

## **STRATEGIES FOR REPOSITIONING BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN AN ERA OF ECONOMIC RECESSION THROUGH INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The work was aimed at determining the strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East in an era of economic recession. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses in line with the purpose of the study. The study adopted a survey research design. The population for the study was 68 business educators in the nine universities in South East. There was no sampling because of the manageable size of the population. The instrument used for data collection was 18 – item questionnaire items developed by the researchers. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha and the overall reliability index yielded 0.87. Mean with standard deviation was used to answer research questions and t-test statistic was used to test null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The results of the analysis showed that both curriculum and institutional strategies are essential for repositioning because education in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South-East. Based on the findings, it was recommended that business education curriculum development should be used on the issues and trends in ICT. Adequate ICT facilities should be provided by authority concern to enhance business education programme.*

**Keywords:** Business Education, Information Communication Technology (ICT), economic recession.

### **Introduction**

Harnessing the potentials of information and communication technology (ICT) for instructional delivery and general development of education processes has been the key to revolutionizing education. This is mostly vital in an era of economic recession. Economic depressed is the suppression of economic development and activities which results into poverty and unemployment (Onyia, 2010). The condition of the economy of any country depends on the level of economic activities and the extent of job creation within her labour market.

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The sophisticated nature of offices, and business activities as a result of ICT has made it pertinent to revitalize business education programme to enable the learners to meet the emerging technologies. According to Yekin and Lawal (2010), ICT refers to the powerful collection of elements like computer hardware, software, telecommunications network, workstations, robotic and smart clips. It has increasingly become the most powerful tool for participating in virtually every global activity such as global market, promoting political accountability, improving the delivery of basic services and enhancing local development opportunities (Obayi, Abuka and Ezeyi 2015). ICT refers to a systematic process of gathering, processing, storing, sending and retrieving of information through the print, broadcast, computing and telecommunications media. When ICT is mentioned, what readily come to mind is the computer and the internet. These two are not the only components of ICT, but have actually revolutionized the way we think, the way we handle and disseminate information.

According to Anyafulude (2011) the use of ICT in teaching is a relevant and functional way of providing education to lecturers to learners in order to assist them imbibe the required capacity for the world of work. ICT resources are capable of being used in improving the teaching and learning of business education. It is imperative to note that ICT driven learning environment is important for holistic development of a Nigerian child. In a global economic setting, that is ICT driven, almost every human activity is computer based, application for job, admissions, checking of results, buying and selling and even banking are now done online. The Nigerian students need to be acquainted with ICTs to cope in the society after school. According to Udu (2015), the ability to work with information and communication technologies is recognized as one of the key competencies necessary for success in life and the ICT curriculum shall be repositioned.

In business education class, it has been observed that the application of ICT facilities has tremendous effects on the student's achievement and interest. As a result of this, it is pertinent to train students in office automation, word processing, spread sheets, desktop publishing. Microsoft power point, graphics and other data based management through ICT. Odah and Ogbaga (2010) noted that, business education frame and equip its recipients with relevant soft skills and management competencies for efficient functioning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

Business education programme is education for and about business, it is designed to equip learners with skills and knowledge needed to contribute economically as literate citizens. Onyesom, Egbule and Okwukenye (2012) observed that, business education is basically teaching and learning for acquisition of knowledge and skill required for successful performance in business and business organizations. It is important to strengthen business education to meet the status of electronic era in business. The success of any office today depends on the organization's ability to do business electronically. Agomuo (2005) posited that, the e-commerce is the exchange of goods and services through the use of internet resources.

This globalization and e-commerce make it paramount to restructuring of business education through ICT to meet the current need in labour market. No educational programme can boost of training the students adequately if ICT facilities are not utilized. Incorporation of ICT facilitates in business education teaching and learning programme will enable the students to be properly equipped for the world of work. Tertiary institution male and female lectures need to adapt to the ICT based teaching and learning. This will help in equipping all the students irrespective of gender for the world of ICT. Against this backdrop, it become necessary to

determine the strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT for capacity building in tertiary institutions in South East.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Technological development has created a great difference between what is taught in school and what is needed in the society. This is evidence in that the rate at which office machine/tools are outdated, and the speed with which business system and procedures change is alarming and difficult to grasp. The implication is that the product of tertiary institutions especially business educators are no longer qualified and therefore cannot satisfy the need of the society in present time.

This situation is occasioned by the explosion of ICT in every area of human life. If it is so, there is need to strategies business education programme to meet the need of the society in an era of economic recession. The researchers wonders why, many graduates of business education cannot fit into ICT jobs available in various offices. This condition needs to be checked before it blows out of proportion. The crux of this study, was to determine the strategies for repositioning business education programme in universities in South East.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East. Specifically; the study sought to find out the:

1. curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in Universities in South East.
2. institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in Universities in South east.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East?
2. What are the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guided the study using t-test at 0.5 level of significance:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educatorson the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East.

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Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East.

### **Method**

The study adopted a survey research design. A survey research design according to Alio (2008), is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group. The area of the study was South-East State. The South-East States are made up of Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra, Imo and Abia. The population of the study was 68 business educators in the nine Universities in South East. There was no sampling because of the manageable size of the population. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researchers after an extensive review of related literature. The instrument has 18 items which sought to provide answer to the two research questions that guided the study. A contained information on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education in an era of economic recession through ICT among Universities in South-East. While section B contained information on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education in an era of economic recession through ICT among Universities in South-East. The instrument was structured 4 points response category of strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with numerical values of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was validated by three business education experts and the corrections and contributions guided the researchers in modifying the final instrument used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbatch Alpha and the overall reliability index yielded 0.87 showing that the instrument was reliable. The questionnaires were administered to the business educators in the Universities and out of 68 copies of the questionnaires administered 64 were properly filled and returned and was used for data analysis representing 94.11% return rate. The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The decision was based on the upper and lower limits. t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The null hypotheses was not rejected when the calculated t-value was equal to or greater than the critical t-value; otherwise it was rejected when the calculated t-value was less than the critical t-value.

### **Results:**

#### **Research Question 1**

What are the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South East.

**Table 1:**

**Mean with standard deviation on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South East.**

S/N	Items	Male N =18		Female = 46			Overall	
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Business education curriculum need to be anchored on information and communication technologies (ICT)	3.22	0.99	3.36	0.67	3.29	0.83	Agree
2	The curriculum implementation should be directed through ICT	3.09	0.53	3.27	0.47	3.18	0.51	Agree
3	Institutions should be charged to provide ICT facilities for teaching business education programme	3.00	0.62	3.08	0.70	3.05	0.67	Agree
4	ICT facilities needs of business education programme should be reviewed from time to time	3.42	0.58	3.46	1.02	3.45	0.81	Agree
5	The challenges of ICT should be taken into consideration while developing the curriculum	3.54	0.51	3.09	0.70	3.35	0.78	Agree
6.	Government should be guided on their roles towards the implementation of functional education curriculum	3.19	0.75	3.30	0.73	3.29	0.74	Agree
7	Business education curriculum needs to contain the ICT instructional guide line	3.40	0.66	3.25	0.75	3.33	0.71	Agree
8.	Contemporary issues in ICT should be included in business education programme	2.92	0.99	3.25	0.70	3.09	0.85	Agree

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9	Curriculum should be reviewed periodically to accommodate trends in ICT	3.20	0.79	3.12	0.82	3.16	0.81	Agree
<b>Grand mean and SD</b>		<b>3.22</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The result of data analysis presented in the table above showed the respondents accepted that the itemized are the strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in universities in South East. The mean ratings of the respondents ranges from 3.05 to 3.45 showing Agree. The grand mean of 3.24 shows that the respondents totally agreed to all the items. The low grand standard deviation showed that the respondents have homogenous responses to all the items.

### **Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female business educators on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South East.

**Table 2:**

**t-test analysis of the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education through ICT in an era of economic recession in universities in South-East States.**

Gender	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	df	t-cal	P	t-tab	Decision
Male	3.22	0.71	18					Not
Female	3.24	0.73	46	62	0.085	0.05	1.98	Significant

The result of t-test analysis in table 2 showed that the calculated t-value at 0.05 level of significant is 0.085 while the critical t-table value is 1.98. Since the t-table value is more than the calculated t-value, the null hypothesis is therefore not significant for these items. This implies that there is no significant different in the mean scores of male and female business educators on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT among Universities in South East.

### **Research Question 2**

What are the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South-East?

**Table 3:**  
**Mean with standard deviation on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic through ICT in Universities in South-East**

S/ N	Items	Male N =18		Female = 46		Overall		Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	
10	Schools should provide students with ICT or internet facilities	3.3	0.76	3.43	0.76	3.27	0.76	Agree
11	Lectures should be made to have easy access to ICT for preparing their lessons	3.09	0.95	2.82	0.93	2.96	0.94	Agree
12	Schools should equip their ICT centres to service business education programme	3.48	0.62	3.38	0.72	3.43	0.67	Agree
13	Standard for utilizing ICT in business education should be mapped out by institution	3.32	0.64	3.29	0.69	3.31	0.67	Agree
14	Schools should engage the services of well trained ICT professionals	3.15	1.03	3.49	0.71	3.32	0.89	Agree
15	Institutions should organize ICT retraining workshop for business educators	3.00	0.87	3.23	0.81	3.12	0.86	Agree
16	Monitoring team should be set-up for quality assurance in the use of ICT facilities in teaching	3.23	0.95	3.67	0.46	3.45	0.71	Agree
17	Enabling environment should be provided for ICT class section to strive	3.29	0.74	3.08	0.91	3.19	0.83	Agree
18	Power supply should be given attention for effective use of ICT facilities	3.48	0.50	3.47	0.60	3.48	0.55	Agree
<b>Grand mean and SD</b>		<b>3.26</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The data analysis in table 3 showed that, the mean scores of the business educators ranges from 2.96 to 3.48. This reveals that the respondent agreed on the itemized as the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in Universities in South-East. The grand mean of 3.28 and standard deviation of 0.76 further shows

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that the respondents totally agree to that. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.76 shows that the respondents have consensus opinion in their responses.

### **Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female business educators on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in Universities in South East.

**Table 4:**

**t-test result of mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession in Universities in South East**

Gender	$\bar{x}$	SD	N	df	t-cal	P	t-tab	Decision
Male	3.26	0.78	18	62	0.247	0.05	1.98	Not
Female	3.32	0.73	46					Significant

The result of t-test analysis presented in table 4 showed that the calculated t-value at 0.05 level of significant and 62 degree of freedom for the nine items is 0.247. Since the critical t-value is more than the t-calculated, the null hypothesis is therefore not significant. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female business educators on the itemized institutional strategies.

### **Summary of major Findings**

From the result of analysis, the followings were made:

1. The curriculum strategies are vital for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in Universities in South East.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the curriculum strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession through ICT in universities in South East.
3. Institutional strategies were found to be vital for repositioning business education program in an era of economic recession in Universities in South-East States.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme through in an era of economic recession through ICT among universities in South East.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The result of the study in respect to research question one showed that, the itemized strategies are needed for repositioning business education through ICT among Universities in South East. Some of the identified strategies include that, curriculum should be reviewed



periodically to accommodate trends in ICT; that the curriculum should be anchored on ICT, ICT facilities for implementing the curriculum should be made available etc The findings of the study are in agreement with Udu (2015) that, the curriculum should be repositioned to meet current issues in educational programmes of institution. There was no significant differences between the mean rating of male and female business educators on the curriculum strategies and female business education programme to South-East States through ICT.

The result of the study in research question two revealed that, the itemized strategies were accepted by the respondents as the institutional strategies for repositioning business education programme in an era of economic recession among universities through ICT in South East. Some of the identified strategies include regular power supply for the ICT facilities, provision of enabling environment for ICT instructional delivery, schools should engage the services of qualified ICT professional among others. The findings of the study were in agreement with Nwangwu (2010) that school authorities should provide enough ICT facilities and engage the services of professional who are already willing to embrace new trends in ICT. The result of null hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female business educators on the institution strategies for repositioning business education programme through ICT among Universities in South-East Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is applied in all areas of life more especially business education. Government and school authorities should ensure that ICT facilities are funded well with good implementation plan. The curriculum development need to consider the trends in ICT and means to accommodate them in training and retraining of students and graduates. There is no going back on ICT implementation, therefore schools should understand the need for ICT and build facilities to meet the current demand in the labour market.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. Business education curriculum development should be based on the issues and trends in ICT.
2. Institutions should engage the services of professionals in ICT work.
3. Adequate ICT facilities should be provided by authority concern to enhance business education programme.
4. Information Communication Technology (ICT) should be made compulsory.
5. There should be regular workshops, conferences and seminars on the application of ICT facilities for business educators.

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