

MODERN COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND PERFORMANCE OF SECRETARIES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

Olukayode Olalekan ODUNTAN

Department of Business Education,
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria

Abstract

The study examined the influence of modern communication tools on the performance of secretaries in Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State. Three research questions guided this study. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 63 secretaries in the selected university. The whole population was studied, because it is not too much and manageable. A researcher-developed instrument; tagged: 'Modern Communication Tools and Secretaries Performance Questionnaire (MCTSPQ)' with ($r = .91$) as reliability coefficient was used for data collection. Mean was used for answering the research questions. The findings of the study revealed that Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners were those modern communication tools available and utilized for secretaries' performance. Improvement in office jobs, increase in typing speed and accuracy, progressive efficiency at work, improvement in reproduction of secretarial jobs, duplications and cheap production of office documents, speed retrieval of document and information, efficiency in the quality of work done, improvement in secretary's hospitality, adequate keeping and retrieval of records of meetings and keeping of appointment for the jobs/meetings were among the contributing roles of modern communication tools in the development of secretaries performance. The recommended that university authority should provide modern technology tools for the usage by the secretaries and more training opportunities should be provided for the secretaries to improve their skills and knowledge on the tools.

Keywords: Modern Communication Tools, Performance, Secretaries

Introduction

Nowadays, the secret to the organisational success must be kept within the system and must not be revealed or shared with any competitors. More reasons the role of secretary as information manager in any organization like University is paramount. In some instance, secretary is called assistant manager or office manager. Also oversees the mission, vision and secret of the organisation, drives organisation goal achievement and dispersed needed information across the sub-units of the system. Reports directly to the managers or head

of department or unit as the case maybe. Secretaries of an organisation now feature in activities such as delivering note-taking during and after meeting, representing manager in a crucial appointment, serve as image for the organization, receiving and sending information to other companies and engage with customers. Oguejiofor and Okem (2021) was in the agreement with the earlier statements that secretaries' performance measurement such as the rate at which he/she is representing manager and how fast is the information delivered across departments. The authors further opined that secretaries'

performance drives organization success and prompt attention to the customers.

Olatoye et al. (2024) reiterated that secretaries' performance refers to the rate at which they diligently carried out their duties and responsibilities without being told in terms of avoidance of lateness to work, information dispersed at the right time, engage other staff in needed information and quick development of memo. Anyaegbunam et al. (2023) were of the opinions that secretaries' performance, particularly during this time of modern technology gadgets in place, is becoming more and more paramount to the organization. The modern facilities enhanced and provided clarity on the functions of a secretary in an office. Modern communication tools are categories of machines used for office work and are mostly carried out by organisational secretary. These tools might include but not limited to Artificial Intelligence (AI), cloud computing, software programs, GPS system, computers/laptops, internet and scanners. However, the novel ideas mean of communication have developed viable methods of passing information from one organization to other, from one employee to another, fasting work-done and efficiency at work (Anyaegbunam et al., 2023).

The new development in office equipment in terms of technological machine has change the manner in which secretaries' work is been carried out. This development has enhanced secretaries' to be increase in their productivity and be efficiency at work. This modern technology tool is also of support to secretaries' by enhancing their effectiveness at work, reduces time spent on work and supported the perfection of work done. However, Echomgbe and Amadi (2023) opined that these modern technology tools

changed the work structure, routines and sometimes required secretaries' to be training and re-training as at when due. It has also make secretaries to work from home, communicate with managers through video calling, virtual meeting among others. Personally, the development of these modern communication tools has triggered new skills buildings for employee of organization to effectively use them for job delivery. These skills building are not exception of secretaries, even, one can say that it is more paramount for the secretaries to equip their selves in it so that their level of job performance might be affected positively.

The role play by secretaries' in any organizations cannot be overemphasis. The gains of having a good and competent secretary is far better than having a thousand of incompetent secretaries. A secretary can be said to be competence, when job continually recorded high performance. However, the job performance among public institutions secretaries are worrisome and this had been reported in many occasions that there was decline in the level of secretaries' job performance. Although, many reasons have been adjudged for this and governments at different level have taken some steps to ameliorating this ugly scenario. These steps taken so far by government include training, retraining, motivation such as increased their salary and wages; still yet their performance still been eroded. This study examined how provision of modern communication tools can influence performance of secretaries.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine how the provision of modern communication tools can

influence performance of secretaries. Specifically, the study sought to examine the:

1. level of modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) availability for performance of secretaries.
2. level of modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) utilization performance of secretaries.
3. contributing role of modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) on the performance of secretaries.

Research Questions

Based on this, the following research questions are raised:

1. To what extent are modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) available for secretaries' performance?
2. To what extent are modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) utilized for secretaries' performance?

3. What are the contributing roles of modern communication tools such as (artificial intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, 3D Printing, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners) on the secretaries' performance?

Review of Related Literature

Modern Communication Tools

According to Adenekan and Jimoh (2021), modern communication tools are types of technological office gadgets specifically designed for secretaries to enhance their office functions. They are kinds of gadgets that made secretaries to function virtually and still achieve goals of the organization. Oguejiofor and Okem (2021) reiterated that modern communication tools also referred to automation office machines like computer, handset, laptop, photocopy machines, printer, e-mail, Artificial Intelligent (AI) among others. These authors stated that this modern equipment drive employees job effectiveness, they made functions of secretaries more ease and efficiency. Yakubu (2015) believed that modern communication tools are kinds of office equipment needed today in most of the offices for secretary to function globally. Olatoye et al. (2024) said that modern communication tools are categories of information and communication tools used by secretary to effectively engage with the clients of the organization, share information with them and delivered memo to the manager virtually.

Secretaries Performance

Secretary's performance according to Adenekan and Jimoh (2021) refers to the increase in the rate of

secretary delivered his/her job at the right time. It also means the extent to which a secretary take responsibility for work done (Anitha, 2019). Dahkoul (2018) opined that secretary performance is an increase in productivity level of functions through prompt attentions to customers/clients, be responsible to management, always present in office, represent the organization well and keep the secret success of the organization. Ciner (2019) and Namely, (2019) jointly asserted that secretary's performance refers to their level of effectiveness in work and engagement with other staff of secretaries' performance.

Theoretical Framework

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

This study adopted Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as theoretical framework. This theory or model was originally crafted by Davis B. in 1989. The theory postulated that the level of acceptance of information communication technology tools by employees depend on the level of unitization of the gadgets. However, the theory is of the opinions that the user or employee might be facing some issues in terms of new skills and knowledge as well as making such new innovations available by the respective organization. The implications of this theory to the current study was that when organization made available of modern communication tools such as software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners among others, these might have multiplier effect of secretaries' performance.

Empirical Review

In Southwest, specifically in Oyo state, Olatoye et al. (2024) ascertained

the extent to which modern communication equipment's enhanced today secretary job profession. Although, the authors utilized primary methods of data collection through the usage of questionnaire. This questionnaire was joint designed by the authors for the purpose of achieving goals of the study. Descriptive statistics was used and the outcomes of the study indicated that opinions of secretaries in terms of gender do not differ when comes to modern communication competencies in this era of global change. In private and public organizations in Nigeria, Yakubu (2015) find out how to consistently increases secretaries job performance when adopting new technologies. Although, this study was not subjected to any data estimation to validate the outcomes, instead, the author adopted content analysis. His findings revealed that availability and utilization of modern communication tools increases secretaries' performance and that private and public institutions must time to time subjected their secretaries to capacity building programmes to increase their skills on how to use modern technology tools. In Rivers state, Echomgbe and Amadi (2023) how modern information communication gadget influence secretaries job, survey research of correlational type was adopted. The study concluded that increases in secretaries' performance could be attributed towards technological tools availability and utilization. Anyaegbunam et al. (2023) examined how secretaries' performance were increase through availability and utilization of technology tools such as artificial intelligence in organization in Nigeria. Their findings indicated availability and utilization of technology tools improved secretaries' job performance.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used in this paper. The justification for using this design is that it helps the researcher examines how the variables are related and operationalized for accomplishing the research purpose. The population of the study comprised sixty-three (63) secretarial staff (secretaries) in Tai Solarin Universities of Education (TASUED), Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria in which 22 are confidential secretaries, 16 are typist and 25 are computer operator). Since population of the study is not large, therefore, there is no need for sampling. The whole population was studied. The study used researcher-developed questionnaire; tagged: 'Modern Communication Tools and Secretaries Performance Questionnaire (MCTSPQ)'. The questionnaire requested responses on a four (4) – point Likert Scale format; such as Strongly Agreed (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was divided into two sections; namely sections A and B. Section A focused on demographic characteristics of the respondents while section B

examined items on the level of modern communication tools availability, level of modern communication tools utilization and the contributing role of modern communication tools in secretaries' performance. In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest study was carried out. The instrument was administered twice within two weeks interval among 10 secretaries different from the study area. Thus, the test re-test reliability method was used to determine the reliability coefficient. The data that generated were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in order to determine the level of reliability of the instrument (MCTSPQ). The reliability coefficient was reported as 0.91. This implied that the instrument is reliable. Descriptive statistics of mean was used for answering research questions.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: To what extent are modern communication tools available for secretaries' performance?

Table 1: Extent to which modern communication tools available for secretaries' performance

Modern communication tools	Mean	Remarks
DJI AVATA	2.39	Not Available
Artificial Intelligence	2.53	Available
Cloud Computing	2.52	Available
Software programs	2.87	Available
3D Printing	2.43	Not Available
GPS System	2.68	Available
Computers/Laptops	3.18	Available
Internet	2.84	Available
Scanners	3.28	Available
Cluster Mean	2.74	Available

Source: Field Survey, 2024

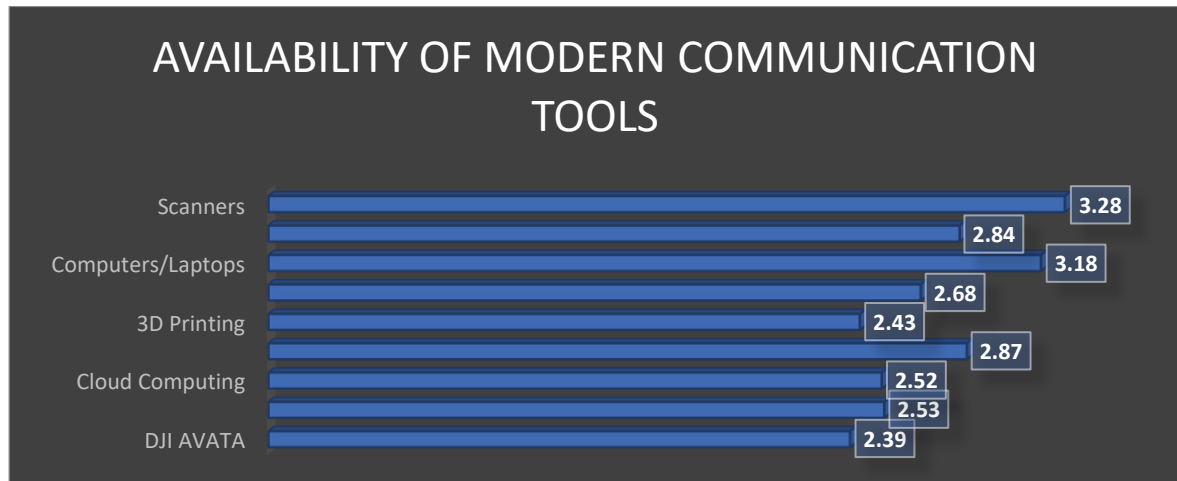


Figure 1: Bar-chart showing modern communication tools available for secretaries' performance

Table 1 in line with bar-chart 1, it was indicated that cluster mean was 2.74 and the bench mark of 2.50. Since, $2.74 > 2.50$; the implications of this result were that Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and

scanners were those modern communication tools available for secretaries' performance.

Research Question 2: To what extent are modern communication tools utilized for secretaries' performance?

Table 2: Extent to which modern communication tools utilized for secretaries' performance

Modern communication tools	Mean	Remarks
DJI AVATA	2.33	Not Utilized
Artificial Intelligence	2.59	Utilized
Cloud Computing	2.51	Utilized
Software programs	2.63	Utilized
3D Printing	2.49	Not Utilized
GPS System	2.75	Utilized
Computers/Laptops	3.24	Utilized
Internet	2.99	Utilized
Scanners	3.25	Utilized
Cluster Mean	2.75	Utilized

Source: Field Survey, 2024

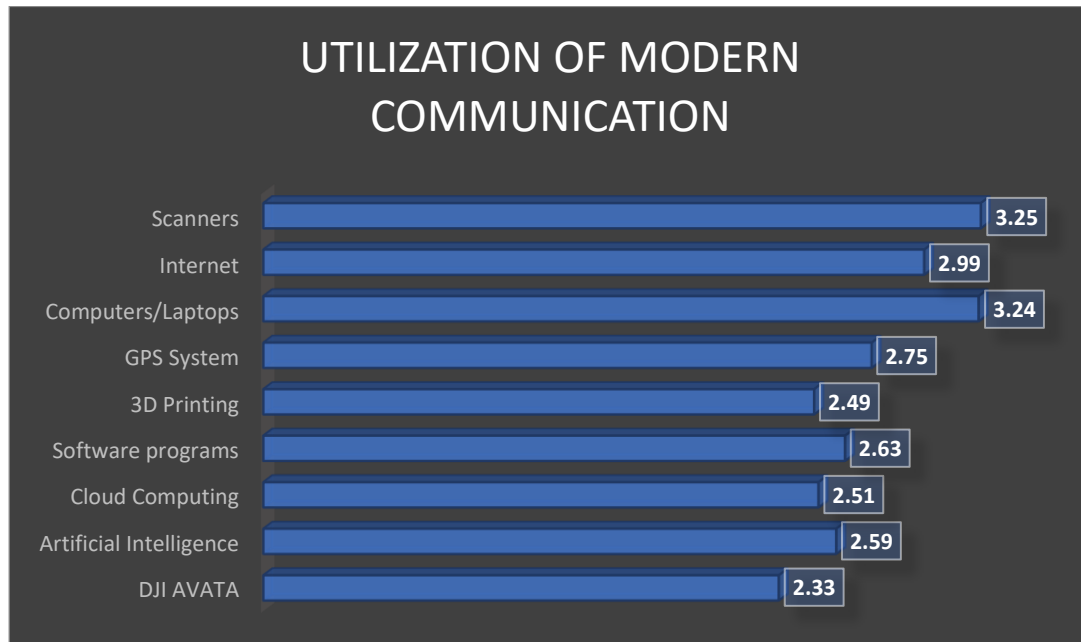


Figure 2: Bar-chart showing modern communication tools utilized for secretaries' performance

Table 2 revealed that cluster mean was 2.75 and the bench mark of 2.50. Since, $2.75 > 2.50$, this implied that Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners were those modern

communication tools utilized for secretaries' performance.

Research Question 3: What are the contributing roles of modern communication tools on the secretaries' performance?

Table 3: Mean responses on the contributing roles of modern communication tools on the secretaries' performance

Items	Mean	Remarks
Improvement in office jobs.	3.14	Agreed
Increase in typing speed and accuracy.	3.03	Agreed
Progressive efficiency at work.	3.19	Agreed
Improvement in reproduction of secretarial jobs.	2.67	Agreed
Duplications and cheap production of office documents.	3.15	Agreed
Speed retrieval of document and information.	2.59	Agreed
Efficiency in the quality of work done.	3.35	Agreed
Improvement in secretary's hospitality.	2.99	Agreed
Adequate keeping and retrieval of records of meetings.	2.69	Agreed
Keeping of appointment for the jobs/meetings.	2.51	Agreed
Cluster Mean	2.93	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

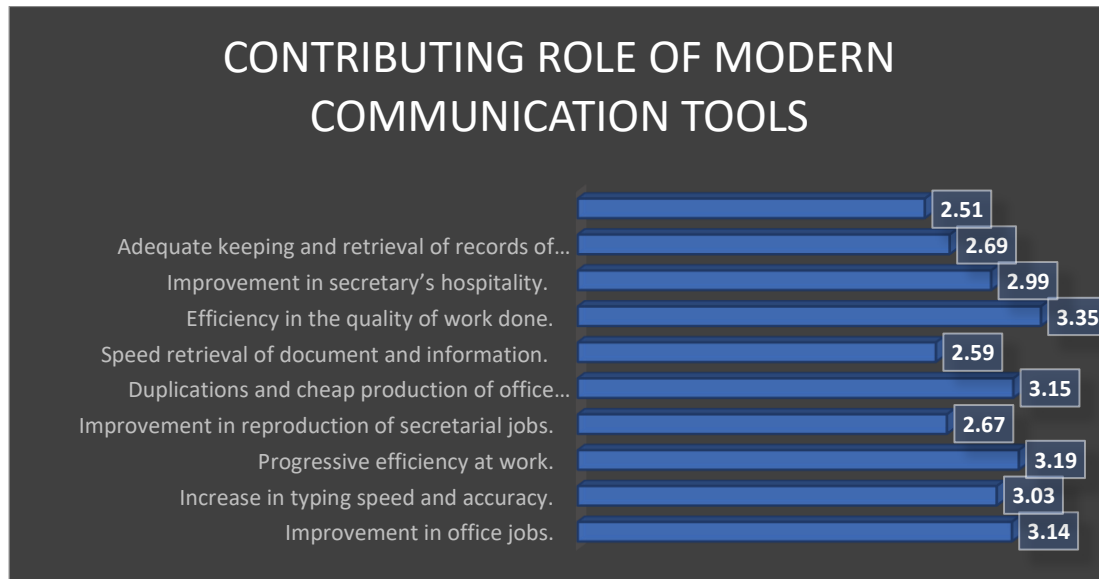


Figure 4: Bar-chart showing contributing roles of modern communication tools on the secretaries' performance

Table 3 revealed the cluster mean to be 2.93 which greater than bench mark of 2.50. This implied that improvement in office jobs, increase in typing speed and accuracy, progressive efficiency at work, improvement in reproduction of secretarial jobs, duplications and cheap production of office documents, speed retrieval of document and information, efficiency in the quality of work done, improvement in secretary's hospitality, adequate keeping and retrieval of records of meetings and keeping of appointment for the jobs/meetings were among the contributing roles of modern communication tools on the secretaries' performance.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners were those modern communication tools available for secretaries' performance. This further implied that availability of modern communication tools will improved the

training of secretaries' if all thing been equal. These findings correlate with Asogwa and Agusiobo (2022) findings indicated that modern tools for training secretaries are available and have tendencies to influence of development of the secretarial profession and job performance of office secretaries in the word of work.

The second findings of the study revealed that Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners were those modern communication tools utilized for secretaries' performance. These findings were in support to Ohiwerei and Okosun (2021) whose found revealed that modern technology tools utilization have tendencies to promote secretarial profession development in developing country.

Finally, the findings revealed that improvement in office jobs, increase in typing speed and accuracy, progressive efficiency at work, improvement in reproduction of secretarial jobs, duplications and cheap production of office documents, speed retrieval of

document and information, efficiency in the quality of work done, improvement in secretary's hospitality, adequate keeping and retrieval of records of meetings and keeping of appointment for the jobs/meetings were among the contributing roles of modern communication tools in the development of secretarial profession as agreed by the respondents. These findings corroborated with Kayode, *et al.*, (2019) who revealed that availability of modern communication facilities may likely influence and improved secretarial profession.

Conclusion

Having examined the role of modern communication tools in the development of secretarial profession, the study concluded that availability and effective utilization of modern communication tools such as Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, software programs, GPS System, computers/laptops, internet and scanners have capability to improved secretaries' performance in Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. The university authority should provide modern technology tools for the usage by the secretaries.
2. More training opportunities should be provided for the secretaries to improve their skills and knowledge on the tools.
3. New technologies should be effectively used by the secretarial studies students and government should make provision for funds for the timely procurement of appropriate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment.

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