

# **THE NEED FOR ICT UTILIZATION IN OFFICE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

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## **ABSTRACT**

ICT is paramount for the development and efficacy of any working environment. ICT involve the use of computers and modern electronic device that are needed to improve the performance of office activities. Office management involves the efficient way of communication and keeping of records needed for effective work delivery. Modern offices have migrated from manual communication technique to digital system of file transfer and communications. Two research questions guided the study. The researcher used simple survey research design. The population consists of 30 administrative staff working in private sector in Bayelsa State. The data obtained from the study was analyzed using simple percentages. The findings of the study showed that 87% of organizations do not provide the staff with ICT facility. 78% stated that their organizations do not have ICT facility. 76% do not have proper budget for purchase of ICT materials. Also, 77% cannot operate computer effectively and 23% can. 67% cannot use internet facility for their office operation. 34 % of workers do keep record in the computer, while 66% do not know how to keep records in the computer. Finally, it was recommended that staffs of most private sectors should be subjected to different training modules on how to use ICT facilities.

**Keywords: ICT Utilization, Office Practice and Management System**

## INTRODUCTION

ICT can be viewed as an umbrella term that includes all technologies for the manipulation and communication of information. ICT according to UNDP, (2003) refers to the complete outfit of electronic advancement and methods used to manage and communicate information and knowledge. ICT application is universal as its effect is seen in every aspect of the society. Nevertheless, in this study the term ICT is not referring to all the media currently available but more restrictedly to the recent computer technologies, social business and groupware technology.

ICT involves the use of hardware and software. The hardware deals with mostly the parts we handle and operate with on daily basis. Software components are collective program which control the entire activities of a computer. They are grouped into two categories which include operating system programs (system software) and the application programs. The system programs are usually but not necessarily finished by a computer manufacturer which contribute to the proper control and enhanced performance of the computer system. On the other hand, the application software are those categories of programs used by the computer users to perform specific tasks. Some examples of application software programs are; the groupware system, internet and social business system etc.

The introduction of ICT in human society has connected the world in a unique way. The fact that Information Communication Technology has made the world a global village cannot be overemphasized. Advancement in this world is now controlled by ICT (Offor, 2013). Individuals through ICTs application can now interact and send messages across the continent without barriers of distance and time constraints via the use of GSM and internet technologies. Information is freely collected and received within the shortest possible time via electronic devices. People now have access to E-libraries of renowned repute where tangible, current and reliable research information is been published.

Information Communication technology has as well opened doors for both small and big businesses to be carried across the globe. It has to a great extent helped the technological advancement of many nations of the world.

People with the aid of simple mobile phones could transact business without the stress and risks of travelling from one country to another. Much time resources are no longer wasted in the course of business transactions. In the medical practice, reliable diagnoses of various illnesses and health conditions are now made, with the aids of computers and other electronic gadgets without specimens like blood samples, urine, swab or semen. Information about possible solutions to illness, diseases, and health problems are now easily gotten from the internet, and various websites. These were not possible in time past when people died of very common illnesses. This is not different in the field of politics. Today we talk about electronic voting whereby elections are conducted and manipulated electronically. This conducting of elections electronically to very high degree reduces electoral malpractices. Currently, countries are opportune to watch and witness in televisions, other countries

conduct elections and electoral processes. This helps these countries to adopt useful and innovative methods in their own electoral process.

Originally, information and communication were carried out orally. People gathered information, stored it in their memories and transmitted them verbally to their receivers and users. But with the innovation of printing technology, there came the first breakthrough in the field of information and communication technology. ICT has led to the globalization of the world. Information and Communication Technology is a mixture of information technology and communication technology. ICT is therefore the application of computers and telecommunication gadgets in processing, storing, and sending information of all kinds in whatever form or distance. ICTs encompass all that is involved in modern communication technologies such as communication satellites, radio, television, video, tape recorders, compact discs, floppy diskettes and personal computers and other related equipment so that the output generated can reach the users at reasonable cost and in good time across the globe (Ezekoka, 2007). Ibenyenwa (2011) sees ICT as all the electronic devices, computer hardware and software and telecommunication gadgets that enable the processing, storage and immediate dissemination of huge amount of information through the computer networks. Obanya (2003) describes information and communication technology as the sole creation of human kind that has thrown off balance the conventional perceptions of time and space that has destroyed geographical barriers to the transmission of knowledge, ideas, and Information.

In modern office practice the knowledge of ICT is very useful in the preparation of document and transmission of information. In the past, office documents are mostly kept in files and information are transmitted via the use of bill boards. The introduction of ICT has led to the development of softcopies of office records and transmission of information through internet. However, the study looked at the need for ICT utilization in office practice management system.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study looked at the need for ICT utilization in office practice management system. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Find out the numbers of staff that have access to ICT facility in their offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State.
- Find out the numbers of staff that can make use of ICT facilities in offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the numbers of staff that have access to ICT facility in their offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State?
- What are the numbers of staff that can make use of ICT facilities in offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State?

### Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the use of ICT facility in private sector of Bayelsa State.

### Methods

The researcher used survey research design. The population consists of 30 administrative staff working in private sector in Bayelsa State. The entire population was used as sample for the study. The researcher developed an instrument titled “ICT Utilization Test” (ICTUT). The instrument consists of six items with yes and no response.

ICTUT was subjected to face validation by two experts in the department of computer science in Rivers State University. The expert checked the appropriateness of the instruments and the language content. The instrument was administered to 5 respondents working in private sector in Rivers State. Their responses were computed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.86. The researcher personally administered the instrument to respondents in Bayelsa State. Simple percentages were used to analyze the research questions.

### Data Analysis

#### Research Question 1

What are the numbers of staff that have access to ICT facility in their offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State?

Table 1: *Numbers of Staff that have Access to ICT Facility in their Offices in Private Sectors in Bayelsa State.*

S/N	ITEMS	YES %	NO %
1	Does your company provide you with ICT facility?	3	87
2	Does your organization have ICT facility?	22	78
3	Does your organization budget for ICT materials?	14	76

Table 1 showed that 87% of organizations do not provide the staff with ICT facility. 78% stated that their organizations do not have ICT facility. 76% do not have proper budget for purchase of ICT materials.

## Research Question 2

What are the numbers of staff that can make use of ICT facilities in offices in private sectors in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: *Numbers of Staff that can make use of ICT Facilities in Offices in Private Sectors in Bayelsa State.*

S/N	ITEMS	YES %	NO %
1	Can you operate on computers effectively?	23	77
2	Can you use the internet for office operations?	33	67
3	Do you keep your records in the computer?	34	66

Table 2 showed that 77% cannot operate computer effectively and 23% can. 67% cannot use internet facility for their office operation. 34% of workers do keep records in the computer, while 66% do not know how to keep records in the computer.

## Discussion of the Findings

The study revealed that most of the organization offices do not have ICT facilities. Also, most staff do not know how to operate on ICT equipment. Edi (2012) stated that most modern organizations in Nigeria do not have ICT facilities for their business operations. Observation also reveals that most employees in private organizations are ICT illiterates (Williams, 2006). This is in line with the findings of the study that reveals that most employees could not operate effectively on ICT tools.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Staffs of most private sectors should be subjected to different training modules on how to use ICT facilities.
2. Government agencies that are responsible for the registration of businesses should ensure that the availability of ICT facilities in these organizations should be a priority.

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