



**SKILLS ACQUISITION IN OFFICE TECHNOLOGY: A TOOL FOR SECRETARIAL EFFICIENCY IN AN AUTOMATED OFFICE**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined skills acquisition in office technology as a tool for enhancing secretarial efficiency in automated office environments. The research examined the degree to which office technology skills develop secretarial productivity, the skills necessary for effective secretarial work, and the connection between productivity and the development of skills among secretarial staff. This research adopted the descriptive survey research design. The sample for this study was secretarial staff and office technology and management specialists at Federal College of Education, Abeokuta. Data were collected through the use of a research questionnaire. The research questions were answered with the mean and standard deviation, and the research hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and the independent samples t-test. The study revealed that the development of office technology skills correlated positively with secretarial productivity through enhanced office operations that are faster and more efficient, and that secretarial staff that are more competent with technology are more productive. This study also revealed that the level of technology competence of staff impacts their productivity and that staff that are more technologically competent tend to be more productive than their less technologically competent counterparts. The study concluded that the development of office technology skills is critical to the enhancement of secretarial productivity in automated office settings. The study suggested that secretarial staff undergo regular technology skills training, and that modern office technology and tools be made available, and that secretarial staff be supported with ongoing professional development.*

**Keywords:** Skills acquisition, Office technology, Secretarial efficiency, Automated office, Technological competence.



## Introduction

Digital technologies and the fast-developing landscape of information and communication technologies have been disruptive to the processes employed to run organisations throughout the world. Systems for communication, documentation, record keeping, and information processing that once relied on labor-intensive methods are being transformed, gradually, into systems that are automated using electronic technologies and devices. The addition of technologies to the office systems and environments creates new demands for employees and transforms existing office practices. The modern office is reliant on computers, internet and web-based applications, teleconferencing and communication systems, digital and electronic databases, scanning and printing, and a host of office and communication technologies to deliver services and enhance the productivity of the organisation.

Automation of office processes has changed the design and the nature of activities involved in office work. Currently, the office environment demands, and technologies provide, the accuracy, speed, flexibility, and the means of communication, all of which are required for the effective performance of systems in organizations. As a result, organizations look for employees skilled in the technologies. Osuala (2009) states that globalization and technological advances have changed office work and the focus of modern organizations on the productivity and efficiency of employees. The acquisition of skills to perform office work is a priority of modern human resource development because it combines the elements of education and training for the development of labor in the modern office. Skills acquisition focuses on practical work, especially in the fields of technology. Ezeani (2012) explained that skills acquisition prepares individuals for self-reliance and workplace effectiveness through practical learning experiences that improve occupational competence. Skills acquisition therefore remains an essential component of educational and professional development because it enables workers to adapt to changing work environments.

Office Technology and Management programmes were established to equip learners with technological and managerial skills necessary for effective office administration and management. The programme focuses on developing competencies in keyboarding, word processing, communication systems, database management, information technology, office administration, and records management. According to Anyakoha (2015), Office Technology and Management programmes are designed to prepare learners with relevant competencies that can enable them to function effectively in modern office environments.

The role of secretarial personnel has changed considerably over the years because of technological advancement and organisational restructuring. Traditionally, the duties of secretaries were largely restricted to taking shorthand notes, typing letters, receiving visitors, and filing documents manually. However, the emergence of automated office systems has expanded the responsibilities of secretaries to include electronic data processing, digital communication management, virtual meeting coordination, internet operations, information management, and office administration using technological applications. Ukoha (2015) observed that technological innovation has transformed the secretary from a routine office assistant into an administrative professional who contributes significantly to organisational decision-making and efficiency.

Similarly, Musawa (2019) noted that technological advancement has created the need for secretaries to continuously acquire modern technological competencies in order to remain relevant



and productive in contemporary organizations. Secretarial personnel who possess office technology skills tend to demonstrate greater efficiency in communication, document preparation, scheduling, and information processing than those with limited technological competence. This suggests that technology-based competencies have become indispensable requirements for modern office operations.

Furthermore, Ngerebo and Okiridu (2010) observed that modern technological applications significantly influence the acquisition of secretarial competencies in educational institutions and workplace environments. Their findings revealed that exposure to technological facilities and practical training opportunities positively influence skill acquisition among learners and office personnel. Similarly, Ezeani and Oludele (2021) reported that competencies acquired through Office Technology and Management programmes significantly contribute to workplace effectiveness and improved employee performance.

Recent studies have further demonstrated that office technologies improve workplace efficiency and productivity. Aliu, Adebayo, and Lawal (2024) found that modern office technologies contribute significantly to the performance of secretarial personnel through improved information exchange, reduced workload, and effective coordination of office activities. Shaibu et al. (2025) also found that the utilization of office technologies enhances internal efficiency among secretaries and improves service delivery within organizations.

### **Statement of the problem**

The emergence of automated office systems has transformed the nature of office work and created a demand for technologically competent secretarial personnel. Modern offices now depend heavily on computer systems, electronic communication technologies, internet services, and information management applications for daily operations. Consequently, secretarial personnel are expected to possess adequate technological competencies to function effectively in such environments. However, despite the increasing adoption of automated office systems, many secretarial personnel still encounter difficulties in adapting to technological changes due to inadequate technological skills and insufficient professional training. Some organisations continue to experience low productivity, communication delays, ineffective information management, and operational inefficiencies resulting from inadequate technological competence among office personnel (Johnson & Ibrahim, 2023).

Furthermore, educational institutions and training centers often face challenges related to inadequate technological facilities, insufficient funding, and limited practical exposure necessary for effective skills acquisition. As a result, many graduates may lack the practical technological competencies required in modern workplaces. This gap between technological advancement and technological competence among secretarial personnel raises concerns regarding workplace efficiency and productivity. Therefore, there is a need to examine how skills acquisition in office technology can serve as a tool for improving secretarial efficiency in automated office environments.



## Research Purposes

The study specifically sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which skills acquisition in office technology enhances secretarial efficiency in automated offices.
2. Identify the office technology skills required for effective secretarial performance in automated offices.
3. Determine the relationship between office technology skills acquisition and productivity among secretarial personnel in automated offices.

## Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does skills acquisition in office technology enhance secretarial efficiency in automated offices?
2. What office technology skills are required for effective secretarial performance in automated offices?
3. What relationship exists between office technology skills acquisition and productivity among secretarial personnel in automated offices?

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between skills acquisition in office technology and secretarial efficiency in automated offices.

**H02:** There is no significant difference in the productivity of secretarial personnel with high technological competence and those with low technological competence.

## Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine skills acquisition in office technology as a tool for secretarial efficiency in automated office environments. The study was conducted among staff of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State. The population consisted of secretarial staff and Office Technology and Management educators at FCE, Abeokuta. A structured questionnaire titled "Skills Acquisition and Secretarial Efficiency Questionnaire (SASEQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in Office Technology and Management and Educational Measurement and Evaluation. A pilot study involving 10 respondents outside the study area yielded Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.82 indicating high reliability. The questionnaires were administered and retrieved by the researcher with the assistance of two research assistants. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation and independent samples t-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Ranking of Items on Skills Acquisition in Office Technology and Secretarial Efficiency (N = 56)**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Ranks	Remarks
1	Computer application skills improve speed in office operations.	3.38	0.82	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agree
2	Word processing skills improve document preparation and management.	3.29	0.87	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agree
3	Internet and communication skills improve information sharing.	3.25	0.91	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
4	Database management skills improve information retrieval and storage.	3.31	0.86	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agree
5	Spreadsheet application skills improve office productivity	3.18	0.95	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
6	Office technology skills improve secretarial efficiency.	3.28	0.81	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
7	Lack of technological competence affects secretarial performance.	3.16	0.90	7 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
8	Continuous technological training improves work effectiveness.	3.14	0.84	8 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.25</b>			<b>Agree</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2026**

Table 1 presents respondents' views on skills acquisition in office technology and secretarial efficiency in automated offices. The findings reveal a grand mean of 3.25, indicating general agreement that office technology skills significantly enhance secretarial efficiency and productivity in modern office environments. This suggests that technological competencies are essential for effective job performance in automated offices. Item 1 ranked first (Mean = 3.38), indicating that computer application skills were perceived as the most important factor in improving speed and efficiency in office operations. Item 4 ranked second (Mean = 3.31), showing that database management skills are important for effective information storage and retrieval, while Item 2 ranked third (Mean = 3.29), suggesting that word processing skills improve document preparation and management.

Although Items 5, 7, and 8 ranked lower, respondents still agreed that spreadsheet skills, technological competence, and continuous training contribute to improved work performance and productivity. Overall, the findings confirm that acquisition of office technology skills plays a significant role in enhancing secretarial efficiency in automated office environments.

**Table 2: Office Technology Skills Required for Effective Secretarial Performance (N = 56)**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Ranks	Remarks
6	Computer operation skills are essential for modern secretarial duties.	3.44	0.74	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agree
7	Internet communication skills are necessary for office operations.	3.37	0.88	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agree
8	Word processing skills are necessary for document preparation.	3.42	0.79	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agree
9	Spreadsheet skills improve record management.	3.25	0.90	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
10	Data management skills improve organizational effectiveness.	3.31	0.83	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
11	Time management skills improve office productivity.	3.18	0.85	7 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
12	Keyboarding skills improve work performance.	3.22	0.80	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
13	Digital communication skills enhance office efficiency	3.16	0.91	8 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.29</b>			<b>Agree</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2026**

Table 2 presents respondents' views on the office technology skills required for effective secretarial performance in automated offices. The findings reveal a grand mean of 3.29, indicating general agreement that various office technology skills are essential for improving secretarial effectiveness and productivity in modern office environments. This suggests that possession of technological competencies is necessary for efficient performance of secretarial duties. Item 6 ranked first (Mean = 3.44), indicating that respondents considered computer operation skills as the most essential skill for modern secretarial duties. Item 8 ranked second (Mean = 3.42), showing that word processing skills are highly important for effective document preparation and management, while Item 7 ranked third (Mean = 3.37), suggesting that internet communication skills are necessary for effective office operations and communication.

Although Items 11, 12, and 13 ranked lower, respondents still agreed that time management skills, keyboarding skills, and digital communication skills contribute to improved work performance and office efficiency. Overall, the findings indicate that a combination of office technology skills is essential for enhancing secretarial performance in automated office environments.

**Table 3: Skills Acquisition and Productivity among Secretarial Personnel**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Ranks	Remarks
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14	Technological skills improve workplace productivity.	3.40	0.81	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Agree
15	Skills acquisition enhances effective communication.	3.29	0.88	5 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
16	Technology-based training improves job performance.	3.43	0.79	1 <sup>st</sup>	Agree
17	Office technology skills reduce errors in office operations.	3.31	0.91	4 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
18	Technological competence improves decision making.	3.37	0.85	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Agree
19	Office technology skills improve employee confidence.	3.15	0.83	6 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
20	Technological skills increase organizational productivity.	3.11	0.92	7 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
21	Skills acquisition supports efficient office administration.	3.07	0.92	8 <sup>th</sup>	Agree
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>3.27</b>			<b>Agree</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2026**

Table 3 presents respondents' views on skills acquisition and productivity among secretarial personnel in automated offices. The findings reveal a grand mean of 3.27, indicating general agreement that skills acquisition significantly enhances productivity and performance among secretarial personnel. This suggests that technological competence plays an important role in improving efficiency and effectiveness in modern office environments. Item 16 ranked first (Mean = 3.43), indicating that respondents strongly agreed that technology-based training improves job performance. Item 14 ranked second (Mean = 3.40), showing that technological skills contribute significantly to workplace productivity, while Item 18 ranked third (Mean = 3.37), suggesting that technological competence enhances decision-making abilities among secretarial personnel.

Item 17 ranked fourth (Mean = 3.31), indicating that office technology skills help reduce errors in office operations, while Item 15 ranked fifth (Mean = 3.29), showing that skills acquisition improves effective communication in the workplace. Although Items 19, 20, and 21 ranked lower, respondents still agreed that office technology skills improve employee confidence, increase organizational productivity, and support efficient office administration.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between skills acquisition in office technology and secretarial efficiency in automated offices.

**Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Skills Acquisition and Secretarial Efficiency (N=56)**

Variables	N	Mean	Std.Dev.	r	Sig (p-value)	Decision
Skills acquisition in office technology	56	3.18	0.89	0.82	0.001	significant
Secretarial efficiency	56	3.27	0.81			

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between skills acquisition in office technology and secretarial efficiency in automated offices ( $r = 0.82$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This implies that improvements in office technology skills acquisition, technological competence, and practical exposure are associated with higher levels of secretarial efficiency and workplace performance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that skills acquisition in office technology significantly influences secretarial efficiency in automated office environments.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in productivity between secretarial personnel with high technological competence and those with low technological competence.

**Table 5: Independent Samples t-test on Technological Competence and Productivity**

Group	N	Mean	Std.Dev.	df	t-value	Sig (P)	Decision
High technological competence	28	3.46	0.42	54	3.62	0.001	Significant
Low technological competence	28	3.08	0.50				

The independent samples t-test analysis reveals a significant difference in productivity between secretarial personnel with high technological competence and those with low technological competence ( $t = 3.62$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). The result shows that respondents with high technological competence recorded a higher mean score (Mean = 3.46) compared to those with low technological competence (Mean = 3.08), indicating that technological competence contributes positively to workplace productivity. The finding further suggests that secretarial personnel who possess higher levels of technological skills tend to demonstrate better job performance, greater efficiency, improved communication, and more effective handling of office tasks than those with lower technological competence. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.



## Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that skills acquisition in office technology significantly contributes to secretarial efficiency in automated office environments. The result from Research Question One showed that respondents generally agreed that technological competencies such as computer application skills, database management skills, word processing skills, internet communication skills, and spreadsheet application skills improve efficiency and productivity among secretarial personnel. Computer application skills emerged as the most highly ranked factor, indicating that technological competence enhances speed and effectiveness in office operations. This finding agrees with Musawa (2019), who reported that acquisition of Office Technology and Management skills improves the relevance and performance of secretarial personnel in contemporary workplaces. The finding also supports Aliu, Adebayo, and Lawal (2024), who observed that modern office technologies improve communication, reduce processing time, and enhance office coordination activities.

The findings of Research Question Two revealed that office technology skills such as computer operation, word processing, internet communication, data management, keyboarding, and time management skills are essential for effective secretarial performance. Computer operation skills ranked highest among the identified skills, suggesting that technological competence remains fundamental to modern office functions. This finding is consistent with Ezeani and Oludele (2021), who found that professional competencies acquired in Office Technology and Management programmes significantly influence workplace performance and organizational effectiveness. The result also supports Osuala (2009), who emphasized that technological advancement has altered office operations and increased the demand for technologically skilled personnel.

Furthermore, the findings from Research Question Three indicated that skills acquisition positively influences productivity among secretarial personnel. Technology-based training was identified as the highest-ranked factor affecting productivity, showing that continuous training and exposure to technological systems improve workplace performance. This finding agrees with Shaibu et al. (2025), who found that effective utilization of office technologies enhances internal efficiency and improves service delivery among secretarial staff. The finding further supports Ngerebo and Okiridu (2010), who reported that practical exposure and technological training significantly influence the acquisition of secretarial competencies.

The result of Hypothesis One revealed a significant relationship between skills acquisition in office technology and secretarial efficiency in automated offices. The strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.82$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) implies that increased technological competence contributes positively to improved secretarial performance and effectiveness. This finding corroborates Ezeani (2012), who stated that skills acquisition equips individuals with practical competencies needed for effective workplace performance and adaptation to changing work environments.

The result of Hypothesis Two also showed a significant difference in productivity between secretarial personnel with high technological competence and those with low technological competence. Secretarial personnel with higher technological competence demonstrated better productivity than those with lower technological competence. This finding suggests that technological competence remains an important determinant of workplace effectiveness and productivity in automated office settings.



## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that skills acquisition in office technology is an essential tool for enhancing secretarial efficiency in automated office environments. The study established that technological competencies such as computer application skills, word processing skills, database management skills, internet communication skills, and information management skills significantly contribute to improved job performance and productivity among secretarial personnel.

The study further established that technological competence positively influences workplace effectiveness, communication, information handling, and decision-making processes. As organizations continue to adopt automated systems and digital technologies, the demand for technologically competent secretarial personnel will continue to increase. Therefore, continuous acquisition and development of office technology skills remain necessary for improving secretarial performance and achieving organizational efficiency.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Organisations should organize regular workshops, seminars, and training programmes to enhance technological skills among secretarial personnel.
2. Educational institutions offering Office Technology and Management programmes should provide adequate modern technological facilities and equipment for practical learning.
3. Secretarial personnel should be encouraged to participate in continuous professional development programmes to improve their technological competencies.
4. Government and institutional administrators should increase funding for Office Technology and Management programmes to facilitate acquisition of modern technological facilities.
5. Office Technology and Management curricula should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect emerging technological trends and workplace requirements.

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