Dealing with the Socio-Economic Challenges Of Nigeria Through Office Technology And Management Teachers` Professional Competencies

UKATA, Philip Festus (FIPMD, MABSEN, MISMN, MABEN, MTRCN, MECRTD)

**Department of Office Technology and Management,
School of Business and Administrative Studies,
Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic,
Rumuola, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
E-mail: ukata4mephilip@yahoo.com
Tel: N0: +2348038877937**

NMEHIELLE, Edith Luke, PhD

**Department of Office Technology and Management,
School of Business and Administrative Studies,
Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic,
Rumuola, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

ABSTRACT
This study was concerned with dealing with the socio-economic challenges of Nigeria through Office Technology and Management teachers` professional competencies. The study adopted a review research design because of the qualitative research approach used to synthesize opinions of various scholars on the topic under study. The amalgamated opinions were used to address the major and specific objectives as well as the research questions of this study. Based on the reviewed literatures, it was concluded that addressing the socio-economic challenges of Nigeria through Office Technology and Management teachers` professional competencies should be properly practiced and given the adequate attention it deserved by lecturers to assisting in solving Nigeria socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inequality among others. Among other thing, the study recommends that information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies, communication /lifelong competencies, research competencies, curriculum/ field competencies and social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM teachers lead to employment opportunities,   poverty alleviation, wealth creation and crime reduction of the learners through skills acquired should be practiced with all the attention it needed by lecturers.
Keywords: socioeconomic challenges, office technology and management, teachers,   professional competencies

INTRODUCTION
Socioeconomics (also known as social economics) is the social science that studies how economic activity affects   and   is   shaped   by   social   processes.   In   general,   it   analyzes   how modern societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy (En.wikipedia.org, 2020). Societies are divided into three groups: social, cultural and economic.

It also refers to the ways that social and economic factors influence the economy. "Socioeconomics" is sometimes used as an umbrella term for various areas of inquiry. The term "social economics" may refer broadly to the "use of economics in the study of society". More narrowly, contemporary practice considers behavioral interactions of individuals and groups through social capital and social "markets" (not excluding, for example, sorting by marriage) and the formation of social norms. In the relation of economics to social values.

A distinct supplemental usage describes social economics as "a discipline studying the reciprocal relationship between economic science on the one hand and social philosophy, ethics, and human dignity on the other" toward social reconstruction and improvement or as also emphasizing multidisciplinary methods from such fields as sociology, history, and political science (En.wikipedia.org, 2020).

Kprschools.ca, (2020) posited that socio-economic challenges or issues are factors that have negative influence on an individuals' economic activity including: lack of education, cultural and religious discrimination, overpopulation, unemployment and corruption. Poverty is also a variable factor that determines one's socio-economic status, meaning, an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure which depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence. As per the United Nations, "poverty is fundamentally a denial of choices and opportunities, and a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation

All over the world, education is seen as the cornerstone of development as it forms the basis of literacy, knowledge and skill acquisition, technological advancement, and ability to harness the natural resources of the environment.

The education sector in Nigeria is important because, it supplies skilled manpower needed for the achievement of its national economic goals. The cardinal aims of education according to the National Policy on Education (NPE) as cited by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) are the development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen, and the development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society. More so, these skills could be acquired in formal education settings via tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics and colleges of education.

Polytechnic education is one of the tertiary levels of education given after secondary school. It is the two tier programme of studies consisting of National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) with one year Industrial Experience (IT) as one of the pre-requisites for entry into HND programme (National Board of Technical Education (NBTE, 2008). The main objective of polytechnic education is to provide technical knowledge and skills necessary for occupational development in Nigeria. Office Technology and Management (OTM) programme was introduced in Nigerian Polytechnics in November 2004 by NBTE to replace the Secretarial Studies curriculum because of the emergence of computerization in the educational sector. The review was necessitated because skills previously acquired in the course of study were inadequate for OTM graduates to adjust to the rapidly changing workplaces (Baba & Akaraha, 2012). OTM programme is designed to offer students training in different skills for employment in various fields of endeavour. Moreover, in these modern economies, continuous innovations have led to major transformations in workplaces, giving rise to pervasive skill gaps and skill mismatches. In order to bridge the skill gaps, OTM programme is investing significant effort and resources in training of students in different skills but the teachers require professional competencies to be able to implement and transmit the skills to the learners to overcome the social economic challenges of Nigeria.

Alghamdi, (2017) postulated that higher education is becoming a major driver of economy learners. In creating supporting learning and teaching environment for students there should be the type of skill-oriented outcomes which students are expected to learn and the kind of learning activities which are likely to result to the students desired outcomes including who students learn with and where students best learn to solve the socioeconomic challenges of the nation. Competencies are defined as "the set of knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for future, which manifests in activities" define competencies as "knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, motivations and beliefs people need in order to be successful in a job.

" The common understanding related to teachers' competencies is divided into three main areas as field competencies, pedagogical competencies and cultural competencies (Selvi, 2016)

Teacher's professional competence includes knowledge and understanding of children and their learning, subject knowledge, curriculum, the education system and the teacher's role.

Professional competence also includes skills such as subject application, classroom methodology, classroom management, assessment and recording. The verbal ability, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, certification status, ability to use a range of teaching strategies skillfully, and enthusiasm for the subject characterize more successful teachers (Tope, 2012). Developing competences requires an analysis of the social, economic, and political context. Competence is needed in all works of life in organization or any setting. For example in the educational realm, lecturers are required to be competent to make the teaching students-centered. Competence should be understood as a collective and system-wide effort (Alghamdi, 2017). At present, around the world, many reforms in the education are oriented towards making lecturer's education more functional for the development of competences lecturers' need in practice. However, competence standards for lecturers and routine classroom practices are increasingly being designed to meet the students' outcome. Lectureship is a strategic position in supporting the process and results of the overall educational system. The lecturer's professional competence in mastering the teaching content and method affects positively students' performances in the classroom (Anggraeni, 2013). The competence of a lecturer in the university is to acts as an educator and facilitator to university students in order to enhance the dynamics and effectiveness of the educational process. According to Anggraeni (2013), lecturer's performance requires their personal competence including skill practices, behaviour, creativity, and self-development efforts. The competence of the lecturers however has been put under question as the performance of the students has been dropping in recent time (Abulatefah 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Socio-economic challenges or issues are factors that have negative influence on an individuals' economic activity including: lack of education, cultural and religious discrimination, overpopulation, unemployment and corruption. Poverty is also a variable that determines one's socio-economic status - meaning, an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure which depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence.

In dealing with these challenges, the higher education is a major driver of the economy for the learners to acquire the needed skills become employees and employers but with emphasis on the teachers` professional competencies to impart on the learners and economy in general through field competencies, research competencies, curriculum competencies, lifelong learning competencies, social-cultural competencies, emotional competencies, communication competencies, information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies and environmental competencies. Despite the roles of higher education and polytechnic education in specific, these socioeconomic challenges such as unemployment, poverty, cultural and religious discrimination among others persist.

METHODOLOGY

The design used in this study was literature review research design. The justification for adopting literature review research design was because this study adopted qualitative research approach to

synthesize opinions of scholars on the topic "addressing the socio-economic challenges of Nigeria through Office Technology and Management teachers` professional competencies". The amalgamated opinions were used to address the major and specific objectives as well as the research questions of this study. Also, the various specific objectives were used to form headings that addressed the problem of the study based on the reviewed literatures.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study was dealing with the socio-economic challenges of Nigeria through Office Technology and Management teachers` professional competencies. The study specifically seeks find out:

1. How information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies of OTM teachers lead to ICT employment opportunities and poverty alleviation of the learners
2. How communication /lifelong competencies of OTM lecturers lead to functional skills employment chances and wealth creation and crime reduction of the learners
3. How research competencies of OTM lecturers lead to research skills for employment opportunities and wealth creation
4. How curriculum/ field competencies of OTM lecturers lead to soft skills for employment opportunities and crimes reduction
5. How social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM lecturers lead to social-cultural for employment prospect and poverty reduction

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies of OTM teachers lead to ICT employment opportunities and poverty alleviation of the learners?
2. In what ways do communication /lifelong competencies of OTM lecturers lead to functional skills employment chances and wealth creation and crime reduction of   the learners?
3. What are the ways research competencies of OTM lecturers lead to research skills for employment opportunities and wealth creation?
4. How do curriculum/ field competencies of OTM lecturers lead to soft skills for   employment opportunities and crimes reduction?
5. In what ways do social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM lecturers lead to social-cultural for employment prospect and poverty reduction?

Review of Related Literatures

Teachers' professional competencies can be composed of different dimensions other than the three main areas which include field competencies, research competencies, curriculum competencies, lifelong learning competencies, social-cultural competencies, emotional competencies, communication competencies, information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies and environmental competencies.

Figure 1. Components of teachers' professional competencies (Researcher creation, 2021)

Professional competence is defined as the strategy used by the educational authorities to strengthen the lecturers to ensure that they continue their practices throughout their career. In this study, professional competence is perceived as lecturer's ability and skills to deliver their own knowledge content in the classroom students-centered. In the present study, this variable is measured by teaching competence, human competence, technology competence, evaluation competence, and cultural competence (Selvi, 2016). .Firstly, teaching competence means lecturer's competence which focuses on students' learning. Human competence is meant by being accountable to Allah and responsible, while quality of friendly teacher who encourages an open discussion with student and offers a constructive criticism.

Technology competence refers to lecturer's ability to use computer and smart board in teaching. Evaluation competence refers to lecturers' assessment of examination preparation, students' assignment, classroom participation, correction and feedback.   Cultural competence refers to a lecturer who is multiculturally educated, a person who understands different students' cultures in learning. These definitions were based on the previous studies such as (Ahmed and Hijjah, 2012). Professional competence takes the shape of lecturer's ability to use judicious communication, knowledge, skills, reasoning, values to benefit in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy. With the rapidly changing environment in the higher institutions, it makes sense to promote educational environment to give students the confidence to become independent and life-long the individual learning community he/she serves. According to Saxena (2013) classroom teaching practice can be practically effective when lecturer shifts teaching to students. That is to say, the focus is on students as a teaching outcome not on lecturer. Hénard and Roseveare (2012) found that in higher education quality teaching becomes more glaring when teaching is focused on student's learning outcomes. They further stressed that the education offered in the university must ensure that it meets the expectations of students and the requirement of today and the future. Many studies have demonstrated various factors that determine lecturers' classroom practices. Some of the factors identified determining lecturers' classroom practices are lecturers' background, staff professional competence and teaching environment. Lecturer's background is one of the most important determining factors of classroom teaching practice in the literature. Its importance lies in

the fact that, it explains the lecturer's knowledge content, experience, their relation with the faculty members and the position held. In the same sense, there is no agreed definition on professional competence most importantly is that professional competence is a set of techniques, skills, abilities and knowledge displayed. In this context, professional competence is measured by teaching, technology, human, evaluation, and culture as suggested in the review of related works. Interestingly, work environment is a work place and work condition. The work environment is an essential factor which impacts on classroom environment in any educational realm.

Furthermore, lecturer's background includes teaching experience found to significantly related to the classroom management, lecturer's position held (Driver & Campbell, 2013), number of courses attended which are reported to impart new learning into classroom. Additionally, professional competence and its ramifications namely, human, technology (Cator, Schneider, & Ark 2014), teaching, evaluation competence (Wong & Moni, 2014), and cultural competence are found as the main influences of the perceived quality of modules in the classroom. Volume of studies suggests that, size of class, control of teaching, students' characteristics, support from faculty and workload.

Information And Communication Technologies (ICT) Competencies Of OTM Teachers Lead To ICT Employment Opportunities And Poverty Alleviation Of The Learners

Information and Communication Technologies-ICT competencies are based on using tools and technical equipments for the reaching, disturbing and transferring the knowledge. They include any technology that helps to produce, manipulate, store, communicate, and/or disseminate information. ICT competencies are concerned with the use of technology in managing and processing the information include all technologies for the manipulation and communication of information (Mandal, 2018). It means that the ICT competency is very important to improve the communication in the learning and teaching process will enable OTM students to:

❑ Have a range of basic IT skills
❑ Apply IT as a management tool
❑ See IT to organise data
❑ Be willing to learn new IT skills and apply
❑ Be aware of the impact of technology on your field and ensure your skills are up to date
❑ Use advanced word processing tools such Microsoft Word, Office Access, Office Excel, Office FrontPage, Office Groove, Office InfoPath, and Office OneNote. Others are Office Outlook, Office PowerPoint and Office Publisher (ICDL digital skills standard, 2019), which easily genrate emplyment and alleviate poverty as such address Nigeria socioeconomic challenges.

How Communication /Lifelong Competencies Of OTM Lecturers Lead To Functional Skills Employment Chances, Wealth Creation And Crime Reduction Of The Learner

Communication competencies include communication models, interaction among teachers, students, social environment and learning topics. Teachers also have competencies in using oral, body and professional language in their fields. Communication competencies include voice, body language and words such as speaking, singing and sometimes tone of voice, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, or the use of writing. They include communication skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating (Career-ready, 2020).

Lifelong learning process requires that learners take responsibility of their learning. As individuals, teachers are acting for their own learning in the lifelong learning process. Lifelong learning activity goes through the whole life continuing between individual and the world. Lifelong learning competencies include the abilities of learning to learn, and teachers' responsibilities of their own professional development. Lifelong learning competencies are related to the ability of learning and skills of using the means or tools of learning to improve the learning throughout the human life. Lifelong learning

competencies refer to the teachers' responsibilities for their own learning and development of lifelong learning skills for students. It means that lifelong learning includes two main abilities. The first one is related to teachers' own lifelong learning ability and the second one is related to teachers' responsibility to develop students' lifelong abilities. These communication /lifelong competencies of OTM lecturers enable learners to:

- Be organized
- Arrive to work on time, or early.
- Be dependable
- Have a positive attitude toward work
- Exert high levels of effort and perseverance
- Complete tasks on time and accurately
- Seek out information to improve skills
- Be flexible and adaptable
- Complete all tasks, even if unpleasant
- Understand dress code or uniform guidelines
- Maintain personal hygiene and employment chances, create wealth with crime reduction.

Ways Research Competencies Of OTM Lecturers Lead To Research Skills For Employment Opportunities And Wealth Creation

Selvi, (2016) argued that research competencies include the competencies of research methods and techniques, designing and carrying out research in teachers' fields. They support collaboration with colleagues and other specialists or people who are interested in curriculum studies and education. Research competencies are influential for teachers in following the developments in their fields and developing themselves based on these developments. Besides, the research competencies of teachers are of great importance for students in gaining the scientific thinking and scientific process skills. The research competencies help to improve all of the teachers' competencies and also support research-based teacher education that is a new approach in teacher education. Research skills are necessary for the workplace for several reasons, including that they allow individuals and companies as well as lead to research skills for employment opportunities and wealth creation through (Glassdoor.com, 2020):

- Identify problems that are hindering performance or the ability to complete tasks
- Come up with viable solutions to those problems
- Evaluate resources and the best way to utilize those resources to promote increased efficiency
- Come up with new services or products
- Identify the needs of a company's target customer to better meet those needs through products and services
- Stay up-to-date with industry trends and market demands
- Learn new ways of doing things to adapt and evolve to meet workplace demands

How Curriculum/ Field Competencies Of OTM Lecturers Lead To Soft Skills For Employment Opportunities And Crimes Reduction

Teachers' curriculum development competencies are not clear, not well defined or neglected, teachers have problems concerning the curriculum development and implementation of curriculum in their fields (Selvi, 2016). Understanding of curriculum philosophy, curriculum theory and curriculum development models, curriculum development studies, learning and teaching approaches and models are the most neglected aspects related to teachers' curriculum competencies. Teachers' curriculum competencies is related to micro and macro level curriculum design, development and implementation. Teachers' curriculum competencies are necessary for partnerships between teachers and the curriculum development team during the curriculum studies. The approach of teacher-regulated curriculum will be important in near future. Thus, school-based curricula should be encouraged by teachers' researches and implementations. At the same time, this will encourage teachers to become more active participants in to

the curriculum development processes.

However, curriculum writers, namely curriculum design and development team do not successfully transmit their ideas to teachers. For this reason, curriculum studies should be projected by curriculum theorists and teachers collaboratively. It is said that curriculum studies have intensified teachers' work. Thus, teacher competencies concerning curriculum are of great importance for teachers to conduct their profession. Selvi, (2016) viewed that competencies of teacher encompass both theoretical and practical of curriculum.

At the same time, defining teacher competencies will contribute to the improvement of the quality of educational system by positively affecting the teacher training and curriculum development studies. The changes in science and educational system have also affected teachers' competencies. There is strong relationship among the other sciences and system of society and they affect educational system and teachers' competencies. Educational system can be based on scientific results of educational sciences, psychology, economy, technology, sociology and so on. Any kind of change and reform study in the other systems or science damage teachers' professional competencies unless teachers' competencies are developed. Teachers must follow all of these changes in order to improve their professional performance. The development of teachers' competencies is based on the changes in other sciences and society and is not associated with only the individualistic development but also professional development. Today, we are talking about internationalization of curriculum studies. Internationalization of curriculum ideas is a kind of reform study and teachers ensure changes by embracing new ideas. In this respect, teachers need to have more competencies than they had before. Teachers' competencies are highly important in both implementing the current curricula effectively and training people for future by developing these curricula. Teachers who are responsible from the training of the individuals of future need to be well equipped in order to fulfill this responsibility. Therefore, pre-service and in-service teacher education should focus on understanding and application of teachers' competencies.

Selvi, (2016) further argued that teachers' field professional competencies are related to the question of "what should school teach?" They refer to the content that the teacher and students will study. For example, the knowledge of keyboarding skills, ICT skills, Shorthand teachers are the main competency for teachers who will teach in classroom. Field competencies are the main areas of teacher competencies that include academic studies about content. Field competencies are the ones necessary for teachers to conduct their profession. They are the teacher competencies regarding the subjects that teachers will teach or students will learn. Formerly, field competencies were deemed as the most important competency field based on the concept that teachers were the only responsibles in transmitting the content. The concept of the one who knows teaches and the teacher is the responsible from learning in classroom changed over time. Within the context of this change, the importance given to teachers' field competencies declined as a result of the changing role of teacher as rather than transmitting the content but being a facilitator enabling students to interact with content. These curriculum/ field competencies of OTM lecturers lead to soft skills for employment opportunities and crimes reduction through (Schmidt, 2018):

✴   Critical thinking and problem solving
✴   Innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship
✴   Learning to learn/self-awareness and self-direction
✴   Collaboration
✴   Communication
✴   Global citizenship and sustainability
✴   Programs and initiatives and global competencies

How Social-Cultural/ Emotional Competencies Of OTM Lecturers Lead To Social-Cultural For Employment Prospect And Poverty Reduction

Alghamdi, (2017) claimed social-cultural competencies include the knowledge about social-cultural background of students and teachers, local, national and international values, democracy and human

rights issues, team and collaborative work with others, and social studies. All of them provide freedom to students and teachers in learning-teaching process and also promote the learning. The individuals become social and cultural being in social life. There is a strong relationship between learning and students' social-cultural background. Some of the learning theories discussed learning as social cultural context and teachers' social-cultural competencies can promote students learning. Humanistic approach and social theories can be put into practice in the classroom by means of teachers' social-cultural competencies

Teachers' emotional competencies can help students to learn and students' willingness to learn can be increased if teachers know how to improve the emotional dimension of students' learning. Competencies also help teachers become effective teachers while monitoring the students' learning. Learning requires emotional supports that create positive feeling for learning- teaching process. Teachers become a learning consultant and mentor about learning for their students. The social and emotional competency chart is as presented below:

Figure 1.2 Observation behaviour and task performance (Nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org, (2020)

These social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM lecturers lead to social-cultural for employment prospect and poverty reduction through (Nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org, 2020): Self-control refers to one's ability to regulate one's emotions and behaviors.[14] It may involve delaying gratification, controlling impulses, focusing attention, and following rules. Self-control is seen as foundational to the other SE skills. For example, successfully maintaining positive peer relationships or working constructively with others often requires the ability to control one's emotions and act in socially appropriate ways. Social competence is the set of abilities needed to be assertive and to create and maintain positive relationships.[19] These skills are necessary to get along well with others and to work constructively with others within established social norms across multiple contexts. Problem-solving ability. Problem-solving ability involves the capacity to identify a problem, collect information from multiple sources to consider options, and select a reasonable solution to that problem. Effective problem-solving has been conceptualized as involving "planning, flexibility, and resourcefulness. Goal-setting/pursuit is the ability to set appropriate goals and effectively pursue them is widely understood to be central to healthy development. Perseverance refers to the ability to pursue one's tasks to completion. It has attracted considerable interest from practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers, particularly in relation to its potential role in facilitating academic and career success. Career exploration, during adolescence, a youth's sense of personal future develops, and identity exploration and commitment become important developmental tasks. Youth-centered outcomes, help youth set and pursue their goals

is a central task in many mentoring programs.

CONCLUSION
Dealing with the socio-economic challenges of Nigeria through Office Technology and Management teachers` professional competencies should be practiced and given the adequate attention it deserved by lecturers to assisting in solving Nigeria socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inequality among others. As a result of this, Mandal, (2018), ICDL digital skills standard, (2019), Career-ready, (2020), Selvi, (2016), Glassdoor.com, (2020), Schmidt, (2018), and Alghamdi, (2017) argued and agreed that information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies of OTM teachers lead to ICT employment opportunities and poverty alleviation of the learners, communication /lifelong competencies of OTM lecturers lead to functional skills employment chances, wealth creation and crime reduction of the learners, research competencies of OTM lecturers lead to research skills for employment opportunities and wealth creation, curriculum/ field competencies of OTM lecturers lead to soft skills for employment opportunities and crimes reduction, and social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM lecturers lead to social-cultural skills for employment prospect and poverty reduction in the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the reviewed literatures and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:
1. Information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies, communication /lifelong competencies, research competencies, curriculum/ field competencies and social-cultural/ emotional competencies of OTM teachers lead to employment opportunities, poverty alleviation, wealth creation and crime reduction of the learners should be practiced with all the attention it needed by lecturers
2. OTM lecturers and others should regularly assess and improve on the professional competencies through education, conferences, and workshops among others to enable always and adequately address the socioeconomic challenges of Nigeria.
3. Government of Rivers state and polytechnic management should create enabling environment with provision of equipment and facility, including hardware and software to enable lecturers display their professional competencies so as to transfer the needed skills to the learners to address socioeconomic challenges of Nigeria.

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