

SECRETARIAL SKILLS COMPETENCIES AND SECRETARIES JOB PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSITIES IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

Prof. ONAJITE Godwin Onnoh¹, OMIDIJI Samuel Ajetomobi², OLATUNJI Rufus Oladimeji³

¹Vocational & Technical Education Department, Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti

²Office Technology & Management Department, Federal Polytechnic, Ado

Omidijisamuel17@gmail.com

³Office Technology & Management Department, Federal Polytechnic, Ado

olatunji.rufus@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study investigates secretarial skills competencies and secretaries job performance in universities in Ekiti state, Nigeria. The main objective of this study was to determine how ICT skills, Communication skills and Interpersonal skills influence the job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State. Descriptive design of survey type was adopted for the study. Two research questions were raised with one hypothesis formulated and tested 0.05 of significances for the study. The population comprises 100 secretaries in three selected Universities in Ekiti State. All the entire population size was used because of the manageable size. The instrument for the study was structured questionnaire titled: Questionnaire on secretarial skills competencies and secretaries job performance in Ekiti State (QSSCSJP) was used to elicit responses. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, one from Test and Measurement, one from Business Education department and one Vocational and Technical Education department. Reliability of the instrument was ensured using Cronbach's alpha and the reliability co-efficient of 0.81 was obtained. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical tool for the research questions and inferential statistical tool for the testing of the hypothesis. The findings revealed that ICT skills, Communication Skills and Interpersonal Skills predicts the job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State. The study concluded that, secretaries have having issues in utilizing the latest ICT resources for enhanced job performance. It was recommended that, university management should procure the latest digital ICT facilities with good networking and internet facilities to enhance the performance of the secretaries in the institutions. Based on the findings, it was recommended that secretaries should be sent on training and retraining to up skill themselves on the application of ICT devices, communication and interpersonal skills in the new normal for enhanced job performance.

Keywords: Secretarial Skills, Competency, Secretaries and Job Performance.

Introduction

Universities are institutions that rely heavily on effective administration to achieve their academic and developmental goals. In Nigeria, universities have been observed to face enormous challenges such as inadequate

funding, infrastructural deficits, limited teaching resources, and the pressure of managing a rapidly growing student population. Administrative efficiency is pivotal for the optimal functioning of universities especially in Nigeria, where institutions grapple with different

challenges coupled with a rapidly growing student population. Efficient administrative processes ensure that resources are utilized effectively, tasks are completed promptly, and objectives are met within set timelines. This translates to smooth operations, timely delivery of services, and overall institutional success. In universities, administrative efficiency supports the institution's ability to adapt to increasing students' population, technological advancements, and evolving educational demands. Secretaries are part of the non-teaching staff handling administrative works in the universities. Secretaries according to Ementa (2022) was defined as an assistance to an executive, possessing of office skills such as information and communication skills, data base management skills, management information system and keyboarding skills, who display initiatives, assume responsibility without direct supervision and exercise judgement according to his or her scope of assigned authority. The qualities of secretaries include possession of effective professional and personal trait to manage a unique of dynamic academia in the area of strict confidential and integrity, advanced tech competency, exceptional interpersonal skills, detailed oriented and accurate, adaptability and time management. The role of secretaries has evolved significantly over time, moving from traditional clerical duties to more complex and strategic administrative functions. Traditionally, secretaries were primarily responsible for tasks such as typing, filing, taking dictation, and scheduling appointments. These roles were largely routine and focused on supporting other staff members in completing their tasks efficiently, (Ojo, 2018). Historically, secretaries performed these basic administrative functions,

ensuring that daily operations ran smoothly but with limited involvement in decision-making processes. However, with technological advancements, globalization, and increasing demands for efficiency, the role of secretaries has expanded. Modern secretaries are expected to possess a wide range of competencies, including proficiency in information and communication technology (ICT), effective written and verbal communication, organizational skills, and interpersonal abilities. They now handle tasks such as managing digital correspondence, coordinating meetings and events, maintaining complex records, preparing reports, and even assisting in strategic planning and decision-making (Abimbola and Adedoyin, 2020). This shift reflects a move from a purely supportive role to a more professional and proactive function within organizations.

The evolving role of secretaries is particularly important because they act as the interface among administrative offices, academic staff, students, and external stakeholders. Their ability to efficiently manage information, communicate effectively, and coordinate activities directly influences institutional performance and service delivery. As noted by Adebayo and Oladipo (2019), secretaries who are equipped with modern administrative skills contribute significantly to organizational efficiency, employees' productivity, and stakeholders' satisfaction. In the modern administrative environment, secretaries are required to possess a range of competencies that go beyond traditional clerical skills. The complexity of university administration in Nigeria, coupled with technological advancements, has made it necessary for secretaries to develop proficiency in information and communication technology (ICT), strong

communication skills, organizational abilities, and interpersonal skills. These competencies are expected to make secretaries to perform their roles efficiently and contribute meaningfully to institutional growth. (Amahi,, Otomiewo, and Jacob, 2023)

ICT skills enable them to use computers, digital tools, and online platforms efficiently. Adegboye and Olowu (2021), asserted that secretaries who are adept at ICT can manage information more efficiently, reduce errors, and enhance the speed of administrative processes in Nigerian universities. Secretaries who are comfortable with digital tools can complete tasks more efficiently, reduce errors, and manage information more effectively. In Nigerian universities while communication skills will help in delivering clear messages and managing correspondence. Oni and Adebayo (2021), effective communication by secretaries improves collaboration, minimizes misunderstandings, and ensures that administrative instructions are correctly implemented. Secretaries with good communication skills are expected to convey information clearly, coordinate effectively with colleagues and students, and ensure that messages are understood correctly. When communication skills are weak, misunderstandings can arise, slowing down administrative processes and affecting overall institutional performance.

Organizational skills are expected to support time management, record-keeping, and coordination of multiple tasks. Secretaries with strong organizational skills can prioritize responsibilities, manage competing deadlines, and maintain well-organized records (Akunama, 2025). This ensures that work flows smoothly, deadlines are

met, and institutional operations are not disrupted. Conversely, weak organizational skills can lead to misplaced documents, missed deadlines, and a chaotic work environment.

While interpersonal skills are to facilitate teamwork, collaboration, and positive interaction with stakeholders. These competencies are crucial because they directly influence how effectively secretaries carry out their responsibilities.

Job performance of secretaries is reflected in indicators such as efficiency, accuracy, timeliness, productivity, ability to maintain work balance, and contribution to institutional goal attainment. Performance is sometimes affected by some factors, such as outdated training, limited resources, and institutional challenges, which may make it difficult for secretaries to meet the growing demands of modern administrative work. Observations revealed that secretaries are with ample opportunity to produce a mailable documents using ICT devices in the course of creating letter, memo, manuscripts by installing scanner on their phone to scan the document as single or multiple documents, after scanning the documents, they should convert the documents into word and subject it the grammarly software to check for errors and email it to the boss as softcopy or print through Noko Print. observably, it was observed that varieties of errors such as typographical errors, syntax errors, transposition errors and sentence structure are noticeable in the tasks created by the secretaries. It was also observed that many secretaries also face difficulties in adapting to new technologies, managing heavy workloads, and receiving adequate professional recognition. In addition, gaps in ICT and organizational skills may prevent some secretaries from

performing optimally. As a result, universities in Ekiti State may not be fully utilizing the potential of their secretarial staff. Limitations in training, access to resources, and structural constraints may likely reduce efficiency in administrative processes and slow down the achievement of institutional objectives. Addressing these challenges through continuous professional development, improved resource allocation, and streamlined administrative procedures could enhance secretaries' performance, allowing them to contribute more effectively to the smooth functioning and overall success of the universities.

Available studies have examined the relationship between employee competencies and job performance in various organizations, however, there is limited research focusing specifically on secretarial staff in universities. Most existing studies concentrate on academic or general administrative personnel, leaving the role and contributions of secretaries underexplored. Moreover, there seems to be shortage of empirical studies from universities in Ekiti State, and little is revealed about the specific skills secretaries possess, the challenges they face, and how their competencies influence their job performance. This observed gap highlights the need for research that investigates secretarial skills and job performance in these universities, providing insights that could guide training programmes, administrative policies, and strategies to improve overall institutional efficiency in Ekiti State.

Statement of the Problem

The advent of technology in all facets of human endeavours has put more challenges on different professionals including the secretary. By this, secretarial work has changed from

traditional clerical abilities to proficiency in ICT, in the course of their job performance. Secretaries can create letters, memo, manuscripts and reports documents without touching their laptop or tablets. They will just install nook Print and scanner on their phone and produce a mailable documents for the boss or end users. However, it seems that many secretaries lack these competencies, tasks may take longer time to be completed, errors may occur more frequently, and the overall efficiency of administrative processes may decline.

Secretarial staff in universities in Ekiti State are expected to be equipped with secretarial skills such as communication skills and organizational skills which seem not to have been fully utilized. Thereby affecting institutional effectiveness. Another area that seems to be affected appears in limited empirical evidence on how their competencies relate to job performance within this context. A clearer understanding of the specific skills that may influence performance of secretaries could help universities to make more informed decisions regarding staff development, resource allocation, and the improvement of administrative efficiency. This study therefore investigated the relationship between secretarial skills competencies and job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate how secretarial skills competencies influence secretaries' job performance in Universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study specifically;

- i. examined secretarial skills competencies on job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State;
- ii. investigated how secretarial skills competencies (ICT,

communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills) significantly influence effective job performance of secretaries; and

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide this study:

- i. What is the influence of secretarial skills on job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State?
- ii. Are there challenges faced by secretaries in using secretarial skills in the performance of their duties in universities in Ekiti State?

Hypothesis

This null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Secretaries in BOESTI and EKSU on Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly influence job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised one hundred (100) secretaries which made up of twenty-six (26) secretaries from Federal University Oye, Oye Ekiti, forty four (44) secretaries from Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, thirty (30) secretaries from Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere, Ekiti State. The entire population was studied because of

manageable size. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire tagged "Questionnaire on the Secretarial Skills Competencies and Secretaries Job Performance in University in Ekiti State (QSSCSJPUES). The questionnaire was designed on 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), (4), Agree (A) Disagree (D) 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1, to capture respondents opinion and experiences on research question one and for research question 2, Very High Extent (VHE-4 points) High Extent (HE-3 points) Moderate Extent (ME-2 points) and Low Extent (LE-1 point) respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts in business education and test and measurement. Cronbach Alpha was used for the reliability and 0.81 reliability coefficient was obtained. Data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics of t-test was adopted to test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for the two research questions was that any mean ratings of 2.50 and above were considered as high extent and items of mean with below 2.50 and above were considered as low extent. Thus, hypothesis is accepted when t-calculated value is less than t-critical value and rejected when t-calculated value is greater than t-critical value.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the influence of secretarial skills on job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Influence of Secretarial Skills on Job Performance of Secretaries in Universities in Ekiti State

S/N	Pedagogy Resources	X	SD	Decision
1	Streamlining Workflows	3.26	0.27	Agree
2	Accelerating Data Access	3.25	0.26	Agree
3	Boost Productivity	3.62	0.49	Agree
4	Accelerated Task Execution	3.25	0.26	Agree
5	Increase Work Flexibility	3.26	0.27	Agree
6	Reduction of Errors	3.25	0.26	Agree
7	Operational Agility	3.26	0.27	Agree
8	Data Driven Decision Making	3.66	0.55	Agree
9	Personalized Development	3.25	0.26	Agree
10	Increase Work Autonomy	3.65	0.47	Agree
11	Increase Speed and Accuracy	3.26	0.27	Agree
12	Efficient Record Management	3.25	0.26	Agree
13	Enhance Communication	3.78	0.50	Agree
14	Task Enrichment	3.75	0.69	Agree
15	Optimizing Performance	3.25	0.26	Agree
Grand Mean		3.20	0.36	

Field work, 2026

Data presented in Table 1 above indicates that streamlining workflows, accelerating data access, boost in productivity, accelerated task execution, increase work flexibility, reduction of errors, operational agility, data driven decision making, personalized development, increase work autonomy, increase speed and accuracy, efficient record management, Enhanced communication, task enrichment and optimizing performance are the influence

of secretarial skills competencies on job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This was showed from the means responses of the respondents that was above 2.50 bench mark for decision criteria and grand mean of 3.20.

Research Question 2: Are there challenges faced by secretaries in using secretarial skills in the performance of their duties in universities in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Challenges faced by Secretaries in using Secretarial skills in the performance of their duties in universities in Ekiti State

S/N	Pedagogy Resources	X	SD	Decision
1	Secretarial Skills gaps	3.77	0.66	Agree
2	Technostress	3.25	0.26	Agree
3	The Skills Mismatch	3.83	0.86	Agree
4	Connectivity Barriers	3.26	0.27	Agree
5	Internet Bandwidth Issue	3.78	0.95	Agree
6	Digital Burnout	3.26	0.27	Agree
7	Training Deficit	3.80	0.90	Agree
8	Inadequate Infrastructures	3.25	0.26	Agree
9	Resistance	3.83	0.78	Agree
10	Technological Advancement	3.26	0.27	Agree
11	Automation	3.83	0.78	Agree
12	Digitization	3.25	0.26	Agree
13	Hardware and Software issue	3.87	0.72	Agree
14	High Job Stress	3.26	0.27	Agree
15	High Pressure Environment	3.83	0.86	Agree
Grand Mean		3.30	0.62	

Field Work, 2026

Data presented in Table 2 above revealed that the identified challenges in applying secretarial skills competencies by the secretaries in Ekiti State universities ranges from secretarial skills gaps, technostress, the skills mismatch, connectivity barriers, Internet Bandwidth issues, digital burnout, training deficit, inadequate infrastructures, resistance, technological advancement, automation, digitization, hardware and software issue, high job stress and high pressure environment This was showed from the means responses of the

respondents that was above 2.50 bench mark for decision criteria and the grand mean of 3.30.

Hypothesis 1

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Secretaries in FUOYE and EKSU on Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly predict job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of Secretaries in FUOYE and EKSU on Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly predict job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Variables	N	X	DF	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
FUOYE Secretary	20	2.25	1.13	38	0.23	1.95	accepted
EKSU Secretary	20	2.30	1.10				

From Table 3 above, the t-calculated value of 0.23 is less than t-critical of 1.95. Thus, the null hypothesis earlier stated is therefore upheld. By implication, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Federal University, Oye secretaries and Ekiti State University secretaries on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly predict job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State. Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The results of data analysis in table 1 showed that all the identified items are the influence of secretarial skills competencies on job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This was showed from the means responses of the respondents that was above 2.50 bench mark for decision criteria. This was also indicated from the grand mean of 3.30. The grand mean

was also greater than the decision bench mark of 2.50. This findings of this studies corroborate the finding of Onajite and Aina (2025) who reported that application of information and communication skills by the secretaries enhances communication, task enrichment optimizing performance and increase productivities in tertiary institutions. This findings was in agreement with the report of Onche and Adenekan, (2023) who reported that the influence of secretarial skills competencies on job performance of secretaries in tertiary institutions are accelerated data access, boost in productivity, accelerated task execution, increase work flexibility and increase in institutional productivity.

The results of data analysis in table 2 showed that all the identified items are the challenges that secretaries face in applying secretarial skills competencies in the performance of their

duties in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria. They were also utilized in the institutions for instructional delivery and for teaching and learning process. This was showed from the means responses of the respondents that was above 2.50 bench mark for decision criteria. This was also indicated from the grand mean of 3.30. The grand mean was also greater than the decision bench mark of 2.50. This findings of this studies corroborate with the finding of Aina and Ezeani, (2023) who reported that technostress, the skills mismatch, connectivity barriers, Internet Bandwidth issues, digital burnout, training deficit, inadequate infrastructures, resistance, technological advancement, automation, digitization, hardware and software issues are the challenges bedeviling secretaries in the application of secretarial skills competencies in their job performance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

On the test of hypothesis 1, the result indicated that the t-calculated value of 0.23 is less than t-critical of 1.95. Thus, the null hypothesis earlier stated is therefore upheld. By implication, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Federal University, Oye secretaries and Ekiti State University OTM secretaries on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly predict job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that the exploration of ICT skills, communication skills and interpersonal skills by the secretaries revealed significant potential for enhancing job performance in the working place and fostering tremendous improvement in the attainment of institutional goals in the universities in

Ekiti state. By leveraging secretarial skills will reduces job redundancy, minimize waste and improve productivities. Empirical research as highlighted in the literature, underscore the importance of evaluating the secretarial skills competencies on the job performance of secretaries in the workplace. As scholars and practitioners continues to investigates the impact of secretarial skills competencies on the job performance of secretaries in the workplace. It is imperative to priotize how efficiency, timelines and accuracy of secretaries in application of secretarial skills to ensure optimum job performance in the universities in Ekiti state. This has reduced redundancy, waste and maximized productivity for result oriented and promote excellence. It was also concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Federal University, Oye secretaries and Ekiti State University OTM secretaries on the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills will not significantly influence the 8 job performance of secretaries in universities in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. School management in university in Ekiti State should prioritize procurement of latest ICT resources for secretaries job performance in the universities in Ekiti State
2. Institutional management should regularly set aside funds for seminars and workshops where secretarial practitioners can be effectively trained and retrained on the use of modern ICT resources in the course of their job performance.

References

- Abdullahi, H. A. (2025) The Challenges and Prospects of Secretarial Profession in the Modern Technology era in North-West, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 12(2), 10-16
- Amahi, F. U., Otomiewo, E. E. & Jacob, M. O. (2023) Digital Switch-over and Instructional Delivery of Academic Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 10(2), 179-188.
- Adegboye, F., & Olowu, A. (2021). ICT skills and administrative efficiency in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Administrative Studies*, 9(2), 56–67
- Akunama, I. A. (2025) Exploring the Impact of AI Integration in Business Incubators and accelerators on Entrepreneurship Education and Startup Success. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 10(2), 36-42.
- Amahi, F. U., Otomiewo, E. E. & Jacob, M. O. (2023) Digital Switch-over and Instructional Delivery of Academic Programme in Tertiary Institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 12(2), 179-188.
- Afolabi, O., & Adeoye, A. (2022). Challenges of ICT utilization in Nigerian tertiary institutions: Implications for administrative staff. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 15(2), 45–60.
- Aina, M. A. (2023). Effectiveness of the Use of Technology in Teaching for Promoting Economic Growth Among Business Education Graduates in Ekiti State. *British Journal of Education Learning and Development Psychology*. 6(2) 1-12.
- Aina, P., & Adeyemi, T. (2022). Secretarial competencies and administrative efficiency in Nigerian universities. *Journal of African Higher Education Studies*, 10(2), 45–59.
- Ezeani, N. S. & Aina, M. A. (2023). Secretarial Profession and the Training Needs of Secretaries for The Future Office Work. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 6(2), 159-165.
- Enang, C. E. (2023) Digital Entrepreneurial Skills and Competencies Required from Business Education Students to work in the Digital Era. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 10(2), 172-178
- Ofume, A. O. (2025) Challenges and Strategic Measures for Application of Artificial Intelligence in Business Education Research in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 12(2), 1-9
- Onajite, G. O., & Aina, M. O. (2025) ICT Competency for Sustainability in Instructional Delivery of Academic Staff in Business Education. *Social Science Education Journal*, 1(1) 71-79
- Onche, U., & Adenekan, R. (2023). Influence of organizational skills on the performance of secretaries in federal universities in South-West Nigeria. *Journal of Administrative Research*, 11(1), 55–70.
- Oni, O., & Adebayo, S. (2021). ICT adoption and secretarial roles in Nigerian public universities. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 8(2), 120–134.
- Oyinlola, G.O., Aderoju, J.A, and Felicia, K. O. (2022) Skills-Enhanced Collaborative Teaching and Learning Practices for Preparing Business Education Students Towards Working in a Changing World. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 9(1), 203-212