

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

By the mid 20th Century, humans had achieved a mastery of technology sufficient to leave the atmosphere of the earth for the first time and explore space. According to Merriam-Webster (2007) technology is making usage and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems or methods of organization in order to solve a problem or perform a specific function. The word technology comes from Greek, the term can either be applied generally or to specific areas: examples include construction technology and information technology.

Technology has affected society and its surroundings in a number of ways. In many societies, technology has helped develop more advanced economies (including today's global economy) and has allowed the rise of a leisure class. Many technological processes produce unwanted by-products: known as pollution and deplete natural resources, the determinants of the earth and its environment. Various implementations of technologies influence the value of a society and new technology often raises new ethical questions examples include the rise of efficiency in terms of human productivity, a term originally applied to machines and the challenge of traditional norms.

According to Franklin Ursula (1952) Traditionally, new technology has been concerned with the construction of machines, structures, and tools on a relatively large scale. The development of materials for building bridges or sky scrapers is an example of this, as is the development of the internal combustion engine and the nuclear reactor. While such activities involve all the sciences, from chemistry to nuclear physics, the overriding goal has been the same to improve the human condition by finding better ways to deal with the macroscopic world.

Jaulius Adama's (1999) in his views says: Since World War II, the focus of technological activities has undergone a major change while the old activities are still pursued, they have largely been superseded by applications of technology at the microscopic level instead of building large-scale structures and machines modern-day technology tends to concentrate on finding improved ways to transfer information and to develop new materials by studying the way

atoms come together. The silicon chip and micro electronics typify the new technological trend, as does the blossoming of genetic engineering. The trend can be expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

With the changing world of technology this day, it is important to say that modern technology has come to stay, and it plays a significant role in the improvement of the secretary's job which in turn enhances productivity in all aspects.

However, Eric Schalzbery (2004) in his views says that with the high rate of technological development in this "global village" era, the secretary has come to terms with the reality of having her job greatly enriched and complete business activities going on in modern office. The secretary plays an important role in ensuring the proper utilization of these machines for greater productivity.

In the past, most office work had been carried out manually although the volume of office work had been small and there was less sophistication in the industrial art, hence there was no significant demand for modern technology. But today, when one looks at the basic tasks. In an office, whether it be writing, calculating, filing, sorting or analysis, it is found that office machines can be used to do the job better and faster which leads to great achievements and professionalism in the field. There has never been greater need for efficiency in business than there is today. All kinds of businesses must employ modern methods in their offices. The raw material of an office is information, and the responsibility of an office is like that of a clearinghouse, receiving and sending out information, processing and storing facts in various forms. Therefore, the ever increasing size of business organizations has increased the development of new techniques in office management. Unlike in the past, where the secretary made use of old model manual typewriter that does not enhance efficiency. Since the secretary is a medium through which the organization's actions and policies are conveyed to the public. In readable and disseminable form, it is wise that she is exposed to office machines and understand their proper usage so that she can efficiently carry out the routine job of the office. By so doing the organization's concern can benefit highly from the services of the secretary.

The secretary is part of the management team since she is completely involved in the affairs of the office and in making and implementation of business plans. She deals with letter

drafting and typing, filing processing and storing of information as well as disseminating information. With the office automations such as electronic typewriter Word process, computer, telephone, fax machine, internet, e-mail, photocopier and calculating machines at her disposal, her job is sure to progress swiftly and a boost to attaining productivity in the organization where she works.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Even though modern technology is regarded as important and of high value in ensuring quality work output in an office, as well as bringing about productivity. It is equally believed that these machines can cause job displacement. This is the fear that many employees suffer from when new machines are being purchased for use by their organization. The machines are cost effective. Some organizations do not really apply the use of some of the modern machines and this leads to poor performance, this is because they seem not to attach great importance to these machines and most secretaries are ignorant of their uses.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study intends to achieve the following:

- a. To examine the concept of modern technology and its effect on the secretary's profession.
- b. To examine whether modern technology causes job displacement of secretaries in organizations.
- c. To determine whether the secretaries utilize the office machines for productivity in every aspect.
- d. To determine whether the modern machines enhance the secretary's efficiency.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the topic, the effect of modern technology on the secretarial profession in government parastatals, this study has drawn up the following research questions:

- a. What effect do modern technologies have on the secretary's job in an organization.?
- b. How have these modern machines caused job displacement of secretaries in organizations today?
- c. How well do secretaries utilize the office machines for productivity in their places of

work?

d. Does modern machine enhance the secretary's efficiency, performance and productivity.

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

The study covers all aspects relating to the effect of modern technology on the secretarial profession such as the concept of modern technology, functions of modern office, secretarial function in government parastatals, types of modern technologies used by secretaries in their profession, effect of modern technology on secretary performance.

This also talks on how these variables can be put together to enhance productivity in all aspects most significantly in the secretarial profession.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research believes that this study will be of immense benefit to the following categories of people.

a. **Secretaries:** This study will be useful to practicing secretaries. It will help broaden their knowledge about modern machines because they are the people who actually make most use of these machines in the offices, it will help motivate them in wanting to make use of the modern machines.

b. **Employers of labour:** This study will enable employers of labour to have more knowledge about the modern machines and will give them a focus in acquiring these machines for use by their secretaries for greater productivity in their business activities.

c. **Future Researchers:** This study will serve as a guide to the future researchers who will need to study and expand on the same topic. It will serve as data or source of information.

d. **Employees:** This study will enable the employees to make use of the modern machines to communicate smoothly. Two people can chat via a computer when they are both connected. It brings secretaries all over the world into contact with each other.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Modern machines: These refer to the usage and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems or methods of organizing in order to solve a problem or perform a specific function.

Productivity: This is the ability to produce things of economic value. The art of being fruitful.

Manually: Work done with high degree of human labour

Efficiency: The ability to perform duties well to produce the desired or satisfactory result.

Sophistication: Having to do things with latest improvement and refinements e.g modern machines.

Implementation: To carry out a plan into action.

Displacement: To put a person out of his usual position and be replaced by a machine.

Policies: Plan of action made by business company to meet aims and objectives.

Secretary: An individual employed to keep the records of the meetings of an organization and to write or answer letters on this behalf.

Professional secretary: A person employed to be in charge of the clerical, organizational and administrative functions of the organization

Government: A political authority who have the power to make and enforce laws for a country or area.

Government Parastatals: A group of people established to perform a function usually associated with a government and under its direct control.

IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON SECRETARIAL PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

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