

ICTs - An Efficient Tools for Entrepreneurs Amongst the Nigerian Youths

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Abstract: Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device encompassing: Computers and network, hardware and software, smart phones, satellites system, radio and television and so on, as well as the various services and application associated with them. Undoubtedly ICT is the greatest achievement of the 21st Century. It is believed that ICT have the potential to help the young graduates/ youths develop various skills including entrepreneurial skills. In Nigeria a considerable part of young graduates/youths remains unemployed; a possible solution for this problem might be self-employment. ICT skills which the young generation are very much familiar with can contribute to the development of an entrepreneurial career. This study tries to define those ICT tools mostly used by the graduates/youths and how possibly best they can be used to generate income and employ others. The paper concludes that the need for ICT in our daily life is imperative and cannot be overemphasized, hence the need to sieze the opportunity in order to generate income and employment. However the studys recommends among others that; an ICT skill based acquisition centres should be established by the government and other relevant stakeholders in order to equip the young Nigerian graduates/youths with the necessary skills they need to be self-employed.

Keywords: ICT, Entrepreneurship, Youths, Nigeria, Graduates, Unemployment

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1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication technology (ICTs) are "diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, disseminate, store, and manage information." "ICT implies the technology which consists of electronic devices and associated human interactive materials that enable the user to employ them for a wide range of teaching-learning processes in addition to personal use." These technologies include computers, the Internet, broadcasting technologies (radio and television), and telephony. "ICT is that technology which uses the information to meet human need or purposes including processing and exchanging. The system could also be seen as "The acquisition, recording, and processing of data which is finally retrieved as information via electronic signals for usage.

[1] In same vain. [2] opined that ICT is an integration and utilization of computer technologies for the purpose of disseminating information to a target destination or consumer without the constraint of time and space. Unemployment is one of the most pronounced hurdles Nigeria is currently facing. The situation is exacerbated

for the fact that youths account for about 36.5 percent of the unemployed population. Based on Trading Economics reports. This is a ticking bomb waiting to explode if not nipped in the bud. The Ministry of Labour and Productivity in Nigeria says the Federal Government is set to declare total war on unemployment and joblessness in the country with the use of ICT systems and operations which is aimed at training unemployed Nigerians. [3] opine that despite the exploitation of negative aspect of ICT by a few Nigerian youths, ICT has raised the economy of the nation, especially the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 1.62 per cent Although he lamented that apart from the improvement on the economy, ICT has also enhanced falsehood, dissemination of harmful information as well as fraudulent activities in the transaction of businesses.

ICTs have the potential to combat poverty and foster sustainable development if appropriately deployed and made to address the diverse discrepancy in the ICT needs of people of all locations, age group, gender and economic status. ICT has become a potent force in transforming social, economic and political life globally. It is believed that ICT have the potential to help the Nigerian youths develop various skills including entrepreneurial skills.

2. RELATED CONCEPTS

2.1 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

[4] Opined that ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computers and satellite, etc. Again, it is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning. According to [5] ICT “is an electronic based system of information transmission, reception, processing and retrieval, which has drastically changed the way we think, the way we live and the environment in which we live”. It can be used to access global knowledge and communication with other people [5]. In [6] it was clearly postulate that ICT “refers to a broad field encompassing computers, communications equipment and the services associated with them.” This means that ICT is not just considered as applications and systems but also as skill for life.

2.2 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is “the process of doing something new and/or something different for the purpose of creating wealth for the individual and adding value to society”[7]. In same view [8] defines entrepreneurship as the art of turning an idea into a business [9], sees entrepreneurs as individuals who recognise opportunities where others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion. They are aggressive catalysts for change within the marketplace. [10] Opined that entrepreneurship is the process of identifying an opportunity related to needs-satisfaction and converting it to a thing (product or service) of value. [11] in his words also said that entrepreneurship is about learning the skills needed to assume the risk of establishing a business.

2.3 Unemployment

The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work. In same vain [12] sees unemployment as a situation where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. It is one of the macro-economic problems which every responsible government is expected to monitor and regulate. The higher would be the poverty level and associated welfare challenges.

3. ICT'S AS ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY FOR EMPOWERING NIGERIAN GRADUATES.

Graduates/Youths spend much of their time using these modern ICT gadgets and their experiences can go a long way in shaping their lives. So therefore empowering them at this stage in life is to provide them the substantial ladder with which they climb to the climax of their ambitions and economic sustenance. Several ICT entrepreneurial resources and strategies exist, that if successfully integrated in their life would, in no small measure; make them self-sufficient in later life.

According to [13], ICT can spur growth, create jobs for the poor, improve market access, contribute to income generation and enhance rural productivity. The economic contribution of ICT is two-fold: income generation and poverty reduction. ICT enable people and enterprises to capture economic opportunities with a view to increasing process efficiency, promoting participation in expanded economic networks and creating opportunities for employment. In same vain.

[14] opined that ICTs has the potential for reducing poverty and fostering growth in developing countries. Some of the relevance of ICT's as it has potential to raise growth in businesses of any size and countries, play a vital role in advancing economic growth and reducing poverty, make management and operation more efficient, ICT differs based on business size, ownership, and export orientation. ICT can enhance a country's economy more efficient and globally competitive, while serving as a tool for improving health and education sector. Thus, social inclusion and promotes more effective accountable, democratic government, especially when combined with effective freedom of information and expression.

Moreover, ICT, according to [15] is a major factor in shaping the new global economy and producing rapid changes in society. Within the past decade, the new ICT tools have fundamentally changed the way people communicate and do business. They have produced significant transformations in industry, agriculture, medicine, business, engineering and other fields.

ICT facilitates access to information, capital, markets and training needed to pursue a career or studies; increased participation in political processes. Entrepreneurship which is enabled by access to technology, the internet and information is fast being positioned as a solution for youth unemployment. ICT therefore does not only facilitate entrepreneurship but there are also entrepreneurial opportunities in ICT. The youth must also develop their business skills in addition to the ICT expertise for the business established to succeed.

3.1 Entrepreneurial Opportunities in ICT

ICT is a fast growing new technological era. The ICT is entering fast in Nigeria both in education and in the job market but still in its infancy. The ICT has opened global job market where people with competence can do jobs sitting in their own house anywhere in the world without going to or attending the work place [16]. The role of ICT in facilitating job creation for the youths, especially developing countries, cannot be over emphasized. ICT can facilitate developing countries' ability to combat the several socio-economic challenges confronting them. Increasing access to information, through the power of the internet infrastructure, and creation of several innovative tools and accessories, could create several opportunities which can be exploited by entrepreneurs [17].

ICT supports entrepreneurship and innovation through: increasing interconnectedness and collaboration; allowing smaller, entrepreneurial companies to compete in global markets; reducing the cost of entry for new entrepreneurs; facilitating research diversification and interdisciplinary approaches; enhancing the ability of entrepreneurs to develop new business models, products, services, and processes; shortening product development cycles; providing new tools to create, organize, store, and transmit information; supporting disruptive business models that transform industries; and facilitating faster access to regional and international markets [18].

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, etc. with very little take off funds. They are common vocations to empower the youth [18][19].

4. CONCLUSION

The need for ICTs in our daily life has been steadily increasing day by day which has now become an important problem. Hence, the need to use them positively to generate employment and income. Computers and the internet cannot be dismissed from the contemporary scene; even the importance of mobile phones and other ICT tools are imperative in our society today. Thus it is impossible to imagine life today without digital media.

Undoubtedly ICT is the greatest achievement of the 21st Century. It is believed that ICT have the potential to help the young graduates/ youths develop various skills including entrepreneurial skills. In Nigeria a considerable part of young graduates/youths remains unemployed; a possible solution for this problem might be self-employment.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. An ICT skill based acquisition centres should be established by the government and other relevant stakeholders in order to equip the young Nigerian graduates/youths with the necessary digital literacy skills they need to be self-employed in this era of digital economy.
- ii. The relevant stakeholders in curriculum development should reform the National Education system and curricula at all levels to portray digital literacy education.

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