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**WORK EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE AS INDICATORS OF  
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FIRMS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Performance effectiveness of editors is critical to every publishing firm. For editors to discharge their duties efficiently, editorial competence is crucial. It is in the light of this that this study examined how work experience and competence indicate performance effectiveness of editors in book publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. Descriptive survey research method was adopted, structured questionnaire tagged “WECIPEE” was the instrument, while four research questions were raised. The population of the study was the editorial staff of the 139 registered publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria while random sampling technique was used to select the editors of twenty-four publishing companies which constituted the study sample. The data collected was analysed using percentages and statistical mean. Findings show that publishers preferred editorial staff who have adequate experience, and that human capacity development enhanced performance effectiveness of editors. The study recommended that publishers should emphasise editors’ competence, ICT skills, and training.*

**Keywords:** Work experience, Competence, Performance effectiveness, book publishing firms

**Introduction**

Publishing organisations are places where production, sales and marketing of books are carried out to aid learning and transfer of human knowledge and culture. The goal of publishing organisations is to package authors' ideas and thoughts in printed or electronic format for dissemination to their intended audience. This is done with a view to passing the message across to target audience with ease and without distortion. Book publishing is a process with series of successive activities. Book publishing firms are formal organisations with a network of interdependent relationships. A publishing firm is essentially divided into departments and units for ease of job definition and management. These departments correspond, logically, with the work activities carried out in each of them. All the departments have a common goal which is to publish high quality and marketable books that would bring in reasonable profit. Therefore, teamwork is the hallmark of their operations. Although nomenclature varies from house to house, a typical publishing firm in southwestern Nigeria have the following departments: editorial, production, marketing, administrative, finance and accounts, research and development, and warehouse and distribution. Among all these, editorial department is germane to attaining organisational goals and objectives. To achieve this calls for performance effectiveness of editors.

Performance effectiveness of editors is the degree to which editors successfully carry out their set tasks and how well they deliver on their official mandates. Rolstadas (1998) defines performance as a complex interrelationship between seven performance criteria, namely: effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, quality of work life, innovation, and profitability/budget-ability. Performance effectiveness therefore is "a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization" (Aguinis , 2013:2). This shows that for performance to be effective, there must be a continuous attainment to a certain level of an editor's task on the job. Performance effectiveness of editors are indicated by quality product, profitability, staff satisfaction and enhanced corporate image of the organisation. From the preliminary investigations, many publishing firms are finding it difficult to attain their organisational goals. Could this be as a result of performance ineffectiveness of editors? If not,

could it be due to lack of work experience and incompetence of editors? Extant literature seems to provide little information on how work experience and competence influence performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms. It is against this background that this study seeks to provide empirical evidence on work experience and competence as indicators of performance effectiveness of editors in southwestern Nigeria.

Work experience refers to the skill or know-how an employee acquires over time while working in a particular job. It is the knowledge or skill an employee gained through being involved in or exposed to a set of diverse but related activities over time. In the context of publishing, work experience is the knowledge and skill an editor gains through being involved in or exposed to editorial activities over a period of time.

As submitted by Roth and Jornet (2014), work experience enhances knowledge and mastery of a skill or knowledge through training or practice. Academic discipline/academic qualification and years on the job are the indicators of work experience in this study. While academic discipline refers to the relevance of the course an editor studies in higher institution of learning to editorial task that is being carried out, academic qualification is the academic level of an editor in his or her discipline. Academic qualification could be Diploma, Nigeria Certificate of Education, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, and doctoral degree. Work experience is, indeed, vital to editors' performance effectiveness as it facilitates competence.

The term competence has been variously used to mean ability, aptitude, capability, effectiveness or skill. It is the performance-based ability, knowledge and skill required for efficient editing. Competence is about the ability to handle a task exceptionally. It is having the capability, skills, strength, fitness, proficiency and knowledge in commensurable level for the task. Competence within the context of this study is indicated by Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills, Editorial skills, Communication skills and training.

Haywood (2003) noted that in this dispensation, ICT skills are essential for information access and utilisation. Thus ICT skills have some influence on performance effectiveness of editors whose job involves communicating and processing information. It is also likely that editors who are versatile in the use of computer might perform well,

particularly in this technological age, than using manual editorial method. Besides ICT skills, editing skill is another fundamental indicator of competence that could influence performance effectiveness of editors. Communication skill will improve an editor's service delivery, and enhance maintenance of good and lasting relationships with the organisation's publics while training helps to improve an editor's knowledge in a particular aspect of learning.

From the foregoing, it is evident that editors are very important in publishing firms owing to the enormous task they perform for the overall success of a publishing venture. The effective performance of editors facilitates production of good quality books. The goal of every publishing firm is to make profit but profit may be low if performance effectiveness of editors is low.

### **Literature Review**

The literature relevant to this study is reviewed under the following sub-headings: Work experience and performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms, Competence and performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms, and Work experience and competence as indicators of performance effectiveness of editors.

#### **Work experience and performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms**

Work experience is vital to performance effectiveness of editors. Work experience implies adequate and functional exposure to editorial practice. The proficiency attained by an editor cannot be divorced from the experience acquired through active engagement in editorial acts. Like in other industries, work experience is an important consideration for career advancement in the publishing industry as it facilitates promotion from entry level to middle level and to senior editorial level.

Entry-level positions are good stepping stones on the path to a book editor career. This view is in tandem with that of Butcher (1996) who states that entry-level editorial positions in publishing firms can allow aspiring editors to gain personal experience which in turn translates to performance effectiveness overtime. Mohammed (2001) emphasises that individuals aspiring to venture into the editing profession may begin their career as writers and then advance to work under an experienced editor thus suggesting mentorship as a



component of success in editorship. This is corroborated by Jannie (2015) who points out that young or aspiring editors can gain useful exposure to editorial toolbox through mentorship and internship because these avenues are great ways to gaining experience and network with professional editors in the industry. There are two major factors that influence experience for performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms. They are academic qualification and years spent on the job.

Years spent on the job is another indicator of work experience that could promote effective editorial performance. Academic training alone will not automatically translate to experience in book editing without the time in term of years which an editor spends on the job. Duration is a *sine qua non* to work experience. Knowledge gathered over time inevitably translates to experience. As noted by Okere (2011), constant editorial improvement through training and retraining while the editors are on the job are also important.

### **Competence and performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms**

Competence is another variable that is very fundamental to performance effectiveness of editors. According to the Oxford Online Dictionary (2016), competence is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. It is the knowledge, skills, abilities, personal characteristics and other “worker-based” factors that help differentiate superior performance from average performance under specified circumstances.

Competence is a group of knowledge, personal attitudes, skills and related experiences which are needed for a person’s success. In the view of Akangbe (2019:372), “Competence implies skillfulness, proficiency or aptitude. It is the ability to do something creditably well. It is a professional resource acquired over the years through experience and training. In a nutshell, competence refers to expertise.” He notes further that “competency, a derivational term from competence, is employed for a more general description of human requirements in formal organisations.” In line with this, The ARZESH Competency Model (2018) states that “Competency is a series of knowledge, abilities, skills, experiences and behaviours, which leads to the effective performance of individuals activities. Competency is measurable and could be

developed through training. It is also breakable into smaller criteria.” In this study, four indicators of competence for performance effectiveness among editors in publishing firms are identified. These are Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, editorial skills, communication skills, and training.

Information and Communication Technology is vital to editorial performance effectiveness. Editing is now predominantly done electronically, therefore every practicing and prospective editor needs to have good mastery of ICT skill to enhance editorial task. Since more and more manuscripts are being submitted in electronic formats, it is important for editors to have a working understanding of computers and various editing software. The major editing software which editors utilise frequently include MS Word, MS Excel, Acrobat and In Design, and Photoshop. Others are grammar, spell check, thesaurus, dictionary, directories, and other facilities that contain information on virtually every subject (Okere, 2011). MS Word is an editing software used in the processing of word documents. MS Excel is a versatile computer programme in form of spreadsheet that enables a wide range of calculations and create high quality graphs and charts. Acrobat and InDesign is a layout and page design software for print and digital media. Adobe Photoshop is a graphics or image editing software that allows one to create and manipulate visual images on the computer.

Editorial skill is equally important to performance effectiveness. Having good editorial skill, according to Hall (2014), means editors know how to act when given a particular task appropriately and immediately. The more tasks editors can work on successfully, the greater the speed and confidence with which they can perform. Editorial skill has three indicators, namely: technical skill, editing skill and creative writing skill. Technical skills are acquired to accomplish specific tasks. Often times, they relate to a specific specialised knowledge and expertise needed by editors to accomplish complex actions, tasks, and processes relating to computational and physical technology. This skill requires the use of certain tools and the technologies such as computer, relevant software, android phones, printers, photocopy machines, scanner, etc. Beside technical skill, editing skill is another factor that enhances editorial skill. Editing skill can be divided into two namely; structural editing and stylistic editing. Structural editing involves assessing and shaping draft material to

improve its organisation and content. Stylistic editing entails meaning clarification via use of refined language to ensure coherence and flow (Igudia, 2012).

Communication skills are also germane to performance effectiveness. Effective communication in a workplace plays a prominent role in improving service delivery and relationship with stakeholders. Communication skill has four major indicators. These are listening, speaking, writing and reading skills. These skills are germane to performance effectiveness because an editor must be versatile and have the ability to communicate effectively. As to what makes a competent book editor, Hall (2014) opines that there is no single definable path to professional editorship, but core to it is one's ability and interest to critically and voraciously read in-between the author's lines. Jannie (2015) concurs that editors are lifelong learners and tend towards polymathematicism. This suggests that successful editors read insatiably and widely, know little about everything, much of which is irrelevant to their formal training.

Training is another factor that could promote performance effectiveness of editors in book publishing firms. Training can improve the performance and productivity of the employee and ensure that they have the relevant skills (Kumar, Singh and Kumar, 2018). Training are of two types: internal training and external training. Internal training which can be theoretical or practical is carried out in-house and it can consist of teaching or coaching by more experienced people or trainers. Aloy (2000) opines that internal training (in-house) could include lecture, vestibule training, role playing, discussion and evaluation through pre- and post-assessment. External training, on the other hand, is training provided from outside an organisation using external consultants or specialists. For effective performance of editors, both trainings are very vital and germane to their effective performance.

On the whole, work experience and competence are germane to performance effectiveness and every forward-looking editor needs them. These two constructs – work experience and competence – intertwine and editors who want to succeed in the publishing profession must possess them. There is dearth of literature on the current performance level of editors

### Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study was the 139 registered publishing firms in the southwestern Nigeria (Nigerian Publishers Association (NPA) directory, 2019).

**Table 1: Population of the study**

SN	States	No of publishing firms
1	Ekiti State	6
2	Lagos State	47
3	Ogun State	6
4	Ondo State	4
5	Osun State	5
6	Oyo State	71
<b>Total</b>		<b>139</b>

Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select two of the six states in Southwestern Nigeria. Lagos and Oyo states were purposively selected because of their high concentration of publishers. The number of publishing firms in the two states selected was 118. Twenty sampling fraction was adopted to select twenty-four from the 118 publishing firms. The staff of the publishing firms who were the participants of this study comprised editors, proofreaders, illustrators, graphic artists, composers, book designers and editorial and production manager. The number of staff in each publishing firm was obtained through personal visit, telephone contacts and e-mail correspondences. The sample for the study is presented in Table 2.

The following four research questions which were drawn from the objectives guided the study:

- i. What is the level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?
- ii. What is the level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?
- iii. What is the level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?

- iv. What is the relative influence of work experience and competence on performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?

**Table 2: Sample of the study**

SN	Publishing Firm	Location	No of Editors
<b>Oyo State</b>			
1	Straight-Gate Publishers Limited	U. I., Ibadan	4
2	Bounty Press	Challenge, Ibadan	8
3	Rasmed Publications Ltd.	Dugbe, Ibadan	6
4	Fountain Publications Nigeria Limited	Kongi Layout, Ibadan	3
5	Evans Brothers (Nigeria Publishers) Limited	Jericho, Ibadan	15
6	Extension Publications Limited	Molete, Ibadan	14
7	HEBN	Jericho, Ibadan	12
8	Safari Books Limited	Onireke, Ibadan	5
9	Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited	Felele, Ibadan	8
10	Penthouse Publications	Old Bodija, Ibadan	7
11	Spectrum Publishers Limited	Ring Road, Ibadan	12
12	University Press PLC	Ring Road, Ibadan	15
<b>Total</b>			<b>108</b>
<b>Lagos State</b>			
13	Atlantic publishers Limited	Palmgrove, Lagos	10
14	CCS Bookshops Limited	Lagos	6
15	Havilah Books & Publishing Co.	Ikeja, Lagos	3
16	Learn Africa Plc.	Ikeja, Lagos	4
17	Literamed Publications Limited	Ikeja, Lagos	7

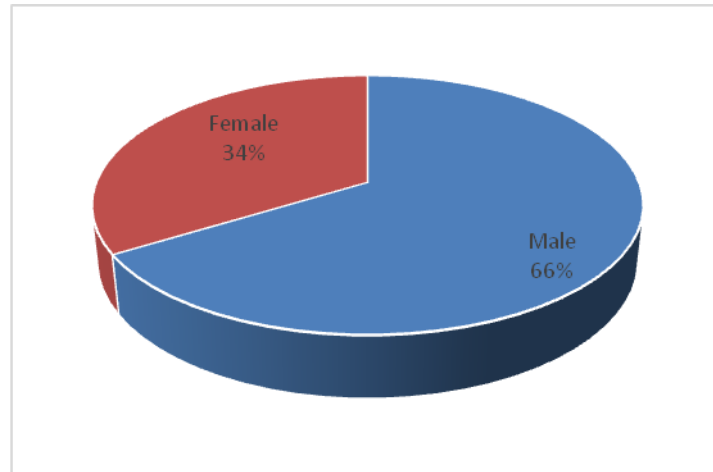
18	Metropolitan Publishers Limited	Palmgrove, Lagos	9
19	Mainstream Publishers Limited	Isheri-Idimu, Lagos	4
20	Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited	Ilupeju, Lagos State	9
21	Pearson Educational Publications Limited	Ikeja, Lagos	4
22	Sterling Books Nigeria Limited	Ikeja, Lagos	9
23	University of Lagos Press	Akoka, Lagos	5
24	West African Book Publishers Limited	Ilupeju, Lagos	6
<b>Total</b>			<b>76</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>184</b>

Total enumeration technique was adopted. The research instrument employed was the questionnaire. One hundred and eighty-four copies of the questionnaire were administered to the editorial staff of the selected publishing houses. The staff were given ample time to complete the questionnaire, afterwards the completed copies were retrieved and collated for analysis. The data collected were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 21. Mean and standard deviation were determined for continuous variables while frequencies and percentages were carried out on categorical variables. The results were presented in tables and charts.

## Results

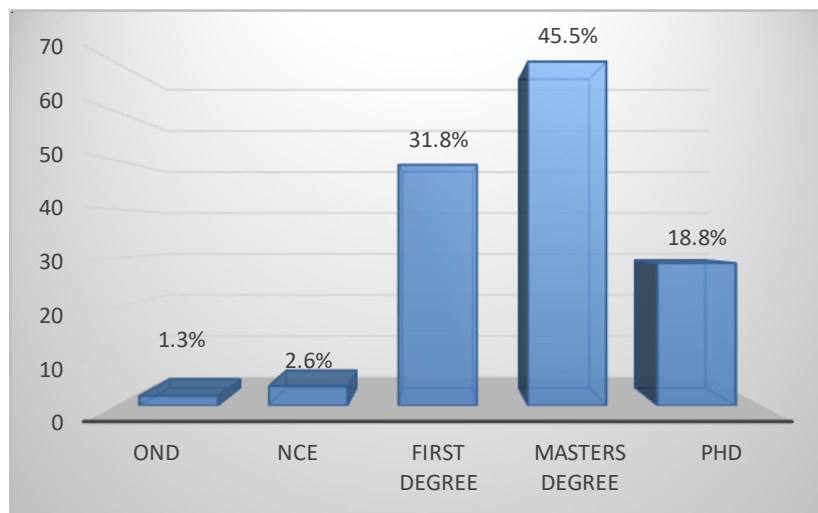
### Demographic characteristics of respondents

One hundred and fifty-four out of 184 copies of the questionnaire administered were returned giving a response rate of 83.7%.



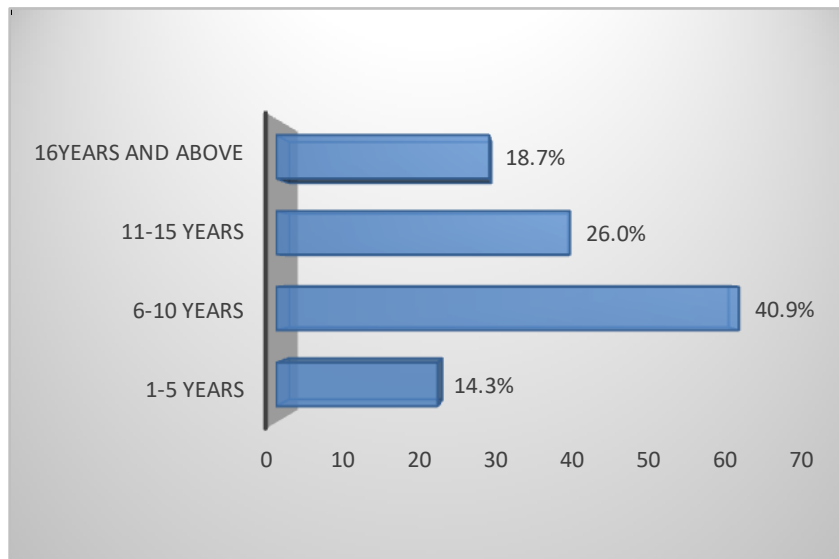
**Fig. 1: Pie chart on distribution of respondents by gender**

The distribution of demographic information of the respondents by gender reveals that 102(66.0%) of the respondents were male while the remaining 52(34.0%) were female. It thus implies that there were more males than females working as editors in the publishing sector in southwestern Nigeria.



**Fig. 2: Histogram showing respondents qualifications**

The data collected showed that majority of the respondents 70(45.5%) had Master degree, this was followed by 49(31.8%) who had first degree while 29(18.8%) had Ph.D. Only 4(2.6%) had Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) while 2(1.3%), being the least, had Ordinary National Diploma (OND). This distribution shows that book editors, as expected, were men and women of letters.



**Fig. 3: Histogram on respondents' years on the job**

Figure 3 reveals the years spent on the job by the respondents. Twenty-two respondents which was (14.3%) had put in 1-5 years, 63 (40.9%) had 6-10 years, 40 (26.0%) had 11-15 years while 29 (18.8%) had 16 years and above on the job respectively.



## Research Questions

### Research question 1: What is the level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria(N=154)

S/No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Development of new titles and revision of existing ones	3.20	0.56
2.	Improved market performance and increase in turnover	3.48	0.62
3.	Attainment of organisational goals	3.31	0.67
4.	Customer retention and satisfaction	3.22	0.71
5.	Staff satisfaction	3.57	0.60
6.	Maintenance of good corporate image with the organisation's publics	3.40	0.56
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>22.30</b>	<b>3.27</b>

In table 3, level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria was defined by six items. These were also measured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) and Strongly agree (4). Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data collected and the results are presented in table 5. From the test norm scale of level of performance effectiveness of editors, the total maximum score of twenty-four is permissible. A score of 1–12 points shows low level of performance effectiveness of editors while 13–26 points indicates high level of level of performance effectiveness. The mean( $\pm$ SD) score of the respondents was 22.30( $\pm$ 3.27) as shown in Table 3 which falls within the range of 13–36, it can then be concluded that there was a high level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. The study also revealed that all the six items listed to determine the level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms yielded high mean scores between 3.20 and 3.57. With these results, it could be deduced that there was a high level of

performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria.

**Research question 2: What is the level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?**

**Table 4:** Level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria (**N=154**)

S/No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	My academic discipline is in line with my job as an editor	3.74	0.49
2.	I have the basic academic qualification necessary as an editor	3.56	0.50
3.	The number of years of experience I have on the job is enough to enable me perform effectively	3.64	0.59
4.	I gain experience from reading and consulting information resource materials such as thesaurus, encyclopedias, dictionaries, maps, atlas, etc. while editing	3.47	0.50
5.	I make use of information on government educational policies, syllabus and curriculum while editing books	3.35	0.55
6.	I read books on editing to gain more knowledge and experience	3.61	0.49
7.	My interaction with authors is beneficial to me	3.41	0.57
8.	The more I edit books the more knowledge and experience I acquire	3.52	0.53
9.	I gain experience from interpersonal communication with colleagues	3.59	0.46
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>32.11</b>	<b>8.75</b>

In Table 4, the level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria was defined by nine items on a four Likert scale (1–Strongly disagree, 2– Disagree, 3 – Agree and 4 – Strongly agree). Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected and the results are presented in Table 4.

From the test norm scale of level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria, the total maximum score of thirty-six is permissible. A score of 1–17 points' shows low level of work experience of editors and 18–36 points indicates high level of work experience of editors. Since the mean( $\pm$ SD) score of the respondents is 32.11( $\pm$ 8.75) which falls within the range of 18–36 as shown in Table 4, it can then be concluded that there was a high level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. The study also revealed that all the nine items listed to determine the level of work experience of editors in publishing firms yielded high mean scores between 3.35 and 3.74. With these results, it could be deduced that there was a high level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria.

**Research question 3: What is the level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?**

**Table 5:** Level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria (N=154)

S/No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	I am proficient in the use of Microsoft Word	3.20	0.56
2.	I am proficient in the use of Microsoft Excel	3.31	0.67
3.	I am proficient in the use of Corel Draw	3.22	0.71
4.	I am proficient in the use of Adobe PageMaker	3.57	0.51
5.	I am proficient in the use of Photoshop	3.48	0.60
6.	I am proficient in copy editing, page planning, proofreading, etc.	3.31	0.67

7.	I pay attention to lexical deviation, redundancy, faulty parallelism, cliché, poor syntax, etc.	3.22	0.71
8.	I maintain quality standards in my work	3.57	0.60
9.	I am familiar and comply with organisation's in-house rules/house style	3.43	0.56
10.	I ensure manuscripts conform to NERDC syllabus and curriculum	3.71	0.45
11.	I ensure legibility of and accessibility to ideas	3.52	0.07
12.	I ensure clarity and brevity of ideas	3.20	0.66
13.	I ensure precision and conciseness of ideas	3.52	0.42
14.	I use appropriate communication style that is most effective for a given situation	3.71	0.45
15.	I have a good command of language	3.61	0.63
16.	I rewrite certain areas where necessary	3.72	0.45
17.	I am fluent in expression when speaking	3.49	0.50
18.	I have good creative writing skill	3.63	0.48
19.	I attend conferences, seminars and workshops related to my field	3.45	0.69
20.	I attend external trainings that are of relevance to my job	3.57	0.50
21.	I attend annual sales conferences	3.41	0.61
22.	I attend promotional trainings organised by NPA	3.17	0.76
23.	I attend writing workshops organised by the company	3.04	0.78
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>86.09</b>	<b>8.17</b>

In Table 5, the level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria was defined by twenty-three items which were rated on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly agree (4). Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected and the results are presented in Table 5. From the test norm scale of level of competence of editors in the publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria, the total maximum score of ninety-two is permissible. A score of 1–45 points shows low level of competence of editors in publishing firms while 46–92 points indicates high level of competence of editors. Since the mean( $\pm$ SD) score of the respondents is 86.09( $\pm$ 8.17) as shown in table 2 which falls within the range of 46–92, it can then be concluded that there was a high level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria.

The result of the study also reveals that all the twenty-three items listed to determine the level competence of editors in the publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria yielded high mean scores between 3.04 and 3.72. With these results, it could be deduced that there was a high level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria.

**Research question 4: What is the relative influence of work experience and competence on performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria?**

**Table 6: Multiple regression analysis showing relative influence of work experience and competence on performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised coefficient		T	Sig
	B	Standard Error	B	Rank		
Constant	15.648	3.062			5.110	.000
Work experience	.346	.089	.333	2nd	3.523	.013
Competence	.593	.096	.489	1st	6.201	.001

***R= .372, R<sup>2</sup>=.138, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>= .133, Std. Error of the Estimate=4.704; Dependent variable: Performance effectiveness***

The regression model reveals the relationship of each of the predictors in the prediction of the performance effectiveness of editors. Since the regression weight indicates the relative influence of each of the predictors, the result in Table 6 shows that competence is the most significant predictor of performance effectiveness ( $\beta = 0.489$ ,  $t = 6.201$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and work experience ( $\beta = 0.333$ ,  $t = 3.523$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) respectively with coefficient of determination of ( $R^2 = 0.372$ ) which means that any variation of performance effectiveness is accounted for by 37.2% variation in a combination of the predictor variables. Since work experience and competence are significant joint predictors of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms, this could be represented using the prediction equation (Model) below:

$$\text{Performance effectiveness} = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2$$

$$\text{Performance effectiveness} = 15.648 + 0.483X_1 + 0.432X_2$$

Where:  $a$  = constant,  $X_1$  = Work experience and  $X_2$  = Competence

### Discussion of findings

On research question one on level of work experience of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria, the study revealed that academic discipline of an editor, academic qualification, and the number of years of experience an editor has put into the job are quite fundamental to work experience acquisition and effective performance. The more an editor edits books, the more knowledge and experience s/he acquires. A lot of experience is gained from reading and consulting information resource materials in the course of editing (Areo, 2011). The study also revealed that editors acquire experience from interpersonal communication with colleagues as well as interaction with authors. Not only this, exposure to information on government educational policies, syllabus and curriculum while editing books is of huge benefit to knowledge acquisition by editors which invariably enhance their experience. According to Okere (2011:263), "book editing is the art of improving the communication process in a manuscript by editors in content and form." This implies that editing is a value-adding process which encompasses all input meant to make an average manuscript become a good book.

Research question two examined the level of competence of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. The study identified four indicators of editorial competence. These were ICT skills, editorial skills, communication skills and training. ICT skills are indicated by proficiency in the use of Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Corel Draw, Adobe PageMaker and Photoshop. On editorial skills, proficiency in copy editing, page planning and proofreading were identified in the study. Paying attention to lexical deviation, redundancy, faulty parallelism, cliché, and poor syntax were also germane. Compliance with in-house rules and house style, and ensuring that manuscripts conform to NERDC syllabus and curriculum were also essential. On communication skills, the study established that clarity of expressions and ideas, brevity, precision and conciseness; and good creative writing skill are *sine qua non*. Lastly on training, attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops; attending and participating in annual sales conferences, training workshops organised by the Nigerian Publishers Association (NPA), and taking part in writing workshops organised by the publishing house constitute trainings which can readily develop editors. As opined by Sirait, Suratini, Husen, Rasyid and Pasolo (2022), Competencies consist of several different types of characteristics, which drive behaviour. High competence will be able to support the improvement of employee performance and support the organisation in achieving its goals. In other word, high competence begets high and positive performance.

Research question three was on the level of performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. The results of the study clearly show that performance effectiveness of a publishing firm are indicated by quality products, which are quality books published; profitability of the firm through growth and expansion, good sales, attainment of organisational goals and increase in turnover; staff satisfaction via good salary package and attractive allowances; and lastly, enhanced corporate image. This is in line with the submission of Mangkunegara (2000) that performance can be measured by considering several factors which include quality (which is the quality of work as the resulting output), quantity (which includes the amount of work that must be completed within a specified time) and timeliness (concerning the suitability of the planned time to complete a job).

In research question four on the relative influence of work experience and competence on performance effectiveness of editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria, the results show the contribution which the independent variables made to the prediction of performance effectiveness among editors in publishing firms in southwestern Nigeria. In term of magnitude of contribution, competence of editors made the most significant contribution. In terms of competence, findings indicate a high level of performance effectiveness of editors in the area of communication skills with a larger percentage of the respondents agreeing that communication is the basis for performance effectiveness followed by training compared to Information Communication skills (ICT) and editorial skill. This is an indication that the respondents who are editors, recognise the importance of communication, which is core and germane to any book publication. Where communication is not effective, the book produced will be defective to the users. In addition, it is equally desirable that editors possess adequate ICT skills needed to carry out editorial tasks effectively especially in this digital age.

In addition, a good knowledge of technical skills, editing skills and creative skills will also increase the level of performance of the individual editor. Also, being efficient in terms of having good communication skill in the form of writing, reading, speaking and listening will enable the editor communicate authors' thoughts, views and ideas to her intended publics effectively as well as other stakeholders of the publishing firm. Lastly, training is a necessary tool in enhancing performance of editors. When an editor is effectively trained in the area of specialisation, the mastery of the rudiments of the work becomes part and parcel of the editor and by that, the performance will be effective.

This result is corroborated by Laelani (2016) who examines the effect of competence on employee performance with organisational commitment as an intervening variable. Finding from the study shows that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This result implies that employee performance will increase if the competencies possessed are further improved. However, this result is in dissonance with the finding of Septiyani and Sanny (2013) in Sirait, *et al* (2022) who stated that competence had no effect on employee performance. The duo examined the effect of individual



competence and motivation on the performance of PT Beta Setia Mega employees. From the results of the study, it was found that competence had no significant effect on the performance of PT Beta Setia Mega employees.

### **Conclusion**

Performance effectiveness is of necessity for editors to thrive in publishing firms. Therefore, it is imperative that book publishing firms take into consideration the performance effectiveness of their editors by adopting necessary precautionary measures and machineries that could enhance their work. However, performance effectiveness will be an illusion if majority of editors do not have the capacity to act in the area of their specialty.

As a result of this, knowledge gained through work experience exposes editors to acquiring more knowledge through mastery of skill, training and practice. Thus, in order for editors to perform effectively, they need to possess a level of academic discipline and qualification that is capable of guaranteeing success in their editorial task. In like manner, spending some years on the job will expose them to the rudiments of the work thereby enhancing their performance. In addition, competence of editors is critical in ensuring performance effectiveness when it concerns book publishing. Any book publishing firm that does not have editors who are efficient in use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), have good editorial skills, communicate effectively and provide adequate training opportunities for editors may find it difficult to thrive and perform effectively. This might possibly reflect on the quality and standard of books that will be produced.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends that publishers should continue to emphasise work experience of editors through their academic discipline, qualifications and years of experience. Also, in considering performance effectiveness of editors, publishers should always take work experience into consideration.

In the same vein, it is also recommended that publishers should emphasise editors'

competence, Information Communication Technology skills, editorial skills, communication skills, and training. It is also imperative for book publishing firms to periodically organise trainings and workshops where experts in the use of software can train editors on the use of newly developed software packages that are capable of improving their work performance.

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