** .000 55
Efficient computation Information Technology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.884** .000 55	1.000 55

df = 53; $r_{cal} = 0.884$; $r_{cri} = 0.273$; $P < 0.05$

Computer software was used for the analysis. Table 4 indicates calculated r -value $>$ critical r -value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is basis to reject the null hypothesis. This means that information technology significantly relates to efficient storage of information.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the data analysis in Table 1, it is evident that there is significant relationship between information technology and efficient preparation of information. It is the school administration that supports effective teaching and learning. When the schools administrative machinery functions efficiently, the entire school system functions efficiently. The school administration prepares letters, memos, schedules and reports. Information technology, according to Ayo (2002) makes the carrying out of these office functions easier and efficient. Elendu (2000) emphasized that word processing through information technology facilities, is faster and efficient.

On computation of information data in Table 2 has shown that information technology significantly relates to efficient computation of information. This function of office involves compiling data from completed forms, and generating reports. As theorized by Fapohunda (1995) and Ayo (2002), computations is easily and efficiently done through computer-based system.

On dissemination of information, data in Table 3 showed that there is significant relationship between information technology and efficient dissemination of information.

Distributing messages and information reports are very important administration functions, which are better enhanced by information technology. Ayo (2002) agreed with these findings when the author stated that information technology has made information dissemination easier, faster and accurate through the use of various information technology facilities.

On storage of information, data in Table 4 revealed that information technology significantly relates to efficient storage of information. An efficient administration should store, retrieve and maintain data and information for quick referencing and use. With the advent of information technology these functions can be performed efficiently. Ayo (2002) noted that information technology has made storage of information better and safer. Volumes of information can be stored with ease and retrieve with ease when needed.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, as shown by the results of data analysis, it is concluded that information technology enhances efficient administration of secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results obtained from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The State Secondary Education Board should provide each Secondary School with a computer set and other Information Technology facilities to be used in the office.

2. The State Secondary Education Board should ensure that both the teaching and non-teaching staff are computer literate through in-service training and workshop.
3. The State Secondary Education Board should base promotion of teachers to the level of a principal on computer literacy since the principal is the head of administration in the secondary school.
4. The Principal should ensure that preparation, computation, dissemination and storage of information are done through Information Technology for efficiency.

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