

Assessing the Alignment between Students of the Department of Secretaryship/Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies of Accra Polytechnic and the Labour Market

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Abstract

This study is conducted with the objective of assessing the alignment between students of Secretary and Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies programme offered in Accra Polytechnic and the Labour Market. The target population for this research was the Human Resource of Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG), Staff of Trade Union Congress (TUC) and students of Secretaryship/Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies of Accra Polytechnic. The sample for the study consists of 80 questionnaires for students of Accra Polytechnic, Secretaryship/Bilingual Studies and interviews conducted in Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and Trade Union Congress (TUC). The study revealed that over 55% of the respondents did not see the relevance of shorthand as a course. It was also revealed in the study that just a few percentage of students get access to an organization for their internships and other students are left wondering as to how and where to get an organization for their internship programme. In view of the above, it is recommended that the curriculum of Secretaryship/Bilingual secretaryship and Management studies department of Accra polytechnic should be reviewed to suit the needs of the labour market.

1. Introduction

In Ghana graduates from various tertiary institutions such as the universities, polytechnics, and other formal educational institutions are employed into various sectors of the labour market. According to the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) of the University of Ghana, an estimated 250,000 young people enter the labour market every year. Out of this number, the formal sector employs just about 5000 (or 2 percent). The remaining 98 percent are compelled to seek employment in the informal sector. Both the public and the informal sectors employ graduates based on their competencies, skills and abilities which contribute to high productivity of the sectors. In recent times however, it is evident that most graduates who are employed into various fields of work do not perform as expected of them. It has come to light that some employees exhibit some unprofessional habits such as lateness to work, indiscipline, lack of skills among others which are contrary to the dictates of the labour market. Labour market according to Anne Kalleberg (Sociology of Labour market) is the arenas in which workers exchange their labour power in return of wages, status and other job reward. Labour market can also be defined as a nominal market in which workers find paying work, employers finding willing workers and wages rates are determined. From the above definitions, we deduce that the labour market is a term used to describe the relationship between the workplace (available employment) and the work force (people, aged 16 and over who are working or are available to work)

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This research seeks to:

1. Identify the similarities between the department of the institution and the labour market;
2. Assess the differences between the department of the institution and the labour market;
3. Identify the causes of the misfit between the department of the institution and the labour market;
4. Identify the collaboration between the department and labour market; and
5. Examine some possible solutions to the misfit between the department and labour market.

1.2 Research Questions

In the course of the studies, some of the pertinent questions which will be asked are the following:

1. What are the similarities between the department of the institution and the labour market?
2. What are the differences between the department of the institution and the labour market?
3. What are the causes of the misfit between the department of the institution and the labour market?
4. What collaboration is there between the department and labour market?
5. What are some possible solutions to the misfit between the department and labour market?

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research Design

Research design is the overall plan for collecting data in order to answer the research question. It also involves specific data analysis techniques or methods the researcher intends to use.

2.2 Data Instrument

Questionnaires would be used to collect data through the use of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. This is to enable respondents to answer questions that reflect their views.

2.3 Data Collection

Information will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews, direct observations and questionnaires would help to gather primary data. Information will be gathered again from books, internet, magazines, and previous projects for secondary data.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data collected from both primary data was analysed using charts and graphs.

3. Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis of findings of data collected. The technique of presentation adopted was basically descriptive statistics in which some of the findings are prepared in tabular forms with absolute figures and relative percentages. The analysis was for both the management and students of Secretaryship and Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies department of Accra Polytechnic. The director of trade union research department and the Human Resource Manageress of Electricity Company of Ghana were not exempted.

In all, 80 respondents from the department of Secretaryship and Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies of Accra Polytechnic were sampled to answer the questionnaires. From table 1 above, it can be observe that 58 (73%) respondents were from Secretaryship and Management Studies and 22 (27%) respondents were from Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies from 80 questionnaires administered. Below is a chart to show the above data.

Table 1: Departmental Respondents of Accra Polytechnic

PROGRAMME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Secretaryship and Management Studies	58	73
Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies	22	27
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

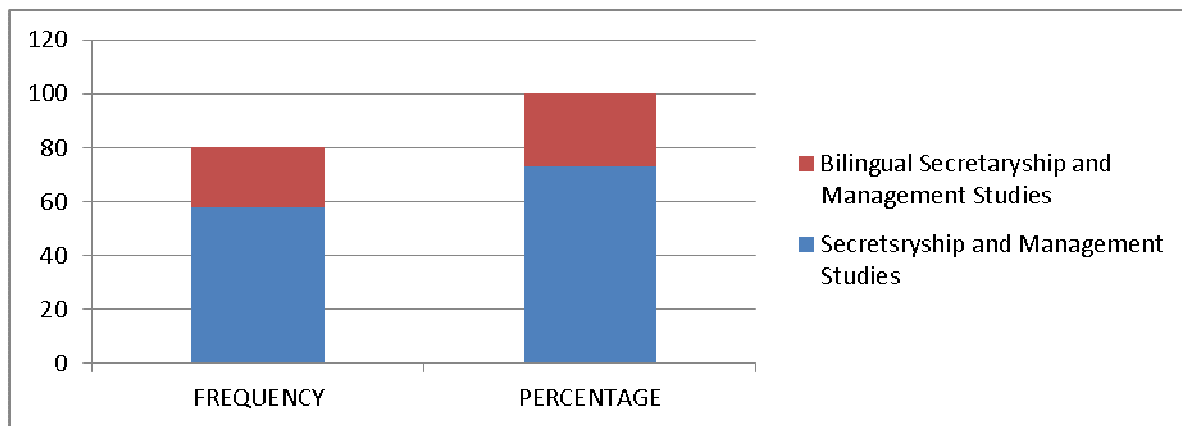


Figure 1: Departmental Variation of Respondents of Accra Polytechnic

In the above table precisely table 2 and figure 2, show the responses of students on how they feel about lecturers teaching according to syllabus. With the total number of 80 students representing 100%, 38% strongly agreed that lecturers teach according to the syllabus, 46% agreed to the above statement, 11 disagreed, whereas 5% strongly disagreed that lecturers do not teach according to the syllabus. The questionnaires were answered by 30 students who strongly agreed that lecturers teach according to the syllabus, 37students agreed, 9 students disagreed to the above statement and 4 students strongly disagreed.

Table 2: Lecturers Teaching According To Syllabus

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	30	38
Agree	37	46
Disagree	9	11
Strongly Disagree	4	5
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

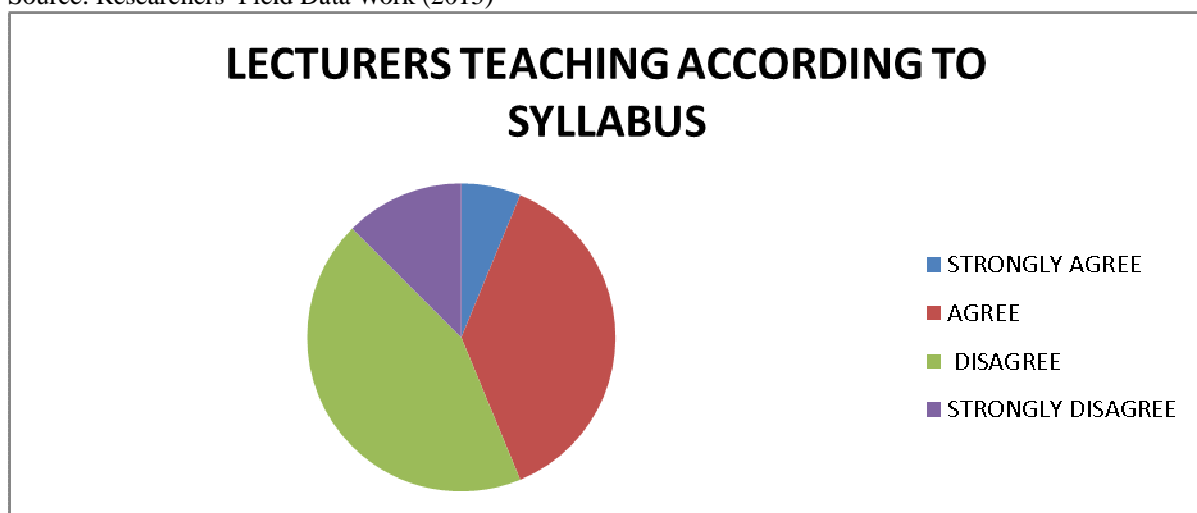


Figure 2 Lecturers Teaching According to Syllabus

Table 3 and figure 3 indicate the respondent views on the organization of workshops and seminars organized for students. With the total of 80 students representing 100%, 5(6%) strongly agreed that there are enough and relevant organized workshops and seminars for students, 30(38%) agreed to this statement, 35(44%) disagreed and 10(12%) strongly disagreed that there were no organized workshops and seminars for students.

Table 3: Organization of Workshops and Seminars for Students

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	5	6
Agree	30	38
Disagree	35	44
Strongly Disagree	10	12
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

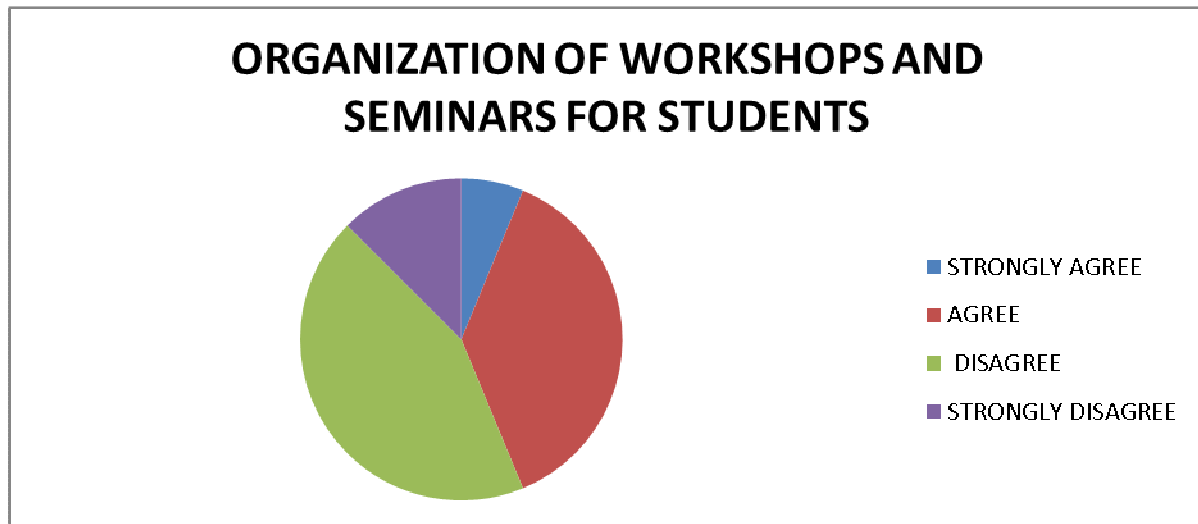


Figure 3 Organization of Workshops and Seminars For Students

Table 4 and figure 4 show the responses of students on the relevance of shorthand. With the total of 80 students representing 100%, 9(11%) strongly agreed that shorthand is relevant, 27(34%) agreed that shorthand is important, 23(29%) and 21(26%) disagreed and strongly disagreed to the relevance of shorthand respectively.

Table 4: The Relevance of Shorthand

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	9	11
Agree	27	34
Disagree	23	29
Strongly Disagree	21	26
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

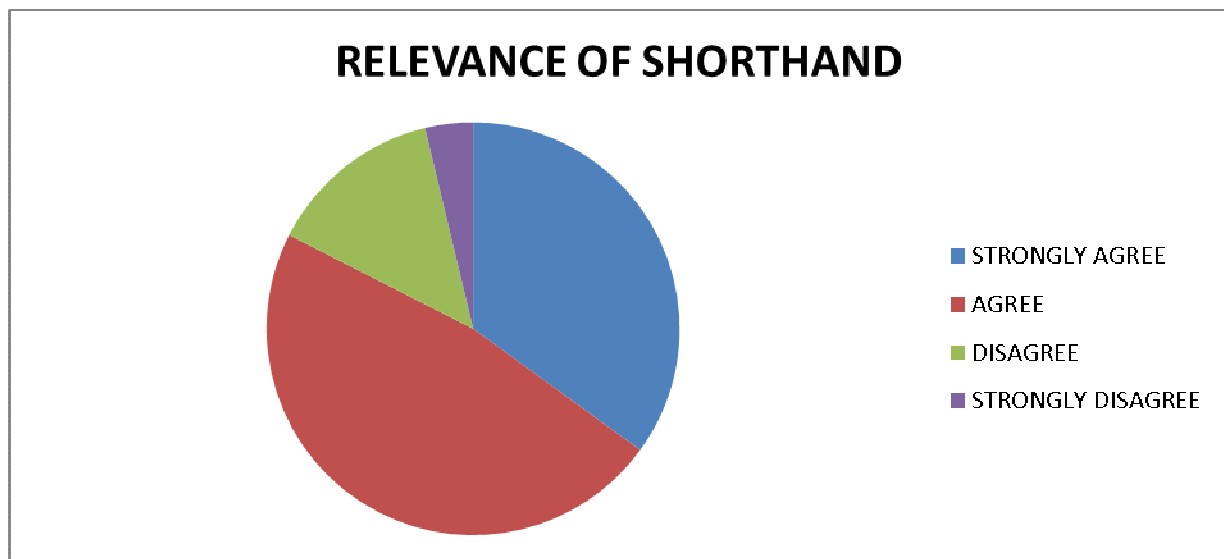


Figure 4: The Relevance of Shorthand

Table 5 and Figure 5 indicate the responses of students concerning the need for students to ask questions during teaching. Out of 80 respondents representing 100% 28(35%) strongly agreed that there is enough room for students to ask questions during teaching, 38(47%) agreed to this statement, 11(14%) disagreed whereas 3(4%) strongly disagreed to the statement “there is enough room for students to ask questions.

Table 5: Room for Students to ask Questions during Teaching

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	28	35
Agree	38	47
Disagree	11	14
Strongly Disagree	3	4
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers’ Field Data Work (2013)

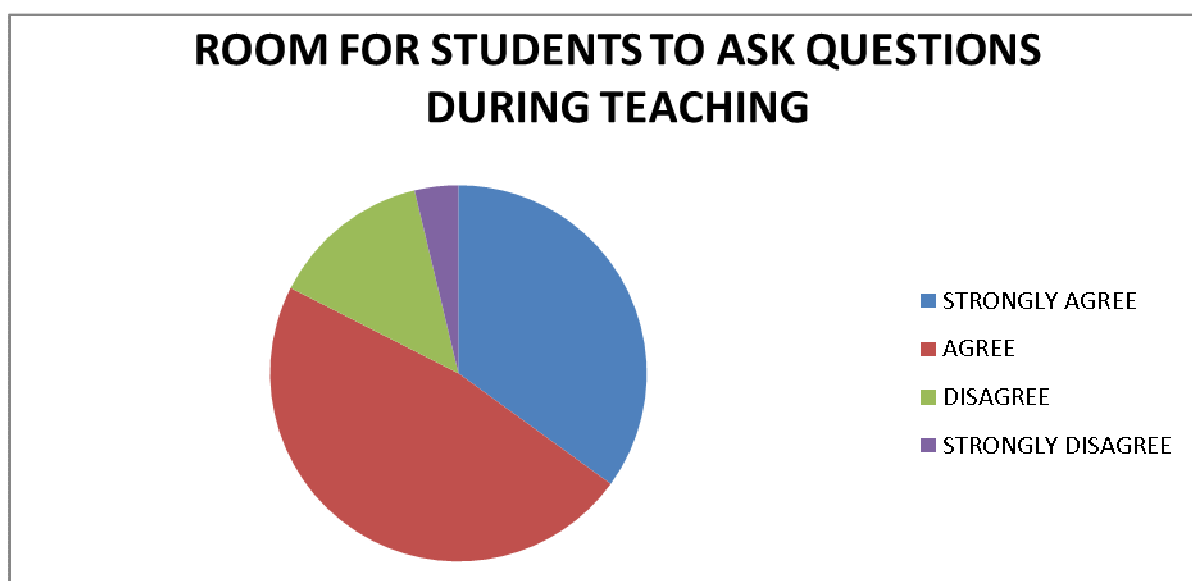


Figure 5: Room for Students to ask Questions During Teaching

Table 6 and Figure 6 shows the responses of students on how they wish lecturers use enough practical teaching methods. With the total number of 80 students representing 100% of respondents, 11(14%) strongly agreed that lecturers use enough practical teaching methods, 38(47%) agreed, 23(29%) strongly disagreed and 8(10%) strongly disagreed to the statement that “lecturers use enough practical teaching methods.

Table 6: The Use of Enough Practical Teaching Methods

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	11	14
Agree	38	47
Disagree	23	29
Strongly Disagree	8	10
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers’ Field Data Work (2013)

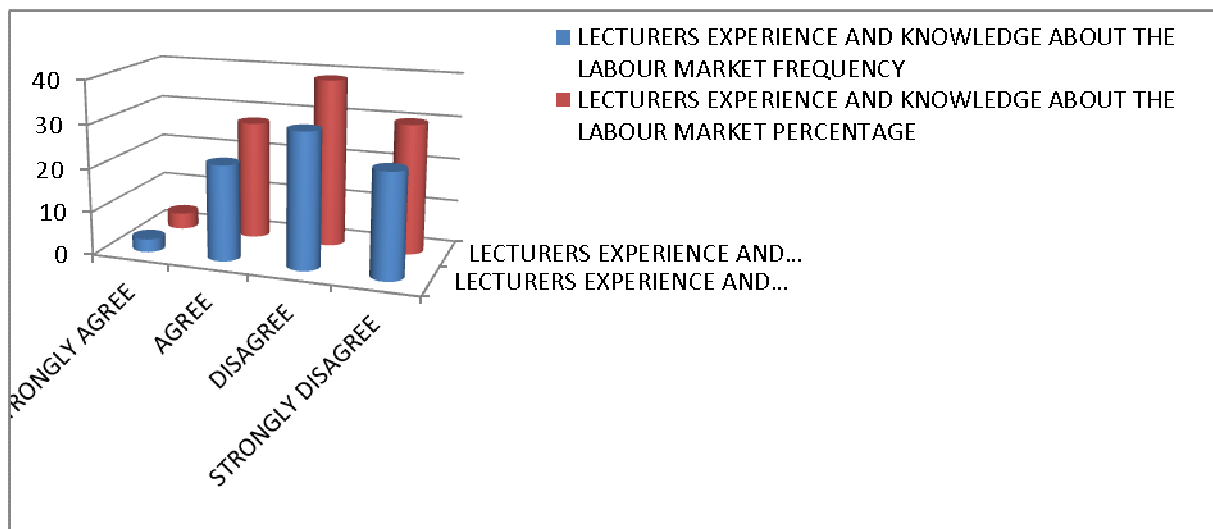


Figure 6: The Use of Enough Practical Teaching Methods

Table 7 and figure 7 above shows the responses of students on lecturers experience and knowledge about the labour market. 17 students representing 21% strongly agreed that lecturers have enough experience and knowledge about the labour market, 48 representing 60% agreed to this statement, 14 representing 17% disagreed that lecturers do not have enough experience and knowledge about the labour market and 1 student representing 1% strongly disagreed that lecturers do not have enough experience and knowledge about the labour market.

Table 7: Lecturers Experience and Knowledge about the Labour Market in Ghana

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	17	21
Agree	48	60
Disagree	14	17
Strongly Disagree	1	1
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers’ Field Data Work (2013)

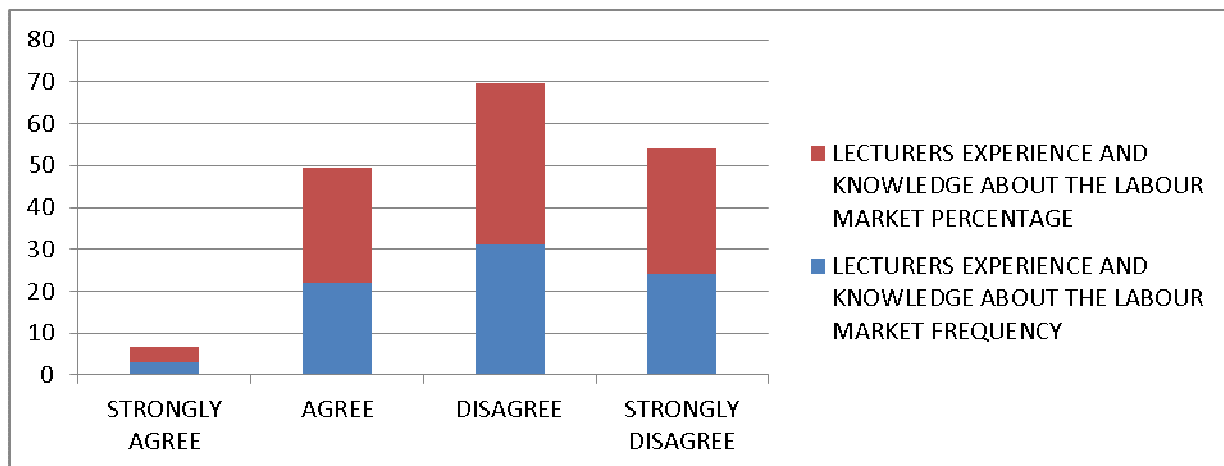


Figure 7: Lecturers Experience and Knowledge about the Labour Market in Ghana

Table 8 and figure 8 above indicate the relationship between students and lecturers. 11 students representing 14% strongly agreed that lecturers relate very well with students, 43 students representing 54% agreed to this statement, 25 students representing 31% disagreed that lecturers do not relate well with students and student representing 1% strongly disagreed that lecturers do not relate well with students.

Table 8: Students' – Lecturers' Relationship

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	11	14
Agree	43	54
Disagree	25	31
Strongly Disagree	1	1
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

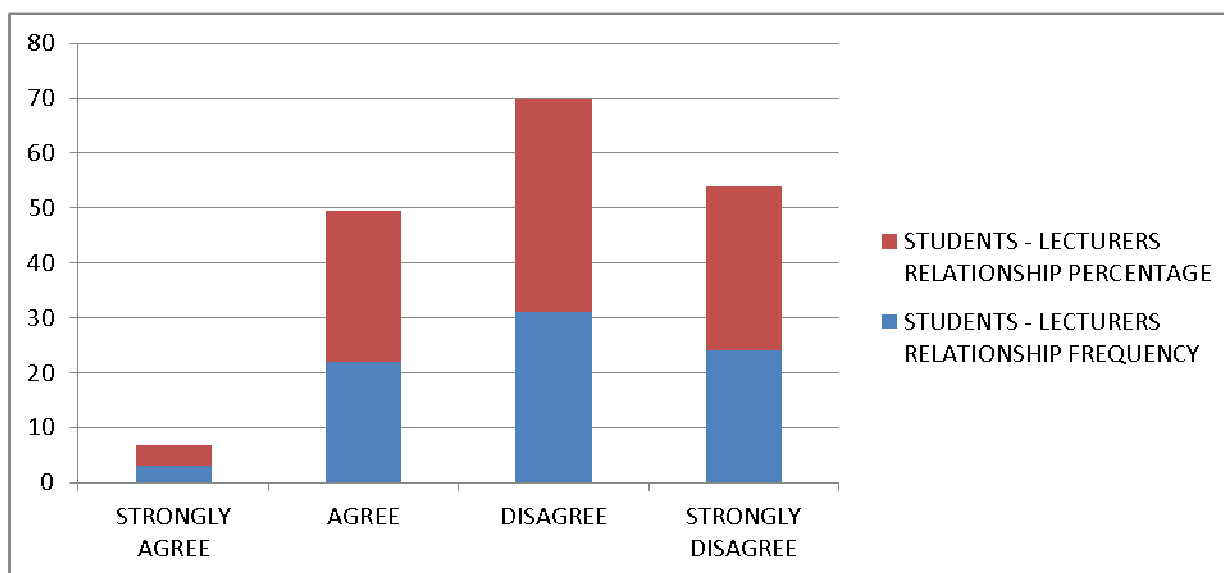


Figure 8: Students' – Lecturers' Relationship

Table 9 and figure 9 show the respondents opinions on lecturers' responsibility of their poor performance. Out of 80 respondents representing 100%, 5 students, representing 6% strongly agreed that the lecturers are responsible

for the poor performance of students, 17 students representing 21% agreed, 40 students representing 50% disagreed, 16 students representing 20% strongly disagreed that lecturers are not responsible for the poor performance of students. Out of the 80 respondents 2 students representing 3% did not give their opinion at all.

Table 9: Poor Performance of Students Attributed To Lecturers

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	5	6
Agree	17	21
Disagree	40	50
Strongly Disagree	16	20
TOTAL	78	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

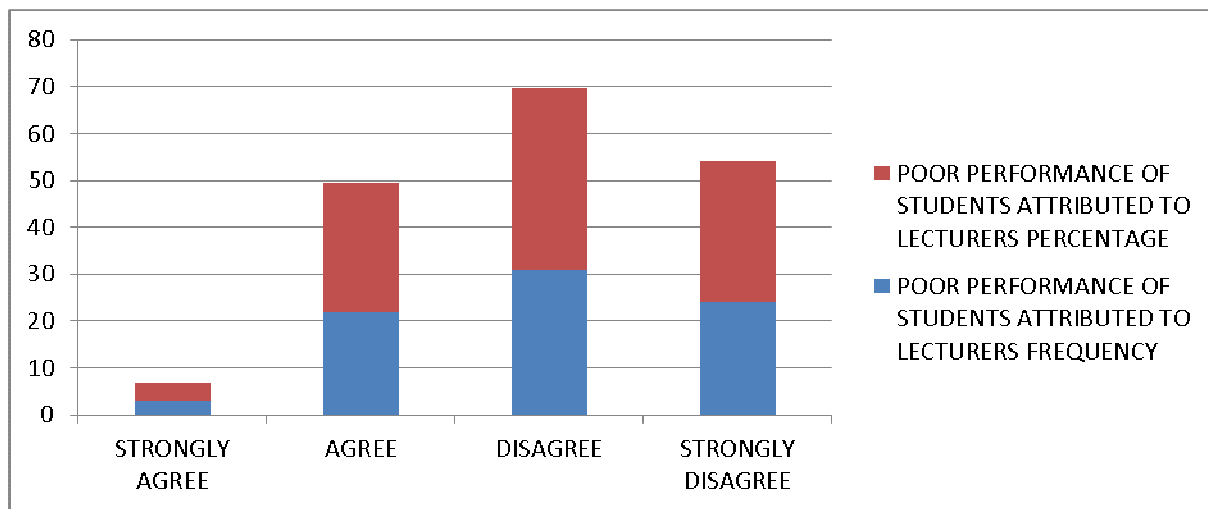


Figure 9: Poor Performance of Students Attributed to Lecturers

Table 10 and figure 10 indicate the accessibility of organisation for internship. Out of 80 students representing 100%, 12 students representing 15% strongly agreed that there is accessibility of organisation for internships, 30 students representing 37% agreed, 27 students representing 34% disagreed and 11 students representing 14% strongly disagreed that there is no accessibility of organisation for internships.

Table 10: Accessibility of Organisation for Internship

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	12	15
Agree	30	37
Disagree	27	34
Strongly Disagree	11	14
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

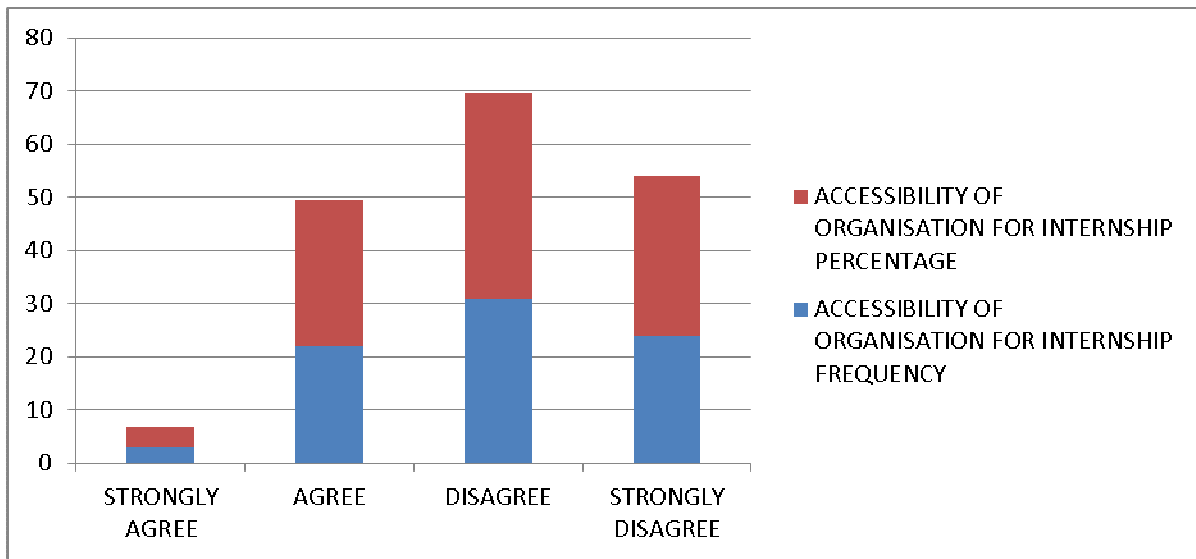


Figure 10: Accessibility Of Organisation For Internship

In the table 11 and figure 11 respectively, out of 80 respondents representing 100%, 7(9%) respondents strongly agreed that there is enough supervision during internships, 19 (24%) respondents agreed to this statement, 35(43%) respondents disagreed and 19 (24%) respondents strongly disagreed that there is no supervision during internships.

Table 11: Supervision During Internships

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	7	9
Agree	19	24
Disagree	35	43
Strongly Disagree	19	24
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

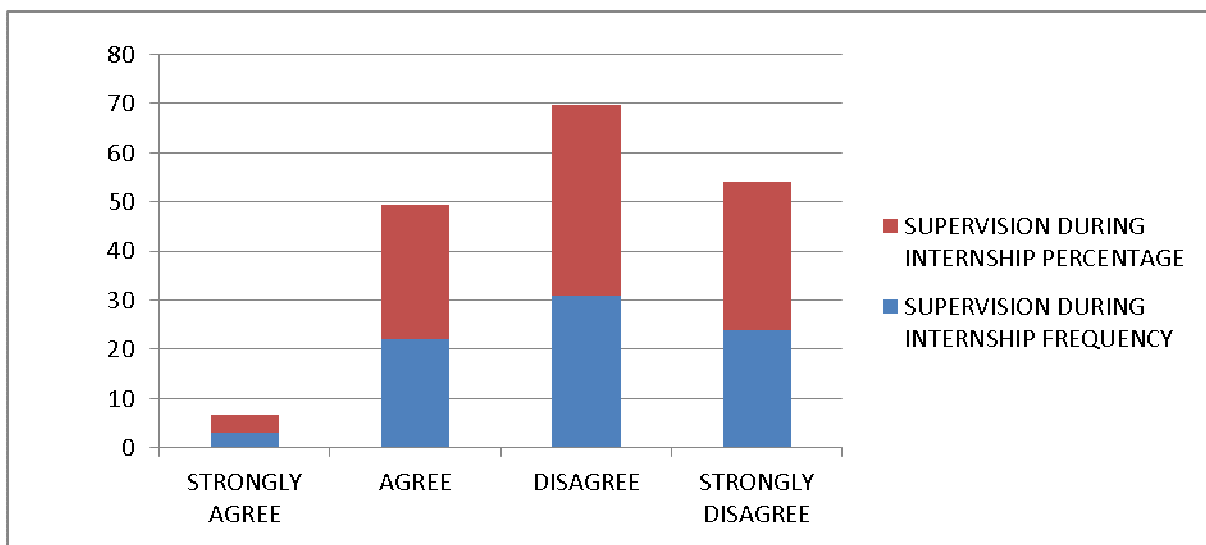


Figure 11: Supervision during Internship

Table 12 and figure 12 indicate opinions from students concerning their internships, as to whether their internships are in line with their study. Out of 80 respondents representing 100%, 20 respondents representing 25% strongly agreed that students' internships are done in line with their field of study, 38 respondents representing 47% agreed, 16 respondents representing 20% disagreed and 6 respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed that students' internships are not done in line with their field of study.

Table 12: Students' Internship Done in Line with Their Field Of Study

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	20	25
Agree	38	47
Disagree	16	20
Strongly Disagree	6	8
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

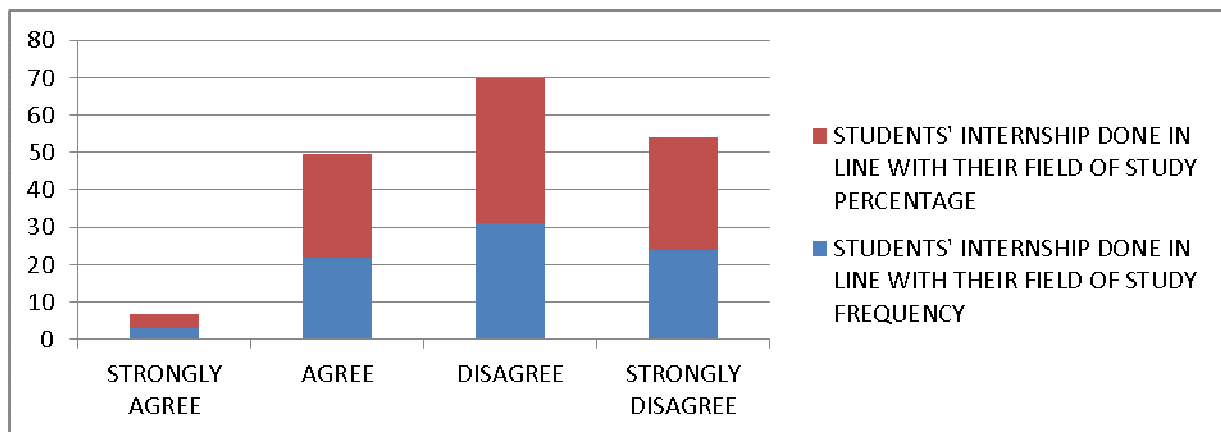


Figure 12: Students' Internship done in Line with Their Field of Study

In table 13 and figure 4.13 respectively, out of 80 respondents representing 100%, 3 respondents representing 4% strongly agreed that there is adequate time for students to prepare well towards exams, 24 respondents representing 30% agreed, 30 respondents representing 37% disagreed and 23 respondents representing 29% strongly disagreed that there is no adequate time for students to prepare well towards exams.

Table 13: Adequate Time for Students to Prepare Towards Examination

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	3	4
Agree	24	30
Disagree	30	37
Strongly Disagree	23	29
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

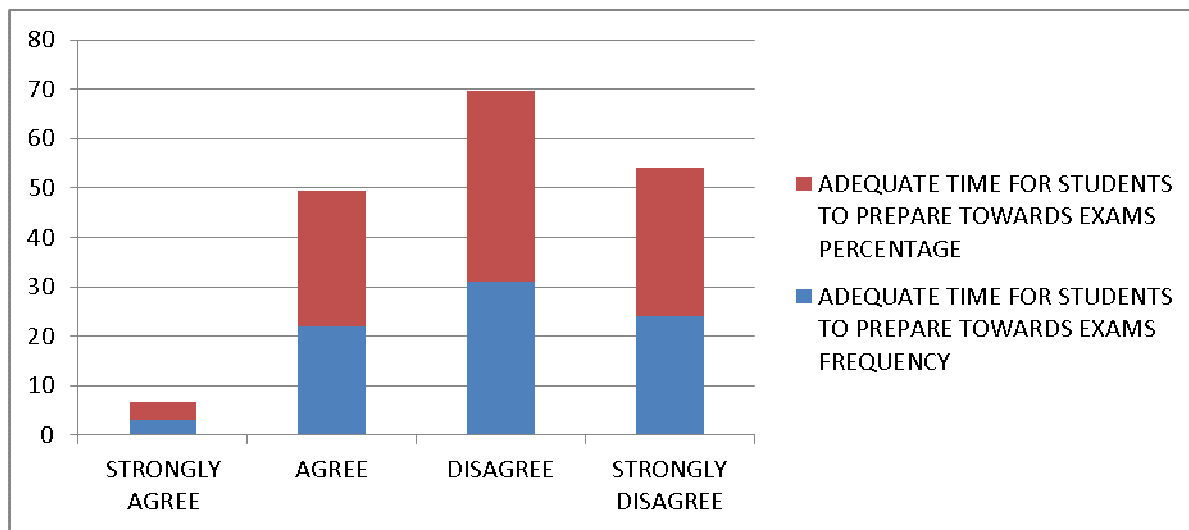


Figure 13 Adequate Time For Students To Prepare Towards Examination

Table 14 and figure 14 indicates how time tables and exam halls are well organised. Out of 80 respondents representing 100%, 3 respondents representing 4% strongly agreed that time tables and exams halls are well organised, 22 respondents representing 27% agreed, 31 respondents representing 39% disagreed and 24 respondents representing 30% strongly disagreed that time tables and exams halls are not well organised.

Table 14: Organisation of Time Table and Exams Hall

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	3	4
Agree	22	27
Disagree	31	39
Strongly Disagree	24	30
TOTAL	80	100

Source: Researchers' Field Data Work (2013)

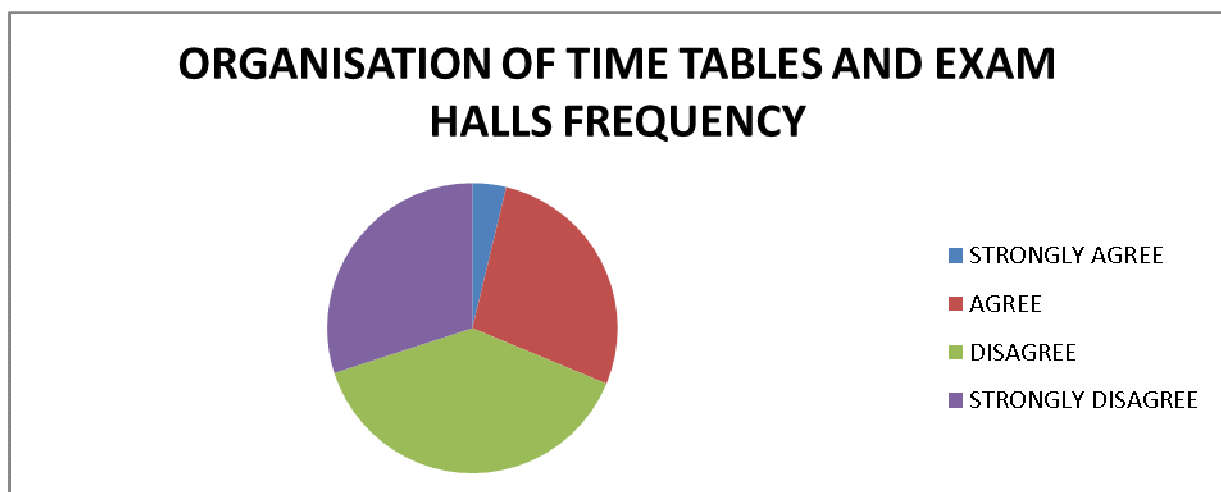


Figure 14: Organisations of Time Table and Exams Halls

4. Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Findings

The study revealed 84 respondents accepted the fact that lecturers teach according to the syllabus and 16% percent refuted. The researchers found out that 44% of the students confirmed that there is enough organized workshops and seminars while 56% denied this assertion. The study revealed that 45% of the respondents saw the relevance of Shorthand as a course and 55% did not see the relevance of shorthand as a course. Again the study revealed that the 45% of the respondents who saw the relevance of shorthand have had knowledge of shorthand before pursuing the Higher National Diploma (HND). The researchers also found out that, when the courses are upgraded and some eliminated out of the curriculum, it would and enable graduates to fit into any organization. The study revealed that most lecturers use enough teaching and practical methods. It was found out that during internship programmes, lecturers who are suppose to supervise students on their work are unable to do so because of their busy schedules. It was also revealed in the study that just a few percentage of students get access to an organization for their internships and other students are left wondering as to how and where to get an organization for their internship programme. The researchers found in their study that adequate time was not given to the students to prepare very well for exam. It was also revealed that a greater percentage of the respondents did not attribute the poor performance of students to lecturers, while the remaining percentage attributed the poor performance to lecturers.

4.1 Conclusions

Management expects that employees exhibit some specific skills to improve work and productivity. In the absence of these required skills such as speed and accuracy in typing in the curriculum of secretaryship /Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies department of Accra Polytechnic, it becomes difficult for the organization to attain high productivity. There is high competition between graduates in the department under study and graduates from other institution over the few job opportunities in the labour market. Therefore, it takes graduates with the prerequisite skills to grasp the opportunity available.

4.2 Recommendations

The following are the vital recommendations needed to ensure that there is an alignment between the department of Secretaryship/Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies of Accra Polytechnic and the labour market. The curriculum needs to be reviewed and updated with modern facilities to meet the needs and demands of the labour market. The Department of Secretaryship/Bilingual Secretaryship and Management Studies should establish a close alliance with the industries to be able to deliver what is needed and also create internship opportunities for the students. Internship supervision should be given to lecturers who are less occupied to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

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