

JOB SATISFACTION, HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS AND MODERN COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENTS AS DETERMINANT OF SECRETARIES JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE

ADETUNJI Folasade Lydia, AYODELE Kolawole O.(PhD), IBE-MOSES Kelechi

Department of Education, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo

Correspondence Author: ADETUNJI Folasade Lydia

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Abstract

This study assessed the extent at which job satisfaction, human relations skills and modern communications equipment influence the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted. Two hypotheses guided the study while a sample of 150 secretaries was determined using Cochran (1997) formula. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. Inferential statistic of Multiple regression was adopted to test the formulated null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. The findings revealed that job satisfaction, human relations skills, and the use of modern communication equipment jointly have a statistical significant effect on the job performance of secretaries ($R = 0.744$, $R^2 = 0.554$, $F = 53.314$; $p = .000 < 0.05$). The relative influence of the predictors on the criterion variable shows that job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.555$; $t = 8.812$; $p < 0.05$) is the most potent factor followed by human relations skills ($\beta = 0.463$; $t = 7.193$; $p < 0.05$) and modern communications equipment ($\beta = -0.157$; $t = -2.306$; $p < 0.05$). It was concluded that effective and efficient functioning of secretaries and office administrators requires the availability of technological tools, better job satisfaction and human relation skills. It is recommended, among others, that public tertiary institutions in Ogun State and similar organisations should make the acquisition and adoption of technological innovation a policy and culture issue to enhance the performance of their secretaries and facilitate service delivery.

Keywords: Human relations skills, job performance, job satisfaction, modern communications equipment, secretaries

Introduction

Human capital is still a valuable resource in the world today, and it is crucial to an organization's ability to achieve its objectives, survive, and expand. One important criterion for organizational outcome and success is employee performance, which also plays a significant role in deciding whether an organization's objectives are met. As a result, workforce performance supports the efficient and effective use of other resources deployed for the achievement of corporate objectives and organizational effectiveness, owners and managers of organizations and businesses are therefore searching for workers who will be able to perform their jobs well.

Comprehending the concept of work performance among secretaries is essential for organizational success in public universities, particularly in Ogun State, Nigeria. As the backbone of administrative operations, secretaries oversee a variety of responsibilities necessary for academic institutions to run smoothly (Ebhodaghe et al. 2020; Oyerinde, Aina, & Adeniran, 2023). By exploring job performance, the effectiveness and efficiency of secretaries in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities can be accessed. Secretaries' job performance is a critical component in the efficient functioning of any organization. As administrative professionals, secretaries are responsible for a wide range of tasks, including managing communication, handling documentation, scheduling meetings, and supporting managerial activities. Their role serves as the backbone of office administration, ensuring that information flows seamlessly and operations are well-coordinated. Performance in this context is often measured by the accuracy, timeliness, and completeness of the secretarial duties performed. According to Oyerinde, Aina, and Adeniran (2023), secretaries play a vital role in ensuring the effectiveness of organizational communication and record management. When their performance is optimal, it leads to increased productivity, better decision-making, and improved organizational outcomes. Conversely, poor performance in secretarial roles can result in communication breakdowns, workflow delays, and reduced overall efficiency.

However, secretaries' job performance in the 21st century automated office involve the creation of documents through laptops and smart devices with advanced typesetting skills to create, edit, format, convert texts into special documents formats. Omidiji (2024) opined that secretary job performance involves ability to voice type through emerging applications that enable users to voice and format documents using their voice rather than typing with their fingers such as speech to text application, voice type keyboard, keyboard personalized note, Audio to text and speech recognition. Onajite and Makinde opined that secretaries job performance determine the success of her assigned tasks that contribute to the attainment of organization goals and objectives. If the secretary performance her job according to institutional job specification it contribute to the achievement of organization goals. It is the way by which employees perform the job tasks in relation to the institutional job specifications. The job performance of the secretaries in tertiary institution involve the execution of various activities and crucial to the smooth running of the institution and achievement of organization goals and objectives. Secretary Job performance determine the most time the image of the institution. Secretary handles the communication and dissemination of the institution and the way they portray the organization tends to reflect on the integrity of the institution.

Secretary job performance in tertiary institution is predicted by many factors such as employees' development, job satisfaction, technological facilities, work environment, relational skills, motivation, and many more. This study is only focusing on three out of so many variables. These are job satisfaction, relational skills, and technological facilities. The first variable is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction refers to the degree to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their jobs. It is influenced by multiple factors including compensation, working conditions, recognition, and the nature of the job itself. For secretaries, job satisfaction plays a pivotal role in determining their level of motivation and productivity. When secretaries are satisfied with their roles, they tend to be more committed, organized, and effective in handling administrative tasks. According to Agubosim et al. (2023), job satisfaction significantly affects staff engagement and willingness to perform at optimal levels. The study further emphasizes that satisfied employees are more likely to contribute positively to organizational outcomes and maintain consistency in performance. In contrast, dissatisfaction can lead to absenteeism, lack of motivation, and frequent errors in task execution, which in turn compromises the overall effectiveness of secretarial functions. Kaelani et al. (2023) observed that job satisfaction acts as a mediating factor between leadership/motivation and performance. Secretaries who experience low job satisfaction often show signs of burnout and disengagement, leading to reduced output and morale.

The relationship between job satisfaction and secretaries' job performance is well established in literature. Secretaries who are content with their work environment, compensation, and career progression tend to demonstrate higher levels of engagement and output. Agubosim et al. (2023) concluded that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors significantly influence job performance, while Kaelani et al. (2023) emphasized that satisfaction serves as a critical link between motivation and output. A satisfied secretary is more likely to be punctual, organized, and responsive traits that are essential for high job performance.

Human relations skills encompass a range of interpersonal abilities such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and teamwork. These skills are particularly important in secretarial roles where constant interaction with colleagues, managers, and clients is required. Nyone (2024) found a strong positive relationship between human relations skills and job performance among non-academic staff, emphasizing that empathy and anger management improve the quality of service delivery. For secretaries, the ability to build positive relationships and effectively manage interpersonal dynamics is critical for coordinating office tasks and ensuring smooth communication across departments. Moreover, effective human relations skills contribute to a healthy work environment and reduce conflicts, misunderstandings, and job stress. Employees with strong interpersonal competencies are more adaptable, emotionally intelligent, and better at navigating organizational challenges. Ebhodaghe et al. (2020) further suggest that poor human relations often result in strained workplace interactions and underperformance. Thus, human relations skills are not only essential for personal effectiveness but also significantly impact the performance of secretaries and their contribution to organizational success.

Human relations skills are directly tied to secretarial performance because they govern how secretaries interact with supervisors, colleagues, and clients. Nyone (2024) found that empathy and emotional control are vital for maintaining workplace harmony and ensuring high-

quality service delivery. Secretaries with strong interpersonal skills manage their tasks more smoothly, foster collaboration, and help maintain a productive office environment. These outcomes naturally lead to better job performance, making human relations skills an indispensable component of secretarial effectiveness.

Modern communication equipment includes digital tools such as computers, email platforms, smartphones, video conferencing systems, and document management software. These technologies have transformed the traditional roles of secretaries by automating routine tasks and enabling real-time communication. The effectiveness of secretaries now depends largely on their ability to use these tools efficiently. According to Aliu et al. (2024), modern office technologies improve secretarial performance by making tasks like document editing, scheduling, and internal communication faster and more accurate. However, the availability of modern equipment alone is not enough; proficiency and training are critical. Oyerinde et al. (2023) revealed that while many secretaries have access to digital devices, their contributions to job performance are limited due to a lack of proper usage skills. Inadequate training on how to use communication tools often leads to underutilization, reducing productivity and slowing down workflow. Therefore, modern communication equipment, when properly utilized, is a major enabler of secretarial efficiency and effectiveness in today's work environment.

Modern communication equipment plays a central role in enhancing secretaries' job performance. As technology continues to reshape office operations, secretaries are expected to be proficient in using digital tools for communication, scheduling, and data management. Adenekan and Elizabeth (2021) found that technological competence was significantly associated with better job performance among secretaries. Likewise, Aliu et al. (2024) emphasized that access to and efficient use of modern office equipment streamline workflow, reduce errors, and increase productivity, all of which are key indicators of strong job performance.

This study is essential because it addresses a significant performance gap in administrative operations by examining the combined impact of job satisfaction, human relations skills, and modern communication equipment on secretaries' job performance. Despite the evolving nature of secretarial roles in modern organizations, many secretaries still face challenges related to low motivation, poor interpersonal interactions, and underutilization of available technology. These issues have contributed to inefficiencies in administrative processes, communication breakdowns, and reduced overall productivity.

Research Hypotheses

- Ho1: There is no significant influence of job satisfaction, human relations skills and modern communications equipment on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State.
- Ho2: There is no significant relative influence of job satisfaction, human relations skills and modern communications equipment on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State.

Research Method

Research Design: The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design uses primary data to obtain data through questionnaire that was administered on respondents from the selected University in Ogun state Nigeria.

Sample Size

The Cochran (1997) formula was used to select the 150 participants that participated in this study. Mixed-method sampling techniques were adopted for this study. This approach combines both probability and non-probability sampling methods. Purposive sampling was used to select 3 universities out of the 4 public universities, as Moshood Abiola University was only upgraded to university status in 2017, whereas the other universities have been well-established over the years. Subsequently, simple random sampling was employed to select the secretaries from the chosen universities.

Table 1: Sample Size of the Study

S/N	Sampled Public universities	No. of Secretaries	No. of Selected Secretaries
1.	Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	77	$77 \times 150/211 = 55$
2.	Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye	73	$73 \times 150/211 = 52$
3.	Tai Solarin University of Education Ijebu Ode	61	$61 \times 150/211 = 43$
	Total	211	150

Research Instrument: A self-designed structured questionnaire tagged “Job Satisfaction, Human Relations Skills, Modern Communications Equipment and Secretaries' Job Performance Questionnaire (JSHRSMCESJPQ)” consisting of eight sections (A – E) was used to collect necessary data and information from the respondents.

Section A will consist of the demographic information of the respondents which include gender, age, marital status and year of job experiences.

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 1985): It a 36-item instrument designed to evaluate employee attitudes across nine facets of job satisfaction: Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards, Operating Procedures, Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Each facet comprises four items, with responses captured on a six-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Human Relations Skills Assessment (Lussier, 2008): This assessment measures interpersonal skills critical for effective workplace interactions, including communication proficiency, conflict resolution, empathy, teamwork, and adaptability. Respondents rate their agreement with

statements related to these skills on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Modern Communication Equipment Usage Scale (Yıldız, 2024): This scale evaluates the extent to which individuals utilize contemporary communication tools such as emails, instant messaging, video conferencing, and collaborative platforms. It assesses both the frequency of use and the perceived proficiency in operating these tools. Responses are recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "always."

Job Performance Scale (University of Texas at San Antonio, 2024): This scale assesses an individual's effectiveness in their job role, focusing on aspects such as task completion, quality of work, efficiency, and overall contribution to organizational goals. Respondents indicate their level of agreement with performance-related statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Method of Data Collection: The data for this study was collected through the administration of the research instruments to the participants of the study. A letter of introduction and permission sent to the public universities that made the sample of this study. Upon getting approval from the colleges, the researcher went to the public universities to administer the instruments. The respondents were guided to provide their responses to the questions outlined in the questionnaires. The instrument was collected from the respondent immediately at the spot after completion. The data collection is expected to be done within a month.

Method of Data Analysis: Collected data was analyzed using frequency counts, mean analysis and linear regression. The research questions was answered with mean analysis of the Likert scale and the hypothesis was tested using linear regression at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Distribution

S/No	Variable	Category	Frequency (N =133)	Percentage
1.	Age	30 – 39 years	40	30.1
		40 - 49 years	66	49.6
		50 yrs above	27	20.3
2.	Gender	Male	56	42.1
		Female	77	57.9
3.	Educational Qualification	OND/NCE	39	29.3
		HND/Bachelor degree	81	60.9
		Masters	13	9.8

4. Years of Job Experience	1 – 5 years	9	6.8
	6 – 10 years	29	21.8
	11 – 15 years	29	21.8
	16 years & above	66	49.6
5. Current Position	Junior Secretary	38	28.6
	Senior Secretary	29	21.8
	Principal Secretary	47	35.3
	Chief Secretary	19	14.3

The demographic data reveal a fairly mature workforce. In terms of age, 40 (30.1%) of respondents were aged between 30 and 39 years, 66 (49.6%) aged between 40–49 years, and 27 (20.3%) aged 50 years and above. Regarding gender, 56 (42.1%) of the respondents were male while 77 (57.9%) were female, reflecting the female-dominated nature of secretarial roles in many Nigerian institutions. In terms of educational qualification, a majority of the respondents (60.9%) held an HND or Bachelor's degree, 39 (29.3%) had OND/NCE qualifications, while 13 (9.8%) had Master's degree. On the years of job experience, 66 (49.6%) have worked for 16 years and above, 29 (21.8%) respondents had between 6–10 years and 11–15 years respectively, while 9 (6.8%) had less than 6 years of job experience. As regards their current position, 47 (35.3%) were Principal Secretaries, 38 (28.6%) were Junior Secretaries, 29 (21.8%) were Senior Secretaries, and 19 (14.3%) were Chief Secretaries.

Table 3: Multiple regressions on the influence of job satisfaction, human relations skills and modern communications equipment on the job performance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1159.571	3	386.524	53.314	.000 ^b
Residual	935.241	129	7.250		
Total	2094.812	132			
R = .744, R ² = .554, Adj. R ² = .543, SE = 2.693					

The first hypothesis examined whether job satisfaction, human relations skills, and the use of modern communication equipment collectively influence the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State. The results revealed a significant joint influence of the three independent variables on the criterion variable (job performance). Specifically, job performance yielded a coefficient of multiple regression (R) of 0.744 and a multiple regression square of 0.554. The coefficient of determination (R²) was 0.554, meaning that 55.4% of the variation in job performance can be explained by the combined effect of job satisfaction, human relations skills, and modern communication equipment use. The ANOVA result confirmed the overall statistical significance of the model with an F-value of 53.314 and a p-value of 0.000 (F = 53.314; p = .000 < 0.05), indicating that the combined effect of the independent variables on job performance is significant. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, job satisfaction, human relations skills, and the use of modern communication equipment jointly have a statistical significant effect on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State.

Table 4: Multiple regression on the relative influence of job satisfaction, human relations skills and modern communications equipment on the job performance

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.399	5.011			
Job Satisfaction	.552	.063	.555	8.812	.000
Human Relations Skill	.612	.085	.463	7.193	.000
Modern Comm. Equipment Usage	-.156	.068	-.157	-2.306	.023

The results from the regression coefficients table revealed that job satisfaction exerted a positive and statistically significant influence on job performance. The standardized beta value of 0.555, t-value of 8.812, and p-value of 0.000 ($B = 0.552$; $\beta = 0.555$; $t = 8.812$; $p < 0.05$) indicates that job satisfaction is associated with a significant improvement observed in the job performance among secretaries. Similarly, human relations skill was found to have a significant effect on secretaries' job performance. The analysis showed an unstandardized coefficient of 0.612, a standardized beta value of 0.463, a t-value of 7.193, and a p-value of 0.000 ($B = 0.612$; $\beta = 0.463$; $t = 7.193$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that better interpersonal and communication skills significantly enhance secretarial performance in the workplace. In contrast, the use of modern communication equipment demonstrated a negative and statistically significant relationship with job performance. The regression output revealed an unstandardized coefficient of -0.156, a standardized beta value of -0.157, a t-value of -2.306, and a p-value of 0.023 ($B = -0.156$; $\beta = -0.157$; $t = -2.306$; $p < 0.05$). This negative association may suggest that while modern communication tools are available, their usage might not be effectively aligned with the daily operational duties of secretaries or could be contributing to distractions or inefficiencies.

Hence, the findings reject the null hypothesis, as each of the three independent variables, job satisfaction, human relations skill, and use of modern communication equipment, had a statistically significant individual impact on job performance. While job satisfaction and human relations skills positively influenced performance, the use of modern communication tools, though statistically significant, showed a negative effect, indicating a potential area for further investigation or targeted training.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the first hypothesis revealed a significant joint influence of job satisfaction, human relations skills, and the use of modern communication equipment on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Ogun State. This is in line with the findings of Agubosim

et al. (2023) that there is relationship between job satisfaction and secretaries' job performance. They concluded that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors significantly influence job performance, while Kaelani et al. (2023) emphasized that satisfaction serves as a critical link between motivation and output. A satisfied secretary is more likely to be punctual, organized, and responsive traits that are essential for high job performance.

Also, Nyone (2024) found that empathy and emotional control which are components of human relation skills are vital for maintaining workplace harmony and ensuring high-quality service delivery. Secretaries with strong interpersonal skills manage their tasks more smoothly, foster collaboration, and help maintain a productive office environment. These outcomes naturally lead to better job performance, making human relations skills an indispensable component of secretarial effectiveness. While Adenekan and Elizabeth (2021) found that technological competence was significantly associated with better job performance among secretaries. Likewise, Aliu et al. (2024) emphasized that access to and efficient use of modern office equipment streamline workflow, reduce errors, and increase productivity, all of which are key indicators of strong job performance.

The results of the second hypothesis revealed that out of the three predictors, job satisfaction is the most potent factor, followed by human relations skill, and lastly by the use of modern communication equipment. This aligns with the work of Owolabi and Makinde (2012), who stated that satisfied employees, particularly in Nigerian tertiary institutions, tend to perform better and show higher levels of commitment and productivity. Their study emphasized that motivational factors, such as recognition, advancement opportunities, and work-life balance, are central to boosting employee output. Similarly, the positive influence of human relations skills corroborates the findings of Afolabi and Balogun (2017). Their study on administrative staff in Southwestern Nigerian universities demonstrated that effective interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution skills significantly enhance performance outcomes in administrative and secretarial roles. Human relations create a supportive work environment that fosters collaboration and job engagement.

The study also finds support in Chukwuma and Eze (2020), whose research highlighted the role of modern communication technologies in administrative tasks. However, unlike the current study, they observed a positive impact of communication equipment on performance. This disagreement may reflect contextual differences—while their sample was drawn from private universities with better infrastructure and ICT training, the current study's setting in public universities might explain the negative impact due to inadequate training, underutilization, or technological barriers.

On the contrary, Okon and Udoh (2019) presented a contradictory view by reporting that excessive reliance on modern communication devices without corresponding training reduces productivity, particularly when staff lack digital literacy. Their study aligns more closely with the negative relationship observed in this research, suggesting that technological adoption must be accompanied by institutional support, orientation, and proper integration into workflow.

The findings of this study are largely in agreement with the empirical literature concerning the roles of job satisfaction and human relations skills in predicting job performance.

The negative influence of communication equipment highlights a contextual challenge in public institutions, signaling the need for improved ICT policies, training, and structured usage strategies.

Conclusion

The result indicated remarkable level of job performance, job satisfaction, human relation skills and modern communications equipments usage by secretaries in the surveyed institutions. It was found that job satisfaction, human relations skills, and the use of modern communication equipment jointly and relatively have a significant bearings on the performance of the secretaries in the face of technology-driven office and secretarial functions. Thus, it was concluded that effective and efficient functioning of secretaries and office administrators requires the availability of technological tools, better job satisfaction and human relation skills. Therefore, public tertiary institutions in Ogun State and similar organisations should make the acquisition and adoption of technological innovation a policy and culture issue to enhance the performance of their secretaries and facilitate service delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. University management should address the issue of poor salary, fringe benefits, and promotion stagnation. Recognition, rewards, and career development plans should be emphasized to enhance job satisfaction.
2. Regular workshops and training should be organized on workplace ethics, emotional intelligence, and team dynamics to further boost human relations capacity.
3. Universities should invest in modern communication tools and provide comprehensive digital literacy training. This includes both hardware upgrades and software usage training tailored to administrative tasks.
4. Universities should align the use of communication equipment with job roles by developing clear ICT policies, guidelines, and support systems for effective usage.
5. The National Universities Commission (NUC) and related agencies should develop benchmarks for secretarial roles in university administration, incorporating performance metrics that account for both human and technological factors.

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