

## **Employers' Expectations of Office Managers' ICT Skills and Competencies in a Business Driven Environment**

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### **Abstract**

*Employers hire only competent and skillful individuals who can effectively demonstrate their excellent Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills for the growth and development of their organizations. This study focused on the employers' expectations of office managers' ICT competencies in a business-driven environment. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in some selected private organizations in Lagos state. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 35 employers of office managers. The result proved that there was a significant relationship between employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and office managers' performance,  $r(35) = .435^{**}$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ . It concluded that ICT and digital skills competencies are inevitable attributes that office managers must possess if they indeed want to retain their jobs and grow in their chosen career. It was therefore recommended that employers of office managers should continually train and retraining office managers as new ICT tools are being invented regularly therefore office managers should be ready to learn and acquire new ICT and digital skills for them to be relevant in the world of ICT environment.*

**Keywords:** Office Management, Employability Skills, Information and Communication Technology, Technological Tools

### **Introduction**

The traditional office tools such as manual typewriters, IBM machine, Grammar-phones, and other stereotyped office devices have been replaced with the modern electronic information communication systems such as computers/laptops, the Internet, phones, tablets and other modern technological tools. Most offices are now viable on the Internet due to the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic that lead to the lockdown of many offices and forced offices to operate via the Internet. New technology such as computers, scanners, printers, shredder machines, the internet, intranet, teleconferencing device, iPad, multimedia projectors, and other technological tools are needed to encourage employees for better performance at workplace (Aina, 2019). The corporate world is expanding and rapidly changing as a result of new developments in information and communication technologies workspaces, and change is happening at a dramatic rate.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) workplaces may be thought of as a modern office with modern technological equipment. ICT is seen as all electronic devices, network infrastructure, software products, and applications that work together to enable individuals and organizations (such as governments, nonprofit organizations, small and medium enterprises, and criminal enterprises) to connect in the digital environment. An office manager is that office personnel who oversees all office resources (materials, money, machines, people, information and so on) and ensure smooth running of daily business activities. Office managers'

responsibilities in an organization are basically performed with the use of various office technological tools such as computer systems, giant photocopiers, iPhone, tablets, printers, and many more. With the advancement of technology, the use of the computer and software programmes facilitate the work of the professional office manager which include the use of machines such as printer, cell phones, pen drive, photocopier, fax, telex and internet (James, 2013). Office managers' requisite skills, competences and knowledge will make their job functions easier and faster to perform without any hindrance. Modern offices are technological driven therefore, they require office managers who can handle these ICT tools effectively and efficiently to achieve organizational set goals.

Employers' expectation of office manager means the management assessment of office managers on professionalism, effectiveness and efficiency in handling their official duties. With regards to the employers' expectations of office managers, the office managers therefore have been surrounded with challenges of varying degrees and dimensions. Igbinedion (2010) opines that office managers are overwhelmed with varied challenges especially when they lack the knowledge of ICT which is an umbrella term for any communication application or device such as hardware and software, computer and network, television, radio, mobile phone, tablet, and so on. ICT comprises many technological tools that make up the computers, telecommunication and microelectronic which help to enhance office managers' daily business activities and operations. Office managers are expected to gain and acquire ICT skills and competencies in order to surpass modern offices' challenges and heavy workloads. Office managers' inability to demonstrate ICT skills and competencies in today's business environment will jeopardize their chances of being promoted and secured lucrative jobs in the long run.

Globally, the handling of business activities and operations have been mostly observed through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools. Employees are expected to possess the required ICT skills and competencies to be able to thrive in today's modern business driven environment. Office managers who are the blood wire of every organization are not exempted from acquiring these basic ICT skills and competencies since most organizations are currently visible on the Internet (Aina, 2019). Office managers, therefore, cannot afford to lose out; it is evidence that those office managers who cannot effectively and efficiently demonstrate these required ICT skills in modern business driven environment are faced with several challenges since the introduction of ICT. Their inability to meet these ICT high standards has instilled dread in them and they lost several profitable positions and opportunities within the constraints of ICT. It is as a result of these critical issues that the researcher intends to find out the employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and competencies in modern business driven environment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study mainly focused on the employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and competencies in modern business driven environment. The specific objectives were to:

- 1 examine the employers' expectations of office managers' skills and competencies in 21st Century business driven environment
- 2 assess the effect of employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills on their performance in modern business driven environment
- 3 determine the ICT skills training needed by office managers in meeting their employers' expectations in modern business driven environment
- 4 ascertain the benefits of ICT machines/equipment to office managers' in realizing their employers' expectations in today's modern business driven environment

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

- 1 What are the employers' expectations of office managers' skills and competencies in 21st Century business driven environment?
- 2 How can the employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills enhance their performance in modern business driven environment?
- 3 What are the ICT skills training needed by office managers in meeting their employers' expectations in modern business driven environment?
- 4 What are the benefits of ICT machines/equipment to office managers' in realizing their employers' expectations in modern business driven environment?

## **Hypothesis**

Ho: There is no significant relationship between employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and their performance in modern business driven environment

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

The amount of economic growth in any emerging country is linked to the level of technology available. Technology refers to the ability to enhance machines to perform some duties in order to increase performance, and it is only through the use of relevant technologies that skilled but unemployed graduates can be made functional and contribute meaningfully to the growth of their country. There is little question that the world's technologically and economically powerful nations trace their success directly to investments in information and communication technology (ICT).

Esene and Mgbonyebi (2015) opine that today's world of work, which is ruled by information and communication technology (ICT), is complex, which necessitates the individual obtaining the type of education that will equip him with knowledge, understanding, and skills in order for him to be highly functional in society. Furthermore, changes in labor market characteristics have raised the complexity of skills required by today's workforce. Thus, in order to tackle the 21st century difficulties of greater competitiveness in the world of work, one must be prepared with basic ICT abilities, since most businesses nowadays require candidates to have some ICT skills. Chigbuson (2014) states that serious companies are less demanding of academic excellence and technical abilities since they consider them trainable provided candidates can display positive traits and soft skills. As a result, labor employers' expectations have risen, with a desire for work-ready graduates who have intellectual ability as well as ICT abilities.

ICT refers to any mechanical equipment used to create, process, store, print, and exchange information from one person to another or from one group of persons to another. It might be personal information, information used in a commercial transaction, information used to deliver educational services, news, marketing, and notifications, and so on. TechProject (2015) describes ICT as the scientific studies and techniques for handling telecommunications, media management, and broadcast; intelligent systems, data handling, processing, storage, and transmission, network-based solutions, and audio-visual monitoring processes. Okoro and Ekpo (2016) explain that in a short period of time, ICTs have become one of the fundamental building blocks of modern society, and many countries now consider understanding ICT and mastering the fundamental skills and concepts of ICT to be part of the core of education, alongside reading, writing, and numeracy.

ICT has significantly altered the ways businesses are done, how people interact with one another, and how security services combat criminals and terrorists. ICTs enable individuals to connect with one another in a variety of modern methods rather than the conventional face-to-face communication (Deb, 2014), and computers have mostly supplanted the traditional typewriter (Senin, 2011). The usage of cellphones, laptops, and desktop computers with internet access has simplified and accelerated communication. Chen and Schulz (2016) conducted study on how ICT might alleviate social isolation in the elderly; they argue that ICT would help to overcome the social and spatial barriers of social isolation by facilitating easy interaction between the elderly and affordable communication through various mediums at any time and in any place, such as text messages, phone calls, the ZOOM App, video calls, Skype, Facebook chat, and other means. According to Sepehrdoust and Khodae (2013), the Association of African Universities (2000) defines ICT as a shorthand for computers, software, networks, satellite links, and related systems that enable various individuals to access, analyze, create, exchange, and use data, information, and knowledge in previously unimaginable ways.

ICTs have also facilitated the smooth operation of businesses in Nigeria, such as the sale and purchase of goods and services through platforms such as Jumia, Konga, Olx, and several online trading firms; payment of utility bills such as PHCN, Water Supply, Waste Bills, and so on; payment of school fees, as seen in most tertiary institutions like Yaba College of Technology, University of Benin and so on, where school fees are paid online; applying for and filling out job vacancy forms online; and several other means. Senin (2011) contends that the emergence of the internet has provided commercial organizations with a new business channel in the fields of e-commerce. Lawal and Ogbu (2015) assert that providing services through e-commerce and newly emerging ICT technologies is a potential tool for economic development and growth because it allows millions of people all over the world to connect with one another and transact business in a short period of time.

ICTs have the capacity to innovate, enhance, accelerate, and deepen the capabilities of students for a sustainable economy (Omotayo and Umoru, 2015). Work can be continued after the closing hour thanks to advances in information and communication technology. Employees may work on their phones, tablets, or mini-laptops while on the road or when they return home after work. Casey (2012) opines that, with the aid of ICT, work is no more something that must be done at a specific time or location; it can be done anywhere and at any time. Okoye (2018) asserts that ICT includes hardware and software, networks, and a variety of other devices (video, audio, photographic camera, and so on) that may transform information, pictures, and sound into a common ICT format. It encompasses electronic data in processing technologies like as computers and the internet, as well as fixed-line communications networks.

Currently, most sectors throughout the globe have adopted ICTs, and most Nigerian businesses are not excluded. They want all of their staff to be computer literate, not simply competent, because it is one of the requirements for hiring. As computers are so frequently utilized, understanding how to use them to successfully manage knowledge is a basic competence in office technology and management programs. It has been demonstrated that the development of computer skills should begin within the first stages of the undergraduate program.

### **Office Managers' ICT Skills Enhancement**

Doyle (2020) explored various ways on how office managers can improve their ICT skills and competences for a sustainable economy. According to him, it is usually a good idea to practice using technology from time to time. What one practices sticks in the brain, and one will unconsciously continue to learn and improve one's ICT abilities. The more practice one gets,

the more confident one becomes. He affirmed that office managers can improve their ICT abilities by learning from identified and ICT-skilled peers. This form of instruction may be provided without charge if the trainer happens to be a colleague at workplace. Many free online tutorials on how to improve one's ICT skills and technology usage are available. YouTube and Google search are common examples of online tools that will provide access to free online tutorials, while one can also view via the company's websites. A free physical class may be taken at their location. This will allow office managers to utilize the center's laptops, desktop computers, printers, and other ICT-related equipment. Oluwatofunmi and Amietsenwu (2019) assert that social media marketing, website marketing, and search engine marketing were among the most popular and efficient ICT marketing tactics employed by estate agents in real estate marketing. And they recommended that government should step in to assist citizens in acquiring the 21st century ICT skills required for sustainable growth.

### **Organizational ICT Facilities and Resources**

Okoye (2018) believes that in this ICT age, officer managers should acquire and possess the ICT skills indicated by Omotayo and Umor (2015) as installing computer software, word processing skills, electronic presentation, spreadsheets, database, e-mail management, ICT cameras, video conferencing, scanner knowledge, file management and windows explorer, and computer related storage devices. According to Sokari, Gama, Haliru, Olayemi, and Yemi-Peters (2017), ICT facilities include computers/laptops, monitors, mice, keyboards, printers, phones, barcodes, internet modems, Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS), and a variety of software applications that enable online interaction and communication. Tertiary universities must give these facilities and resources so that students may better comprehend and use them to increase commercial activities and operations. According to Arinola, Adigun, and Oladeji (2012), many tertiary institutions have been equipped with advanced ICT facilities and resources to improve undergraduates' ICT skills and competences for fostering sustainability.

### **Office Managers' Expected Skills and Competencies in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Business-Driven Environment**

Reddy (2016) explains various 21st century abilities and qualities that managers possess. According to Reddy, a 21st Century office manager must possess a variety of abilities; in the past, the manager was responsible for supervising the team and projects allocated to him. Today, an office manager is responsible for the desired outcomes as well as employee pleasure at the workplace. According to Reddy, in order for an office manager to be successful and flourish in his or her line of work, he or she must be able to learn from mistakes, research changes in trends and technology and develop strategies and plans that will benefit the organization; interact with influential figures in society to project their products and services online for sales; display great presenting abilities as well as be smart enough to deal with significant situations; work with diverse cultures, religions, tribes, beliefs, and values; provide creative approaches for the benefit of the organization; demonstrate excellent ICT and technological skills; maintain a good connection with senior and junior colleagues; manage people and resources effectively; deal with the psychological adjustment that comes with other types of organizational changes; pay attention to detail and think creatively; exhibit love and empathy to all workers, whether they are senior or junior. They should feel empathy and kindness towards others. This is covered in the OTM curriculum's Social Psychology course.

Office managers are in charge of a variety of office operations, including meetings with both internal and external clients (as this is part of the trainings receive and skills acquire in OTM department). Eze, Mba, and Ozemena (2011) affirm that formal ICT training be provided, together with relevant ICT skills, knowledge, and attitudes, in order to recognize and overcome

these perceived barriers to ICT access. The ability to handle several jobs while maintaining effectiveness and efficiency justifies Office Managers' flexibility. OTM students are taught and groomed in a variety of technical skills courses such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access, among others. Office Managers are taught how to utilize the Excel application software to create fundamental accounting concepts such as Sales/Purchase Journals, Trading and Profit/Loss Accounts, Two and Three Column Cash Books, and so on. Mikre (2011) established that ICTs have an impact on all aspects of life; they stimulate changes in working circumstances, information management and exchange, and so on.

Oviawe and Ojo (2010) opine that the demonstration of ICT skills and competencies are essential for workplace as most business transactions and activities today rely on them for survival, and this applies to all industries, including education, banking, oil and gas, government agencies and parastatals, and so on. It was established training was deficient due to a lack of learning skills necessary to match the standards of modern-day labour market. The enhance ICT skills and competencies, government should provide the necessary ICT infrastructure in schools; there should be a defined vision for the plan of ICT in education. As ICT age is not going away anytime soon, office managers must continually develop themselves in this specialized area.

## **Methods**

In this study, the research design adopted was a descriptive research design while a purposive sampling technique was used to carefully select thirty-five (35) employers of office managers within Yaba and Surulere axis of Lagos State. A purposive sampling technique was adopted because it is a form of non-probability sampling that enables researchers to rely on their own judgement when selecting participants for the survey. The method used to source data was primary and the instrument used was a structured-questionnaire. Data, from the answered questionnaires, were organized and analyzed using the frequency and percentage in Section A (Demographic Data) while mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the statements in Section B (Technical Data). The analysis of the questionnaire was based on four Points Likert the Likert Scale of four categories of responses ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 points; Agree (A) - 3 points; Disagree (D) - 2 points; to Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 point was used. These were used to weigh the level of respondents' views to each of the questionnaire statements. For this analysis, a mean value of 3.00 and above showed that the respondents agreed while below 3.00 indicated that they disagreement. The Pearson Product correlation was used to test the null hypothesis at the significance level of 0.05.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Demographic Data Respondents**

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	21	60
	Female	14	40
Age	Below 35 years	1	2.8
	36 – 40 years	3	8.6
	41 – 45 years	13	37.1
	46 – 50 years	14	40.0
	50 and above years	4	11.4
Marital Status	Married	29	82.9
	Single	6	17.1
Years of work experience	Below 5 years	5	14.3
	6 – 10 years	10	28.6
	11 - 15 years	12	34.3
	15 years and above	8	22.8
Kind of Business	Logistics	3	8.6
	Bakery and Confectionery	4	11.4
	Fashion	6	17.1
	Entertainment	3	8.6
	Travelling Agency	4	11.4
	Supplier	6	17.1
	Others	9	25.8

Table 1.1:

Survey field (2021)

In Table 1.1, the gender analysis shows 21 respondents representing 41.2% were male while 14 respondents representing 58.8% were female. The male respondents were more than their female counterparts. The Age analysis shows that most respondents were between the age of 41 and 45 (37.1%) or 46 and 50 (40%) respectively. The study has more married ones than the singles as 29 respondents representing 82.9% were married while 6 respondents representing 17.1% were singles. The years of work experience of the respondents shows that 5 respondents representing 14.3 had 5 or less years of work experience; 10 respondents representing 28.6% had between 6 and 10 years; 12 respondents representing 34.3% had between 11 and 15 years; while 8 respondents representing 22.8%. The kind of business analysis is as follows – Logistics (3; 8.6%); Bakery and Confectionery (4; 11.4%); Fashion (6; 17.1%); Entertainment (3; 8.6%); Travelling Agency (4; 11.4%); Supplier (6; 17.1%); and those in other business not listed (9; 25.8%).

**Technical Data Analysis**

<b>RQ1: Employers' expectations of office managers' skills and competencies in 21st Century</b>				
S/N	Statements	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	Ability to work with different people in a work setting	3.29	1.81	Agreed
2	Ability to learn from their mistakes and improve on their strengths	3.54	2.41	Agreed
3	Ability to develop strategies and plans that will enhance the growth and development of the organization	3.66	2.67	Agreed
4	Ability to demonstrate effective analytical skills	3.17	1.55	Agreed
5	Ability to provide a creative approach to solve intending issues	3.57	2.47	Agreed
6	Ability to manage office resources effectively and efficiently	3.71	2.80	Agreed
7	A good listener and creative thinker	3.83	3.07	Agreed
Average		3.54	2.40	

Table 1.2: Survey field (2021)

The above Table 1.2 indicated that 31 respondents with a mean score of  $3.29 > 2.50$  agreed that they expect office managers to work with different people in their work settings. However, 4 respondents disagreed. 19 and 16 respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they expect office managers to learn from their mistakes and improve on their strengths with a mean score of  $3.54 > 2.50$ . 23 and 12 respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they expect office managers to develop strategies and plans that will enhance the growth and development of their organizations and the mean score was  $3.66 > 2.50$ . Sixteen and twelve respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they expect office managers to demonstrate effective analytical skills; but 7 respondents disagreed and the mean score was  $3.17 > 2.50$ . 21 and 13 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they expect office managers to provide a creative approach to solve intending issues; however, one respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.57 > 2.50$ . 25 and 10 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they expect office managers to manage office resources effectively and efficiently and there was no that disagreed. The mean score was  $3.71 > 2.50$ . 29 and 6 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they expect office managers to demonstrate good listening and creative thinking skills; there was none that disagreed and the mean score was  $3.83 > 2.50$ . The sum up of this analysis above revealed that employers of office managers demand more from the office managers towards uplifting their organizations. The average standard deviation of this RQ1 was 2.40 which was lower than the mean average score of 3.54.

<b>RQ2:Employers’ expectations of office managers’ ICT skills and their performance</b>				
S/N	Statements	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	Prepare professional documents using word processor	3.29	1.81	Agreed
2	Win customers into buying through the online business techniques	3.26	1.75	Agreed
3	Handle modern office machines for job efficiency and effectiveness	3.31	1.88	Agreed
4	Effective manipulation of computer keyboard for multiple projects	3.06	1.29	Agreed
5	Project the company's products/services through online applications	3.37	2.01	Agreed
Average		3.26	1.75	

Table 1.3: Survey field (2021)

The above Table 4.3 indicated that 32 respondents with a mean score of  $3.29 > 2.50$  agreed that office managers should prepare professional documents using word processor. However, 3 respondents disagreed. 30 respondents agreed that they office managers should win more customers into buying through the online business techniques but 5 respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.26 > 2.50$ . 30 respondents agreed that office managers handling of modern office machines should enhance job efficiency and effectiveness; 5 respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.31 > 2.50$ . Twenty-six (26) respondents agreed that office managers’ effective manipulation of computer keyboard should handle multiple projects; however, 9 respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.06 > 2.50$ . 32 respondents agreed that office managers should project the company’s products and services through the online applications; but 3 respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.37 > 2.50$ . The sum up of this analysis above revealed that the effect of employers of office managers’ expectations should further boost office managers to contribute to the success growth and development of the organizations. All the mean scores were greater than 2.50. The average standard deviation of this RQ2 was 1.75 which was lower than the mean average score of 3.26.

<b>RQ3: ICT skills training needed by office managers in meeting their employers’ expectations</b>				
S/N	Statements	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	Online marketing training	3.34	1.95	Agreed
2	Professional conversation on phone	3.60	2.54	Agreed
3	Creative writing on digital facilities	3.54	2.41	Agreed
4	New Microsoft package training especially Ms word 2019	3.57	2.47	Agreed
5	Data analysis and analytical skills using Database software	3.71	2.80	Agreed
6	Sales report skills using Microsoft Excel	3.60	2.54	Agreed
Average		3.56	2.45	

Table 1.4: Survey field (2021)

The above Table 4.4 indicated that 33 respondents agreed that office managers need to be trained on how to market their businesses online. Though 2 respondents disagreed. The mean score was  $3.34 > 2.50$ . 21 and 14 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that office managers are to be trained on professional conversation through the phone. The mean score was  $3.60 > 2.50$ . 19 and 16 respondents strongly agreed and agreed that office managers need to be trained on how to creatively write on digital facilities. The mean score was  $3.54 > 2.50$ . The thirty-five

respondents agreed that office managers need to learn the new Microsoft package especially Ms Word 2019 (mean score 3.57 > 2.50); how to analyze data and present them analytically using database software (mean score 3.57 > 2.50); and to be trained on sales report skills with the use of Microsoft Excel (mean score 3.60 > 2.50). The average standard deviation of this RQ3 was 2.45 which was lower than the mean average score of 3.56.

It is obvious that office managers are to be equipped with modern digital skills and online marketing sales report for better performance at their workplaces.

<b>RQ4: Benefits of ICT machines/equipment to office managers' in realizing their employers' expectations</b>				
S/N	Statements	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	Help to boost business activities and operations	2.97	1.09	Agreed
2	Aid multiple digital communication	3.11	1.42	Agreed
3	Increase efficiency and effectiveness	3.40	2.08	Agreed
4	Accelerate the process of execution time	3.49	2.28	Agreed
5	Help to monitor subordinates' job tasks and performances	2.97	1.09	Disagreed
Average		3.19	1.59	

Table 1.5: Survey field (2021)

In Table 4.5, 25 respondents agreed that ICT machines and equipment help office managers to boost business activities and operations; though, 10 respondents disagreed (mean score 2.97 > 2.50). 27 respondents agreed that ICT machines and equipment aid office managers' multiple digital communication; however, 8 respondents disagreed (mean score 3.11 > 2.50). 33 respondents agreed that ICT machines and equipment increase office managers' efficiency and effectiveness at workplace; however, 2 respondents disagreed (mean score 3.40 > 2.50). 33 respondents agreed that ICT machines and equipment accelerate office managers' work process execution time; however, 2 respondents disagreed (mean score 3.49 > 2.50). 25 respondents agreed that ICT machines and equipment enable them and office managers to monitor their subordinates job tasks and performances; however, 2 respondents disagreed (mean score 2.97 > 2.50). The average standard deviation of this RQ4 was 1.59 which was lower than the mean average score of 3.19.

### Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and their performance in modern business driven environment

<b>Statistics</b>		<b>(EEOIS)</b>	<b>(OMP)</b>
<b>Employers' Expectations of Office ICT skills (EEOIS)</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.0435**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	n	35	35
<b>Office Managers' Performance (OMP)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.0435**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	35	35

Table 1.6 \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

In determining the relationship between employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and office managers' performance, a Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted. The outcome according to Table 1.6 shows that there is a significant relationship between employers' expectations of office managers' ICT skills and office managers' performance,  $r(35) = .435^{**}$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ . With this outcome, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative accepted.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The average mean of RQ1 in Table 1.2 was  $3.54 > 2.50$  and it revealed that employers of office managers do not expect nothing less than office managers who have possessed required 21<sup>st</sup> Century office skills and competencies and can effectively demonstrate them for the betterment of their organizations. Reddy (2016) states that office managers in 21<sup>st</sup> century must possess a variety of abilities and be able to supervise subordinates and projects allocated to them. The era of typing, preparing tea and coffee for the boss has dramatically changed. Office managers are now part of the management team. They contribute to the growth and development of the organization and much is expected from them.

The average mean of RQ2 in Table 1.3 was  $3.26 > 2.50$  and it revealed that office managers who possess required ICT skills were able to win customers into buying/patronizing the company's products and services online, prepare professional documents with word processor, handle modern office machines and thus increasing job efficiency, effectiveness and profitability of the organization. Ifijeh, Iwu-James and Adebayo (2016) opine that the purpose of acquiring ICT literacy skills is to tailor them towards organizational growth and development. Demonstration of professionalism, loyalty, hard-working, commitment, zeal to succeed and dedication to work are few attributes to earn for job efficiency and effectiveness.

The average mean of RQ3 in Table 1.4 was  $3.56 > 2.50$  and it revealed that some office managers lack the required ICT skills especially in managing and operating the newly invented ones. In technologies, new innovation is setting basically every quarter of the year. Igbinedion (2010) opines that office managers are overwhelmed with varied challenges especially when they lack the knowledge of ICT which is an umbrella term for any communication application or device such as hardware and software, computer and network, television, radio, mobile phone, tablet, and so on. Office managers need to acquire the online marketing skills, telephone etiquette skills, creative writing skills, how to make presentation to the management team using database and presentation softwares; how to prepare sales report in Microsoft Excel and many others.

Also, the average mean of RQ4 in Table 1.5 was  $3.19 > 2.50$  and it revealed several benefits of ICT machines and equipment towards office managers' realization of their employers' expectations. Aina (2019) affirms that new technologies such as computers, scanners, shredder machines, printers, the internet, intranet, teleconferencing device, iPad, multimedia projectors, and other technological tools are needed to encourage employees for better performance at workplace. The introduction of ICT machines in office works is to boost business activities and operations and enhance multiple digital communication among members of the team. It helps to accelerate the process of handling various tasks as deadlines will be tactically fixed on each task.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings, it was concluded that professional, ICT and digital skills and competencies are inevitable attributes that office managers must possess and demonstrate effectively and efficiently if they want to continue keeping their jobs and be relevant in today's business world. Employers of office managers do not expect anything less than effective demonstration of ICT proficiency and professionalism at all levels and the ability to channel their skills to enhancing and promoting their performances at workplace. Training and retraining are imperative for ICT and digital skills acquisition because of the constant and dynamic business environment and the continuous invention of new and modern office tools and equipment. The great benefits of office ICT tools and equipment should not be ignored as they help to boost organizational performance and productivity.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Employers of office managers should continue to train and retrain office managers in order to gain the expected ICT and digital skills for 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- ii. Office managers should be expose to online marketing of their companies' products and services rather than limiting their duties to only administrative duties.
- iii. Employers of office managers should equip their offices with new and modern ICT tools and equipment that will improve their job efficiency and effectiveness
- iv. Office managers should be ready to learn and acquire new ICT and digital skills for them to be relevant in today's ICT and digital business world
- v. Office managers should utilize all knowledge and talents that they have acquired through the use of ICT tools over time to boost the organizational productivity and performance

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