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EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING FOR PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES IN EKITI STATE

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ABSTRACT

The use of technology in the preparation of business education graduates is expected to improve the worth and reduce unemployment among recipients. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of technology for economic growth by graduates of this programme in Ekiti State. Descriptive research design was employed. The population of the study was 3,538 business education graduates (Colleges of Education and University) working in public and private organisations in Ekiti State. 354 business education graduates, representing 10% of the population were randomly selected as sample. A validated structured instrument titled “Questionnaire on the Use of Technology for Economic Growth (QUTEG) with 22 items was used for data collection on the two research questions. The reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained, using split half and Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula. The findings showed that the use of technology has improved graduates’ productivity, creativity, ICT skills, thereby reducing the cost of retraining by their employers. It was recommended that business education graduates should always acquire technological skills for improved worth as employees and to engage in entrepreneurial outfits for the nation’s economic development.

KEYWORDS: Business Education, Economic Growth, Effectiveness, Technology, Use

1. INTRODUCTION

The nature of man is to always seek for improvement in a bid to leave his environment better than he met it. The insatiable nature of human beings leads to individual and group or organizational development, culminating in economic growth of a given nation. In order to achieve this, different educational programmes are designed to serve as the vehicle through which the desired growth can be attained, one of which is business education.

The need for the introduction of business education programme was to equip students with the necessary skills and abilities that will enable them function well in the economic world. By this, graduates of business education programme are expected to contribute and add more values to the quality of any business environment where they find themselves at micro level, the conglomerate of which will metamorphose to macro level and subsequently lead to national growth.

Business Education as an aspect of Vocational and Technical and Training (TVET) Programme, is an integral part of the general education where students are equipped with business-oriented skills, manipulative, accounting and marketing skills with which the recipients can successfully navigate their economic environment. Thus, Njoku in Ementa and Ile (2015) opined that business education empowers an individual in such a way that the individual develops intellectual capacity that would help him or her to make informed decisions in all spheres of life. They define business education as a programme which do not only provide its recipients with the knowledge, skills and competencies for the work place but also for general living.

In line with this, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2013) listed the goals of business education curriculum to include:

- (a) application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through the study of business to a variety of learning tasks and relate them to business phenomena at local, national and global levels.
- (b) achievement of business, economic, financial and digital literacy.
- (c) gaining an understanding of business concepts through the study of subjects such as accounting, entrepreneurship, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), marketing, international business and business leadership.

From the foregoing, Aina and Enijuni (2017) remark that business education programme encourages the ability of the students to set up their own private small or medium business organisations and run them successfully after graduation. According to Idialu in Osakwe and Ebietuoma (2016), business education is defined as a programme of studies organised to prepare the learner for entrance into a particular vocation (job) or to upgrade employed worker. This will no doubt enhance economic development of the nation as there will be no overdependence on white collar jobs by these graduates (Onyesom, Egbule & Okwuokenye, 2012).

The advent of technological advancement across the globe also has its attendant influence on the economic growth of the nation as it has opened different ways or means by which a nation's economy can be improved upon by the citizens. Technology is the technical means through which people can improve their surroundings. Blissmer in Oliver and Bernard (2010) considered technology and the practical application of knowledge, and refer to those activities directed to the satisfaction of human needs, which produced alterations in the material work. Also, Raymond (2006) defines technology as a general term for the process by which human beings fashion tools and machines to increase their control and understanding of their material environment.

The use of new technologies for the preparation of business education graduates as opposed to when the students were taught with obsolete machines such as manual typewriters, duplicating equipment, adding machine, use of carbon papers and stencils is expected to improve the economic status of business education graduates and subsequently the nation's economic growth. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2001) defines Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the automatic acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching interchange, transmission or reception of data or information. Information and Communication Technology can also be described as an umbrella term used to capture all modern equipment that are used for data acquisition, processing, storage, dissemination and analysis, which may include computer, word processors, multimedia software and any other electronic gadgets.

Effective use of technology for teaching in business education programme serves as an investment in human capital as it has the potency of improving the worth of the learners through the acquisition of business skills such as word processing or manipulative skills, spread sheet, desktop publishing, website design, office management skills, coordination, supervision skills which will enable their employers to achieve their organizational goals, thereby enhancing the economic development of the nation. Kenton (2019) defines human capital as an intangible asset or quality not listed on the company's balance sheet. It can be classified as the economic value of a worker's experience and skills. This includes assets like education, training, intelligence, skills, and health, among others. Human capital is perceived to have relationship with economic growth, productivity and profitability, since inputs (education, knowledge and skills) are determinants of output in the workplace.

Of importance to this study is competency development. In line with this, Azih and Nwagwu (2015) remarked that graduates of business education in Nigeria are expected to possess practical skills needed by industries in order to effectively fit into practical business skills available to graduates of business and be employers of labour thereby help in reducing unemployment in the country. Also, Zahedi (2000) notes that the demand for greater skill and knowledge has made novice workers less employable and experts costlier to replace, while Ekwe and Abuka (2014) examined the influence of accounting skills for the sustainable development of small and medium scale enterprises.

The use of technology has provided business education graduates the opportunity to be self-employed. The increasing rate of unemployment among graduates is becoming a threat to the nation's economic development, but with proper utilization of the opportunities brought by technology to business education programme, skills acquired can be turned to economic gains thereby improving the nation's economic growth. Thus, Kayode in Okoro (2016) views that entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identifiable opportunities.

In their contributions, Oyadongha and Iwelaje (2016) remarked that business education programmes offered by Nigerian universities provide graduates with accounting skills, secretarial skills, computer skills, managerial skills and marketing skills in addition to teaching skills and qualification. In addition, Ikegwuani (2015) and Ekwue and Okafor (2016) presented a list of new technologies that aided in the teaching of business education to include computer, worldwide web (www), overhead projector, digital cameras, electronic chalkboards. These skills, if properly acquired, are veritable means of economic survival through entrepreneurship for business education graduates. Aina (2016) defines entrepreneur as a person who owns a business. Onajite (2017) defines entrepreneur as a person who sees other business challenges as opportunities to start his own. Ekpenyong (2010) defines it as a person who organizes, operates and assumes the risk of a business venture in expectation of the profit. Also, Amedu (2016) defines entrepreneurship as the ability to set up a business as different from being employed.

The economy is now diversified with a shift from product-based industry to service-based industry due to advances in communication technologies. Thus, Zahedi (2000) reported that today's business and individual consumers of information and knowledge have far more computer skills and higher quality expectations than the previous generation. A number of previous studies have concentrated on the use of technology for students' academic performance, availability and utilization of ICT facilities in business education in tertiary institutions, but there seems to be a little or no attention on how the acquired knowledge through the use of ICT for teaching can be more rewarding and beneficial to business education graduates and to boost the economy in the face of unavailable white-collar jobs in Nigeria economic system.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The use of technologies in the teaching/learning process has been widely accepted by educationists across the globe. It is expected that using these technologies to impart knowledge and skills into business education students will improve the economic development of the recipients through the possession of the ability to turn the acquired knowledge to practical and profitable outfits that can benefit the nation economically after graduation. However, in view of the observed ever increasing rate of unemployment among business education graduates, the researcher is in doubt whether the use of these technologies in teaching has any impact on the economic growth of the nation. Based on the foregoing, the researcher became interested in the topic in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the use of modern technologies in teaching business education courses on human capital development and unemployment among business education graduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the use of technology in teaching for promoting economic growth among business education graduates in Ekiti State. Specifically, the purpose sought to:

- (a) determine whether the use of ICT in teaching has impact on the extent of human capital development among business education graduates in Ekiti State.

(b) find out whether the use of ICT in teaching can alleviate unemployment among business education graduates in Ekiti State.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- (1) Does the use of ICT for teaching has impact on the extent of human capital development among business education graduates for economic growth in Ekiti State?
- (2) Can the use of ICT for teaching alleviate unemployment among business education graduates for economic growth in Ekiti State?

2. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Business education graduates who are in the public sector and registered private establishments in Ekiti State made up the population of the study which was 3,538. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select 10% of the population used as the sample for the study. Thus, the sample for the study was 354 business education graduates. Two research questions guided the study. A structured 4-point rating scale questionnaire with 22 items titled "Questionnaire on the Use of Technology for Economic Growth" (QUTEG) was used for data collection. The questionnaire sought for demographic information of respondents in section A, while section B sought for data for the analysis of the research questions. The instrument was validated by three business education experts. The reliability test was conducted using the split half method and the data collected were subjected to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation formula which yielded a coefficient of 0.87. Mean rating and standard deviation were used to analysis the research questions. In taking decision, any mean of 2.50 and above was regarded to as 'High Extent' for research question one and 'Strongly Agreed' for research question two while any mean of less than 2.50 was regarded to as 'Low Extent' and 'Strongly Disagreed' for research questions one and two respectively.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Research Question One: Does the use of ICT for teaching has impact on the extent of human capital development among business education graduates for economic growth in Ekiti State?

Table 1: Impact of Technology on Human Capital Development among Business Education Graduate

S/N	Items	X	S.D	Decision
1	Good knowledge of ICT skills is an asset for business education graduates.	2.93	0.86	High Extent

2	Possession of effective time management skill on decision making.	3.02	0.91	High Extent
3	Acquisition ICT skills enabled me to secure a job.	2.89	0.76	High Extent
4	Ability to use excel and word software placed me above my contemporaries in my place of work.	2.69	1.08	High Extent
5	The use of ICT gives room for business growth.	2.75	0.83	High Extent
6	My employer did not need to spend large amount of money on training before I could adapt to the working environment.	2.92	1.01	High Extent
7	Use of Technology enhances production of competent business education graduates.	2.85	0.89	High Extent
8	ICT facilities used to train business education students are very relevant to the ones used in today's business environment.	3.21	0.93	High Extent
9	Most of the job descriptions of business education graduates are covered through the use of ICT in the curriculum.	2.88	0.90	High Extent
10	Business education graduates are fit for the job they are employed for.	2.73	0.78	High Extent
11	Use of ICT in training business education students increased their productivity when employed.	2.69	0.86	High Extent
12	Technology has improved the ability of business education graduates to demonstrate creativity skills.	2.64	0.77	High Extent

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Grand mean = 2.85

Table one showed that all the items are above 2.50 mean scores. This indicates that the respondents agreed to all the items that they are ways by which the use of technology for teaching business education students can improve human capital development, which can also help in the economic

development/growth of the state. The overall mean score point for all the items is 2.85 which is greater than the 2.50 cut off mean score set as benchmark.

Research Question Two: Can the use of ICT for teaching alleviate unemployment among business education graduates for economic growth in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Technology and Unemployment among Business Education Graduate

S/N	Items	X	S.D	Decision
13	Use of ICT can promote on-line marketing business.	3.01	0.82	Agree
14	Knowledge of ICT can be used to enhance establishment of business centre outfits.	2.98	0.76	Agree
15	It is easy to undergo market/environmental scanning with circuit technologies.	2.56	0.84	Agree
16	Computerized accounting auditing firms can be established by business education graduates.	3.10	0.90	Agree
17	Secretarial/computer training institutes can be established by business education graduates.	3.34	0.87	Agree
18	Small/medium scale on-line businesses can be establishment by these graduates.	2.99	0.76	Agree
19	Linkage with experienced and successful business owners for mentoring through whatsapp and face-book.	2.58	0.89	Agree
20	Use of ICT helps to keep adequate and comprehensive financial record for correct interpretation and accurate decision making.	2.74	0.70	Agree
21	Engagement in the use of mobile banking and Point On Sales (POS) services in private places.	2.93	0.91	Agree
22	Establishment of Desktop Publishing and Webpage design outfit.	3.08	0.89	Agree

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

Grandmean = 2.93

The analysis in table two revealed that all the items are means by which the use of technologies can help to reduce unemployment among business education graduates in Ekiti State. The table also revealed that most of the respondents were of the opinion that effective use of technology can reduce unemployment among business education graduates. The overall mean score of the items is 2.93, which is above the cut-off point of 2.50 set as benchmark.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that the use of ICT for teaching business education programme has the capacity to improve human capital development among business education graduates in that the skills and competencies acquired during their studentship go a long way to helping them secure, maintain and advance in their chosen careers. For instance, the impact of all the identified items in this regard are of high extent on human capital development. These include acquisition of ICT skills, reduction of cost of training by employers, improved productivity as well as creativity skill of business education graduates. In support of the finding of this study, Ementa and Ile (2015) reported that business education has the ability to develop individual's intellectual capacity that would help him or her to make informed decisions in all spheres of life. In consonance with the finding of this study, Ekwe and Abuka (2014) found out that accounting skills are needed by small and medium scale enterprises that will enhance their business acumen and improve their profit margin. Also in agreement with the finding, Ekwe and Okafor (2016) remarked that these new technologies have the opportunities to contribute to economic development and growth and as well play a special role in developing countries.

Furthermore, analysis of research question two revealed that the skills and competencies acquired through the use of these new technologies in teaching are able to provide entrepreneurial opportunities for graduates of business education programme. This, no doubt, will reduce the rate of unemployment among these graduates. This is in line with the finding of Amedu (2016) when the author remarked that if vocational skills are studied and applied properly it will create entrepreneurial opportunities for self-employment which will also lead to economic empowerment for the youths. Corroborating the finding of this study, Aina and Enijuni (2017) submitted that business education programme encourages the ability of the students to set up their own private small or medium business organisations and run them successfully after graduation.

5. CONCLUSION

The economic growth of a nation is dependent on the quality of its workforce. Thus it is concluded that the use of technology for the preparation of recipients of business education programme has improved the worth of business education graduates through the possession of needed skills and

competencies that can enable them contribute to the economic and entrepreneurial development required in the world of work.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

- (a) Business education graduates should always acquire ICT practical skills in that will make them assets to their employers.
- (b) Business education graduates should study their environment and engage in the use of new technologies to provide for their economic needs through the establishment of entrepreneurial outfits, which will in turn, improve the nation's economy.

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