

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) COMPETENCE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN PORT HARCOURT

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ABSTRACT

The study examines information and communication technology (ICT) competence for entrepreneurial skills development of business education students' in tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt. the study adopted the descriptive survey design and the population consisted of Six Hundred and Eighty Five (685) final year business education students' of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt which comprises of 420 and 265 final year business education students' respectively. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 254 respondents. Two (2) research questions were answered and two (2) research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Questionnaires title "(ICT COMFESD)" was used for data collection. The instrument were validated and deemed reliable for the study. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and frequency while T-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. One of the findings reveals that ICT competence level of business education students' affects their entrepreneurial skills development to a high extent. It was therefore recommended among other things that government should make provisions of adequate ICT facilities for the enhancement of ICT competence among business education students'.

Keywords: Information and communication technology, skills, entrepreneur ship, competence, business education students'.

INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology (ICT) is the systematic application of computers and other technologies to acquire, organize process, store, retrieve and disseminate information to bring about effective exchange of information in communication. ICT is one of the major contemporary factors shaping the global economy and resulting in quick changes in the society. This is because it has the ability to enhance, access quality and effectiveness in education in general as well as providing the tools needed to navigate today's increasingly complex and globally linked market place.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is so widespread in today's modern world that it plays important roles in academic institutions, industries and entrepreneurial

activities. Dellicit (2000) opined that ICT is the sole creatures of humankind that has thrown of balance the conventional perceptions of time and space and has destroyed geographical barriers to the transmission of knowledge, ideas and information. Supporting this claim, Mbakwem (2007) assert that this new and irresistible "bride" termed ICT has drastically revolutionized business patterns and structure, work habits, interpersonal relationships, created new business and has move nations that adapt it forward in their development trust.

Hamza (2009) averred that one of the biggest contributions to the growth and economy of a nation is the information and communication technology (ICT) industry. No wonder that virtually all manner of information is available on the internet brought about by ICT on this note therefore there is no doubt that, in this 21st century, information has become the most sort after asset used by many organization including institutions and entrepreneurs. In education sector, knowledge of ICT application have affected academic activities at all levels in the sense that, students' are offered the opportunities to prepare themselves for participation in a rapidly changing world of ICT where activities are increasing transform by access to ICT (Ozorji, 2005).

Entrepreneurial is the process of perceiving business opportunities, mobilizing both human and material resources and initiative action (s) under an enterprise and creativity to meet individual, group or societal needs. Today there is business explosion all over the world as a result of entrepreneurial awareness created among the young and old in various institution of learning as thousands of business are born every hour. Integrating ICT resource towards creation of entrepreneurial opportunities has been successful (Ottih, 2004).

Business education is a programme of study which offers students who wish to pursue a career in business an opportunity to develop those skills, abilities and understanding that will enable them to enter, perform and progress in business occupation before and after graduation from the university. It is expected that a graduate of business education will be able to carry out basic computer command and develop an acceptable typing speed and use the net which of course can make him her an entrepreneur. One of the goals of the Nigeria tertiary education according to the national policy on education (FRN, 2000) is to train students to acquire physical and intellectual skills which will enable them to be self-reliant and useful members of the nation.

Skills refer to an individual knowledge and ability to perform specific task successfully, this empowerment is most needed by the students. It is therefore needful to equip them with current technological trends underlying ICT, in order to advance the ICT field and become competent to develop entrepreneurial skills.

Statement of Problem

The rate of unemployment of graduate from tertiary institutions is fast becoming a threat to the nation. It is expected that at the end of the tertiary education, graduates are supposed to transit into meaningful living within the society with the acquisition of appropriate skills and competencies, such as found in information and communication technology (ICT) and entrepreneurship. Moreover, given the huge benefits provided by ICT and entrepreneurship the government has directed their effort towards creating and developing effective and successful entrepreneurship opportunity by providing ICT resources.

Instead of being indolent and unemployed, it is expected that business education students would key into technological advancement and several opportunities it proffers to

develop entrepreneurial skill, equip and create jobs for themselves while they are still in school and after graduation to become self-reliance Therefore, the statement of the problem is, would competence in ICT affect the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education students in the study area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine ICT competence of business education students for entrepreneurial skill development. Specially, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the extent to which ICT competence level of business education students affect their entrepreneurial skills development.
2. Ascertain the extent to which ICT competence of business education students affect their entrepreneurial skills development with respect to gender.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does ICT competence level of business education students' affect their entrepreneurial skills development?
2. To what extent does ICT competence affect business education studies entrepreneurial skills development with respect to gender?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of business education students of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Rivers State University with regards to ICT competence level for entrepreneurship skills development.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business education students with regards to ICT competence for entrepreneurial skills development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Information And Communication Technology (ICT) is a major tool in the hands of the entrepreneur that gives insight into the world as a global village. ICT have really sharpened the life styles of many; from the youngest to the oldest ranging from the menial jobs to top executive positive in the employment offices. ICT has actually made life easy with its resources. Competence in ICT resources utilization will better place prospective individuals for good entrepreneurial opportunities (Nwaiwu, 2007).

In the past, ICT has provided societies with various means of communication capabilities. For instance, people communicate in real time with others in different countries using technologies such as skipping, video conferencing, instant messaging and so on. In developing the nation economy, entrepreneurship plays the vital role of stating and making changes in the structures of business and society. Not only does it increase the expected output of income, but also results in the growth and increase in output of income, but also results in the growth and increase in output which eventually allows the distributions by the parties involved. Information and communication technology (ICT) concept is about the use of information, in today E-world, ICT forms foundation of countries economies and is a driving force for social changes in the global world because it has really affected all aspects of human.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurs have become a powerful force in the transformation of the countries' economies and have directly affected the manner in which business is being done. Hisrich and Peters (2002) believe that an entrepreneur is someone who pulls other factors of production together for production of goods and services to take place. Conrad and Daren (2011) defined entrepreneurship as a process where an individual discovers, evaluates and exploits opportunities independently. Similarly, Shukla (2005) asserts that entrepreneurship is a process involving recognizing opportunities in the environment, mobilizing resource to take advantage of such opportunities, providing improved goods and services to the ultimate consumer and making profit as a reward for risk taking. The entrepreneurial process therefore, involves all the functions, activities, and actions associated with perceiving opportunities and creating organizations to pursue them (William, 2008)

Usefulness of Internet to the Entrepreneur

Internet as one of the ICT tools has captured the imagination of the world by providing access to a seemingly limitless array of information to anyone with a computer, modem and so on (Ohakwe 2012). The author explained that the internet is a global network of computers and when one is connected to the internet, he or she can communicate with a computer across the globe with equal facility, familiarity with the internet and computers provide a competitive advantage for entrepreneurs and such knowledge forms the basis for conducting business effectively. For an entrepreneurial business to grow, it needs an internet presence provided by tools such as the electronic mails (E-mail) which is the most familiar and universal business tool of the internet age. Thus with E-mail, messages are sent to recipients anywhere in the world because it is simple, less expensive, direct and also serves as an advertisement medium. The entrepreneur can also access information via the world wide web (www), the telnet and so on. With regard to the usefulness of the internet, business education students are therefore saddled with the task of getting familiar with the internet in order to avail themselves of the information needed to grow a business.

ICT Competence and Entrepreneurship Skills Development ⁱⁱ

Competence is the standard requirement of an individual to properly perform a specific task. It is also defined as something a person is very good at and seen as a talent which enables them to do their job well (Nwaiwu, 2008). Competence leads to self-efficacy, that is, the belief that one has the ability to succeed.

Nwosu (2003) is of the view that competence is a collection of capabilities, knowledge, characteristic and attitude necessary for a good performance. Information and communication technology (ICT) competence needed by business education students are creative/innovation, decision making, problem solving, communication, critical thinking, collaboration ICT and so on. It is therefore needful to equip business education students with technological trends underlying ICT in order to advance in ICT field which can develop their entrepreneurial skills such as communication skills, negotiation skills, leadership skill, personal skills and so on.

ICT Competences is the proficiency use of ICT tools and application in a particular domain. It is paramount that business education students acquire ICT Competence as they learn to use ICT tools effectively and appropriately when investigate, creating and communicating ideas and information at home, school, work place and in their communities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey method. The population of the study consisted of Six Hundred and Eighty Five (685) final year business education students' of Ignatius Ajuru University of education and Rivers State University which comprise of 26'S and 420 business education students respectively. Taro Yamane formula was used to arrive at the sample size of 254 students comprising of 98 respondent from IAUE and 156 respondents from RSU respectively. Data were collected through the use of questionnaire which were validated and deemed reliable for the study. Responses on the instrument where rated on four (4) point rating scale of very high extent (VHE) with score of 4, high extent (HE) with score of 3, low extent (LE) with score of 2 and very low extent with score of 1. Any value equal to or greater than 3.50 will be regarded as very high extent, any value from 2.50 - 3.49 is high extent, value from 1.50-2.49 is low extent and any value from 0.50 - 1.49 is very low extent. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and frequency, while T-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses.

RESULT

Research Question 1: To what extent does ICT competence level of business education students' affect their entrepreneurial skills development?

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation of the responses on extent ICT competence level of business education students affect their entrepreneurial skills development.

S/N	ICT COMPETENCE LEVEL	IAUE (N=98)			RSU (N=156)		
		M	SD	RMKS	M	SDH	RMKS
1	Ability to advertise products online	3.29	0.28	HE	2.25	0.18	LE
2	Ability to boot a computer, laptop, Ipad and Ipod	3.02	0.25	HE	3.05	0.20	HE
3	Ability to browse the internet via internet explorer, bing and google	3.09	0.26	HE	2.81	0.19	HE
4	Ability to print out useful information that is needed for business transaction	1.90	0.26	LE	2.14	0.21	LE
5	Ability to request for products and services online	2.76	0.23	HE	2.88	0.19	HE
	GRAND MEAN	2.82	0.26	HE	2.63	0.19	HE

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Key: M=Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, HE=High Extent, LE= Low Extent, RMKS = Remarks

The above table reveals that both respondents of IAUE and RSU have competence in the ability to boot computer, laptop, Ipad and Ipod, ability to browse the internet via Google, bing and internet explorer and ability to request for products and services online to a high extent, it was also revealed that IAUE respondents have competence in the ability to advertise products online to a high extent while respondents of RSU shows low extent competence to that. However both IAUE and RSU respondents shows low extent competence in the ability to print

out useful information that is needed for business transactions. The grand mean summary of IAUE and RSU respondents indicated a mean value of 2.82 and 2.63 respectively, which shows that ICT competence level of IAUE and RSU business education students' affect their entrepreneur skills development to a high extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does ICT competence of business education students' affect their entrepreneurial skills development with respect to gender?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the responses on extent ICT competence of male and female business education students' affect their entrepreneurial skills development

S/NO	ICT COMPETENCE	MALE (N = 106)			FEMALE (N = 148)		
		M	SD	RMKS	M	SD	RMKS.
1.	Ability to boot a computer, laptop, ipad and ipod	2.93	2.03	HE	2.91	0.20	HE
.	Ability to browse the internet via internet explorer, bing and google	2.73	0.22	HE	2.91	0.20	HE
3.	Ability to request for product and services on line	3.11	0.25	HE	2.16	0.19	LE
4.	Ability to advertise a product online	3.04	0.24	HE	1.93	0.21	LE
5.	Ability to print out useful information that is needed for business transaction	1.87	0.25	LE	2.08	0.20	LE
	GRAND MEAN	2.74	0.24	HE	2.40	0.20	LE

Source: Field Survey 2019

Key: M=Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, HE=High Extent, LE= Low Extent, RMKS = Remarks

The above table reveals that both male and female respondents from the institutions have competence in the ability to boot a computer, laptop, ipad and ipod and ability to browse the internet via internet explorer, bing and google to a high extent. It was also revealed that male respondents are competent in the ability to advertise products on line and ability to request for products and services on line to a high extent while the female respondents products and services on line to a high extent while the female respondents possess that to a low extent. However, both male and female respondents, shows low extent competence in the ability to print out useful information that is needed for business transactions. The grand mean summary of male and female respondents indicate a mean value of 2.74 and 2.40 respectively, which shows that male students competence in ICT affects their entrepreneurial skills development to a high extent while that of the female is to a low extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of business education students' of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Rivers State University with regards to ICT competence level for entrepreneurial skills development.

Table 3: T-test of mean difference on responses to extent ICT competence level of business education students' of IAUE and RSU affects their entrepreneurial skills development.

VARIABLES	NO OF RESPONDENTS	X	SD	DF	T-cal	T- critical	DECISION
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IAUOE	98	2.82	0.26	252	6.3	1.96	REJECTED
RSU	156	2.63	0.19				

Table 3 reveals that the calculated value of 6.3 is greater than the t-critical value of 1.96, this implies that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of business education Students' of IAUE and RSU with regards to extent ICT competence level affect their entrepreneurial skills development.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business education students' with regards to extent ICT competence affects their entrepreneurial skills development.

Table 4: T - test of mean difference on responses to extent ICT competence affect entrepreneurial skills development of male and female business education students'

VARIABLES	NO OF RESPONDENTS	X	SD	DF	T-cal	T-critical	DECISION
MALE	106	2.74	0.24	252	3.7	1.96	Rejected
FEMALE	148	2.40	0.20				

Table 4 shows that the calculated value of 3.7 is greater than the critical value of 1.96, this implies that, there is a significant difference in the mean responses of the male and female business education students' with regards to extent ICT competence affect their entrepreneurial skills development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the result of data analyzed, there are disparities in the levels of ICT competence among business education students' for entrepreneurial skills development. Most business education students' do not possess ICT competence as required. This finding is in conformity with the views of Colgan (2007) who explained that some level of ICT competence is required by an individual especially in an endeavor. Also finding from research question 2 shows that gender disparity existed in ICT competence for entrepreneurial skills development as revealed in the study. The male students' have higher ICT competence for entrepreneurial skills development than their female counterparts. This agrees with the view of Hafskin and Sofia (2005) on empowerment of women through ICT. This is also in line with the view of Nwaiwu (2009) that many nations have failed to sensitize and incorporate the importance of ICT for women to use in the new technologies to their greatest advantage.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were reached; students' of high level of information and communication technology (ICT) competence are potent for the development of entrepreneurial skills. The acquisition of ICT competence seems to be gender - based because the male students are more competent than their female counterparts hence, shows more inclination for the development of entrepreneurial skills among business education students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government should make provision of adequate ICT facilities for the enhancement of ICT competence among students of tertiary institutions.
2. Workshops and seminars should be conducted for students in order to demystify ICT facilities to them.
3. Lecturers that are knowledgeable in the areas of ICT should be employed to teach the student's.
4. Parents should encourage the student's to develop ICT competence by providing them with their own personal computers and other ICT facilities.

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