



INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
HOSTED BY

EMPIRICAL STUDIES AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT
(A RESEARCH CENTER)
UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

THEME: RECENT TRENDS IN TECHNOLOGY: TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTION IN EDUCATION, MANAGEMENT, SCIENCES FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

📅 DATE: 8TH - 9TH JULY, 2025 | 📍 LOCATION: GOOGLEMEET | ⌚ TIME: 10:00 AM DAILY (WAT)

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- Uduak Augustine
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CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION

Good Morning, Distinguished Guests, Esteemed Scholars, Professionals, Innovators, and Visionaries!

It is with immense excitement and deep honor that we welcome you to this groundbreaking conference, centered on the powerful and timely theme: "Recent Trends in Technology: Transformative Solutions in Education, Management, Sciences for National Economic Growth and Sustainability." This gathering is more than just a convergence of great minds, it is a bold step forward, a rallying point for those who believe that technology is not just shaping our future, but revolutionizing our present in ways we once only dreamed of.

Across the globe, the winds of change are unmistakable. Technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace, reshaping every facet of human endeavor from how we learn and teach, to how we lead and manage, to how we explore the mysteries of science and nature. These advancements are not merely conveniences; they are catalysts of transformation, bringing forth new possibilities for solving old problems and crafting solutions that are smarter, faster, and more sustainable.

In the realm of education, technology is tearing down the barriers of geography, inequality, and inaccessibility. Today, a child in a remote village can learn alongside peers in bustling cities, thanks to digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and immersive tools like virtual and augmented reality. Education is becoming more inclusive, personalized, and dynamic, nurturing minds ready to innovate, not just imitate.

In the world of management, technology empowers leaders to make more informed decisions, streamline operations, and build agile, resilient systems. Whether through data analytics, automation, or smart management systems, organizations are being redefined becoming more responsive to change, more transparent, and more accountable to the people they serve.

Meanwhile, the sciences are experiencing a renaissance. Breakthroughs in biotechnology, environmental science, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence are giving us the tools to not only understand our world more deeply but also to heal it. From tackling climate change to improving public health, scientific innovation is at the forefront of sustainable progress.

At the heart of all this transformation lies one ultimate goal: national economic growth and sustainability. As nations grapple with post-pandemic recovery, climate challenges, and global competition, it is clear that technological innovation must be harnessed not just for profit—but for people and planet. The solutions we cultivate today will determine the prosperity of generations to come.

This conference, therefore, is more than a platform, it is a launchpad. A space where ideas meet impact. Where theory meets practice. Where collaboration fuels innovation. Let us engage with energy, explore with open minds, and challenge each other to rise higher. Let us ignite conversations that move beyond the walls of this hall and spark real change in our communities, institutions, and nations.

Together, let us imagine boldly, think critically, and act courageously for a future that is smarter, greener, and more equitable.

Welcome to the future. Welcome to transformation. Welcome to the conference!

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

To Explore Emerging Technological Trends: Examine the latest innovations and digital tools revolutionizing education, management, and the sciences highlighting their relevance, applications, and future implications.

To Promote Technological Integration in Education: Discuss and share strategies for leveraging technology to enhance teaching, learning outcomes, digital literacy, and access to quality education across all levels.

To Strengthen Technology-Driven Management Practices: Explore how digital transformation, data analytics, AI, and automation are reshaping leadership, decision-making, and organizational efficiency in both public and private sectors.

To Showcase Scientific Innovations for Sustainable Development: Highlight cutting-edge scientific research and technological solutions addressing challenges in health, agriculture, environment, and industry for long-term national sustainability.

To Foster Collaboration Between Academia, Industry, and Government: Create a platform for cross-sector dialogue and partnerships that bridge research with real-world application, enhancing policy development and innovation ecosystems.

To Address Challenges and Ethical Implications of Technology: Critically assess the risks, barriers, and ethical concerns surrounding emerging technologies, with a focus on equity, privacy, and inclusivity.

To Inspire Innovation for Economic Growth: Encourage the development of indigenous technological solutions that stimulate entrepreneurship, job creation, productivity, and national economic competitiveness.

To Build Capacity for Future-Ready Leadership: Equip participants with the knowledge, tools, and inspiration needed to lead change and adapt proactively in an increasingly digital and dynamic world.

CONFERENCE THEMES

The conference will cover a wide array of related themes:

Technology in Education: Exploring digital tools, e-learning platforms, AI-driven instruction, and virtual learning environments that are transforming teaching and learning.

Digital Transformation in Management: Examining how automation, data analytics, and smart technologies are optimizing organizational efficiency, leadership, and decision-making.

Scientific Innovation for National Development: Showcasing breakthroughs in science and technology that address societal challenges and contribute to sustainable national growth.

Artificial Intelligence and Automation: Analyzing the role of AI, robotics, and machine learning in reshaping industries, services, and everyday life.

Tech-Driven Sustainability: Investigating green technologies, renewable energy, and sustainable practices powered by innovation for environmental and economic resilience.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Ecosystems: Promoting startup culture and innovation hubs that leverage technology to drive job creation and economic development.

Cybersecurity and Digital Ethics: Addressing data protection, privacy concerns, digital rights, and ethical use of technology in a connected world.

Technology Policy and Governance: Discussing policies, regulations, and frameworks that support responsible tech adoption, innovation, and national competitiveness.

Bridging the Digital Divide: Focusing on strategies to ensure inclusive access to technology across rural and urban areas, genders, and socio-economic groups.

Capacity Building for a Digital Future: Highlighting skills development, digital literacy, and training programs essential for preparing the workforce for a technology-driven economy.

ADDRESSES/SPEECHES

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, PLANNING COMMITTEE

Distinguished guests, esteemed participants, scholars, innovators, and thought leaders,

On behalf of the Planning Committee, it is my great pleasure and honor to warmly welcome you to this landmark conference themed: "Recent Trends in Technology: Transformative Solutions in Education, Management, Sciences for National Economic Growth and Sustainability."

This conference represents more than just a gathering of minds—it is a dynamic platform where knowledge meets innovation, where research meets real-world application, and where visions for a better, smarter, and more sustainable future take shape. In a world marked by rapid technological advancement and constant change, this theme is not only timely but essential. We are here to ask bold questions, share breakthrough ideas, and collaborate across disciplines to spark solutions that can shape our economy, our institutions, and our society for the better.

As the Planning Committee, we have worked with passion and purpose to bring together an outstanding lineup of speakers, researchers, and practitioners. Every session has been carefully designed to ignite thought, provoke dialogue, and inspire action. We are confident that over the course of this event, you will gain fresh insights, forge valuable connections, and leave with renewed energy to be agents of transformation in your fields.

Let us embrace this moment with open minds and a shared commitment to excellence and impact. Once again, welcome—and let the conversations that will define tomorrow begin today.

Thank you.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR, RESEARCH CENTER

Esteemed guests, distinguished scholars, industry leaders, partners, and participants,

It is with immense pride and excitement that I welcome you all to this transformative conference themed: "Recent Trends in Technology: Transformative Solutions in Education, Management, Sciences for National Economic Growth and Sustainability."

As Director of the Research Center, I am deeply honored to witness this moment where innovation, research, and visionary thinking converge in one space to shape the future. This conference reflects the core mission of our center: to serve as a hub for cutting-edge inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and real-world impact. Today, we are not just discussing technology, we are exploring how it can serve as a powerful tool for sustainable development, economic resilience, and inclusive progress.

In a time where the global landscape is evolving at lightning speed, our role as researchers, educators, and leaders has never been more critical. We are challenged to innovate responsibly, to lead with insight, and to create solutions that matter. This gathering provides us the unique opportunity to do just that by sharing knowledge, challenging ideas, and building networks that extend far beyond this event.

I encourage each of you to engage fully, think boldly, and collaborate freely. Let this be more than a conference let it be a spark for action, discovery, and transformation.

Welcome once again, and let's make this a truly impactful experience.

Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTRIBUTORS

¹Ekemini Anietie JOHNSON, ¹Victor Prince OKE, ²Jude Alphonsus INYANGETOH and ³Ujong Uket EDET

¹Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

²Department of Statistics, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

³Cross River State College of Nursing Sciences, Itigidi, Cross River State

Corresponding Author: Ekemini Anietie Johnson: eke5461@gmail.com

¹EGINIWIN Joseph Ese, & ²ONOVUGHE Abel

¹ Department of Accountancy, School of Business Studies, Federal Polytechnic Orogun, Delta State, Nigeria. ORCID ID: 0009-0008-4115-4598

² Department of Accountancy, School of Business Studies, Federal Polytechnic Orogun, Delta State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author Email: eginiwin.joseph@fepo.edu.ng or eginjoseph70@gmail.com

¹OYOKUNYI E. ISONG, MNIM, ²ENOBONG I. OKON, & ³CHARLES B. BASSEY

^{1,2&3} Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²; basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

¹NSEOBOT, Ime Robson, Ph.D, ²Ekpenyong Ame EKPENYONG, & ³Unyime Joseph UDOUNWA

^{1,2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Ekepene, Nigeria

nseobot857@gmail.com ¹; ameekpenyong221@gmail.com ²; unyimeudounwa@gmail.com ³

¹ALI, PETER IFEANYICHUKWU Ph.D, ²ENWEREONYE EPHRAIM C., & ³OBIAH MMADUBUIKE EMMANUEL

¹Department of Accountancy, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, Nigeria,

²Department of Business Administration and Management, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, Nigeria,

³Department of Accountancy, School of Business Management Technology, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, Nigeria,

Email: madoxlimoz@gmail.com ¹

OWOR EFFIOM OWOR

Federal Polytechnic Ugep, Cross River State, Nigeria

oworeffim@gmail.com

Unyime Joseph UDOUNWA ¹, NSEOBOT, Ime Robson, Ph.D ², & Ekpenyong Ame EKPENYONG ³

^{1,2,3}DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, AKWA IBOM STATE
POLYTECHNIC, IKOT EKEPENE, NIGERIA

unyimeudounwa@gmail.com ¹; nseobot857@gmail.com ²;
ameekpenyong221@gmail.com ³

¹BELLO JUNAIDU AHMED, & ² USMAN MUHAMMAD

^{1,2}Department of Social Sciences, School of Basic and General Studies
Federal Polytechnic, Bida, Nigeria

junaidub13@gmail.com ¹; muhammadusmanmago@gmail.com ²

HARRY, Amieibi Harcourt (PhD) ¹ & Damian-Okoro Inetimi ROSELINE (PhD) ²

^{1,2} Department of Marketing, Faculty of Administration and Management,
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

amieibihary@gmail.com ¹; roseline.damian-okoro@ust.edu.ng ²

Ekpenyong Ame EKPENYONG¹, Unyime Joseph UDOUNWA², & NSEOBOT, Ime Robson, Ph.D³

^{1,2,3}DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, AKWA IBOM STATE
POLYTECHNIC, IKOT EKEPENE, NIGERIA

ameekpenyong221@gmail.com ¹; unyimeudounwa@gmail.com ²;
nseobot857@gmail.com ³

Ekemini Anietie Johnson¹, Jude Alphonsus Inyangetoh², & Victor Prince Oke¹

¹ Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

² Department of Statistics, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: Ekemini Anietie Johnson: eke5461@gmail.com

Oyokunyi E. ISONG, MNIM ¹, Enobong I. OKON ², & Charles B. BASSEY ³

¹ Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

^{2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua

isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²;
basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

Bishop Prof. Uzoma Emmanuel AFAMEFUNA ¹, Hon. Mrs. Onuora Anthonia NONYELUM ²

¹ Federal Polytechnic Nekede Owerri, Imo State

² Education Secretary Aninri Lga Ndeaboh, Enugu State

bishopuzoma11@gmail.com ¹; nonyelumonuora@gmail.com ²

Oyokunyi E. ISONG, MNIM ¹, Enobong I. OKON ², & Charles B. BASSEY ³

¹ Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

^{2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua

isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²;

basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

Obanla Adebayo BANKOLE ¹, Ogunlade Emmanuel DAMILARE ², & Adewale-Ojo Titilayo OLUFUNMIBI ³

^{1,2} Department of Public Administration

³ Mass Communication, Ogun State Institute of Technology, Igbesa

AJAYI, Victor Oladipupo

ajayivictor807@gmail.com

Onoharigho Gift KEVWE

Delta State Maritime Polytechnic Burutu

Assistant Lecturer

giftonos28@gmail.com

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A MACHINE LEARNING APPROACH TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE PREDICTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF XGBOOST AND RANDOM FOREST

¹Ekemini Anietie JOHNSON, ¹Victor Prince OKE, ²Jude Alphonsus INYANGETOH and ³Ujong Uket EDET

¹Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

²Department of Statistics, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

³Cross River State College of Nursing Sciences, Itigidi, Cross River State

Corresponding Author: Ekemini Anietie Johnson: eke5461@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Accurately predicting student academic performance is a critical objective in educational data mining and learning analytics, as it enables data-driven interventions aimed at improving educational outcomes. This study investigates and compares the predictive performance of two widely used machine learning algorithms: Random Forest (RF) and Extreme Gradient Boosting (XGBoost) using real-world student data. A dataset comprising 400 student records collected from six departments at the Federal Polytechnic Ukana was preprocessed through principal component analysis (PCA) and feature normalization to enhance model accuracy. Sixteen key features were selected based on their eigenvalues and explained variance. The dataset was partitioned into training (80%) and testing (20%) subsets. Model performance was assessed using standard evaluation metrics, including Mean Squared Error (MSE), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), R-squared (R^2), Explained Variance Score (EVS), and Median Absolute Error (MedAE). Experimental results indicate that both RF and XGBoost exhibit strong predictive capabilities, with RF demonstrating a slight advantage across several metrics. These findings underscore the potential of machine learning approaches in educational performance prediction and provide actionable insights for model selection in academic analytics frameworks.

KEYWORDS: Performance, Extreme Gradient Boosting, Random Forest, Prediction, Students, Academic Performance.



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS AND EARNINGS PER SHARE OF LISTED CONSUMER GOODS FIRMS IN THE MIDST OF A DOUBLE-DIGITS INFLATIONARY ECONOMY IN NIGERIA

¹EGINIWIN Joseph Ese, & ²ONOVUGHE Abel

¹ Department of Accountancy, School of Business Studies, Federal Polytechnic Orogun, Delta State, Nigeria. ORCID ID: 0009-0008-4115-4598

² Department of Accountancy, School of Business Studies, Federal Polytechnic Orogun, Delta State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author Email: eginiwin.joseph@fepo.edu.ng or eginjoseph70@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of corporate governance practices on earnings per share of listed consumer goods firms in the midst of the double-digit inflationary economy in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study looked at the relationship between board size, board independence, board diligence, women board membership, and earnings per share. The inflation rate was used to moderate corporate governance in relation to earnings per share. The study was anchored on the agency theory, and the secondary data obtained from the audited financial statements and annual reports of randomly selected listed consumer goods firms covers a ten-year period from 2014 to 2023. The regression analysis was used to analyze the collected data via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 to examine the impact of the corporate governance proxies and the moderating variable on earnings per share. The findings of the study revealed that both board size and board diligence have a negative relationship with earnings per share, while board independence and women board membership, as well as the moderating variable inflation rate all have a positive relationship with earnings per share. However, the negative and positive relationships indicated by the findings of the study are not statistically significant enough to be relied upon. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher therefore concludes that there is no significant relationship between corporate governance and earnings per share of consumer goods firms in Nigeria and recommends that while the corporate governance codes are guides provided by regulations to manage firms, the managers of firms should look beyond these corporate governance codes to attain the corporate objective of firms for the generality of all stakeholders.

KEYWORDS: Earnings Per Share; Board Size; Board Independence; Board Diligence; Women Board Membership; Inflation Rate



FINANCIAL LEVERAGE AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF QUOTED INDUSTRIAL GOODS FIRMS IN NIGERIA

¹OYOKUNYI E. ISONG, MNIM, ²ENOBONG I. OKON, & ³CHARLES B. BASSEY
^{1,2&3} Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus
isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²; basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

ABSTRACT

Businesses use financing decisions to optimize their capital structure, control risk, and spur growth. In view of this, this study examined the relationship between financial leverage and financial stability of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to determine the effect of debt-equity ratio on liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria, to ascertain the effect of interest coverage ratio on liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria and to assess the effect of total debt ratio on liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. Ex-post facto research design was adopted, and panel data covering ten (10) years (2014-2023) were collected from twelve (12) listed industrial goods firms in Nigeria which formed the sample size of the study. The data collected were analysed using panel linear regression technique. Findings showed that debt equity ratio has a significant negative relationship (Coeff. = -0.00219{0.0097}) with liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria while interest coverage ratio has a significant positive relationship (Coeff. = 0.00029{0.0124}) with liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. It also revealed that total debt ratio has a non-significant negative relationship (Coeff. = -0.00011{0.1260}) with liquidity of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. It was thus concluded that financial leverage has a significant impact on the financial stability of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. Recommendations made included that quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria should consider reducing their debt levels and increasing their equity base. This could be achieved through strategies such as debt restructuring, equity financing, and improving profitability to reduce dependence on debt.

KEYWORDS: Financial Leverage, Financial Stability, Industrial Goods Firms, Debt-Equity Ratio, Interest Coverage Ratio, Liquidity and Total Debt Ratio



STAKEHOLDERS' COLLABORATION AND EFFECTIVE FUNDING OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN NIGERIA

¹NSEOBOT, Ime Robson, Ph.D, ²Ekpenyong Ame EKPENYONG, & ³Unyime
Joseph UDOUNWA

^{1,2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot
Ekepene, Nigeria

nseobot857@gmail.com¹; ameekpenyong221@gmail.com²; unyimeudounwa@gmail.com³

ABSTRACT

Background: Effective funding remains a significant challenge for cooperative societies in Nigeria, despite their recognized role in financial inclusion and grassroots economic development. This study investigates the influence of stakeholder collaboration, trust and communication, and institutional and technological support on the effective funding and financial sustainability of cooperative societies. **Objective:** The primary objective is to examine how stakeholder engagement and supportive mechanisms affect funding accessibility and sustainability in Nigerian cooperatives, while addressing gaps in integrated empirical research. **Methodology:** The study adopts a quantitative research design using a structured survey instrument distributed across a stratified sample of cooperative societies in Nigeria. Data were analyzed using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression and supported by robust statistical diagnostics. Key variables include Effective Funding (EF), Stakeholder Collaboration Index (SCI), Institutional Support (IS), Trust and Communication (TC), Stakeholder Commitment (SC), Years of Operation (YO), and Total Assets (TA). Construct validity was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity were evaluated using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Breusch-Pagan test, respectively. **Findings:** The results indicate that stakeholder collaboration, trust and communication, and institutional-technological support significantly influence effective funding. Trust-based communication channels and digital innovations emerged as strong predictors of funding accessibility and sustainability. **Conclusion:** Findings reinforce the need for integrated stakeholder frameworks, transparent communication, and digital support systems to enhance cooperative funding outcomes in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Stakeholder Collaboration, Cooperative Societies, Effective Funding, Trust, Institutional Support, Technology, Nigeria



RECENT TRENDS ON MANAGEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN NIGERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

¹ALI, PETER IFEANYICHUKWU Ph.D, ²ENWEREONYE EPHRAIM C., & ³OBIAH
MMADUBUIKE EMMANUEL

¹Department of Accountancy, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma, Nigeria,

²Department of Business Administration and Management, Imo State Polytechnic, Omuma,
Nigeria,

³Department of Accountancy, School of Business Management Technology, Imo State
Polytechnic, Omuma, Nigeria,

Email: madoxlimoz@gmail.com ¹

ABSTRACT

This study examined recent trend in the sustainability accounting and financial performance of financial institutions in Nigeria, focusing on deposit money banks. The study employed quasi-experimental research design to establish the relationship that exists between sustainability accounting and financial performance indices (return on assets - ROA, return on equity - ROE, and earnings per share - EPS). Purposeful sampling technique was employed to select five (5) deposit money banks quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange and approved by the Central Bank of Nigeria. Secondary data, covering 2012 to 2021 financial years, were extracted from annual reports of the study sectors, using a content analysis method. The data are analyzed using SPSS, Version 23. Panel Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression method was employed in estimating the unknown parameters in the study's regression model after conducting diagnostic and preliminary tests to ascertain that the data set are reliable and not misleading. Empirical results showed that there is a negative non-significant relationship between sustainability accounting (SA) and the performance indices (ROA, ROE, and EPS) of deposit money banks in Nigeria. The study recommended that: only relevant information which increases the performance indices should appear on the disclosure checklist; sustainability accounting practices should be country-specific; and bank executives in Nigeria should increase and monitor the level of investment (resources, time, and energy) in order to ensure that sustainability accounting has significant impact on financial performance.

KEYWORDS: Sustainability, Sustainability Accounting, Financial Performance, Deposit Money Banks



FACTORS WITH SCHOOL GOAL ATTAINMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN CROSS RIVER STATE: AN EMPIRICAL PATH ANALYTICAL MODEL APPROACH

OWOR EFFIOM OWOR

Federal Polytechnic Ugep, Cross River State, Nigeria

oworeffim@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The yearning for paper qualifications in Nigeria in particular and globally has resulted in many types of corruption in schools despite government efforts in achieving accountability and transparency within the system towards the attainment of the goals of secondary education, the problem of poor output from public secondary schools still persist, the need to explore the rationale behind this horrible trend. This problem prompts this study on factors with school goal attainment of secondary school principals in cross river state using a path analytical model. The study adopted survey design approach. All the 272 principals in the 272 public secondary schools in cross river state were used. An average score of four (4) teachers per school who served as sampling unit were selected to assess one principal (unit of analysis). A self-developed 66-item modified 4-point likert scale questionnaire was used to collect information. Cronbach alpa reliability method was employed to test the internal consistency of the items which coefficient estimates ranges from .822 - .830. The data was subjected to Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Analysis of MOment of Structure (AMOS) in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate a path analytical model and data analysis at .05 level of significance. The result revealed that there were significant direct predictive effects between absenteeism and school goal attainment, embezzlement and school goal attainment, bribery and school goal attainment and forgery and school goal attainment. The result also revealed that nepotism had significant positive predictive direct effects with absenteeism, embezzlement, bribery and forgery. The result also showed that the correlation among all the four exogenous variables to school goal attainment was significantly positively correlated. It was, therefore, recommended among others school authority should introduce transparent criteria and procedures for creating transparency in appointment, promotion and remuneration, as well as provide integrated monitoring systems for school staff and develop suitable methods and institution building for trustworthy and as independent as possible integrated complaints and monitoring systems with a mandate for competence and the expertise to identify and prevent corruption throughout the school system.

KEYWORDS: Path analysis, nepotism, absenteeism, embezzlement, bribery, forgery, school goal attain



EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETY AND STAKEHOLDERS' WELL-BEING

Unyime Joseph UDOUNWA ¹, NSEOBOT, Ime Robson, Ph.D ², & Ekpenyong Ame
EKPENYONG ³

^{1,2,3}DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, AKWA IBOM STATE
POLYTECHNIC, IKOT EKEPENE, NIGERIA

unyimeudounwa@gmail.com ¹; nseobot857@gmail.com ²;
ameekpenyong221@gmail.com ³

ABSTRACT

Background: Cooperative societies play a crucial role in promoting socio-economic development, especially in grassroots communities. This study investigates the effectiveness of cooperative society management and its impact on stakeholders' well-being in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, focusing on leadership practices, financial management, and stakeholder engagement.

Objective: The study aimed to examine how leadership practices, financial management, and stakeholder engagement influence the socio-economic well-being of members of cooperative societies.

Methodology: A descriptive survey research design was adopted to systematically collect and analyze data without manipulating variables. The study population comprised registered members and executives of cooperative societies across Akwa Ibom State. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, 687 respondents were selected from 60 cooperative societies across four purposively chosen Local Government Areas (Uyo, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, and Oron). The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Cooperative Management and Stakeholder Well-being Questionnaire (CMSWQ). Content and face validity were ensured by expert review, while a pilot test yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.86, confirming the instrument's reliability. Data were collected over six weeks and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and regression analysis via SPSS v26. The significance level was set at 0.05.

Findings/Conclusion: The results showed that effective leadership, sound financial management, and active stakeholder engagement significantly influence stakeholders' well-being and contribute to the performance and sustainability of cooperative societies in the state. The study underscores the need for strengthened management practices to enhance cooperative efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Cooperative Society, Leadership Practices, Financial Management, Stakeholder Engagement, Socio-economic Well-being, and Akwa Ibom State.



ASSESSMENT ON NIGERIA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORT'S INFLUENCE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH (2020–2024)

¹BELLO JUNaidu AHMED, & ²USMAN MUHAMMAD

^{1,2}Department of Social Sciences, School of Basic and General Studies

Federal Polytechnic, Bida, Nigeria

junaidub13@gmail.com ¹; muhammadusmanmago@gmail.com ²

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the impact of Nigeria's agricultural exports on economic growth from 2020 to 2024. The specific objective is to examine how agricultural exports such as cocoa, sesame, cashew, and ginger affect GDP growth, foreign exchange earnings, and employment. Using regression analysis of secondary data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), and World Bank, the results show a strong positive correlation between agricultural export growth and Nigeria's GDP, with exports rising from ₦355 billion in 2020 to a projected ₦780 billion in 2024. The findings confirm that agricultural exports significantly support economic diversification and currency stabilization (CBN, 2024; NBS, 2024). Thus, enhancing agricultural exports can serve as a strategy for sustainable national development.

KEYWORDS: Agricultural exports, Economic growth, Nigeria, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Foreign exchange earnings, Trade diversification, Non-oil exports, Post-COVID economy, Agro-processing, Export-led growth.



LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE FOR NIGERIAN FARMERS

HARRY, Amieibi Harcourt (PhD) ¹ & Damian-Okoro Inetimi ROSELINE (PhD) ²

^{1,2} Department of Marketing, Faculty of Administration and Management,
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

amieibihary@gmail.com ¹; roseline.damian-okoro@ust.edu.ng ²

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in advancing sustainable food security within Nigeria's agricultural sector. Against the backdrop of growing population pressures, climate variability, and systemic inefficiencies in food production and distribution, the research explores how AI technologies, ranging from precision farming and yield prediction to market access platforms and climate-smart tools, can address the four pillars of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. Drawing on theoretical foundations such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI), and socio-technical systems theory, the study presents a contextualized analysis of AI adoption among Nigerian farmers. Through literature synthesis and multi-stakeholder perspectives, the study identifies critical barriers, including poor digital infrastructure, high costs, low digital literacy, and policy fragmentation. It also highlights emerging opportunities for empowering smallholder farmers through localized, farmer-centric AI innovations. The findings reveal a significant gap in empirical and localized research on AI in Nigerian agriculture and emphasize the need for integrated, inclusive strategies that bridge technology, policy, and human capital. The study concludes with actionable recommendations for policymakers, innovators, and development actors, positioning AI as a strategic imperative for achieving resilient and inclusive food systems in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Sustainable Food Security, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, Socio-Technical Systems Theory



THE POTENCY OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES: AN X-RAY OF 1937 AND 1966 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE PRINCIPLES

Ekpenyong Ame EKPENYONG¹, Unyime Joseph UDOUNWA², & NSEOBOT, Ime
Robson, Ph.D³

^{1,2,3}DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, AKWA IBOM STATE
POLYTECHNIC, IKOT EKEPENE, NIGERIA

ameekpenyong221@gmail.com¹; unyimeudounwa@gmail.com²;
nseobot857@gmail.com³

ABSTRACT

Background: This study undertakes a comparative analysis of cooperative societies operating under the 1937 and 1966 International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) frameworks in Nigeria. The aim was to evaluate how these frameworks influence operational practices, efficiency, and institutional effectiveness in diverse regional and sectoral contexts. **Methodology:** A mixed-methods research design was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to enhance depth, validity, and contextual richness. The study was conducted in seven purposively selected Nigerian states including Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Abuja (FCT), Lagos, Kano, Oyo, and Enugu chosen to reflect ethno-linguistic and geopolitical diversity. Data were collected using a structured instrument, the Comparative Cooperative Operations and Principles Assessment Questionnaire (CCOPAQ), administered in English, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, and Nigerian Pidgin. The sampling frame included various cooperative types credit, agricultural, workers', and multipurpose. A total of 379 questionnaires were distributed using multi-stage sampling, with 354 successfully retrieved (93.40% response rate). Additionally, 14 qualitative interviews were conducted with cooperative leaders to deepen interpretation. **Findings:** Descriptive and inferential analyses using SPSS v26 and NVivo revealed that cooperatives under the 1966 ICA framework demonstrated greater adherence to community development, education, and inter-cooperative collaboration, whereas those under the 1937 framework prioritized internal governance and thrift-based member services. Hybrid models showed moderate performance across key dimensions. Regional and institutional factors significantly influenced framework adoption and cooperative effectiveness. **Conclusion:** The study underscores the relevance of context-sensitive frameworks and recommends a hybridized adoption for greater adaptability and sustainability in Nigeria's cooperative movement.

KEYWORDS: Cooperative societies, ICA 1937 and 1966 framework, operational efficiency, governance, cooperative development, and Nigeria



PREDICTIVE MODELING OF STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE USING AN INTELLIGENT ENSEMBLE LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Ekemini Anietie Johnson¹, Jude Alphonsus Inyangetoh², & Victor Prince Oke¹

¹ Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

² Department of Statistics, Federal Polytechnic Ukana, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: Ekemini Anietie Johnson: eke5461@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Predicting student academic performance is a central focus in Educational Data Mining (EDM) and Learning Analytics, as it enables institutions to enhance learning outcomes, identify at-risk students, and implement targeted interventions. This paper presents an Intelligent Ensemble Learning Framework that integrates Extreme Gradient Boosting (XGBoost) and Random Forest (RF) to improve prediction accuracy in student performance modeling. XGBoost, a robust boosting technique known for its scalability and ability to reduce overfitting, is combined with RF in a bagging-based ensemble to enhance model stability and reduce variance. The study utilizes a real-world dataset comprising 400 student records including attendance, demographic information, and academic history collected from Federal Polytechnic Ukana. After preprocessing, which involved normalization and feature selection using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), 16 significant features were identified based on eigenvalues and explained variance. The dataset was split into training (80%) and testing (20%) subsets, and the ensemble model was constructed accordingly. Performance was evaluated using standard regression metrics: Mean Squared Error (MSE), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), R-squared (R^2), Explained Variance Score (EVS), and Median Absolute Error (MedAE). The proposed ensemble model achieved superior performance; with an R^2 score of 0.9900, surpassing both standalone RF (0.9888) and XGBoost (0.9800) models. Visual analyses using scatter plots, grouped bar charts, and heat maps further validated the framework's effectiveness. This research contributes to the expanding field of machine learning applications in education by demonstrating the enhanced predictive power of ensemble regression models. The findings highlight the value of advanced predictive modeling techniques for supporting proactive decision-making and personalized student support in higher education environments.

KEYWORDS: Intelligence, Ensemble Learning, Framework, Prediction, Academic Performance, Extreme Gradient Boosting and Random Forest



INVENTORY MANAGEMENT AND PROFITABILITY OF LISTED PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES IN NIGERIA

Oyokunyi E. ISONG, MNIM ¹, Enobong I. OKON ², & Charles B. BASSEY ³

¹ Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

^{2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua

isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²;

basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of inventory management on profitability of listed pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. However, the specific objectives were to examine the effect of inventory turnover on gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria, to access the effect of inventory holding cost on gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria and to determine the effect of economic order quantity on gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design and utilized a panel data of seventy (70) pooled observations gathered from seven (7) listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria over ten (10)-year period (2014-2023) and employed a panel multiple regression technique to analyze the data via E-views 10.0 statistical package. The study findings revealed that inventory turnover has a significant positive relationship (Coeff. = 0.414078 {0.0005}) with gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria while inventory holding cost has a significant negative relationship (Coeff. = -3.100747 {0.0298}) with gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. It also revealed that economic order quantity has a non-significant negative relationship (Coeff. = -0.000525 {0.4067}) with gross profit margin of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. The study provided conclusive evidence on the importance of effective inventory management in driving profitability in the pharmaceutical industry. The recommendations made included that listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria should implement cost-saving measures to reduce their inventory holding costs. This can be achieved by renegotiating storage contracts, implementing just-in-time inventory systems, and reducing inventory obsolescence.

KEYWORDS: Inventory Management, Profitability, Pharmaceutical Companies, Gross Profit Margin, Inventory Turnover, Inventory Holding Cost and Economic Order Quantity



MITIGATING CYBER SECURITY THREATS IN LEARNING AND ENTERPRISE

**Bishop Prof. Uzoma Emmanuel AFAMEFUNA ¹, Hon. Mrs. Onuora Anthonia
NONYELUM ²**

¹ Federal Polytechnic Nekede Owerri, Imo State

² Education Secretary Aninri Lga Ndeaboh, Enugu State
bishopuzoma11@gmail.com ¹; nonyelumonuora@gmail.com ²

ABSTRACT

This study examines cybersecurity threats in educational and corporate settings. The increasing reliance on digital technologies has heightened vulnerability to cyberattacks, compromising sensitive data and disrupting operations. A mixed-methods approach was used to investigate the nature and impact of these threats, integrating qualitative and quantitative data analysis. A survey of 500 participants, including students, educators, and IT professionals, gathered insights on threat perceptions and mitigation strategies. Findings reveal phishing, ransomware, and malware as significant cybersecurity threats. Regular software updates, employee training, and robust security protocols are essential for mitigation. Prioritizing cybersecurity is crucial to protect sensitive data, ensure business continuity, and maintain trust. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and IT professionals, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on cybersecurity and informing effective cybersecurity strategies. Cybersecurity awareness and proactive measures are necessary to prevent cyber threats and ensure a secure digital environment.

KEYWORDS: Cybersecurity, Learning Institutions, Enterprises, Cyber Threats, Data Protection



CASH MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND MARKET VALUE OF LISTED PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS IN NIGERIA

Oyokunyi E. ISONG, MNIM ¹, Enobong I. OKON ², & Charles B. BASSEY ³

¹ Department of Accountancy, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

^{2,3} Department of Business Administration, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua

isongoyokunyi@gmail.com ¹; enybongokon@gmail.com ²;

basseybrothers24@gmail.com ³

ABSTRACT

Poor cash management exposes businesses to illiquidity and insufficiency, hindering the ability to meet daily liquidity requirements. In view of this, the study examined the relationship between cash management practices and market value of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to determine the relationship between cash conversion cycle and market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria, to ascertain the relationship between current ratio and market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria and to assess the relationship between of cash ratio and market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design and utilized a panel data of seventy (70) pooled observations gathered from seven (7) listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria over ten (10)-year period (2014-2023) and employed a panel multiple regression technique to analyze the data via E-views 10.0 statistical package. The study findings revealed that cash conversion cycle has a non-significant positive relationship (Coeff. = 0.003378 {0.8406}) with the market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria while operating cashflow has a significant positive relationship (Coeff. = 0.258792 {0.0469}) with the market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. It also revealed that cash ratio has a significant positive relationship (Coeff. = 2.741821 {0.0007}) with market capitalization of listed pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. It was however concluded that effective cash management practices, particularly cash ratio enhances the market value of pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria. The recommendations made included that should focus on optimizing their working capital management practices to reduce their cash conversion cycle at all times.

KEYWORDS: Cash Conversion Cycle, Operating Cash Flow, Cash Ratio, Market Value, Market Capitalization and Pharmaceutical Firms



ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION HUBS AND THEIR IMPACT ON NIGERIA PUBLIC COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

**Obanla Adebayo BANKOLE ¹, Ogunlade Emmanuel DAMILARE ², & Adewale-
Ojo Titilayo OLUFUNMIBI ³**

^{1,2} Department of Public Administration

³ Mass Communication, Ogun State Institute of Technology, Igbesa

ABSTRACT

The emergence of entrepreneurship and innovation hubs across Nigeria has fundamentally transformed public communication management paradigms. These collaborative ecosystems serve as catalysts for creative problem-solving, technological innovation, and citizen engagement, reshaping how government entities communicate with the public. Through the integration of digital technologies, social media platforms, and community-driven initiatives, entrepreneurship and innovation hubs have created new pathways for transparent, inclusive, and responsive governance communication. This paper examines the multifaceted impact of these innovation ecosystems on Nigeria's public communication landscape, analyzing best practices, identifying persistent challenges, and exploring opportunities for sustainable development. The study reveals that while these hubs have significantly enhanced public engagement and transparency, challenges related to digital divide, infrastructure limitations, and regulatory frameworks continue to impede optimal integration into Nigeria's public communication management systems.

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship, Innovation Hubs, Public, Communication Management, and Nigeria



TEACHING METHODS AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, OWERRI, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

AJAYI, Victor Oladipupo
ajayivictor807@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Teaching, as an act of knowledge and skills acquisition can be achieved using appropriate teaching method. In this paper, the Teaching Methods considered involved; classroom teaching, self-reading, audio and audio-visual methods, with the major objective to know the effect teaching method on students' academic performance. Experimental design was used as it involved classroom practical teaching on the topic "Production" in Economics and students' test administration for the students' achievement. From the two schools used, Holy Ghost College, Owerri of about One thousand (1,000) and Owerri Girls ' Secondary School, Owerri of about One thousand five hundred students (1,500) as population, a sample of One hundred and sixty (160) respondents., Eighty each from each school and sub- divided into the four (4) teaching method groups of 20 students each. Frequency, Percentage tables and Chi-square analysis were used for analysis. From the analysis, Audio-visual had 81 points as the highest, for the most effective teaching method, thus emerged zoom, Microsoft teams and so on, 41% preferred the Audio-visual method to other methods and 58.75% agreed that classroom teaching is still the most commonly used method in Owerri. Also, at 99% significant level, the teaching methods have significant effects on the students' academic performance. It is therefore recommended that audio-visual facilities should be made available for better knowledge acquisition.

KEYWORDS: Teaching Methods, Students', Academic Achievement, Secondary Schools, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN MANAGEMENT: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR ORGANIZATIONS SUCCESS

Onoharigho Gift KEVWE
Delta State Maritime Polytechnic Burutu
Assistant Lecturer
giftonos28@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Digital transformation in management has become an essential response to the rapidly evolving technological landscape. Scholarly literature emphasizes that digital transformation extends beyond the mere implementation of technology; it requires a fundamental shift in organizational culture, leadership practices, and strategic orientation (Westerman et.al.;2014; kan e et al.;2016). This study aims to examine the impact of digital transformation on management functions and identify critical enablers for successful implementation. Drawing from current literature and real-world examples, the study finds that strong leadership, digital competency, and organizational agility are crucial to transformation success. It recommends fostering a digital-first mindset, encouraging continuous learning, and aligning digital strategies with core business goals. The paper offers insight into how managers can strategically navigate the complexities of digital transformation to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

KEYWORDS: Digital transformation, management, leadership, strategy, innovation, digital culture