

**NEED FOR BUSINESS EDUCATORS' TO INTEGRATE INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) KNOWLEDGE IN THE TEACHING OF
BUSINESS EDUCATION**

PROF. ANTHONIA N. UMEZULIKE

Department of Vocational Education

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus,

E-mail: toniomezilike@yahoo.com

+2347067650365

&

OLISA CHINENYE OBIANUJU

Department of Vocational Education

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus,

E-mail: cjolisa@gmail.com

+2347063002134

Abstract

This paper examined the need for business educators' to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) knowledge in teaching business education. It has become essential in modern education that business educators' must have a sound knowledge of ICT and its applications in order to deliver quality teaching to students. This paper also explores the needs and various ways through which business educators can integrate and apply ICT knowledge in teaching business education. The paper also ex-rayed the current state of business educators' integration of ICT knowledge in teaching business education. Benefits of ICT integration and application in business education where also disclosed. The paper also highlighted the challenges associated with the integration and application of ICT in teaching business education and as well proffer solutions. It was concluded among others things that the integration and application of ICT knowledge in teaching business education are crucial in providing students with the necessary skills and knowledge required for success in the modern business world. Based on the conclusion it was recommended among other that business educators should continually update their ICT knowledge and skills by applying new technologies in delivering quality teaching to their students.

Keywords: Business Educators, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Integration and Business Education.

Introduction

The need for business educators' to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) knowledge in the teaching of business education has become increasingly important in today's digital age. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the use of digital technologies such as computers, software and telecommunications, to process, transmit and store information. It encompasses a wide range of technologies including the computers, software, telecommunications devices and cloud computing. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the use of a computer and the internet to access information and communicates one another. For example a student may use a computer connected to internet to search for information on a research topic, read online articles and participate in online discussion forums with classmates. A business teacher can use ICT device like Zoom or Skype to teach his/her students from home. Another example of ICT is the use of social media platforms such as Twitter, Whatsapp, Palm store, Facebook, phoenix and so on to connect with people, share information and collaborate on projects. Many businesses also use ICT to manage their operations and communicate with customers using email and online chat.

The use of ICT in teaching business education has the potential to enhance the teaching effectiveness, increase student's engagement and prepare students for success in a rapidly evolving technological change. In this context, the role of business educators is critical as they play a key role in preparing students for success in the business world. It is important for business educators to possess a strong understanding of how to effectively integrate and apply ICT in teaching, as this can help to improve learning outcomes and provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in a digital economy. ICTs are modern tools, the necessary to share and conceive new knowledge in social life, such as education, private, commerce, among others (Rivera & Suconota, 2018). Costa (2020), maintained that COVID-19 lockdown measures have made ICT more relevant. Information and Communication Technology has great impact in our lives. It has changed almost everything about how we do things everyday of our lives, such as: social media, online teaching and teaching aid. Integrating information and communication technology into business education can improved the quality of business education students and performance of business teachers.

Integration at the simplest level is the process of combining two or more things to create a whole. Integration allows information to be shared between the connected systems. The integration solutions can come in many forms whether it is requesting information from a website, internal employee systems, sending and receiving information, or connecting customer data from a point of sale system to CRM to automate recommendations.

Successful integration of ICT in teaching depends on the teacher's ability to build a learning environment; "jumping" and "breaking" traditional programme on the basis of contribution and teamwork. It is on this note that the authors wish to ex-ray the needs for business educators' to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) knowledge in the teaching of business education.

Conceptual Review

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT stands for Information and Communication Technology which refers to a broad range of technologies and tools used to manage process store and communicate information. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) first appeared in the mid-1980s and was defined as “All kinds of electronic systems used for telecommunications using personal computers, video games, cell phones, internet and electronic payment systems. ICT is made of computer and communication technology. Computer technology is the tool for storing and processing information in digital form, while communication technology helps us to transfer and disseminate digital information. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the use of technology to create process, store and transmit information, (carretero et al, (2021). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2019), “ICTs have transformed the way people communicate, learn and conduct business. They offer new opportunities for social and economic development and can be a catalyst for poverty reduction and improved livelihoods”. In other words ICT has the potential to drive progress and development in a wide range of areas including education, government, healthcare and business. With the growing importance of digital technologies in the modern world, ICT has become an essential part of everyday life for individual, organizations and communities. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (2021) ICT is referred as tools and resources used to communicate, manage, process and store information. ICT tools include digital technologies such as computers, smart phones, software applications, internet and other related tools. It has enabled individuals and organizations to access and share information quickly easily and collaborates with others across distances and automate tasks to increase efficiency. Integration of ICT in teaching business education is significant as it offers numerous benefits for both teachers and students to access information, enhanced engagement and participation, facilitates collaboration as well as increases efficiency and effectiveness so as to prepare students for the digital workforce. The integration of ICT in teaching business education is crucial in preparing students for success in the business world and equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a digital economy.

Business Education

Business education is the process of learning and acquiring knowledge skills and abilities related to the various aspects of business management and entrepreneurship. It involves the study of business concepts, theories, and practices and their application in real-world settings. Business education refers to a programme of instruction that offers various skills in accounting, marketing and Office Technology and Management (OTM). Major topics include: office practice, Book keeping, business mathematics, business communication, secretarial duties, word processing and advertising (Utoware, et al 2018). Business Education is a broad area of knowledge which deals with the entire enterprise system which identifies and explains the role of business in a dynamic economy (Nedum-Ogbede, 2018).

Jargons (2021) see business education as the study of business principles, concepts and practices with the aim of providing students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in the business world. That is to say that business education encompasses various disciplines such as management, accounting, finance, marketing, human resource and entrepreneurship. Okoye and Ashibogwu (2018) defined business education as that aspect of educational training which an individual receives with the primary motive of acquiring adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for vocational usage in careers as an administrator, manager or teacher wherever one may find him/her in the business world. Edokpolor and Egbri, (2017) stipulated that the actual goals of business education is to prepare students for specific career in office occupations equip students with the requisite skills for job creation and entrepreneurship and expose students with knowledge about business including a good blend of computer technology, which incorporates Information and Communication Technology (ICT). They further explained that business education is education for and about business that is aimed at equipping recipients with the requisite attributes (digital skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes) to become gainfully employed in the world of work. Whereas education ‘about’ business, is aimed at providing a sound basis for further studies at the graduate and postgraduate levels. According to the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria, the primary goal of business education is to prepare students for successful careers in business by providing them with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to succeed in the workplace. Business education is also aimed at developing students' critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills as well as their ability to work effectively in teams. Business Education according to the authors has its main objective in preparing the youth to enter into a career to render efficient service and to advance from their present level of employment to higher levels which arguably will have a significant effect on the economic development Business education on the other hand is one of the occupational areas that are richly provided by vocational and technical education in Nigeria.

Objectives of Business Education

The following according to Okon and Ukpong (2019), outlined the following as Objectives of Business Education.

- To provide students with appropriate physical, mental, skills and competences needed in the business world.
- To inculcate the right business attitude for the survival of the individual and the society.
- To provide career information that will help students relate their interest, needs and abilities to occupational opportunities in business.
- To produce business educators who shall impact the needed skills and competencies to up-coming generations
- To prepare the youth to enter into a career, render efficient service and as well advance from their present level of employment to higher levels.

- To help students gain knowledge on what business is, through teaching them various business-related subjects
- To provide useful life skills that can be applied to other spheres of life other than business (e.g. computer science or keyboarding).
- To encourage students to be more interested in business.
- To provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the business world and the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in it. This includes the ability to analyze and interpret financial data, develop marketing strategies, manage personnel and make strategic decisions.
- To equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in the business world as well as the ability to adapt to changing business environments.
- To produce competent degree graduates who can employ other persons to reduce unemployment.

Need for Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Knowledge in the teaching of Business Education

The need for Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) knowledge in the teaching of business education cannot be overemphasized. Alias and Yusoff (2021) articulated the following as necessity of business educators to integrate ICT during teaching:

- **ICT enhance Student Engagement:** The use of ICT tools, such as educational software, online resources and multimedia presentations can enhance the learning experience and improve student understanding of complex concepts. It also enables students to learn at their own pace and in a way that suits their learning style.
- **ICT prepares Students for the Workplace:** Businesses are increasingly reliant on technology to operate and compete in today's global economy by integrating ICT knowledge into business education, students can develop the skills and competencies they need to succeed in the workplace such as digital literacy, problem-solving and critical thinking.
- **ICT makes accessing Learning Resources:** With the rise of online learning platforms and digital resources integrating ICT knowledge can provide students with greater access to learning materials and resources. This can help to level the playing field, as students from diverse backgrounds can access the same high-quality learning materials regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic status.
- **ICT lead flexibility and Personalization:** ICT tools and technologies can enable instructors to create personalized and flexible learning experiences that meet the diverse needs and learning styles of their students. For example online learning platforms can provide students with the flexibility to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule.
- **ICT Provides access to a wider range of resources:** ICT provides access to a wider range of resources including online databases, e-books and educational software.

This enables teachers to provide a more diverse and engaging learning experience for students.

- ICT makes possible develops digital literacy skills: Integrating ICT in teaching helps to develop students' digital literacy skills which are essential for success in today's digital age. This includes skills such as using software applications navigating the Internet and using social media.
- ICT makes one stay current: The business world is constantly evolving, with new technologies trends and challenges emerging all the time. By integrating ICT knowledge into business education, instructors can ensure that their courses are up-to-date and relevant to the needs of today's business world.
- ICT improves teaching effectiveness: ICT can improve teaching effectiveness as it enables teachers to provide more effective feedback monitor student progress and track student achievement. It also enables teachers to collaborate with each other and share best practices.
- ICT facilitates collaboration: ICT enables teachers and students to collaborate and communicate with each other regardless of their location. This fosters teamwork and enables students to develop effective communication and interpersonal skills which are essential for success in the business world.

Benefits of Developing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Knowledge for Business Educators.

Lots of benefits are accruable if ICT will be integrated in teaching business education. Hodge sand Bond (2020) outlined the following as benefit ICT in teaching business education programme:

- Improving teaching effectiveness: With a strong understanding of ICT tools and techniques business educators can use these tools to create more engaging and effective teaching materials deliver better presentations and facilitate more interactive classroom discussions.
- Enhancing student learning: By incorporating ICT tools into their teaching, business educators can help students better understand complex concepts analyze data and develop practical skills that are highly relevant to their future careers.
- Increasing employability: In today's highly competitive job market having strong ICT skills can be a significant advantage for business educators. Employers are increasingly seeking candidates who can use technology effectively to solve problems and drive innovation.
- Expanding career opportunities: Business educators with strong ICT knowledge can pursue a wide range of career opportunities from teaching in online or hybrid settings to consulting or working in technology-related fields.
- Attending professional development workshops: Many professional development workshops are available to educators to help them enhance their ICT knowledge.

These workshops cover various topics such as using technology in the classroom, online safety and digital literacy.

- Collaborating with colleagues: Working with other educators who have expertise in ICT can be beneficial. They can provide guidance and support and you can learn from their experiences.
- Participating in online forums: Online forums are a great way to connect with other educators and exchange ideas. They can also provide access to resources and information that can be helpful in developing your ICT knowledge.
- Experiment with technology: Trying out new technology can help educators become more familiar with it. They can explore the features and capabilities of different tools and identify how they can be used in the classroom.
- Incorporating technology into lessons: Incorporating technology into lessons can help educators develop their ICT knowledge while also engaging students. It can also provide opportunities for educators to identify areas where they need to improve their skills.
- Keeping up with new technology trends: Staying informed about new technology trends can help educators stay current and adapt to changes in the field. Reading blogs, attending conferences and following social media accounts of technology experts can help educators stay informed.

Digital Tools that can be Used for Teaching Business Education

The following according to Nitin Jindal (2023) are the digital tools that can be used for teaching business education:

- Microsoft PowerPoint: These presentation tools can be used for class lectures, group presentations and student projects. Video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Skype or Google Meet that allow teachers to conduct online classes, webinars and virtual meetings with students.
- Video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Skype or Google Meet that allow teachers to conduct online classes, webinars and virtual meetings with students.
- Online collaboration tools such as Google Docs, Slack or Microsoft Teams that allow teachers and students to communicate share files and collaborate on projects.
- Learning management systems (LMS) such as Blackboard, Moodle or Canvas that allow teachers to create and deliver online courses, assignments, quizzes and assessments.
- Online databases and resources such as JSTOR, ProQuest or Business Source Premier that provide access to academic journals, research papers and case studies.
- Social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, or Facebook that can be used to engage students, share news and trends and connect with industry experts.
- Data visualization and analysis tools such as Tableau, Google Data Studio or Excel that allow students to analyze and present business data in a visual and interactive way.

- Online assessment tools such as Kahoot, Quizlet or Socrative that allow teachers to create and deliver online quizzes and assessments to test students' knowledge and understanding of business concepts.
- Cloud-Based Collaboration Tools: such as Google Docs, Drop box and One Drive enable students to collaborate and share their work with each other and with their instructors in real-time.
- Business games: Games like Monopoly or Stock Market Games can be used to teach students about finance, accounting and business strategy.
- Interactive Whiteboards: tools like SMART Boards or Promethean Boards enable instructors to create and present multimedia content to their students in an engaging way.
- Online Learning Resources: such as Khan Academy and edX offer a wide range of courses, tutorials and resources that can supplement traditional classroom instruction.
- Educational Apps: tools like Quizlet, Kahoot and Duolingo provide a fun and interactive way for students to learn and practice new concepts and skills.
- Accounting software: Programs like QuickBooks and Xero can be used to teach basic accounting principles and financial management.

Ways Business Educators Can Integrate and Apply Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Knowledge in the Teaching of Business Education

According to Mishra and Koehler (2023), posited that business educators can integrate and apply ICT knowledge in the teaching of business education in the following ways:

- Use online tools and resources: Business educators can incorporate online tools and resources like Google Suite, Microsoft Office and learning management systems (LMS) into their teaching. These tools can be used for collaborative assignments, research projects and creating presentations.
- Use business simulation software: Programs like Capsim and SimVenture can be used to provide students with a simulated business environment where they can make decisions and see the outcomes in real-time.
- Teach financial management software: Business educators can teach students how to use financial management software like QuickBooks and Xero to manage financial records and make financial decisions.
- Use data visualization tools: Programs like Tableau and Excel can be used to teach students how to create and interpret business data in a visual way.
- Incorporate social media: Educators can use social media platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook to connect with professionals in the field and to share relevant news and information with their students.
- Provide online resources: Business educators can provide online resources like business news websites, online journals and e-books to supplement course content and keep students up-to-date on the latest industry trends and developments.

- Provide online feedback: Educators can use digital tools like Google Forms and online surveys to provide feedback to students on their performance and to gather feedback from students on course content and delivery.

By integrating ICT knowledge into teaching business education, teachers can create a more engaging and interactive learning experience for their students. Additionally, students can develop digital literacy skills that are essential for success in the modern business world.

Challenges Business educators encountered in Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Teaching of Business Education.

The researchers pointed out some challenges Business educators may encounter in integrating ICT in teaching business education:

- Inadequate Funds and facilities: public schools lacked adequate facilities due to poor funding from government. This restricts access to latest and most advanced ICT tools.
- Resistance to Change: most old teachers feel it is waste of time to embrace new technologies at old and therefore resist to change.
- Technological Issues: Technical problems such as poor internet connectivity or software glitches can disrupt teaching and create frustration.
- Quality and Reliability of ICT Tools: Some ICT tools may not be of high quality or may not be reliable to impact the necessary knowledge.
- Lack of Technical Skills: Some educators may have limited technical skills or experience with certain ICT tools which can make it difficult to integrate them effectively into teaching.

Remedies to challenges confronting ICT integration

- Providing Equitable Access: Educational institutions can provide access to ICT tools to all students by providing computers or tablets and ensuring reliable internet connectivity. For students who do not have access to technology at home, institutions can consider providing access to computer labs or loaning out devices.
- Providing Professional Development Opportunities: Educational institutions can offer professional development opportunities to educators to help them learn how to use ICT tools effectively in their teaching. This can include workshops, training sessions and online resources.
- Developing Contingency Plans: To address technological issues, institutions can develop contingency plans to ensure that teaching and learning can continue in the event of technical problems. This can include having backup devices or software a plan for communicating with students and having alternative teaching strategies.
- Conducting Research on ICT Tools: Educational institutions can conduct research on the quality and reliability of ICT tools to ensure that they are effective and reliable for use in teaching. This can include conducting pilot studies seeking feedback from students and educators, and evaluating the impact of ICT tools on student learning.

- **Training and Support:** Educators can seek training and support for themselves to enhance their technical skills and knowledge of ICT tools. This can also be extended to students to ensure they are comfortable using the technology
- **Partnering with Industry:** Educators can partner with businesses and industries to gain access to funding and resources needed to integrate ICT into teaching.
- **Adapting Teaching Styles:** Educators can adapt their teaching style to incorporate ICT tools and resources, thereby creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment that caters to the needs of all students.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** Educators can collaborate with other educators and institutions to share knowledge and resources, learn about best practices, and stay up to date with the latest ICT trends and tool.

Conclusion

The persistent rapid influx of technology in the business world is a challenge for business educators to incorporate Information and Communication Technology ICT into their teaching practices to ensure that students are prepared for the demands of the modern workplace. By integrating ICT into their teaching, business educators can enhance the learning experience of their students by providing access to a range of online resources, tools and applications that can facilitate active learning, collaboration and problem-solving, analysis and communication.

Furthermore, incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching business education can also help to bridge the gap between academia and industry as students gain exposure to the latest technological tools and practices used in the business world. This can better equip students to enter the workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in a technology-driven workplace. The integration and application of Information and Communication Technology ICT knowledge in the teaching of business education is crucial for preparing students for the demands of the modern workplace and improving their chances of success in their future career

Recommendation

Based on the discussion so far, the following recommendations were put up:

- The government and institution management should provide relevant equipment and machines to enhance teaching and learning of business education programmes.
- The government should provide fund to business educators to undertake on in-service trainings workshops, seminars and conferences in order to keep them up -to-date with the latest new technologies.
- Business educators should recognize the relevance of new technologies in business world and integrate them into business education programme.
- Adequate training programmes should be organized for business educators and the students to educate them on how to use the available new technologies in teaching and learning business education programme.

Reference

- Alias, N & Yusoff, M. (2021) Measuring the integration of ICT in teaching and learning: The Case of Malaysian Vocational College. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 16(6), 160-174.
- Aydin, M & Kilinc, A. C. (2020). Pre-service teachers' perception of technological pedagogical and content knowledge (TPACK) regarding innovative teaching methods. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 15(13), 160-172.
- Carretero et al & Gonzalez-Vazquez, I. (2021). What did we learn from schooling practices during the COVID-19 lockdown, publications office of the European Union? Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2760/135208>
- Costa, R. (2020) Pedagogical challenges: before and in the covid 19 pandemic. *Temas em Educação e Saúde*, 16(2), 594-606. Retrieved from <https://periodicas.fclar.unesp.br/tes/article/view/14061>.
- Curtarelli, M. Gualteri V & Donlevy, V (2017). ICT for work: Digital skills in the workplace. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Edokpolor, J. E. & Egbri, J. N (2017). Business education in Nigeria for value re-orientation: A strategic approach for poverty alleviation and national development. *Journal of Educational Research and Review(JERR)*, 5(3),41-48.
- Hodges, C. B, Moore, S. Lockee, B. B. & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *Education Cause Review*, 55(4) <https://www.revistarazonypalabra.org/index.php/rvp/article/view/1278>.
- International Telecommunication Union. (ITU, 2021). Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Retrieved from <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/ICT-Applications/Pages/ICT.aspx>.
- Mishra, P. & Koehler, M. J. (2023). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: Past, present and future. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 61(1), 1-14.
- National business education association. (n.d.). What is business education? Retrieved from <https://www.nbea.org/what-is-business-education>.
- Nedum Ogbede, P. O. (2018). New technologies in business education: challenges and the way forward. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED)* 3(2), 104-111.
- Nitin Jindal 2023 Head office Kanakia Wall Street, Unit No 1201 - 1205, 12th Floor, B Wing, Near Chakala Signal, Mulgaon, and heri East, Mumbai – 400093 Copyright Leadership Boulevard Private Limited 2023.
- Okon, F. I. & Ukpog, O. U. (2019). Evaluation of business education curriculum for preparation of undergraduates students for economic empowerment and sustainable development. *Nigeria: Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa*. 19- 34.
- Okoye, K.R.E. & Ashibogwu, N.K. (2018). Strategies considered effective by business educators for quality assurance in business education programme in Universities in South South Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management* 10(2), 43-48.

- Rivera, D. & Suconota, E. (2018). ICT in the management of educational processes reason and word: reputation, transparency and new technologies, 22(3), 481-509. Retrieved from <https://www.revistarazonypalabra.org/index.php/ryp/article/view/1278>
- Şahin, M. (2021). The impact of blended learning on student motivation in higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 24(1), 1-13.
- UNDP. (2019). ICT for development. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-9-industry-innovation-and-infrastructure/targets/91.html>
- UNESCO (2021). What is ICT? Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/themes/ict-education>
- Utware, J. D, KrenIkidi, C. P. & Apreala, I. O. (2018). Issues and trends in the application of new technologies in teaching business education in Nigerian universities in south south States. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education (NIGJBED)*, 3(2), 54-66 Vol. 5(3), pp. 4148.