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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF ICT TOOLS BY STUDENTS TO THE STUDY OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT. An Assessment of the Use of ICT Tools by students to the study of Business Education in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. The study adopted a descriptive survey design approach. To guide in the achievement of the purpose of the study, four research questions were raised. The target population of the study was eight hundred and eight (808) students. However, the researchers purposively sampled eighty (80) 300 level students of Business Education of the institution for the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire of a four point rating scale and experts in Department of Measurement and Evaluation of the institution validated the instrument. The reliability index of the questionnaire was calculated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistics and it gave 0.68. The researchers administered the instrument to the respondents while data were analyzed using the frequency counts, percentages and mean statistical tools. Generally, the study revealed that few ICT Resources were available in the department of Business Education of the institution; students of the department of Business education have access to browser phone and e-mail services only, the students as a result, use the available tools i.e. browser phone and e-mail services for their study on daily basis and challenges like inadequate power supply, expensiveness of ICT facilities, lack of infrastructure etc confronts them. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended among others, lecturers and teachers should assist the College management and government in providing ICT Resources for their personal use in instructional delivery in tertiary institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Business Education is an academic programme offered in tertiary institution. It is designed to provide learning situations for skill acquisition among students who could apply and employ such skills in their occupational choice, managing personal or group business, for personal living in the society and for the growth and development of the economy of the nation. Osuala (2009) opines that the growing need for business knowledge has continued to expand and increase from the era of industrial revolution in western world and indigenization policy. Business Education is increasingly needed to fill the gap created by unemployment. It is necessary to increase the skills of undergraduates in Nigeria today in order to reduce the alarming unemployment rate in the country. Hence, the need to utilize ICT tools in the teaching and learning of Business Education is apt.

ICTs are said to help expand access to education, strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital work place, and raise educational quality by, among others, helping to make teaching and learning an engaging, active process connected to real life (Ike, Iwu and Chimezie, 2006). Across a range of educational application, ICT is being harnessed to improve the efficiency, accessibility and quality of learning process in developing countries (Ajuzie, 2009). Egbule (2008) cited in Akude (2010, p.3) defined ICTs as “a systematic process of gathering, processing, storage, retrieval, and spreading information through the print, broadcast, computing and telecommunication media”. The word “Use” according to Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary means a purpose for which something may be employed. It follows that it is worthwhile to ascertain the extent of employing ICT tools by students in tertiary institution.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are major factors in shaping the new global economy and producing rapid changes in society. The emergence of the ‘knowledge-based’

society is changing the global economy and the status of education. There is growing awareness among policy-makers, business leaders and educators that the educational system designed to prepare learners for an agrarian or industrially-based economy will not provide students with the knowledge and skills they will need to thrive in the 21st century's knowledge-based economy and society. ICTs provides the array of powerful tools that may help in transforming the present isolated, teacher-centered and text-bound classrooms into rich, student-focused, interactive knowledge environment (Ajuzie, 2013). ICTs have been considered as the combination of technologies for collecting, storing, processing, communicating and delivering information. Also, Becta (2004), observed that use of information and communications technology (ICT) and suitable learning environment has improved the students' skills. The assumption here is that the use of ICT has changed some pedagogical roles of teachers and a compelling rationale for using ICT in schools is its potential to act as a catalyst in transferring the teaching and learning process. ICT can support pedagogical practice when new directions are carefully planned, staff and support systems are prepared, and resources are provided.

2. THE PROBLEM

It has been observed that teaching and learning process in Business Education in Nigeria tertiary institutions is still at the level of "chalk and talk method" which is the traditional method of teaching. It also involves the face-to-face approach to teaching and learning where the teacher sees himself as the centre point of teaching (Akude, 2004). The teacher does all or most of the talking in the classroom; the students are passive, have little or no control over the flow of information and are reduced to copying notes. Students and lecturers still depend on text books information. Furthermore, it is observed that many lecturers and students of Business Education are yet to fully utilize ICT for teaching and learning, hence the researchers decided to assess the use of ICT tools in teaching and learning Business Education in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to assess the use of ICT tools by students to study Business Education in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. The study specifically achieved the following objectives;

To find out the available ICT resources used in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education.

To determine how accessible the resources are to the students.

To find out how often students use the ICT resources for their studies.

To ascertain the factors militating against the effective use of the ICT resources.

Research Questions

In order to effectively cover all the issues raised in the purpose of this study, corresponding research questions were raised;

What are the available ICT resources for students' use in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education?

How accessible are these Resources to students?

How often do students use ICT resources for their studies?

What are the factors militating against students effective use of these ICT resources?

4. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey. The researcher employed the use of questionnaire to gather information from the sampled population. The reliability index of the questionnaire was calculated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and it gave 0.68. The population of the study comprised of all students studying Business Education in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. Based on statistics from the office of the Head of Department of Business Education, they are eight hundred and eight students studying Business

Education. The researchers purposively sampled eighty (80) 300 level students of Business Education. This is because they have studied Business Education for at least three years in the institution; they will be in a better position to provide accurate and adequate information that may be required for this study. The instruments used were constructed by the researchers and was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation Department of the institution. The instrument administration was done by the researchers during their lecturers and was collected the same day. The data collected was analyzed using frequency count and percentages for research questions 1, 2 and 3. The mean statistical tool was used to answer research questions 4 respectively. A mean of 2.50 was used as the acceptable mean for agreement. Value of 2.50 and above was regarded as acceptable, while the value of 2.49 and below was rejected.

5. RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the available ICT resources for students' use in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education?

Table 1: Percentages of Students' Responses on the Availability of ICT Resources

S/N	ICT Resources	Available		Not Available		Result
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
1	Personal computer	60	75.00	20	25.00	Available
2	e-mail	65	81.25	15	18.75	Available
3	Digital Camera	4	5.00	76	95.00	Not Available
4	Scanner	2	2.5	78	97.5	Not Available
5	Video facilities	7	8.75	73	91.25	Not Available
6	Printer	12	15.00	68	85.00	Not Available
7	Browser phone	69	86.25	11	13.75	Available
8	Electronic bulletin board	-	-	80	100	Not Available
9	Interactive Smart board	-	-	80	100	Not Available

For purposes of generalization, the researcher considers all items that possessed percentages from 50 and above as being available, while those below 50 percentages are considered not available. In the light of this consideration, ICT resources such as personal computer, e-mail, and browser phone are available while others are not available.

Research Question Two: How accessible are these Resources to Students?

Table 2: Percentages of Students' Responses on their Accessibility to ICT Resources

S/N	ICT Resources	Accessible		Not Accessible		Result
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
1	Personal computer	20	25.00	60	75.00	Not Accessible
2	e-mail	75	93.75	5	6.25	Accessible
3	Digital Camera	5	6.25	75	93.75	Not Accessible
4	Scanner	2	2.5	78	97.5	Not Accessible
5	Video facilities	7	8.75	73	91.25	Not Accessible
6	Printer	4	5.00	66	82.50	Not Accessible
7	Browser phone	59	73.75	21	26.25	Accessible
8	Electronic bulletin board	-	-	80	100	Not Accessible
9	Interactive Smart board	-	-	80	100	Not Accessible

Data in table 2 revealed that respondents have access to e-mail services and browser phone only. Other ICT resources in the table are not accessible to respondents.

Research Question Three: How often do students use ICT Resources for their studies?

Table 3: Frequency of the Use of ICT Resources

S/N	ICT Resources	Percentage/Number of Respondents			
		Once per week	Twice per week	Daily	Occasionally
1	Personal computer	13.75%(11)	16.25%(13)	52.5%(42)	17.5%(14)
2	e-mail	10%(8)	12.5%(10)	52.5%(42)	17.5%(14)
3	Digital Camera	68.75%(55)	16.25%(13)	10%(8)	5%(4)
4	Scanner	60%(48)	12.5%(10)	15%(12)	12.5%(10)
5	Video facilities	70%(56)	8.75%(7)	10%(8)	10%(8)
6	Printer	56.25%(45)	15%(12)	10%(8)	15%(12)
7	Browser phone	5%(4)	12.5%(10)	75%(60)	7.5%(6)
8	Electronic bulletin board	71.25%(57)	16.25%(13)	6.25%(5)	6.25%(5)
9	Interactive Smart board	61.25%(49)	20%(16)	8.75%(7)	10%(8)

Result from table 3 showed that the respondents use personal computer, e-mail services and browser phones on daily basis more than others. This could be as a result of the availability of these resources within and around the institution and many of the respondents have their private browser phone.

Research Question Four: What are the factors that militate against effective use of ICT resources?

Table 4: Means Responses on Factors Militating against the Use of ICT Resources

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
1	There are lack of infrastructure for ICT facilities in Business Department	160	75	10	10	3.19	A
2	ICT facilities are expensive for students of Business Department to purchase.	240	45	10	-	3.70	SA
3	Inadequate power supply hinders us from learning with ICT facilities in Business Department	200	60	20	-	3.50	SA
4	Lack of sufficient time in the school time table	192	60	24	-	3.45	A
5	There are inadequate ICT tools in the Department of Business Education	200	60	10	5	3.44	A
6	Most a time, students are not allowed to use the computer systems in the Department	196	36	20	09	3.26	A
	Grand Mean					3.42	A

Table 4 showed a grand mean of 3.42 which is above the acceptable mean of 2.50. This indicates that there are factors militating against the Use of ICT Resources by respondents.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the analyses made, it was revealed that; only few ICT Resources are available in the Department of Business Education.

Respondents have access to browser phone and e-mail services only. Other ICT resources in the table are not accessible to respondents.

Respondents use e-mail services and browser phones on daily basis more than others.

There are factors militating against the Use of ICT Resources by respondents.

7. DISCUSSION

The results presented in tables 1 revealed that students of Business Education in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education are ready to learn with the ICT Resources. The challenge here is on the availability. Contributing, Manjulika & Reddy (2002) asserts that the major problem we have in our school system is lack of learning resources or ICT tools. Furthermore, lack of learning resources places serious limitations on what the teacher can achieve (Adatinirin, 2012).

Few of the resources available like e-mail services, and personal computers are not accessible to the students. Supporting the above revelation, Saddiqui (2008) observed earlier that resources can not be used if they are not accessible.

Respondents use e-mail, and browser phones daily. Collaborating this view, Ajuzie and Umeh (2012) maintain that students often times work with their hand sets and where possible browse the Internet with it. This aids students to get information on their studies online, there by increasing their access to knowledge and information gathering across the globe.

The result upheld that there are factors militating against effective use of available ICT resources, such as inadequate ICT tools, lack of electricity supply etc. It is obvious that ICT infrastructures are lacking, inadequate or absent of public power supply hamper the use of ICT in schools, in fact the list is endless (Ajuzie, 2009, Ajuzie and Umeh, 2012, Carlson and Firpo (2001), Okebukola (1990), Egunjobi (2003), Akude & Ajuzie, 2011 and Ajuzie, 2013).

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings of the study, the researchers recommend as follows;

Lecturers and teachers should assist the College management and government in providing ICT Resources for their personal use in instructional delivery in tertiary institutions.

The available ICT resources provided by the institutions should be made accessible to the students to enable the learn with it.

Lectures should be encourage to use ICT resources in teaching students as this will enable students be acquainted with such facilities.

9. CONCLUSION

It is not an over statement to say that acquisition of basic skills is paramount in our quest to overcome unemployment in this country. To this end, teaching and learning of Business Education should be done using ICT facilities, especially now ICT has made the world a global village. This will enable lecturers and students alike to share ideas, information and knowledge with colleagues and counterparts across other continents of the world. Thereby helping to bridge the gap between developed nations and under-developed or developing nation which Nigeria is a victim today.

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