

The Use of ICT in Dissemination of Career Information in Secondary Schools in Ogbadigbo Local Government Area of Benue State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study sought to find out the use of ICT in dissemination of career information in secondary schools in Ogbadigbo local government area of Benue State, Nigeria. Three research questions and a hypothesis guided the study. Population consisted of all teachers and counselors in Ogbadigbo council area. The sample was 200 teachers and counselors drawn using stratified sampling through simple random sampling technique. Instrument for the study was questionnaire. Mean score and t-test statistics were used for data analysis. Results showed that teachers and counselors have not recognized ICT as a primary source of career information. The result also shows that students are ignorant of the basic skills in operating computer and that many government schools do not have adequate computer laboratories. It was also shown that no significant mean difference existed between teachers and counselors in the awareness of ICT as a source of career information. Implications of the findings were highlighted, limitations pointed out, recommendations and suggestions for further research made also.

Keywords: Use, ICT, Dissemination, Career, Information

1. Introduction

Information and communications technology(ies) (ICTs) is often spoken of in particular context as ICTs in education, health care or libraries. ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite system as well as the various services and application associated with them such as video conferencing and distance learning (Bartlett and Watts, 2000). Kaphan (1995) stated that the notion of electronic literacy is based on the awareness and understanding which will enable individuals to be more effective in an electronic controlled environment. Thus to think about ICT is to consider all the uses of digital technology that already exist to help individuals, business and organizations using information.

Information and communication technologies are transforming career information and guidance services just as they are transforming service delivery in other sectors such as banking and health services. This poses major challenging issues to policy makers such as discovering the extent investment in ICT would enhance the cost effectiveness of service, whether investment in ICT should be viewed as alternative to face to face services or as means of enhancing the quality of such services, the prospective roles of government, career guidance profession and also private sector in promoting the application of ICT within this field.

The advent of the internet meant that instead of free-standing systems located in career guidance centres, websites could be developed which individuals could access instantly from a wide variety of sites including their homes. The case of developing such websites produced massive increase in their numbers. Rather their perceiving ICT solely as a service from extent suppliers, guidance services began to develop their own website (Watts and Dent, 2002). Whereas initially ICT based career guidance and information services were available only at a selected number of technically-equipped service locations, they are now available not only in most guidance services, but also in vast range of other locations-homes, workplaces.

We live in a fast changing world and Nigerians must not be left behind. Febbetts, (1999) observed that there is the need to up-grade terminals to micro components, maintain them and keep place with technological development which has a significant impact on the information industry and is an important fact in information technology planning. Career information provides exposure and experiences for students to enable them to make more appropriate educational and vocational decisions when required. The purpose according to Omeje (2007) is not to pressure the individuals into making a choice, but to broaden his knowledge of self and environment so that he can be stimulated into reaching his potentials as he matures. It is therefore of great value to our nation, especially in the secondary school that correct and current information be sourced via the internet. The effort of career information isto help individuals acquire and utilize knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to make work meaningful, productive and satisfying part of their way of living (Ochiaghs, 1995).

Rapid changes in the Nigeria economy have brought about the importance of manpower. As Nigeria's economy continues to expand, and as a result of technological advancement, the nature of many jobs change and the need for occupational information and techniques of its provisions to students becomes very important. They should be exposed to a wide range of occupations in school to ensure enough stimulation for career development decision.

In secondary schools in Ogbadigbo local government area of Benue State, Nigeria, the sources of career information using old literatures, brochures and workers are becoming archaic, does not stand the test of time and is not dynamic. Though the awareness of computer and internet as a source of current information is increasing day after day not every school is interested in embracing it. The level of computer literacy of both teachers and students is still low and grossly inadequate.

The awareness of potentials embedded in the ICT especially in the area of career information is grossly inadequate and this inadequacy of good career information can result to occupational maladjustment and consequently to stress and frustration. Now jobs are emerging, their requirements new too and current information need to be known as soon as it emerges. It therefore becomes imperative to identify the various information communication technology used to disseminate career information in secondary school, determine the level of availability of ICT services in secondary schools and determine the level of computer literacy among secondary schools students. The study investigates the use of ICT in dissemination of career information in secondary schools in Ogbadigbo local government area of Benue State, Nigeria.

2. Research Questions

The study is guided by three research questions

- i. What are the various forms of information technology used in dissemination of career information in secondary schools?
- ii. How many secondary schools have computer laboratories connected to the internets?
- iii. What is the level of competence possessed by students on the use of computers?

3. Hypothesis

A null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of probability guided the study.

H_0 : There is no significant mean difference between teachers and counselors in the awareness of ICT as a source of career information.

4. Method

The design is descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Ogbadigbo Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The population was 1303, comprising 1003 teachers and 300 counsellors. The sample was 200 counsellors and teachers drawn through simple random sampling technique.

The instrument for the study was a questionnaire consisting of 18 structured items. This was designed into two sections of A and B. Section A was meant to obtain information on the respondents bio-data. Section B was designed into three clusters to get information on (a) various ICTs used in career information disseminations (b) availability of internet connection in the school and (c) students level of competence in operating the computer. The questionnaire is a scale measure of a four point rating responses. Face validity of instrument was determined by giving draft copies to three experts, two from guidance and counseling and one from measurement and evaluation, faculty of education, university of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering the questionnaire to a selected twenty teachers and counsellors in Oju council areas of Benue State. Reliability was estimated for the clusters of the instrument using Cronbach Alpha method. This gave average reliability coefficient of 0.68. Copies of the instrument were distributed to the respondents personally by the researchers with the help of research assistants. Mean scores and t-test statistics were used in analyzing data collected. A benchmark of mean response of 2.50 and above was used to accept the items for the research questions as adequate and below 2.50 as in adequate.

5. Results

Mean Response on the Various Forms of Communication Technology used in our Secondary School

The results in table 1 reveal that teachers and counsellors to a large extent do not use the computer, flash drive, diskette for information dissemination. This is determined by their mean responses to item 1-5 which fall below 2.50. However teachers and counsellors response to item 6 shows their acceptance of mobile phone as a form of information communication technology.

Mean Responses on how many Secondary Schools have Computer Laboratories Connected to the Internets.

Result in table 2 indicates that less than 70% of secondary schools in Ogbadigbo area council of Benue State have their computer laboratories connected to the World Wide Web. Responses to items 7-12 with means below 2.50 reveals that there are no good internet headsets, no functional web camera, no data transfer rate, no sufficient personal computers and no media equipment in many of the secondary schools.

Responses on the Level of Competence Possessed by Students on the use of Computers.

Result in table 3 reveals that students' typical proficiency is inadequate. Item 14-18 with the mean all below 2.55 indicate that students' ability to save documents and retrieve saved documents, students ability to log on to a website and browse in the internet plus students capability to operate an e-mail account are all inadequate. This could be attributed to the fact, that many of the secondary schools computer laboratories are not connected to the internet.

The t-test analysis of the mean responses of teachers and counselors in the awareness of ICT as a source of career information.

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of the mean response is less than the table t-cal ignoring the negative sign. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant mean difference between teachers and counselors.

6. Discussion

The study was guided by three research questions which focused on forms of information technology used in dissemination of career information in our secondary school, secondary schools that have computer laboratories connected to the internet and the level of computer competence possessed by students. The study was a guided by a hypothesis which tested the mean difference of the awareness of teachers and counsellors of ICT as a source of career information. The result shows that the various ICT used in information dissemination are not very familiar to teachers and counsellors. This could be attributed to the fact that ICT is a new innovation in part this of the world. This finding is in consonant with early study of Febbets (1999) which states that we live in a fast-changing world and if Nigerians must not be left behind, something needs to be done. The result also indicated that many ICT, facilities such as schools computer laborites being connected to the world web, schools internet headsets being very good among others are not in place and where they are, they are not good enough. The finding is in agreement with a study of Olibe (2006) which found that most of the media facilities are not available for use. The result on the level of competence possessed by students on the use of computers showed that the level of students' basic computer skills fall below expectation. Such are students' ability to type with computers, save or retrieve saved information among others. This could be attributed to students not having easy access to computer facilities. This is in line with the earlier study of Daniels (2002) which asserts that ICTs have become within a very short time one the building blocks of modern society. Finally, the result of the hypothesis shows that there is no significant mean difference between teachers and counsellors in their awareness of ICT as a source of career information.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study has shown the extent ICT is used in dissemination of career information, number of schools with Internet connection and students' level of competence in the use of computers and teachers counsellors and students awareness of ICT as a source of career information. Since ICT is a new innovation and its usefulness and benefit is much, it is necessary to seek ways of maximally actualizing its profit.

The implication of the findings of this study is that since many schools' computer laboratories are not connected to the internet, teachers, counsellors and students are handicapped. The problem is also complex because not only that awareness are not drawn to them on the use of computer, but they have no basic skills in operating computer even when it is provided to them.

The attitude of some respondents in completing the questionnaire posed some limitation. Some were unaware of the use of ICT in sourcing career information, while others do not have their schools computer system connected to the internet. This disposition no doubt slowed down the responses to the questionnaire. The researchers then suggest a replication of the present study using more sample in other state with different background from that of the present area of study.

Finally the study recommends that computer science be made a compulsory subject from junior secondary school level. Efforts should also be made to employ permanently computer literate teachers to handle computer studies at all levels of schools. In this manner, the benefit of ICT as a modern means of sourcing in formations would be harnessed.

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Tables

Table 1: Mean Response on the Various Forms of Communication Technology used in our Secondary School

S/N	Item description	\bar{x} of Teachers	X Counsellors
1	Computers are usually used to source career information	2.09	3.32
2	The flash drive can be used to store career information	2.05	2.06
3	The diskette facilitates storage of career information	1.88	1.82
4	Films on a projector are good source of career information	2.02	2.08
5	Recorded cassettes tapes supply career information	2.06	2.17
6	Mobil phones are good source of information dissemination	2.57	2.45

Table 2: Mean Responses on how many Secondary Schools have Computer Laboratories Connected to the Internets.

S/N	Item Description	\bar{x} of Teacher	\bar{x} of Counsellors
7	My school's computer laboratory is connected to the world wide web	1.92	2.11
8	My schools internet headsets are very good	1.03	1.90
9	My schools web camera is very adequate and functional	1.61	1.69
10	The data transfer rate from my schools internet connection is fast	1.02	1.52
11	There are sufficient personal computers connected to my schools internet work	2.10	2.-3
12	My schools internet network is equipped with full multimedia equipment	1.99	2.00

Table 3: Responses on the Level of Competence Possessed by Students on the use of Computers.

S/N	Items	\bar{x} of teachers	\bar{x} of counselors
13	Students' proficiency in typing with the computer	2.00	2.42
14	Students' ability to same documents	2.41	2.44
15	Students ability to web site	2.49	2.43
16	Students ability to log to web site	2.20	2.92
17	Students' capability to browse in the internet	3.01	3.32
18	Students' capability to operate an e-mail account	2.25	2.85

Table 4: The t-test analysis of the mean responses of teachers and counselors in the awareness of ICT as a source of career information.

S/N	Item description	Teachers		Counselors		t-cal
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
	Teachers/counselors source their information from the internet	2.15	1.13	2.13	1.15	0.13
	Students visit the internet when they want to make career choice	2.29	1.21	2.30	1.19	0.07
	The computer provides authentic career information	2.39	1.37	2.36	1.27	0.19
	Teacher counselors recommend the internet for students with career choice problem	2.11	1.08	2.10	1.09	0.07
	Career information from the internet is not suitable for our society's job needs	2.15	1.33	3.16	1.31	-0.06
	Career information is seldom sourced from the internet by both teachers-counsellors and students	2.20	1.06	2.18	1.09	0.20

N1= 100, N2 = 100, df = 198, table 1 = 1.96 at $\alpha = 0.05$.