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INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL WORKPLACE ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF SECRETARIES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of digital workplace on job performance of secretaries in universities in Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design and was conducted in Anambra State. The population comprised 134 secretaries in the two public universities in Anambra State. Two instruments were used for data collection. The first instrument, titled Influence of Digital Workplace Questionnaire (IDWQ) *and the second instrument, titled* Job Performance of Secretaries Questionnaire (JPSQ). *The instruments were validated by two experts from the Faculty of Technology and Vocational Education and one from the Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the Department of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To determine reliability, a pilot test was conducted. The reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded coefficient values of 0.82 and 0.85 for Clusters 1 and 2 of IDWQ, respectively, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.84. The reliability coefficient for JPSQ was 0.88, indicating that the instruments were reliable for the study. The instruments collected from respondents were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and simple regression analysis. Findings of the study revealed that digital workplace influences the job performance of secretaries in universities in Anambra State to a high extent. Also, findings of the study revealed that digital workplace influences the job performance of secretaries in universities in Anambra State to a high extent. Furthermore, the study revealed a significant positive influence of digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in universities in Anambra State. It was also revealed that digital technology has a significant positive influence on the job performance of secretaries in universities in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended that Government in collaboration with administrators of universities and the private sector should invest in modern digital infrastructure that supports flexibility, collaboration and seamless workflow.*

Keywords: Digital Workplace, Influence, Job Performance, Secretaries, Universities

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Introduction

Job performance is the measurable output of an employee in achieving organizational goals through work conduct and interactions. It reflects knowledge, abilities, and competence relative to expectations (Dahkoul, 2018). Effective decision-making and high performance in modern offices require accurate information (Asogwa & Agusiobo, 2022). However, concerns about poor job performance among university secretaries in Anambra State persist, affecting institutional efficiency.

Secretaries play a vital role in coordinating organizational activities by managing records, communication, and resources (Ademiluyi, 2018). As administrative professionals with specialized training, they perform tasks with minimal supervision (Mishra, 2020). In this study, a secretary is defined as a formally trained professional with the skills and competencies necessary for modern office operations. In universities, secretaries handle information processing, document management, and data storage, ensuring smooth administrative operations (Tuke, 2020). Despite their importance, declining secretarial performance in Anambra State universities has led to inefficiencies, delays, and reduced productivity. A major challenge is the lack of continuous training and professional development (Oguejiofor & Okem, 2021). Additionally, the increasing adoption of digital technologies has reshaped administrative roles, yet many secretaries struggle with adapting due to inadequate digital literacy. Some universities have not fully integrated digital workplace solutions, forcing secretaries to juggle outdated manual processes alongside modern systems, resulting in inefficiencies. This highlights the urgent need for secretaries to acquire ICT competencies to enhance performance.

As information and communication technology (ICT) grows in importance, secretaries proficient in its application for office record management become vital to organizational success (Dosunmu et al., 2017). To stay relevant, they must acquire modern ICT skills, as rapid technological advancements continue to reshape workplaces (Ohiwerei & Okosun, 2021). Consequently, the increasing digitalization of the workplace has transformed traditional office environments, making the integration of digital tools essential for efficiency.

The digital workplace, defined as an ecosystem of digital tools that enable employees to work efficiently from any location, has significantly influenced organizational operations (Perks, 2015). By integrating mobile, cloud, analytics, and social tools, organizations enhance communication and productivity, fostering a more connected and digital workforce (Attaran et al., 2019). Williams and Schubert (2018) further explored the digital workplace by categorizing it into three key dimensions: (1) Organizational strategy and design**,** which fosters a collaborative and flexible work culture; (2) People and work**,** which prioritizes employee engagement and knowledge-sharing; and (3) Technology platform**,** which integrates essential tools for seamless operations. Building on this, the digital workplace not only reshapes how employees perform tasks but also alters work processes and social interactions within organizations, leading to a fundamental shift

in workplace dynamics (Meske & Junglas, 2021). This transformation is driven by the integration of tools such as intranet, communication platforms, and HR systems, which facilitate daily business functions (Attaran et al., 2019). By breaking down barriers between people, information, and processes, the digital workplace enhances efficiency and agility, enabling employees to adapt to evolving work environments (Attaran et al., 2020).

Ultimately, an effective digital workplace is built on the integration of mobile technology, big data, cloud computing, and search-based applications, which streamline operations and foster collaboration (Lestarini et al., 2015). The core pillars of this digitalized workplace—agility, digital technology, and networking—play a crucial role in optimizing workplace functionality and ensuring long-term organizational success (Attaran et al., 2019). This paper focused on the influence of digital workplace and digital technology on the job performance of secretaries.

The digital workplace involves changing the physical workspace primarily through the integration of front and back-office tools. Digital workplaces represent the next significant step in workplace evolution (Attaran et al., 2019). They are created through the simultaneous and coordinated development of both the physical spaces and the work conducted within them. These interconnected activities foster continual improvement through processes of experimentation, integration, and shared learning. These workplace-making activities are integral to the design and execution of organizations processes. Stare (2021) stated that a digital workplace facilitates teamwork, collaboration, and productivity without compromising operations. This can be achieved through various approaches, such as in-office changes, a work-from-anywhere model, or a hybrid approach. The workplace should be smart, intuitive, and seamless. While the methods for achieving this will vary depending on the specific industry and type of organization, the overall goal remains the same (Peeters et al., 2022). Similar to a digital work environment, digital technology is a crucial aspect of the digital workplace.

Digital technology involves tools and systems that process, disseminate, and represent digitised information, driving organisational change (Haddud & McAllen, 2018). Like past industrial revolutions, digital technologies are transforming workplaces through strategic infrastructure design. Williams and Schubert (2018) define the digital workplace as an integrated platform providing employees with essential tools for efficient, location-independent work, strategically aligned with organisational goals (Kahrović & Avdović, 2021). Modern workplaces increasingly rely on digital tools for projects, communication, and daily operations. The shift extends beyond technology to include organisational and strategic changes that enhance efficiency. Online document management, instant messaging, and email have replaced traditional workflows, streamlining business communication. However, universities in Anambra State face challenges in fully adopting the digital workplace due to inadequate infrastructure, limited access to modern tools, and low digital literacy among secretarial staff. A digital workplace could

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enhance performance, agility, productivity and collaboration while improving work-life balance. Despite challenges, Digital workplace fosters cooperation across distances and time zones (Brahma et al., 2020). However, its influence on secretarial job performance in Anambra State universities remains unclear, as no known studies have explored this area. With the ongoing digital transformation in global workplaces, this study aims to address this gap by examining how the digital workplace influences secretarial job performance in public universities in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The global workplace has undergone a significant transformation due to the rapid adoption of the digital workplace, revolutionizing office operations. Digital technologies now facilitate remote work, seamless collaboration, and easy access to information, shifting from traditional office setups to more flexible work environments. However, universities in Anambra State appear to struggle with this transition, as offices still rely on outdated paper-based processes, with physical file cabinets overflowing with documents.

Some secretaries in these universities seem to face challenges in effectively utilizing digital tools, leading to delays in administrative tasks that could be streamlined with modern technology. Additionally, some universities appear to struggle with digital collaboration and networking, evident in difficulties graduates face when accessing school records like transcripts, often requiring in-person visits despite advancements that enable remote access. The researcher is concerned that the lack of full digital workplace integration may hinder secretarial job performance. However, its exact influence remains unclear. Thus, this study sought to empirically investigate the influence of digital workplace on job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of digital workplace on job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent:

1. Digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.
2. Digital technology influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State?
2. To what extent does digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

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

1. Digital workplace does not significant influence job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

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2. Digital technology does not significant influence job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design and was conducted in Anambra State. The population comprised 134 secretaries in the two public universities in Anambra State. The public universities are Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. Two instruments were used for data collection. The first instrument, titled *Influence of Digital Workplace Questionnaire (IDWQ)*, was divided into two clusters: Cluster 1 contained 10 items on the influence of the digital workplace on secretaries' job performance, while Cluster 2 contained 10 items on the influence of digitalisation on secretaries' job performance. The second instrument, titled *Job Performance of Secretaries Questionnaire (JPSQ)*, contained 15 items measuring secretaries' job performance. Both instruments were structured on a 4-point rating scale: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE).

The instruments were validated by two experts from the Faculty of Technology and Vocational Education and one from the Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the Department of Educational Foundations in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To determine reliability, a pilot test was conducted with 20 secretaries in public universities in Enugu State, who were not part of the study population. The reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded coefficient values of 0.82 and 0.85 for Clusters 1 and 2 of IDWQ, respectively, with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.84. The reliability coefficient for JPSQ was 0.88, indicating that the instruments were reliable for the study. The instruments for data collection were administered to the respondents on the spot and in situations when they were not disposed to complete the instruments an appointment was made on the date for retrieval. Out of 134 copies of the instrument administered, 117 copies were returned in good condition.

The 117 copies of instruments collected from respondents were analysed using mean, standard deviation and simple regression analysis. The mean was used to answer the research questions, while the standard deviation assessed the homogeneity of responses. A mean value of 2.50 and above indicated a high extent, whereas a mean below 2.50 signified a low extent. Hypotheses were tested using simple regression at a 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was: if p-value ≤ 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant influence. Conversely, if p-value > 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted, signifying no significant influence.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent does digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State?

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Table 1: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Extent Digital Workplace Influences Job Performance of Secretaries in Public universities in Anambra State (N=117)

S/N	Influence of Digital Workplace on job performance of secretaries:	Mean	SD	Remark
1	The digital workplace enhances flexibility in task execution.	3.45	0.78	High Extent
2	Secretaries complete tasks faster in an digital work environment.	3.38	0.90	High Extent
3	Digital workplace fosters teamwork and collaboration.	3.50	0.65	High Extent
4	Digital tools in a digital workplace improve workflow efficiency.	3.42	0.70	High Extent
5	Digital workplace allows secretaries to work remotely when necessary.	3.30	0.87	High Extent
6	Adaptability in a digital workplace enhances job satisfaction.	3.47	0.73	High Extent
7	Secretaries experience fewer delays in processing documents.	3.36	0.69	High Extent
8	A digital workplace improves communication between secretaries and management.	3.40	0.74	High Extent
9	Secretaries have better access to work-related information in a digital workplace.	3.44	0.81	High Extent
10	The use of modern technology in a digital workplace boosts productivity.	3.48	0.86	High Extent
	Cluster Mean	**3.42**		**High Extent**

Data in Table 1 presents the respondents' mean ratings on the influence of digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. Data in Table 1 showed that the respondents rated to a high extent, items 1-10, as the influence of digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State with mean ratings ranging between 3.30 and 3.50. The standard deviation scores ranging between 0.65 and 0.90 showed that the respondents' opinions were related. The cluster mean score of 3.42 indicates that the digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent.

Research Question Two: To what extent does digital workplace influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 2: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the Extent Digital Technology Influences Job Performance of Secretaries in Public universities in Anambra State

S/N	Influence of digital technology on job performance of secretaries:	Mean	SD	Remark
11	Digital tools enhance secretaries' productivity	3.50	0.60	High Extent
12	Digital technology improves work efficiency	3.48	0.74	High Extent
13	Use of digital communication tools reduces delays in workflow	3.35	0.70	High Extent
14	Digital platforms facilitate effective document management	3.40	0.68	High Extent
15	Online scheduling tools improve task organization	3.55	0.66	High Extent
16	Digital archiving enhances record-keeping efficiency	3.42	0.72	High Extent
17	Digitalisation reduces workload stress for secretaries	3.31	0.77	High Extent
18	Secretaries effectively use digital platforms for report generation	3.25	0.79	High Extent
19	Digital tools enhance secretaries' collaboration with university management	3.39	0.81	High Extent
20	Access to digital resources improves problem-solving skills	3.45	0.89	High Extent
	-Cluster Mean	**3.41**		**High Extent**

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Data in Table 2 presents the respondents' mean ratings on the influence of digital technology on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. Data in Table 1 showed that the respondents rated to a high extent, items 11-20, as the influence of digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State with mean ratings ranging between 3.30 and 3.50. The standard deviation scores ranging between 0.60 and 0.89 showed that the respondents' opinions were related. The cluster mean score of 3.41 indicates that the digital technology influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent.

Hypothesis One: Digital workplace does not significant influence job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis on the Influence of Digital Workplace on the Job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State

		B	Std. Dev.	β	t-value	p-value
Constant		28.156	4.367		28.452	0.000
Digital Workplace		0.638	0.411	0.612	31.291	0.000
R	0.612					
R^2	0.608					
Adj. R^2	0.601					
F	42.642					0.000

The regression analysis results in Table 3 provide important insights into the influence of the digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B = 0.638) indicates a positive influence of digital workplace on secretaries' job performance, meaning that as the workplace becomes more digital, secretaries' job performance improves. The standardized beta coefficient (β = 0.612) strengthens this assertion, showing that the digital workplace has a significant effect on performance. Additionally, the t-value of 31.291 and a p-value of 0.000 suggest that the influence of the digital workplace on job performance is statistically significant, as the p-value is well below the 0.05 threshold for significance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.608$) indicates that 60.8% of the variance in job performance can be explained by the digital workplace, which is a substantial proportion, demonstrating the model's effectiveness. Furthermore, the adjusted R^2 value of 0.601 corroborates this finding, confirming that the model remains strong even after accounting for the number of predictors in the regression. The F-statistic of 42.642, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000, also confirms the overall statistical significance of the model, showing that the digital workplace is a meaningful predictor of job performance. Thus, since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis

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is rejected, affirming that the digital workplace has a significant positive influence on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: Digital technology does not significant influence job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis on the Influence of Digital Technology on the Job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State

	B	Std. Dev.	β	t-value	p-value
Constant	28.008	10.766		12.060	0.000
Digital Technology	0.695	0.612	0.712	18.755	0.000
R	0.712				
R^2	0.583				
Adj. R^2	0.574				
F	44.127				0.000

The regression analysis results in Table 4 present significant findings regarding the influence of digital technology on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B = 0.695) indicates a positive relationship between digital technology and job performance, implying that as digital technology usage increases, the job performance of secretaries improves. The standardized beta coefficient (β = 0.712) further emphasizes the strength of this relationship, suggesting that digital technology is a strong predictor of job performance among secretaries. The t-value of 18.755 and the p-value of 0.000 demonstrate that the influence of digital technology on secretarial job performance is statistically significant, as the p-value is well below the 0.05 significance level. This indicates a clear and reliable effect of digital technology on performance outcomes in this context. The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.583) shows that approximately 58.3% of the variance in job performance can be explained by digital technology, which is a considerable proportion, highlighting the model's explanatory power. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.574 further supports this, showing that the model remains robust even after adjusting for the number of predictors. Moreover, the F-statistic of 44.127 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates the overall significance of the model, further confirming that digital technology is an important factor in determining the job performance of secretaries. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that digital technology has a

significant positive influence on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

Discussion

Findings of the study revealed that digital workplace influences the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent. The finding may have resulted because of the increased flexibility and adaptability that digital workplaces offer. Secretaries, who are often required to manage multiple tasks and responsibilities, may find it beneficial to have the flexibility to adapt their working style to meet varying demands. The digital environment likely allows them to more effectively organize their work and manage their time, which ultimately enhances their performance. Another reason could be the emphasis on enhanced collaboration and communication that digital workplaces promote. The findings are in agreement with Stare (2021) who reported that digital workplaces facilitate teamwork, collaboration, and productivity without compromising operations, which is crucial for secretarial roles that require effective communication, multitasking, and efficient organization. Similarly, Attaran et al. (2019) suggested that digital workplaces support continuous improvement by providing employees with the flexibility to experiment, integrate new tools, and learn from one another. These practices contribute to improved performance, which aligns with the positive influence observed in the study. Furthermore, Peeters et al. (2022) emphasized that digital work environments encourage a shift towards smarter, more intuitive workplaces that foster productivity and engagement, reinforcing the study's findings that the digital workplace positively impacts the job performance of secretaries. Regarding the hypothesis tested, the study revealed a significant positive influence of digital workplace on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. This statistical significance further supports the argument that digital workplaces enhance job performance, particularly in roles such as secretaries who benefit from flexible, collaborative, and adaptive environments.

The findings of the study revealed that the digital workplace significantly influences the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent. This could be attributed to the ability of digital technologies to streamline various administrative tasks, enhance communication, and provide easy access to information, all of which are crucial to secretarial duties. In a digital workplace, secretaries can use digital tools to improve efficiency, manage workloads effectively, and coordinate tasks more seamlessly. Additionally, digital technology enables secretaries to handle complex processes such as document management, communication, and scheduling with greater speed and accuracy, all of which likely contribute to the improvement in their job performance. This is in agreement with Haddud and McAllen (2018) and William and Schubert (2018) have established those digital technologies, particularly in the workplace, facilitate more efficient and flexible operations. These technologies not only reduce time spent on administrative tasks but also improve

decision-making through the quick availability of information. Similarly, Brahma et al. (2020) emphasized that digital workplaces allow employees, including secretaries, to collaborate and cooperate effectively, even from different locations or time zones, which further enhances productivity and job performance. The integration of digital technology in workplaces aligns with the findings of this study and underscores its importance in driving improved job performance in modern administrative roles. Furthermore, the test of hypothesis showed that digital technology has a significant positive influence on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. This finding indicates that as digital tools and technologies become more integrated into the workplace, they enhance secretaries' ability to perform their duties more effectively. The positive influence observed can be attributed to several factors, including better communication through digital channels, the use of office automation tools that simplify repetitive tasks, and access to real-time data, which all increase overall productivity and job performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher digital workplace has a significant positive influence on the job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. The finding of the study revealed that digital workplace and digital technology influences job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State. Furthermore, the study revealed that workplace and digital technology significantly influence job performance of secretaries in public universities in Anambra State.

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