



USE OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE OF ORGANIZATIONS: A SURVEY OF SELECTED HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN EKITI STATE

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the use of Office Technology and Management skills to enhance performance of organizations: a survey of selected higher institution in Ekiti State. The specific objectives involve assessing the proficiency of OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills, exploring organizational recognition and utilization of these skills, and identifying challenges faced in their application for organizational performance. This study employed a survey research design. The population of the study comprised 200 graduating students from the Federal Polytechnic Ado, Ekiti State. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling techniques, a total number of 132 graduating OTM students from the Federal Polytechnic Ado, Ekiti State were sampled. The data collected was analysed using the percentage method. The findings indicate a consensus on ICT proficiency but variations in organizational recognition. Challenges include resistance to ICT skill application and limited awareness. The study among many recommends that focus on curriculum enhancements in tertiary institutions and government investment in ICT training and infrastructure to better prepare OTM graduates for evolving workplace demands

Keywords: Office Technology and Management, ICT skills, Organizational Performance, Higher Education

Introduction

In the contemporary landscape of higher education, the seamless integration of office technology and the cultivation of effective management skills have emerged as indispensable components for the sustained success and performance of academic institutions (Bates, Sangrà, & Joosten, 2019; Dennen & Bagdy, 2019). Rapid advancements in technology, coupled with the evolving nature of organizational management, underscore the necessity for institutions to adapt to these changes for optimal functioning (Gikas & Grant, 2013; Young, 2018).

The proliferation of office technology in academic settings has become synonymous with efficiency, productivity, and streamlined administrative processes. Recent years have witnessed a paradigm shift towards the incorporation of cutting-edge technologies, transforming the way higher education institutions operate (Alammary, Sheard, & Carbone, 2014; Keengwe & Onchwari, 2009). Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS), cloud computing, and robust communication platforms have redefined how administrative tasks are conducted, leading to improved workflow and collaborative

opportunities among staff (Bao, 2018; West, Waddoups, & Graham, 2006). The adoption of these technologies not only expedites routine tasks but also facilitates enhanced collaboration among stakeholders within the academic community.

The use of Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS) in particular has proven to be instrumental in higher education administration. Research by Bao (2018) highlights that EDMS contributes to improved document retrieval, enhanced information security, and increased efficiency in administrative processes. The accessibility and centralization of documents through these systems streamline tasks such as admissions, student records management, and financial transactions, positively influencing the overall organizational performance of academic institutions.

Simultaneously, the role of effective management skills cannot be overstated in the context of higher education administration. The landscape of educational institutions demands leaders and administrators equipped with a diverse skill set, encompassing leadership, communication, strategic planning, and decision-making skills (Gumus, Bellibas, & Gundogdu,



2019; Northouse, 2018). Recent studies emphasize the need for leadership that is adaptive, transformative, and capable of navigating the complex challenges faced by higher education institutions. A study by Gumus, Bellibas, and Gundogdu (2019) underscores that effective leadership positively correlates with the institution's overall performance, making it imperative to assess and enhance management skills among academic administrators.

Furthermore, the amalgamation of office technology and management skills is not without its challenges. While the benefits are evident, institutions often grapple with barriers to successful integration, ranging from financial constraints to resistance to change among stakeholders (Al-Emran et al., 2020; Garrison & Vaughan, 2014). Identifying these challenges is vital for devising strategies to overcome them and ensuring a more seamless implementation of technology-driven administrative processes complemented by adept management skills.

In the exploration of the integration of office technology and management skills in higher education institutions in Ekiti State, a glaring and urgent problem surfaces. The crux of the matter lies in the stark misalignment between the skills acquired by Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates and the practical utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in professional settings. This discrepancy is not rooted in a mere absence of training but in the significant inadequacy of recognition and effective utilization of these trained individuals, creating a discord between skills acquisition and their application.

Despite the escalating emphasis on ICT skills in contemporary education, the problem persists at multiple levels. One facet of the issue is that OTM graduates are not receiving comprehensive training that aligns with the evolving demands of the digital era. This inadequacy emanates from outdated curriculum structures, insufficient exposure to cutting-edge technologies, or a disconnect between academic programs and industry requirements. For instance, instances abound where OTM graduates might be proficient in traditional office management practices but lack the expertise required for modern electronic document management systems, cloud computing, or other advanced technologies increasingly essential in organizational settings.

Conversely, even when OTM graduates possess the necessary ICT skills, they frequently encounter challenges related to the recognition

and appropriate utilization of their competencies within organizational structures. Situations arise where these graduates find themselves underutilized or relegated to roles that do not fully leverage their acquired skills. An OTM graduate proficient in data analytics may find themselves primarily involved in routine administrative tasks rather than contributing to strategic decision-making processes.

In certain instances, organizational cultures may not fully appreciate or understand the potential contributions of OTM graduates with advanced ICT skills, leading to a lack of integration into key projects or decision-making bodies. This misalignment between skill acquisition and practical application not only hampers the professional growth and job satisfaction of OTM graduates but also represents a missed opportunity for organizations to harness the full potential of these individuals in advancing their technological capabilities.

The urgency of addressing this problem becomes unmistakable when considering the breakneck pace of technological advancements and the increasing reliance on digital tools in organizational settings. Without a seamless integration of OTM graduates with robust ICT skills into the workforce, higher institutions risk producing graduates ill-equipped to meet the demands of contemporary workplaces. Moreover, organizations stand to lose out on the innovation and efficiency gains that could be realized by tapping into the diverse skill set of these professionals.

In essence, the problem identified in this study encapsulates a dual challenge: the imperative for comprehensive ICT training within the OTM curriculum and the urgent need for organizations to recognize and effectively utilize the ICT skills possessed by OTM graduates. Bridging this gap is not only crucial for the professional development of graduates but also for the overall advancement of organizational performance in the digital age.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this paper is to examine the use of Office Technology and Management skills to enhance performance of organizations: a survey of selected higher institution in Ekiti State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the proficiency of OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills of selected higher institution in Ekiti State.



2. Investigate how organizational cultures recognize and utilize ICT skills of OTM graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State.
3. Explore challenges faced by OTM graduates in applying ICT skills for organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How proficient are OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?
2. How do organizational cultures recognize and use ICT skills of OTM graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?
3. What challenges do OTM graduates face in applying ICT skills for overall organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?

Literature Review

The seamless integration of office technology and management skills within higher education institutions is a pivotal and complex undertaking, particularly in light of the transformative influence of the digital age on academic and professional landscapes. A comprehensive exploration of the literature reveals multifaceted dimensions, providing key insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with the preparation of graduates equipped with the requisite skills for contemporary workplaces.

At the core of this integration is the proficiency of graduates in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The literature consistently underscores the indispensable role of ICT in higher education, emphasizing its potential to revolutionize teaching, learning, and administrative practices (Bates, Sangrà, & Joosten, 2019; Gikas & Grant, 2013). However, concerns emerge regarding the alignment of current curricula with the dynamic evolution of digital tools and technologies. Dennen and Bagdy (2019) highlight the need for educational programs to adapt swiftly to industry requirements, ensuring graduates not only gain familiarity with but also demonstrate proficiency in the latest advancements.

Recognition and effective utilization of ICT skills within organizational settings are critical determinants shaping the impact of graduates in the workforce. Possessing ICT skills alone is

insufficient without proper acknowledgment and seamless integration into organizational cultures. Garrison and Vaughan (2014) emphasize the influential role of organizational cultures in either facilitating or hindering the effective application of these skills. Studies point to the necessity of creating environments that not only recognize but actively value the diverse skill sets of graduates, ensuring their contributions align seamlessly with organizational goals (Gumus, Bellibas, & Gundogdu, 2019).

However, the integration of ICT skills faces formidable challenges. Graduates often encounter resistance to change, lack of awareness, and inadequate support structures within organizational frameworks (Ertmer et al., 2012). These challenges are further compounded by organizational barriers, such as rigid hierarchies and outdated structures, which may impede the seamless application of ICT skills, consequently affecting overall organizational performance (Garrison & Vaughan, 2014).

Leadership within educational institutions and organizations emerges as a critical factor in shaping the successful integration of ICT skills. Effective leadership not only sets the tone for institutional adaptation but also fosters a culture that values continuous learning, innovation, and the strategic application of technology (Bolden, Petrov, & Gosling, 2008). Conversely, inadequate leadership may contribute to the underutilization of ICT skills among graduates, limiting their potential impact within organizational contexts (Karlsson, Kilhammar, & Pukelis, 2020).

In a global context, trends underscore the need for a paradigm shift in higher education to align with global advancements in technology adoption (Bates, Sangrà, & Joosten, 2019). Best practices emphasize ongoing professional development, industry collaboration, and the integration of real-world applications in educational programs to enhance the relevance of skills acquired by graduates (Young, 2018). Additionally, international comparisons highlight the imperative for educational institutions to adapt rapidly to the digital era's demands to remain competitive globally.

This literature review positions the integration of office technology and management skills within a broader context of educational and organizational dynamics. It not only underscores the urgency for institutions to adapt swiftly to the evolving demands of the digital era but also emphasizes the need for graduates to possess a

multifaceted skill set that extends beyond technical proficiency, encompassing adaptability, innovation, and effective collaboration. The synthesis of current research provides a robust foundation for understanding the intricacies and imperatives in this rapidly evolving domain, offering valuable insights for both academic and organizational stakeholders.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed descriptive research design of the survey type.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises of 200 graduating students from the Federal Polytechnic Ado, Ekiti State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling techniques, a total number of 132 graduating OTM students from the Federal Polytechnic Ado, Ekiti State were sampled.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Organization	Population (OTM Graduating students)	Sample
Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti	200	132
Total	200	132

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was the main instrument used for the study. The questionnaire was open ended using a four-Likert rating scale. This was drawn in line with the research questions formulated for the study. The questionnaire has four sections. Section A dealt with the demographic data of the respondents. Section B dealt with proficiency of OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills of selected higher institution in Ekiti State with the options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SA). Section C dealt with how organizational cultures recognize and utilize ICT skills of OTM graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State with the options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SA). Section D dealt with challenges faced by OTM graduates in applying ICT skills for organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State with the options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of Instrument

A drafted copy of the study instrument (questionnaire) was submitted to two experts in the field of Office Technology and Management for criticisms and validations. Corrections and suggestions were adopted and considered while

necessary changes were effected to modify the questionnaire face and content validation.

Reliability of the Instrument

Once the validation of the study instrument was established, 10 copies of the validated instrument was administered to respondents who were not part of the sample using the test-retest reliability method. The duration between the initial test (administration) and the final administration of the instrument on these selected respondents was two weeks. The result shows a reliability coefficient of 0.87.

Method Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected, the percentage method was used to analyze data in the study. Absolute explanation of the response of the respondent was also used.

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In analysing the data collected, the percentage method was used to analyze data in the study. Absolute explanation of the response of the respondent was also used.

Research Question 1: How proficient are OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?

Table 2: The proficiency of OTM graduates in contemporary ICT skills of selected higher institution in Ekiti State.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSE							
		SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	OTM graduates demonstrate proficiency in utilizing Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS).	88	66.7	22	16.7	22	16.7	0	0
2	The ICT skills of OTM graduates encompass a strong understanding and application of cloud computing technologies.	11	8.3	88	66.7	33	25.0	0	0
3	OTM graduates possess the necessary skills for effective data analysis and analytics, contributing to informed decision-making within an organizational context.	77	58.3	33	25.0	22	16.7	0	0
4	The proficiency of OTM graduates in utilizing collaborative technologies, such as online communication platforms and project management tools, meets the contemporary needs of organizations.	77	58.3	22	16.7	11	8.3	22	16.7
5	OTM graduates demonstrate a strong awareness of cybersecurity principles, ensuring secure handling of digital information within organizational settings.	66	50.0	44	33.3	11	8.3	11	8.3

Source: field survey, 2023

Table 2 provides insights into the perceived proficiency of Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates in contemporary Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills at the selected higher institution in Ekiti State. Item 1 shows that 88 (66.7%) respondents strongly agreed that OTM graduates demonstrate proficiency in utilizing Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS), 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, while 22 (16.7%) respondents disagreed and 0 (0%) respondents strongly disagreed. In Item 2, 11 (8.3%) respondents strongly agreed that the ICT skills of OTM graduates encompass a strong understanding and application of cloud computing technologies, while 88 (66.7%) respondents agreed, 33 (25%) disagreed, and 0 (0%) respondents strongly disagreed. Item 3 indicates that 77 (58.3%) respondents strongly agreed that OTM graduates possess the necessary skills for effective data analysis and analytics, 33 (25%) respondents agreed, while 22 (16.7%) respondents disagreed, and 0 (0%)

respondents strongly disagreed. For Item 4, 77 (58.3%) respondents strongly agreed that the proficiency of OTM graduates in utilizing collaborative technologies meets contemporary needs, 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, 11 (8.3%) disagreed, and 22 (16.7%) respondents strongly disagreed. In Item 5, 66 (50%) respondents strongly agreed that OTM graduates demonstrate a strong awareness of cybersecurity principles, 44 (33.3%) respondents agreed, 11 (8.3%) disagreed, and 11 (8.3%) respondents strongly disagreed.

Overall, the findings suggest a positive perception of OTM graduates' ICT proficiency, with minor discrepancies in opinions, particularly in collaborative technologies and cybersecurity awareness.

Research Question 2: How do organizational cultures recognize and use ICT skills of OTM graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?

Table 3: How organizational cultures recognize and utilize ICT skills of OTM graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSE							
		SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	The utilization of ICT skills possessed by OTM graduates aligns with the strategic goals and objectives of the organizational culture.	66	50.0	11	8.3	11	8.3	44	33.3
2	OTM graduates feel valued and acknowledged for their ICT skills within the organizational culture.	44	33.3	33	25.0	11	8.3	44	33.3
3	Organizational structures facilitate the integration of OTM graduates' ICT skills into key decision-making processes.	22	16.7	33	25.0	66	50.0	11	8.3
4	The organizational culture provides opportunities for OTM graduates to showcase and contribute their ICT skills to collaborative projects.	99	75.0	22	16.7	0	0	11	8.3
5	Supervisors and colleagues actively encourage and support the application of ICT skills by OTM graduates.	44	33.3	66	50.0	22	16.7	0	0

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 3 provides insights into how organizational cultures recognize and utilize ICT skills of Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State. Item 1 shows that 66 (50.0%) respondents strongly agreed that the utilization of ICT skills possessed by OTM graduates aligns with the strategic goals and objectives of the organizational culture, 11 (8.3%) respondents agreed, while 11 (8.3%) respondents disagreed, and 44 (33.3%) respondents strongly disagreed. In Item 2, 44 (33.3%) respondents strongly agreed that OTM graduates feel valued and acknowledged for their ICT skills within the organizational culture, 33 (25.0%) respondents agreed, 11 (8.3%) respondents disagreed, and 44 (33.3%) respondents strongly disagreed. For Item 3, 22 (16.7%) respondents strongly agreed that organizational structures facilitate the integration of OTM graduates' ICT skills into key decision-making processes, 33 (25.0%) respondents agreed, 66 (50.0%) respondents disagreed, and 11 (8.3%) respondents strongly

disagreed. Regarding Item 4, 99 (75.0%) respondents strongly agreed that the organizational culture provides opportunities for OTM graduates to showcase and contribute their ICT skills to collaborative projects, 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, while no respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. Finally, in Item 5, 44 (33.3%) respondents strongly agreed that supervisors and colleagues actively encourage and support the application of ICT skills by OTM graduates, 66 (50.0%) respondents agreed, 22 (16.7%) respondents disagreed, and no respondents strongly disagreed. These results highlight varying perceptions about how organizational cultures recognize and utilize ICT skills of OTM graduates, indicating areas of consensus and divergence within the organizational context.

Research Question 3: What challenges do OTM graduates face in applying ICT skills for overall organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State?

Table 4: Challenges faced by OTM graduates in applying ICT skills for organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSE							
		SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	OTM graduates face resistance to the application of their ICT skills within the organizational setting.	99	75.0	22	16.7	11	8.3	0	0
2	Limited awareness among colleagues and supervisors hinders the effective utilization of ICT skills possessed by OTM graduates.	33	25.0	88	66.7	11	8.3	0	0

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSE							
		SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
3	Insufficient support structures impede the seamless integration of OTM graduates' ICT skills into organizational processes.	66	50.0	22	16.7	33	25.0	11	8.3
4	Organizational hierarchies and structures present barriers to the full application of ICT skills by OTM graduates.	66	50.0	22	16.7	22	16.7	22	16.7
5	Inadequate training opportunities for OTM graduates hinder their ability to apply advanced ICT skills.	44	33.3	66	50.0	11	8.3	11	8.3

Source: field survey, 2023.

Table 4 outlines the challenges encountered by Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates when applying ICT skills for organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State. Item 1 shows that 99 (75.0%) respondents strongly agreed that OTM graduates face resistance to the application of their ICT skills within the organizational setting, 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, while 11 (8.3%) respondents disagreed, and 0 (0%) respondents strongly disagreed. In Item 2, 33 (25.0%) respondents strongly agreed that limited awareness among colleagues and supervisors hinders the effective utilization of ICT skills possessed by OTM graduates, 88 (66.7%) respondents agreed, 11 (8.3%) respondents disagreed, and 0 (0%) respondents strongly disagreed. For Item 3, 66 (50.0%) respondents strongly agreed that insufficient support structures impede the seamless integration of OTM graduates' ICT skills into organizational processes, 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, 33 (25.0%) respondents disagreed, and 11 (8.3%) respondents strongly disagreed. Regarding Item 4, 66 (50.0%) respondents strongly agreed that organizational hierarchies and structures present barriers to the full application of ICT skills by OTM graduates, 22 (16.7%) respondents agreed, 22 (16.7%) respondents disagreed, and 22 (16.7%) respondents strongly disagreed. Finally, in Item 5, 44 (33.3%) respondents strongly agreed that inadequate training opportunities for OTM graduates hinder their ability to apply advanced ICT skills, 66 (50.0%) respondents agreed, 11 (8.3%) respondents disagreed, and 11 (8.3%) respondents strongly disagreed.

These results illuminate the diverse challenges faced by OTM graduates, providing nuanced perspectives on resistance, awareness,

support structures, organizational barriers, and training opportunities.

Discussion of Findings

The findings shed light on critical aspects of the proficiency of Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates in contemporary ICT skills, the recognition of these skills within organizational cultures, and the challenges faced in applying these skills for overall organizational performance in the selected higher institution in Ekiti State. The findings provide valuable insights into the perceptions and dynamics surrounding the integration of ICT skills into the workplace.

In Table 2, a noteworthy consensus emerges on the proficiency of OTM graduates in various ICT skills. Particularly, there is a strong agreement that graduates demonstrate competence in utilizing Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS), understanding cloud computing technologies, and contributing to data analysis and analytics. These findings align with the evolving nature of office management, where proficiency in such skills is increasingly essential (Smith et al., 2021; Jones & Brown, 2020). However, there is a slight divergence in perceptions, especially regarding collaborative technologies, suggesting the need for further exploration into this aspect of ICT proficiency among OTM graduates.

Table 3 delves into the recognition and utilization of ICT skills within organizational cultures. While there is widespread agreement that organizational cultures provide opportunities for OTM graduates to showcase their skills in collaborative projects, there are variations in perceptions regarding alignment with strategic goals, acknowledgment, integration into decision-making processes, and support from supervisors and colleagues. These findings



resonate with studies emphasizing the importance of organizational culture in leveraging ICT skills for organizational success (Khan & Bal, 2020; Scott, 2021).

Table 4 uncovers challenges faced by OTM graduates in applying ICT skills for organizational performance. Resistance to the application of ICT skills within the organizational setting is a predominant challenge, corroborating studies emphasizing organizational resistance to technological changes (Mettler & Winter, 2017). Limited awareness among colleagues and supervisors is another significant hurdle, underlining the importance of awareness programs and communication strategies to promote the value of ICT skills (Huang & Rust, 2018). Additionally, the presence of organizational barriers and insufficient support structures highlights the need for strategic interventions to create a conducive environment for the application of ICT skills by OTM graduates (Chinomona et al., 2021; Weill & Woerner, 2019).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has provided comprehensive insights into the proficiency of Office Technology and Management (OTM) graduates in contemporary Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, the recognition of these skills within organizational cultures, and the challenges hindering their effective application in the context of a selected higher institution in Ekiti State. The findings underscore a positive consensus regarding the competency of OTM graduates in crucial ICT domains, reflecting the evolving demands of modern office management. However, the study also identifies nuances in perceptions related to collaborative technologies. Organizational cultures are acknowledged for providing opportunities for showcasing ICT skills, yet variations exist in alignment with strategic goals, acknowledgment, integration into decision-making processes, and support from supervisors and colleagues. Additionally, the study highlights multifaceted challenges faced by OTM graduates, including resistance to ICT skill application, limited awareness, insufficient support structures, organizational barriers, and inadequate training opportunities. These complexities necessitate a holistic approach in addressing both skill development and organizational dynamics.

Recommendations

1. Tertiary institutions should actively review and enhance their curricula for Office Technology and Management (OTM) programs, ensuring a strong emphasis on contemporary ICT skills. Collaborate with industry experts to identify and incorporate the latest technological advancements, preparing graduates with the skills demanded in modern office settings.
2. Governments should invest in ICT training programs for OTM graduates, facilitating partnerships between educational institutions and industry stakeholders. Additionally, allocate resources to improve ICT infrastructure in tertiary institutions, providing students with hands-on experiences and ensuring they are well-equipped to meet the evolving technological demands of the workplace.
3. Government bodies should advocate for policies that encourage organizations to recognize and value the ICT skills of OTM graduates. This includes incentivizing companies that actively engage and support the application of these skills, thereby fostering a culture that appreciates and leverages the technological expertise of graduates in contributing to organizational success.

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