

# An Assessment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Resources at a Higher Education Institution in Namibia

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## Abstract:

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the Information Communication Technologies (ICT) resources employed at a certain university campus in Namibia. The paper mainly concentrate on the implementation elements such as availability, adequacy as well as accessibility of the ICT resources at the university campus. The paper reviewed the literature specifically concerning the effect of ICT resources towards students learning activities.

Through a quantitative approach, an online questionnaire was designed to understand the questions related to the objectives of the study. A sample of 130 students through convenience sampling technique was selected from the population of students enrolling in various degree programs at the university campus. This quantitative study's primary aim was to assess variables using descriptive and inferential statistics concerning the phenomenon.

The study results shows that students at that specific campus are of the perspective that educational technologies are supportive for their academic achievements. Furthermore, the paper revealed that students are of the perspective that the ICT resources availability, adequacy and accessibility currently at that university campus seems not ideal.

The study offers practitioners, education officers and researchers a blueprint for designing an educational environment that supports effective students learning, specifically at the Higher learning institution level.

**Keywords:** Educational technology (ET), Information Communication Technology (ICT) resources, Higher education (HE), learning activities.

## 1. Introduction

The creation and advancement of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) is among the major breakthroughs in human attempts to alter the society and to expand the way knowledge is transmitted (Oyefara, Adejoh, Adisa, Abdulsalam, & Alabi, 2021). Basri, Alandejani and Almadani (2017) agree that ICT has become an important source of innovation and improvement of efficiency for many sectors across the globe. For example, through the use of the technologies modern businesses have been marketed, and in the health sector, technology is used for the diagnosis of diseases to the treatment of patients. Similarly, in the education sector, the application of ICT is a critical part of the learning process both outside and inside the classroom.

In their writing, Ahmad and Sheikh (2021) argues that the integration of ICT in educational organizations helps in reducing barriers of place and time. Likewise, ICT enhances the competency of teachers and students (Basri et al., 2018). A number of researchers Ahmed and Sheikh (2020); Victor and Bolanle (2017) are of the outlook that students learn better by using ICT, however, they also argues that many educational settings struggle to offer basic technological conveniences to their students. The availability and adequacies of ICT resources enable improvement of learning as students become less dependent on teachers (Khurshid et al., 2016). It therefore seems that the integration of ICT should become a prerequisite in the educational and learning process of students. Ahmed and Sheikh (2020) present that transmission of knowledge through ICT has a positive impact on students learning. They state that learners can take advantage of the immense opportunities to boost their learning through various communication technologies. Therefore, this paper argue too that ICT has a beneficial effect on learning and student performance when it becomes a component

of the classroom and teaching environment. Given that modern students have access to ICT devices including laptops, computers and mobile phones, etc. and that Universities of today employ these tools in their operational model, it therefore seems significant for researchers to not only assess the impact of these tools on learning but also to examine the implementation elements affecting their effectiveness.

Whereas the business community has made significant strides in the use of ICT when facilitating commerce and business transactions, the spread of digital culture to higher education has been comparatively slow in many parts of the world, particularly in developing countries (Oyefara, Adejoh, Adisa, Abdulsalam, & Alabi, 2021). Universities in Namibia have employed ICT facilities at their campuses, for reasons such as the improvement of learning methods, teaching, research and development. For example, the University of Namibia (UNAM), The International University of Management (IUM) and NUST across all their campuses implemented a Learning Management System (LMS) or eLearning platform to facilitate online teaching and learning. According to Waiganjo (2022) LMS integrates student's assignments, forums, quizzes as well as live and recorded tutorials. Additionally, other platforms such as Zoom meetings, Google hangout, Emails, WhatsApp can also be used for communication and lessons (Waiganjo, 2022). To access e-learning though, resources such as smartphones, laptops, internet accessibility and software applications are needed both by students and lecturers (Sapkota & Narayangarh, 2020).

This paper observed that the universities in Namibia have made efforts in making sure that their lecture halls are equipped amongst others with overhead projectors to enable visual and audio presentations. As for some of the universities campuses, It is however not clearly documented how effective their ICT resources are towards the students learning, or the implementation elements impact on student learning. Adopting the perspective of the students, the main purpose of this paper is therefore to examine the implementation elements of ICT resources that are affecting student learning at a specific university campus in Namibia, primarily concentrating on elements of availability, adequacy and accessibility of ICT resources. Furthermore, the study examined the benefit and challenges faced by students concerning ICT resources at the campus in question. The specific objectives of this paper are (1) to assess student's perception of the availability of ICT resources; (2) to examine student's perception of the adequacy of the available ICT resources; as well as (3) to determine the student's perception on accessibility of ICT resources at a particular university campus in Namibia.

## **2. Literature Review**

The aim of this paper's literature review is to presents a recap of the findings from earlier studies regarding the adoption of ICT in higher education and its impact towards students learning. This section is organized as follows, section 2.1 presents the overview of ICT in the education setting, 2.2 analyses the recent empirical literature on ICT towards high education student learning, and section 2.3 concludes.

### **2.1 Overview of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) on student learning**

According to Laudon and Laudon (2014) ICT infrastructure includes investment in hardware, software and services such as consulting, education and training shared across the entire organisation. It refers to the technologies that are used for collecting, storing, editing and communicating of information into various formats. In the corporate world, a firm's IT infrastructure provides the foundation for serving customers, for working with vendors as well as for managing internal business processes (Laudon & Laudon, 2014). ICT comprises of the use of computer based technology and the Internet to make information and communication services available to a wide range of users. According to Ahmad and Sheikh (2022) ICT technologies provide rapid access to information through multiple types of communication devices such as smartphones, desktop computers, laptops, fax machines, internet, Wi-Fi devices and multimedia products of which universities are currently using to educate their students (Humbhi, Tareen, & Raheem, 2022).

Waiganjo (2022) wrote that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, every university may need to adopt e-learning as a way of teaching and learning. The author also argues that success of e-learning depends on the factors such as online platforms, internet connections, devices to access online platforms as well as ICT knowledge. This paper therefore argue that in this age of globalization, ICT constitutes an important aspect of education. Humbhi, Tareen and Raheem (2022) indicate that today, the integration of ICT has turned out to be a

requirement for the students in regards to their education and learning processes. They argues that students are now less dependent on teachers for learning as ICT aids in instructing even outside of the classroom. ICT based knowledge transmission has been recognized to have a positive effect on teachers' teaching methods and also on pupils' different learning styles (Ahmed & Sheikh, 2020) (Basri, Alandejani, & Almadani, 2018).

## **2.2 Empirical literature on ICT towards student learning**

Adopting a structured (quantitative) approach to accumulate data and both descriptive and inferential statistics, Humbhi, Tareen and Raheem (2022) examined the effects of the availability of ICT resources on students' educational performances as well as usability and impact of ICT on students' educational performances in the higher institutions in the far-flung areas of Pakistan. The results elaborated that higher educational institutions in Balochistan do not have accessibility to all kind of ICT resources. Though, there is non-availability of internet connectivity and adequate number of ICT equipment in the educational institutions, the results show that within the limited resources maximum of the students are using ICT resources to complete their educational tasks (Humbhi, Tareen, & Raheem, 2022). Furthermore, Humbhi, Tareen and Raheem (2022) study results show a positive significant linear association between the accessibility, availability and usability of ICT resources and the students' educational performances. The findings demonstrated that ICT has an integral element in the students' educational outcomes in the modern age (Humbhi, Tareen, & Raheem, 2022). ICT supports students in their search for retrieval and review of numerous sources of information (Humbhi, Tareen, & Raheem, 2022). It also assists students in completing their academic work more easily. In summary, their findings highlighted internet connectivity issue and slow speed issues, of which the authors argues that the students therefore face problems while accessing databases and downloading E-journals, Ebooks to complete their academic tasks (Humbhi, Tareen, & Raheem, 2022).

In a similar study, using the quantitative approach, a study conducted by Ahmad and Sheikh (2021) investigated the impact of ICT on student's learning at the University of Punjab in Pakistan. Through a convenience sampling technique, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 275 students whereby the results of the study demonstrate that students at the University of the Punjab have access to various kinds of ICT applications and resources. Moreover, they have an adequate number of ICT equipment available for their use and they are familiar with various kinds of ICT applications and resources which they use in their educational tasks during studies. Hence, a strong positive linear correlation exists between availability, accessibility and user-ability of using ICT resources and the student's educational learning. Ahmad and Sheikh (2021) study confirms that ICT plays a significant role in the student's educational accomplishments. According to the author, ICT helps students in searching, retrieving and consulting various types of information sources. It also helps them in completing their educational tasks in a quick manner. The results further demonstrate that the University of the Punjab has Web connectivity restricted to some specific places. Therefore, the author recommended that internet facility should be expanded throughout the university premises with the goal that students may use Web-based electronic learning resources such as e-journals, databases and overall study-related information for learning and research purposes.

In other similar studies, Basri et al., (2018) investigated the effects ICT has on the academic performance of the students belonging to Saudi Universities. The findings reveal that there exists a significant relationship between students' performance and ICT adoption. It was also noticed that using such technologies has contributed more in improving the performance of female students rather than the male students. Additionally, the impact of ICT on students' performance was investigated by Salam et al. (2017). The results of this study indicated that ICT acts as a catalyst in improving the quality of education and students' performance. The authors suggested that ICT infrastructure should be provided in all public schools to reduce the digital gap and help the students to acquire technological competencies. The researchers also recommended that policymakers should revise the educational policy by introducing technology-based curricula and provide opportunities for the professional development of teachers. Jahanian (2015) carried out a survey to identify the relationship between the use of ICT and the learning level of elementary school students with the aim to inquire how elementary students are affected by ICT. The results showed a positive relationship between the usage of ICT and the educational accomplishments of elementary school students. It was concluded that creating a learning-oriented environment with the help of technology infrastructure

motivates students to learn and think more.

Additionally, Slechtova (2015) investigated the attitudes of students from various disciplines relating to ICT usage. The results indicated that more than half of the participants were enthusiastic and willing to make use of the ICT for their academic achievements and purpose. Furthermore, students' involvement and experiences were investigated by Conole et al. (2008) whereby their study revealed that the participants of various departments had undeniable and easy access to modern technology for the attainment of academic purposes. Students with higher levels of ICT literacy may utilize their constituent abilities to enhance learning, or they may use their experience with ICT mediated activities to improve learning, accessing, managing, evaluating, and conveying information of which all are examples of ICT literacy component abilities (Katz & Macklin, 2004). Harerimana and Mtshali (2019) explored the types of ICT applications used and the skills level of nursing students in higher education at a selected university in South Africa. In total, 150 nursing students were examined in this study and it was indicated from the results that the students have different levels of skills in using various ICT applications and it was also noted that the skill level of students increases with respect to year of study. The ownership of digital devices, such as laptops and tablets, was also significantly associated with the skills level of using ICT applications.

Geoffrey (2010) investigated the students of Gulu University, Nigeria to assess the effects of ICT on student's learning. The study established that the availability of technological resources in the University is still very much wanting and very inadequate for the students to use. The researcher concluded that the availability, accessibility and user-ability of ICT resources significantly affect students learning at Gulu University. Other studies Saleem and Zahra (2017) also confirmed a significant relationship between user-ability, accessibility of ICT and student learning. In another study, Nisar et al. (2011) also elaborate that the availability of ICT in education is supportive for the students learning. Moreover, results from the study of Nisar et al. (2011) also reported that usage and impact of ICT in the education sector can be predicted by the availability, usage, knowledge and effectiveness of ICT.

Cited in Humbhi, Tareen and Raheem (2022) ICT and learning results showed a negative association between each other. Various researchers noted that more ICT literate students perform worse academically (Chen & Peng, 2008) (Englander, Terregrossa, & Wang, 2010). Carr (2020) elaborated that pupils with more ICT exposure diverted from attaining their academic purposes or greater ICT literate pupils gain more risky anticipations or incline to immoral practices. Similarly, (Miller, et al., (2017) reported that pupils who opt for ICT undertaking over some traditional learning processes may be diverted and spend too much time on the IT based applications. Another negative aspect is that students who devote their maximum time on surfing the internet and give less time to their activities on traditional learning, improve and acquire less, and show worse academic performance as well as an achievement than those who spend less time on internet (Gubbels & Swart, 2020).

### **2.3 Conclusion**

After reviewing the above relevant literature, this paper therefore concludes that ICT and learning have a strong correlation. Furthermore, the reviewed literature also revealed that ICT has both a positive and negative effect on students learning and academic realization. It has been therefore evident from the previous studies that integration of technology in education is vital for the improvement of students, teachers and ultimately the overall institutional performance.

## **3. Research methodology**

The objective was to obtain demographic data of students and to determine the opinion of participants regarding the status of ICT on the university campus. A quantitative approach was employed to accumulate data, where descriptive and inferential statistics is used for the analysis of the obtained data.

### **3.1 Population and Sampling**

The population of this study was comprised of students currently enrolled in various faculties at the university campus, of which 3 828 are undergraduate students and 136 are postgraduate students, thereby totaling at 3 964 students. Participants available on the campus were selected for the study through a

convenience sampling technique. The study applied Slovin's formula  $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$  to arrive at the sample size of 150. The sample size was calculated at a confidence level of 92 percent, giving a margin of error of 8%. It is for this computation that Slovin's formula is believed to be reasonable as per the desired degree of accuracy.

### 3.2 Instrument

An online Questionnaire link, designed with Google form, was shared with the students through the WhatsApp application. Out of 150 students in the study, only 130 filed and submitted the forms. Hence, only 130 forms (87% response rate) were used for the analysis. The questionnaire was divided into five parts. Section (1) confirmed that the respondent is indeed a student registered at the specific campus, Section (2) examined the participants' demographic background. Section (3) contains 7 items that investigated the availability of ICT resources, section (4) contains 6 items that investigated the Adequacy to ICT resources. Section (5) discusses 4 items that investigated accessibility of ICT resources at that specific university campus.

### 3.3 Procedure of Data collection

The data was collected in a period of 2 week (14 days). Questionnaire was designed to give a clear overview and purpose of the study. In regards to ethical considerations, this paper did not mention the precise name of the university but rather refer to it as a particular or specific Namibian university throughout. Lastly, the researcher guaranteed the participants in writing that their views and information will be treated confidential, honored as private, anonymous and strictly be used only for academic purpose.

## 4 Results of the study

### 4.1 Demographic Information

Table 1 gives demographical details about the participants of this study. It shows that the participation of female students is quite dominant 70% than that of the male students 30%. Out of the 125 participants, the majority of the participants of this study were between the age group of (52%) 21 – 25 years. Additionally, majority of the participants (42%) were enrolled in faculty of education programs.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Response rate		
• Students	125	96%
• Not students	5	4%
Gender		
• Male	38	30 %
• Female	87	70 %
Age		
• Under 20 years	11	9 %
• 21 – 25 years	65	52 %
• 26 – 30 years	25	20 %
• Above 30 years	24	19. %
Faculty of Study		
• Education	52	42 %
• Business administration	38	30 %
• ICT	10	8 %
• Tourism, Hospitality and events management	3	2 %
• Strategic management	12	10%
• Center for Distance		

learning	1	1%
• Others	9	7%
Year of Study		
• First year	32	26%
• Second year	21	17%
• Third year	42	34%
• Fourth year	26	21%
• Postgraduate students	4	3%

#### 4.2 ICT facilities and students learning activities

Table 2 presents that ICT related facilities are helpful for students in their academic achievements, as the majority of participants agreed that ICT resources is useful for them to fulfill their academic needs.

Table 2. ICT facilities on academic achievement

ICT related facilities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
YES	115	92%
NO	10	8%

#### 4.3 Availability of ICT resources

The next question dealt with the opinion of participants regarding the availability of ICT resources at the campus. The participants were given a list of seven ICT equipment and were asked to indicate which of these facilities are available or not available to them. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3. Availability of ICT resources on campus

ICT Resources	Available (%)	Not-Available (%)
Computers availability in lecture rooms	25%	75%
Internet (Wi-Fi) Availability & accessibility on campus	15%	85%
Projectors availability in the lecture rooms	83%	17%
Computer Laboratory	75%	25%
Software's availability in the computer laboratory	57%	43%
Video Conferencing equipment	14%	86%
E-journals/E-Books availability in the library	43%	57%

#### 4.4 Adequacy of ICT resources

Inadequacy of ICT resources restricts students to perform well in their educational activities. Accordingly, the participants were asked some questions related to the adequacy of ICT equipment's which are shown in figure 1. Accordingly, the majority of participants (72%, 90% and 88%) indicated that they are not satisfied with the adequacy of computers in lecture rooms, internet (Wi-Fi) access as well as video conferencing equipment at the campus.

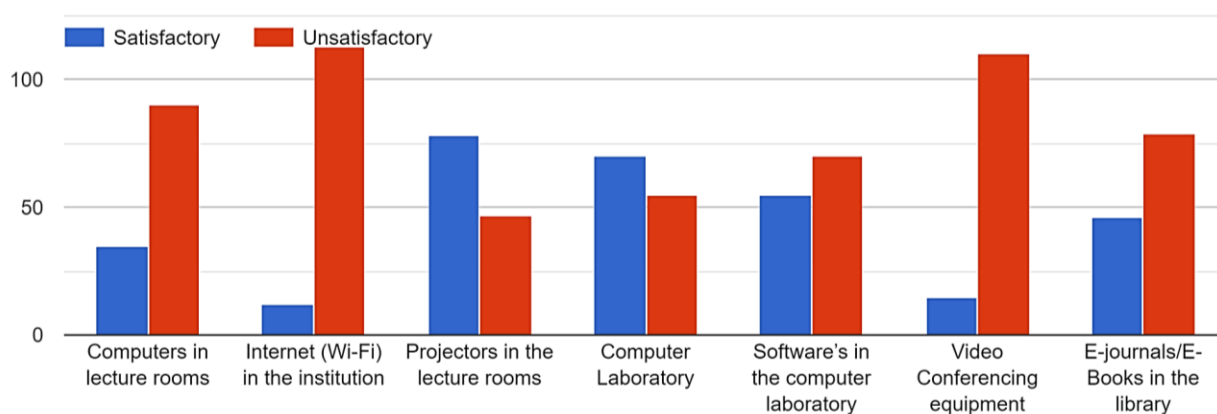


Figure 1. Adequacy of ICT resources on campus

#### 4.5 Accessibility to ICT resources

The participants were asked how often they have access to ICT resources at the institution. Figure 2 above reveals that majority of the participants (60% and 60%) indicates that they never at all access ICT tools in lecture rooms and internet in the lecture rooms correspondingly. Very few participants (18%, 16%) indicated that they always access ICT tools in the library as well as ICT tools in the computer lab.

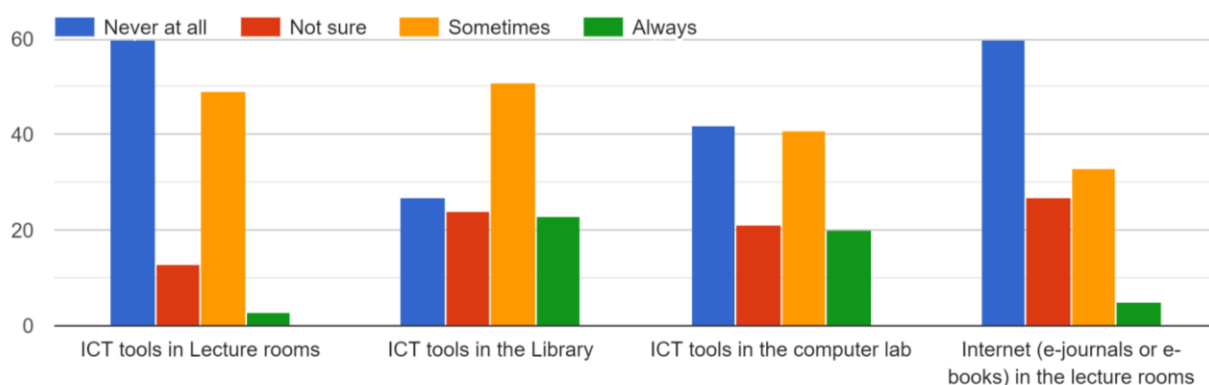


Figure 2. ICT resources accessibility on campus

### 5 Discussion

In this study, 92% of the respondent concur that ICT resources are necessary for student fulfilment of academic duties. This is supported both by Ahmad and Sheikh (2021); Basri et al. (2018); Victor and Bolanle (2017) that ICT enhances the competency of both teachers and learners as it reduces the barriers of place and times as well as helping with effective students learning. This finding appear as a confirmation that not only researchers that are of the perception that ICT is necessary for learning but students too are aware of it. Concerning the availability of the ICT resources at the investigated university campus, this papers result indicate that there are no computers available in the lecture halls as majority (75%) of participants indicated so. The result also shows that, the university campus internet (Wi-Fi), video conferencing equipment as well as E-journals/E-Books availability or accessibility in the library are also all not available. This may mean that students at this campus are somewhat limited especially when it comes to internet (Wi-Fi) communications and access of information, thereby negatively affecting their improvement on learning (Khurshid et al., 2016).

On the other hand, the study presents that the university's campus examined lecture halls are well equipped with overhead projectors and a computer laboratory with necessary software available on the computers. This appears to mean that lectures and other presentations done at the specific campus are presented with rich information and thereby able to accommodate different audience learning styles. Additionally, the availability of a computer lab seem to not only compliment the unavailability of computers in lecture halls but may also mean that when students needs to use computers especially those that may not possess computers, the campus seems to cater for them.

This study also examined the adequacy of the available ICT resources. Students at the university campus are currently not satisfied with internet (Wi-Fi) in the institution, software in the computer laboratory, video

conferencing materials as well as accessing of e-journals/e-books in the library. This seems to mean that students are experiencing unsatisfactory internet access connectivity when using the university's Wi-Fi, of which this paper did not determine whether it is a university technical ineffectiveness or that of the university internet service provider (ISP).

Furthermore, students at the campus are not able to host or conduct academic video conferences as the infrastructure in this regards is unavailable/unsatisfactory. As for the software availability in the computer lab computers, student at this specific campus are of the perspective that they are not satisfied and cannot rely on them. This may mean that the software either not installed, stopped working or perhaps not updated. Additionally, the students agree that when it comes to the overhead projectors as well as the computer laboratory, they find these ICT resources satisfying.

The result presented in this study demonstrated that majority of students at this specific campus never at all access ICT tools in Lecture room as well as accessing Internet (e-journals or e-books) in the lecture rooms. This seems to correspond with the earlier discussed findings of this paper. Additionally, only very few students at the campus have indicated that they are always able to access ICT tools particularly in the library and in the computer laboratory. Interestingly, a certain small number of students at the campus are of the opinion that they are not certain if they can even access ICT tools both in lecture halls, computer laboratory and library. It is not clear as to how this students carryout their tasks however it seems they do not rely on the university's ICT resources for it and one can only wonder how their academic performance is affected by this element.

## 6 Conclusions

In today's world, ICT not only help educational institutions disseminate knowledge but it also help deconstruct learning and make education learner centered. ICT seems to open up opportunities for learners to engage in critical thinking and it incentivizes learning to be self-reliant, creative, innovative and efficient. Furthermore, ICT has not only changed the approach of learning but it has changed the learning process as well. On the basis of the findings of this study, it is concluded that the specific university campus student perception of the ICT resources specifically around the availability, adequacy and accessibility of the ICT resources at the specific campus is of a serious concern that need a serious intervention. This study therefore recommends that educational institutions all around the country and world at large need to employ effective ICT resources as well as effective ICT operational procedures and strategies to enhance and maintain their effectiveness particularly because ICT resources remain among the key resources universities needs in attaining their educational strategic objectives and missions.

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