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EFFECT OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SKILLS ON REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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The study examined the Effect of Information Communication Technology skills on youth unemployment reduction in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. Data were collected from 350 respondents from Ibadan North Local government areas in Oyo State through purposive sampling method. Descriptive survey research design was use. The research instrument was a set of questionnaire tagged: "Effect of Information Communication Technology Skills on Reduction of Unemployment Rating Scale" (ICTSURS). Four research questions were raised and answered. Data obtained were analysed through simple percentages and cross tabulation. The findings showed that Information Communication Skills have improved socio-economic well-being of youths in terms of Job Creation, improved knowledge, improved financial status and better resource sharing among youths.

Key words: Information Communication Technology, Youth, Unemployment Reduction.

Introduction

The unemployment rate in Nigeria as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics has increased to 23.90 percent in 2011 from 21.10 percent in 2010. From 2006 until 2011, Nigeria unemployment rate averaged 14.6 percent reaching an all-time high of 23.9 percent in December 2011 and records a low rate of 5.3 percent in December 2006. Unemployment rate measures the number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labour force. The unemployment rate indicated above is not only worrisome but also

alarming and shows that government cannot tackle it alone. Therefore, exploring the effect of Information and Communication Technology devices such as full range of computers, phones and telecommunication gadgets, etc., sales and services purpose, application software development would be able to tackle the problem of unemployment in Nigeria. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have opened up new opportunities for the youths to acquire skills that will in turn reduce unemployment a problem affecting the Nation at large. However, there are many example of how ICTs enhancing the livelihood of people. An important dimension of information technology cannot be overemphasized in that it now plays key role in education learning research, agriculture, health trade and commerce economic to the people living in the Nation that are actively participating in them. Information and communication technology (ICT) can no longer be seen as a luxury for the elite but as an absolute necessity for the masses. Kenneth, (2001) asserts that "ICT could enable even the poorest of developing nations to "Leapfrog" traditional problems of development like poverty, illiteracy, disease, unemployment, hunger, corruption social inequality so as to improve, rapidly into modern information age But while ICTs are not a magic bullet, they do provide powerful ammunition in the fight against poverty and unemployment (Osu, 2008). Information and communication technology is an electronic technology for collecting, storing, processing and communicating information. According to Butcher, (2003) ICT is categorized into two: those which process information such as computer systems and those which disseminate information such as telecommunication system. Trowel and Laudon (1994), ICT include all the different means, methods, tools that humans have used throughout history to help manage information, conduct business, and communicate with others and better understand the world around them. Frenzel (1996), states that ICT is seen as computer systems, telecommunication, networks and multi-media application while Osatuohien (2008) agrees with the submission of Olasanmi, Ayoola and Kareem (2012) that ICT is the application of knowledge for the execution of given task which entails skills and processes necessary for carrying out activities in a given context.

Sesan (2004) reports that in developing countries there is an astronomical increase in unemployment.

In Nigeria the youth have yielded to the call and are using ICT as a launching pad to create entrepreneurial activities such studies have shown that the ICT era have created various types of jobs from Chief Information Officer in big enterprises or government agencies to the computer shop operators since early 90's. Vendors of hand held phones and their accessories are common sight in every community. There are various types of ICT based businesses such as document processing centres, cybercafé, computer training centres, computer services and repairs, hand set services and repairs, internet, programming, cable and satellite TV installations, type setting with very little take off funds. They are common skills to empower youth (Oladunjoye and Audu 2012; Olasanmi, Ayoola and Kareem 2012). According to Osu (2008) networking, programming, repairing and maintenance, computer sales, parts and accessory sales; document processing; and phone repairs, typesetting, web designing, desktop publishing are different ICT skills that affords youth employment opportunity. It is against this background that this study will examine effect of ICTs on unemployment reduction among youths in Ibadan metropolis.

Statement of Problem

One of the major problems facing the human race in recent times hinges on unemployment gap. However the extent to which ICTs can contribute to unemployment reduction, is contested, as different misconceptions surround the role of ICT in unemployment reduction and its contribution among the youths and the society at large. In the light of the above this study investigates the effect of ICT skills on unemployment reduction among youths in Ibadan metropolis.

Objective of the study

This paper seeks to establish the effect of ICT skills on youth unemployment reduction in Ibadan metropolis, while the specific objectives are:

- to identify various kinds of ICT skills.

- examine effect of ICT skills on socio-economic well-being of youths.
- to identify the challenges being presently faced by youths in the practice of ICT skills.
- to make suggestion on how to improve ICT training.

Significance of the study

The study provides useful information on how ICT skills have reduce unemployment among youths. The will study also enhance future research on the effect of ICTs as a channel of development the society. Lastly the findings of the study will help enhance the strategy for socio-economic development of youths.

Scope of the study

The study focused on ICT skills in Ibadan metropolis, where ICT training centers are located in Ibadan North local government (Agbowo , Bodija, and University of Ibadan)

Research Questions

1. What are the various kinds of ICT skills?
2. What effect has ICTs on socio-economic well-being of youth?

Review of Literature

Concept of Youth

UNFPA(2003), defines youth as the segment of population comprising young people between ages 18 and 35, the convention of the right of the child, (CRC), recognizes child as children all human beings under the age of 18, (UNICEF 2004). Chamber 20th Century dictionary, defines youth as “the state of being young early life, the period immediately succeeding childhood: an early period of existence”. Hence, the expression “youth” refers to young person collectively. Similarly, in 1964, the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) was set up as a private sector body which serves as the Apex organization co-coordinating the activities of the various voluntary youth organizations. Government also has established by statute youth’s organizations like the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC),

and the citizenship and leadership training centre. The National Youth Award Scheme and Youth Holiday Camp are also programmes, set up by government to assist youths. (www.anys.utas.edu.au/proceeding1996/paper-3html). According to Adeoti (1993), cited in Osu (2008), youth are citizens of a country who fall between age 20 and 35. They include those that are born in the country registered as legal members of the country and those naturalized as a result of them taking oath of allegiance. Obanya (1995), views youth as those people within early childhood stage to 12 years which signifies adolescent stage. Adulthood according to him range from 21 to 45 years. Edah, (1988) said that youths are leaders of tomorrow that common sense dictates that we see our youths as leaders in training today. Experience they say is the best teacher. If that be so, then it implies that leaders of tomorrow need to acquire experience today if they are not fatten on their shoulders.

Role of ICT in Unemployment Reduction

Access to information and ultimate knowledge plays crucial role in improving the living conditions of the poor. Information and communication technologies, (ICTs), particular telecommunication and information service, as tool for access to and processing of information, are therefore, facilitating factors of unemployment reduction. However, according to Juan (2002), there are wide disparities in access to ICTs both among and within countries a notion that has come to be known as the “digital divide”. Narrowing these access gaps and removing barriers to information dissemination, and access to knowledge are therefore a priority in providing sustainable development and reducing unemployment. Juan (2002), Telecommunication and information services in general, have a positive effect on unemployment reduction effort through a variety of mechanism: ICTs promote integration of isolate communities into the global economy. The predominance of ICTs in all aspect of economy means that failing to develop technological capabilities relegates countries, regions, and communities to exclusion. A well-developed telecommunication industry, for instance promote trade and influx of foreign direct investment (FDI). Global businesses, no matter their size, are more likely to establish

themselves in countries that offer telecommunications infrastructure and facilities that provide them with global reach. ICTs promote productivity gain, efficiency and growth by making both global and domestic operation more productive and efficient, equally in the private and public sector, thus promoting growth indeed, it can be shown that the income of the unemployed grow faster in telecommunications – intensive economics. For example, a number of source are quoted as showing that student with access to the internet perform better than student without access and that every dollar invested in ICTs multiplies almost three fold in terms of improved production of the public sector ICTs extend the reach of public services to the remotest areas, and allow information, to flow in both directions, thus efficiently empowering the unemployed and giving them a voice. ICTs stem urban migration and generate income and employment, potential in rural areas, which is one of the most valuable contributions ICT can make to address unemployment.

Source: (<http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/sourcetoc.htm>)

Concept of Unemployment

Ifere (1962), opined that the concept of unemployment was originated by Adam Smith, Alfred Marshal, Thomas Matthew and J.M. Keynes. Unemployment among Nigerian educated youths in general Ibadan North Local Government Area in particular, became very conspicuous and more acute immediately after independence in 1960. According to the Federal Ministry of Labour and the National Manpower Board Statistics, the population of the unemployed citizen in 1964 rose to 14%. It is pertinent to note that, the unemployment rate for the population with school certificate NECO/WAEC/SSCE and above constitute the greatest human potential of the nation is significantly higher than those with lower level of education. Similarly, the Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary (2000), defines unemployment as a state of having a job; people willing to work but not worthy presently are refer to as “unemployment” the “unemployed” comprises all person above a specific age who during the reference period were:

- (a). "Without work" i.e. that hadn't a paid employment or self-employment
- (c) "Seeking work", i.e. had taken specific steps to seek paid employment, or self-employment. The specific steps may include, registration at a public or private employment exchange application to employers, answering or planning newspaper advertisements.

Ijere (1992), cited in Akpama; Bisong; & Anthony (2006), views unemployment as a situation where people are willing and able to work, but have not available employment. Furthermore, Mouly and Costs (1974), are of the opinion that unemployment occurs when people are not at work but are seeking work or available for work. In the accepted terminology, a person can be unemployed, only if he is a member of the labour force, and if it is not clear who is or is not in the labour force. The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2004) sees unemployment as involuntary idleness due to lack of work. The unemployed here refers to person below the labour force, seeking but not doing any work during a specific period.

Types of Unemployment

Ijere (1992), cited in Akpama; Bisong; & Anthony (2006), identify five types of unemployment in Nigeria. These include; seasonal unemployment, technological unemployment, structures, cyclical, and disguised or underemployment. Seasoned unemployment affects people who are already working, in agriculture and domestic handicrafts, when the agricultural work finishes or is no more rewarding, hordes of farmers move out to more promising areas. Technological unemployment according to him exists among people displaced by modern techniques from their work.

Effect of Unemployment on Youth and Society

Sinfield (2000), states that numerous claims have been made about the effects of mass unemployment on society. Usually the effects have been seen as detrimental to the society. Unemployment 'devalues or debases the standard quality of life in society'. He believes it does so in the following ways. Those remaining in work feel less

secure and may have their standard of living threatened. This is partly because of short-time working and reductions in the amount of overtime, and partly due to the reduced bargaining power of workers which leads to downward pressure on wages.

Sinfield, (2000), believes that high unemployment reduces the chance of equality of opportunity being achieved. With a surplus of labour, employers need no longer make an effort to recruit women, ethnic minorities, the young, old, disabled and handicapped or former inmates of prisons or mental hospitals. For example writing in 2000, Sinfield claimed that the proportion of firms which had more than 3% registered disabled in their workforce had fallen from two-third to one-third with the rise of mass unemployment. Also Lea and Yount (2000), cited in Osu (2008), says that unemployment among the young leads to the marginalization of some members of the society. Those who have never worked feel that they have no stake in society since they are not members of unions they lack institutional way to express their discontent.

According to Allen and Watson (1986), many social problems have been linked to unemployment. Links between unemployment and wide range of social problems have been made by academics, politicians and journalists. Ill-health, premature death, attempted and actual suicide, marriage breakdown, child bearing, racial conflicts and hooliganism are few examples. Many of these is seen as effect of unemployment on individual especially the youth. This implies that unemployment is a particularly serious problem for the youth and the society. This view is supported by Willis (1989), on the basis of a study conducted in Wolverchampton in (1984), he argues that a new social condition has been created for youth in areas of high unemployment. Unemployment disrupts the normal transition to adulthood. The young unemployed are denied the opportunity to become independent from parents and often experience long period of poverty. Robert (1986) opines that young people do not enjoy unemployment, but he believes that they are better equipped to deal with it than older unemployed workers.

Effect of ICT Skills on Youth and Society

Ekabua and Edim (2001), cited in Akpama; Bisong; & Anthony (2006), the positive effect of ICT skills to include the following:

Employment Benefits: The ICT skills have helped millions of people to do their jobs more efficiently. Through computer, messengers could decide on a future course of action (planning function) and they can then help with the follow-up checks on performance, to see if planned goals are being achieved (the control function). By using accurate and timely facts supplied by data base job management software, a manager can do a better job of identifying problems and opportunities.

Greater Efficiency: Ekabua and Edim (2001), further explain that because business have avoided waste and have improved efficiency through the use of computers, the prices we now pay, are less than they would otherwise have been. For example, about one third of all the dairy cows in the society today are now bred fed, milked and monitored for productivity with the help of computers. With only half as many cows the dairy industry today produces all the milk that was supplied 15 years ago. These computers can significantly improve productivity.

Higher – Quality Product: ICT have also helped to improve the quality of the product and services, we receive for instance microcomputers installed in cars now provided a more efficient means of controlling the engine's fuel mixture ignition timing and exhaust emission.

Recreation and Education Benefit: Computers could be used to amuse and entertain people .Computer game programme are being prepared by hundreds of producers. Computer firms are writing programmes that give the illusion of movement to in animate objects. The result of the animation is now seen regularly in movies on television. (Ekabua and Edim 2001).

ICT: The Role of Mobile Phone in Youth Unemployment Reduction

Kure (2003), the advent of global system of mobile communication (GSM) has been described by many as a blessing to Nigerian economy this is not only because it has actually brought telecommunications service to the doorsteps of the people but because it also provides employment opportunities for the teeming unemployed. Kure (2003), as much as ICTs promise dynamic opportunities for youths in relation to employment. ICTs are simply tools and must be engaged in order to produce results Mobile platforms, web technologies, internet services and other ICT delivery mechanisms are available for youths who are able to translate opportunities into livelihood ventures.

Sesan (2005) says most of the employment opportunities provided by ICTs do not require huge start-up capital, a mobile phone merchant can actually set up his umbrella business with less than \$100. Even if he has less, he can afford to grow his start-up capital from also nothing by relating recharge cards for sub dealers. Kure (2003), if these opportunities exist in ICTs, why are we not seeing dynamic changes across the continent in the area of engaging ICT opportunities for employment? The answer is quite simple – some have not seen the opportunity others assume that ICTs have a steep learning curve; and some others are ignoring opportunities, or are not prepared to follow the path of ICT opportunities because of their assumption that the ICT pasture is not green enough.

While the campaign for ICT opportunities in employment need to increase. Youth themselves must seek to identify these dynamic openings in the use of mobile phones and telecommunications in general. For those who think that ICTs present high entry barriers (steep learning curve), they fail to realize that ICTs offer a wide spectrum of choices ranging from those comfortable with each entrant to choose which width of the spectrum best matches his or her needs and individual learning capacity. Although, a lot of youths in Ibadan North Local Government are exploiting the gain of mobile communication, but there are lots of grounds yet to be covered. Youths should be encouraged to see all the benefits that abound in mobile communications, in order to be more empowered.

Research Design

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. This type of design is usually adopted where the researcher does not aim at manipulating the variables of the study since the variables had already occurred. It also enabled the researcher to make proper investigation for description, drawing inferences and making generalizations.

Population of the Study

The study population was mainly some selected youths that have acquired ICT skills in the area of sales and repairs of GSM, typesetting, internet, tele-centre service providers, computer analyst, web designing, network designing, Web designing desktop publishing, computer engineering, in the Ibadan North Local Government area of Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to select 350 respondents from Ibadan North Local government areas in Oyo State.

Research Questions I

What are the various kinds of ICT Skills?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Various Kinds of ICT Skills

S/NO	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Web development is a type of ICT skill acquired	59.7% 179	38.0% 114	-	0.7% 2	100% 300
2	Type-setting is a type of ICT skill acquired	26.3% 78	46.5% 138	27.3% 8	-	100% 300
3.	Computer engineering is a type of ICT skill	46.5% 139	36.8% 110	15.4% 46	1.3% 4	100% 300
4	Network development is a skill that youth acquires	28.8% 84	51.4% 150	14.7% 43	5.1% 15	100% 300
5	Desktop publishing is ICT skill	33.1% 93	52.0% 146	11.4% 32	3.6% 10	100% 300
6	Networking technology is ICT skill	39.55% 117	52.0% 154	5.4% 16	3.6% 10	100% 300
7.	Repairs of GSM accessories is ICT skill	41.9% 124	38.9% 115	10.5% 31	8.8% 26	100% 300
8	Computer analyst is a type of skill	40.9% 122	50.0% 149	6.0% 18	3.0% 9	100% 300

The above, shows that item 1, 179 (59.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 114(38.0%) agreed that web development is a type of ICT skill, while 20 (0.7%) strongly disagree to the statement. Item 2, Typesetting is a type of ICT skill, 78 (26.3%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 138 (46.5%) agreed and 28(27.3%) disagreed. On item 3, 139 (46.5%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 110 (36.8%) agreed, while 46 (15.4%) disagreed and 4(1.3%) strongly disagreed to the statement. Similarly, item 4, network development is a skill that youth acquires 84(28.8%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 150 (51.4%) agreed while 43 (14.7%) disagreed and 15 (51.0%) strongly disagreed to the question item.

Item 5, destop publishing is ICT skill, 93(33.1%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 146 (52.0%) agreed while 32 (11.4%) disagreed and 103 (3.6%) strongly disagreed. Item 6 shows that 117 (39.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 154 (52.0%) agreed, while 16(5.4%) disagreed and 9(3.0%) strongly disagreed.

Item 7, shows that 124 (41.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 115 (38.9%) agreed, while 31 (10.5%) disagreed and 26 (8.8%) strongly disagreed to the statement. Item 8, shows that 122 (40.9%) of the respondents strongly that computer analyst is a type

of ICT skill, 149 (50.0%) agreed, while 18 (6.0%) disagreed, and 9(3.0%) strongly disagreed.

Research Question: 2

What is the effect of ICT Skills on Socio-economic well-being of Youths?

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Effect of ICT on Socio-economic Well-being of Youths.

S/NO	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total
9	ICT skill creates job	72.0% 211	21.5% 63	2.7% 8	3.8% 11	100% 300
10	Many Nigerian youth have their job through ICT	28.2% 82	45.4% 132	17.9% 52	8.6% 25	100% 300
11	I have livelihood through ICT	19.1% 57	33.4% 100	36.8% 110	10.7% 32	100% 300
12	ICT acquire skills has improved my financial status	21.3% 61	43.6% 124	18.8% 54	16.7% 48	100% 300
13	ICT has reduced unemployment in Nigeria	25.8% 77	43.6% 130	14.8% 44	15.8% 47	100% 300

Table 2 above, shows that item 9, 211 (72.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 63(21.5) agreed, while 8(2.7%) disagreed to the statement ICT skills creates job.

Item10, many Nigeria youth have their job, through ICT, 82(28.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 132(45.4%) agreed, while 52(17.9%) disagreed and 25(8.6%) strongly disagreed. Item 17, I have livelihood through ICT, 57(19.1%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 110(36.8%) disagreed, and 32(10.7%) strongly disagreed.

Item 11, ICT skills has improved my financial status, 61 (21.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 124 (43.2%) agreed, while 54 (18.8%) disagreed and 48 (16.7%) strongly disagreed. Item 12, ICT has reduced unemployment in Nigeria, 77 (25.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 130 (43.6%) agreed, while 44 (14.8%) disagreed and 47 (15.8%) strongly disagreed.

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