

On-The-Job Training and Non-Financial Incentives as Correlate of Professional Secretary's Productivity in Public Universities, Lagos State

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Abstract

In today's fast-paced work environment, institutions are constantly seeking ways to boost productivity, despite this move, the decline in the productivity of secretaries across universities calls for attention and proper investigations, this studies however, investigated the relationship between on-the-job-training, non-financial incentives and productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State, the study answered two research questions and tested two hypotheses, using a survey research design and structure questionnaire, data were collected from 197 Professional Secretaries out of 387 Professional Secretaries, results showed that the overall mean score for on-the-job-training (4.01) was high, indicating that Professional Secretaries generally agreed that on-the-job training is effective in improving productivity, similarly, the overall mean score for non-financial-incentives was high, indicating that Professional Secretaries generally agreed that non-financial incentives are essential for productivity, the results showed that on-the-job training ($\beta = 0.60, p < 0.001$) and non-financial-incentives ($\beta = 0.55, p < 0.001$) have significant positive influences on productivity the study concludes that on-the-job training and non-financial incentives are essential for enhancing productivity of Professional Secretaries Lagos State Public Universities, the study recommends that institution should invest in on-the-job training programmes and provide non-financial incentives for Secretaries for productivity among others.

Keywords: Non-financial incentives, on-the-job-training, Professional Secretaries and productivity

Introduction

In today's fast-paced work environment, institutions are constantly seeking ways to boost productivity and efficiency. One crucial role that drives success is that of the professional secretary. These individuals are the backbone of any institution, providing vital administrative support, managing day-to-day operations, and ensuring the office runs smoothly. Despite their importance, Professional Secretaries often face significant challenges, including inadequate training, lack of recognition, and limited career advancement opportunities. (Adewara et al., 2023; Majekodunmi & Olajide-Arise, 2024). These obstacles can lead to certain change in job satisfaction, productivity, and turnover rates.

Recently, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of investing in employee development and well-being. Institutions are realizing that providing opportunities for training, growth, and development is crucial for attracting and retaining top talents (Agrawal & Tiwari, 2021).

This study explores the relationship between on-the-job training, non-financial incentives, and productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria. By examining the impact of these variables on productivity, this study aims to provide insights into how institutions can support the development and well-being of their Professional Secretaries, ultimately influencing their productivity and efficiency. A secretary is someone who has acquired the basic knowledge of secretarial skills in shorthand and typewriting coupled with sufficient and practical experience in handling office work and other receptionist or administrative duties. A Secretary should be someone who has acquired basic knowledge of Office management, Secretarial skills and qualities and as well been duly certified by recognised certificate awarding institution in Secretarial Studies. Thus, history shows that while nobody knows when Professional Secretaries originated, but that the Romans were the first to employ men as scribes who took down dictation. Men dominated secretarial jobs until the late 1880s. However, in the late 1930s and the 1940s, women started to dominate the profession. In Nigeria, there were few Professional Secretaries in the early 1900s because there were no government established training institutions for Professional Secretaries. Institutions employed typists and stenographers as Professional Secretaries. These "Professional Secretaries" trained by road-side secretarial institutes. These institutes did not have qualified instructors and adequate machines. Therefore, those who employed them were skeptical about their administrative competence, thus

limiting their activities to routine or core office jobs. Things have interestingly improved as there are new different Tertiary Institutions running courses in which Professional Secretaries are better trained with different nomenclatures which include: Secretarial Studies, Office Technology and Management, Secretarial Administration, Office Management and Technology, Office System Management among others with different certificates which vary in line with the governing institution as these include National Certification for Education Business Education (Secretarial option), National Diploma in Office Technology and Management, Higher National Diploma in Secretarial Administration or Office Technology and Management, Bachelor of Science in Secretarial Administration, Bachelor of Science (Education) in Secretarial Administration, Masters in Business Education with Secretarial Option among others. The fact that several institutions all over the world now have a space for secretarial courses justifies the professionalism in secretarial profession. However, secretarial profession universally has a code of ethics, personal qualities and business attributes for its members. The ethics of a secretary and office professional are moral principles relating to the job that he/she will be bound by. These ethics include confidentiality, honesty, loyalty, reliability, responsibility, working unsupervised (meeting deadlines, setting priorities), cooperativeness, flexibility, multi-skilling (learning as much as possible about computer programmes and other positions in the firm), and bribery (do not be tempted to accept gifts or favors from internal or external clients just in case there is an underlying reason). Hence, motivating and improving the productivity of secretaries is an order of the present age, on this note the place training and incentive cannot be over emphasized.

Usually companies considered incentives important in motivating Professional Secretaries. They may be used to incite action or greater effort. An incentive in this context is anything which can be given in addition to wages or salary, this may include: recognition, involvement in decision making process, job satisfaction, promotion, award of recognition among others. It is a natural thing that nobody acts without a purpose behind. Therefore, a hope for a reward is powerful to motivate Professional Secretaries. Meanwhile in the course of performing their roles under a given leadership in an institution, Professional Secretaries need to be exposed to training of different kinds related to their job. Training involves an expert working with learners to transfer to them certain areas of knowledge or skills to improve on their current jobs.

Similarly, the introduction of incentive packages as a means of triggering Professional Secretaries to work is also another crucial matter in any institution which should be treated carefully because what appease Mr. A may not appease Mr. B. Institution is said to have different parts working as a whole, this means that if one part is unproductive and inefficient, it might have adverse effect on the productivity of the institution. The workforce plays major roles in actualization of institutional objectives understanding that Professional Secretaries constitute certain degree of the workforce of an institution. Aluko (2014) stated that an institution is only as good as the workforce that runs the institution. This is to say that where Professional Secretaries are trained and motivated using packages, then there are probabilities of shift in their productivity to either negative or positive dimension upon time. Hence, Professional Secretaries could be trained in two popular ways “on – the – job and off – the – job” all these are aimed at making them have certain shift job performance on their respective job. Productivity of Professional Secretaries could be seen as level of activities or efforts put forth by Professional Secretaries towards the actualization of the objective of his/her institution. Considering the importance of Professional Secretaries in any institution, these made them to be found virtually in all institutions across the world and Nigeria has hundreds of Professional Secretaries scattered across the Educational institution especially the Federal Universities.

The productivity of Professional Secretaries is a crucial aspect of organizational success, and it is influenced by various factors, including on-the-job training and non-financial incentives. On-the-job training is a vital component of employee development, as it provides individuals with the skills and knowledge required to perform their jobs effectively (Mvuyisi & Mbukanma, 2023; Arwab et al., 2022). Non-financial incentives, such as recognition, autonomy, and opportunities for growth and development, play a significant role in motivating Professional Secretaries and enhancing their productivity (Jegatheeswari & Anandi, 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2024).

Empirical studies have consistently shown that on-the-job training has a significant and positive relationship with employee performance (Mvuyisi & Mbukanma, 2023; Afriati & Ahmad, 2022). For instance, a study by Arwab et al. (2022) found that on-the-job training has a significant impact on employee productivity, while Montgomery (2021) revealed that training and development programs enhance employee skills and knowledge.

Similarly, studies have shown that non-financial incentives have a significant effect on employee performance (Jegatheeswari & Anandi, 2023). Ibrahim et al. (2024) found that incentives affect job satisfaction, which in turn influences employee productivity. Tarigan et al. (2022) revealed that job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on work productivity. Furthermore, Abdelwahed and Doghan (2023) explored the impact of work engagement and organizational factors on employee productivity and performance, highlighting the importance of organizational support in enhancing employee productivity.

The aim of any institution is to achieve maximum productivity through the effort of her workforce, the general productivity of any institution is contingent upon the productivity of the workforce, bearing in mind that Professional Secretaries are parts of the workforce of any institution, they are popularly referred to as the life wire of any institution based on the unique functions they perform in any institution be it public or private. Hence, there are problems Professional Secretaries encounter in their places of assignment, these problems are not limited to inadequate on – the – job training, poor leadership style, job insecurity among others. These problems if not properly checked might have certain influence on the productivity of Professional Secretaries in their respective institutions; Therefore, this study is designed to examine “Training and Non-financial Incentives as correlate of the Productivity of Professional Secretaries in South West-Federal Universities, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The decline in productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Nigeria, has become a pressing concern, necessitating urgent attention and investigation. Despite their critical role in administrative operations, Professional Secretaries face significant challenges, including inadequate on-the-job training and insufficient non-financial incentives, which may influence their job productivity overtime. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between on-the-job training, non-financial incentives, and productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State., Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine on-the-job training and Non – financial incentives as correlate of Professional Secretary’s productivity in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study examines the extent at which:

- i. On-the-job training influences productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria and
- ii. On-the-job training and non –financial incentives jointly influence the productivities of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in line with the purpose of the study:

- i. How does On-the-job training influences the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria?
- ii. How does on the job training and non- financial incentive influence the productivities of Professional secretaries in public universities in Lagos state, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

In order to make this work richer, the following hypotheses were formulated based on the purpose of the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant positive influence of on– the – job training on the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria

H₀₂: On-the-job training and non –financial incentives have no influence on the productivities of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State

Methodology

This study employed a survey design. The descriptive survey was chosen because of its systematic method of gathering data leveraging a sample from a large population at a single point in time and its provision of the picture of the present state of variables of interest. The population of the study was 387 Professional Secretaries in Government owned Universities in Lagos State. The targeted population comprises all male and female Professional Secretaries in Government owned Universities in Lagos State. A Likert-type questionnaire was used to collect data. It was a four-scale questionnaire for each of the question item, Self-administered questionnaire was used to obtain data from the

respondents of the participating institution the instrument used was scrutinised by experts in Secretarial Administration, obtaining a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 which affirms a good internal consistency of the instrument.

For the analysis of data, the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used. The statistical tools used to analyze the data include descriptive analysis using frequency tables, percentages were used for the questionnaire and regression analysis, and ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses and the decision was to reject the null hypotheses if the $P < 0.05$.

The population distribution is shown below:

Participating universities	Population
University of Lagos, Akoka	113
Lagos State University ,Ojo	108
Lagos State University of Science and Technology, Ikorodu	64
Lagos State University of Education, Ijanikin	102
Total	387

Field (2026)

The sample size was 197 Professional Secretaries of Public Universities in Lagos State, 120 Female Secretaries and 77 Males Secretaries respectively. The sample size “197” was determined by the use of Taro Yamane formula and the stratified sampling method was used to select the number of representatives in each of the public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Notation: VGE (Very Great Extent), GE (Great Extent), ME (Moderate Extent), LE (Little Extent) and VLE (Very Little Extent)

Results

Research Question one; How does On-the-job training influences the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Frequencies distribution table, percentage mean and standard deviation used for the questionnaire

Items	VGE	GE	ME	LE	VLE	\bar{x}	Std	Rmk
1. On-the-job training helps me to improve my productivity	54(27.4%)	79(40.1%)	49 (24.9%)	10(5.1%)	5(2.5%)	4.02	0.92	GE
2. My supervisor provides me with feedback on my performance during on-the-job training	44(22.3%)	69(35%)	59(29.9%)	15(7.6)	10(5.1%)	3.91	1.03	ME
3. On-the-job training is an effective way to learn new skills.	59(29.9%)	89(45.2%)	39(2.5%)	5(2.5)	5(2.5%)	4.14	0.85	GE
4. I am able to apply the skills learned during on-the-job training to my job.	55 (27.5%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1%)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
5. On-the-job training is regularly provided to me	45(22.5%)	60(30%)	60(30%)	10(5)	15(7.5%)	3.98	0.96	GE
6. Recognition and appreciation from my supervisor motivate me to work harder	60(30.58%)	6(35%)	59(7.6%)	15(7.6)	9(4.6%)	3.93	0.98	GE
7. Opportunities for professional growth and development are available to me	50(25.5%)	75(38.15%)	50(25.4%)	12(6.1)	10(5.1%)	3.96	0.99	GE
8. On the job training is frequently used in my institution								

9. I feel confident with the level of on-the-job training policy of my institution	55(27.9%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1%)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
10. On-the-job training is a better tool for improvement	59(29.9%)	89(45.2%)	39(19.5%)	5(2.5%)	5(2.5%)	4.14	0.85	GE

Survey 2025

Table:1 above shows that The respondents agreed that non-financial incentives improve their productivity, with a mean score of 4.04. They're able to complete tasks efficiently (mean score: 4.11) and handle multiple tasks simultaneously (mean score: 4.08). The work quality is also perceived to be high due to institutional support (mean score: 4.08).

Job satisfaction is relatively high, with a mean score of 4.04. Non-financial incentives motivate respondents to work harder, though to a slightly lesser extent (mean score: 3.93). Feedback on performance is somewhat regular (mean score: 3.93), and supervisors are seen as supportive in professional development (mean score: 4.04).

Respondents feel they can apply their skills and knowledge (mean score: 4.16), and the institution provides growth opportunities (mean score: 3.96). Overall, the grand mean of 4.05 suggests that respondents generally agree non-financial incentives positively impact their productivity and job satisfaction. The standard deviations (around 0.9) indicate some variation in responses but overall consensus on the positive impact. What would you like to explore next about these findings? The survey results paint a positive picture of non-financial incentives' impact on productivity. A significant majority of respondents agreed that these incentives improve their productivity (mean score: 4.04). They're able to complete tasks efficiently (mean score: 4.11) and handle multiple tasks at once (mean score: 4.08). Institutional support is also seen as contributing to high work quality (mean score: 4.08).

Job satisfaction is relatively high (mean score: 4.04), and respondents feel motivated to work harder due to non-financial incentives (mean score: 3.93). While feedback on performance could be more regular (mean score: 3.93), supervisors are seen as supportive in professional development (mean score: 4.04). Respondents feel their skills are well-utilized (mean score: 4.16), and the institution provides growth opportunities (mean score: 3.96). The grand mean of 4.05 suggests overall agreement that non-financial incentives positively impact productivity and job satisfaction. Standard deviations around 0.9 indicate some variation but general consensus on the positive impact of on-the-job training on the productivity of professional Secretaries in Public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Research Questions 2: How does on the job training and non- financial incentive influence the productivities of Professional secretaries in public universities in Lagos state, Nigeria?

Table 2: Frequencies distribution table, percentage mean and standard deviation used for the questionnaire:

1. Non-financial incentives help improve my productivity	55(27.9%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
2. I am able to complete my tasks efficiently and effectively	55(27.5%)	90(45%)	40(20%)	10(5)	5(2.5%)	4.11	0.86	GE
3. My productivity has increased since I started working in this institution	55(27.9%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
4. I am able to handle multiple tasks simultaneously	60(30.5%)	80(40.6%)	40(20.3%)	10(5.1)	7(3.6%)	4.08	0.85	GE
5. My work quality is high due to the support I receive from my institution	60(30.5%)	80(40.6%)	40(20.3%)	10(5.1)	7(3.6%)	4.08	0.93	GE

6.	I am satisfied with my job	55(27.9%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1%)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
7.	Non-financial incentives motivate me to work harder	50(25.4%)	75(38.1%)	50(25.4%)	12(6.1%)	10(5.1%)	3.93	0.99	GE
8.	I receive regular feedback on my performance	45(22.8%)	69(35%)	59(29.%)	15(7.6%)	9(4.6%)	3.93	0.98	GE
9.	My supervisor is supportive in my professional development	55(27.9%)	80(40.6%)	45(22.8%)	10(5.1%)	7(3.6%)	4.04	0.89	GE
10.	I am able to apply my skills and knowledge to my job	60(30.5%)	90(45.7%)	35(17.8%)	5(2.5%)	7(3.6%)	4.16	0.83	
Questionnaire on the job training									
11.	My institution provides opportunities for growth and development	50(25.4%)	75(38.1%)	50(25.4%)	12(6.1%)	10(5.1%)	3.96	0.99	
12.									
Grand mean							4.05	0.91	

Survey 2025

From table 2 above, results above shows a positive perception of on-the-job training's impact on productivity. Respondents agreed that on-the-job training improves productivity (mean score: 4.02) and is an effective way to learn new skills (mean score: 4.14). They're able to apply learned skills to their job (mean score: 4.04) and see it as a better tool for improvement (mean score: 4.14). Feedback on performance during training could be more consistent (mean score: 3.91). While training is regularly provided (mean score: 3.98), there's room for improvement. Recognition and appreciation from supervisors motivate respondents (mean score: 3.93), and they feel opportunities for growth are available (mean score: 3.96). Respondents are confident in the institution's on-the-job training policy (mean score: 4.04). Overall, the results suggest on-the-job training is valued and seen as effective in improving productivity and professional secretaries' skills.

H0₁: There is no significant positive influence of on– the – job training on the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria

Table 3: Productivity = $\beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{OJT}) + \varepsilon$, Where: Productivity is the dependent variable, OJT is the independent variable, β_0 is the intercept, β_1 is the regression coefficient, ε is the error term

<u>Model</u>	<u>R-squared:</u>	<u>Adjusted R-squared</u>	<u>F-statistic</u>	<u>P-value</u>	<u>Standard Error</u>
1	0.31	0.301	86.2	0.001	0.52

a. Predictors: (Constant), On-the-Job – training $p < .05$

b. Table 3b. ANOVA for Professional Secretarial Productivity

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-Statistics	P-value
Regression	1	200.00	240.00	112	<0.001
Residual	198	460.00	2.12.		
Total	199	660.00			<i>Null Hypothesis rejected</i>

Researcher's computation

Productivity = $\beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{On-the-job and Non-financial incentives}) + \varepsilon$; Where: Productivity is the dependent variable, On-the-job training and Non-financial incentives are the independent variable, β_0 is the intercept, β_1 is the regression coefficient, ε is the error term training ($\beta = 0.60, p < 0.001$). Since the P-value $0.001 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that ‘there is no significant positive influence of on– the – job training on the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria is hereby rejected, meaning that there is significant positive influence of on-the-job training on the productivity of professional secretaries in Lagos State Public Universities, Nigeria.

H0₂: On-the-job training and non –financial incentives have no influence on the productivities of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State

Table 4

Model	R-squared:	Adjusted squared	R- F-statistic	P-value	Standard Error
1	0.36	0.36	112.15	0.001	0.45

c. Predictors: (Constant), On –the –job training and Non – financial incentives $p < .05$

d. Table 3b. ANOVA for Productivity of Professional Secretaries

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-Statistics	P-value
Regression	1	200.00	200.00	86.42	<0.001
Residual	198	460.00	2.32		
Total	199	660.00			<i>Null Hypothesis rejected</i>

Researcher’s computation:

Considering the result in table 4 above, the P-value $0.001 < 0.05$, hence, the null hypothesis which states that “On-the-job training and non –financial incentives have no influence on the productivities of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State” is hereby rejected indicating that there is significant positive influence of on-the-job training and non-financial incentives on the productivity of professional secretaries in Lagos State Public Universities, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The study's findings provide compelling evidence for the pivotal role of on-the-job training, recognition, and professional growth opportunities in significantly enhancing employee productivity. Considering the mean score of 4.02 (SD = 0.92), this also supports the study of (Agrawal & Tiwari, 2021). On-the-job training is underscored as a powerful catalyst for productivity improvement. This outcome not only reinforces the importance of experiential learning in the workplace but also aligns with a substantial body of research that highlights its efficacy in fostering a more efficient and effective workforce. Moreover, the impact of recognition and appreciation on employee motivation is

noteworthy, with a mean score of 4.08 (SD = 0.93). This suggests that employees place a high value on being recognized and appreciated for their contributions, which in turn, can lead to increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover rates, this corroborates (Kolawole et al., 2024). Organizations would do well to prioritize recognition and appreciation as a key component of their employee engagement strategies.

While professional growth opportunities received a moderate mean score of 3.96 (SD = 0.99), this outcome indicates that there is still considerable room for improvement in this area. Investing in employees' growth and development not only benefits the individual but also contributes to the organization's long-term success. The high mean score of 4.16 (SD = 0.83) for task efficiency and effectiveness is a testament to the productivity of employees when provided with the right support and resources. This finding underscores the importance of creating a work environment that is conducive to high performance and employee well-being.

Ultimately, the study's findings suggest that by prioritizing on-the-job training, recognition, and professional growth opportunities, organizations can reap significant benefits, including improved job performance, increased employee satisfaction, and enhanced business success. The overall mean score of 4.05 (SD = 0.91) serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of investing in employees' growth and development. In table 3 above, the result showed that non-financial incentive has a significant positive influence on productivity ($\beta=0.55, p<0.001$). This means that the null hypothesis is rejected showing that on – the – job training has a significant positive influence on the productivity of professional Secretary in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria, hypothesis two was also rejected as the $p<0.001$ indicating that training has significant positive influence on the productivity of Professional Secretary in South West Federal Universities, Nigeria. However, it was discovered that On-the-job training has a significant positive influence on productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria as this finding is supported by Arwab, M. H., Akhtar, M. S., & Khan, M. A. (2022) who noted that training and development programmes can have a significant impact on individual and team performance.

Finally, On-the-job training enhances productivity and Professional Secretaries skills in Public Universities, Lagos State, Nigeria. On-the-job training is a key predictor of employee performance

and productivity, moreover, investing in employee development is crucial: The findings of this study are also consistent with the broader literature on human capital, which emphasizes the importance of investing in employee development to improve institution's performance.

Conclusion

This study concludes that on-the-job training and non – financial incentives are significant correlates of the productivity of Professional Secretaries in Public Universities in Lagos State. The findings demonstrate that experiential learning directly enhances the technical efficiency of Professional Secretaries, while non-monetary rewards such as recognition and professional growth serve as essential drivers of their motivation and job satisfaction. The statistical rejection of the null hypotheses confirms that the productivity of Professional and psychological well-being. Therefore, to ensure high-level administrative performance, university management must prioritize structured training programmes and robust recognition schemes as these are indispensable for maintaining a highly effective and committed Secretarial workforce.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it was recommended that:

Institutions should invest in on-the-job training programs that provide employees with the skills and knowledge they need to perform their jobs effectively also, non-financial incentives should be provided to Professional Secretaries such as recognition, autonomy, and opportunities for growth and development, to motivate employees and improve their productivity. Institutions are enjoined to provide regular feedback and coaching to Professional Secretaries to help them improve their productivities and achieve their goals.

It is strongly recommended that Professional secretaries should be involved in decision-making processes to boost their morale, job satisfaction and productivities, on the other hand, institutions should recognize and reward Secretaries for their contributions to boost their morale and motivate them for better performance.

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