



## **SUPERVISORS' APPRAISAL OF ADEQUACY OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT GRADUATES' WORK PERFORMANCE IN POLYTECHNICS IN DELTA STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study was designed to find out the supervisors' appraisals of adequacy of office technology and management graduates' work performance in polytechnics in Delta State. Three research questions guided the study one null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study consisted of all the 67 supervisors of secretaries in polytechnics in Delta State Nigeria. Data was collected using a validated research questionnaire. Data relating to the research questions were analyzed used mean while t-test was using in testing the null hypothesis. The results of the study indicated that the work performance of office technology and management graduate in the areas of word processing, spreadsheet and internet application skills is adequate. It was therefore concluded that the objectives of office technology and management programme in polytechnics in Nigeria was achieved. It was recommended among others that the current OTM curriculum for polytechnics should be analyzed and reviewed to ensure that current skills requirements of information technology as well as the relevant facilities are adequately reflected in order to maintain relevance and currency of education practices. Emerging concepts and skills required for coping with the dynamics of information technology should be infused into the curriculum.*

**Keywords:** *Supervisor, Appraisal, Adequacy, Work Performance*

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### **Introduction**

Over the years, the global world has experienced technological changes in business and office activities/functions. In Nigeria, many government and private sector offices, are fast adapting to modern technologies. This trend appears to be one of most viable ways to survive the industrial and group competitions as well as the evolving global technological culture. Enyakit in Okoro (2017) asserted that the modern business office is rapidly changing as a result of office automation, which has brought about new methods in carrying out functions performed by people in organizations. One office employees that constantly use this ever-changing technology in the office is the office manager who is expected to handle numerous office functions related to information processing.

An office manager or a secretary is a member of staff who is concerned with the preparation, preservation and transmission of different types of office documents as well as conventional secretarial duties of confidential nature at various levels in an organization (Olanye, 2015). This implies that a qualified secretary should possess basic secretarial skills, have sufficient business acumen, be versatile in office information and communication technology and have sufficient knowledge of the operations of all departments within the organization where he/she works.

Based on the above, Office Technology and Management programme was designed to prepare the graduate for office works in public and private sector of the economy. Maduabuchi (2008) added that Office Technology and Management (O.T.M) programme came into being in 2004 in response to persistent calls by business educators and supervisors, that the time to change the



curriculum for secretarial studies programme in polytechnics in Nigeria had long past. According to Nwosu in Ohakwe and Njoku (2009), the review was necessitated by the fact that the skills, attitude and knowledge previously acquired in the course of the study were inadequate to arm today's graduate secretaries with the competencies needed to adjust to the rapidly changing needs of the office.

The aim of O.T.M programme as stipulated by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2004) is to produce graduates who should fit properly into the office of any computerized organizations and perform professionally the functions of a secretary. The functions, among others, include relating the functions of the office to the whole organization, attending meetings and providing information as may be required, making accurate records of proceedings, filing and retrieving information, taking appropriate action independently when faced with challenging secretarial office problems, showing personal qualities and attributes that are conducive and co-exist with the work group.

Thus, the NBTE structured the curriculum to encompass general education subjects, foundation courses and professional courses. The general education components includes courses in citizenship education and communication, the foundation courses are economics, business mathematics, accounting, Nigeria Labour law and entrepreneurship education, and the professional courses includes information and communication technology (ICT), shorthand, keyboarding, office administration and management, career development, professional ethics and social responsibility, record management et cetera.

It is anticipated that the curriculum of OTM programme would equip the graduates sufficiently with information and communication technology skills for office work. The training is expected to equip students with word processing, electronic spreadsheet and internet technology skills among others. With word processing skills graduates would be use a word processor to create files and folders; use input devices to enter and edit texts accurately; manipulate information (opening, copying, cutting, pasting, saving and deleting files); preview, print and save documents among others (Okoro & Ndinech, 2013). Word processing skills are required for almost every office function of the secretary. Similarly, electronic spreadsheet processing skills enable them to organise and analyse data into lists and Tables. With spreadsheet application such as Microsoft Excel (MS Excel), information is easily displayed and people can insert formulas to work with data.

However, internet technology skills empower office workers to carry out online office functions in modern business offices. The internet is a network in which users at one computer can, if they have permission, get information from another computer. It has the capacity of sending and receiving messages; and allowing people to stay in the comfort of their homes and transact immeasurable volume of businesses all over the world (Okiti-Okagbare, 2008). The work effectiveness of OTM graduate workers in the above functional areas can be determined based on their supervisors' appraisal.

Appraisal in this study implies an impartial analysis and evaluation conducted according to established criteria to determine the acceptability, merit, or worth of a thing (Horny, 2016). It is an expert estimation and judgment of the quality, quantity or other characteristics of something or someone. Supervisors in this context include Deans, Heads of Departments, Director Programmes, Heads of Units and so on whose role is to supervise the OTM graduate worker under them. Since these supervisors have both the knowledge and experience required to suitably assess the level of effectiveness of their secretaries in various areas of office functions, it is therefore imperative to conduct this study based on supervisors' appraisal.



### **Statement of the Problem**

Office technology and management programme was introduced to produce office profession who will be able to combine information and communication technology skills and versed business knowledge needed to carry out the ever changing and computerized office functions. In specific term, the curriculum indicated that graduate of the programme can fit properly into the office of any computerized organizations and perform professionally the functions of a secretary. The functions, among others, include relating the functions of the office to the whole organization, attending meetings and providing information as may be required, making accurate records of proceedings, filing and retrieving information, taking appropriate action independently when faced with challenging secretarial office problems, showing personal qualities and attributes that are conducive and co-exist with the work group.

However, no report has been published as to how adequate employers of labour considered the graduates of the programme in Delta State in terms of job performance and effectiveness. The researcher is therefore worried that if the above situation empirically determined, training institutions would remain in the dark as to the level of job effectiveness of its graduates and possible adjustment needed in the training of their students. It is against this bedrock that the present study was designed to find out the job effectiveness of office technology and management graduates in information and communication technology functions.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study was carried out to determine supervisors' appraisal of adequacy of office technology and management work performance in polytechnics in Delta State. Specifically the study sought to determine the;

- adequacy of office technology and management graduates' work performance in word processing skills
- adequacy of office technology and management graduates' work performance in spreadsheet processing skills
- adequacy of office technology and management graduates' work performance in internet technology skills

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on word processing skills?
- How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on spreadsheet application skills?
- How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on internet technology skills?

### **Hypothesis**

Male and female supervisors of office technology and management graduates do not differ significant in their mean ratings on the adequacy of OTM graduates' work performance in polytechnics in Delta State.

### **Method**

The research design used for this study is survey design. The population of the study comprised 67 supervisors of secretaries in polytechnics in Delta State. The distribution of supervisors of secretaries according to their institutions are as follows: Delta State Polytechnic Ozoro (28); Delta State Polytechnic Ogwashi-Uku (21) and Delta State Polytechnic Oghara (18). This information was generated from the various institutions. The entire population was used for the study since the number is small and relatively manageable, hence there was no sampling. A 30 item questionnaire was used as

instrument for the study. The research instrument has two parts Part A and Part B. Part A contains information on the respondent's biographic data. Part B is divided into three sections in line with research questions raised for the study. The instrument was structured to elicit information from the assessment of respondents on a 5 point rating scale as follows: Very Adequate 5, Adequate 4 Moderately Adequate 3, Rarely Adequate 2 and Not Adequate 1. The instrument was validated by two experts one from Delta State Polytechnic Ogwashi-Uku and the other from University of Benin, Benin City. The questionnaire constructed was administered by the researcher to the respondents with the aid of research assistants. Out of a total of 62 copies of the questionnaire distributed 62 copies were returned base on which analysis for this study was done. In analyzing the data to be collected from the instrument administered, simple mean was used to analyze the responses for research question while t-test was used to test the hypothesis formulated for the study. The decision rule is this: Any item with a mean rating that is equal to or greater than 3.0 was considered 'Adequate' while any item with a mean rating that is less than 3.0 was considered 'Inadequate'. The null hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics at  $p < 0.05$ .

## Results

### Research Question 1

How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on word processing skills?

**Table 1:** Supervisors' Mean Rating of OTM Graduates Work Performance on Word Processing Skills (N=62).

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
1.	Loading a word processing application software e.g. MS Word,	4.00	Adequate
2.	Creating and organizing computer files and folders	3.60	Adequate
3.	Using storage devices (hard disk, diskette, CD, flash etc.) for storing and sharing files	3.90	Adequate
4.	Using input devices to enter and edit text	3.80	Adequate
5.	Copying, cutting and pasting text	4.20	Adequate
6.	Inserting pictures and symbols into a document with correct margin and layouts	4.30	Adequate
7.	Changing text font and size in a document	4.00	Adequate
8.	Creating and formatting a table in a document	3.60	Adequate
9.	Using Word Art to create and shape text in a document	3.40	Adequate
10.	Previewing, printing and saving text in a word processor	3.00	Adequate
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.78</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

The data in Table 1 reveal how supervisors of office technology and management graduates rate their work performance in word processing skills. All the items in this section received mean scores above 3.0. The grand mean of 3.78 shows that the respondents considered the work performance of OTM graduate workers in polytechnics in Delta State adequate.

### Research Question 2

How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on spreadsheet application skills?

**Table 2:** Supervisors' Mean Rating of OTM Graduates Work Performance on Spreadsheet Application Skills (N = 62).

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
11.	Opening a spreadsheet application software	4.20	Adequate
12.	Adjusting column's width and row's height	3.40	Adequate
13.	Entering and sorting data in worksheet	3.80	Adequate
14.	Creating formula to carryout arithmetic computation in a worksheet	2.80	Inadequate
15.	Naming/renaming a worksheet	4.60	Adequate
16.	Merging and centering data in a worksheet	3.60	Adequate
17.	Inserting borders, columns and rows	4.00	Adequate
18.	Deleting columns and rows	2.40	Adequate
19.	Creating editing and formatting charts and graph using spreadsheet application	2.89	Inadequate
20.	Previewing, printing and saving a worksheet	3.12	Adequate
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.92</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

The data in Table 2 reveal how adequate supervisors rate the work performance of OTM graduate workers in polytechnics in Delta State. Apart from creating formula to carryout arithmetic computation in a worksheet and creating editing and formatting charts and graph using spreadsheet application which received mean scores of 2.80 and 2.89 respectively, all other items on electronic spreadsheet skills received mean score above 3.0. The grand mean of 3.92 is a further indication that the respondents were of the opinion that OTM graduates' work performance in spreadsheet application skills is adequate.

### Research Question 3

How adequate do supervisors rate OTM graduates' work performance on internet technology skills?

**Table 3:** Supervisors' Mean Rating of OTM Graduates Work Performance on Internet Technology Skills (N = 62)

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
21.	Accessing internet application software or web browser	3.80	Adequate
22.	Creating an e-mail account	3.60	Adequate
23.	Opening and composing mail online	3.60	Adequate
24.	Sending and receiving mails with attachment	4.20	Adequate
25.	Controlling junk e-mail messages	2.00	Inadequate
26.	Chatting with friends, colleagues and clients online	3.80	Adequate
27.	Ability to use shared devices within a network	4.20	Adequate
28.	Refreshing and saving a web page	3.50	Adequate
29.	Downloading information from the internet	3.80	Adequate
30.	Uploading information into the internet	3.80	Adequate
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.62</b>	<b>Adequate</b>



The data in Table 3 reveal how adequate supervisors of OTM graduate work rate their secretaries work performance in internet technology skills. Apart from controlling junk messages which received a mean score of 2.0, all other item on internet technology skill received mean score above 3.0. This implies the respondents were of the opinion that OTM graduates' work performance in internet technology skills is adequate.

**Testing of Hypothesis**

Male and female supervisors of office technology and management graduates do not differ significant in their mean ratings on the adequacy of OTM graduates' work performance in polytechnics in Delta State.

**Table 4:** The t-test Analysis of Supervisors on Work Performance of OTM Graduates

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>z-cal</b>	<b>α</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>z-crit</b>	<b>Remark</b>
Male	45	3.92	0.87	1.08	0.05	64	1.21	Retained
Female	17	3.88	0.92					

Table 3, shows the t-test analysis of responses of male and female supervisors of OTM graduate workers on the adequacy of work performance of OTM graduates workers in polytechnics in Delta State with mean scores of 3.60 and 3.82 respectively. The z-calculated value of 1.08 is less than the z-tabulated value of 1.21 at 64 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained which implies that, male and female supervisors of office technology and management graduates do not differ significant in their mean ratings on the adequacy of OTM graduates' work performance in polytechnics in Delta State.

**Discussion of Results**

The study revealed that the work performance of OTM graduate workers in the area of word processing skills is adequate. This result is in agreement with the findings of Okoro and Ndinechi (2013) who held that polytechnic OTM lecturers are competent in the area of word processing skills hence the utilize them in training their students. The result of Olanye (2015) also supported the findings when the study held that secretaries in government ministries in Delta State possessed word processing competencies for effective job performance.

The findings of the study indicated how adequate supervisors of OTM graduate workers consider the work performance of OTM graduates in the area of electronic spreadsheet application skills. The result indicated that the work performance of OTM graduate workers in the area of spreadsheet application skills is adequate. This finding corroborated the report of Ezenwafor (2012) who found out that business education lecturers in tertiary institutions were competent in spreadsheet application skills and adequately utilize it in training students. Similarly, Okoro and Ndinechi 2013) also held that polytechnic OTM lecturers are competent in the spreadsheet application skills. Hence, there no doubt that these set of workers must have been well exposed to the skill in the course of their training in polytechnic.

Finally, the result of the analysis of Research Question 3 indicated that the work performance of OTM graduate workers in the area of internet application skills is adequate. This finding agreed



with Olanye (2015) who found out that, secretaries in government ministries possessed the required internet application skills for effective job performance. Egbri (2012) also held that business educators in the south east are conversant with internet facilities and make use of them in preparing their students for the world of work and entrepreneurship.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it has been concluded that the work performance of office technology and management graduates' work performance in polytechnics in Delta State is adequate in terms of word processing, spreadsheet and internet application skills. This implies that the goal of office technology and management programme in polytechnic in Nigeria is being achieved as the training institutions are playing their significant role of producing quality manpower needs of modern office.

### Recommendations

Consequent upon the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

The current OTM curriculum for polytechnics should be analyzed and reviewed to ensure the current skills requirements of information technology as well as the relevant facilities are adequately reflected in order to maintain relevance and currency of education practice, emerging concepts and skills required for coping with the dynamics of information technology should be infused into the curriculum.

Polytechnics should be provided with appropriate and relevant business office equipment and machines for practical training in office occupation.

The role of the business educators in today's technological oriented workplace is to prepare students to succeed in such a work environment where change is continuous and adaptability is an essential employee attribute. Therefore, as trainers of office workers, they should constantly update their knowledge and skills in information technology through workshops, conferences, personal study, seminars and in-service training.

Employers of labour should always employ graduates of office technology and management programme since set of graduates are adequately equipped with relevant skills and knowledge to put theory into action and deliver result.

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