



Analysis of Office Management and Technology Competencies and Practices in Business Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis

Prof. Amaewhule, W.A. & *Yellowe, Tamunokuro Iyalla

**Department of Business Education
Faculty of Education
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
*iyallatammy1@yahoo.com**

ABSTRACT

The study focused on the Analysis of Office Management and Technology Competencies and Practices in Business Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Sixty-six secretaries in public and private offices in business firms constituted the population and sample of the study. Four research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. The study utilized a four-point scale and a structured questionnaire titled ‘‘Analysis of Office Management and Technology Competencies and Practices Questionnaire’’ (AOMTCPQ). The instrument was validated by three experts using content and face validity. Test-retest method was adopted, and average reliability coefficient of 0.81 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation method. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test statistical tool. The findings revealed that responses of public and private secretaries on OMT Management competencies and practices enumerated were employed by secretaries. The findings revealed that responses of public and private secretaries on OMT Information Communication Technology competencies and practices were employed by secretary. The finding of responses of public and private secretaries on OMT communication competencies and practices in business enumerated were employed by secretary. Lastly the finding revealed that responses of public and private secretaries on OMT typing/keyboarding competencies were also employed by secretaries. The results indication is based on total average mean scores. Based on the findings the researcher recommended that Business firms should improve on the managerial approaches both humans/materials.

Keywords: Office Management, Technology Competencies, Practices, Business Firms

INTRODUCTION

Today’s business environment which is fast growing and evolving has brought a lot of dynamism to the role and functions of Office Management and Technology. According to Davenport (2013) he states that for decades, rapid changes have been taking place in all facets of human life, including Office Management and Technology as a result of technological advancement. The nature of machines, software, hardware, and ICT facilities that were used to produce, duplicate and store information have undergone a great transformation to meet with the trend of growing technology. In addition, it is important to note that this innovation is managed and implemented by a worker called the secretary.

An office secretary is a custodian of the office saddled with the responsibilities such as preparation, preservation, and transmission of different types of documents as well as oversight secretarial duties of confidential nature at various levels in an organization. It means that a qualified secretary should possess basic secretarial skills, managerial skills, and ICT skills and have knowledge of the activities of all sections within the organization where they work. Odesanya, Glory, Mohammed, and Uche (2014) state that secretarial functions everywhere in the world have undergone a lot of technical

changes as a result of modern equipment which gives the secretary the opportunity to increase secretarial efficiency.

Azih (2013) states that in reprography and stencil duplication have been replaced by computer print outs and xeroxing systems. He argued that horizontal suspension and other systems are now replaced by compact disc run on data base computer systems in the area of micrograph and telecommunication. For example, telephones have gone digital including teleconferencing, internet, email, facsimile, and telecommunication equipment are now used. Therefore, hardly any modern business organization that operates without the use of one form of modern office technology gadgets under the auspices of the secretary.

Furthermore, in the light of the ubiquitous nature of modern technology secretaries ought to have the competencies to perform effectively in their place of work. This is important because OMT secretaries need to versatile office staff needed in every department be it public or private to assist executive in carrying out their responsibilities. According to Mumuni and Sam (2014) they buttressed that secretary is pivotal to any efficient and dynamic organizations, and their effective performance depend upon the office equipment, knowledge, skills, and professionalism. Similarly, the success of any organization relies much on the secretary whose role is supportive but critical to the success of any organization. According to International Association of Administrative Professionals as cited by Gambari (2013) describe secretary as an executive assistant who has mastery of office skills who demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, one who exercises initiative, judgement, and makes decisions within the scope of assigned responsibilities. Because OMT functions requires a large amount of initiative, high level resourcefulness, competencies to succeed, and thus, an efficient OMT secretary operates with better combination of modern office competencies with the aim of delivering the appropriate level of services at quality level expected by any business firm.

Modern office competencies are those capacities and abilities required for maximum utilization of innovative office technologies. However, competencies refer to the skills, behaviour, and knowledge acquired and manifested by people. According to OECD (2009) describe competency as a bundle of skills, which is derive from combination of knowledge and personal treats. Similarly, Anne (2012) argued that competency in modern office requires a combination skill, attributes, and behaviours that are directly related to successful performance on any job. These competencies provide a sound basic for consistent and objective performance standards about what is needed and expected in an organization in terms of human relations, management competencies, communication competencies, secretarial competencies, and ICT competencies (Cornachione, 2012).

Office Practices and Procedures

Office today is very different from what it used to be few years back. Having been changed dramatically by technological innovation. Office Management and Technology provides secretaries with essential knowledge of the nature and scope of equipment and procedures used in most modern offices. Similarly, office work is concerned with collecting, processing, and supplying information to business administrators or support staff who need it for decision making.

Common Office Procedure	Major Office Procedure
Mailing service/ Library	- Planning
Typing and duplication/ Estate service	- Staffing
Stenography service/ Security service	- Coordinating
Filing service/ Health service	- Controlling
Stationery and supplies service	-Organizing
Communication service	
Public relation service	
Maintenance service	

Some Modern Office procedure

- **The Cloud:** This is a process where files, project management data, information, and document are all stored in a system called cloud for possible backup.
- **Automating Office Task:** This is a process in the office where data move from system to system without humans but artificial intelligent.

- **Office Management Software:** This is simply the way or method to manage front-office and back-office.
- **Computer Aided Facility Management:** This software helps businesses manage their space allocation, maximize the use of facilities, and improve facilities planning and maintenance.
- **Activity Based Working:** In the traditional office set-ups, workers are assigned specific desks or workplaces. But in an activity-based office, employees choose from a variety of workspaces that are tailored for specific tasks, like collaboration, research, or socializing. While activity-based working may not be for everyone, it can improve efficiency and increase worker satisfaction for many companies.
- **Bring Your Own Device:** This is on the rise because companies are becoming less afraid of employees using their own devices at work and starting to embrace the flexibility.

Concept of Management Competencies

Frederick Taylor developed the scientific management theory around 1911 which espoused this careful specification and measurement of all organizational tasks. He stated that tasks were standardized as much as possible. Workers were rewarded and punished. He buttressed that this approach appeared to work well for organizations with assembly lines and other mechanistic, routinized activities. Going forward, Weber in 1905 improved on the scientific management theory with his bureaucratic theory. Max Weber focused on dividing organizations into hierarchies, establishing strong lines of authority and control. Weber suggested that organizations should develop comprehensive and detailed standard operating procedures for all routinized tasks. Therefore, management as one of the branches of Office Management and Technology such as control, directing, organizing, planning, and staffing etc. These management tools are utilized for the day to day office activities and problem solving for growth and business sustainability. For utilization of these tools there must be availability of these skills. Secretaries of OMT are expected to acquire these management competencies to provide executive support services to all other sectors in the organization, since office management is concerned with the application of the principles and practices. Management competencies focused on the ability to identify issues and practices that generate a range of solutions and actions with benefits, costs, and risks that are connected. These competencies would enhance the abilities of OMT secretaries to effectively and efficiently discharge their duties and responsibilities in a modern office, to meet the challenges of modern times.

Concept of ICT Competencies

The world of technology is blistering fast, ready to adopt change in a fast pace like never before, this pace might not be comfortable but it is a necessity. It has brought different technologies in one paragraph that all must embrace. Secretaries of OMT are required to have the needed skills to operate modern office technological gadgets such as smartphones, faster windows operating systems, laptops, and tablets combined are being used by many secretaries who acquire OMT skills and are helpful in terms of making their work very flexible and easy. Hritzuk and Jones (2014) opined that we live in an era of tablets, phones, and computers, that ICT has become an enabler for greater convenience. Secretaries of OMT who acquire ICT skills can access software programs, like word processing and others in writing and editing letters and reports on their own. And also, data management programs that help OMT secretaries to work with long lists of data and spreadsheets every day on their gadgets, thus, making secretaries to work as smart as possible. It is important to note that OMT secretaries who have the ICT skills operate any time of day, because some of the tools extend working time. They can do business tasks at their homes, and can reply emails whenever they want to. These activities in turn can increase man hours and also increase productivity and profitability. In addition, Christensen (2013) observed that the magnitude and speed at which technology has advanced and changed in management practice over the past years have been stunning. And it is expected that secretaries acquire the needed technology and upgrade their skills constantly to make a difference, he stated that there is no reason to believe that the current rate of change will slow down. Dion (2012) further states that new technology advancement is reshaping business industries to industries where every business will need technology to compete successfully.

Concept of Communication Competencies

Communication competencies in 21st century include written, verbal and nonverbal communication and human relation functions passed through communication processes. OMT Secretary are supposed to acquire this communication competency that incorporates oral and written communication as well as interpersonal communication skills for maintaining production work relationships. As stated by Allen (para 2, n.d) that “competency is a bridge of meaning; that consist of a systematic and continuous telling, listening, and understanding”. However, it is important to note that the success of an organization depends upon how extensively and intensively communication being carried out by it. Because it is a tool of management that helps people meet and work together and that the primary function of an office is communicating internally and externally. It’s a vital tool in which as stated by Ikelegbe, (2016) that communication play an important role in developing and transforming the economy, and also strengthened government and private sector collaboration for the attainment of sustainable national development through increase in the capability, flexibility, and efficiency of communication.

Furthermore, communications competencies involve visiting, talking, writing business letters, telephoning, arranging for meetings, and others. Secretaries of OMT are expected to acquire good command of English language, possess listening ability, possess intelligent perception, and competent to make intelligent interpretations, communication competencies also involve the use of body language, possession of friendly voice, and ability to make intelligent selection of communication channels.

Typing and Keyboarding Competencies

The paradigm towards practical skills training and skills acquired is increasingly being reshaped to make it more attractive, efficient, and effective. Typing and Keyboarding are area where OMT secretary dominate. OMT secretary need to acquire typing and keyboarding skill to properly function among others, attend meetings, take minutes, and predetermine their accuracy for example 80 wpm typing speed etc. These OMT secretarial competencies are vital and major part of OMT especially in the day to day running of the office. Typing is a bimanual action which requires simultaneous coordination between hand and fingers and in which the right key (K, L), and the left-hand key (A, S, D), never interfere with each other because they are assigned to different parts of the keyboard (Cerni, & Job, 2016). According to Lubbe, Monteith and Mentz (2006) they stated that keyboarding skills as a motor skill is defined as the ability to key in information into the memory of the computer with the minimum effort and energy use. While, touch typing is a typing system in which the individual’s fingers are trained to hit particular keys (Weintraub, Gilmour-Grill & Weiss, 2010). Therefore, he/she is expected to be able to type without looking at the keyboard, and the fingers automatically press the keyboard keys without being forced. And also, secretaries of OMT typing speed and typing accuracy should be ten-finger typing speed, that is usually measured on two scales, namely CPM (Characters Per Minute) and WPM (Word Per Minute). CPM is the number of true words typed in one minute, while WPM is the number of standard words that are five letters typed in one minute. WPM can be obtained from CPM divided by five (Sulastri, 2014). Typing accuracy is measured by a percentage scale. An expert touch typist can easily achieve 50 wpm and even 80 wpm.

Concept Competencies

According to Onojetah (2011) described competency as a skill regarded as functional ability applied in practical situations. It is the ability to systematically get things done with the required technological practical skills. Competency is an acquired knowledge, skills and attitude of the person. The term competency has a multiple denotation; it depends on the specific task to be performed by individuals under separate conditions. It is also considered as totality of experience, knowledge, skills, and attitude which are acquired during our life time for effective performance in task. Therefore, Competencies is a broad concept, it helps a person to perform better in practical form. It is the transformation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for performance for a particular task successfully. Finally, it is helpful in distinguishing the superior performance from what is available.

Statement of Problem

Development and innovations in technology have brought about tremendous changes in today’s offices and business environment. These innovations demand greater responsibilities and improved performance on the part of OMT graduates in view of their vital roles in processing office

information. This implies that today's secretaries who lack technological competencies, teaching competencies, communication competencies, short and long competencies and personal and material management competencies, typing/keyboarding to cope with the demands of office management and technology will become irrelevant or even unemployed as the case may be.

Unfortunately, Azih (2013) observed that the performances of some OMT graduates fall short of acceptable practices in modern office technologies. This suggests that they have not adequately acquired the competencies needed for effective use of modern office technologies during their training. Consequently, some functions that are supposed to be handled by OMT graduates are thus given to interlopers from other disciplines, hence, it is against this backdrop that the researcher carried out this study.

Purpose of the Study

The context of the study was to analyze the office management and technology competencies and practices in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the OMT Management competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
2. Ascertain the OMT Information Communication Technology competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
3. Ascertain the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
4. Ascertain the OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Research Questions

1. What are OMT Management competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?
2. What are the OMT Information and Communication Technology competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?
3. What are the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms Port Harcourt metropolis?
4. What are the OMT Typing/keyboarding competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private Secretaries on OMT Management competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private secretaries on OMT Information Communication Technology competencies and practices employed By secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private secretaries on OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.
4. There is no significant different in the mean rating of public and private secretaries on OMT Typing/keyboarding competencies and practices employed by secretaries in Business Firms Port Harcourt metropolis.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The design was appropriate because it enabled the study to describe the OMT competencies and practices regarding the subject matter. The population for the study comprised sixty-six (66) secretaries of public and private business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for the study was sixty-six (66). The sample was drawn from the population using Snowball technique/Visual snowball technique. Snowball technique exist where existing subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances (Goodman, 1961). While according to Fabiola and Ignasi (2012) Visual snowball method is applied where the population is hard to reach.

Table of Population of Secretaries of firms

S/N	Secretaries	Population Size	Sample Size
1.	Public business firms	36	36
2.	Private business firms	30	30
	Total	66	66

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaire titled ‘‘Analysis Office Management and Technology Competencies and Practices Questionnaire’’ (AOMTCPQ). The instrument adopted four-point rating scale weighted as ‘‘Strongly Agree’’ (SA) 4- points, ‘‘Agree’’ (A) -3 points, ‘‘Disagree’’ (DS) -2, and ‘‘ Strongly Disagree’’ (SD) -1. Three experts did the content and face validation, test-retest method was adopted and Pearson Product Moment Correlation method was used to establish the reliability of the items and a reliability average coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. The instrument provided response for four research questions with 40 items: Items 1-10 for research question one, items 11-20 for research question two, items 21-30 for research question three, and items 31-40 for research question four. The researcher administered 66 copies of questionnaire retrieved a total of 66 copies were used for the analysis representing 100 percent of the total number distributed. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The decision rule is a mean score of 2.50 and above was deemed to be significant. While the rule for the hypotheses was that any hypothesis with t-critical table value of 1.96 and below is significant.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What are the OMT Management competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on the OMT Management competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis

S/N	Statements	Pubic Sec. (N=36)		Private Sec. (N=30)		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1.	Secretaries possess managerial skills for resolution.	2.90	0.63	2.73	0.87	A
2.	Show professional competencies.	2.80	0.70	2.90	0.85	A
3.	Develops positive customers relations.	2.78	0.80	2.70	0.82	A
4.	Show positive relationships with employees.	2.78	0.70	2.80	0.80	A
5.	Possess needed leadership qualities for firms’ goals.	2.95	0.90	2.60	0.85	A
6.	Maintain professional and ethical standard.	2.85	0.80	2.80	0.98	A
7.	Motivate employees to achieve desired performance.	2.89	0.80	2.90	0.96	A
8.	Identify operational problems.	2.80	0.74	2.78	0.94	A
9.	Communicate effectively both orally and writing.	2.90	0.73	2.79	0.91	A
10.	Possess interactive skills.	2.98	0.83	2.94	0.93	A
	Total mean/SD	25.83	7.33	25.21	8.16	
	Grand mean/SD	2.583	0.73	2.521	0.81	1.661

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Table 1: shows that all items regarding OMT management competencies and practices employed by secretaries in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis are all in agreement as indicated by their mean which are above 2.50. This implies that secretaries unanimously agreed with all the items listed as management competencies as tool employed by secretaries.

Research Question 2

What are the OMT Information and Communication Technology competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on the OMT Information and Communication Technology Competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis

S/N	Statements	Public Sec. (N=36)		Private Sec. (N=30)		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
11.	I can access and navigate internet.	2.61	0.64	2.91	0.72	A
12.	I can use copiers.	3.01	0.74	3.04	0.81	A
13.	Ability to use excel package.	2.90	0.70	3.02	0.79	A
14.	To store document in flash/CD.	3.03	0.76	3.00	0.78	A
15.	I can scan and send document.	2.93	0.71	3.10	0.78	A
16.	I can prepare slide show using power point.	2.90	0.74	3.17	0.77	A
17.	I have knowledge of graphics and design.	2.89	0.73	3.10	0.76	A
18.	I can use hyperlinks to track site.	2.89	0.73	2.90	0.74	A
19.	I use design layout.	3.13	0.75	3.16	0.72	A
20.	Send mail and receive mail.	3.12	0.73	3.10	0.71	A
Total mean/SD		29.41	7.23	30.5	7.58	
Grand mean/SD		2.941	0.072	3.05	0.75	1.71
			3		8	

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Table 2 shows that all items regarding OMT Information and Communication Technology competencies and practices employed by secretaries in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis are all in agreement as indicated by their mean which are above 2.50. This implies that secretaries unanimously agreed with all the items listed as ICT competencies as tool and practices employed by secretaries.

Research Question 3

What are the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms Port Harcourt metropolis?

Table 3: Mean Ratings on the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

S/N	Statements	Public Sec. (N=36)		Private Sec. (N=30)		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
21.	Ability to build trust.	3.21	0.74	3.11	0.72	A
22.	Help in terms of understanding situations.	3.00	0.84	3.14	0.71	A
23.	Help improve respect in the office environment.	2.90	0.75	3.00	0.89	A
24	Create conditions for creative ideas.	3.00	0.73	3.00	0.98	A
25.	Communication boost productivity.	3.10	0.71	3.30	0.88	A
26	It helps improve professional life.	2.50	0.64	3.17	0.77	A
27.	Help in making rational decisions.	2.79	0.73	3.10	0.86	A
28.	Build strong business relation.	2.89	0.86	2.90	0.83	A
29.	Help in top/bottom relationship in work place.	3.13	0.75	3.16	0.82	A
30.	Better control.	3.12	0.73	3.10	0.81	A
	Total mean/SD	29.65	7.48	30.98	8.27	
	Grand mean/SD	2.964	0.748	3.098	0.82	1.91
					7	

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Table 3 shows that all items regarding OMT Communication competencies and practices employed by secretaries in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis are all in agreement as indicated by their mean which are above 2.50. This implies that secretaries unanimously agreed with all the items listed as communication competencies as tool employed by secretaries.

Research Question 4

What are the OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Table: 4 Mean Ratings on the OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and Practices employed by Secretaries in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

S/N	Statements	Public Sec. (N=36)		Private Sec. (N=30)		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
31.	Ability to demonstrate correct posture.	2.50	0.64	2.61	0.62	A
32.	I apply hand and arm position.	3.00	0.74	2.74	0.61	A
33.	Key at a predetermined level of accuracy.	2.90	0.70	3.01	0.77	A
34.	I can filter file alphabetically/numerically.	3.01	0.73	3.07	0.78	A
35.	I can transcribe 70-80 wpm with 95% accuracy.	1.10	0.21	1.04	0.14	SD
36.	I possess audio typing skills.	1.50	0.64	1.17	0.87	SD
37.	I am quick in data entry during meetings.	2.69	0.63	3.10	0.76	A
38.	Key at a predetermined level of speed.	2.89	0.69	2.90	0.83	A
39.	Apply touch numerical/symbolic skills.	3.03	0.75	3.16	0.92	A
40.	I apply ergonomic standard of keyboarding.	3.11	0.83	3.15	0.91	A
	Total mean/SD	25.73	6.56	25.95	7.21	
	Grand mean/SD	2.573	0.656	2.595	0.72	1.64

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

Table 4 shows that the items regarding OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices employed by secretaries in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis are in agreement with mean ratings of items 1,2,3,4,7,8,9, and 10 with mean ratings above 2.50. But strongly disagreed in mean ratings of 5,6, which are below 2.50 respectively. With grand mean of 2.59 and standard deviation 0.69, this implies that on the average the respondents agreed with the items listed as typing/keyboarding competencies as tool employed by secretaries.

Hypotheses 1

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private Secretaries on the OMT Management competencies and practices employed in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Table 5: t-test result of the difference in mean rating on public and private Secretaries on the OMT Management competencies and practices employed in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis

Secretaries	N	Mean	SD	Df	L/Sign	z-Cal.	z-Crit.	Remark
Public Firms.	36	2.583	.73					
Private Firms.	30	2.521	.81	64	0.05	.339	1.96	Accepted

Source: fieldwork, 2021.

The data in Table 5 shows that t-calculated value of .339 is less than the t-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of 64. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. Meaning that the responses of public and private secretaries on the OMT Management competencies and practices employed in business firms did not differ significantly.

Hypotheses 2

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private Secretaries on the OMT Information Communication Technology competencies and practices in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Table 6: t-test result of the difference in mean rating on public and private Secretaries on the OMT the Information Communication Technology competencies and practices in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Secretaries	N	Mean	SD	Df	L/Sign	t- Cal.	t-Crit.	Remark
Public Firms.	36	2.941	.72					
Private Firms.	30	3.05	.758	64	0.05	-33.7	1.96	Accepted

Source fieldwork, 2021.

The data in Table 6 shows that t-calculated value of -337 is less than the t-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of 64. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that the responses of public and private secretaries on the OMT Information Communication Technology competencies and practices employed in business firms did not differ significantly.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private Secretaries on the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Table:7 t-test result of the difference in mean rating on public and private Secretaries on the OMT Communication competencies and practices employed in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Secretaries	N	Mean	SD	Df	L/Sign	t- Cal.	t-Crit.	Remark
Public Firms.	36	2.95	.75					
Private Firms.	30	3.01	.39	64	0.05	-7.16	1.96	Accepted

The data in Table 4 shows that t-calculated value of -7.16 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of 64. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that the responses of public and private secretaries on the OMT communication competencies and practices employed in business firms did not differ significantly.

Hypotheses 4

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of public and private Secretaries on the OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices employed in Business Firm Port Harcourt metropolis.

Table 8: z-test result of the difference in mean rating on public and private Secretaries on the OMT Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices employed in Business Firms in Port Harcourt metropolis

Secretaries	N	Mean	SD	Df	L/Sign	z-Cal.	z-Crit.	Remark
Public Firms.	36	2.74	.66					
Private Firms.	30	2.60	.72	64	0.05	-5.9	1.96	Accepted

Source fieldwork, 2021.

The data in Table 8 shows that t-calculated value of -5.9 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of 64. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. It means that the responses of public and private secretaries on the OMT typing/keyboarding competencies and practices in business firms did not differ significantly.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The finding of the study revealed that both public and private secretaries agreed that all the itemized OMT competencies and practices established by this study such as management competencies and practices, Information and Communication Technology competencies and practices, Communication competencies and practices and Typing/Keyboarding competencies and practices are all OMT competencies acquired by secretaries and practices by business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis. As agreed by Olubumi (2014) that argued that apart from the computer science, computer technology and engineering, there is no other sector that exposes secretaries to modern office equipment as Office Management Technology. The finding also revealed that the test of the null hypotheses indicated they do not differ significantly in the mean responses of secretaries of public business firms on the acquired OMT competencies and practices, and also the secretaries of private business firms on the acquired OMT competencies and practices in business firms in Port Harcourt metropolis. Thus, the hypothetical situation was accepted.

CONCLUSION

Modern office technology can make a significant difference in a workplace. It was found that office technologies secretaries possess competencies to enhance performance, but only if the office is equipped with relevant and needed technologies, and the right personnel who possess the required and acquired competencies of OMT. Secretaries who possess these competencies stand a chance to create growth and development in business firms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Business firms should improve on the managerial approaches both humans/materials.
2. Business firm should improve and constantly upgrade/train secretaries to meet the test of time since ICT is evolving.
3. Business firms should improve in the area of communication, for any business to have growth it is basically through trust and this trust comes through communications.
4. Business firms should make provision for upgrade/training on typing/Keyboarding.

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