

## Word Processing Skills Needed by Office Technology and Management Students of Colleges of Education for Effective Performance in Modern Office in Enugu State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The study was aimed at determining the word processing skills needed by office technology and management education students of Colleges of Education for effective performances in modern offices in Enugu State. The study was carried out in Enugu State using a descriptive survey research method. One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population for this study was 144 which comprised 13 lecturers and 131 students of office technology and management in the two public Colleges of Education in Enugu State. There was no sampling because the population was manageable. The instrument used for data collection was a 22 item structured item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was structured using a four point rating scale for data collection and was face validated by three experts, two in Business Education, from the Department of Technology and Vocational Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation from Department of Science and Computer Education both in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument which stood at 0.76. Out of 144 copies of the questionnaire distributed 140 were properly filled and used for data analysis representing 97.22 percent return rate. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance at 138 degree freedom. The result of the findings revealed that all the items under word processing skills, communication skills, were higher needed by office technology and management education students of Colleges of Education for effective performance in modern offices in Enugu State. The null hypothesis tested showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers and students of office technology management to the items in word processing skills. Based on the findings, some implications were deduced and it was recommended among others that the identified ICT skills for modern offices should be integrated into the curriculum of office technology management by the curriculum planners.

Keywords: Word Processing, Skills, Effective, Performance, Office Technology and Management

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### INTRODUCTION

The technological development in office information and management has created a skill mismatch on the training of students in tertiary institution. This has constituted challenges on the skills possessed by graduates in order to execute day-to-day activities in business and related occupations [1] notes that the rapid scientific and technological inventions and innovations have made it imperative for graduates to acquire new skills to keep up with the current time. This development is

evidenced by the technological infrastructure and equipment used in offices for communication. [2] states that the introduction of sophisticated telecommunication equipment; electronic mail system, computer and word processing as well as new management techniques have affected the skills and knowledge needed to perform in offices. All these innovations have changed the work habit which in turn requires acquisition of information and

communication technology (ICT) skills. ICT according to [3] comprises the diverse set of technological facilities and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information. The scope of (ICT) includes computer, internet, broadcasting technologies like radio, television and telephone, internet software, database, fixed time telecommunications, mobile and wireless communications [4]. [5], defines ICT as the use of scientific discoveries - computer and video cameras, cable television, satellite dish, fax machines, scanners, interactive digital white boards and other electronic devices to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate information. ICT is a powerful support tool to foster office and business activities. ICT according to [6] is a system designed to acquire, analyze, synthesize and distribute appropriate information required by managers, workers and administrators to perform their duties efficiently. As the access to information continues to grow exponentially, office education and skills remain on a higher requirement for teachers and students. ICT is a computer based tool for communication and processing needs of organizations. Computer provides word processing skills and competencies to its users to enable them type, draw and pass information to other people. According to [1], word processing entails using a computer to create, edit and print documents. It is the most common type of all computer application. It is an electronic form of the old typewriter that enables people to edit, insert and create document for easy information dissemination. [5] opined that word processing skills is essential to the students to work after graduation. This skill enables them to apply their knowledge and undertaking to everyday life, engage easily with others, solve problems and develop personally. [5], stressed that a word processor is a program design to enable computer users create document and reports. An example of word processing, one needs a computer, a special program called word processor and a printer. [7], noted that a word

processor enables one to create a document, store it electronically on a disk, display it on a printer. Word processor students will continue to find that they have to make decision on things as lines and spaces per centimeter, differences in pitch and set up from completely unarranged copy. The teaching of these has assume greater importance. Other important areas of word processing are the letter styles and decision making.

Further, [8] pointed out that every student irrespective of gender or discipline entering the labour market needs to understand how office technology is affecting these four areas at the office; (a) environment, (b) the workers, (c) the nature of the job available today, and the jobs that are likely to exist in the future. It is pertinent to note that students of office technology and management need to be able to; (1) Lunch a word processor and use it to create new documents, saving document, open existing documents, edit text, format a document (by new inserting paragraphs, bullet and page number, line spacing, font size or face, colour and size, underline, tallies, bold, text alignment and boarder styles) (2) Cut, copy and paste text to another location within a document or into another document, undo operations, check spellings and grammar, use thesaurus to lock up synonyms, and antonyms, find and replace text, use format painter feature to copy formatting from one place and apply it to another. (3) Create different document types-business letters, mail mergers, newspaper columns etc. (4) create tables and use mathematical functions to perform mathematical operations on table data. (5) Insert object, graphs, chart and pictures into active documents, resize pictures and move pictures to different location, insert word art, clip art, hyperlinks, symbols, auto shapes, date and time, header and footer, bookmark, customize toolbars and adjust page views. (6) Convert word documents to portable file format (pdf) or web page (html) [5]. According to [9] word processing program allows One to order a printout complete with headings page number, and margins as desired, Justification, centering variables pitch or

variable spacing for the typeset look. The word processing is very useful for office work and even non office work. Word processing also thrives in the world of the large cooperation. The most widely used word processing program run as microcomputers and are used in small business and professional offices by writers, editors, students in and out of schools and colleges, and in the homes. Word processors were developed to speed the process of written communication. They are now the foundation for today's office automation; they are essential productivity tools for offices and personal users alike. Word processing is the activity of entering, viewing, storing, retrieving, editing, arranging and printing text using a computer [10]. Word processing is comparable to typewriting. There is a great advantage of word processing over using a typewriter in that one can make changes without retyping the entire document. Word processors also make it easy to move sections of text from one place to another within a document or between documents. Further, word processing application is the use of computer for the purpose of producing document such as letter, memos and reports [11]. Word processing can be linked to a typewriter inside a computer in that it incorporates all the duties of a typewriter which basically are; the ability to type and produce text on paper, store and manipulate text in a document and get printed copies. The skills of manipulating word processing are necessary as the computer system has replaced the typewriter. Students studying office technology and management need to acquire these word processing skills to enable them fit into the

#### **Theory of Connectivism**

This study was based on the connectivism theory. Connectivism is a learning theory propounded by [11]. Connectivism has been lauded as a learning theory for the digital age and as such seeks to describe how students who use personalized, online and collaborative tools learn in different ways not exposed to previous generation of students. The essence of Siemens' argument is that today, learning is lifelong, largely formal and that

Okorojiofor and Areji labour market. Word processing is useful in policy and decision making. If a firm has its policy manual in a word processing form such as stored on diskettes, changes can be made quickly and easily. Assume that an executive committee is considering changes to the retirement policy, using word processing, the policy manual can be scanned for all references to retirement. These sections are printed for executive review. When the decision are made, word processing can be used to update the appropriate manual section and prepare a letter to employees advising them of the changes. In this word processing application, it improves the information flow to the manager before the decision is made and improves the flow from manager before the decision is made and improves the flow from the manager after decision is made. Moreover, word processing is advantageous in preparing account, receivable mails and can be used to prepare customized collection of letter for previous accounts. The word processing skills needed by colleges of education students who are studying office technology and management to perform in modern offices are necessary to be identified in order to train them for the challenges of labour market. When these skills are adequately possessed by the students of office technology management their future performances in the modern offices world be guaranteed. Against this back drop, the need for ascertaining the word processing skills needed by office technology management students of Colleges of Education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu state arouse.

previous human -led pedagogical roles and processes can be off-loaded on to technology. Siemens also criticize the three dominant learning theories, namely behaviorism, suggesting that they all locate learning inside the learner. Siemens counter argument is that through the use of net worked technologies, learning can now be distributed outside the learner, within personal learning communities and across social networks. Embracing

connectivism means that there is the need to consider new design metaphor that place the person under social behaviour and their community at the Centre of the design process and the resultant net - worked technologies. The implication of the theory is that there is need to shift focus to promoting core evaluative skills for flexible learning that will actuate the knowledge acquired.

[11] identified the principles of connectivism and they include;

- Learning is a process of connecting specialized modes or information sources
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances
- Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known
- Nurturing and maintaining connections are needed to facilitate continual learning.
- Ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concept is a core skills
- Currency (accurate) up to date knowledge is the intent of all

[11] ,conducted a study on word processing and electronic office operation skills needed by secretaries in selected business offices in Abia and Imo States. The purpose of their study was to determine word processing and electronic office operation skills in selected business offices. The researchers used the survey design and the population of the study consisted of 81 secretaries from 41 business offices in public liability companies in Abia and Imo States. There was no sampling since the population was manageable. The data collected were by means of a 20 item self-report inventory titled word processing skills inventory (WPCI) while percentage, mean rating (with standard deviation) were employed in analyzing the data. The finding of the study revealed among others that; secretaries required the following word processing skills, word processing system (hardware and software) skills in using

connectivism learning activities.

- Decision making is itself a learning process
- Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the learning of a shifting reality.

While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision. The need for the existence of highly and competent office technology management graduates who can perform effectively in the current global economy is imperative to this study. Students studying office technology management ought to acquire ICT skills for effective performance of modern office in conjunction with requisite humanistic disposition in order to be in effectively global work force. This theory of connectivism is relevant to this study as the acquisition of ICT skills are pertinent for effective performance in modern offices.

#### **Empirical Studies**

software packages including keyboard accuracy/speed, mail merge, formatting proof reading, saving texts, printing, centralized and distributed processing. Based on the forgoing finds, it was recommended that there was no need to organize refresher courses and seminar for secretarial studies teachers in word processing skills. This study is related to the present study in that the questionnaire item statements are designed to find out ICT skills required by business education graduates who are office workers, using electronics in offices. [11] study differ from the present study in that their study was only word process and electronic office operation skills needed by secretaries in Abia State and Imo State while the present study is on the ICT skills needed by students of office technology and management for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Research question**

This research question was raised to guide the study:

1. What are the word processing skills needed by office technology

Students of Colleges of Education for effective performance in modern offices in Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Research hypothesis**

This research hypothesis was formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

$H_{01}$  There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the word processing skills

needed by office technology management students of colleges of education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Methodology**

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design which according to [12] is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group. The design was adopted because it made use of polychotomous scored instrument for data collection. The study was carried out in the two public Colleges of Education in Enugu State using 13 lecturers and 131 year 11 and 111 students of office technology and management. No sampling was done since the number was small and manageable. A structured instrument developed by the researchers after an extensive literature review titled "word processing skills Needed by office Technology and Management Education Students of Colleges of Education for effective performance in modern office Questionnaire (WPSNOTMESCOE) was used

to collect the much needed data for the study. It was face validated by 3 experts and its reliability coefficient stood at .76. 3 research assistants assisted the researchers to distribute 144 copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Finally, 140 copies were returned signifying 97.22 percent return rate. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question while t-test was used to answer the research hypothesis at .05 level of significance Decision Rule: for the research question was based on the principle of lower and upper limit of the mean, thus:

Very highly needed (VHN) - 3.50-4.00  
 Highly Needed (HN) - 2.50-3.49  
 Fairly Needed (FN) - 1.50-2.49  
 NOT (NN) - 1.00-1.49

For the hypothesis, it was rejected if the significant level was less than .05 level of significance (based on SPSS).

**Research Question 1**

What are the word processing skills needed by office technology Management students

for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State?

**Table 1: Mean rating and standard deviation of the respondents on the word processing skills needed by office technology management students for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State.**

S/N	word processing skills needed by office technology Management students include;	Lecturers		Students		Overall		Decision
		N=12 X1	SD1	N=128 X2	SD2	XG	SDG	
1	Competency to launch a word processor	3.00	1.00	3.50	0.71	3.19	0.92	HN
2	Ability to create a new document	3.41	0.71	3.40	0.70	3.41	0.69	HN
3	Ability to save a document in the word	3.12	0.3	3.40	0.70	3.30	0.62	HN
4	Ability to input devices to enter and edit text accurately	3.24	0.83	3.40	0.70	3.30	0.78	HN
5	Ability to perform text alignment accurately	3.12	0.86	3.20	0.63	3.15	0.77	HN
6	Ability to cut, copy or paste text to another location within a document	2.88	0.93	3.30	0.67	3.04	0.85	HN
7	Ability to create or insert a table	3.53	0.62	2.70	0.82	3.22	0.80	HN
8	Ability to perform undo or redo operation	3.47	0.62	3.20	0.79	3.37	0.80	HN
9	Ability to use thesaurus to look up synonyms/autonyms with the word environs	3.24	0.90	3.30	0.67	3.26	0.81	HN
10	Ability to convert document to portable file format (PDF) or web page etc.	3.65	0.49	3.10	0.74	3.44	0.64	HN
11	Ability to insert spreadsheets into word document	3.47	0.62	3.30	0.67	3.41	0.64	HN
12	Ability to insert word art in to the word document	3.41	0.71	3.20	0.92	3.33	0.78	HN
13	Ability to use format painter features	3.41	0.51	3.50	0.53	3.44	0.51	HN
14	Ability to use color	3.59	0.51	2.80	1.03	3.30	0.82	HN
15	Ability to use numbers	3.00	0.61	3.00	1.05	3.00	0.78	HN
16	Ability to preview /print document	3.14	0.78	3.10	0.88	3.11	0.80	HN
17	Ability to insert object (graphs, charts and pictures)	3.59	0.62	3.20	0.79	3.44	0.70	HN
18	Ability to save files in a secondary devices (flash, CD, etc	3.35	0.70	3.20	0.63	3.30	0.67	HN
19	Ability to use font face	2.76	0.75	2.50	1.08	2.67	0.88	HN
20	Ability to format to size	2.82	1.13	3.10	0.99	2.93	1.07	HN
21	Ability to use symbols	2.82	0.95	3.00	0.82	2.89	0.89	HN
22	Ability to insert header and footer in to the word document	3.41	0.51	3.50	0.53	3.44	0.51	HN
		3.41	0.73	3.18	0.77	3.23	0.85	HN

**Note; X = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation and HN = Highly Needed**

The result of data analysis presented in Table 1 above indicates that the mean rating of the respondents' ranges from 2.67 to 3.44 indicating that the identified word processing skills are highly needed

by office technology and management students for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State. The implication is that the word processing skills are highly needed for the students to

perform effectively in office work in Enugu State. The cluster mean of 3.23 further revealed that the itemized skills are highly

needed. The low standard deviation of 0.85 shows that the respondent's opinions do not differ remarkably to the items.

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and students on the word processing skills needed by office technology management students of

colleges of education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu State.

**Table 2: t-test analysis of mean ratings of lecturers and students on the word processing skills needed by office technology management students of colleges of education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu State**

Variables	N	t	Sig. df	Mean (2tailed)	Std. Error Difference	Decision Difference	
Lecturers	12	0.238	138	0.746	0.33532	.61413	NS
Students	128						

Table 2 shows that the t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 138 degree of freedom for the 18 items is 0.238 with a significant value of 0.746. Since the significant value of 0.746 is more than the 0.05 level of significant the null hypothesis is not significant. This means that there is no significant difference with respect to the 22 items on the mean ratings of lecturers

and students of office technology and management on the word processing skills needed by secretaries on the word processing skills needed by office technology management students of colleges of education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu State. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected.

**Major Findings of the Study**

Based on the result of data analysis, the following findings were made;

1. The itemized word processing skills were highly needed by office technology management students for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State. Some of the word processing skills include ability to; launch a word processor, create a new document in the word, use thesaurus to look up synonyms/autonyms with the word environs, convert document to portable file format (PDF) or web

page, use format painter features and many more.

2. The findings according to test of hypothesis showed that there was no significant difference with respect to the 22 items on the mean ratings of lecturers and students of office technology and management on the word processing skills needed by secretaries on the processing skills needed by office technology students of colleges of education for effective performance in modern office in Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Discussion of Findings**

**Word Processing Skills Needed by Office Technology Management Students for Effective Job Performance in Modern Office**

The findings of the study in line with research question one showed that ability to launch a word processor, create a new document, save a document in the word, use input devices to enter and edit text accurately, perform text alignment accurately, cut, copy or paste text to

another location within a document, create or insert a table, perform undo or redo operation, use thesaurus to look up synonyms with the word environs, convert document to portable file (PDF) or web page, insert spreadsheets into word, document, insert word art into the world

document, format painter features, use page number, preview/print document, save files in a secondary device (flash, CD, etc.) and others are the world processing skills needed by office technology management students for effective job performance in modern offices. The findings of the study showed that the identified skills are highly needed for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State. The implication of this study was that word processing skills like the use of font size and type, use of symbols, ability to insert header and footer into the word document, save files in secondary devices, launch a word processor, create a new document and save a document in the word need to be taught to the students as part of the ICT skills needed for the effective job performance in modern offices. The findings of the study were in line with [1] that students of business education need word processing skills for effective performance and employability. [1], noted that ability to create new document, save a

#### **Educational Implication of the Study**

The findings of the study based on the result of data analysis had far-reaching implications for the government, curriculum planners, colleges of education, business education programs administrators, lecturers and students of office technology management in colleges of education with the general public. The findings of the study have implications for the government in that these identified ICT skills would help in training employable and responsive members of the society. This would reduce the level of unemployment in the society and provide

Based on the findings of the study, information has been gathered on the word processing needed by office technology management students for effective job performance in modern offices. The application of ICT in offices has created a huge gap between the word processing skills possessed and needed for effective job performance in such offices. ICT skills in the context of this study are the soft and hard skills for effective manipulation, operation and utilization of ICT aided

document in the word, input devices to enter and edit text accurately and insert objects (graphs, charts and pictures) are among the ICT skills needed by students for effective job performance and employability in ICT and automated offices. [13], opined that ICT skills are highly needed by the students to perform in automated offices equipment and facilities. The productivity of the employees in ICT and computer aided offices was based on ability to use word processing and other facilities. The findings of the study showed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of student's and the lectures on the word processing skills as ICT component needed by office technology management. The implication was that the status of the respondents (that is students and lecturer) has no influence on the itemized word processing skills needed by office technology management student for effective job performance in modern offices in Enugu State.

enough tax for the government. The findings of the study would enable the curriculum planners in Colleges of Education to integrate the much needed word processing skill for successful and effective performance of the students after graduation. The result would enable them to conduct curriculum evaluation of office technology management in Colleges of education. This would enhance the quality of education offered to the student which consequently would address the need of skill mismatch in the society.

#### **CONCLUSION**

machines to achieve success in work. The result of the study showed that the needed skills are highly needed skills by office technology management for effective job performance in modern offices. Based on the empirical findings of this study, it was therefore concluded that word processing skills identified should be fully integrated into the curriculum in training office technology management students for effective job performance in automated/modern offices. The lecturers



and students shared the same view that these skills were highly needed as ICT

facilities in modern offices cannot be neglected.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The identified word processing skills for modern offices should be integrated into the curriculum of office technology management by the curriculum planners.
2. Lecturers should adopt ICT innovative teaching approaches in teaching the students for easy transition and acquisition of word processing skills among the students

3. ICT facilities should be made available by the school administrators and the government in order to promote the teaching of the identified word processing skills to the students
4. The school administrators should supervise the teaching of the identified word processing skills in order to promote quality in the mastery of the ICT skills by the students.

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