

# Quality Assurance in the Use of Information and Communications Technology Skills in Teaching and Learning: Implication for Business Educators in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria

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**Abstract:** Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Globalization are two global phenomena that have impacted positively on modern businesses in many parts of the world. Business Education is one of the disciplines designed to equip students with requisite skills for self-employment and one of the major tools used for this great assignment is the use of ICT tools such as internet, data base management or spreadsheet applications etc. However, adequate attention has not been given to the use of ICT skills in teaching and learning of business education courses by Business educators at the College of Education level in Edo and Delta States, especially in handling the vast arrays of ICT tools and facilities available to them. This paper will therefore, focus on quality assurance in the teaching of ICT skills by Business Educators in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria. The paper will x-ray the problems associated with the incorporation of ICT skills in the impartation and learning of Business Education courses and programmes in these Colleges, its impact on the student in the work environment in an ever changing and innovation driven economy and society. The paper will employ the use of structured questionnaire and survey method of gathering data, which will be analyzed and make appropriate recommendations that will help government, curriculum planners and the Management of Colleges of Education and similar institutions in Nigeria embrace, improve and institute the use of ICT skills in the teaching and learning of Business Education courses and programmes.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) transcends various areas of human endeavour, be it business, agriculture, medicine, mining or engineering. The world is undergoing a revolution in the information communications technology (ICT) sector. This is what many rightly refer to as the Digital Revolution. This revolution is already transforming social and economic lives. No doubt, Information and Communication Technology is one of the most potent forces shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is fast becoming a vital engine for growth in the world's economy, creating opportunities for many enterprising individuals, firms and communities globally.

Drill (2000) posits that quality assurance places attention on enhancing teaching and learning on educational matters. They also help to clarify responsibilities for quality in teaching and learning at the individual, institutional, educational and national levels and by doing so, stakeholders are able to access education quality as to whether acceptable levels are being recorded and sustained.

The link between quality assurance in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills in the Teaching and Learning of Business Education programmes or courses is a subject of great concern in the Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria.

Business education is one of the occupational areas that richly provided by Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria. Business Education refers to a programme of instruction that offers various skills in Accounting, Marketing and Office Technology and Management (OTM), major subjects include Office Practice, Book-Keeping, Business Mathematics, Business Communication, Word Processing, Secretarial Duties, Advertising (AJisafe, Bolarinwa and Edeh (2015)

Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) is the Certificate awarded to graduates who pass through Colleges of Education in Nigeria, Business Education is one of the disciplines in these Colleges of Education and it is expected that graduates of Business Education demonstrate effortlessly ability to combine their professionalism in the ever changing world of work by being able to deploy Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Skills in the discharge of their assignments.

Edokpolor and Egberi (2017) stipulated that the actual goals of business education shall be to:

- a. prepares students for specific career in office occupations
- b. Equip students with the requisite skills for job creation and entrepreneurship.

- c. Expose students with knowledge about business, including a good blend of computer technology, which incorporates Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

As Harvey & Green (1993) and Watty (2003) posits, quality assurance in education should be hinged on value for money as it focuses on efficiency and effectiveness measuring output against input. Graduates of Business Education are exposed to courses like Accounting, Auditing, Word Processing, Business Communication, Management, Taxation, Office Management and Technology etc. In modern day practice there are software already designed and are being used in modern offices in performing duties which relates to the above subjects.

Business Education curriculum is being modified from time to time to ensure that the graduates from tertiary schools in Nigeria are able to fit into the innovative world of work when they eventually graduate from school and the goal of business education is education 'for' business which is aimed at equipping recipients with the requisite attributes (knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes) to become gainfully employed in the world of work, whereas the later addresses education 'about' business which is aimed at providing a sound basis for further studies at graduate and post-graduate levels.

Historically, Business Education has played an important role in the manpower development of European nations. From their inception in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Independent business schools offered evening and week-end instructions for adults. In so many ways, business education helps in manpower development for any nation. Business education reflects previous education and experience, career needs, learning goals and personal aspiration of students. It provides career guidance to adult students to increase their awareness of varied job opportunities and changing requirements for career entry and achievement. It provides training, which reflects changes in business brought by technological advancement.

It meets the needs of adults, including the handicapped, disadvantaged and gifted. It prepares individuals for local business and other organizations as well as provide for wide range of interest, abilities and goals of adult learner. Business education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in all types of educational delivery system, elementary and secondary schools, Colleges and Universities.

Quality assurance in the teaching of Information and Communications Technology by Business educators at the Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States in particular and Nigeria in general is very important in the renewed interest of Business education to achieve the training of modern day business manager or business teacher.

Business education programme at the College of Education level in Nigeria also prepares professionals to teach business subjects and business related subjects in middle, junior and

Senior Secondary schools. Business Education programme also prepares candidates for teaching business courses at tertiary level of learning depending on the level of business education required.

In addition, the programme aligns its operation with guidelines set forth by the National Association for Business Teachers Education (NABTE)

Osuala (2004) define business education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts.

- a) Office education, a vocational education programme for office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education leading to employability and advancement in the office occupation and
- b) General business education programme to provide students with information and competencies which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and using the services of the business world

A survey carried out by the researchers in Colleges of Education, Igueben, Agbor, Warri and Mosogar, Nigeria in 2020 revealed that although a good number of Lecturers (business educators) are skilled in the use of ICT tools they are unable to employ these in the Teaching and learning process of business subjects, there are certain challenges which ultimately hinder the use of these tools in the Teaching and learning process and these include:

- a. Regular power outages
- b. lack of regular maintenance of ICT facilities in the Colleges
- c. Non-provision of ICT tools needed for pedagogy
- d. Non provision of in-service training for business educators in ICT
- e. The use of traditional methods in teaching and learning of business courses like Word Processing, business Communications, taxation, Auditing and Accounting courses.

The survey also revealed that a good number of the Lecturers (business educators) were trained using traditional methods. For example, most of the business educators have the problem of not being trained with the computer or other ICT facilities, so when they graduate, they in turn pass on this 'outdated knowledge' onto the students they are preparing for the world of work.

Most of these traditional educators also resist change, in most of these colleges Invasion Projection Boards (IPBoards) are mounted in the Classrooms and wireless internet systems are also readily available, but because these lecturers are resistant to change, this equipment are not mostly put to use.

Another, factor that may hinder quality teaching, is the fact that the management of this institutions are not willing to train and retrain these educators so as to keep abreast of modern trends and innovations in ICT.

Inadequate supply of qualified manpower is also a challenge which is hindering quality delivery in the impartation of business education courses in these Colleges. This is to be expected since there is paucity of funds to employ qualified manpower. Illusanya (2005) observed that the state of Vocational Education generally in Nigeria is becoming embarrassing. He lamented that the inadequacy of personnel as well as their lackadaisical attitude towards the teaching of the subject. Illemobade (1994) also commented on the state of Vocational education in general. The author argued that teachers are not committed to the teaching of vocational and technical subjects; where there is inadequate provision of teaching staff in terms of quality and quantity.

#### *Information and Communications Technology and Business Education*

Information and communication Technology (ICT) has become a vital tool to reckon with if there must be a successful and meaningful result in business education. The presence and impact of ICT is manifested in all walks of life whether social, political, religious or economic life of man. Information and communications Technology has been conceptualized in different ways by different authors.

Evans (1986) views ICT as the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of vocal, pictorial, textual and numerical information by micro-electronic based combination of computerizing and telecommunication.

Soykes and Zakka (2009) quoting the National Policy on Information and Communications Technology (2001) described ICT as the bedrock for national survival and development in a rapidly changing global environment.

On the other hand, Oliver and Chapman (1993) see ICT as activities involving the creation, storage, manipulation and communication of information together with their related method, management and application. It is clear from the above that Information and Communications Technology embraces all sophisticated system, equipment, technologies e.t.c, used for processing information in text, data, image or voice forms and communicated through local or international telecommunication network.

Akhere (2002) cited by Adeshina (2006) observed that ICT has changed the structure, content and methodology of office work. It is evident from the above that ICT has changed the way business organizations work. In addition, the business educator and the business education students need to be armed with quality skills to be able to fit into modern world of work. The importance of Information and Communications Technology in the achievement of business education goal were further highlighted by Adeshina and Tunde (2006) when they pointed out that the Federal Executive Council in March 2001 approved a National ICT policy which established the National Information and Development Agency (NITDA) with many objectives among which are

1. To empower youths with ICT skills and prepare them for global competition.
2. To integrate ICT into the mainstream of education and training.

Business education stands a better chance of achieving the goals of ICT as intended by government for self-empowerment and global relevance.

The foregoing brings us to the issue of achieving the goals of ICT as intended by government for self-empowerment and global relevance.

The foregoing brings us to the issue of integration, that is how ICT can be properly integrated into Business Education programmes vis-a-viz the teaching methodology.

Ajaja (2009) defined teaching method as the *pattern of teaching made up of a number of discrete behaviours but with specific focus*. Factors such as the size of class, available instructional materials, nature and content of the subject, objectives to be achieved, class levels, learners, maturity and ability of learners influence the choice of teaching method. The teaching of Information and Communications Technology in Business Education like any other subject requires the right teaching methods appropriate for subjects in the psychomotor domain in order to achieve set instructional goals.

#### *Implication for Business Educators in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria*

In the recent past students who graduate from business education department in Colleges of Education, Igueben, Agbor, Warri and Mosogar, Nigeria find it difficult to fit into modern day organizations without having to go through one form of ICT training or the other after graduation. The reason for this is because they were not properly exposed to the use of ICT by their teachers. It is a known fact that even the lecturers/Teachers/Instructors in well-equipped Colleges hardly deploy these facilities in teaching their students. The implication for the business educators in these Colleges (Edo and Delta States of Nigeria) is that the students who go through them are made to undergo practical training in the Information and Communications Technology before they can become employable. In terms of research the Lecturers would not be able to effectively compete with their counterparts elsewhere where there is adequate deployment in the use of ICT skills in the Teaching and Learning process.

The implication of this for the Business Educator in these Colleges is that they graduate they produce cannot be said to be of good quality in terms of employability. As Vroeijsstijn(1995a) & CHEA, (2003) puts it "the planned and systematic review process of an educational programme to determine whether acceptable standards of education and infrastructure are being maintained and facilitated are the main thrust of quality assurance"

### Objective of the Study

This study is aimed at ascertaining the level of Information and Communications Technology skills use in the teaching and learning of Business Education programmes and courses in the Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria. The study will also look at the bottlenecks, problems and prospects in the deployment of ICT Skills in the teaching and learning process especially as it relates to the Business educators and students in these institutions.

### Statement of the Problem

Over the years it has been discovered that the quality of graduates in Colleges of Education in Nigeria is low compared to their counterparts in other parts of African continents and other continents, in terms of ability to display Information and Communications Technology skills in the world of work and in their academics. The graduates of Business Education cannot be excused when it comes to the deployment of Information and Communications Technology skills in the discharge of their duties or in their academics, this is so because, business education cannot be separated from information and Communications Technology in its programmes. The quality of business education graduates must as a matter of fact, be above board when compared to other graduates from the Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The Business educator therefore has a herculean task for the business educator as he or she must ensure that quality is assured at all times in the teaching and learning process.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What is the level of quality assurance in the use of Information and Communications Technology skills in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.
2. What is the quality of methodology used by business educators in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Nigeria?
3. What is the status of quality assurance in the use of Information and Communications Technology skills in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Nigeria?

## II. METHODOLOGY

The instruments for data collection was a 15 item structured questionnaire designed by the researcher after the literature review. The instrument was structured on a modified 4 point Likert-type response scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). A pilot study was carried out on 25 respondents in 2 Colleges of Education, which offers business education, located in Epe and Ijanikin

areas of Lagos State Nigeria. The research experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Benin, Nigeria face-validated the instrument. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the items, with a co-efficient of 0.75 and this indicated high reliability of the instrument.

### Data Analysis

The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) was used on the entire variables to answer the research questions formulated for the study. Any calculated mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) which was greater than the cut-off point  $x = 2.50$  was accepted and if less rejected.

### Research Question 1

What is the level of quality assurance in the use of Information and Communications Technology skills in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Table 1: Level of Quality Assurance in the Use of ICT Skills in Teaching and Learning

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
1.	Most Business Educators are not skilled in the use of ICT tools in teaching and Learning	5	12	2	-	3.16	Accepted
2.	There is no room for in-service training for business educators to become skilled in the use of ICT tools and resources in teaching and learning	10	9	-	-	3.53	Accepted
3.	Most of the Business Educators are not willing to embrace innovations and would prefer traditional methods of Teaching and Learning	-	14	5	-	2.74	Accepted
4.	Most of the Business Educators or Lecturer/Instructors parade certificates showing that they have ICT skills but cannot deploy it effectively while teaching	4	10	3	2	2.84	Accepted
5.	A good number of Business educators are not interested in self-improvement and are not interested in ICT because its perceived an abstract thing	4	4	10	1	2.58	Accepted

The table above shows that most of the respondents agreed that most of the business educators are not skilled in ICT and as a result cannot guarantee quality teaching. They also do not have access to in-service programmes that would make them skilled in the use of ICT skills in teaching and learning of business education programmes and on their parts are unwilling to acquire the skills in order to ensure quality in the

teaching and learning process because of lack of interest and the belief that learning of ICT Skills is abstract and cumbersome. All items were accepted based on the decision that their mean ratings were greater than the cut-off point of  $x = 2.50$ .

*Research Question 2:*

What is the quality of methodology used by business educators in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Nigeria?

Table 2: Quality of Methodology Used by Business educators in Teaching and Learning

Table 2: Level of Quality Assurance in the Use of ICT Skills in Teaching and Learning

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
6.	The Methodology used by business educators in Colleges of Education is rarely evaluated by National Commission for Colleges of Education	4	10	4	1	2.89	Accepted
7.	Methodology for teaching and learning of Business education courses does not enhance students interest	5	9	4	1	2.95	Accepted
8.	Business educators use traditional methods for teaching and learning of business education courses like word processing, business communication, taxation, auditing, accounting etc	4	8	5	2	2.74	Accepted
9.	The Department of Business education in Colleges of Education in Nigeria do not evaluate content of work given to students by the educators	2	6	10	1	2.49	Rejected
10.	Poor performance and negative attitude towards business courses that require ICT skills is as a result of low quality of the teaching methods	4	6	6	3	2.78	Accepted

The table above revealed that most of the respondents agreed that methodology used in teaching and learning of business education courses and programmes is rarely evaluated by the regulatory agency for Colleges of Education in Nigeria i.e National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The method does not enhance the students interest and this brings about negative attitudes on the part of the students towards business education courses. Items 1, 3 and 5 were accepted based on the decision that their mean ratings are greater than the cut-off point  $x = 2.50$

*Research Question 3:*

What is the status of quality assurance in the use of Information and Communications Technology skills in the teaching and learning of business education programmes and courses in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States of Nigeria?

Table 3: Status of Quality Assurance in the use of ICT skills in teaching and learning of business education courses and programmes in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

Table 3: Status of Quality Assurance in the Use of ICT Skills in Teaching and Learning

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
11.	Most of the ICT tools in Colleges of Education in Nigeria are not installed and as a result most of the business educators do not have access to these facilities and cannot use them	4	11	4	-	3.00	Accepted
12.	The use of ICT skills in teaching and learning has not been encouraged by sending business educators to regular in-service training on ICT skills	12	7	-	-	3.63	Accepted
13.	ICT Resources/tools have been installed but regular power outages make it impossible for those business educators to deploy ICT skills in teaching and learning of business education courses and programmes	6	10	3	-	3.16	Accepted
14.	There are no safe classrooms where ICT resources/tools can be installed in the Colleges of Education	10	5	4	-	3.32	Accepted
15.	Although there is ICT facility in my College and there is regular and backed-up power supply, inadequate maintenance sometimes hinder delivery of quality teaching and learning using ICT skills.	14	5	-	-	3.74	Accepted

The table above shows that most of the respondents agreed that most of the Information and Communications Technology resources and tools are not installed and as a result cannot be accessed by the business educators. Others agreed that non-availability of in-service programme, irregular power supply and adequate maintenance of ICT resources are a major reason for retaining traditional methods of teaching business education courses and programmes. Most of the items were accepted based on the decision that their mean ratings are greater than the cut-off point  $x = 2.50$

### III. CONCLUSION

Quality assurance in the teaching and learning business education in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta State of Nigeria has gone below its expectations. The system has derailed from its original intentions because the learning conditions are deteriorating, laboratories lack the basic ICT/equipment, incessant power outages, inadequate funding. All these have contributed to a precipitous fall in the standard and quality of business education in Nigeria. Apart from these seemingly deficiencies in the sector, there is an attitudinal failure on the part of all stakeholders. However, this situation in the business education in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta State is not irreversible only if there is a positive attitudinal change by all stakeholders.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government should make Information and Communication Technology part of National minimum standards for all graduates of business education in Nigeria.
2. Workshop, seminars should be organized to create awareness of ICT to students and teachers
3. Government should increase budget allocation to institutions to enable them embark on Information and Communication Technology
4. The use of Information and Communication Technology in the teaching and learning of business education should be highly encouraged by the government through the supply of computers and other ICT facilities through funding agencies like Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), National Communications Commission etc.
5. Government should assist in training and retraining of business education teachers through in-service courses, training, symposia/workshops and conferences to be ICT literate
6. Steady electricity supply and telecommunication facilities should be provided in urban and rural areas to facilitate the use of ICT Skills acquired by the educators in the teaching and learning of business education courses
7. Non-Governmental organizations, multi-national companies and philanthropies should assist tertiary institutions in the provision of internet facilities and computers. Conclusion Nigeria must re-focus on her education system and integrate information and communication technology (ICT) 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 expand access to quality education.

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