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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Management of Functional Education Among Internally Displaced Teenagers in Benue State

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***Author's Contributions***

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## ABSTRACT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) makes dynamic changes in society. It is influencing all aspects of life. The influence is felt in education as ICT provides functional education to learners in all learning situations including teenagers in internally displaced camps. The study was to find out if ICT was a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey research design. One research question guided the study. One hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprises 229,227 teenagers from 10 Internally Displaced Persons Camps in Benue State (State Emergency Management Agency, 2021). 289 respondents out of the population were sampled. Self structured rating scale titled "Information and Communication Technology and Functional Education Management Rating Scale (ICTFEMRS)" was used for data collection. Findings were that; ICT was a to a high extent positive determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in the area of study. Recommendations were that; education stakeholders should ensure that education is managed towards producing teenagers with requisite skills knowledge and values through ICT relevant to the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Information and communication technology (ICT); management of functional education and internally displaced teenagers

## INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) makes dynamic changes in society. It is influencing all aspects of life. The influence is felt in education as ICT provides; learners, teachers and educational managers with more opportunities in adapting learning, teaching and managing the individual needs. It provides newer and more effective ways of mitigating some of the challenges being faced by the educational system of the country. These technologies distinguish themselves by their rapid evolution and revolution continuously changing the modes of engagement with them. A decade long infusion of computer, and more recently ICT, has demonstrated varying impacts on learning.

In the current information age, educational institutions are expected to play a crucial role as the engine for knowledge generation and learning environment. In this regard ICT becomes the vital means to facilitate the task of providing functional education to learners to make them useful to

themselves and the society at large. ICT can help the school administrators improve various administrative tasks of schools. Information and communication technology (ICT) has become an important source of innovation and improvement of efficiency for many sectors across the globe (Jurkowski, 2018). Ochai et al. (2025) demonstrated that the mere provision of ICT tools is not sufficient; the effectiveness of digital platforms, including social media, depends on how they are managed. Their study found that structured management strategies such as clear guidelines, supervision, and purposeful academic engagement enhanced student participation and engagement. This implies that in Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps, ICT must be deliberately planned, supervised, and aligned with educational objectives to maximize functional learning outcomes. Management of education is not limited to learners within the school system but expands its coast to internally displaced persons who cuts across different ages and by implication different levels of education.

Internally displaced persons are the most vulnerable group and are susceptible to all forms of exploitation and neglect for the obvious reasons. An internally displaced person (also known as “IDPs”) has been legally defined by The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2016) as “an individual forced to flee from his/her home or place of habitual residence, as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, who has not crossed an internationally recognised state border.” Large numbers of IDPs are visibly scattered across different states in Nigeria without a reliable database providing a comprehensive profile of the IDPs. Nigeria is reported to have the largest population of displaced people in Africa, over 3.3 million IDPs (UNHCR, 2016). The cause of displacement in Nigeria is multi-faceted and sometimes complex. It ranges from flooding, religious conflict, ethnic violence, insurgency, militancy, kidnapping, banditry, Fulani pastoralist and farmers conflict and terrorism by the militant Islamic group Boko Haram.

Education remains an important aspect of our lives and it is vital to our development, our understanding and our personal and professional growth. Education also builds knowledge and skills for self-reliance and resilience. It can also contribute to peace and security and mitigate factors responsible for conflict and displacement (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2016). World Bank (2018) harping on the benefits of education states that education is a powerful driver of development and one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability; providing teenagers with basic cognitive skills could massively boost economic outcomes, especially in developing countries. Developing countries have made tremendous progress in getting children into the classroom and the majority of children worldwide.

In an emergency situation such as displacement, education gives hope and reduces the trauma already suffered (Okwute, Sanda, & Usman, 2017). Education provides life saving and life sustaining physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection. It offers safe space for learning as well as ability to identify and provide support for affected individuals, particularly for children and adolescents. Education mitigates the psychosocial impact of conflict and disaster by giving a sense of normality, stability (Ferris and Winthrop 2010) and it saves lives, provide children with lifesaving information as well as sustain the progress already made by communities. The children as posited by Ferris and Winthrop fall within the teenage age and could survive and support the society with the aid of a functional education.

Displaced teenagers miss out on months or years of education, and this is damaging to them and their families, as well as to their societies, both in the short and long term (Lenette, 2016). Lack of functional educational opportunities stifles development of teenagers and limits the chances of channeling their potentials to contribute to; themselves, families and communities throughout their lifetime. Functional education may serve as a channel to address other basic needs as well as reduce conflict and its effects on individuals, societies. El-Sheikh (2017) rightly suggests that access to education (functional education) should be an integral part of humanitarian response and future development efforts. Functional education in this wise is necessary to provide skills for survival and employment during and after staying in IDP camps. It is worthy of note that managing education at IDP Camps is demanding and needs to leverage on other platforms other than the formal school set up; such platforms as the researcher observe is use of ICT.

Educational Management is a field which is concerned with the operation of educational organisations. It is the process of planning, organising and directing activities

in a school as well as effectively utilising; human, material, financial and time resources in order to accomplish educational objectives (Akpakwu, 2013). Managing functional education for teenagers has a major role of ensuring that education is availed at IDP camps gearing towards to preparing the learners to live successfully as individuals as well as contribute in the society. Such curriculum should; reflect community realities, provide opportunities for individuals to participate actively in educational activities generate creative and functional activities among teenagers, stress the need for respect of dignity of labor, national loyalty and consciousness.

According to Idowu (1999), functional education is the total process of bringing up individuals to develop their potentials (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) to the fullest and consequently be able to contribute maximally to the development of the society. Arogundade (2011) adds that functional education seeks to prepare people, especially youth, to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers who will contribute to economic development and sustainable communities. Importantly, the success of functional education depends on effective leadership. Slaa and Inamungu (2025) emphasize that transformational leadership which inspires a shared vision, fosters a supportive learning environment, and motivates learners significantly enhances engagement, participation, and learning outcomes. Their findings suggest that in contexts like IDP camps, educational managers who guide and encourage learners can maximize the benefits of ICT, ensuring that teenagers acquire practical skills and knowledge. Management of functional education in IDPs is viewed by the researcher to bear on teenagers in IDPs who are prone to new innovations such as ICT. Sule (2020) posits that; displaced persons encounter some difficulties in accessing education, yet higher education remains their inalienable rights.

The responsibility for the protection of IDPs rests first and foremost with federal governments and other levels of authority with a mandate to see how best it can contribute to enhancing the protection of IDPs in conflict and crisis situations as well as designing humanitarian assistance in such a way that it will provide functional education to facilitate support to IDPs in the area of study. Mello (2020 ) rightly posits that as a principle; Internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the ground that they are internally displaced; such rights include access to functional education pertinent to their anticipated level.

According to Musa (2018) the success of many nations is tackling major developmental problems can be traced to their educational system. Nigeria is not an isolated case as one of its developmental problems is poverty stricken IDPs in various camps across the country and Benue State in particular. Management of functional education is a prerequisite for overcoming the poverty rate experienced by IDPs. Managing functional education through; planning, organising, coordinating, and staffing focuses more on administrative work with little or no concentration on facilitating generation of new ideas, liberation of human energy, identification of problems, inventing new designs and many more. It is evident that Nigeria as a country is challenged in the aspect of managing functional education, because education appears not to produce the right individuals with functional skills to make them useful to themselves and the society. Managing functional education as the study implies entails; efforts of education stakeholders to provide and facilitate use of ICT by teenagers in IDP camps for skills acquisition towards survival and contribution to the society.

A close look at the above view reveals that; there can hardly be any success in education without educational management to conceive the ideas, develop strategies and execute the planned actions. There is very little that teachers can do to bring forth creative and functional education without able, forward-looking, supportive, visionary, knowledgeable and committed educational managers. For the nation to attain effective functional basic education for sustainable national development, there should be a form of re- structured education with a shift from subject centered learning to skills acquisition, personal development and orientation of every individual learner. There should be individual autonomy, communication, collaborative learning skills, application of knowledge and values development through new innovations such as ICT; this is because ICT provide personal educational possibilities with other potentials such as learning skills on internet and other mediums. The full potential of information and communication technology in education when aligned with new management logic towards supporting and empowering is certain (Kristen 2015). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a vital role in

supporting efficient management and administration in education sector. It is specified that technology can be used right from student administration to various resource administration in an education institution; educational set up at IDP camps are not an exception. The researchers are concerned with teenagers because their level of adoption and application of new innovations is remarkable. It is against this background that the study is out to ascertain if ICT is a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers at IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

**Statement of the Problem**

The vast majority of internally displaced children are deprived of a safe, inclusive and quality education and the multitude of short-and long-term advantages it affords. Barriers such as a lack of good teaching capacity, limited funding, ongoing insecurity, social tensions and discrimination compound with education systems in low-income and fragile contexts which are already overstretched. During displacement, some schools in the area of study are occupied by armed groups and displaced communities. Teachers as the researchers observe; leave conflict-affected areas or change professions. The notable lack of adequate education services can increase vulnerability to abuse, child marriage, child labour, and recruitment into armed groups especially among teenagers. Furthermore, most of these teenagers have experienced a high level of stress and lose concentration in an organised classroom setting. In these circumstances, functional education plays a critical role as a building block of recovery, resilience and long-term development. The researchers observe a high rate of interest in use of ICT among teenagers and calls attention of educational managers to leverage on ICT to provide functional education to teenagers at IDP camps in the area of study. The study is therefore out to; ascertain ICT as determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of the study was to find out if ICT was a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

**Research Question**

The research question raised to guide the study was:

How is ICT a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria?

**Hypotheses**

This null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

ICT is not a significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive survey research design. According to Emaikwu (2015), descriptive survey design is one in which a group of people or items are studied in their natural setting by collecting, analysing and interpreting data from people considered to be a representative sample of the entire population. The population of the study is made up of 229,227 teenagers from 10 Internally Displaced Persons Camps in Benue State, Nigeria (State Emergency Management Agency, 2021). Out of this population, 289 respondents were sampled. The instrument used for data collection was a structured rating scale titled “Information and Communication Technology and Functional Education Management Rating Scale (ICTFEMRS)”. The rating scale was structured into two sections A and B. Section A contained the instruction for respondents, while section B elicited information on ICT as determinant of managing functional education. Data was obtained through direct contact with the respondents in IDP camps in the area of study with the aid of four research assistants for a faster coverage. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. The decision was based on the limit of numbers when a mean response score of 2.50 was considered a high extent and below 2.50 was low extent. The null hypothesis was tested using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

**Research Question**

How is ICT a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria?

Table 1. Mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on influence of ICT on managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue state, Nigeria

| Item No | Item Description | N | VHE | HE | ME | LE | VLE | $\overline{X}$ | *SD* | Deci |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | ICT can be used for registration of IDPs | 289 | 40 | 53 | 69 | 36 | 91 | 2.71 | 1.43 | ME |
| 2. | Educational technology is possible at IDPs | 289 | 82 | 72 | 45 | 60 | 30 | 3.40 | 1.36 | HE |
| 3. | Teenagers can be digitally connected through ICT to avoid crowded gatherings | 289 | 112 | 89 | 51 | 21 | 16 | 3.90 | 1.16 | HE |
| 4. | ICT can facilitate case management of IDPs | 289 | 6 | 78 | 31 | 73 | 101 | 2.36 | 1.27 | LE |
| 5. | ICT has opportunities of learning skills | 289 | 67 | 76 | 31 | 81 | 34 | 3.21 | 1.38 | HE |
| | Cluster Mean/SD | | | | | | | 3.12 | 1.32 | HE |

Note: Very High Extent (VHE) =4.50-5.00, High Extent (HE) = 3.50-4.49, Moderate Extent (ME) =2.50-2.99, Low Extent (LE) = 1.49-2.49, Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1.00-1.49, Cluster Mean=3.00 and SD=0.00.

Table 2. Chi-square test on influence of ICT on managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue state, Nigeria

| Responses | Observed N | Expected N | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|
| VHE | 40 | 57.8 | -17.8 |
| HE | 53 | 57.8 | -4.8 |
| ME | 69 | 57.8 | 11.3 |
| LE | 36 | 57.8 | 21.8 |
| VLE | 91 | 57.8 | 33.2 |
| Total | 289 | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Chi-square | 35.34[a] |
| DF | 4 |
| Asymp. Sig. | 0.00 |

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 57.

Table 1 shows the mean scores of items 6-10 as 2.71, 3.40, 3.90, 3.36 and 2.21 with corresponding standard deviation of 1.43, 1.36, 1.16, 1.27 and 1.38 respectively. All the items are above cut-off point of 2.50 except item 4. This means that the respondents said that to a moderate extent, ICT can be used for registration of IDPs; to a high extent; educational technology is possible at IDPs; to a high extent; teenagers can be digitally connected through ICT to avoid overcrowded gatherings; to a low extent; ICT can facilitate case management of IDPs and to a high extent; ICT has opportunities of learning skills. The cluster mean of 3.12 with corresponding standard deviation of 1.32 is high. This implies that ICT is a significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps

**Hypothesis**: ICT is not a significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

Table 2 shows that chi-square=35.34a, df=4; P=.00<0.05. Since probability value of 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that ICT is not a significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria is therefore, rejected. This implies that to a high extent, ICT is a positive significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the analysis and the result obtained from the field, the following discussion is presented: ICT is a positive significant determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue

State, Nigeria. The study found that; to a moderate extent, ICT can be used for registration of IDPs; to a high extent; educational technology is possible at IDPs; to a high extent; teenagers can be digitally connected through ICT; to a low extent; ICT can facilitate case management of IDPs and to a high extent; ICT has opportunities of learning skills. This finding agrees with Sule (2020) who found a significant positive influence of higher education needs on development of displaced persons, provision of scholarships/bursaries on access to higher education; and provision of certified distance learning and e-learning opportunities on access to higher education for displaced person and recommended that the government should urgently manage the higher education needs of displaced persons through adequate provision of scholarships/bursaries, distance learning and e-learning opportunities to enhance access to higher education. The mentioned view captured aspects of ICT to be availed at IDPs as suggested by the present study; however functional education which should cut across all levels of education is not emphasized; which is the basis for the present study. Finding of the study also upholds the views of Idowu (1999), who posits that; functional education is the total process of bringing up individuals to develop their potentials (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) to the fullest and consequently be able to contribute maximally to the development of the society. It is therefore imperative to employ ICT as a medium for managing functional education among teenagers and beyond.

## CONCLUSION

Functional education is a catalyst for reducing the high rate of poverty in Nigeria. ICT is a determinant of managing functional education among teenagers in IDP camps in Benue State, Nigeria. ICT can be used for; registration of IDPs; provision of educational technology is at IDPs; connect teenagers digitally and create opportunities of acquiring skills.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The government at all levels should show its commitment and political-will to ensuring functional education through its funding, policy making, supervision and monitoring of educational projects and programmes using ICT.
2. Education stakeholders should ensure that education is managed towards producing teenagers with requisite skills knowledge and values through ICT relevant to the 21st century.
3. Education stakeholders especially educational managers should apply technological domains such as use of ICT for; registration and case management; digital connectivity for measuring connectivity of displaced children and their families for effective planning towards managing education at IDP camps.

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