



## **CHALLENGES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS IN ACQUIRING INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SKILLS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, RIVERS STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated the challenges faced by business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development in Rivers State. Two research questions guided the study and one hypothesis was tested. The entire population of 300 final year business education students was studied by the researchers and no sample was drawn. Data for this study were collected by means of questionnaire. The questionnaire adopted a modified four point scale. Test-re-test method was used for the reliability and a coefficient of 0.89, Mean rating and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that there was significant relationship among the challenges faced by business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government should make the acquisition of information and communication technology skills part of national minimum standards for all graduates of business education.*

*Keyword: Information and Communication Technology, Business Education, Skills, National, Development, Challenges, Students*

### **Introduction**

Education has been identified as a vital tool for any form of development be it economic, social or political. It is a factor that determines the state of prosperity sustenance of welfare and security of the people (Bray, 2000, Scott and Guogh, 2004, Osakwe, 2006). The yearnings, needs, aspirations as well as the cultural heritage and environment of any society determine, to a large extent the kind of knowledge and skills to be acquired (Adebosin, 2004). Therefore, the kind of education operated should bring about skill development as this will enable students of business education to live and contribute meaningfully to the overall development of the society in which they live. Since government regards education as an instrument par excellence for facilitating and fostering national development as well as economic growth. It is imperative that, the kind of education to be provided should be holistic and wholesome so as to foster national development. For any nation to boast of educational development, it should be able to boast of viable and function information and communication technology driven education especially in this fast changing world where globalization is the order of the day. Business education should have access to the enormous wealth of on line information and digital collaboration opportunities. This will help in the transformation and meaningful



development of business education. Information and communication technology is an essential component of fundamental reform and development program in the area of poverty reduction. It is also vitally important for achieving sustainable national development goals.

Information and communication technology means different things to different educators and researchers; hence there are various views and definitions of information and communication technology. Yusuf (2007) described information and communication technology as an electronic technology used for accessing, processing, gathering, manipulating, presenting and communicating information. The author emphasized that when information and communication technologies are employed in education they can accelerate, enrich and deepen basic skills in every sphere of learning.

There are many numbers of examples of how information and communication technology can help support sustainable development. For example, telephones open up access for farmers and entrepreneurs to new sales and procurement markets. Fast comprehensive word processing packages can help considerably improve the availability and qualities of services provided by state institutions and boost the productivity of companies. The internet allows schools and hospitals for example to access extensive data and a wide array of data information Agomuo (2007). There is no gainsaying that the fact that application of information and communication technology in business education help the students in acquiring the necessary skills that will enable development of the nation in this dispensation of globalization.

The challenges business education students encounter in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills are many. Several factors have hindered the business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills for national development. Such factors include lack of government interest in providing information and communication technology skills to Nigeria.

The government of Nigeria has not played significant role in the development and provision of information and communication technology in the country. According to Adomi (2005) information and communication technology development and application are not well established in Nigeria as a result of poor infrastructure and government support in terms of finance. Therefore, the attitude of government to financially motivate the teaching staff through the provision of computer even on loans basis or at a subsidized rate is not encouraging which even make it difficult for students to even acquire their own personal computers.

Another issue that business education students are faced with is the high cost of acquiring, installing and maintaining information and communication technology puts fear on most government and managers of institutions Obanya (2002). This boils down to financial issues which almost all developing countries face. Resources are so scarce that most of the public institutions cannot afford to set up information and communication technology centers. The high cost of information and communication technology



facilities has greatly hindered the acquisition skills by the business education students in Nigeria.

The next to be discussed is that Nigeria has not solved the problem of power supply since her independence as a nation. This has adversely affected the use of information and communication technology facilities regularly. Inadequate power supply is therefore, a very great challenge to the business education student in acquiring information and communication technology skill for national development. According to Jimoh and Kadiri (2008) it is difficult to keep high technology equipment such as the computer when electricity supply is not consistent and stable.

The other challenges is access to the internet is highly limited in remote areas, and relatively poor infrastructure in developing nations such as supply of electricity makes this worse (Gulati, 2008). Low infrastructure is the fundamental problem for developing countries to deal with and it might take a long time and huge funding to improve.

Another challenge of developing nations to adopt information and communication technology in the educational system is lack of trained teachers (Gulati 2008, Kozma 2009). When it comes to practically applying information and communication technology, which is new to traditional teachers, many may not know how to deal with it and sometimes they are reluctant to accept new technologies. Thus professionals who can technologically install and maintain the system are needed.

Furthermore, According to Aduwa Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2008) there are clear indications from many countries that the supply of relevant and appropriate software is a major bottleneck obstructing wider application of the computer. There is need for people to be trained for the production of relevant software that should be suitable for Nigeria educational system and curriculum bearing in mind the cost and availability of software designers.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The challenges faced by business education students in the course of acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development cannot be over emphasized. Business education students are experiencing shortage of information and communication technology and human resources required for taking advantages of emerging technologies in the society. There is a very limited information for business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the challenges faced by business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Determine how lack of government interest in providing information and communication technology skills can influence business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skill for national development.



2. Ascertain the challenges faced by business education students in acquisition of information and communication technology skills for national development.

### **Research Questions**

1. How does lack of government interest in providing information and communication technology influence business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills?
2. What challenges are faced by business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills for national development in Rivers State, Nigeria?

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference in the responses of the respondents regarding the challenges faced by business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills for national development on the basis of lack of government interest in provision of ICT skills.

### **Method**

The study area was Rivers State of Nigeria. The study focused on two Universities in Rivers State that offer business education program. These include: Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The study used mean and standard deviation to analyze the research questions with descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of three hundred and five final year business education students of these universities. The sample size of study consisted of all the final year students from business education departments in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Rivers State. Data for this study were collected by means of questionnaire developed by the researchers. The instrument consisted of sections "A" and "B". Section "A" contains information on the demographic data of the respondents. Section "B" sought information relating to research questions on a weighted scale of four points as strongly agreed (4), agreed (3) disagreed (2) strongly disagreed (1). The researchers personally administered and retrieved copies of the questionnaire. In all, three hundred copies of the instrument sent out were retrieved, which amounted to 95 percent return rate. The initial copy of the questionnaire was face and content validated by three experts. Test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the items and a reliability of 0.89 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research questions. The criterion mean of 2.50 was used to accept an item, while below 2.50 was rejected. Chi-square was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

### **Result**

**Research Question 1:** How does lack of government interest in providing information and communication technology skills affect business education students in acquisition of this skill for national development.



**Table 1: Government interest in provision of ICT skills for business education students**

S/N	Item statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	Funding affects business education students in the acquisition of ICT skills	2.93	0.95	accept
2	Lack of infrastructure affects the acquisition of ICT skills	3.20	0.92	accept
3	Government motivation of teaching staff affects the acquisition of ICT skills	2.51	1.11	accept
4	Government provision of computers at a subsidized rates to business education students influences the acquisition of ICT skills	3.03	0.94	accept
5	Government assistance in training and retraining teachers though in service course to be ICT literate.	3.03	0.96	accept
Grand mean		<b>2.94</b>	<b>0.98</b>	

*Source: Research Data 2017*

The information in table 1 reveals that, the respondents accepted that lack of governments interest in providing information and communication technology affects business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development. This is based on the responses of the respondents as the grand mean and standard deviation of 2.94 and 0.98 confirmed it.

**Research Question 2**

What challenges are faced by business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills for national development in Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Government interest in provision of information and communication technology skills for business education students**

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	Inadequate infrastructures and facilities	2.93	1.06	accept
2	Some lecturers fear of technological innovations	3.1	0.91	accept
3	Inability to own a personal computer	3.11	0.92	accept
4	Unavailability of relevant software's	3.1	0.98	accept
5	Erratic power supply	3.37	0.66	accept
		<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.91</b>	

*Source: Research Data 2017*

Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of the respondents responses on challenges faced by business education students in the acquisition of information and communication technology skills.



**Table 3: Contingency table**

Group	SA	A	D	SD	Total
RSU	80	40	20	18	158
IAUOE	75	38	19	10	142
Total	155	78	39	28	300

Source: Research Data 2017

**Table 4: Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) observed and expected table**

O	e	o-e	(o-e) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$	X <sup>2</sup> cal	x <sup>2</sup> crit	Decision
80	81	-1	1	0.01	2.04	7.815	reject
75	41	-1	1	0.02			
40	20	0	0	0			
38	14	4	16	1.1			
20	73	2	4	0.05			
19	36	2	4	0.1			
18	18	-1	1	0.06			
10	13	-3	9	0.7			

Source: Research Data 2017

The analysis shows that the calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is less than critical value of  $\chi^2$  at 2.04 and 7.815 respectively. The respondents rejected the null hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis testing, the researchers conclude that there is a significant relationship among the challenges of acquiring information and communication technology skills by business education students for national development.

### Discussion of Findings

The study examined the challenges of business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development. The findings of this study have shown that business education students are lagging behind in the level of information and communication technology skills. Lack of government interest in providing information and communication technology skills affect institutions; mostly business education students. Unreliable and incessant electricity supply is an obstacle to business education students in tertiary institutions of learning. Towns and cities in Nigeria where institutions of higher learning are located do not have constant supply of electricity and some do not have access to electricity at all, especially the rural areas. This greatly affects business education students in acquiring information and communication technology skill for national development. Anujeonye (2008) affirmed that when electricity supply is not stable and constant, it is difficult to keep high



technological equipment functioning thereby denying the use of information and communication technology and other electricity devices.

It was revealed that there were acute shortage of qualified teachers in the field of system operation, software and network administration for effective acquisition of information and communication technology skills by business education students in institutions of higher learning. The World Bank (2002) asserted that low education level, literacy levels, lack of awareness about the capability of technology and absence of skills to develop and use information and communication technology application represent significant obstacles to the adoption even when the physical infrastructure are available. Successful integration of information and communication technology in higher institutions depends on the availability of qualified teachers to enhance creativity and effectiveness. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) affirmed that there is scarcity of teachers with requisite information and communication technology qualification and few professors engage in information and communication due to poor facilities for teaching and learning.

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria/Rivers State must re-focus on her education system and integrate information and communication technology into business education curriculum to enhance the contents and pedagogical strategies in order to meet the changes in the global market, office automation and democratization and expansion of quality education. It is concluded that with the speed at which technology is invading the classrooms, business education students must be given all round preparation in order for them to stay abreast and progress in acquiring information and communication technology skills for national development.

### **Recommendations**

1. Government should make information and communication technology part of national minimum standard for all graduates of business education. So that there will be Powers of inspection.
2. The use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning business education should be highly encouraged by the government through the supply of computers and other information and communication technology facilities.
3. Steady electricity supply and telecommunication facilities should be provided by the government to business education departments/faculties in higher institutions
4. Government should assist in training and retraining of teachers through in service course to be information and communication technology literate. This can be done through conferences, workshops, seminars and excursions.
6. Business education teachers should look out for business offices with modern technologies and visit those places as excursions with their students.



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