INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

DR (MRS) ATUEYI, NGOZI C.
Department of Office Technology and Management
Federal Polytechnic, Oko, Anambra State

Abstract
ICT and Entrepreneurship are the grooming needs of any country especially the developing ones. Nigeria is a developing country and should not relent her efforts in encouraging the acquisition of ICT and entrepreneurship skills as these will empower her students and youths to fit into any labour market or establish their own business, as well as enhance economic business development. This paper revealed these skills and their usage. The paper held the views that ICT and entrepreneurship could be central to economic development. Finally the paper suggested encouraging the students and youths to acquire ICT and entrepreneurship skills as these will boost Nigeria’s economic development.
Key words: ICT, Entrepreneurship, economic development, skills.

Introduction
We are in an age of information and this age is associated with varied needs. The need to prepare our students and youths for the future in all aspects of labour and economic development. These needs have given rise to the varying efforts by many countries to ensure that their students and youths are well-equipped. The developed world has achieved more than the developing world because the present global economic crisis and the rising waves of unemployment are associated with lack of skill acquisition among the younger generation of the developing world. These skills point to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as well as entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is any attempt at new business organizations or the expansion of an existing business by individuals or an established business. Entrepreneurship is the phenomena associated with entrepreneurial activity. In order words, it is the service that the entrepreneur renders that is in accepting the risk of starting, running and growing a business. Both Osuala (1991) and Ademuluyi (2007) opined that entrepreneurship is the ability to generate business ideas, innovation and diversifications as well as bear risks. They further indicated that these are combined with management and organizational skills which are put together thereby using people, money and resources to create wealth. However, Ugiagbe et al (2008) noted that the concept and scope of entrepreneurship can better be understood when we examine some definitions of entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur is seen as a person who organizes and manages any enterprise especially a business and he is the innovator of new ideas and business process. Anugwo (2012) viewed entrepreneur as a creative individual who ventures into business risk created by dynamic environmental opportunities for profit making. Ikeme and Agu (2013) also
viewed the entrepreneur as one who identifies needs and generates ideas on how to proactively satisfy these needs in order to make profit. Thus the entrepreneur in managing the business bears the risks and rewards (Wikipedia, 2016).

Encarta (2009) indicated that the entrepreneur generally decides on the product, acquires the facilities and brings together the labour force, capital and production materials. If the business succeeds, the entrepreneur reaps the reward of profit but if it fails he or she takes the loss. Inspite of the various definitions of the entrepreneur, these definitions are geared towards the same direction. It is glaring that the entrepreneur assumes responsibility and risks for business creation which is geared towards profit making. These responsibilities demand appropriate ICT and entrepreneurship skills for effective operation of the business.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

ICT is an indispensible tool in the day to day running of any establishment. The term ICT is referred to as a convergence of technologies that include the computer and microprocessor technology which enable users to access, store, transmit and manipulate information. Atueyi (2009) opined that ICT is a host of system, equipment and materials essentially computer based which are used to electronically achieve communication goals and varied services. However Wikipedia (2016) observed that ICT has no universal definition as the concepts, methods and applications involved in ICT are constantly evolving on an almost daily basis. It further observed that the breadth of ICT covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form. The emergence of ICT is challenging in relation to future job opportunities and their performance. O’ Keefe (2008) indicated the need to ensure that those coming through education and those currently in the workforce have the right skills for this evolving sector.

**Skills**

ICT is evolving a lot of changes in today’s workplace. People need a broad range of skills in order to contribute to a modern economy and take their place in the technological society of the twenty-first century. A skill (also called talent) is the learned capacity to carry out pre-determined results often with the minimum outlay of time, energy or both (Wikipedia 2008) Skill is also thought of as a facility of performance in responding to a given stimulus such as operating manual or electronic equipment (Russon and Wanous, 1973). The need to have skill is very important in this digital age as it could be seen as one of the many tools for describing and managing competencies in ICT. From the foregoing, it is obvious that entrepreneurship and ICT requires acquisition of skills in order to fit into the demands of the current economic trends.
Ict and Entrepreneurship Skills

The way people live has been impacted by ICT and Nigeria as a developing nation needs to use ICT and entrepreneur skills for development. Entrepreneurship skills include:

a. Technical Skills  
   Technical Skills are very important because without technical skills it will be difficult to achieve any desired goal in this global age. The ability to use computers to process information, perform problem solving activities and communicate electronically is the key to success in entrepreneurship. Computer and its related skills include ability to define hardware and software requirements, ability to develop software, proficiency in Ms-office, Oracle and Data base (Atueyi, 2009).

b. Financial Skills  
   As noted in technical skills, the entrepreneur should be proficient in Ms-office. The Ms-office is made up of six softwares and ms-excel is one of them. The ability of the entrepreneur to operate the ms-excel and use it to analyse and solve his financial problems is a very big advantage in business. It is pertinent that entrepreneurship skills demand the ability to install softwares, hardwares, formulate and deliver IT projects as well as coordinate information networks, manage human and financial resources. Ms-excel knowledge and usage eliminates all manual accounting and financial processes and provide good and accurate financial records.

c. Marketing Skills  
   Kotler and Amstrong (2008) indicated that the entrepreneur should be able to design customer-driven market strategies, market segmentation, market target differentiation and positioning. In order to implement the strategies Atueyi (2009) opined that the entrepreneur has to market his goods through various channels including forecasting current and future trends. He has to understand what customers need and ensure that the goods are accessible to them without difficulty. All these no longer centre on manual processes. They require client server and web-based applications, ability to develop and maintain standard internet applications and data base; ability to develop and implement telecommunication system/infrastructure. (Atueyi, 2009).

d. Managerial Skills  
   The entrepreneur is the manager of the business and this demands that he must possess some managerial skills. Entrepreneurship managerial skills include: ability to
communicate both in written and oral forms, ability to maintain complex information system of administration in management. He should also be able to use systems development life cycle methodology. The entrepreneur as a manager should realise that competition is intense and so should keep an insight into designing and development of customer desired products in order to create room for more market. Jones and George (2006) noted that customers and young college customers seek to have products with best value for their money as in the case of “sidekick” offer by T-Mobile which combines a phone, email, web browsing, instant message, digital camera, personal information management functions and games.

**The Role of Entrepreneurship In Economic Development**

Entrepreneurship is a significant factor in the process of any country’s economic development. It occupies a central position in a market economy. Ugiagbe et al (2005) noted that the role of entrepreneurship in economic development involves more than just increasing per capital output and income but that it also involves initiating and constituting changes in the structure of business and society which is accompanied by growth and increased output. The entrepreneur creates jobs through the formation of new enterprise. This can be seen in the different types of small businesses that spring up in our society. These include: food stuff selling, restaurants, business centers for computer and word processing services, the list is endless.

The role of the entrepreneur moves from creation of these jobs to its expansion and its expansion creates employment opportunities thereby enhancing economic development. A typical example is Google which started as an entrepreneurial venture in a garage but is now a huge corporation. Similarly Henry Ford pioneered the automobile industry (Wikipedia, 2016). The role of the entrepreneur does not only create employment but also increases productivity as he innovates new forms of products for production which in effect is boosting economic development. He also helps in resource utilization through harnessing the resources that might otherwise remain idle and imputs them into productive use. The entrepreneur helps in the distribution of income and wealth by enabling individuals to use their potentials to create wealth as it also helps the individual to be independent with elevated status in the society. It also helps to facilitate transfer of technology or the adaptation of existing ones. In addition the entrepreneur helps in the maintenance of competition which in effect enhances economic development.
Conclusion

This paper discussed the dimension of ICT and entrepreneurship. It highlighted specific skills required by entrepreneurs in order to cope with the problems to be encountered in operating their business in order to enhance its economic growth and development.

Recommendation

To ensure economic growth and development in Nigeria. This paper recommends as follows:
- Students and youths should be proficient in ms-office, oracle and database, to enable them coordinate information network, manage human and financial resources.
- They should be capable of developing client-server and web-based applications and be able to use systems development life cycle methodology as well as design customer-driven market strategies.
- They should have good communication skills, be able to develop and implement telecommunication systems/infrastructure.
References


“Entrepreneur” Microsoft ® 2009 Microsoft Corporation


