



## **INFLUENCE OF COUNSELLING, PEER GROUP AND PARENT PROFESSION ON STUDENTS' CHOICE OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT (OTM) IN POLYTECHNICS IN NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research will be carried out to examine the influence of counselling, peer group and parent profession on students' choice of Office Technology and Management in Polytechnics in Nigeria. To achieve the objective of the study, three objectives and three research questions were raised and survey research design method was adopted for the study. A population of 538 ND1 and ND II students of Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic, Zaria Kaduna state, Federal Polytechnic Daura, Katsina State, Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namuda, Zamfara State, Kano State Polytechnic and Kaduna polytechnic was targeted. The instrument of data collection of the study was validated by three expert and the reliability of .780 was obtained. Five hundred and thirty (530) questionnaires were returned out of the 538 distributed to the selected institutions for the study. A fifteen items structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The researcher used mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Based on the data collected and analysis for this study, it can be concluded that guidance and counselling, peer group and parents' profession, influence and can affect students' choice of business subjects in Polytechnics in Nigeria. Recommendations were proffered.

**Keywords:** Influence, Counselling, Peer Group, Parent Profession, Students' Choice, Office Technology, Management, Polytechnics, Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Ahmad, F. O., & Lawal, S. L. (2024). Influence of counselling, peer group and parent profession on students' choice of office technology and management (OTM) in polytechnics in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics, Environmental Development and Society*, 5(3), 389-395.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Office Technology and Management (OTM) is one of the Management and Technology courses offered at Polytechnics in Nigeria. The aim of the program is to provide students with skills and competencies to qualify into office secretarial and management jobs. OTM is an intellectual and vocational preparation for earning a living in a contemporary industrial and business environment. However, it has been characterized with continuous shortage of students' enrolment in the program. Hence, it becomes absolutely pertinent that right efforts be put in by guidance and counsellors, parents and OTM educators to sensitize public and the business world about the right image of OTM program in the public service and overall economic development (Amoor & Aliyu, 2014).

Therefore, there is the need to prepare and make students competent, skilful and employable in the world of work, which is being driven by technological content in the curriculum of secretarial studies programme in the nation's tertiary institutions (Osuala, 2004). This idea gave birth to introduction of office technology and management into Polytechnics in Nigeria.

Choice involves decision making. It can include judging the merits of multiple options and selecting one or more of them. The best course will be the one that changes your level of knowledge, awareness, skills and overall capacity to live and work more effectively and ultimately with more contentment. The choice of a course is born from the desire to attain certain goals. It is believed that the stronger these desires are the greater will be the effort toward achieving goals and test of desire called counselling and engagement with parent and peers.

Counselling is the services offered to the individual who is undergoing a problem and needs professional help to overcome it. Sutton (2021) viewed the term counselling as an in-depth interaction between two or few individuals with the intent of assisting the client to understand himself in relationship to his or her present and future problem. Counselling is a total program of a number of highly specialized activities that help individual makes wise and intelligent choice or decision.

Peer group is a group of people usually of similar age background, and social status, with whom a person associates and who are likely to influence the person beliefs and behaviour (Tomé et al., 2012).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The choice of individual career goes a long way to determine what one life will become. If it is capable of determining how happy and fulfilled one become later in life. However, many people pay little or no attention to their career choice thereby putting their future on the edge of a wordy.

Study of office technology and management is very important in our modern society today. It equips students in Nigeria with practical skills in professional discipline to make them face challenges of employment in industries and other public and private institutions after their graduation. It also provides the students with basic skills, competencies, experience and attitude necessary for the word out look and to become self-reliance and provide them with knowledge and skills for self-reliance.

Despite the importance of office technology and management to individuals and the nation at large, office technology and management is still considered as a program meant for

dropout, misfit and educational backward students. It is observed that only insignificant number of people enrol for office technology and management and the numbers of office technology and management professionals in the world is still inadequate. The researcher observed that most of the students are not choosing office technology and management because of lack of counselling, peer group and parent profession influence in our tertiary institutions now are days.

It is in this light that the researcher is carrying out a research work on the influence of counselling, peer group and parents' profession on students' choice of office technology and management (OTM) in polytechnics in Nigeria.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to determine the influence of counselling, peer group and parent profession on students' choice of office technology and management (OTM) in polytechnics in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- Examine the influence of counseling on students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria.
- Determine the influence of peer group on students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria.
- Ascertain the influence of parents' profession on students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

- How does counseling encourage students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?
- How does peer group influence students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?
- How does parents profession advanced students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?

### **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design which defines as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. The population for this study comprised five hundred and thirty eight (538) male and female office technology and management students of federal and state polytechnics in North West zone. These institutions include Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic, Zaria Kaduna State, Federal Polytechnic, Daura, Katsina State, Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State, Kano State Polytechnic, and Kaduna Polytechnic. The entire population were purposely selected due to limit their number. This questionnaire was designed for data collection from respondent's opinion. The respondents opinions were rated inform of strongly agree (4) agree (3) disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) as an instrument for data collection of the study. The instrument of data collection of the study was validated by three expert and the reliability of .780 was obtained. The test re-test was also used. The researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents, five hundred and thirty (530) questionnaires were returned. The data collected for this were coded

into statistical package of social sciences (SPSS), version 25. The package was used to calculate mean and standard deviation.

**Research Question One:** How does counselling encourage students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean rating and standard deviation on influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria.

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD.	Remark
1	Counselling influences your decision to pursue office technology and management as a career.	530	3.28	1.229	Agree
2	Counselling you received clarify your career goal in office technology and management.	530	1.08	1.251	Disagree
3	Counselling helps you to understand the job prospects and requirement of office technology and management.	530	3.47	1.219	Agree
4	Counselling increases your confidence in pursuing office technology and management as a career.	530	1.76	1.244	Disagree
5	Counselling gives me the direction of choosing office technology and management as a career.	530	1.62	1.214	Disagree
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>530</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>1.231</b>	<b>Disagree</b>

The information in the descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 revealed that items 1 and 3 of the variable agree that counselling influence student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria, while respondents disagree on items 2, 4, and 5. The mean scores of the influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria ranges from 1.62 to 3.28. The grand mean of influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria is 2.24, which is below the criterion mean of a revised four-point Likert scale of 2.50. The results indicate that the respondents disagreed with research question 1, which determined the influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria.

**Research Question Two:** How does peer group influence students' choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Rating and Standard deviation of influence peer group on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD.	Remark
6	Class mate influence my decision in pursuing office technology and management as a career.	530	3.28	1.019	Agree
7	My peers encourage me to pursue office technology and management as a career.	530	3.08	1.115	Agree
8	The opinion of my peers was important in my decision to choose office technology and management as a career.	530	3.49	1.229	Agree
9	My friends influence my decision to pursue office technology and management	530	1.58	1.673	Disagree
10	My class mate helps me to understand the job prospect of office technology and management as a career.	530	3.61	1.054	Agree
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>530</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>1.218</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The data of the descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 revealed that respondents disagreed on only item 9 of the variable of influence of peer group of student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. Respondents agree on items 6, 7, 8, and 10 agree that peer group influence student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. The mean scores of peer group influence on student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria ranges from 1.58 to 3.61. The grand mean of peer group influence on student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria is 3.00, which is above the criterion mean of revised four-point Likert scale of 2.50. The result indicates that the respondents agreed with peer group influence student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria.

**Research Question Three:** How does parent's profession advance student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean rating and standard deviation on how parents' profession advance student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD.	Remark
11	My parents encourage me to pursue office technology and management as a career.	530	3.24	1.125	Agreed
12	My parents' decision influence me to choose office technology and management as a career.	530	1.05	1.225	Disagreed
13	The parent opinion is important in my choice to choose office technology and management as career	530	3.67	1.219	Agreed
14	The choice of office technology and management as a career is because it was my parent profession.	530	3.67	1.008	Agreed
15	The parent increases my confidence in chosen office technology and management as a career.	530	3.72	1.211	Agreed
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>530</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>1.157</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The information derived from the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3 revealed that respondents disagreed with item 12, while they agreed with items 11, 13, 14, and 15 on the variable of how parent profession advance on student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. The mean scores on how parent profession advance of student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria ranges from 1.05 to 3.72. The grand mean of how parent profession advance student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria is 3.07, which is above the criterion mean of a revised four-point Likert scale of 2.50. The results indicate that the respondents agreed with research question 3 that states that parent profession advance student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The output of the descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 revealed that disagree that counselling influence student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria. The grand mean revealed that respondents disagreed on the influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria at 2.24 which is

below the criterion mean of 2.50. The results indicate that the respondents disagreed with statements on influence of counselling on student choice of office technology and management in polytechnics in Nigeria. This is in line with Amoor and Aliyu (2014) when he postulated that career choice is determined by the societal role preference. Nigerian traditional culture according to Nwabufo et al. (2020), asserted that counselling does not directly influence the students on choice of office technology and management as career.

The results of descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 revealed that peer group influence student's choice of office technology and management in Nigerian polytechnics. The grand mean highlighted that peer group actually influence student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. The results indicate that the respondents agreed that class mates influence decision in pursuing office technology and management as a career, peers encourage me to pursue office technology and management as a career, the opinion of peers are important in decision to choose office technology and management as a career and class mate helps students understand the job prospect of office technology and management as a career. Thus, peer group influence student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. This in line with Odirile (2012), Olumese and Olamide (2018) and Angwaomaodoko (2023), when they noted that peer influence is a phenomenon that help student in schools to choose their preference career particularly office technology and management as profession in Nigerian polytechnics. Odirile (2012) also asserted that peer group are important in monitoring student on career choice. He further that peer group is another agent of socialization that makes a lot of impact on students' choice of career.

The output of the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3 revealed that parent profession advance student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. The results indicated that the respondents agreed that parent profession advance on student's choice of office technology and management in polytechnic in Nigeria. This is in line with. Tziner et al. (2012) asserted that there is a high relationship between educational level of parents and the occupational plans for their children. They further asserted that most parents get involved in the occupational dreams of their children and how it is fulfilled.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the data collected and analysis for this study, it can be concluded that guidance and counselling, peer group and parents' profession, influence and can affect students' choice of business subjects in Polytechnics in Nigeria.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Federal Government should employ guidance and counsellors' personnel for proper choice of students' occupation in polytechnics Nigeria.
- It was recommended that; government should provide orientation for peers in other to highlight the importance of office technology and management as a course of study.
- It was recommended that parents should control their children on interactions so as to encourage them in studying office technology and management, by organizing extra moral classes at home for them that will help improving their performance.

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