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Competencies of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students in Machine Shorthand

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the Competencies of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students in Machine Shorthand, it sought to identify: profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex and year level, competencies of BSOA students in machine shorthand in terms of dictation and transcription, challenges of BSOA student in machine shorthand in terms of dictation and transcription, as an output of this study an intervention plan than was proposed to enhance the competencies of BSOA student in machine shorthand. The respondents of this study were the BSOA students, composed of the 2nd year and 3rd year students in the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration for the academic year 2023-2024, with a total of 100 respondents. This study utilized the Quantitative Descriptive Research Method and percentage technique, weighted mean, and rank order method as the statistical tools. The study revealed that, in terms of Personal Profile, the majority are 19-20 years old, the majority are female, and the majority of the respondents are 3rd year students. In conclusion, the competencies of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students in Machine Shorthand in terms of the competencies of BSOA Students in terms of transcription and dictation were found to be competent. Challenges of BSOA Students in Machine Shorthand in terms of Transcription and Dictation were found to be Often Encountered. The output of this study is the proposed recommendation to enhance the Competencies of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students in Machine Shorthand.

Keywords
Dictation Competencies
Learning Activity
Machine Shorthand
Office Administration
Transcription

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Introduction

In today's emerging generation, the demands of the professional industry are getting stiffer and bolder. It may seem that educational institutions' portals must embody the ideals of competitive and proficient Administrative Professionals. A person who chooses professional services understands the necessity for a professional with all the necessary qualifications, including skill, competence, and the appropriate attitude or point of view.

To be fully skilled individuals, students need to receive the education that will fulfill their knowledge and enhance their skills in their respective fields. According to the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, Article 14, Section 12 (Education) [1], it is stated that the state shall protect and promote the right of citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make education accessible to all. It is stated that all citizens have the right to have a better education to acquire the knowledge and skills needed in their future careers.

Stenography is one of the courses in the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration; most students are unfamiliar with the subject matter and find it difficult to cope with this course. According to Echipare, et.al [2], the subject drives the tension and anxiety among the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students. Students' lack of interest in Shorthand, inadequate supply of teaching/learning facilities, and lack of teacher encouragement are some of the difficulties and problems the students are dealing with. Students experience nervousness and an inability to retain what they have learned, Afribary [3].

Like other students in different programs aiming to be future administrative professionals in their respective fields, most Office Administration students strive to be future stenographers. Considering those professions, students are highly expected to acquire the skills needed to play their role as professionals effectively. Among these skills is Stenography. Stenography, or shorthand, is a skilled process of making and transcribing shorthand notes. This comprises two kinds: the written or manual shorthand and the machine shorthand. It is the rapid way of writing by symbols to represent syllables, words, phrases, or sentences, and the process of transcribing notes using a steno machine, Leslie [4].

Shorthand is one of the most critical and challenging tasks a secretary must perform. It may surprise you that shorthand is still recognized as an incredibly vital talent even in the

digital age. However, some claim that it is outmoded and irrelevant with the rising use of technology, yet reporters and journalists today express how valuable shorthand is to them.

With the underlying facts cited, the researchers felt the need to focus their study on the Competencies of BSOA students in Shorthand in Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges to determine the extent of competencies possessed by the students, as well as the challenges that affect their performance in Stenography, to address these factors in preparation for job employment in the near future and career growth and development.

Material and Methods

A. Research Design

In this study, the researchers considered the descriptive survey method appropriate because the study aimed to determine how competent BSOA students are in Machine Shorthand. According to De Guzman et. Al [5]. The descriptive method is concerned with the presentation and collection of data. This involves the techniques used in variance and description of numerical data, whether graphical or computational.

B. Respondents

The respondents of this study are exclusive of the officially enrolled Bachelor of Science in Office Administration in the College of Tourism, Hospitality, and Business Management students who were formally enrolled in the academic year 2023- 2024. One hundred (100) students, composed of 2nd year and 3rd year, were selected using the Quota Sampling.

C. Research Instrument

In gathering the necessary information in Machine Shorthand dictation to enhance the performance of BSOA students, the data gathering tool used in this research is the online tools through Google Forms. A survey or questionnaire is used as an online tool to include sets of appropriate questions formulated to be answered by the respondents, so that from their answers, the experiences, opinions, and preferences for improved affairs can be determined. It also provides convenience, accessibility, and flexibility for researchers and the respondents.

D. Documentary Analysis and Statistical Treatment of Data

To quantify the interpretation of data, the following statistical tools were used in the study:

- Percentage technique: These were used to establish the demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as age, sex, and year level, of the respondents who already had experience in shorthand transcription and dictation.

- Weighted mean: This was used to establish the extent of the responses on the competency level of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students in terms of transcription and dictation, as well as the challenges in transcription and dictation.
- Four-point likert scale: This study used closed questions for each item with the respondents' choices to select, tick, and provide the corresponding numeric value for the most preferred option. This scale aimed to identify the frequency of competency Levels of BSOA students in transcription and dictation, as well as the challenges encountered by BSOA students in transcription and dictation.
- Ranking method: This was used to ascertain the ranking of the given indicators concerning the corresponding areas. This method was applied to the competency level of BSOA students in transcription and dictation, as well as the difficulties faced by BSOA students in transcription and dictation.

Results and Discussions

The *Results* section should be clear and concise, presenting the findings logically. Results must be interpreted in the context of the literature previously reviewed. Avoid repeating results in the *Discussion* section; instead, focus there on the interpretation and significance of the findings. A combined *Results* and *Discussion* section is acceptable and often recommended for coherence.

A. Personal Profile of the Respondents

This section includes the discussion of the analysis and interpretation of the respondents' profiles, including age, sex, and year level.

1. Age

Table 1 shows the respondents' profiles according to age. The data gathered found that Category 2, which is 19-20 years old, had the highest percentage (51%). Category 3, which is 20 years and above, comprises 24%, ranking them the lowest in the survey.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile in terms of Age

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
18-19	25	25 %	2
19-20	51	51 %	1
20 Above	24	24 %	3
TOTAL	100	100 %	

From the above findings, it is evident that category three, which is 20 years old and above, ranked as the lowest in respondents' profiles according to age. This implies that some of the respondents are 20 years old or younger. According to Cruz [6], this study established that age plays a role in students' learning achievement and skill development, primarily in technical courses like office administration. The study indicated that younger

students, particularly those aged 19- 20, tend to adapt more quickly to technical competencies such as machine shorthand due to their familiarity with technology and ability to process new information rapidly. This supports the findings in Table 1, wherein 51% of the participants belong to this age group.

2. Sex

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents in terms of sex, with the frequency and percentage as well. Ranked number 1 were female respondents with eighty-four (84), which comprises eighty-four percent (84%) of students. While ranked number 2 were male respondents with sixteen (16), which shall consist of sixteen percent (16%) of students.

Table 2. Respondents' Profile in terms of Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	16	16%	2
Female	84	84%	1
TOTAL	100	100%	

From the above findings, it is evident that category one, male, ranked as the lowest rating regarding respondents' profiles according to sex, which means that the least number of male BSOA students answered our survey. However, category two, which is female, ranked the highest.

According to Cabigon, J.V. [7], in their study on the demographics of office administration students, female students have traditionally dominated the BSOA programs in the Philippines. This is linked to the historical association of clerical and secretarial work with women. This trend continues in specialized fields such as machine shorthand, which requires precision and attention to detail, skills often stereotypically linked to female workers.

3. Year Level

Their academic year level categorizes the number and percentage distribution of the respondents. Out of 100 respondents, the 3rd year respondents ranked first in year level with a frequency of fifty-four (54) and a percentage of fifty-four (54%). This was followed by the 2nd year, with a frequency of forty-six (46) and a percentage of forty-six (46%).

Table 3. Respondents' Profile According to Year Level

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
2nd Year	46	46%	2
3rd Year	54	54%	1
TOTAL	100	100%	

This implies that the majority of year levels are in the 3rd year. This is significant, as 3rd year students typically have a more in-depth understanding of their coursework and can provide valuable insights into the competencies being assessed in this study.

According to Santos [8], the progression in machine shorthand skills between these year levels is mainly due to the structured curriculum, which allocates more complex transcription tasks and real-world application scenarios in the third year. This progressive learning helps students gain confidence and better adapt to the demands of office administration tasks, where speed and accuracy in shorthand transcription are crucial.

B. Competencies of BSOA Students in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription and Dictation

Table 4 shows the Competencies of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand and Transcription. Based on the data, mainly of the indicators were interpreted as "Competent", consider the following: Able to transcribe brief forms derivatives phrases and abbreviations, with a weighted mean of 2.93, which was in the first position and the indicator 10 which is the Able to transcribe 50 words per minute with 98% accuracy, has the lowest weighted mean of 2.49.

Table 4. Competencies in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription

No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1	Able to transcribe words and phrases accurately.	2.92	Competent	2
2	Able to transcribe words accurately without looking at the steno machine.	2.73	Competent	5
3	Able to transcribe unfamiliar words under stress dictation.	2.63	Competent	8
4	Able to transcribe brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations.	2.93	Competent	1
5	Manual dexterity in transcribing on the steno machine.	2.77	Competent	4
6	Proficient in transcribing words based on pronunciations and syllables.	2.85	Competent	3
7	Proficient in transcribing rapidly as the dictator gives it.	2.60	Competent	9
8	Able to maintain a consistent and accurate typing pace, even when transcribing complex material.	2.69	Competent	6
9	Able to transcribe dictation even in audio recordings.	2.66	Competent	7
10	Able to transcribe 50 words per minute with 98% accuracy.	2.49	Moderate Competent	10
	Average Weighted Mean	**2.73**	**Competent**	

From the above findings, it is evident that indicator four ranks as the highest in Competencies of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand in terms of Transcription. However, indicator 10 ranks the lowest, meaning most respondents are more competent in transcribing

brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations.

According to Jintalan [9], skills and abilities cannot be learned from the comfort of one's office or home; skills must be learned through practical applications where people can work under pressure and make mistakes. Hence, the respondents efficiently transcribe brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations, which are the qualities learned if they practice transcribing in Machine Shorthand.

Table 5 shows the Competencies of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand, along with Dictation. Based on the data, indicator one, which focuses and concentrates during dictation sessions, shows a weighted mean of 2.94, ranking it at the top. In contrast, indicator 10, which can take dictation at the speed of 50 words per minute with 98% accuracy, gets the least ranked with a weighted mean of 2.55.

Table 5. Competencies in Machine Shorthand along with Dictation

No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1	Able to focus and concentrate during dictation sessions.	2.94	Competent	1
2	Can handle complex and technical dictation	2.73	Competent	4.5
3	Proficient in taking dictation as rapidly as the dictator gives it.	2.69	Competent	7
4	Able to outline unfamiliar words under stress dictation.	2.72	Competent	6
5	Able to recognize and correct common errors in machine shorthand dictation.	2.73	Competent	4.5
6	Proficient in listening to the pronunciations of letters to be transcribed as steno chords.	2.81	Competent	2
7	Manual dexterity in transcribing in the steno machine while listening to dictation.	2.66	Competent	9
8	Able to maintain a consistent and accurate typing pace, even when transcribing complex material.	2.75	Competent	3
9	Able to differentiate between similar-sounding words accurately in dictations.	2.61	Competent	8
10	Able to take dictation at the speed of 50 words per minute with 98% accuracy.	2.55	Competent	10
	Average Weighted Mean	**2.73**	**Competent**	

From the above findings, it is evident that indicator one ranks as the highest in the competencies of BSOA students in machine shorthand and in dictation. However, indicator 10 ranks as the lowest. This means most respondents are competent in focusing and concentrating during dictation sessions.

Based on the results, the respondents can focus and concentrate during dictation sessions, similar to the study of Pratt (n.d) [10]. According to her, students must learn to focus on basic phrases to do well in Shorthand. It is also advised to sharpen the concentration and alertness, both of which are essential in dictation sessions.

C. Summary of Competencies of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand, along with Transcription and Dictation

As shown in Table 6, the observations made were that the Competencies of BSOA students along Transcription and Dictation have a general weighted mean of 2.73, which is interpreted to mean Competent. During the transcript, they received an average of the weighted mean of 2.73, interpreted as competent; the Dictation also received an average of the weighted mean of 2.73, interpreted as competent. This means that the BSOA students are skilled in transcribing in Machine Shorthand and are trained in Dictation, with the same average weighted mean of 2.73.

Table 6. Summary of Competencies in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription and Dictation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
• Transcription	2.73	Competent
• Dictation	2.73	Competent
General Weighted Mean	**2.73**	**Competent**

D. Challenges of BSOA Students in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription and Dictation

Table 7 shows the Challenges of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand and Transcription. According to the data, indicator 2, which states the difficulty in transcribing words accurately without looking at the steno machine, has been assigned a weighted mean of 2.98 and has become the most crucial. However, indicator four, the inability to transcribe brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations, has a weighted mean of 2.68 and ranked the lowest.

From the findings, it is evident that indicator two ranks as the highest in the Challenges faced by BSOA students in Machine Shorthand, along with Transcription, meaning that the respondents experience the most difficulty when attempting to transcribe words accurately without looking at the steno machine. However, indicator four ranks the lowest, meaning that the challenges associated with transcribing brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations are comparatively less significant.

According to Garcia [11], effective training methods that combine theoretical knowledge with practical drills are essential for developing proficiency in transcription. Thus, based on the data, it is clear that while respondents struggle with transcribing without looking at the steno machine, they have developed competencies in transcribing brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations through consistent practice.

Table 7. Challenges of BSOA Students in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription

No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1	Difficulty in transcribing words and phrases accurately.	2.81	Often Encountered	7
2	Difficulty in transcribing words accurately without looking at the steno machine.	2.98	Often Encountered	1
3	Difficulty in transcribing unfamiliar words under stress dictation.	2.86	Often Encountered	5
4	Not able to accurately transcribe brief forms, derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations.	2.68	Often Encountered	10
5	Struggle to transcribe words based on pronunciation and syllables accurately.	2.72	Often Encountered	9
6	Difficulty in transcribing rapidly as the dictator gives it.	2.87	Often Encountered	4
7	Struggle to maintain a consistent and accurate typing pace when transcribing complex material.	2.88	Often Encountered	2.5
8	Struggle to transcribe dictations in audio recordings.	2.80	Often Encountered	8
9	Struggle to stay on focus during transcription session.	2.85	Often Encountered	6
10	Not able to transcribe 50 words per minute with 98% accuracy.	2.88	Often Encountered	2.5
	Average Weighted Mean	**2.83**	**Often Encountered**	

Table 8 shows the challenges BSOA students face in machine shorthand and Dictating. Based on the data, Indicator 3, which is not proficient in dictation as rapidly as the dictator gives it, has a weighted mean of 2.84 and ranks the highest. In contrast, indicator nine cannot differentiate between similar-sounding words accurately in dictation rank, as the lowest, with a weighted mean of 2.72.

Table 8. Challenges in Machine Shorthand along with Dictation

No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1	Struggle to concentrate during dictation sessions.	2.74	Often Encountered	8
2	Not proficient in complex and technical dictation.	2.78	Often Encountered	5
3	Not proficient in typing as quickly as the individual dictating.	2.84	Often Encountered	1.5
4	Struggle to underline all the unknown words started under stress dictation.	2.84	Often Encountered	1.5
5	Difficulty in recognizing and correcting common errors in machine shorthand dictation.	2.80	Often Encountered	4
6	Struggle to listen to the pronunciations of letters to be transcribed as steno chords.	2.76	Often Encountered	7
7	Not able to transcribe in steno machine while listening to dictation.	2.72	Often Encountered	9.5
8	Struggle to prioritize and manage multiple dictation tasks simultaneously.	2.82	Often Encountered	3

No.	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
9	Not able to differentiate between similar-sounding words accurately in dictation.	2.72	Often Encountered	9.5
10	Not able to achieve the speed and accuracy of 50 words per minute with 98% percent accuracy in taking dictation.	2.77	Often Encountered	6
	Average Weighted Mean	**2.78**	**Often Encountered**	

From the findings, it is evident that indicator three ranks as the highest in the Challenges faced by BSOA students in Machine Shorthand, along with Dictation, meaning the respondents struggle the most with keeping up with the speed of dictation. On the other hand, indicator nine, related to differentiating similar-sounding words, ranks as the lowest with a weighted mean of 2.72. According to Johnson [12], accurately transcribing dictation rapidly is crucial for success in machine shorthand programs as it directly affects student performance and confidence.

E. Summary of Challenges of BSOA Students in Machine Shorthand, along with Transcription and Dictation

Table 9 shows that the Challenges of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand, along with Transcription and Dictation, have a general weighted mean of 2.81, which falls in the Often Encountered category. In transcription, besides the mean, they also got an average of the weighted mean of 2.83, which is interpreted as Often Encountered. In dictation, they also got an average of 2.78, which is again interpreted as "Competent".

Table 9. Summary of Challenges in Machine Shorthand along with Transcription and Dictation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
• Transcription	2.83	Often Encountered
• Dictation	2.78	Often Encountered
General Weighted Mean	2.81	Often Encountered

This implies that the challenges BSOA students face, such as transcribing and dictation in Machine Shorthand, are often encountered. To support these findings, according to Garcia [11] effective training methods that theoretical knowledge and practical drills will be essential for developing the proficiency in transcription, and it also mention by Johnson [12] that for the student to be competent or success in the dictation, the ability to accurately transcribe dictation at a rapid pace is crucial for success as it affects the students' performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn: From the analysis of the results, the largest percentage of the respondents is between 19 and 20 years. Most of the respondents are female. Third-year students comprise the most essential part of the respondents. Moreover, the observation from the study, the Competencies of BSOA students in

Machine Shorthand in transcription as well as dictation were determined to be Competent, and it was also concluded that the challenges of BSOA students in Machine Shorthand in terms of dictation were found to be Often Encountered.

It is recommended that all forms and their derivatives, phrases, and abbreviations be transcribed for a short time daily or weekly to increase transcription accuracy. Additionally, it is recommended that other materials that may help students study, such as electronic resources, books, and/or video tutorials, be provided so that students of BSOA can study independently. Exercise is best done in a way intended to raise and further the typist's speed, but while doing the exercise, one also hopes to be right in the exercise. The students are supposed to type text when times are called. In addition, it allows the taping students to enlighten their fellow course mates and friends about advanced shorthand methods and exercise taping on the Steno Machine.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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