

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)
SUITABLE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EDUCATION FOR
GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT**

Juliana Nebo

*Department Of Business Education,
School of Vocational and Technical Education,
FCT College of Education, Zuba – Abuja.*

Philo Akaeze

*Department Of Business Education,
School of Vocational and Technical Education,
FCT College of Education, Zuba – Abuja.*

And

Helen Godswill Akpan

*Department Of Business Education,
School of Vocational and Technical Education,
FCT College of Education, Zuba – Abuja.*

Abstract

The study examined ICT tools suitable for teaching and learning in business education for gainful employment. The primary objective was to determine whether the use of ICT tools in business education is one of the criteria for gainful employment by business education graduates. The total population comprised all employers of business education in Abuja out of which 250 respondents were selected from 5 business firms in FCT as sample. The selection of the sample size was based on the fact that these business firms employ business education graduates. A structured research questionnaire was used for data collection and mean was the statistical tool used for data analysis. The data analyzed revealed that some of the ICT tools suitable in business education for gainful employment include computer, internet, Automatic Teller Machine (ATM), smart phones, scanners etc. and the factors militating against effective use of ICT tools in business education for gainful employment include unqualified personnel, poor power supply lack of ICT tools among others. The researchers therefore concluded that for business education graduates to be gainfully employed, they need to be familiar with the use of ICT tools used in the modern offices. It is recommended that government should appropriate

adequate fund to business education departments in all institutions for the purchase and proper maintenance of ICT tools for effective teaching and learning.

Keywords: ICT tools, business education and gainful employment.

It will be pertinent to note that for a successful teaching and learning to take place in Business Education for gainful employment by the graduates, some important influencing requirements need to be addressed. Gainful employment of business education simply means when the recipients of business education are able to satisfy the work needs of the employers. Business education teachers as asserted by Oliver (2002), are employed in the school system to bring about change in the society through modern technology such as Information and Communication Technology. Information and Communication Technology is the application of modern technology tools such as computers, internet etc. in the storage, retrieval and manipulation of data or information in the business offices (Okoji, 2008). In modern offices today, when an advertisement for vacancies of secretaries are made, the organization insist that the prospective applicants must possess the knowledge of computer or word processing, which means that they must be capable of using the modern ICT tools found in the modern offices such as computers and internet as well as many others. As a result of this fact, Okoji (2008), noted that it is imperative for the training institutions and business education programme to ensure that they train business education recipients to meet the needs and requirements of the labour market so that the trainees can be gainfully employed after graduation. It is absolutely certain that machines will not replace man, therefore the secretary who is a business education graduate must be familiar with the operation of all the information and communication technology tools found in modern day offices in order to be gainfully employed (Nwocha, 2011).

It was to this end, that Mbanefo (2004), foresaw and advised that equipment utilized in business education programme should be similar to those found in up-to-date offices. In achieving this aim, he further stated that it requires effective teaching and learning in business education through the use of suitable Information and Communication Technology tools if the recipients of the training are to be gainfully employed. Eze (2007), opined that if business education graduates are to be gainfully employed, one of the major objectives in business education must be seriously pursued which is to train people who will be able to work in business organizations with the ability to effectively handle the modern ICT tools with the aim of bringing about national development. Considering the above opinion by Eze (2007), it is a pity to note that some of the business education teachers are yet to be aware of the suitable ICT tools needed for effective teaching and learning to attain gainful employment in the modern offices. As a matter of fact, even teachers in business education who are of these tools

are not familiar with the use of the tools as a result of some factors militating against the effective use of these tools in teaching and learning.

In view of the above, it becomes necessary for the researchers to investigate into how effective business education can take place through the use of suitable ICT tools so as to make the recipients to be gainfully employed after graduation.

Research Objectives

The major objective of the study was to find out how suitable ICT tools in business education can provide gainful employment for the business education graduates. Specifically, the following objectives were stated to guide the study:

1. To find out the ICT tools suitable for teaching and learning in business education for gainful employment.
2. To find out the factors militating against the effective use of ICT tools in teaching and learning of business education for gainful employment.
3. To determine the extent to which modern business education ICT tools is relevant for gainful employment.

Research Questions

In line with the above stated research objectives, the following research questions were extracted:

1. What are the ICT tools suitable for teaching and learning in business education for gainful employment?
2. What are the factors militating against the effective use of ICT tools in teaching and learning of business education for gainful employment?
3. To what extent are the modern business education ICT tools relevant for gainful employment?

Methodology

The design for the study was survey design. The population for the study comprised all employers of business education graduates in Abuja. The sample was drawn from 5 business firms operational in FCT that employ business education graduates. A total of 250 respondents constituted the sample size selected through simple random selection. The respondents were selected from the following business firms and the figures in brackets signifies the number of respondents selected from the firms:

- Education Firm (40)
- Law Firm (30)
- Banking Firm (50)
- Telecommunication Firm (60)and
- Business Centres with internet application (70)

Academic Scholarship

The selection for the sample size was based on the fact that these respondents or business firms make use of modern ICT tools in their offices. A structured research questionnaire was used for data collection. The three research questions generated 15 questionnaire items which were used to sort responses from the respondents on suitable ICT tools in business education for gainful employment. A four Likert scale of Strongly Agree –SA (4), Agree –A (3), Disagree – (2) and Strongly Disagree – SD (1) were used and the statistical tool used for data analysis was mean. A mean of 2.50 and above was the baseline for agreement of each item while any point below the baseline was disagreement.

Data Analysis

The responses for the three research questions were carefully sorted out in table form followed by brief interpretation as follows:

Research Question I

What are the ICT tools suitable for the teaching and learning in business education for gainful employment?

Table I Suitable ICT tools in Business Education for Gainful Employment

S/N	Structured Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SDV	Decision Rule
1	Computer/internet	100	70	50	30	2.96	1.04	Agree
2	Modern Dictaphone	125	85	25	15	3.28	0.87	Agree
3	Automatic Teller Machine (ATM)	86	92	42	30	2.93	0.99	Agree
4	Smart phones	78	90	55	27	2.87	0.95	Agree
5	Scanners and copiers	96	69	63	22	2.95	0.99	Agree
	Grand Mean					2.94		Agree

Source: Empirical Survey, (2016)

The structured item 1-5 in Table I above had mean scores which are all above 2.50 as baseline for agreement. In conclusion for responses on research question one, the grand mean was 2.94 which is above the 2.50 calculated as the baseline for agreement. This implies that the above structured items computer/internet, modern Dictaphone, Automatic Teller Machine (ATM), smart phones and scanners and copiers in Table I (1-5) are ICT tools in business education suitable for gainful employment.

Research Question 2

What are the factors militating against the effective use of ICT tools in teaching and learning of business education for gainful employment?

Table 2 Factors Influencing the use of ICT tools

S/N	Structured Items	SA	A	AD	D	M	SDV	Decision Rule
6	Inadequate qualified personnel	98	86	31	35	2.96	1.03	Agree
7	Lack of ICT tools	102	58	34	56	2.82	1.18	Agree
8	Power failure	112	60	52	26	3.03	1.03	Agree
9	Fear of the students	65	78	87	20	2.75	0.93	Agree
10	Lack of laboratories for proper practice	79	81	60	30	2.83	1.00	Agree
	Grand Mean					2.89		Agree

Source: Empirical Survey,(2016)

The structured item 6-10 in Table 2 above had mean scores which are above 2.50 as baseline for acceptance. In conclusion for responses on research question two, the grand mean was 2.89 which is above the 2.50 calculated as the baseline for agreement. This implies that the above structured items; inadequate qualified personnel, lack of ICT tools, power failure, fear of the students and lack of laboratories for proper practices in Table 2 (6-10) are factors influencing the use of ICT tools in teaching and learning of business education for gainful employment.

Research Question 3

To what extent are the modern business education ICT tools relevant for gainful employment?

Table 3 Relevant of Modern ICT tools for Gainful Employment

S/N	Structured Items	SA	A	AD	D	M	SDV	Decision Rule
11	Becoming self- reliant	86	99	35	30	2.96	0.98	Agree
12	Becoming creative	91	92	31	36	2.95	1.03	Agree
13	Becoming more intelligent	66	97	56	31	2.79	0.97	Agree
14	Becoming more technical	74	85	63	28	2.82	0.98	Agree
15	Brings international job connection	90	90	90	25	2.83	0.96	Agree
	Grand Mean					2.87		Agree

Source: Empirical Survey, (2016)

The structured item 11-15 in Table 3 above had mean scores which are above 2.50 as baseline for acceptance. In conclusion for responses on research question three, the grand mean was 2.96 which is above the 2.50 calculated as the baseline for agreement. This implies that the above structured items; becoming self reliant, creative, more intelligent, more technical and bringing about international job connection in Table 3 (11-15) are the extent to which relevant of modern ICT tools aid in gainful employment of business education graduates.

Discussion on Findings

From the findings, it has been revealed that some of the ICT tools suitable for teaching and learning in business education for gainful employment include internet, modern Dictaphones, Automatic Teller Machine (ATM), smart phones, scanners and copiers as indicated by the respondents from the 5 business firms. This result is in line with the opinion of Edward (2008), who opined that ICT which is the process of creating, collecting, storing, processing, displaying and transmitting or conveying data or information through automated devices as computers, internet, smart phones, television is in revolution and its revolution has greatly transformed the way knowledge is kept and shared. Thus, the illiterate in the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write but those who cannot operate or work with the modern ICT tools effectively in the office.

The findings also revealed among others factors militating against the effective use of ICT tools in business education to include unqualified personnel, lack of ICT tools and power failure and fear of the operation of the tools by the students as well as lack of laboratories for proper practice during teaching and learning processes. This result confirms the assertion of Orungbemi (2008), who asserted that lack of practical knowledge in the use of ICT tools for teaching and learning constituted a limiting factor to the effectiveness of the business education teacher which affect the performance level of the learners and gainful employment. In this regard, Orungbemi (2008), therefore concluded that the training of business education teacher should be such that would build him into a rounded individual who would be aware of the technology tools in the business world and provide him with the relevant tools to enable him function effectively.

At most, the research revealed that the extent to which modern ICT tools in business education is relevant for gainful employment cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the extent of the relevancy include; becoming self-reliant, more creative, intelligent and technical as well as giving them international job opportunities. The result of this finding is in line with the opinion of Osunrinde (2012), who opined that business trainees in ICT having acquired the idea of ICT needed to operate in the business offices have the opportunities of developing the idea to become creative and self-reliant.

Conclusion

ICT tools are very important and key elements in the teaching and learning of business education. Business offices these days operate with modern technology tools such as ICT tools (computer, internet, ATM etc), as such if business education graduates are to be gainfully employed in these offices, they must be able to use the ICT tools or gadgets effectively. This means that business education teachers are to be familiar with the use of some of these tools for effective teaching and learning to take place.

The fact that business education teachers cannot use the ICT tools effectively in teaching is traced to certain factors which need to be addressed. Hence, what distorts the effective teaching and learning of ICT in business education is the major challenges such as poor electricity supply, unqualified personnel and inadequate tools.

The relevance of ICT tools for gainful employment of business education has brought about creativity and self-reliant.

Recommendations

From the foregoing discussions and conclusions, the researchers therefore, made the following recommendations:

- ICT centres should be established for training and retraining of ICT personnel in business education.
- Government should appropriate adequate fund to business education departments in institutions for the purchase and maintenance of ICT tools.
- Lecturers and teachers in business education should acquire the basic skills and knowledge of ICT to be able to handle the ICT tools effectively.
- Business education graduates should be aware that if they are to be gainfully employed in our modern offices, then they need to be familiar with the use of modern ICT tools.

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