

TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR JOB CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT: A CASE OF ICT IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper attempted to present a scenario of the link between Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and Business Education. In the process, the meaning of the concept ICT was explained. The relevance of ICT in Business Education and how they affect the educational programmes as regards job creation were also stated. The experience and skill acquisition through ICT which enables the business education graduands to be self-reliant in creating job for the society and themselves were spelt out. The challenges or problems facing the effectiveness of ICT in Business Education were also examined. The paper concluded that there exists a link between Business Education and Information Communication technologies – a programme that is geared towards job creation.

Introduction

The arrival of computer technology in the 20th century has revolutionized many fields of endeavours and exerted considerable influence on the ways society function. In the fields of agriculture, communication, the space programme, transportation, banking engineering medicine, manufacturing, marketing and education, the influence of computer is enormous. In fact, ICT has fundamentally changed the practices and procedures of nearly all forms of endeavour within business governance. Within education, ICT has begun to have a presence but the impact has not been as extensive as in other fields. Education is a very socially oriented activity. Quality

education has traditionally been associated with strong teachers having high degrees of personal contact with learners. According to Edith Cowan (2010), the ICT in education lends itself to more student-centered learning settings and often this creates some tensions for some teachers and students. But with the world moving rapidly into digital media and information, the role of ICT in education is becoming more and more important and this importance will continue to grow and develop in the 21st century. However, some developing countries are already embracing computer technology in many parts of the world.

According to Olaitan (1985) in Imogie, Business Education which is an integral part of Technical Education has

the potential role of transforming the nation economically and technologically. He further observed that Business education is designed to develop skills, abilities, attitudes and understanding habits and appreciation, encompassing, knowledge and information needed by workers to enter and make progress in employment on a useful and productive basis.

Business Education has become a dynamic field of study requiring the learner or beneficiary to acquire office skills in order to be gainfully employed either in an office/factory or be self-employed by setting up his or her own business. As mentioned in this paper, it has gone beyond the emphasis on studying only Shorthand, typewriting, English Language, Secretarial Duties, Accounting, Office Management, among others has added the requirements of proficiencies in the operation and application of the computer system. Accounting and Secretarial Education which are parts of Business Education programme have appeal to both men and women in Nigeria as well as other developing countries in the world. The programme has a lot of opportunities for gainful employment in the economy. There is hardly an organized office in Nigerian economy today where an office secretary or accounting personnel with computer skill not required or does not have job mobility.

Many secretaries and accounting personnels who are computer literate or well versed in ICT have been able to set up their own business centres or documentary offices to earn a living.

Eyitayo, Eyitayo and Akeku (2002:73) including Becham and Rathswohl (2006:291) explained that ICT and Business Education skills provide self-employment skills to office secretaries and Accounting personnel. Davies (2006: 2) opined that the educational policies, curriculum, general orientation of education and examination systems emphasize white-collar jobs rather than aspirations towards achieving competencies in Business and technical education programmes. With ICT in Business Education, Secretaries and Accounting personnel can solve the problems of unemployment in Nigeria and should be vigorously pursued by everyone. By everyone.

Definition of Information Communication Technologies

It is not easy to find a definition that clearly describes the difference between IT and ICT. In short, the definitions of both IT and ICT talk about hardware, software and networks by which information is retrieved, recorded and displayed. The World Bank, which is working on providing help to the developing counties with funds and proficiency needed to exploit ICT, defined IT and ICT as following: "Information Technology refers to the creation, storage and processing of data, including hardware (computer networks, servers, storage devices, and desktop computers), system software (operating system, middleware, programming languages), and software applications." Heeks (1999:3 defined ICT as following: "Information

and communication Technologies can be defined as electronic means of capturing, processing, storing and communicating information.” And Hamelink (1997:3) wrote that “Information and Communication Technologies encompass all those technologies that enable the handling of information and facilitate different forms of communication among human actors, between human beings and electronic systems, and among electronic systems.”

Defining Business Education

The UNESCO (1978:17) in *Foundations of Technical and vocational Education: Evolution and Practice* by Prof. Ekpenyong L.E. (p. 22) defined “technical or Business Education “as a comprehensive term referring to the educational process when it involves, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skill and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life.

In the National Policy on Education (Federal FRN 2004 Revised Edition) Technical or Business Education is defined as” that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical or applied skill as well as scientific knowledge. The important element in the definition is that for a course to be technical, it has to include the study of science. However, in 1977 Federal Ministry of Education Circular SME/363/S1/93, titled” Free Technical Education, post secondary courses are

defined as those where the minimum entry requirements are not below school certificate. The document went further to list courses that fall under technical education as follows: Engineering, Technology, Building Environmental Studies, Agriculture, Water Resources, Applied Fine Arts, Building and Design, Printing, Food Technology and catering, Laboratory Technology, Medical Technology, Management, Business Studies, Accounts, Secretarial Studies etc.

Business Education includes Business Management, Accounts and Secretarial Studies. With technology applied for skill acquisition, it is therefore inseparable from ICT which is the new technology that enhances the efficiency and application.

Relevance of ICT in Business Education

The relevance of ICT in Business Education are as follows:

- (1) ICT in Accounting Process
- (2) ICT in Secretarial Training or Office Technology and Management (OTM)
- (3) ICT in Business Management

(1) ICT in Accounting Process: The Effect of Information Communication Technology in Accounting field cannot be denied. Accounting involves a lot of routine calculations and could be time consuming as it is tedious. In view of the human factor involved, manual calculations would often invariably result in errors, arrears of work, thus giving room to misleading variables of decision

making as well as making information retrieval difficult. But with the use of spreadsheet for example Excel and other accounting programs, speed, accuracy, quick information, retrieval, calculating power and decision making can take place. Input and output facilities which facilitates search reading interrogation of files, alterations, displays etc' which are not possible in manual system can be done. The impact enable computer to be applied in two broad areas of costing, namely: Decision Support System (DSS) and Transaction processing such as application of computer capabilities in the processing routine, large volume of data with primary objective of cutting down on processing time, enhancing accuracy, removing tedium and provision of decision making variables, timely accurately and in the desired formats.

ICT in Secretarial Studies or Office Technology and Management (OTM)

Office Technology and Management is the enhancement of Secretarial Studies due to the application of ICT in the course of Study. In OTM, emphasis is laid on computers rather than Shorthand and Typewriting. More credit hours were allocated to Computer Applications I and II while credit loads for Shorthand and Typewriting classes were reduced. The study of ICT has a great impact in OTM because secretaries cannot do without the use of ICT. ICT help in the

developing of the teaching and learning of OTM students, secretaries and managers. It aids messages/ documents communication, ICT aids computer-based message system, document filling, and public data services. Such packages like micro soft word, Excel, Power Point, Data Base Management, and Desktop Publishing help in the documentary and presentation of information.

ICT in Business Management

The information society challenges the business system. In recent years, the speedy, effective and global communication of knowledge has created a new foundation for co-operation and teamwork, both nationally and internationally. The increasing role played by ICT in the development of society calls for reaction to the challenges of the information society. The ICT has played a great role in business studies like (i) establishment of Business centres, (ii) Establishment of Cyber cafées, (iii) Call centres. The impact of ATM on the operation of commercial banks in Nigeria ensure convenient business hour; prompt and or faster services. The adoption of ICT improves the bank image and lead to a wider faster and more efficient market.

General Benefits of ICT in Job Creation

ICT has revolutionized our economy through the use of

- ❖ Smart Card
- ❖ E- payment
- ❖ Western Union Money Transfer
- ❖ E-Learning

- ❖ All of the companies cut their telephone and fax cost by using Internet. It was mainly e-mail that was perceived as the main benefit as the communication and transaction was made faster and easier and more convenient way of doing business was gained by using ICT.
- ❖ ICT also improved the query process and information flow and it was regarded as a time saving factor.

Challenges Facing ICT in Education

There have been a number of factors impeding the wholesale uptake of ICT in education across all sectors. These have included such factors as:

- ❖ Lack of funding to support the purchase of the technology.
- ❖ Lack of training among established teaching practitioners.
- ❖ Lack of motivation and need among teachers to adopt ICT as teaching tools (Star 2001) but in recent times, factors have emerged which have strengthened and encouraged moves to adopt ICTs into classroom and learning settings.
- ❖ The technical and security issues such as (i) viruses, (ii) fake messages and various spam despite the use of programs such as Norton Anti Virus.
- ❖ Hacking and copying of the websites making some users to

reformat or reprogram their computers.

- ❖ Cost of procuring and supply of teaching equipment
- ❖ Erratic or interrupted power supply. This is prevalent in our country today thereby making some business centres and individuals to be out of job. The new equipment need regular power supply. Unnecessary interruption of power supply can damage the equipment.
- ❖ Maintaining the server and the customer is a problem since many lack awareness.

Conclusion

At this study, it is very obvious that ICT cannot be separated from Business Education in the creation of job opportunities since both are interwoven in science and skill acquisition. It is the view of this paper that Business Education skills acquisition programme will certainly go a long way in rescuing the unemployment syndrome, especially when purposeful funding, provision of good electricity power supply, shunning of all forms of corruption as income supplement by Nigerians are adequately addressed.

Conclusively, in all the institution there should be a digital cloud. If you do not have computer training, you do not have a passport to digital economy.

All that one need to do is to take a system into the environment, probably stay under a tree and get connected to information super highway. ICT has broken the barriers of classroom size and

location and acts as a powerful agent to creation of job through business and other educational practices.

Recommendation

In order to reduce the causes of unemployment problems in Nigeria and create job opportunities for our youth, ICT in business education should be made effective through regular electricity power supply.

2. Adequate and regular funds should be made available by government and other stakeholders to purchase good quality computer, laptops and other gadgets for training students so as to achieve desirable competencies.
3. NGO should be involved by establishing skills acquisition centres where individuals can be trained and be self-employed in ICT compliance.
4. Teachers in ICT programmes should be motivated through period in-service training to be updated with the trend.
5. Adequate computers should be made available to schools, polytechnics and colleges of education.
6. Government and other stakeholders in tertiary education should endeavour to build good classroom spaces and viable laboratories for

practical training in computer systems, audio visual aids.

1. Other computer aided instructions such as interactive software, projectors, digital slides should be made available to the learners by the government.
2. Nigerians should endeavour to shun all forms of corruption such as computer fraud which are heavily affecting our establishments or industries. Government should avoid procuring outdated or refurbished facilities for teaching and learning presentation.
3. ICT in Business Education should be practically demonstrated and taught as stipulated according to NBTE curriculum.

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