



Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

**ADVANCING OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND
MANAGEMENT IN BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR
GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS AND RELEVANCE IN
THE VIRTUAL AND PAPERLESS WORKPLACE ERA:
CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS**

AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

Series No. 07/26



Prof. Sev Sebastian Amoor

FIQPS, CDSA, FISM

Professor of Office Technology & Management in Business Education

Department of Vocational & Technical Education, Faculty of Education,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

DATE WEDNESDAY, 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2026



Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

**ADVANCING OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND
MANAGEMENT IN BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR
GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS AND RELEVANCE IN
THE VIRTUAL AND PAPERLESS WORKPLACE ERA:
CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS, AND FUTURE
PROSPECTS**

**AN INAUGURAL LECTURE
(Series No 07/26)**

By

Professor Sev Sebastian Amoor

FIQPS, CDSA, FISM

*Professor of Office Technology & Management in
Business Education*

Department of Vocational and Technical Education,
Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University,
Zaria, Nigeria

16th September, 2026

© **Professor Sev Sebastian Amoor, 2026**

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronics or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

Published by

University Organized Lectures Committee,
C/O Public Affairs Directorate,
Office of the Vice-Chancellor,
Ground Floor, Senate Building,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Printed by

Ahmadu Bello University Press Limited,
Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria
Tel: +234 806 594 9711
Email: abupress@abu.edu.ng
info@abupress.com.ng

Dedication

This work is dedicated to God and His mouth piece Professor Paul I. Bolorunduro.

Acknowledgements

I thank Almighty God who has been so merciful, gracious and good to me, for all He has done for me and for bringing me to the prestigious rank of a Professor in a prestigious Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In Him I breathe, live and have my being. I am nothing without God.

I am grateful to Professor Paul I. Bolorunduro, of NAERLS, who saw great academic potentials in me and consistently and persistently encouraged me to leave administration and move into academics. He did not only encouraged me but also has been fully involved in my twelve years academic journey to the rank of a professor. I am grateful sir.

I deeply appreciate the past Head, Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Professor I.M. Haruna who without hesitation recommended my application for transfer from Registry to the Department of Vocational and Technical Education as academic staff in 2013.

I owe much gratitude to the former Registrar, Mr Kundila, who also graciously recommended same application for transfer from Registry to the department of Vocational and Technical Education as academic staff to the former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abdullahi Mustapha for approval.

My heart overflows with gratitude to Professor Abdullahi Mustapha, a former Vice-Chancellor of ABU, Zaria who approved my transfer from university administration to academics. The approval did not come easily, but I appreciate him very deeply.

Very special appreciation to all my colleagues in the department. You have in one or the other contributed to my journey to the rank of a professor. Thank you so very much.

Above all, I would like to deeply appreciate my home team: my dear wife, Mrs Lydia Amoor and our five children: Mrs Torkwase Daniel, Mrs Do'om Utile, Mr Tiza-sev Amoor, Miss Sedue Amoor and Mr. Kator-sev Amoor for giving me peace and all the encouragement I needed to come this far.

Contents

Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Contents	v
Salutation	vi
Preamble.....	vii
1.1. Introduction and Conceptual Clarification	1
1.2. Evolving Trends and Issues In OTME	6
(i) Theoretical Perspectives Underpinning in OTME in the Virtual and Paperless Workplace Era	6
(ii) Transformational Stages of OTME: 1960- 2026 (2030 vision).....	12
(iii) Academic Impact Values of OTME in the Era of Virtual and Paperless Office	21
(iv) Innovations Reshaping OTME	23
(v) Sustainability Challenges Facing Office Technology and Management for Global Competitiveness and Relevance	29
1.3. My Research Efforts and Contributions to OTME	35
1.4. Concluding Thoughts and Remarks.....	37
1.5. Recommendations	38
(i) Curriculum Review and Transformation	38
(ii) Strengthening Industry Partnerships	39
(iii) Investment in Digital Infrastructure	40
(iv) Continuous Staff Development.....	40
(v) Policy Support and Institutional Reforms.....	41
References	42

Salutation

The Vice-Chancellor
Provost, School of Postgraduate College
Registrar
Bursar and other Principal Officers
Deans of Faculties
Distinguished Professors
Head of Academic and Administrative Departments
Colleagues
Distinguished Guests
Beloved Students
Cherished Friends
My beloved wife and my humble children
Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome all of you to this inaugural lecture. Let me sincerely thank all of you for taking time out of your very tight schedules, from far and near, to be part and parcel of this inaugural lecture. I am highly honoured and delighted, and I deeply appreciate every one of you present here today.

Vice-Chancellor Sir, I am greatly honoured and very grateful to you for the approval you have given to enable me to stand before this great and highly respected audience as a Professor of Office Technology and Management Education in Business Education to present the 1st inaugural Lecture from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I lack appropriate words to express my deepest thanks, gratitude and appreciation to God Almighty for making this day a reality.

Preamble

The inaugural lecture, as I understand it, is a platform where professors have the opportunity to showcase their expertise. Succinctly, it is a platform to exhibit:

- (i) the progress of their career so far;
- (ii) update colleagues on current and future research plans; and
- (iii) introduce their field of expertise to a wider audience.

It is, therefore, my pleasure this afternoon to stand before this distinguished audience to profess my career progress so far in this inaugural lecture titled:

Advancing Office Technology and Management in Business Education for Global Competitiveness and Relevance in the Virtual and Paperless Workplace Era: Challenges, Innovations and Future Prospects

The Vice-Chancellor, sir, permit me to inform this great audience of my journey to the prestigious rank of Professor of Office Technology and Management Education in Business Education, and the presentation of the inaugural lecture today.

I started work at NAERLS/ABU on 13th March, 1992, as a junior confidential secretary on grade level 5. On the 26th September, 1996, I took up a fresh appointment as Principal Confidential Secretary on grade level 8 at the Main Campus of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and was posted to the Department of Human Physiology. During the university cleansing by the Sole Administrator, late Gen. Mamman Kontagora, I was drafted to the engine room where the cleansing took place. After the cleansing exercise, I was posted to the Office of the Registrar, where I served five Registrars as their personal secretary. In 2007, I was redesignated to the rank of Senior Assistant Registrar (SAR) and worked in central administration till 2013.

On the 1st of March 2013, my services were transferred to the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, as an academic staff member. This journey was characterized by a lot of hurdles. If the destiny of a person were to be in the hands of fellow men and women, my destiny would have been described as “cut short”, but I thank God for His mercies and kindnesses; today, I am a Professor in this esteemed university.

The Vice Chancellor, Sir, a good number of people present here may have heard of Office Technology and Management Education, while for some, this may be their first time. Nevertheless, this inaugural lecture will create more awareness of this specialization of business education offered in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, and other universities in Nigeria. The purpose of the inaugural lecture in this specialization in Business Education is to educate the university community on Office Technology and Management Education and its contributions to administrative office management and national development at large.

Advancing Office Technology and Management in Business Education for Global Competitiveness and Relevance in the Virtual and Paperless Workplace Era: Challenges, Innovations and Future Prospects

1.1. Introduction and Conceptual Clarification

I would like to begin this lecture by providing a brief background on Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) in the Business Education, Department of Vocational and Technical Education.

Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) is a specialization in Business Education, which is an integral part of Vocational and Technical Education that started at the degree level in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1970 and was later introduced in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the 1977/78 academic session. Today, many universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria offer the programme. In the past, it was known as secretarial education until 2004, when the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Kaduna, changed the programme nomenclature to Office Technology and Management (OTM).

The new nomenclature for this programme emerged in Nigerian tertiary institutions in response to the influx of advanced office technology and information systems into office administration and management for practicing secretaries in the world of work. This scenario necessitated the curriculum designers to critically look into the curriculum of Office Technology and Management Education and redesign it to incorporate the teaching and learning of advanced office technology and information systems so that graduates of OTME will be able to handle the advanced office technology and information systems effectively in administrative office management and even in the teaching profession.

In support of this assertion, Michael (2023) posits that the nomenclature of OTME came into existence in 2004 to solve the problems the secretarial education failed to adequately and appropriately respond to development in society and international organization, especially with regards to the globalization and information and communication technology. According to Michael (2023), the initial secretarial studies were considered obsolete as it trained secretaries mostly in shorthand and typewriting skills with machines and equipment that were no longer used in modern offices. Michael (2023) further argues that the change in nomenclature to OTME and the course contents became imperative to pave the way for graduates to be accommodated in today's dynamic, technology-driven world of work.

Conceptual Clarification

A clear understanding of the key concepts underlying this inaugural lecture is essential for appreciating the role of Office Technology and Management (OTM) in preparing graduates for the rapidly changing world of work. The concepts of Office Technology and Management, Global Competitiveness, and Virtual and Paperless Workplace are central to contemporary discourse on workforce development and organizational effectiveness.

Office Technology and Management Education (OTME)

OTME is a vocation-based programme offered in polytechnics, colleges of education and universities. It is a type of education that equips students with vocational skills, effective work competencies, and socio-psychological work skills essential for interpersonal relations; it focuses on job skills, employability, and self-reliance. Office Technology and Management Education provides students with adequate skills, information and competencies needed to function well in office

occupations; it primarily provides the students with skills, knowledge, ability, capacity, effectiveness and proficiency in office administration, office technology and information systems to take up a career in teaching, office occupation and business. These competencies are linked with creativity, innovativeness, flexibility, accuracy and precision.

Several scholars succinctly define Office Technology Management Education as an integral part of vocational business education, a subset of general education that develops a person's head, heart, and hands for their self-fulfilment and optimal service to humanity. Others see it as a form of education that equips students with vocational skills, effective work competencies, and socio-psychological work skills essential for interpersonal relations. Chukumezie (2000) states that Office Technology and Management Education revolves around job skills, employability and self-dependency; Okolo (2001) states that OTME provides students with adequate skills, information and competencies needed to function well in an office occupation; Aliyu (2006) postulates that Office Technology and Management Education is primarily intended to educate and train students to become competent OTME teachers (Business Teacher Education) and office administrators, equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to pursue careers in teaching, office occupations, and entrepreneurship.

According to Nwosu (2009), OTME training emphasises learning by doing, leading to the acquisition of practical and applied skills. Patrick (2009) defines OTME as a discipline that provides students with adequate skills, information and competences needed to function well in office occupations and stressed that OTME is a component of vocational education that prepares students for work in secretarial/office procedures in an organisation. It also provides them with operational skills in office equipment in the changing world of technology.

Igbinedion (2011) defines OTME as a viable and specialised phase of vocational business education that prepares recipients for office occupation as secretaries, executive secretaries, administrative assistants and functions in other similar titles describing jobs similar or overlapping those of the traditional secretary, such as office coordinator, executive assistant, office manager and administrative professional.

According to Oluwaseun (2020) Office Technology and Management programme is a technology-driven programme that equips students with competencies in office automation tools, digital communication systems, and information management software. Adebayo & Ogunleye (2020) state that in Nigeria, the Office Technology and Management programme is designed to equip students with competencies in office administration and the use of modern technological tools for information processing and management. Adebayo & Ogunleye (2020) buttress that the programme is crucial for preparing graduates to function effectively in a digital work environment.

Amoor (2022) defines OTME as a vocational education that provides the recipient with adequate knowledge in office administration and management, skills in office technology and information systems, competence and creativity in entrepreneurship, public relations and attitudes in handling classified information for teaching, effective and efficient supportive service delivery in office occupation and self-reliance.

In Nigeria, the Office Technology and Management programme is designed to equip students with competencies in office administration and the use of modern technological tools for information processing and management. The programme is essential for preparing graduates to function effectively in a digital work environment.

Global Competitiveness

Global competitiveness is the capacity to achieve superior performance and sustainable success through innovation, productivity, adaptability, and effective utilization of human and technological resources within the global economy. It also refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to perform effectively and sustainably in an increasingly interconnected and competitive global economy. At the individual level, global competitiveness involves possessing competencies that enable one to compete successfully in local and international labour markets. Such competencies include: Digital literacy, communication skills, critical thinking, innovation, problem-solving ability, adaptability, Cross-cultural competence and entrepreneurial capability.

At the organizational level, global competitiveness reflects the capacity to innovate, continuously adopt emerging technologies, improve productivity, deliver quality products and services and compete internationally.

Global Relevance

This depicts the capacity of individuals or organizations to anticipate, embrace and lead technological changes in the evolving world of work or business. According to Domeyer (2010) the rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has fundamentally transformed the nature of office work and business generally. Therefore, contemporary organisations now operate in highly digitised environments characterised by automation, virtual collaboration, intelligent systems, and paperless workflows. Consequently, Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) has to embrace innovative technologies so as to impart them to their graduates to remain relevant and responsive to global workplace demands. Such latest office technologies include cloud collaboration technologies, artificial intelligence

(AI), virtual assistants, learning management systems, digital records management systems, and remote work technologies.

Virtual Office

Virtual office depicts telework that enables office workers to operate from anywhere in the world. Office workers operate from any location that is most convenient for them. Virtual office helps workers to operate from their homes without necessarily coming to a particular place designated for office. However, a virtual office may have a mailing address, telephone answering and video conference service. In support of this assertion, Danja (2025) posits that in a paperless office, documents, workflows and communications are digitalized. Instead of mounting cabinets for filing and printed forms, the office relies on electronic document management systems, cloud storage and digital signatures to handle daily operations.

The Paperless Office

The paperless workplace represents the latest stage in the evolution of office work. According to Adebayo (2022), it involves the extensive use of digital technologies to create, store, process, retrieve, and share information without relying on physical paper documents. Key features include: electronic document management systems, digital signatures, cloud storage solutions, electronic workflows, online forms and databases and digital archiving systems.

1.2. Evolving Trends and Issues In OTME

(i) Theoretical Perspectives Underpinning in OTME in the Virtual and Paperless Workplace Era

A robust theoretical foundation is essential for understanding the dynamics of Office Technology and Management (OTM) in the contemporary workplace. The transformation from traditional offices to digital, virtual, AI-

enabled, and paperless environments can be effectively explained through four complementary theoretical lenses:

- Human Capital Theory
- Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)
- Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI)
- Socio-Technical Systems Theory (STS)

These theories provide a framework for understanding how individuals acquire competencies, how technology is adopted and used, how innovations spread within organisations, and how technology and people interact to achieve organisational effectiveness.

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory was developed by economists such as Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker during the 1960s. The theory posits that investments in education, training, skills development, and health enhance the productive capacity of individuals and contribute to economic growth and organizational performance.

Central Assumption of the theory

The theory views education and training not merely as expenditures but as investments that yield future returns in the form of higher productivity, increased earnings, improved employability, economic development, organizational competitiveness.

Relevance to OTM

Office Technology and Management programmes serve as mechanisms for developing the human capital required in contemporary workplaces. As organizations increasingly adopt: digital technologies, artificial intelligence, cloud computing and Virtual collaboration systems.

There is a growing need for highly skilled office professionals capable of operating effectively within these environments. The Human Capital Theory, therefore, justifies, curriculum modernization, digital skills acquisition, professional development, lifelong learning, and continuous retraining.

Implication for OTM in Business Education

The theory suggests that investment in OTM education is an investment in national productivity and global competitiveness. In the words of economist Theodore Schultz:

"The knowledge and skill people acquire through education have economic value."

Thus, OTM graduates represent valuable human resources capable of driving organizational efficiency and innovation.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model was developed by Fred Davis in 1989 to explain how individuals adopt and use new technologies.

Core Constructs

The model identifies two major determinants of technology acceptance:

- **Perceived Usefulness (PU):** The degree to which a person believes that using a technology will improve job performance.
- **Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU):** The degree to which a person believes that using a technology will require minimal effort.

These two perceptions influence: attitudes toward technology, intention to use technology and actual technology usage.

Application to OTM in Business Education

In modern offices, employees are expected to use: electronic document management systems; Cloud computing platforms; AI-powered applications; Learning management systems and digital communication tools. Successful implementation depends largely on whether users perceive these technologies as useful and easy to use.

Implications for OTM Education

OTM programmes should:

- Provide hands-on technological training.
- Develop positive attitudes toward innovation.
- Enhance students' confidence in using digital tools.
- Reduce technology anxiety.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI)

Diffusion of Innovation Theory was developed by Everett Rogers in 1962. The theory explains how innovations spread through social systems over time. An innovation is any idea, technology, practice, or product perceived as new by individuals or organizations.

Relevance to OTM

The adoption of: Artificial intelligence; Electronic records management

Virtual office systems; Cloud technologies; Paperless workflows.

This varies across organizations and educational institutions. Some institutions embrace innovation rapidly, while others remain resistant. The theory helps explain,

curriculum innovation, technology integration in education, organizational digital transformation, and adoption of virtual office practices.

Implications for OTM in Business Education

Business educators must serve as change agents who facilitate the diffusion of emerging technologies among students, institutions, and workplaces. The theory underscores the need for proactive leadership in educational innovation.

Socio-Technical Systems Theory (STS)

Socio-Technical Systems Theory emerged from the work of researchers at the Tavistock Institute during the 1950s. The theory emphasises that organisational effectiveness depends on the interaction between social systems and technical systems.

Components of the Theory

Social System - This includes People, Culture, Values, Skills, Relationships and Leadership.

Technical System – Includes Technology, Equipment, Software, Procedures and Infrastructure.

Application to OTM

Modern workplaces increasingly rely on sophisticated technologies such as:

Artificial intelligence; Cloud computing; Automation systems and Digital records management platforms

However, technology alone cannot guarantee success. Success depends on employee competence, organizational culture, management support, training opportunities and user acceptance.

Relevance to Virtual and Paperless Offices

Virtual workplaces require balancing technology infrastructure, human interaction, organizational communication, Employee well-being. Similarly, paperless offices require both digital systems and employees capable of using them effectively.

Implications for OTM Education

OTM programmes must prepare graduates not only to use technology but also to manage people, processes, and organizational change. The theory supports the integration of ICT competencies, leadership skills, Communication skills, human relations; change management within OTM curricula.

Integrative Theoretical Framework for OTM

The four theories complement one another and provide a comprehensive explanation of OTM in the digital age.

Theory	Main Focus	Relevance to OTM
1. Human Capital Theory	Skills and knowledge development	Justifies investment in OTM education and training
2. Technology Acceptance Model	User acceptance of technology	Explains adoption of digital office technologies
3. Diffusion of Innovation Theory	Spread of innovations	Explains institutional and organizational adoption of new technologies
4. Socio-Technical Systems Theory	Interaction between people and technology	Guides effective integration of technology and human resources

These four theories collectively provide a powerful framework for understanding the transformation of Office Technology and Management in Business Education. Human Capital Theory explains why investments in OTM education are essential; the Technology Acceptance Model explains how individuals embrace new technologies; Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how technological changes spread across institutions and organizations; while Socio-Technical Systems Theory highlights the need for harmony between people and technology.

Taken together, they support the central argument of this inaugural lecture that:

The advancement of Office Technology and Management in Business Education is not merely a technological imperative but a strategic investment in human capability, innovation adoption, organizational effectiveness, and global competitiveness in the virtual and paperless workplace era.

(ii) Transformational Stages of OTME: 1960- 2026 (2030 vision)

From 1960 – 1980s: Manual Office Administrative Systems

Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) also known as Secretarial Education in the beginning, has witnessed tremendous evolution in Nigeria. There are many schools of thoughts about the historical advancement of Office Technology and Management Education (OMTE) in Nigeria. According to Osuala (1996) there were very few privately-owned commercial secondary modern schools and many roadside commercial institutes which offered secretarial courses to prospective secretaries in English language, typewriting, shorthand, and office practice. The graduates sat for professional examinations such as the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Pitman stages I-III, London Chambers of Commerce (LCC) stages I-III. Aromolaran (1996) states that OTME had no bright beginning, it was only very few well organized

Institutes for training secretaries like College of Arts Sciences and Technology, and Staff Training Centres which included Secretarial training in their curriculum. Aliyu (2006) states that OTME was founded in the last decades of the 19th century when some Nigeria nationals in business partnerships with overseas exporters had to learn simple commercial subjects for the purpose of facilitating business transactions.

In a nutshell, OTM evolved from the traditional discipline of Secretarial Studies to Office Technology and Management in 2004 by the National Board for Technical Education as a result of digital technologies, office automation, records management, communication systems, information management, and organizational administration. The following are the evolutionary changes of OTME:

Office Technology Taught at this Period

The earliest administrative office works relied heavily on manual procedures for information processing, storage, and communication. In view of this, the following manual office technologies were part of the then curriculum: Manual typewriter, Adding and calculating machines, Duplicating machines, Dictation equipment and Telephone systems. During this period, office professionals were primarily expected to possess skills such as:

- Typing and shorthand
- Filing and records management
- Bookkeeping
- Business correspondence
- Office machine operation

Certificate Attained at this Period

Royal Society of Arts (RSA) stages I-III, London Chamber of Commerce (LCC), stages I-III and Ordinary Diploma

Proficiency. The proficiency was stenography because the emphasis then was on shorthand and Typewriting.

Competencies

Operation of manual office machines. This period actually made information retrieval very slow and labour-intensive. This was because documents were stored in physical files. Office communication depended largely on writing letters, memos, and of course face-to-face interactions. Decision-making processes were also often delayed due to the limitations of information flow. The discipline was commonly known as Secretarial Studies.

From 1990 – 2010: Digital Office Administrative Systems

During this period, there was significant advancement in office technology and management education. This was because the administrative roles of office professionals in contemporary office occupations, according to Amoor (2020) had evolved as a result of influx of modern office technology and information systems. Modern office technology and organizational restructuring have led office professionals in office occupations to assume responsibilities once reserved for managerial staff. The office professionals now conduct research on the internet, operate and troubleshoot new office technologies, coordinate administrative activities, store, retrieve and integrate information for dissemination to staff and clients. According to the Bureau of Labour (2006), office professionals served as information and communication managers for offices, planned and scheduled meetings and appointments, took minutes at meetings, organized and maintained paperwork and electronic files.

Office professionals disseminate information by using telephone, mail and e-mail. Office professionals often use computers to perform tasks previously handled by managers to

create spreadsheets, compose correspondence, manage databases, and create presentations, reports and documents using desktop publishing software and digital graphics.

Office Technology Taught at this Period

The technology used in this timeline includes:

- Desktop and laptop computers
- Word processing software
- Electronic spreadsheets
- Database management systems
- Email communication
- Internet connectivity

During this period, most organisations started digitising records and automating routine administrative tasks. Productivity increased significantly as information could be generated, stored, edited, and transmitted electronically.

Because of the office transformation from manual to digital office administrative systems, Office Technology and Management Education in Business Education began to offer the following courses: Administrative Office Management, Office Organization and Method

Business Law, Business Mathematics, Business Communication and Report Writing, Nigeria Tax System, Element of Business, Shorthand and Word Processing, executive Office Procedures and economics.

Certificate Attained at this Period

The following certificates were obtained in the following institutions:

- Colleges of Education: NCE
- Polytechnics: ND and HND
- Universities B.Sc, B.Sc (Ed), M. Ed and PhD (OTME)

In addition to the classroom courses, SIWES was introduced to bridge the gap between classroom learning experience and real practical office environment to adequately prepare graduates to effectively operate in the world of work. At this period, the discipline was commonly known as Office Technology and Management Education with the mandate to produce graduates to serve as teachers, office professionals and entrepreneurs.

Competence Required of Graduates of OTME

The emergence of digital technologies altered the competency requirements of office professionals. Traditional clerical skills were supplemented by: computer literacy, information management, data processing, digital communication and Internet navigation

From 2011-2030: Virtual and Paperless Administrative Office Systems

Virtual Administrative Office Systems

At this stage, the duties of secretaries have significantly moved from a clerical and support-oriented roles to dynamic, tech-driven and strategic administrative functions. The daunting tasks and competitiveness of the modern office make it mandatory for office professionals to be current with the trends or ever-changing office administration, office technology and information systems to remain competitive and relevant in the world of work or business. In support of this assertion, the International Association of Administrative Professionals (2005) states that office occupations would become increasingly mobile through the use of multifunctional wireless office technology and information systems, such as mobile note-takers, web-based conference services, and telecommuting,

enabling confidential secretaries to perform their duties from virtually anywhere.

The Association further stresses that the future of modern offices will create new administrative roles for office professionals. These roles include human resource coordination, workflow control, information management and virtual-meeting organization. Miniature wireless devices, WiFi, WiMAX, and mobile technology will continue to allow workers to work outside of the office with greater ease. Additionally, virtual environments and web-based conferencing services will provide off-site employees with real-time access to meetings, reducing the need to travel. Improved wireless connectivity will allow for an increasingly flexible workforce.

Domeyer (2010) reports that 87% of executives surveyed believe telecommuting will increase over the next 10-15 years. This will enable office professionals to work where it is most convenient. The duties will include entrepreneurial duties, resource coordination, workflow control, virtual meetings organizations, internet research, desktop publishing, computer training for the junior staff and website maintenance, writing of letters on behalf of their managers or executives; preparing reports of committees; arranging for venues and taking minutes at the meetings; conducting research on the internet and making some managerial decisions within the scope of their authorities; help managers or executives to implement policy decisions; and handle most of the administrative routines to relief their managers or the executives from the excess workload so that they could concentrate more on planning, forecasting and carrying out special projects.

Oladeji & Afolabi (2021) postulate that the transformation of the profession is now driven by workplace automation, artificial intelligence and increasing demand for hybrid and remote work adaptability; and that office professionals are now required to possess a mix of technical skills, emotional

intelligence and decision-making capabilities. In addition, Danja (2025) posits that in today's workplace, secretaries are often referred to as Administrative professionals or office managers and are expected to be proficient in using advanced office software such as Microsoft 365, and Google Workspace with virtual communication tools and digital document management systems; and that secretaries play critical roles in internal communication, project coordination, event planning and data management.

The advancement of internet technologies, cloud computing, and mobile devices gave rise to the virtual workplace. Employees no longer needed to be physically present in a traditional office environment to perform their duties. In support of this assertion, Adebayo, & Ogunleye, (2020) postulate that office technology and management education professionals now require: adaptability, digital literacy, strategic thinking, and lifelong learning to remain relevant in an ever-changing work environment.

Office Technology Taught at this Period

Virtual workplaces are characterized with:

- Remote work arrangements
- Cloud-based collaboration platforms
- Video conferencing systems
- Shared digital workspaces
- Mobile office technologies

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the global adoption of virtual work models, demonstrating that many organizational functions could be effectively performed from remote locations.

In the virtual workplace, communication occurs through digital platforms, teams collaborate across geographical boundaries, employees' access organizational resources through

cloud services and work becomes more flexible and globally interconnected.

Certificate Attained at this Period

The following certificates are obtained in the following institutions:

- Colleges of Education: NCE
- Polytechnics: ND and HND
- Universities B.Sc, B.Sc (Ed), M. Ed and PhD (OTME)

Consequently, OTM graduates require competencies in:

- Virtual communication
- Digital collaboration
- Online project management
- Cyber security awareness
- Cross-cultural teamwork

The office has evolved from a physical location into a digital ecosystem.

AI-Enabled Administrative Office Systems

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has introduced Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, robotics, and intelligent automation into office environments.

AI-enabled offices employ technologies such as:

- Intelligent Virtual Assistants
- Chatbots
- Automated Scheduling Systems
- Predictive Analytics
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA)
- Speech Recognition Technologies
- AI-Powered Document Management Systems

Routine administrative functions that previously required human intervention are increasingly automated. AI systems can schedule meetings, manage workflows, process invoices, generate reports, and analyse large volumes of organizational data.

This observation is particularly relevant to OTM professionals who must continuously adapt to emerging technologies. The AI-enabled workplace demands new competencies, including:

- AI literacy
- Data analytics
- Digital intelligence
- Critical thinking
- Problem-solving
- Human-machine collaboration

Rather than replacing office professionals entirely, AI is redefining their roles by shifting emphasis from routine tasks to strategic and analytical functions.

Paperless Administrative Office Systems

The paperless workplace represents the latest stage in the evolution of office work. It involves the extensive use of digital technologies to create, store, process, retrieve, and share information without relying on physical paper documents. Key features include:

- Electronic document management systems
- Digital signatures
- Cloud storage solutions
- Electronic workflows
- Online forms and databases
- Digital archiving systems

Competence Required: Digital literacy and ICT proficiency, Cloud computing and virtual collaboration, Artificial Intelligence applications in office management, Electronic records and information management, Cyber security and data protection, Digital entrepreneurship, Remote work management and Innovation and adaptability.

Summary Table: Historical Evolution of OTM

Er(a	Dominant Technology	Key Skills	Nature of OTM
Manual Era	Handwritten systems	Writing, filing	Clerical administration
Mechanical Era	Typewriters, calculators	Typing, shorthand	Secretarial practice
Electronic Era	Electronic machines	Machine operation	Office automation begins
Digital Era	Computers, software	ICT literacy	Technology-driven office work
Networked Era	Internet, cloud	Digital communication	Connected offices
Virtual/ Paperless Era	Cloud platforms, e-documents	Remote collaboration	Virtual office management
AI Era	AI, automation	Analytics, AI literacy	Intelligent office management

(iii) Academic Impact Values of OTME in the Era of Virtual and Paperless Office

The advancement of administrative office work has profound implications on OTM in Business Education programme. Curriculum content must move beyond traditional office procedures to embrace emerging digital competencies. The modern OTM in Business Education programme should emphasize: Digital literacy and ICT proficiency; Cloud computing and virtual collaboration; Artificial intelligence applications in office management; Electronic records and information management; Cyber security and data protection and Digital entrepreneurship; Remote work management; and innovation and adaptability.

National Impact values of OTME

National development is multidimensional, encompassing economic growth, social progress, technological advancement, environmental sustainability, and institutional effectiveness. OTM contributes to these dimensions in several ways:

Economic Development - Through workforce preparation, entrepreneurship development, and productivity enhancement.

Technological Advancement - Through the promotion of digital literacy, innovation, and technology adoption.

Institutional Efficiency - Through effective information management, records administration, and organizational coordination.

Employment Generation - Through entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities in digital business environments.

Sustainable Development - Through support for paperless operations and environmentally responsible workplace practices.

Individual Utility impact values of OTME

It provides office professionals with knowledge, competencies and skills to handle general office administration such as taking down notes at meetings and translating same into minutes, drafting or writing letters, memos, circulars, notices etc on behalf of his manager; handling records management, handling public relations and many miscellaneous duties assigned by the manager;

It provides office professionals with knowledge, competencies, skills, and creativity to use various office technology and information systems and become conversant with the following social media platforms that are useful for office administration such as: Zoom, Skype, video virtual meetings, Google hangout, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, Mixlr etc

(iv) Innovations Reshaping OTME

The rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has fundamentally transformed the nature of office work and business education. Contemporary organisations now operate in highly digitised environments characterised by automation, virtual collaboration, intelligent systems, and paperless workflows. Consequently, Office Technology and Management (OTM) must continuously embrace innovative technologies to remain relevant and responsive to global workplace demands. Among the most significant innovations reshaping OTM are cloud collaboration technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), virtual assistants, learning management systems, digital records management systems, and remote work technologies. These innovations have revolutionised how information is created, managed, shared, and utilised in modern organisations.

Cloud Collaboration Technologies

Cloud collaboration refers to the use of internet-based platforms that enable individuals and teams to create, store, access, and share information from any location and at any time. Unlike traditional office systems where documents are stored on individual computers or physical files, cloud-based systems allow real-time access to shared information through centralized online platforms.

Examples of Cloud Collaboration Tools: Microsoft Teams, Google Workspace, Slack, Zoom and Dropbox

Benefits include:

- **Enhanced Team Collaboration** - Employees can work on documents simultaneously, regardless of location.
- **Improved Productivity** - Real-time updates eliminate delays associated with document circulation.

- **Cost Reduction** - Organizations reduce expenditure on physical storage and infrastructure.
- **Flexibility** - Employees can access organizational resources from multiple devices.

Implications for OTM

Cloud collaboration technologies have transformed office management from location-dependent operations to globally connected work environments. OTM graduates must therefore acquire competencies in cloud computing, virtual teamwork, and online communication.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, including learning, reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, and language processing. AI is increasingly becoming a strategic component of modern office environments.

Applications in Office Management

- Automated scheduling
- Data analysis
- Workflow automation
- Customer support systems
- Intelligent document processing
- Predictive analytics

Implications for OTM

The future office professional must understand how to work alongside intelligent technologies rather than compete with them.

Virtual Assistants

Virtual assistants are AI-powered software applications designed to perform administrative and organizational tasks through voice or text interactions.

Examples - Microsoft Co-pilot, Google Assistant, Amazon Alexa, Apple Siri, and ChatGPT.

The functions of virtual assistants include: Scheduling meetings, Sending reminders, managing emails, searching for information, generating reports and drafting documents.

Implications for OTM

The integration of virtual assistants into office operations requires OTM graduates to develop competencies in AI-assisted productivity and digital workflow management.

Digital Records Management Systems

Digital Records Management involves the creation, storage, retrieval, protection, and disposal of records in electronic formats. It represents a cornerstone of the paperless workplace with the following components: electronic document management systems.

Cloud storage solutions, Digital archives, Electronic workflow systems and Digital signatures.

Relevance to OTM

Records management has traditionally been a core component of office administration. The digital transformation of records management therefore requires OTM professionals to master:

- Electronic filing systems
- Digital archiving
- Information governance
- Data protection regulations

Remote Work Technologies

Remote work technologies are digital tools that enable employees to perform organizational tasks outside traditional office locations. The widespread adoption of remote work during and after the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated investment in these technologies. The following are examples of remote work technologies:

- Video conferencing platforms
- Virtual private networks (VPNs)
- Project management software
- Cloud-based communication systems
- Digital workflow applications

The following are the key tools used for remote work technologies – Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Trello and Asana. The benefits of the key tools used for remote work technologies include:

- **Workplace Flexibility** - Employees can work from diverse locations.
- **Cost Efficiency** - Organizations reduce office overhead expenses.
- **Global Talent Access** - Employers can recruit talent from anywhere in the world.
- **Business Continuity** - Operations continue despite disruptions.

Implications for OTM

Remote work technologies require office professionals to possess competencies in:

- Virtual communication
- Online collaboration
- Digital project management
- Self-management
- Cyber security awareness

Summary Perspective

The future of Office Technology and Management lies in its ability to harness emerging technologies to enhance efficiency, productivity, innovation, and organizational effectiveness. Cloud collaboration, artificial intelligence, virtual assistants, learning management systems, digital records management, and remote work technologies are no longer optional innovations; they are essential components of the modern workplace. For institutions that offer Office Technology and Management Education, the challenge is to ensure that the curricula, teaching methods, and learning environments reflect these realities. Graduates must be prepared not merely to use technology but to lead technological transformation within organizations.

Prospects and future vision of OTME

The future of Office Technology and Management (OTM) will be shaped by rapid technological advancement, changing work patterns, environmental sustainability concerns, and the increasing globalization of business operations. As organizations continue to embrace digital transformation, the office of the future will be significantly different from the traditional workplace known today.

Emerging trends such as AI-integrated offices, hybrid work systems, smart offices, green offices, block chain-based records management, and global digital entrepreneurship are redefining organizational structures, employee competencies, and business processes. These developments present both opportunities and responsibilities for OTM educators, practitioners, and policymakers.

OTME must ensure that OTM graduates must possess AI literacy, Data analytics skills, Human-AI collaboration competencies and Digital problem-solving abilities. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into office operations, office

professionals will transition from performing routine tasks to managing intelligent systems.

Vision for the Future for OTME

The future of Office Technology and Management extends beyond preparing office workers; it encompasses developing digital workplace leaders, innovation managers, information strategists, and global entrepreneurs. OTM is evolving from a discipline focused on office procedures to one centred on digital transformation, intelligent systems, sustainability, and global value creation.

For OTME to remain relevant, it must embrace emerging technologies, foster entrepreneurial mind-sets, strengthen industry partnerships, and continuously redesign curricula to anticipate future workplace realities.

The administrative workplaces as a discipline will continue to evolve from:

Traditional Orientation	Future Orientation
1. Clerical functions	Strategic information management
2. Secretarial practice	Digital workplace leadership
3. Office procedures	Innovation and technology management
4. Paper-based administration	Intelligent and paperless systems
5. Routine support services	Strategic organizational partnership

In view of these, OTME is charged with the responsibility to produce graduates who are:

- Digital leaders
- Innovation champions
- Technology managers

- Knowledge workers
- Global entrepreneurs
- Organizational problem solvers

(v) Sustainability Challenges Facing Office Technology and Management for Global Competitiveness and Relevance

The historical evolution of OTME demonstrates that the discipline has never been static. It has continuously adapted to technological and organizational changes. What began as training for clerical support has become preparation for managing information, technology, people, and digital processes in complex global environments. In view of this, OTME must continue to evolve from office skills education to digital workplace intelligence education. The future office professional is not merely a typist or secretary; rather, the future OTM graduate is a technology-enabled information manager, virtual collaborator, data-informed decision supporter, and strategic organizational partner. Unfortunately, however, research carried out by the inaugural lecturer from colleges of education and universities revealed that the curriculum of OTM in the Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has not significantly evolved at this level of virtual and paperless administrative office systems to match up with the expected global practices that will enable OTM graduates to compete effectively in the world of work and business. This poses a great challenge to OTM in Business Education Programme in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The transition from traditional office systems to digital, virtual, AI-enabled, and paperless workplaces has created unprecedented opportunities for Office Technology and Management (OTM). However, this transformation has also exposed several challenges that threaten OTME in Business

Education programmes' ability to produce globally competitive graduates.

Among the most significant challenges are: infrastructure deficits, the digital divide, curriculum obsolescence, funding constraints, cyber security risks, and skills mismatch. Addressing these challenges is imperative if OTM is to remain relevant in the rapidly evolving world of work:

1. Infrastructure Deficits

Infrastructure remains one of the greatest obstacles to effective OTM education, particularly in developing countries. Modern OTM education depends heavily on access to: reliable electricity supply, high-speed internet connectivity, computer laboratories.

Digital learning platforms, cloud computing facilities, smart classrooms and Modern office technologies. Unfortunately, many institutions continue to struggle with inadequate infrastructure. The manifestations of inadequate infrastructure include: Frequent power outages, Poor internet bandwidth, obsolete computer systems, inadequate ICT laboratories and limited access to virtual learning facilities.

The following are the consequences of inadequate infrastructure: Reduced practical exposure for students, ineffective technology integration, poor digital competency development and limited readiness for virtual workplaces.

Implications for OTM

Without adequate infrastructure, graduates may find themselves competing globally with peers who have had access to more advanced technological learning environments.

2. The Digital Divide

The digital divide refers to inequalities in access to information and communication technologies among individuals, institutions, regions, and nations.

The dimensions of the digital divide include:

Dimensions of the Digital Divide

Access Divide - Differences in access to Computers, Internet services and Digital devices

Skills Divide - Differences in Digital literacy, Technology utilization and Information management competencies

Usage Divide - Differences in the ability to effectively utilize digital technologies for learning and productivity.

Impact on OTM Education

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often face: limited internet access, inadequate digital devices, Reduced exposure to emerging technologies.

This creates unequal learning opportunities and widens educational disparities.

Implications

The digital divide undermines efforts to achieve: Inclusive education, Workforce readiness, Digital transformation, and Global competitiveness.

Bridging the digital divide is therefore a critical prerequisite for achieving equitable access to OTM education.

3. Curriculum Obsolescence

One of the most persistent challenges confronting OTM programmes is the rapid pace of technological change.

Technologies evolve faster than many educational curricula can adapt.

The indicators of Curriculum Obsolescence

The following are the indicators of curriculum obsolescence: Overemphasis on outdated office practices, Limited integration of artificial intelligence, inadequate focus on cloud computing, insufficient attention to cyber security, Minimal exposure to data analytics and weak incorporation of virtual office technologies.

Emerging Workplace Expectations

Employers increasingly seek graduates with competencies in:

- AI-assisted productivity tools
- Digital collaboration platforms
- Remote work management
- Electronic records management
- Data-driven decision making
- Digital entrepreneurship

Unfortunately, some curricula continue to emphasize competencies suited to traditional office environments which will result into:

- Skills irrelevance
- Reduced productivity
- Weak industry confidence

Implications. The curriculum review must become continuous rather than periodic.

4. Funding Constraints

The successful implementation of technology-driven OTM programmes requires substantial financial investment. The following are the areas that requires Funding:

- ICT infrastructure
- Software acquisition
- Internet services
- Staff training
- Research and innovation
- Equipment maintenance
- Digital resource subscriptions

However, many institutions operate under severe financial limitations.

Effects of Inadequate Funding

- The following are the effects of inadequate funding:
- Obsolete facilities
- Inadequate practical training
- Limited staff development
- Poor research output
- Reduced technology adoption

Impact on OTM Programmes

Funding shortages hinder efforts to modernize teaching and learning environments, thereby limiting programme effectiveness.

5. Skills Mismatch

Perhaps the most significant challenge confronting OTM education is the mismatch between graduate competencies and labour market requirements.

Nature of the Skills Mismatch

- Employers increasingly demand competencies in:
- Artificial intelligence applications
 - Data analytics

- Digital collaboration
- Virtual communication
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Innovation management

Yet many graduates still possess skills suited to traditional office environments.

Causes of Skills Mismatch

The following are the skills mismatch:

- Outdated curricula
- Limited industry collaboration
- Inadequate practical exposure
- Insufficient technological infrastructure
- Weak internship experiences

Consequences of Skills Mismatch

For graduates:

- Unemployment
- Underemployment
- Reduced career progression

For employers:

- Increased training costs
- Reduced productivity
- Recruitment difficulties

For institutions:

- Declining programme relevance
- Lower graduate employability ratings

Summary Table: Challenges Confronting OTM in the Virtual and Paperless Era

Challenge	Major Manifestation	Impact on OTM
1. Infrastructure Deficits	Poor electricity, weak internet, inadequate laboratories	Limited practical competence
2. Digital Divide	Unequal access to technology	Educational inequality
3. Curriculum Obsolescence	Outdated course content	Graduate irrelevance
4. Funding Constraints	Insufficient resources	Poor programme quality
5. Cyber security Risks	Data breaches, cyber attacks	Information vulnerability
6. Skills Mismatch	Gap between training and industry needs	Reduced employability

Summary Perspective

The challenges confronting Office Technology and Management are not merely institutional problems; they are strategic issues affecting workforce development, organizational productivity, and national competitiveness. Infrastructure deficits, the digital divide, obsolete curricula, inadequate funding, and skills mismatch collectively threaten the capacity of OTME in Business Education to produce graduates capable of thriving in virtual and paperless workplaces.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for transformation. Through strategic investment, curriculum innovation, industry collaboration, digital infrastructure development, and continuous professional development, OTM can reposition itself as a leading driver of workforce readiness and global competitiveness in the twenty-first century.

1.3. My Research Efforts and Contributions to OTME Empirical Issues on OTME

Research on Evaluation of challenges of OTME in Nigerian universities between 2000-2010; (2011)

Research on the perceived determinants of students' choice of OTME in Colleges of education in Nigeria. (2014)

Curriculum Issues on effective delivery of OTME

Research on the Analysis of exposure of OTME students in Nigerian universities to modern office technology and information systems. (2020).

Innovation and Sustainability Issues of OTME in Academic Institutions

Research on re-positioning of OTME for enhanced entrepreneurial skills for economic growth and sustainability. (2022).

Contributions to Knowledge

First research (2011): The study established that societal attitudes, peer group influence and students' vocational interest were responsible for low enroll of candidates into the programme which was the major challenge of OTME in Nigerian universities.

Second research (2014): Prestige of the nomenclature "secretary" was statistically found to have significant influence on business education students' choice of OTME option in Colleges of education.

Third Research (2020): The study established that there were no adequate modern office technology and information systems in OTME programme for teaching and learning, and this accounted for non- exposure of the students to the practical application of modern office technology and information systems.

Fourth Research (2022): The study established that the curriculum of OTME does not incorporate entrepreneurial ICT skills courses to adequately train its students to be ICT entrepreneurs after graduation.

My Research Focus and Work-in-Progress

Impact of Digital Resources Utilization on Employability Skills Acquisition of Office Technology and management students in Nigerian universities;

Influence of Learning Styles, Learning Attributes and Interest on Office Technology and Management Education Students' Academic Performance in modern ICT in Universities in Nigeria;

Assessment of the influence of digitization of record management on job efficiency of office professionals in tertiary institutions in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

1.4. Concluding Thoughts and Remarks

As I draw this inaugural lecture to a close, it is important to reiterate that:

(i) Office Technology and Management Education (OTME) has developed far beyond its traditional perception as a discipline concerned merely with typing, shorthand, filing, and secretarial duties. Today, OTME stands at the intersection of technology, information management, office administration, innovation, and workforce development.

(ii) It is increasingly becoming a strategic discipline for national transformation in the digital age. It is also a strategic driver of development in the knowledge economy of the twenty-first century.

(iii) The task before us is to ensure that this transformation translates into national progress, organizational effectiveness, workforce competitiveness, and global relevance.

(iv) The future relevance of Office Technology and Management will depend largely on the willingness of stakeholders to embrace transformation and innovation. Curriculum modernization, strong industry linkages, robust digital infrastructure, continuous staff development, and

enabling policies are not optional reforms; they are strategic necessities for survival and excellence in the digital age.

(v) The advancement of OTM must therefore be viewed as a national development agenda. Nations that invest in technologically driven business education will be better positioned to produce a workforce capable of thriving in virtual, intelligent, and paperless workplaces.

(vi) The challenge before us is not whether Office Technology and Management will change; it is whether we will change fast enough to shape its future by embracing innovation, strengthening partnerships, investing in people and technology, and implementing supportive policies so that OTM can become a catalyst for global competitiveness, organizational excellence, and sustainable national development in the twenty-first century.

1.5. Recommendations

Strategic recommendations for Advancing Office Technology and Management in Business Education for Global Competitiveness and Relevance in the Virtual and Paperless Workplace Era include:

(i) Curriculum Review and Transformation

The rapid pace of technological advancement has rendered many traditional curricula inadequate for preparing graduates for emerging workplace realities. The contemporary office now demands competencies in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, virtual collaboration, cyber security, digital records management, and data analytics. Consequently, curriculum review should become a continuous and proactive process rather than a periodic exercise. The following courses are hereby recommended to be part of the new curriculum:

Emerging Technologies

- Artificial Intelligence in Office Administration
- Machine Learning Applications
- Robotic Process Automation
- Internet of Things (IoT)

Digital Workplace Competencies

- Virtual Office Management
- Remote Work Administration
- Digital Collaboration Tools
- Cloud Computing

Information Security

- Cyber security Fundamentals
- Data Privacy and Protection
- Information Governance

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Digital Entrepreneurship
- Innovation Management
- E-Commerce Operations
- Business Start-up Development

Data Management

- Business Analytics
- Data Visualization
- Digital Records Management
- Information Systems

(ii) Strengthening Industry Partnerships

One of the major causes of skills mismatch is the disconnect between educational institutions and industry expectations. Effective collaboration between academia and industry can bridge this gap. The following are the suggested areas of collaboration with industries:

Curriculum Development - Industry practitioners should actively participate in curriculum design and review.

Internship Programmes - Students should gain meaningful workplace experience through Industrial attachments, Internship programmes and Cooperative education schemes

Technology Transfer - Organizations can provide Software licenses, Equipment donations, Technical expertise and Professional mentorship

Collaborative Research - Joint research initiatives can address workplace challenges and promote innovation.

(iii) Investment in Digital Infrastructure

Technology-driven education cannot thrive without adequate technological infrastructure. Modern OTME programmes require robust digital ecosystems that support teaching, learning, research, and innovation, such as:

ICT Laboratories - Modern computer laboratories, Simulation centres and Digital innovation hubs,

Internet Connectivity - High-speed broadband, Campus-wide Wi-Fi and Cloud access facilities.

Smart Learning Environments - Smart classrooms, Interactive learning technologies and Virtual learning platforms

Digital Resource Centres - Electronic libraries, Online databases and Digital repositories

(iv) Continuous Staff Development

No educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The rapid evolution of technology requires educators to continuously update their knowledge and skills. The areas of capacity building for educators should include:

Emerging Technologies - Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing, Data Analytics and Cyber security.

Digital Pedagogy -Online Teaching Methods, Learning Management Systems, Virtual Assessment Techniques.

Research Development - Grant Writing, Collaborative Research and Innovation Studies.

Professional Certification - Encouraging staff to obtain globally recognized certifications in relevant technological areas.

Regular Training Programmes – Workshops, Conferences, Seminars and Professional development courses.

Industry Attachment - Academic staff should periodically undertake industry immersion programmes.

International Collaboration - Participation in global research and academic networks.

(v) Policy Support and Institutional Reforms

The sustainable advancement of OTME requires supportive policies at the institutional, national, and international levels. Policies create the framework within which innovation and transformation can occur. The following are the suggested areas of intervention:

Funding Policies - Increased investment in technology infrastructure, research and development, staff development and innovation initiatives

Digital Transformation Policies – Promoting e-learning, digital governance, electronic records management and virtual work practices

Quality Assurance Frameworks - Ensuring that OTM programmes align with global best practices.

Industry-Education Collaboration Policies - Encouraging structured partnerships between institutions and employers.

Research and Innovation Policies – Supporting Applied research, Technology transfer and Entrepreneurship development.

Thank you for your rapt attention Mr. Vice-Chancellor and the invited dignitaries.

God bless ABU, Zaria, our nation, and the future of Office Technology and Management.

References

- Adebayo, F. & Ogunleye, M. (2020). Sustainability of academic programmes in Nigeria: The role of ICT. *Journal of Educational Management*, 12(3), 45–58.
- Akande, J.A.C (2022). *A Guide to Teacher Competency Evaluation*. Ibadan. University, Press
- Aliyu, M.M. (2006). *Business Education in Nigeria: Trend and Issues*. Gosten Print Media Limited. Offa, Kwara State, 25-26
- Amoor, S.S. (2020). *Office Secretarial Administration*. ABU Press, Zaria, Kaduna, Nigeria.
- Amoor, S.S. (2024). Advancing Secretarial Profession to a New Pinnacle in Nigeria, Lead paper presented at National Conference of Chartered Institute of Professional Secretarial Staff of Nigeria held on the 10th October, 2024 at the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.
- Aromolaran, E.D. (1996). The Effect of Training in Automated Office Equipment on Secretaries Job Performance.
- Chukumezie, F.U. (2000). The secretary and Human Relations: The millennium Secretaries. *Journal of Secretaries Association*.
- Danja, K.H (2025). Innovative Roadmap to Success in the Dynamic Field of Secretarial Profession in Nigeria. A Paper presented at 34th Annual National Conference and Workshop of Chartered Institute of Professional Secretarial Staff of Nigeria.

- Igbinedion, V.I (2011). Perception of Factors that Influence Students' Vocational Choice of Secretarial Studies in tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria. *European Journal of Education Studies* 3 (3), 228.
- Isineyi T.N. (2006). Challenges of Secretarial Profession in the Era of Globalization. *Journal of Professional Secretaries and Administrators* 12, 13-25. *Minolta Survey Report Published in Professional Secretaries International* (1987).
- Oborah, J.O. (2021). A Strategic Framework (SWOT Analysis Construct) for the future of the secretarial profession in Nigeria. *Journal of Office Administration Education and Practice*. 1 (3)364-375.
- Okolo, C.I. (2009). Teaching Business Education in Distance Education Programme: Problems and Strategies for Improvement. *Business Education Journal*. 3(1):41-43.
- Oladeji, A.D & Afolabi, O.A, (2021). The Challenges and Prospects of the Secretarial Profession in the Modern Technology Era in Oyo State, Nigeria. *The pacific Journal of Science and Technology*, 22(2)137-145.
- Oluwaseun, A. (2020). *Integrating technology in office management programmes: Challenges and prospects*. TechEd Publishers.
- Nwosu, C.U. (2009). Developing an Entrepreneurial Business Education Curriculum. *The Secretarial Perspective*. 14-20.



Printed by Ahmadu Bello University Press Limited

P.M.B. 1094, Samaru, Zaria, Nigeria.

Tel: +234 806 594 9711

Email: abupress@abu.edu.ng | info@abupress.com.ng

Website: www.abupress.com.ng