

An Exploratory Evidence of Youth's ICT empowerment in Nigeria

Baba HAFIZ^{1*} Jamal Abdul Nassir SHAARI², Adamu Ibrahim Saleh³

1. Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS),
2. Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS),
3. Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi State Nigeria

*Email: babahafiz@yahoo.com

Abstract

The new ICT revolution has now broadened the horizon of the opportunities among nations, organization, institutions and individuals giving hopes to compete with their counterparts all over the world. It has been seen as an important vehicle to propel individual to greater height as the world moves further into the knowledge economy in this 21st century. It has been acknowledged that the information revolution is a powerful force with enormous benefits in socio-economic and political developments. Such benefits include job creation, increase in the stock of technologies and skills, ease of communication, expansion of trade, etc. particularly in developing countries. Against this background scale were source from literature and focus group analysis using 5 points likert scale. The questionnaire items have 65 indicators / constructs with the exception of demographic questions reflecting the relevant variables. An exploratory factor analysis was run on 389 valid responses from 3 geo-political zones in Bauchi state, Nigeria within the ages of 18-35 years. Using SPSS version 16 to check skewness and kurtosis. Utilising the maximum likelihood procedure which was followed by Varimax, rotation to get a better understanding of the factor structure.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Empowerment, Poverty, and Nigeria.

1. Introduction

It is an established fact that major sectors of the World's economy are already utilizing the capacity of information technology to improve life generally. It is common knowledge that globalization brought about by information and communication technology (ICT) has reduced the whole World to village without boundaries or borders. ICT has been acknowledged as a powerful engine of development. The enormous economic benefits, real and potentials of ICT are not in doubt, especially in the industrialized economies where the revolution is rooted (Rayport and Jaworski, 2002). The 21st century, started with the awareness that the new revolution variously called information revolution and IT revolution has come to stay. Increasingly, it is also being realized that the revolution is presenting daunting challenges which must be frontally tackled in order to maximize both potential and real benefits emanating from it (Olatukun, 2009; Olaoye, 2010). The challenges are at personal, societal and global levels. For instance learning, understanding and operating within the action frame of a new vocabulary, if not an entirely new language, that is peculiarly associated with information and communication technology (ICT), is the bedrock of the IT revolution. The new ICT revolution has now broadened the horizon of the opportunities among nations, organization, institutions and individuals giving hopes to compete with their counterparts all over the world as observed by Collins, et al (2002). It has been seen as an important vehicle to propel individual to greater height as the world moves further into the knowledge economy in this 21st century. Empirically, studies have confirmed that ICT revolution can strengthen pillars of development, poverty reduction and this is where it matters most in Nigeria (UNDP-APDIP Report 2004); Ebebe, (2002). Ingwe and Judith (2008) stated that within barely 15 to 20 years, information and communication technologies (ICTs)-driven new digital economy and high competition for global market share has engendered hunger for knowledge as one of the main drivers of economic development factor for cities, states, nations and organizations in advanced nations.

The demands for high technological skilled workers are needed in the workforce in the 21st century. This has created a lot of problems for the country because not everyone is literate in ICT skills and most youths have no access to computer. In general, most of the school students are not exposed to the ICT skills and training and very limited students and youth have the access to computer knowledge. This is one of the factors that influence poverty and the government should think about how to improve the situation. As it is now, there are some efforts being carried out but yet to be seen and not much has been achieved. There are lots to be done to improve the situation if the government wants the economy to be better and the poverty rate to go down. The youths between 18 -35 years of age are mostly the victims of unemployment. Accordingly, ICTs revolution has greater