



## Office Suites Application Skills Acquired By Office Management and Technology Graduates for Routine Functions in Rivers State Universities

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined Office Suites Application Skills Acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities. Two specific objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 48 Office Management and Technology graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, made up of 22 Office Information Management graduates from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 26 Office Management and Technology graduates from Rivers State University. The entire population of 48 was studied. Due to the manageable population no sampling was done. The instrument used for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Office Application Skills Acquired by Office Management and Technology Graduates developed using a five-point rating scale of very highly acquired, highly acquired, moderately acquired, rarely acquired and not acquired. The instrument was validated by two experts in Business Education and one expert in measurement and evaluation, all from the Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was established with split half method. This was done through Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and a reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings in the study revealed that; word processing skills, spreadsheet application skills, desktop publishing application skills and database management application skills were acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates. It was recommended that; more office application skills should be taught in Business Education Programme and Business Educators should be up to date with the latest office application skills needed in today's automated offices.

Keywords: Word Processing, Spreadsheet, Desktop Publishing, Database Management

### Introduction

Office Management and Technology is a segment of Business Education, while Business Education is an umbrella name covering the educational processes involving the study of techniques, related sciences, and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupations in the vocational sector of the economic and social life. Business Education programme is meant to equip individuals with functional and saleable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable them operate in any environment they find themselves. The programme represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all levels of education delivery system; primary, secondary and tertiary such as college of education. It includes education for office occupation, teaching of business subjects, business administration and economic understanding. Business Education covers Accounting Education, Marketing Education, Management Education and Secretarial Education (hereby referred to as Office Management and Technology (OMT)). Those who teach in the programme are called Business Educators.

Experience has revealed that the introduction of the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to offices and business arena appears to be posing great challenges to Office Management and Technology (OMT) graduates. Information Technology/Computer Application with emphasis on word processing using Microsoft word, the word star, data processing with Lotus/Excel (Spreadsheet) application, desktop publishing, electronics data application systems dealing with batch processing, on-line processing and real-time processing systems. Other components of the course include record keeping systems, decision-making systems and problem solving systems among others. Also included is

electronic communication systems covering electronic mail system, internet, Local Area Network (LAN); Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) and Computer Assisted learning among others. In addition, it is required that computer usage for teaching and learning should be in the ratio of one computer to three students (1:3) and that every one hour of theory lecture should be followed by two hours of practice (Garba, 2012).

In recent times, Information Communication Technology has introduced a new dimension to the field through computer and other electronic devices that constantly transforms the profession as reflected by expectations of Office Management and Technology (OMT) graduates in tertiary institutions by the larger society. As a result, emphasis has shifted from shorthand and typewriting to computer applications and information technologies. These changes can be seen in the innovation and invention pertaining to equipment, nomenclature, technology, furniture, designs, environment, responsibilities, training, skills, abilities, attitudes, knowledge, educational institutions and their curricula.

According to Adeola (2012), in the contemporary business world, the virtual office which is Information Communication Technology (ICT) driven has replaced the traditional paper and file office. The knowledge of Information Communication Technology and computer technology is an indispensable tool to work in today's business office and educational enterprise. Bolarinwa (2010) remarked that every aspect of life; from education to work environment is being influenced by Information Communication Technology and computer technology.

It appears that students are major beneficiaries of technology especially for office management and Technology students. Today's Office Management and Technology (OMT) students are therefore, required to have relevant computer knowledge, Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills, and exhibit high level of competency in office applications to facilitate their transition from school to work. Agbatogun (2011) conceptualized competencies as the ability to perform basic computer operations and other activities such as maintenance and troubleshooting of equipment, use of word processing, spreadsheet, computer graphics, desktop publishing, database management and networking of computer system.

The invention of computer brought the greatest revolution in Office Management and Technology (OMT) programme as well as the business and work environment of the era. Computers have changed the way we live, work, and communicate and the society depends so much on computers to perform variety of functions (Garba, 2012).

According to Onyeizugbe (2015), a computer is an electronic device that accepts data from an input device, performs some kind of manipulations on the data in accordance with the defined instructions and transfers the manipulated or processed data to an output device for further processing or in final printed form, such as business documents, schedules and management control reports. Furthermore, Onyeizugbe buttressed that a computer is also an electronic machine that operates under the control of instructions stored in its own memory to accept data, manipulate the data according to specified rules, produce results and store the results for future use.

Microsoft office is an aspect of office suites and one of the office suites application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates is word processing skills. Word processing such as Microsoft Word refers to the act of using a computer to create, edit, save and print documents. In addition to working with text also provide tools to insert pictures, edit photos, draw objects, and produce graphic organizers. The range of options available within word processing programs makes them versatile to the user. In order to perform word processing, specialized software (Known as word processor) is needed. The word processing application allow users to create a wide variety of documents including reports, letters, memos, newsletters and brochures (Sunny Broome Community College, n.d.), memoranda, mailing lists, greeting cards, labels, newsletter, business reports, business cards, letter heads and tables among others. Computer is the major technological equipment used in teaching and learning of word processing. Office Management and Technology education students are exposed to the use of computer and its applications to input, edit, format, save, store, retrieve and print diverse documents (Sunny Broome Community College, n.d.). Students are expected to acquire word processing skill in school because so many of them will need it later in life when they enter the work place.

Spreadsheet application which is one of the office suites application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine function has to do with numerical figures and data. It makes use of formula and calculations which are automatically performed and presented even in graphical form. Spreadsheet is used for budget, tables, cost analysis, financial reports and statistical analysis among other (Adeola, 2012). Spreadsheet makes use of worksheets in form of a matrix to store and manipulate data in slots which inherit the properties put in them as data or in form of formulas to compute values in tabular form. Students are expected to acquire adequate skills in the use of spreadsheet for different activities.

Desktop publishing is another office suite application skill acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions. It is the creation of documents using page layout software on a personal (desktop) computer. It is also the main reference for digital typography. This technology allows individuals, businesses, and other organizations to self-published a wide variety of content, from menus to magazines to books,

without the expense of commercial printing. It is the process of using computer and desktop publisher to combine texts and graphics to produce documents such as newsletters, brochures, posters and books (Azuka, 2012). Desktop publishing is used to design materials for publication. It helps for easy arrangement of textbooks, magazines and preparation of calendars, invitation cards, posters, identity cards, greeting cards, web pages and more for professional or personal printing online or onscreen among others. Okoro and Ndinechi (2013) stated that desktop publishing skills include the ability to open desktop environment, identify and use documents, produce a simple publication, set up page size/orientation and margins of a flier and create quality and attractive text area/text frame.

Another officesuites application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions is the database management system. A database management is a software for storing and retrieving user's data while considering appropriate security measures. It consists of a group of programs which manipulate the database. Database management helps users and other third-party software to create, store and retrieve data. (Mullins, 2021). Database management system (DBMS) is system software for creating and managing databases. It makes it possible for end users to create, protect, read, update and delete data in a database. As the most prevalent type of data management platform, the Data Base Management System essentially serves as an interface between databases and end users or application programs, ensuring that data is consistently organized and remains easily accessible (Mullins, 2021). These three foundational elements help provide concurrency, security, data integrity and uniform administration procedures.

There are different kinds of database according to how they are organize. A relational model organizes data elements in a two-dimensional table consisting of the rows and columns. Students are expected to understand the database environment, be able to load and quit database management system, use the tool bars and apply the menu commands, exhibit competence on how to open a database table, setting of field properties, creating, modifying tables, input data and records into a database, save and print.

Office Management and Technology (OMT) graduates of Business Education who should either teach others (Business Education) or work in other sectors of the economy are required to be competent in the use of office applications. On the contrary, Bolarinwa (2011) observed that they lack both the basic and core ICT skills needed in modern business offices and are not employable due to inadequate Information Communication Technology and computer applications content in their training curriculum, thereby affecting their routine functions in offices.

Office Management and Technology (OMT) curriculum emphasizes Information Communication Technology (ICT) and management so as to enrich the knowledge of students and equip them with skills needed to overcome the challenges in modern offices and the business environment occasioned by Information Communication Technology (ICT). Information Communication Technology makes schools more efficient and productive, thereby engendering a variety of tools to enhance and facilitate teachers' professional activities (Adeola, 2012). Bolarinwa (2010) posited that the knowledge of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and computer technology is an indispensable tool to work in today's modern business office and educational enterprise.

Despite the obvious fact that Business Education was designed to produce well qualified and competent graduates who will be able to: teach business subjects in Nigerian secondary schools and other related educational institutions, produce business teachers who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of Business Education into the society, equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to enter and to progress in world of work (National Commission for Colleges of Education, 2012), it is observed that the programme has not been able to produce graduates with appropriate skills, abilities and competencies for employment because of the challenges of inadequate funding among others (Okeibunor, Egbule&Alabi, 2015).

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## Statement of the Problem

Development and innovation in technology have brought about great changes in various offices and business environments as well as in the roles and functions expected by OMT graduates, demanding greater responsibilities and improved performance in view of their vital roles. The implication is that Office Management and Technology graduates who will be unable to cope with the demand of some office skills will become irrelevant, low priced or even unemployed. (Azih 2013) stated that as a result, employment opportunities and some office functions that are supposed to be handled by Office Management and Technology graduates are gradually been taken over by graduates of other related disciplines.

Bolarinwa (2011) observed that vast majority of graduate teachers from colleges of education in Nigeria lack the basic Information Communication Technology (ICT) competencies needed to teach, evaluate students' performance and work in modern offices. Office Management and Technology (OMT) is skilled-based and practice oriented programme. The widely reported lack of requisite skills in computer

applications by Office Management and Technology graduates mean that they will be unable to apply computer-based skills in the work place. This leads to the pertinent question: “How can these graduates survive in this career path”?

The problem of this study, therefore, is that if the teachers who are trained to train are not competent in the tools of their trade, they cannot effectively equip their students for success in employment in their chosen career. If this deficiency is not adequately addressed, employers of labor, government and the people of Nigeria will continue to grapple with the challenges of unproductively and under-development. However, office suites applications skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates of Rivers State Universities do not seem to have been compiled to guide employers in their assessment. Hence, this study is imperative as it will reveal the office suites applications skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine office operation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the Office Suites Application Skills Acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for their routine functions in Rivers State Universities. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the word processing skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.
2. Examine the spreadsheet skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the word processing skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities?
2. What are the spreadsheet skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities?

### **Hypotheses**

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

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the word processing skills acquired for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the spreadsheet skills acquired for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

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### **Methods**

The study was carried out in Rivers State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of forty-eight (48) Office Management and Technology graduates in Rivers State Universities. The entire 48 graduates were used for the study since it was manageable, no sampling techniques were adopted. Instrument for data collection was a 26-items structured questionnaire in a five-point rating scale of Very Highly Acquired (VHA), Highly Acquired (HA), Moderately Acquired (MA), Rarely Acquired (RA) and Not Acquired (NA). Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and a coefficient index of 0.86 was obtained. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed and collected by the researchers. Mean and Standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

**Research Questions 1:** What are the word Processing applications skills acquired by Office Management and Technology Graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Word Processing Application Skills Acquired by OMT Graduates for Routine Functions (N =48)**

S/N.	Statement	RSU (N= 26)			IAUE (N = 22)		
		$\bar{X}$	S.D	RMKS	$\bar{X}$	S.D	RMKS
1.	Ability to Create files and folders	3.68	1.76.	Agreed	3.68	0.94	Agreed
2.	Ability to Speedily and accurately key-in text	2.96	1.01	Agreed	3.27	0.88	Agreed
3.	Ability to Format a document suitably	3.27	1.77	Agreed	3.36	0.84	Agreed
4.	Ability to Save document electronically	3.62	1.84	Agreed	3.32	1.36	Agreed
5.	Ability to Retrieve document electronically	3.42	0.96	Agreed	3.55	1.05	Agreed
6.	Ability to Use secondary storage devices	3.38	0.80	Agreed	3.45	1.09	Agreed
7.	Ability to Use options in the edit menu	3.46	0.95	Agreed	3.50	1.16	Agreed
8.	Ability to Insert headers and footers	3.46	1.07	Agreed	3.55	0.87	Agreed
9.	Ability to Insert pictures and symbols in a document	3.50	0.54	Agreed	3.64	1.52	Agreed
10.	Ability to Use table options	3.54	0.95	Agreed	3.59	0.69	Agreed
11.	Ability to Use word art to create and shape text in a document	3.35	0.75	Agreed	4.18	0.98	Agreed
12.	Ability to Address envelopes and labels	3.23	0.42	Agreed	3.91	1.09	Agreed
13.	Ability to Create personalized letters using mailing list	3.62	1.11	Agreed	3.77	0.72	Agreed
14.	Ability to Print texts	3.31	1.12	Agreed	3.64	1.19	Agreed
	<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2022

The analysis in table 1 showed that word processing application skills are highly acquired by office management and technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities. This was shown in their grand mean and standard deviation of 3.41 (SD= 1.08) for Rivers State University and 3.60 (SD= 1.03) for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education respectively.

**Research Question 2:** What are the spreadsheet application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Spreadsheet Application Skills Acquired by OMT Graduates for Routine Functions. (N=48)**

S/N.	Statement	RSU (N= 26)			IAUE (N = 22)		
		$\bar{X}$	S.D	RMKS	$\bar{X}$	S.D	RMKS
15	Ability to speedily and accurately key-in data	3.23	0.83	Agreed	3.82	1.24	Agreed
16.	Format data in a cell	3.35	1.17	Agreed	3.91	1.35	Agreed
17.	Edit data in an existing record	3.46	0.63	Agreed	3.73	0.23	Agreed
18.	Insert rows and columns	3.35	0.38	Agreed	4.64	0.73	Agreed
19.	Save document	3.54	1.32	Agreed	3.91	1.46	Agreed
20.	Paginate worksheets	3.19	0.50	Agreed	3.68	1.29	Agreed
21.	Locate specific records using find function	3.19	0.72	Agreed	3.64	1.14	Agreed
22.	Sort data in a worksheet	3.23	0.64	Agreed	3.23	1.09	Agreed
23.	Generate appropriate graph	3.46	1.14	Agreed	3.72	0.67	Agreed
24.	Successfully apply formulas	4.27	0.27	Agreed	3.41	0.52	Agreed
25.	Interpret data from an existing spreadsheet	3.19	1.23	Agreed	4.05	1.41	Agreed
26.	Print documents	3.42	1.02	Agreed	3.59	0.69	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b>		<b>3.32</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 revealed that the spreadsheet application skills are highly acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities. These were shown in their grand mean and standard deviation of 3.32 (SD=0.82) for Rivers State University and 3.69(0.99) for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education respectively.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on Work Processing Skills acquired for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

**Table 3: T-test the Analysis of Mean Ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in RSU and IAUE on Word Processing Skills Acquired by OMT Graduates for Routine Functions.**

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Df	$\alpha$	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
RSU	26	3.41	1.08	46	0.05	0.63	1.68	Accepted
IAUE	22	3.60	1.03					

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The analysis in table 3 reveals that the t-calculated value of 0.63 at 48 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, while the t-critical value of 1.68. Since the calculated t- value of 0.63 is less than the t-critical value of 1.68, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This signifies that Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education do not differ significantly in their mean responses on word processing application skills in Rivers State Universities

**Hypotheses 2:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in Rivers State Universities and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on spreadsheet application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

**Table 4: T-test the Analysis of Mean Ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in RSU and IAUE on Spreadsheet Application Skills Acquired by OMT Graduates for Routine Functions**

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Df	$\alpha$	t-Cal	t-Crit	Decision
RSU	26	3.32	0.82	48	0.05	1.37	1.68	Accepted
IAUE	22	3.69	0.99					

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 4 above revealed at-calculated value of 1.37 at 48 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, while the t-critical value of 1.68.

Since the calculated t- value of 1.37 is less than the t-critical value of 1.68, the null hypotheses was therefore accepted. This signifies that Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education do not differ significantly in their mean responses on spreadsheet application skills in Rivers State Universities

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### Discussion of Findings

The result on research 1, was found in the study that office management and technology graduates in Rivers State Universities acquired the following word processing application skills; ability to; create files and folders, speedily and accurately key-in text, format a document suitably, save documents, retrieve documents, use secondary storage devices, edit documents, insert heads and footers, insert pictures and symbols in a document, create personalized letters using mailing list and print documents. These findings are in agreement with the view of Adeola (2012) that the skills in word processing application are; ability to produce letters, labels, greeting cards, business cards, manuals and newsletters. In agreement with the view of Adeola, Ajie-Uche and Jumbo (2016) opined that the skills that are acquired in word processing application are; creating of word documents, inserting tables, symbols and pictures in a document, ability to merge, mails, ability to use spelling checker, ability to save documents and retrieve documents in a computer.

Results on hypothesis 1 revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on word processing application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

From the result on research question 2, shows that office management and technology graduates in Rivers State Universities acquired the following spreadsheet application skills; ability to: format data in a cell, edit data in an existing record, insert rows and columns, save documents, paginate worksheets, sort data in a worksheet, successfully apply formulas, interpret data from an existing spreadsheet and print spreadsheet documents. These findings are in agreement with the view of Ajie-Uche and Jumbo (2016) that the spreadsheet application that can be acquired by an individual are; ability to; enter data in a cell, format data, sort data, generating appropriate graph when necessary, insert rows and columns, paginate worksheets, successfully use formulas and print spreadsheet documents.

Results on hypothesis 2 revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Office Management and Technology Graduates in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on spreadsheet application skills acquired by Office Management and Technology graduates for routine functions in Rivers State Universities.

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### Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the automated nature of today's offices brings to light the need for Office Management and Technology graduates in Business Education programme in Rivers State Universities to keep improving their office suites application skills regularly so as to be relevant in these offices.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made by the researcher:

1. More Microsoft Office Application Skills should be taught in Business Education programme so as to enable the students especially those in Office Management and Technology option to be well acquainted with modern office skills.
2. Latest office suites applications should be introduced regularly in office management and technology programme, so as to meet up the globalized standard.

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