

## BASIC COMPETENCIES OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGISTS IN BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES

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### Abstract

*This paper is looking at the competencies of educational technologist that can enhance their job mobility in the traditional school system to businesses and industry. The paper recognizes eighty such competencies along certain functional areas such as organizational management, personnel management, design, production, evaluation, selection, logistics, utilization, research/theory etc. the researcher sent survey instruments to six states of the south-south of Nigeria which comprises Akwa Ibom State Bayelsa Cross River State, Delta, Edo and Rivers. The major findings are the demand for doctoral graduates is minimal in the businesses and industry whereas those employed in the corporate sectors are those with lower degrees. Finally the comparative analysis of their task suggests that both need same competencies to functions optimally either in the traditional education outfit or in the industry and businesses alike.*

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***Keywords:*** *Competencies of Educational Technologist, job mobility, Business and Industry*

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of Study

Educational media technologists play a very unique role both in the academia and in the industry and businesses alike. However, quite recently the outlook for employment of media graduates in traditional educational settings is dismal, whereas, the prospect in business and industry is bright and promising. Educational technologist employment survey reported in June 2018, issue of educational media (Pp. 36-37), confirmed this trend; according to the report, about one fifth of the media graduates responding had taken jobs in businesses and in the industries. This is because the outlook of the job market is changing towards the direction of industry and businesses to have wider operational spaces in probable collaborative linkage between academia and industry. However, According to Hope (2016), business and industry account for 52 percent of audio-visual purchases as compared to 29 percent for primary, secondary and higher education combined. Students in educational technology need to take this changing job market into consideration as they plan their programmes of study and experiences, so that they will be more flexible and employable after they graduate.

## **The Realities of the Economy**

The changing economy in the country, while not the sole determinant of the direction for graduate programme in educational technology, must be an important factor. Therefore, successful liaison with business and industry of is very vital so as to lends credibility to the graduate programme and bolsters our rejuvenated relationship with the school, for instance, in areas such as collaborative in-service education, research and soft-money projects. According to Dokubo (2020) cited in Rosset (2013) there is friendly industrial market place created especially in the media sub-sector, hence there is a concomitant demand for our educational programme as well as strong pressure to reexamine our graduate programme in the light of changes in the field. This is because local businesses do not always call over graduates what we call them of course; sometimes industries and businesses are seeking “performance technologist” or “trainers or programme development specialists” or “curriculum leaders” or “instructional developers”. Only recently have advertisements included the words “instructional technologist”. But they are all seeking educational technologists, systematic problem solvers whose repertoire includes instructional analysis and design, development and evaluation, media production, management and liaison; interpersonal skills for interaction with clients and subject matter experts; platform presentation and workshop skills.

My observation over the years revealed that, our graduate schools rarely placed students as “video experts” or “graphic artists” animation specialist “virtual learning experts” and “Artificial Intelligence (Ai) experts” etc. The educational technologists’ competencies relate to a broader conception of the field as articulated in the 2014 AECT publication. The instructional design, production management and communication competencies that are integral to this definition of educational technology are very attractive to business.

## **OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCIES AND RELATED JOB SKILLS**

Do educational technologists employed in business and industries need different skills than their counterparts in education or other settings? Recent studies on the major competencies considered important in six occupational settings: business and industries, governments, armed services, medical institutions, colleges/universities, primary, secondary - junior and senior, and vocational technical schools. The instruments used asked respondents to rate the importance of 80 competencies in nine functional areas, these are organizational management, personnel management, design, production, evaluation/selection, logistics, utilization, research/ theory and utilization/dissemination derived from the model in AECTs 2015 publication; the definition of educational technology. The instruments also obtained information about respondents' degree level, length of experience and major areas of job responsibility.

The researcher sent the survey instruments to six states of the south-south of Nigeria - Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers. Sixty percent (265) of the

instruments were returned. About 20 percent of those responding were media specialist in businesses and industry, with such job titles as director of personnel, training director, instructional development and the rest served as media generalist or media producers.

More than 60 percent of the technologists in business had fewer than 10 years of related work experiences, indicating relatively young blood in this organizational setting. About 45 percent of this group had Bachelor degree while 36 percent had obtained a post graduate or specialist degree. This supports Williams (2018) findings that the demand for doctoral graduates is negligible at present, and that the percentage of graduates receiving new media jobs are as a result of degree-earned is low.

### **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Comparing technologists working in business and industry with the researcher those in the occupational settings, they draw the following conclusions:

1. All groups gave high priority to managing organizational and personal task such as setting goals and policy, improving administrative procedures, evaluating personnel and handling financial and budget matters.
2. Among the management competencies, business and industry technologists were unique in giving little importance to initiating agency funded projects, and in making minimal use of students' personnel. They also rated economic analysis of training higher than did the other groups, but not at a significant level.
3. In decision and production functions, all groups except government/armed services identified as important basic design functions: developing individualized instruction programmes, designing or coordinating material development for courses, writing instructional guides, developing automated presentation, and planning new facilities. All groups gave high ratings to producing video tapes, graphic materials and slide presentation, and to improving production standard. They indicated that competency in production of motion pictures and filmstrips and computer assisted instruction, is of little value.
4. All logistic functions (for the purpose of making learning resources available) were rated significantly lower by the business and industry employed technologist than by the others with the exception of locating curriculum or training materials. Equipment acquisition, cataloguing and distribution system for materials are not high priority tasks for the respondents from the business and industry sector.
5. On the other hand, evaluating and selecting learning resources receive a great deal of attention from media specialist in business and industry. They evidently believe it is important to develop a climate supportive of previewing, selecting and evaluating instructional materials, and to pilot test prototype materials.

6. All occupational groups indicated a strong commitment to maintaining a professional status. Unsurprisingly, those in the industry and business give little importance to the traditional teaching functions as these apply to their jobs, but did attach high priority to disseminating information about training projects and reporting to management.
7. In general, educational technologists in business and industry along with those in government/ armed services-rated the six task listed in the research/theory functions somewhat lower than did their academic counterparts, but not at a significant level.

## CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of task in these occupational settings suggests that technologists, whatever their jobs are much more alike than different in the skills and competencies they need. They have a common goal: to facilitate human learning. And they all need a high level of organizational and personnel management skills.

Additionally, business and industry technologists are very active in the design and production of materials to assist management in developing human resources. Most business training centers do not place a high priority on the logistics of media, but do expand a great deal of effort in evaluating and selecting resources. Business and industry also stress the importance of keeping management, the public, and training content specialist informed.

The future holds exciting promise for continued growth of educational technology in business and industry. Educational technology programmes must keep these market place realities in mind as they prepare people for careers in a variety of occupational settings.

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