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DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION IN SCHOOLS CURRICULUM ADMINISTRATION WITHIN THE URBANIZED AREAS OF AKWA IBOM STATE: PERCEIVED PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the status of digital technology utilization (DTU) in schools curriculum administration (SCA) within the urbanized areas of Akwa Ibom State: Perceived prospects and challenges. The study was conducted in Oron, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, and Uyo Local Government Areas. Five research questions were answered using cross-sectional survey design. Population of 141 was used consisting of 36principals, 100 vice-principals and 5 Directors in SSEB in the study area. Census sampling technique was utilized because the population was manageable. Data derived using researcher's designed instrument titled: "DTUSCS". The DTUSCS was validated using content validation by experts in Department of Curriculum and Teaching, University of Calabar and was tested for reliability using Cohen's Kappa Statistics which resulted at 0.79.. Data analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, graph, charts and mean projections. Results indicate a very low extent of DTU in SCA ($\bar{x}$=1.35) with DTU in CO ($\bar{x}$=1.77)>CE($\bar{x}$=1.22)>CO($\bar{x}$=1.07). Results also shown that DT tool/platforms often utilized for SCA are laptops (72.4%), emails (70.1%), digital filing (57.4%), online libraries (53%), AI (41%), and data analysis software (17.2%). The prominent perceived prospects of DTU in SCA include easy management of data, promotion of staff productivity, and easy determination of trend in curriculum administration effectiveness for accurate projection. The perceived challenges among others were unreliable electrical source, lack of or poor emerging DT knowledge among staff (school administrators), lack of accessibility to DT tools, and government failure in adopting intentional and proactive measures (through DT) in improving quality education in the State. It is recommended that government should provide schools with DT tools, and as well, makes it mandatory for schools administrators to utilize DT in SCA for easy tracking of quality education outcome.

KEY WORDS: Digital Technology (DT), Utilization, School Curriculum Administration (SCA), Curriculum Planning (CP), Curriculum Organization (CO), Curriculum Evaluation (CE)

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1.0 Introduction

A school is a system for the optimization of the learners' cognitive capacity, recreating reasonability and sense of developmental integration. This the school achieved through exerting effective orientation on the learners, and consistently creating a blueprint worthy of emulation by the learners. In other words, an haphazard school system has the tendency of producing similar outcome in the learners.

Records, insinuations and observations have shown that majorly, educational institution in Nigeria has been bedeviled by series of unacceptable students' issues (Lukman and Hamad, 2014, Odebode, 2019, Aibinuomo & Kennedy, 2021). For instance, studies have shown the rising level of students' deviancy such as cases of examination malpractices(Oko & Adie, 2016, Onyibe, Uma & Ibina, 2015), issues of truancy (Fareo, 2013, Nwaordu & Taiwo, 2024, Olaleye & Ayorinde, 2025), cult-related activities (Chukwu & Tor-Anyiin, 2023, Nwala, 2023, Onete, 2020), and lackadaisical attitude to studies (Sumaila & Oko, 2025, Aremu, et al., 2019). These challenges have contributed remarkably to the rising cases of students' academic failure and alarming impediment to their academic, personal and professional successes. Although many studies attributed these challenges facing education sector to many factors such as parents' factors, students' factors, teachers' factors and school factors (D'Souza & Magree, 2021, Adegoke & Folorunso, 2024, Owoeye, et al., 2022). It is reasonable to believe that school curriculum administration plays critical roles to exert more influence than others.

Quality education especially in the secondary level of education starts with effective administration of curriculum. Many studies considered curriculum administration as the blueprint for effective and functional school system (Wirtati, et al., 2025, Karnes, et al., 2022, Saro, etal., 2024). Wirtati, et al., (2025) posited that curriculum administration is a vital component of education, encompassing the processes of planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous development. In another perspective, it involves the planning, decision making, supervision, coordination and other management strategies towards the attainment of educational goals (Cui and Lei, 2020). In other words, school curriculum administration is the holistic measure observed towards the achievement of education objectives. Diverse potentials of curriculum administration have been highlighted by scholars to include:

i. Promotion of motivation among the school personnel,
ii. Encouragement of timely researches and quality implementation
iii. Provision of educational managers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation, not only in the life of their country but also in the wider world.
iv. Enhancement of teachers' job satisfaction, commitment and quality job performance
v. Development skills and knowledge to those who will manage the educational system and,
vi. Preparation of various categories of workers in the education industry for further studies in management (Carol, 2022, Burra & Fanuel, 2021, Ifarajimi, 2023).

These underscore the potentials of curriculum administration in establishing a formidable schools system with potencies to coordinate teachers' interest to work, enhances absolute adherence to school rules and regulations, as well as promoting students' academic, personal, and professional successes.

A functional school system propels by effective curriculum administration establishes status quo that maintain serenity in personal and students' behavioural conduct. Many studies acknowledged the influence of effective curriculum administration in ensuring optimized quality expectation of secondary schools (Wirtati, et al., 2025, Efendi, 2022, Neliwati, et al., 2023). Unfortunately, this is not the case in Akwa Ibom State as the State records among the States in Nigeria with high rate of examination malpractice (Obilor & Akwaowo, 2024, Udoinyang, et al., 2024), students' academic failure (Sakirudeen & Sanni, 2017, Adeleke, et al., 2024), and dropout rate (Edung & Uranta, 2024). These challenges without doubt may be attributed to inability of the school administrators to make the school system interesting, evaluative and formidable in implementing appropriate curriculum behavioral conduct. Other challenges that have received prominent attention are lackadaisical attitude of the school administrators, teachers and students to school development (Moye, 2015, Adelotan & Gbesoevi, 2021). Studies maintained that issues of teachers' poor attitude to work, students' deviant tendencies, inadequacy of school plant, and school administrators administrative style have significant negative implications on the curriculum administration (Mohammed, et al., 2021, Moye, 2015, Adelotan & Gbesoevi, 2021). These challenges may not be unconnected with the administrative style of the school administrators, non-inclusion of teachers and students in decision making process, non-adoption of comprehensive and strategic evaluation mechanism to access the performance of staff and students, as well as the intimidating workload. These undermined the advocated curriculum administration best practices which emphasized on collaborative planning, data-driven decision-making process, utilization of functional feedback mechanism, adaptability, and equity and inclusion (Wirtati, et al., 2025, Efendi, 2022, Neliwati, et al., 2023). Therefore, bridging the challenging gap with innovation requires digital technology.

Digital technology are electronic devices that aid rapid delivery of service. In education, digital technology plays significant roles assisting education in making instructional transfer simple, easy and interesting (Kruger and Johnson, 2010), promoting knowledge exchange, increasing project performance, leading to efficient communication between people, supporting knowledge creation, transfer and sharing, and as well bridging the gap of interconnectedness between teachers and students (Priyono, 2016). Other functions of digital technology platforms are the creation of easily accessible services designed to help the school administrators and teachers in their daily work, and enable students to progress in his or her own pace (Agbetuyi and Oluwatayo, 2012). These digital technologies mostly utilized in the implementation of school curriculum administration could be categorized into hardware and software. Examples of hardware digital technology utilized are computer, projectors, smartboard, and interactive whiteboard. Those within the software platforms are the electronic mail, artificial intelligence (AI), diverse data analysis software, WhatApp, teleconferencing, internet, email, zoom and augmented and virtual reality. Others are online libraries, and digital filings. These digital technology tools and platforms played remarkable roles in drives large data, assists in sharing information with one another, assists educators and other communicators to converse with others in real time speaking through their keyboards seeing through the screen and hearing through speakers attached to them, promotes data storage (Fajuigbe and Obiluku, 2016), reduces paper document, as well as serving as idea system for distributing information within the establishment (Carol, 2022). In other words, the digital technology

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has the potentials of:

i. eliminating workload stress through it analytical platforms.
ii. handling big data associating with the rising population of students.
iii. providing formidable templates for the evaluation of staff and students' attitude to work and studies respectively.
iv. enhancing staff-students' collaboration.
v. improving effective implementation of programs that enhance staff and students' motivation in schools, and,
vi. guaranteeing quality adaptability, adjustability and teaching and learning successes

However, despite the advantages of digital technology, when adoption and utilization is poor, the formidability of these digital technology tools and platforms cannot be achieved. Studies maintained that many educational institutions are adopting and utilizing digital technology in the management of administration of schools (Agidani, 2021, Ekwueme, 2025). In Nigeria, many studies revealed a high level of utilization of digital technology (Lazarus, 2024, Blandul and Bradea, 2016, Olafare, Adeyanju and Fakorede, 2018), while others showed a very low level of utilization (Igboechesi, et al., 2023, De & Kaugi, 2023, Onwuagboke and Singh, 2016). Carol, (2022) and Fajuigbe, et al. (2016) highlighted factors undermining the digital technology utilisation in schools to include personnel resistance to change, lack of fund for the provision of the digital technology facilities, issues of constant power failure, maintenance of the available digital technology facilities. Others are lack of adequately trained personnel and lack of exposure to equipment (Carol, 2022, Fajuigbe, et al., 2016)

However, from the intensive studies reviewed, none considered the utilization of digital technology in enhancing curriculum administration which is premier in guaranteeing the optimization of quality school system that promote teachers' job productivity, creates sense of satisfaction among staff and students as well as secured students' academic, personal and professional successes. This created a gap which formed the focus of the study.

2.0 Purpose of the Study

The study examined the digital technology utilization in school curriculum administration within the urbanized areas of Akwa Ibom State: Perceived prospect and challenges. Specific purposes were:

i. examined the extent of digital technology utilization in school curriculum administration.
ii. examined the digital technology platforms utilized for school's curriculum administration.
iii. examined the areas of school curriculum administration the digital technology platforms are utilized to achieved.
iv. analyzed the perceived prospects of digital technology platforms in school curriculum administration.
v. analyzed the perceived challenges of digital technology platforms in school curriculum administration.

3.0 Research Methods

The study employed cross-sectional survey design. This is suitable as the study assessed cross-sectional status of digital technology utilization in schools among the school administrators in public secondary schools. According to Wang and Cheng (2020), cross-sectional survey research design assists in analysing data from a population at a single point in time, so that the insights from this type of research are a snapshot of a particular moment.

The study area was Akwa Ibom State located within the South-South zone of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Geographical latitude and longitude of Akwa Ibom State are 4.9057^{o}N and 7.8537^{o}E respectively. The State has the major crude oil deposit and categorized as one of the richest States in Nigeria. It is an emerging State in terms of infrastructural development. A situation that attracts influx of people from other States. Although Akwa Ibom State has normal characteristics of a typical African setting with three prominent locational attributes that made up the urban, semi-urban and rural status, concentration of infrastructural development is still within the urban areas. Such attributes are density of schools and high population of students due to availability of quality schools, accessibility of teachers in schools, and seemingly concentration of supervision by supervisors due to accessibility challenges. This formed one of the factors for consideration of urbanized areas for the study.

Meanwhile, the Akwa Ibom State has three senatorial districts categorized mostly within the ethnic lines of Ibibio (Akwa Ibom North-East Senatorial District (AINESD)), Annang (Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District (AINWSD)), and Oro (Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District (AISSD)). Each of these districts has areas with urbanized characteristics. The AINESD has Uyo local government area, AINWSD, Ikot Ekpene local government area, while AISSD has Eket and Oron local government areas. The choice of these areas was for the generalization of the results with what happen in the semi-urban and rural areas.

Population of study was 141 consisting of five Directors in the State Secondary Education Board, 36 Principals, and 100 Vice Principals in the urbanized areas of the State (Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Oron, and Uyo local government areas). Sample of 141 Schools Administrators were used using census random sampling technique. This was because the population under consideration was manageable for easy accessibility. To complement the quantitative data, a school was sampled to represent in the qualitative assessment in each of the sampled areas. In each of these schools, a Principal and two Vice-Principals were sampled for the interview (focus group discussion). This was in addition with two Directors in the State Secondary Education Board. The respondents for the qualitative assessment totaled 14.

Data were collated using researcher's designed instrument entitled: "Digital Technology Utilization in School Curriculum Scale (DTUSCS)". The DTUSCS elicited requisite information from the respondents regarding the purposes of the study. Structured into five sections: Section A has gender, educational attainment, positions, and digital technology literacy. Section B elicited information on the digital technology tools utilized while Section C dwelt on areas of the digital technology utilization in curriculum administration. Section D highlighted the perceived prospects of digital technology in school curriculum administration while Section E elicited information on the perceived challenges of digital technology in school curriculum administration. The Section C was built on strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed optioned pattern while Section D has 'Yes', 'No' and 'I Don't Know' options. Finally, Section E has four options (very high extent, high extent, low extent, and very low extent). Meanwhile, the qualitative data organization was done using focus group discussion. This was especially to gather information from the respondents on the perceived prospects and challenges of digital technology in school curriculum administration.

The research instrument (DTUSCS) was validated using content validation by experts in Department of Curriculum and Teaching,

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University of Calabar. The content assessment reliability approach was used to test for the instrument reliability. This involved the inter-rater assessment with multiple coders assessing the content of the instrument to measure consistency of their coding. The data generated was calculated using Cohen's Kappa statistics which resulted to the estimate of 0.79, thus approving the DTUSCS as highly reliable.

Data collection was in two segments. The first, qualitative data was handled by four adhoc assistants as the instrument administration lasted for two days through instant retrieval approach. The valid return rate estimated at 95percent (134). The second segment was qualitative which was handled by the researcher, and the four adhoc assistants using tape recorder for recording and documentation of the discussion as well as the interviewees' responses. The emphasis of the focus group discussion was on the five issues raised in the research purposes. The final collation of data was analyzed using SPSS Version 21. The descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage, graphs and charts analyzed the research questions raised.

4.0 Results

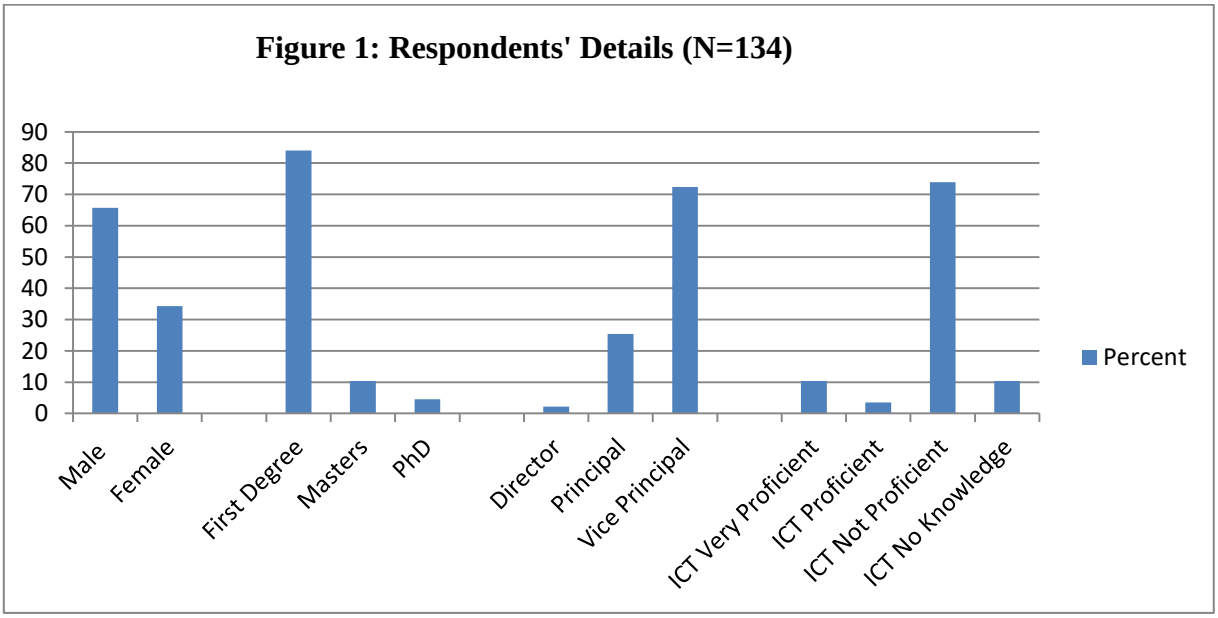

Figure 1 indicates that majority of the respondents were male (65.7%), while those with first degree were the majority (84%). In terms of position, majority were the vice principals (72.4%) and those not proficient with ICT literacy were the majority among them (73.9%)

Table 1: Extent of Digital Technology Utilisation (DTU) for School Curriculum Administration (SCA) (N=134)

SCA Categories	$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}_{jsca}$
Curriculum Planning (CP)		
Analyzing students' needs	1.02	
Gathering data through interview/research	1.00	
Holding staff meeting	0.00	1.07
Sourcing for valuable information	2.26	
Curriculum Organisation (CO)		
Typing work by self	2.36	
Stores schools documents	1.92	
Processing information	1.78	1.77
Organising school schedules	1.03	
Curriculum Evaluation (CE)		
Analysing school related data	1.09	
Gathering feedbacks	1.06	1.22
Assessing students' overall learning achievement	1.71	
Identifying students' strength	1.03	

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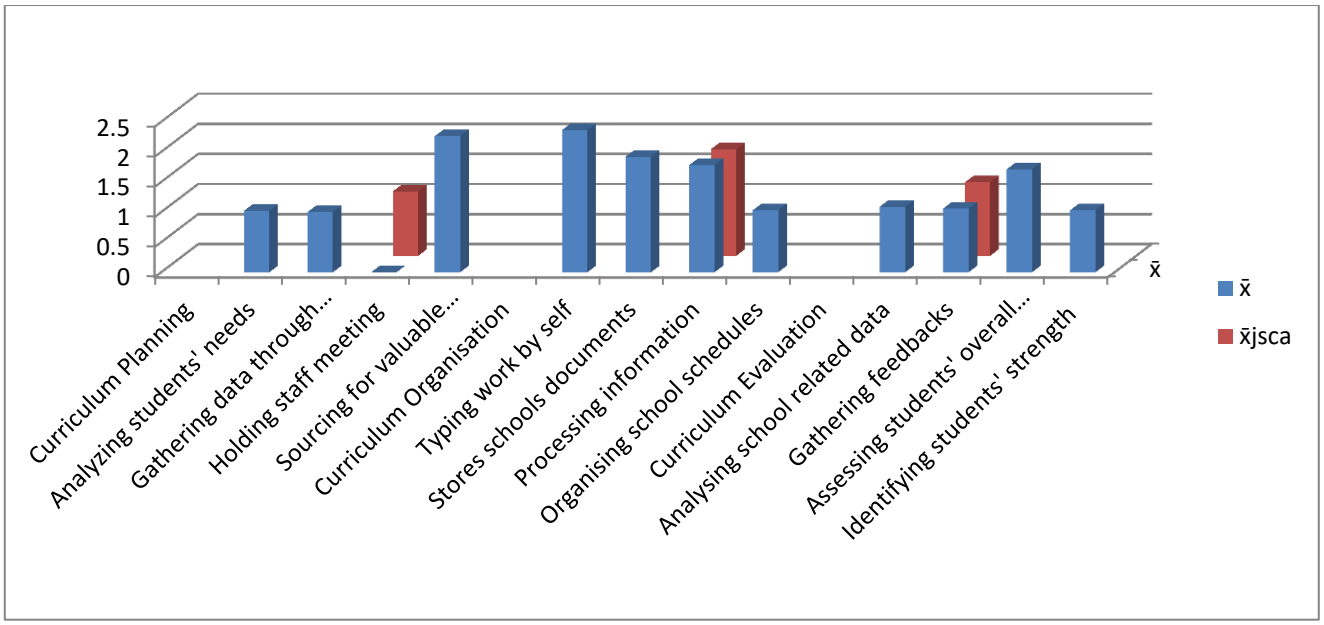

Table 1 Figure 2 revealed that the extent of DTU in SCA was very low. The low extent of DTU spread across the three areas of curriculum administration which are curriculum planning (x̄=1.07), organization (x̄=1.77), and evaluation (x̄=1.22). However, disparities existed, revealing that currently administrators utilized the digital technology more in CO, followed by CE, better than in CP.

Table 2: Digital Technology Tools/Platforms utilised for SCA by Administrator

DT Tools/Platforms for SCA	Frequency	Percent (%)
Laptop	97	72.4
Email	94	70.1
Digital filing	77	57.4
Digital projector	7	5
Online libraries	72	53
Artificial intelligence	55	41
Data analysis software	23	17.2
Smart whiteboard	2	1.5
Zoom	0	0

Figure 3: DT Utilised for SCA

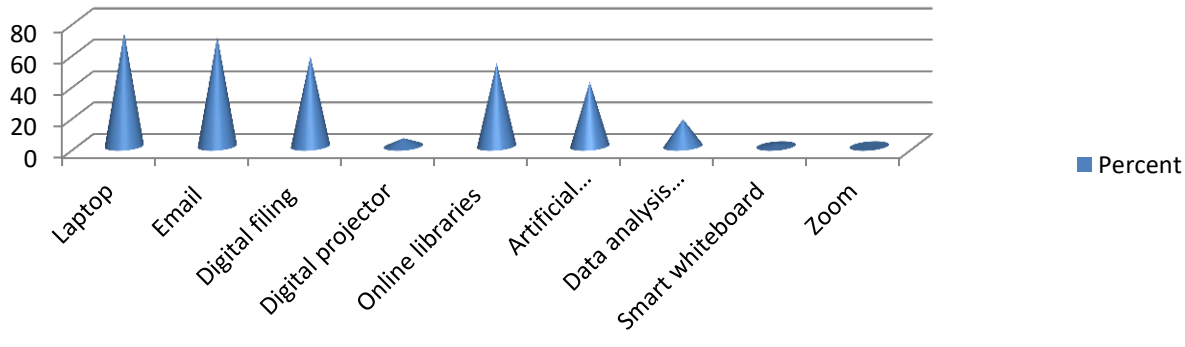

Table 2 and Figure 3 showed that the digital technology (DT) often utilized for school curriculum administration in schools to include laptop computer (72%), email (70.1%), digital filing (57.4%), online libraries (53%), AI (41%), and data analysis software (17.2)

Table 3: Prominent Perceived Prospects of DTU in SCA

Perceived Prospects	**Options**			**Yes (%)**
Do you think, digital technology has:	**Yes**	**No**	**I Don't Know**	
Assists in easy management of data	118	4	12	88
Promotes staff productivity	101	6	27	75

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Improves job satisfaction	55	60	19	41
Enhances analysis of trends in SCA	91	12	31	68
Replaces human effort in SCA	21	110	3	16
Consumes work time	55	44	35	41
Eradicates stress associating with SCA	55	69	10	41
Guarantees quality curriculum delivery	44	21	69	33

Arising from the Table 3, it was revealed that the prospects of the digital utilization in school curriculum administration are enormous with specific prominence in the areas of assisting in easy management of data (88%), promotion of staff productivity (75%), and enhances determination of trends in school curriculum administration (68%).

Table 4: Perceived Challenges in the DTU in SCA

Perceived Challenges	$\bar{x}$	**Remarks**
Unavailability/Poor electrical source	3.55	VHE
Lack of staff accessibility to DT platforms	3.42	HE
Lack of staff satisfaction in the DTU	1.49	LE
Lack of staff passion for DT in SCA	2.44	LE
Poor staff knowledge	3.51	HE
Unreliability of DT platforms	2.41	LE

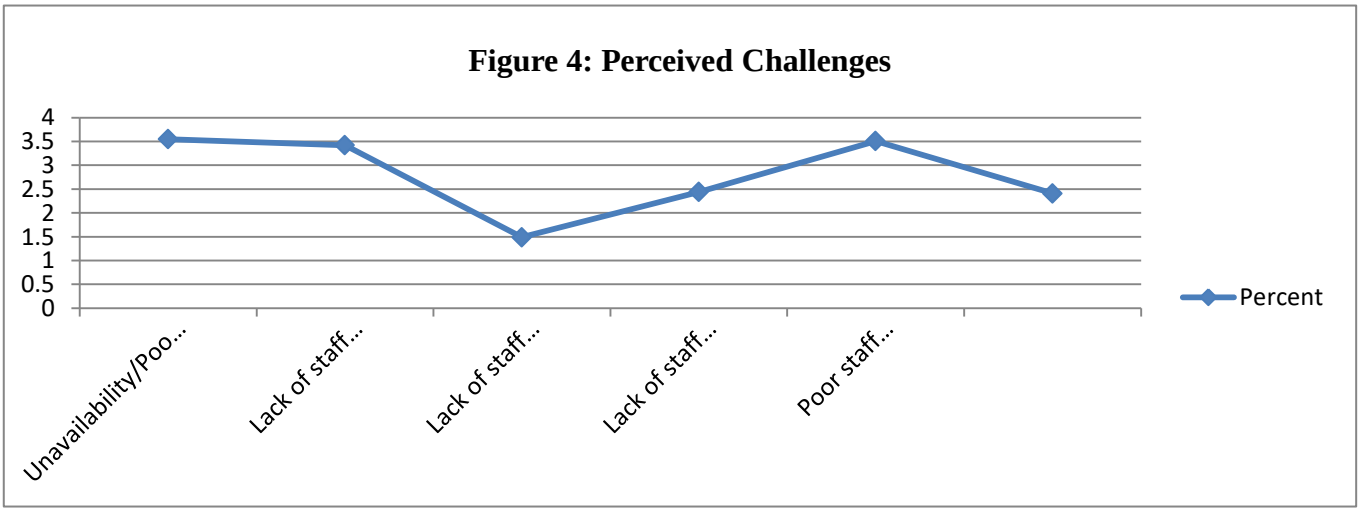

Table 4 and Figure 4 indicates that of all the perceived challenges associated with the administrators' digital technology utilization in school curriculum administration, unavailability/poor electrical sources ($\bar{x}$=3.55), poor staff knowledge ($\bar{x}$=3.51), lack of staff accessibility to digital technology platforms ($\bar{x}$=3.42) were the major challenges occurring in a high and very extent.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

The extent of DTU in school curriculum administration was very low, signifying the fact that schools in the study area are still not adjusting to the realities of the remarkable influence of technology in the administration of public secondary schools. This perhaps could be resulting from the poor knowledge of the school administrators on the functions of DT in enhancing effectiveness as well as the lack of DT tools availability occasioned by lack of funding by the government. The findings are similar to that of Carol (2022), Fajuigbe, et al. (2016) which revealed that lack of fund for the provision of the digital technology facilities, issues of constant power failure, maintenance of the available digital technology facilities and lack of exposure to equipment.

Meanwhile, the areas of SCA which the administrators readily apply DT was seemingly better in curriculum organization, especially for typing work. The results also showed that laptop, email and digital filing system were mostly utilised DT tool/platforms by the school administrators. This informed the fact that there were mainly conversant or accessed to those DT tools used in processing information. The finding was supported by Fajuigbe and Obiluku, (2016). However, although the extent of DTU in SCA was very low, it was agreed that DT have the prospects of assisting easy management of data, promoting staff productivity, and as well, enhancing determination of trends in school curriculum administration. The results aligned with the positions of Kruger and Johnson (2010), that digital technology plays significant roles assisting education in making instructional transfer simple, easy and interesting, promoting knowledge exchange, increasing project performance, leading to efficient communication between people, supporting knowledge creation, transfer and sharing, and as well bridging the gap of interconnectedness between teachers and students.

Nevertheless, the results established major challenges that undermined the DTU in SCA among the school administrators in the study area to include unavailability/poor electrical sources, poor staff knowledge, lack of staff accessibility to digital technology platforms were the major challenges occurring in a high and very extent**.** This contradicted the position of ----**cite** of the staff resistance to change rather upheld the position of Fajuigbe, et al. (2016) that prominent factor undermining the DTU in schools is

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personnel resistance to change. However, the results aligned with that Carol (2022) which emphasized that issues relating with lack of fund for the provision of the digital technology facilities, issues of constant power failure, maintenance of the available digital technology facilities. Others according to the authors are lack of adequately trained personnel and lack of exposure to equipment (Carol, 2022)

6.0 Conclusion

It is reasonable to conclude that the problem of poor delivery of school curriculum administration as evidence in ineffectiveness in teaching and learning is resulting from the very low extent of DTU in the optimization of SCA. Therefore, challenges of unavailability of DTU tools/platforms has to be met for quality implementation of school curriculum administration. Thus, quality implementation of SCA and service delivery in the twenty-first century schools depend importantly on the digital technology utilization.

7.0 Recommendations

The following are recommended:

i. Government and corporate entities should empower schools with steady electricity supply source and as well, equip them with digital technological tools to facilitate efficiency and effectiveness in school curriculum administration.

ii. Government should make it mandatory for school administrators to acquire digital technological skills and utilize digital technology in most of the administrative tasks in the schools.

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