Technophilia: Viable Tool for Actualizing Refugee Education

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ABSTRACT

The use of computers and associated hardware, software, and networks, to provide learning through virtual learning systems have become a means of supplementing the existing traditional teaching method. This innovation, though new in a developing country such as Nigeria, is capable of serving the needs and requirements for improving the quality of education in the numerous Internal Displacement Camps in Nigeria. In this research, the education of school-age children in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps is examined with particular focus on the enrollments, and the quality of provided education. Also, case studies of various African countries' programs geared towards improving the quality of education, and skilling up her students for employment using various Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools, are presented. The innovations directly or indirectly yielded positive impacts on national economies of the deploying countries. Targeting school age children in the over 140,000 IDP camps in Nigeria with ICT-based learning, will have the triple effect of quality education, skill acquisition, and reduction in the growing number of IDPs in the camps as a result of unwanted pregnancies. National Communication Commission's Digital Job Creation for Youth (DJCY), which follows a customized boot camp, with the beneficiaries being offered computers with associated connectivity toolset, and set up as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) after training them in ICT services, is recommended for the youth in the IDP, while immersive learning (VR lens) should be used for interactive learning experience for the younger children, with Google expedition for control of accessed content. The framework for refugee education is adapted to specifically focus on ICT-based education, training, and skill acquisition for refugees.

Keywords: Quality Education, Virtual Reality, Google Expedition, Internally Displaced Persons, Education Innovation, National Communication Commission (NCC)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Internal displacement camp is a community set up by the government to provide basic amenities and livelihood for people who through disaster, conflict or violence, have been left homeless. According to [1], over 2.18 million displacements were reported in the year 2021. Data from internal displacement monitoring center website, (Nigeria | IDMC, 2022) showed that 940,000 internal displacements are as a result of conflicts and violence while disaster accounted for 2.9 million internal displacements between 2019 and 2022, with 2022 recording the highest disaster-based displacement of 2,437,000, a significant increase from that reported the previous year.

The responsibility of providing shelter, food and associated needs lies on the government of the affected people. A study of 46 countries with displaced person show that only 14 out of this number has adopted a policy for attending to the basic needs of displaced persons and cushioning the negative impact of their presence in their host communities [3]. Nigeria's Federal National Policy on IDP was approved by the Federal executive Council (FEC) in 2021, which is 20 years after the commencement of the policy development and adoption process (Ogunyemi, 2022).
[4] adapted the quality education research framework by [5], to accommodate the special needs of a refugee camp. The adapted framework is presented in figure 1 below:

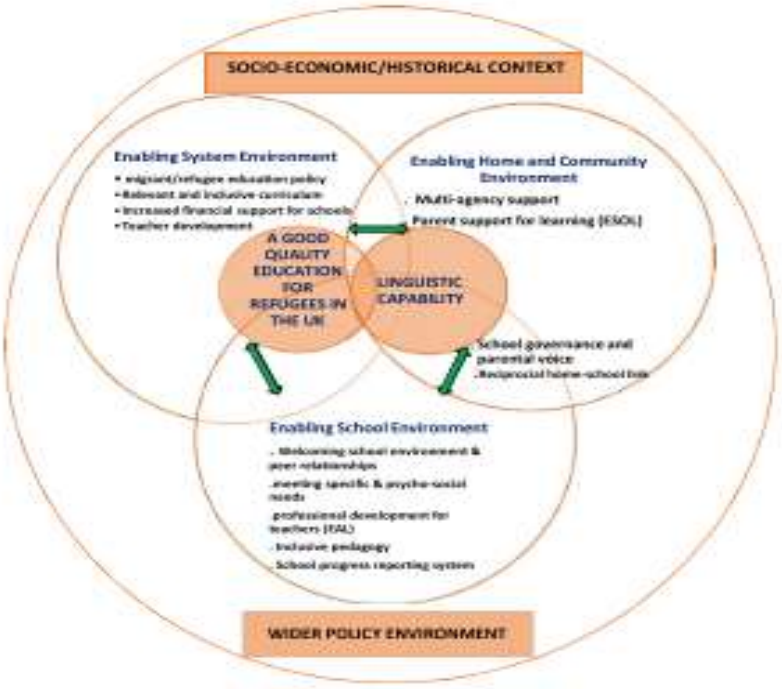

Figure 1: Adapted Conceptual Framework of Refugee quality Education Source: [4]

In the requirement gathering phase, the common language in an IDP camp noted. In the design phase, this may be used as the primary teaching language while English language can be the secondary teaching language.

According to Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, in the book A Greek-English Lexicon, on Perseus, the word "Technophilia can be understood from two viewpoints: technē and philos. Technophilia (from Greek τέχνη - technē, "art, skill, craft" and φίλος - philos, "beloved, dear, friend")

The word is defined in "The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition 2003 as: a strong enthusiasm for technology, especially new technologies such as personal computers, the Internet, mobile phones and home cinema [6].

The opposite of Technophilia is Technophobia which means:
Fear of Technology. Nigeria is a mixed economy with an economic diversification that has GDP Inflation, Unemployment Rate, and Foreign Exchange Rate as key indicators of its economic status. According to [7] Nigerians

now refer to technology sector as the new oil. This can be traced to the recent increase in the contribution of Information and Communication Technology to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

[8] indicates that in the second quarter of 2022 (Q2), ICT contributed 18.45% to GDP of the country. A total of 10.6% in nominal terms was realized in the year 2022, which is higher than its nominal contribution of 10.24%. Also, it contributed a total of 16.51% in real terms in 2022, which is higher than its 15.51% contribution reported in 2021 [9].

In this study, the researcher examines the role of inculcating passion for technology into children of school age who are camped in Internally Displaced Persons' centers. It proposes identifying the economic activities within the ICT sector, which are included in the measured nominal and real GDP contributors, Investing in these economic activities through training and empowerment.

Table 1 ICT Economic Activities [8]

	Telecomm & Information Services	**Publishing**	**Motion Pictures & Sound recording**	**Broadcasting**
Global Output	Revenue from telephone, telex, Facsimile, telegraph, & other income from satellite and internet services	Revenue from publishing services	Revenue/total sales from movies, TV rights, Royalties, sound recordings and fees	Corporate data derived from Accountants, General reports, revenue generated from services rendered e.g advertisements
Internal Consumption	Transit fees, operational expenditure, minor repairs & maintenance	Cost structure details, transportation fees, operational expenditure, minor repairs	Administrative expenditure, cost structure of operating firms, minor repairs & maintenance, and operational expenditure	Details of market transporting fees, operational expenditure, minor repairs & maintenance

Identifying areas of each economic activity that where the revenue is expended (minor repairs and maintenance, and employing these trained personnel as a means of saving cost.

ICT measured contribution to GDP is based on 4 economic activities. Table 1 above presented these activities, their Gross outputs, and the associated intermediate consumption.

There is a new move to tax digital assets and crypto currencies. The move, recently validated through the signing of the Financial Act, 2023 into law, introduces among other reforms, a 10% tax on gains from disposal of digital assets, such as crypto currencies [10]. By the GDP reporting of 2023, the contribution of Digital assets and crypto currencies will be added to four existing economic activities from which ICT contribution to GDP is derived. A popular school of thought holds that new technologies replace labour, thereby creating unemployment. The prediction came in the 30s, when John Maynard Keynes predicted that there would be rapid technological progress for the next 90 years, and associated this with a new trend called technological unemployment cited in [11].

[12] cited [11] analysis of the effect of the increase in industrial robot usage between 1990 and 2007 on US local labour market. The authors found that an increase of one robot to one thousand workers was noted within the reviewed period, and that a negative impact was realized, causing a reduction of 0.18% -0.34% in employment while improved productivity was noted in the considered period. A more worrisome assessment of the impact of technology on employment found that approximately 400 million jobs will be displaced following the transition ushered in by automation [13] cited in [14]. [15] found that advances in Artificial Intelligence impacted negatively on truck drivers, paralegals, and even surgeons' jobs. There is however, a Return on Investment (ROI), which is the increase in productivity through the introduction of technology. tremendous increase in productivity results in demand for labor which leads to employment, forming a circle [16]. this circle becomes:

Technology Introduction→Job loses→Increased production→ Employment boom.
[17] reported ways technology has helped improve lives of Nigerians, stating that ICT had provided about 2.5 million jobs in 10 years, with major areas of contribution being GDP growth, improved banking, job creation, etcetera. Similarly, [18] reported the statements of the former Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Professor Isa Pantami, that Communication and Digital Economy created 2.2 million jobs in Nigeria between 2020 and Q3 2022.

A recent report from NCC media team shows that the National Communication Commission has commenced massive training and job creation in Digital Content [19]. A programme set up to enhance the skills of youth from the six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria, Digital Job Creation for Youth (DJCY), follows a customized boot camp, with the beneficiaries being offered computers with associated connectivity toolset, and set up as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME). According to the vice chairman/CEO of NCC, the provisions of National Digital Economy Policy and strategy (NDEPS) encourages the promotion of digital literacy and skills through massive training of Nigerians from all works of life to skill them up with digital literacy and related skills [20].

DJCY relies on this provision, and has had two training editions with thousands of beneficiaries. This move could be said to account to a large extent, for the increased GDP in the ICT sector. The eight pillars to accelerate the development of Nigerian digital economy are presented in figure 2 below:

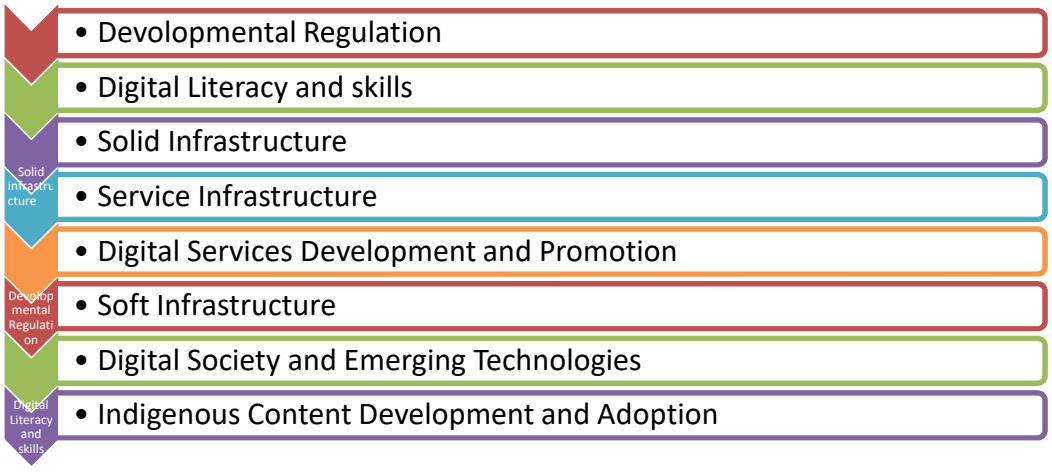

Figure 2: 8 Pillars of NDPES: [20]

Selected Case Studies of Education Innovations in Africa

Various techniques have been deployed to help make learning interesting, interactive and skill oriented. Table 2 below presents some of these ICT-based methods. Notable case studies are: the use of immersive technology used by Afriedx, Mauritius [21], Lightboard innovation and Sayans by Uganda, Scolaryx Education Box by Cameroun, VLABY by Egypt, Sua Code by Ghana, Si Realities by South Africa, and Digital Job Creation for Youth by NCC, Nigeria. Details of case studies are presented in table 2.

The framework that aims to help partners achieve inclusive and equitable quality education has been developed. For [22], refugee education aims to achieve the following goals:
- ease the pressure on their host country
-enhance refugee self-reliance,
-and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

The case studies adapted from African Education Innovation handbook [23] is contained in table 2. In each of the innovations captured, learning outcomes were not only achieved, there was enthusiasm in the target learners, which meets the expectations of accepted technology as encapsulated by the Technology Acceptance Model theories: Perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, attitude towards use, and actual system use. The students found learning with ICT tools interactive, easier to understand, memorize and retain acquired knowledge (Perceived Ease of Use). Employer specific training, skill up for entrepreneurship, as well as professional training programs all contribute to make ICT useful in today's digital ecosystem.

Thirdly, learners attitude towards learning with ICT have been that of awe at what can be achieved using ICT, and excitement at being able to replicate learned content. This is especially true in the case studies where the innovation target school-age children. Finally, actual system use and continued use depends on the first three theories. If learners find a given technological innovation easy to use, useful in gaining or retaining employment, then attitude towards the technology will be positive, and sustainability will be assured. Sample of some education innovations are presented below

Figure 4: Use of Immersive Technology in Learning, AfriEDX EDTECH [21]

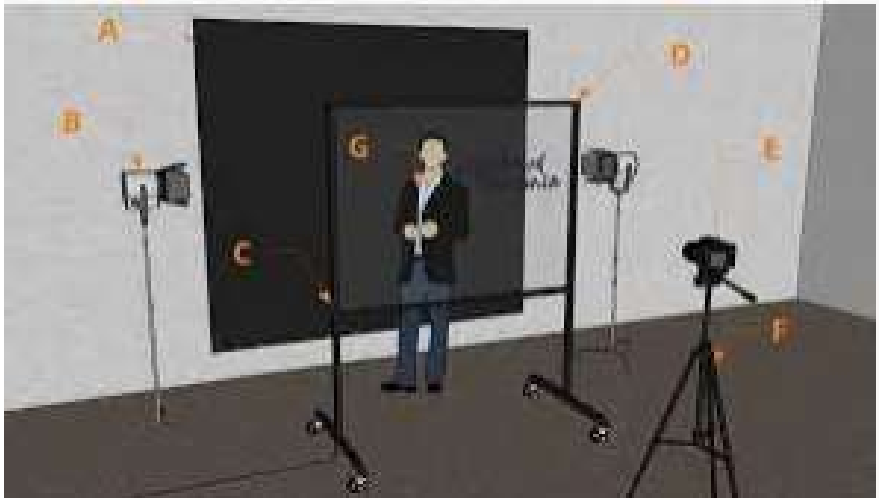

Figure 5: Lightboard, Uganda [23]

Figure 6: AI/VR Solar Lab [23]

Table 2: Case Studies of Innovative ICT Programmes in Africa, [23]

Country	Innovation	Description
Mozambique	Academycus	Mgt system: parents & mgt information sys.
Senegal	African Digital Libraries	Subscription for eReader on 9-subject areas
Benin	BookConekt	Provides paid access to booksk
Uganda	LightBoard	Glass boards with LED lights strpes. Video camera used to record for online learners
Uganda	Career Master	Provides Career guide
Botswana	Conexus Educational App(CEA)	App:students revise material, assess & test ability
Botswana	Classmate	App for interaction b/w urban & rural students
Ghana	ICT Africa	Solar classroom: ICT multimedia & video production platform
Mauritius	Immersive Education	Use of VR for retention. Google expedition to enforce control
Kenya	Kytabu	Mobile App containing all required books in primary and Secondary school
Zimbabwe	Maw Technologies	AR scans book content with sound features
Tanzania	Remote Areas & Comm Hotspot(RACHEL)	RACHEL server connects has stored learning resources & connects to smart devices through wired or wireless (WIFI)
Uganda	Sayans Computer	Lowcost Raspberry Pi computer. Locally assembled with wood casing, Khan academy videos
Gabon	Scientia	Students' information mgt system
Cameroun	Scolaryx Education Box	Micro server, Scolaryx software, lessons available online
South Africa	Si realities	Allows projection of Science Apparatus using phones and tablets
Ghana	Sua code	Coding platform using JAVA
Botswana	The Clicking Generation	Teens & Kids ICT Academy
Nigeria	iSchool	Virtual Learning plaform
Rwanda	Capacity development School	ICT training for headteachers & their Deputies
Egypt	VLABY	Virtual laboratory with chemicals, equipments etc virtually provided

Country	Innovation	Description
Ethiopia	AHADU	LMS with Attendance mgt
Chad	ChadEducationPlus	Course materials, mem cards& Books
Cote D'Ivore	SOUKLOU	Device AES 1507 is teachinf tool in form of a lamp. Films everything on the desk & projects in real time
Togo	Retice-PWCS	Server+visualizer,platform, renewabl energy etc
Burkina Faso	EDBOX(Education Digital Box)	Simulation and Information mgt for parents and school mgt
Togo	Kekelitheque	Web-based virtual library device
Democratic Rep. of Congo	KELASI	Information mgt on students
Botswana	ORIENTIS	Career guide
Cameroun	IF-Tech	Wifi remote training. Internet not required
Congo	University Admin System	Admin and result mgt
Kenya	M-Lugha App	Offline mother tongue app that translates syllabus
Kenya	TextSchool	USSD/SMS e-learning platform for grades 4-8
Tanzania	Smart Darasa	AR, Digital Simulation
Tanzania	Kisomo	AI, VR, big data analytics, ML
Rwanda	BAG	Gamified LMS that builds in employers needs
South Africa	Sisanda	Virtual Science Lab
South Africa, Kenya, Rwanda, Botswana	IDEA Virtual School	LMS with primary/secondary school interaction and assessment mgt
Zambia	Book-IT	Cloud-based LMS(AWS backed)
Malawi	Lync Academy	E Learning system
South Africa	Fundanii Digital Learning Project	App and Workbook for exercises
Zimbabwe,S.Africa,Bostswana,Western Sahara	Science Learning	AE used to provide coding and computer basics $30
South Africa	CRSP ROBO/LCERT	Robotics kit for design/coding & building
Kenya	AI/VR	VR/AI goggles, learning apps, digital libraries, smart devices, solar stations
Senegal	Kartoon Afrika	Animated cartoons
Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Mali,Guinea, Cote d'Ivore, Kenya,Liberia	EMBED	LMS for digitization of 9-year UBE
Burkina Faso	Project Barka	LMS for students + ward monitoring

Country	Innovation	Description
Nigeria, Ghana,Uganda,Kenya	SchoolLinka LMS	Provides professional dev. Opportunities for teachers
Nigeria	DigiLearns	Gamified Quizzes, via USSD and SMS
Nigeria,Ghana, Kenya, Cote D'Ivore	Teseem -Early Education interactive Learning	Interactive education App in African languages
Nigeria	ICT SchoolPlus	Connects schools, parents, students, & allows fees payments & performance monitoring
Nigeria	Digital Job Creation for Youth (DJCY)	customized boot camp, with the beneficiaries offered computers & associated connectivity toolset, and set up as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME).

With over 143,000 IDP camps in Nigeria, the task of achieving the Global Compact on Refugee and Refugee education 2030 [22] target is an onerous one. This case study paper therefore presents various ICT-based education innovations that have been implemented by African countries, while recommending that the existing programme of National Communications Commission be extended to benefit the IDPs, and in turn contribute to national development.

Research Design

Qualitative research is carried out to gain insight into the challenges of the education system in IDP camps in a developing country such as Nigeria, considering the huge infrastructural deficit in the education system as a whole.

Data Collection

[24] refers to data as a body of information which can be extracted from many sources such as words, spoken or written, numbers, images etcetera. The authors therefore identified literature review as a valid tool for collection of data. Literature review is the study of published views of various authors on a subject matter. This overview may on its own, form a whole scholarly article or be a section of the article. Literature review method will be used as tool for data collection in this paper since the researcher cannot have easy access to the refugees for self-reporting of their experiences.

Research Problem:

Does the quality of education in internally displaced persons camps in Nigeria meet with sustainable development Goal 4 (SDG-4) measurement targets?

Hypothesis

H_0: Quality of education in IDP camps meet with SDG4 targets.

To answer the research question, a review of various authors literatures that tried to assess the standard of education in IDP camps across Nigeria was carried out.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to [25] internal displacement negatively impacts on children's access to education, its quality and the learning outcomes. The degree of this impact has been associated to the gender of these children as displacement has been seen to aggravate existing obstacles to girls' education and also create new obstacles such as early marriage and health challenges as a result of rape and unwanted pregnancies [26]. A pilot study of the consequences of displacement on IDPs in Nigeria was carried out by [27], using 3 states in Nigeria where displacement is highest (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe). The study captured a demography on the IDPs which show that 55% of the people residing in camps and camp-like shelters are female while 45% are male, and that 58% of the IDPs are below 18years. It further presented a sector analysis of the percentage of school enrollment of IDPs and their host communities, stating the percentage of school enrolled children in a given percentage of IDP and IDP-like camps.

Despite the impressive governmental efforts to provide education to children in IDP and IDP-like camps, the quality of this education has been found to be below acceptable standard (Obashoro-John & Oni, 2017) cited in [29]. To measure the quality of education in IDP camps, the basic aim of education in Nigeria must be satisfied, and this involves providing the a platform for equipping the individuals with knowledge and skills required to live a meaningful life, and be able to give back to the society (Obashoro-John & J. Oni, 2017).

The authors submitted that for such a wholesome education to be provided in IDP camps, professionals who will ensure that learning outcomes yield the expected Return on Investment (ROI) must be involved. The United Nations, however identified lack of qualified teachers as a major impediment to improving the quality of education in IDP camp [30]. [25] identified lack of infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, cost of learning materials and classroom supplies, as well as terrorist actions which target available school structures, as the causes of unachieved quality education in IDP camps. For [29], language of communication in the education of IDPs is fundamental to achieving the main purpose of education which include skill acquisition, self-development and giving back to the society among other factors.

The use of the most common language in the camp has been found to work well with majority of the students. [31] through a survey that was analyzed using ratio statistics, found that implementing the well-structured IDP Education programme of the government will improve the quality of education in IDPs. At the Universal Basic Education level, benchmarks are provided for in the ratios: 1:35 for teacher-students, 1:4 for toilet, 1:1 for computer, 2:1 for pupils chairs and tables, while recreational facilities, Sickbay, Administrative block, and Assembly halls are other must-have of a good school environment.

These items were found to either be unavailable or well-below the benchmark. The authors also found that Nigerian Certificate of Education(NCE) and Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) are the highest occurring teacher qualification in the IDP camps. [32] administered unstructured interview on displaced persons in IDP camps with a view to understand the problems of learners and the teachers in IDP camps. Some notable problems are: indoctrination by insurgents resulting in loss of hope in education, psychological trauma of losing loved ones, shelter, and source of livelihood. The teachers on the other hand face challenges of having over-aged students in class.

Conceptualization of Refugee ICT Training & Empowerment

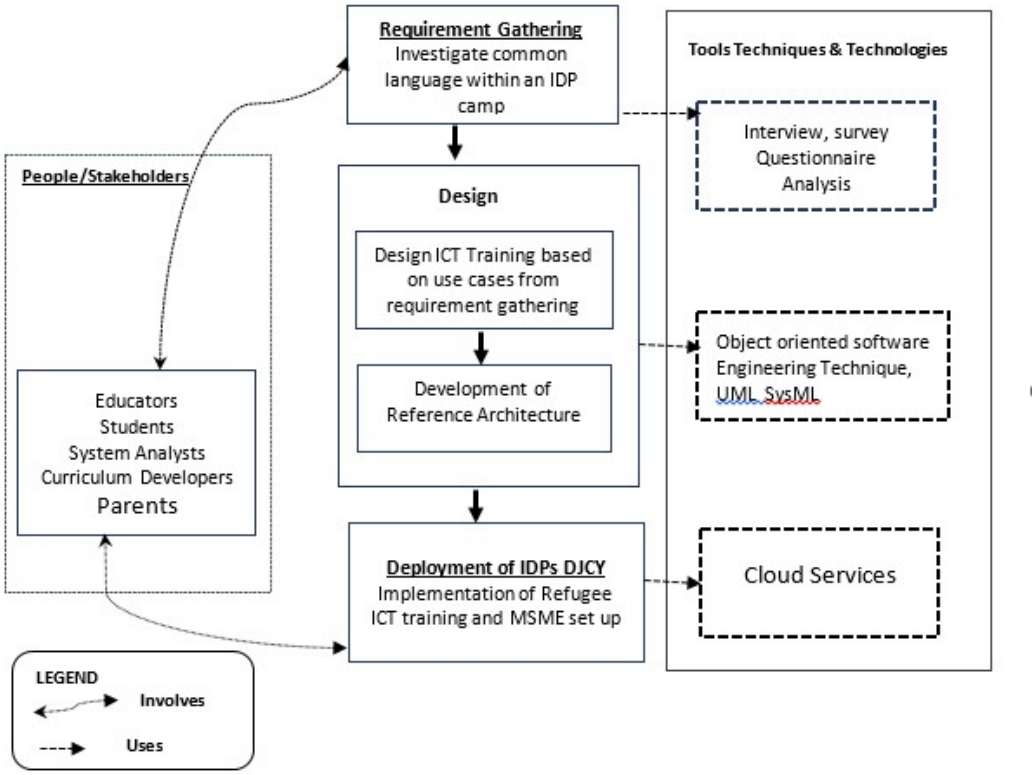

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework of Refugee ICT Training. Motivated by [4]

3. DISCUSSION

[25],[26],and [27] highlight the negative impacts of internal displacement on students, such as rape, unwanted pregnancies, low enrollment in provided educational facilities. With respect to the quality of education, [25]…[31] found lack of qualified teaching, use of language different from the most common language in the camp, terrorist acts that destroy available infrastructure, psychological, trauma and student–to-material ratios that are well below Universal Basic Education benchmark.

4. RESULT

In view of the foregoing, the Null hypothesis which states that quality of education in IDP camps meet with SDG4 targets is rejected and its alternative is accepted.

5. CONCLUSION

(Obashoro-John & Oni, 2017), [29] and [30] highlighted this malady in the refugee education in Nigeria, as the standard fall short of the acceptable aim of education, which is providing a platform for equipping the individuals with knowledge and skills required to live a meaningful life, and also be a revenue source to the society.

The researcher therefore concludes that there is need to revisit the education framework of the refugee as contained in [33] with a view to factoring in the provisions of National Digital Economy Policy and strategy (NDEPS) as contained in [20]. The second pillar's provision of training Nigerians from all works of life to enable them obtain digital literacy and digital skill, has been successfully implemented by NCC, with over 2000 beneficiaries skilled up and set up as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) entrepreneurs in two editions.

This meets the goals of refugee education as stipulated by [22] :
- ease the pressure on their host country
-enhance refugee self-reliance,
-and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity, as well as have the added advantage of:

Depopulating the IDP camps as the refugees get employed and unwanted pregnancies are reduced.

The problem of poor refugee education in Nigeria was identified through review of literature. Case studies of education innovations were presented and ICT teaching framework adapted to fit the use cases of a refugee ICT training. Previous successful implementation of DJCY caused a percentage increase in the contribution of ICT to education.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that in ICT training of refugees,

- ✓ The common language in the camp be used in training as primary language while English language may be the secondary language
- ✓ That the feedback from the system allows guardians to monitor the progress of their wards.
- ✓ That the empowered youth be given a time frame within which they are expected to leave the camps. The program should serve as an IDP camp depopulation scheme.
- ✓ The contribution of the industry in giving internship experience to trainees offered high Return On Investments (ROI) as these students were industry ready with requisite skills. It is therefore recommended that organizations operating in a country invest in defining their skill needs and partnering with the government in providing the required learning environment and infrastructure for the learners.
- ✓ The use of technological tools that make learning entertaining should be employed. Virtual reality headsets and related tools create scenes that captivate the learners thereby bringing into the learning environment some required but unavailable scenes that encourage learning and retention.
- ✓ Where providing computers prove cost intensive, mobile phones which most IDPs already have maybe resorted to by loading interesting learning apps. This agrees with[34] and would prove cost effective.
- ✓ Finally, the need for an intentional assessment of the academic performance of the students in IDP cannot be over emphasized. This is because of the positive effect that feedback, praise and encouragement can have on the student. Such measures as proposed by [35].

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