

Examining the Mediating Effect of Self-efficacy on the Relationship between Work Experience, ICT Acceptance and Employability among Undergraduate Students in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to look into the relationship between work experience, ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students in North Eastern universities in Nigeria. The study also examines the mediating effect of self-efficacy among undergraduate students. The research sample was 264 which was also drawn among undergraduate students in North Eastern Nigeria. The result showed that work experience does not have a significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students in the universities. Likewise, ICT acceptance was shown to have a significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students in the universities. The results further showed that, both ICT acceptance and work experience have a significant relationship with self-efficacy and employability among undergraduate students in the universities. However, self-efficacy was found to mediate the relationship between ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students in the universities. Additionally, self-efficacy was found to have an indirect effect on the relationship between work experience and employability among undergraduate students in the universities. This study contributes to the body of knowledge since employability among undergraduate students in the region was under researched, consequently undertaking this study has shown a limelight to researches in the region.

Keywords: Work Experience, ICT Acceptance, Self-efficacy, Employability and Undergraduate Students

Introduction

It has been a lingering dream of every undergraduate students to graduate with good results and get white collar job which will be beneficial to himself and the family. Nevertheless, due to the fierce competition in the employment market, and most of the undergraduate students

in the universities are usually unable to do their jobs, because they do not have sufficient knowledge and technology reserves, therefore most of the university students can not improve themselves accurately and competently, thus the employment situation of university students is increasingly not bright. From the employer's point of view, new technologies, challenges of work experience and new industries are emerging in today's society, and the demand and standards for talents in the employment market are increasingly transformed. In any case, the employment market is a combination of advantages and disadvantages. Most of the times, employers are in the disadvantage of information when they enlist university undergraduate students. The danger of information lopsidedness in the employment relationship frequently keeps ventures from retaining university undergraduate students. From the viewpoint of developing our knowledge, creativeness and abilities in the universities and universities, colleges and institutions should bear the obligation of developing and transporting talents for the economic development of our humanities. In the new monetary time, the market request is evolving quickly, so is the talent market. So therefore, universities need to know the requirements of social talents and undergraduate students' capacities as expected in order to show students as per their ability and develop the talents required by the general public. Subsequently, it is essential to study the assessment systems of undergraduate students' employability.

In addition, in the developing nations, most of the unemployment are among the school age children particularly youths. Research has also indicated that, plenty of developing countries of the world are having high school age children with joblessness rates and they includes amongst them Middle East (24.0%), North Africa (26.6%) and South East Europe (22.6%) (Deshmukh, 2017). For instance in Nigeria, Mohammed et al. (2020) *it is a well-known fact* that the high rate of civil agitation, political thuggery and kidnapping can be traced to the unemployment situations in Nigeria.

Additionally, Nigerian government has put in place numerous strategies and diverse interventions programmes which is aimed at battling unemployment in the region. The programmes which it includes bodies and agencies which deals with skills acquisition and they includes National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), SURE-P and National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (Muyideen, 2020; Olojuolawe and Amin, 2019). Apart from that, government on its own part has also established TraderMoni and N-Power, Presidential Youth Empowerment Scheme (P-YES) (Muyideen, 2020). Notwithstanding the determination by the government and sectors of the economy, the programme has woefully failed in providing appropriate youth training for employment and talent development. Consequently this has compelled the need for a study to highlight on the mediating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between ICT acceptance, work experience and employability among undergraduate students.

Research has shown that, youth's unemployment in the country has a percentage of about 19%-25%, while in the first, second and third quarter of 2016 it is about 25%. Even with the fact that youth unemployment has increased rapidly in terms of percentage of about 33.1% in the year 2017. Whereas as for the year 2018, the percentage has abruptly increased to 38% respectively. More so, the percentage has afterwards dropped to about 36.5% in the year 2019 particularly looking at the graph below (Okolie et al., 2020).

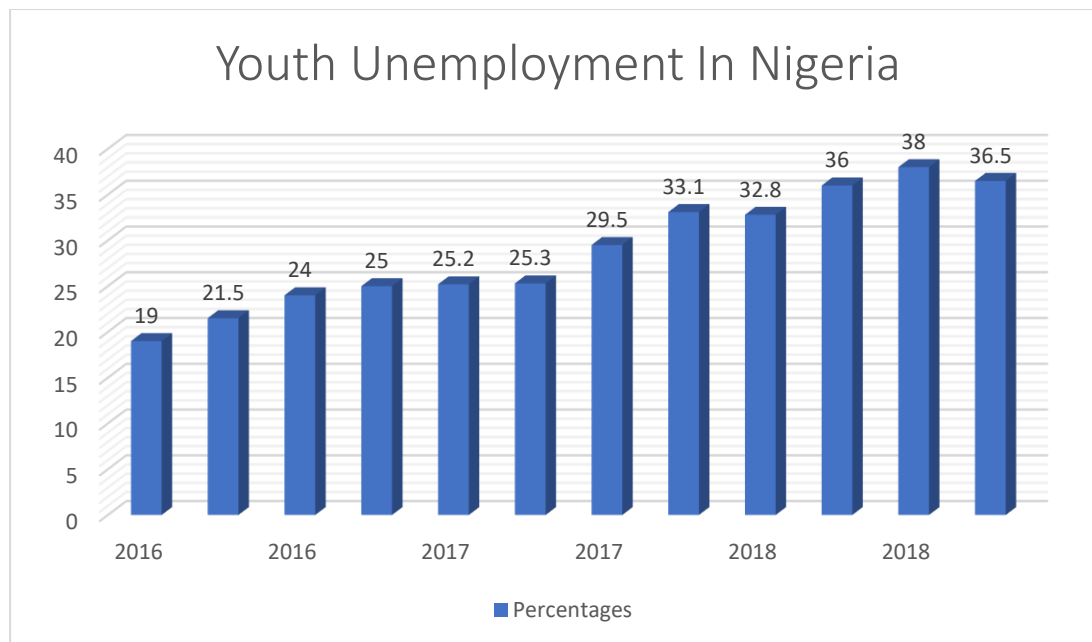


Figure 1.1 Showing Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

Source: (Okolie et al., 2020)

Literature Review

Employability as a concept was dated back to the commencement of twentieth century, that is when it has seen a similar divergence in the middle of an individual which is considered to be whichever amongst employable or not, nevertheless as the century changes, many individuals were progressively seen just like a more dynamic specialist in their employability, that is people were viewed as having the option to impact the degree to which they were employable (Brooks et al., 2014). Perspectives on the key features of employability are normally reliant on by those who are vested with the responsibility of defining the concept (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005; Sung et al., 2013; Yorke, 2006). Many employers usually perceive employability as something that is basically connected with undergraduate students' transferrable skills because they are obviously concerned about their readiness in the place of work (McQuaid et al., 2005). Most undergraduate students, perceived, employability as having a more restricted meaning, and is viewed as a temporary unfortunate responsibility, which is just associated with getting a new line of work (Eguabor and Aigbavboa, 2021).

Therefore, employability as a concept is having some difficulties when it comes to definitions (Andrews and Russell, 2012). Consequently, employability does not have a specific common conceptual language (Bano and Vasantha, 2020; Harvey, 2001), and for that reason, this notion was frequently used correspondingly with key terms like “enterprise”, which is also seen to be closely associated with other terms such as “entrepreneurship” (Pool, 2020; Pool and Sewell, 2007). Most of the times, the concept is frequently use whenever discussing on labour market policies, that is in year 2001 when the UN made employability amongst its four top most priorities for national policy action which is on youth unemployment (McQuaid et al., 2005), but then again widespread variety of meanings attached to the term makes this challenging (Brooks et al., 2014).

A lot of scholars have defined the term employability as a set of achievements related to personal and external factors that make individuals more likely to achieve appropriate,

sustainable employment in relation to their level of qualification (Rothwell and Arnold, 2007) and to be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and society as a whole (Ashraf et al., 2018). Equally, employability capital refers to the perception that individuals have of the various forms of capital which are acquired through their life experiences that may promote their employability (Donald et al., 2019; Fugate et al., 2004; Caballero et al., 2020; Tomlinson, 2017; Harvey and Knight, 2005).

Notwithstanding the definitions given by several scholars above on the term employability across different contexts, none of the definitions given by these scholars suited employability appropriately. Consequently, the definition given by (Harvey, 2005) as quoted in (Okafor and Mohee, 2019) is more appropriate and it is about learning and the emphasis is less on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. In conclusion, this study has come to a conclusion that employability may be seen as the ability of undergraduate students to possess skills, knowledge and attributes which enables them to boost their career and subsequent employment.

Theorising Employability

The CareerEDGE model.

The CareerEDGE model was established by (Pool et al., 2007), it is a framework which is essentially destined to explain to most of the students, parents and teachers equally on how the provision of content by universities results in employability (Pool et al., 2007). CareerEDGE model describes five categories of learning content which are mostly at the upper level and they include career development learning, work experience, generic skills, emotional intelligence and degree subject knowledge and understanding skills that each undergraduate student is expected to have the chance to access and develop. Whereas, as for the lower level which has to do with reflection and evaluation, whereby Pool et al. (2007) has categorized as the fundamental connection in the middle of access to content and employability, in which undergraduate students can then develop higher levels of self-efficacy and self-confidence, which in turn leads to better-quality of self-esteem, and afterwards employability (Pool et al., 2007; Krouwel et al., 2019).

CareerEDGE model has one of the most distinguishing features which are dual. The effort to specify different classes of educational content which is seen to be vital for the development of employability clarifies what universities need to deliver, even though the categories require reflection within diverse educational contexts. While as for other important feature is the idea that a positive self-image and being able to effectively apply learned content precede employability. This makes the educational outcomes of employability development more explicit by describing it as the efficacious and confident application of content, which increases the general applicability and clarity of the model within education. Conversely, the outcomes remain relatively abstract in that they again provide no concrete opinion of what the application of learned content for better employability should look like in practice. To end with, in accordance with the GED model, Pool et al. (2007) also assert that reflection and evaluation are required for employability to develop, reaffirming their significance (Krouwel et al., 2019).

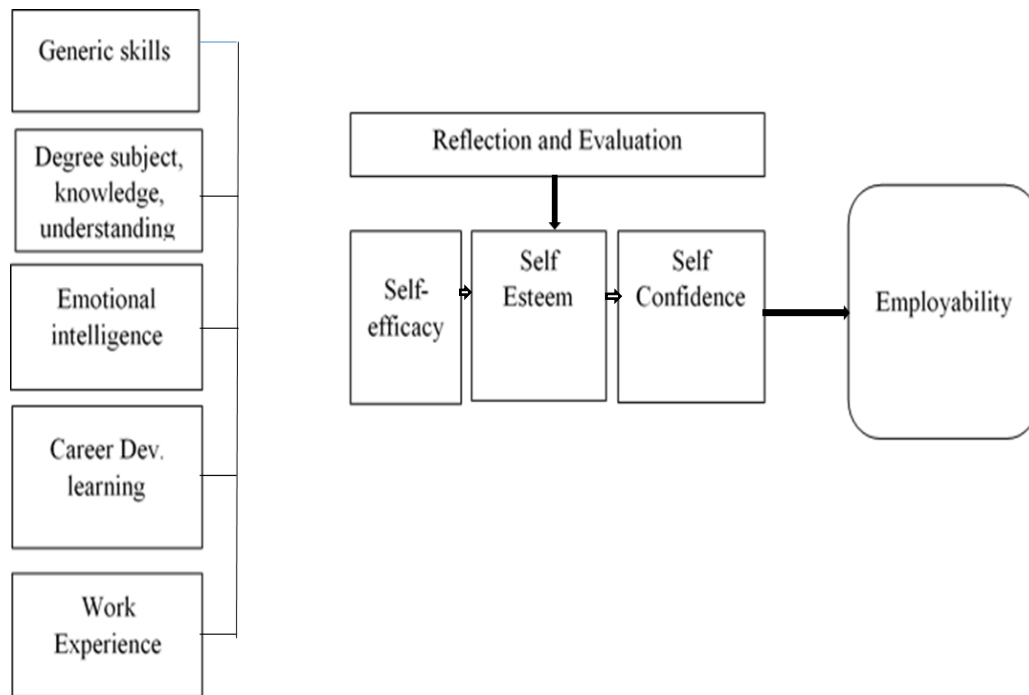


Figure 2.1 CareerEDGE Model (Pool et al., 2007, P. 280).

ICT Acceptance

Information and communication technology has turn out to be a household name universally and this has brought about a fundamental changes in the way people live, learn and work. About a decade or two have observed marvellous changes in the way businesses and organizations carry out their activities as a result of the emergence of Information and communication technology (ICT). According to Ubani in (Njoku, 2006) ICT is the combination of technologies for collecting, storing, processing, communicating and delivering of information. Ikwuka (2013) defined ICT as the electronic means of capturing, processing, storing and disseminating information. At present, classrooms do change direction to environment which encourages team work amongst students, teachers and learning devices. In this era of digital age, it is essential that all available means be used to achieve competitiveness globally. No nation can be left out in the quest for globalization including Nigeria. There is an indication that, in this 21st Century, undergraduate student's level of job search and employment depends solely on the level of talents they have with regards to ICT skills. Those who do not have ICT talents would be considered as outdated and seen as not in tune with realities at present. More so, technology has brought about several innovations in all aspects of human activities both at home and in the offices. Accordingly, several offices and their essential activities were now digitalized. Though, it requires a work force which is digitally inclined to carry out work in many places, hence the need for undergraduate students to have employability talents while in the course of their studies.

ICT acceptance has helped to discover and achieve up-to-date knowledge among university undergraduate students which has equally improved their academic activities. As undergraduate students would now have the option to investigate for chat with devices on the web, they are additionally ready to look for occupations online by presenting their curriculum vitae. Moreover, Elo et al. (2020) contends that the information technology has

fundamentally affected on the research outcomes of undergraduate students in Nigerian Universities of Agriculture, as this has permitted them to have methods for interaction, particularly gaining knowledge and skills which would encourage employability. Other obvious investigations conducted among Delta State University, Abraka, undergraduate students in Nigeria announced that the information technology has contributed extremely in easing research activities thereby facilitating their chances of graduation to be employable (Apuke, 2016; Oberiri, 2017).

Apuke and Iyendo (2018) have uncovered that utilizing the Information technology by undergraduate students from university of Abuja in Nigeria has suddenly brought an end to lack of computer skills, issue of searching through on the web and slow internet server and these has been replaced by quickest methods for looking through the information technology and a medium of knowledge propagating and a resulting employment for undergraduate students who are potential graduates (Apuke et al., 2018).

A number of undergraduate students these days utilize distinctive applications or programs on their computers and mobile devices (Domingo and Garganté, 2016). A large portion of these undergraduate students make use of their computer and other digital devices to enable them to carry out their assignment, homework and paying bills to edit computerized photographs, some even post various pictures and updates via social media, and play games. They additionally utilize the antivirus program to secure and protect their computers. With the usage of ICT application, variety of tasks were accomplish on digital devices which usually improves the level of employability of potential graduate. Apart from the use of computers, they also have a software which is known as the operating system which enables users to use applications such as a browser or word processing on a desktop or laptop (Shelly and Vermaat, 2011). Aside from the operating system, using the technology nowadays has brought about many changes within the society, especially the industrial revolution has changed the society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many people were now found to interact directly with computers in fields such as publishing, science, education, health care, finance, government, travel, and manufacturing (Halili and Sulaiman, 2018).

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students.

Work Experience

Employability can be improved by applying work experience through the provision of practical experiences to undergraduate students which is connected directly with university courses, just as motivating the universities to change from work to improve proficiency outcomes especially for employers and the economy (Freudenberg et al., 2010). The convergence of work experience is centered on delivering a profoundly skilled labor force particularly to those that can meet industry and community desires. It is demonstrated that, work experience among undergraduate students is a fundamental factor particularly in making the transition from the industries to work and their ability to compete successfully in the employment market (Kay et al., 2019). Significant evidence has shown that appropriate work experience contextualizes undergraduate student learning, as it is influential and also contributes to graduate employment and which have to be included into scheme of courses at every possible opportunity (Reddan, 2015). Many types of work experience has been demonstrated by (Lowden et al., 2011) as they revealed that overwhelming help from universities and employers for work placements and internships (Bradley et al., 2019).

It is indicated that, work experience among undergraduate students is an indispensable feature which particularly contributes in making the changeover from the industries to work and their ability to compete successfully in the employment market (Kay et al., 2019). Significant evidence as regards to work experience contextualizes student learning, which is influential in graduate employment and should be combined into many course curricula wherever possible (Reddan, 2015). Work experience and other forms of value placements has been confirmed by (Lowden et al., 2011) whom have establish overwhelming support from universities and employers for work placements and internships (Bradley et al., 2019).

Numerous researchers were of the opinion that there are a few advantages from incorporating internship programs into university programs. Internships programs usually offers university students with a hands-on work experience in a way that is attach to classroom learning (Stansbie et al., 2016) and authorize university students to turn out to be more familiar with the work place (Goodwin and Mbah, 2019). Simultaneously, it is really challenging to organise and facilitate a well-organized internship program in the universities (Lam and Ching, 2007; Zopiatis, 2007). Zopiatis (2007) were of the opinion that, an efficient internship among students must be customized, the student should also be assign a significant tasks and interesting, competent supervisors, and that the organization's association ought to be favourable as a way of improving the interns. As portrayed by (Stansbie et al., 2013) entry level positions are usually valuable as per as stakeholders is concern, in any case, they are for that reason needed to be well organised.

Internship programs are usually useful in planning for the industry by enabling the undergraduate students to recognize the conditions of working and also to establish cordial relations with other workers and supervisors (Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou, 2013). Toward the completion of their internships, they would have enough experience especially the undergraduate students' and would have the ability and confidence to work with individuals, their ability to adjust to changes, their leadership, their knowledge of how the industry functions and their financial management competency (Lam et al., 2007). Students with the abilities, experience they gained from internship programs would empower them to improve their careers in order to settle on better educated decisions about promising circumstances which is accessible to all of them (Wang et al., 2014), and in place of others, this internship program can be in the later days turn into full time profession (Collins, 2002; Mensah et al., 2021).

Many studies in the past have demonstrated that internship programs is advantageous to undergraduate students as it improves their level of employability (Ishengoma and Vaaland, 2016) and more so, students are more confident about the level of their employability as a result of positive reports on their internship programs (Qenani et al., 2014). Effective conclusion of internship programs typically expands the chances of students in having some work and businesses particularly those that graduated with prior knowledge of the internship experience. More so, temporary positions programs have been revealed to be fundamental in improving undergraduate students employability (Yang et al., 2016) and it has been demonstrated to be quite possibly the most strong technique to overcome any barrier between employment demands and education, which by and large the pith of employability (Sapp and Zhang, 2009).

H2: There is a significant relationship between work experience and employability among undergraduate students.

ICT Acceptance and Self-efficacy

Al-Haderi (2013) has reiterated in his work that self-efficacy impacts on the technology usage for a longer period of time and has even influenced the selection process of which technology to be used (for example the Internet technology and e-commerce) and its perceived usefulness. A recent study conducted by (Kurilovas and Kubilinskiene, 2020) was aimed to build a model which predicts on the level of technology acceptance by most of the undergraduate students, it's subsequently found out that computer self-efficacy has been seen to have a straightforward influence on undergraduate students intent of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. More so, they have also testified that complexity in technology and facilitating conditions may seriously affects students intent to use indirectly. Additionally it has been established that computer self-efficacy has for that reason have more influence on perceived usefulness and also less effect on perceived ease of use (Kurilovas et al., 2020).

H3: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students.

Work Experience and Self-efficacy

Undergraduate students participate in work experience while they are still in the university. Accordingly this openness to work experience during the degree program is a significant method, which empowers undergraduate students to set up a concrete association in the midst of theory and practice, it additionally improves their confidence in completing the task of internship programs. Studies by (Jackson and Michelson, 2015) on the connection between work experience and employability have shown that employer's value undergraduate students who have taken part in a work experience program (Jackson and Collings, 2018). The reactions from students who have taken an interest in work placements programs equally show that work experience gives opportunity for students to develop based on knowledge gained in the normal classroom circumstance (Jackson, 2013). Work experience equally helps students who are potential graduates to have a better understanding of the jobs and expectations for their occupation, and engaging in with talented specialist's elevates their confidence and probabilities of employment (Jackson et al., 2015; Putwain et al., 2013).

Notwithstanding the significant scholarly admission requirements, earlier work experience is nowadays are desirable courses in the universities for most final year to embrace before their graduation (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005). Consequently, enormous amount of undergraduate students who were opportune to go through internship programs have at least acquired relevant industrial and substantial work experience. A study by for instance, (Barron, 2008) has demonstrated that, experiences from internship programs not only beneficial to students, as it has consequential on-course performance which maybe to some extend effects the level of self-efficacy (Brooks et al., 1995). Past studies have asserted that, self-efficacy is very essential in the areas of career choice (Lucas et al., 2009). Plenty of past literatures has shown that, work experience significantly influence self-efficacy in a positive manner. (Wood and Bandura, 1989), using an inspired organization, this has revealed that the organizational accomplishment of managers, especially those involving individual goal setting has contributed immensely towards their self-efficacy and related experiences among undergraduate students (Tresolini and Stritter, 1994). A subsequent meta-analysis of 114

studies carried out by (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998) have demonstrated a positive association amongst work-related performance and self-efficacy. Fascinatingly, Coll et al. (2001) have observed that vicarious workplace encounters can lower the level of self-efficacy, especially a discouraging comments made to an undergraduate students by a skillful colleague (Judge and Bono, 2001) they have stated that self-efficacy was related to work experience.

H4: Self-efficacy mediates relationship between work experience and employability among undergraduate students.

Employability and Self-efficacy

Undergraduate students in the universities and their usage of self-efficacy has brought about a relationship which is positive with job search behaviour and employment outcomes (Kanfer et al., 2001; Moynihan et al., 2003) and also served as consequent undergraduate students employment outcomes (Pinquart et al., 2003). Additionally, success in the areas of employment among undergraduate students has been seen to be having strong connectivity with self-efficacy. This assertion was further buttressed in a research by (Judge et al., 2001) which has also proven that higher level of self-efficacy is connected to all-inclusive positive results. Empirical evidence by (Çakar, 2012) was in line with the above statement and it has pointed out that, self-efficacy among undergraduate students tends to be more contented and productive especially in times of difficulties in the place of work compared to those lacking self-efficacy. Even though employability was seen fundamentally as part of an individuals to enter and sustain in an environment that has to do with work. Hence, based on the economic-social viewpoints, employability is referred to as the competency of various classifications of the workforce to enter and sustain in employment (Finn, 2000).

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and employability among undergraduate students.

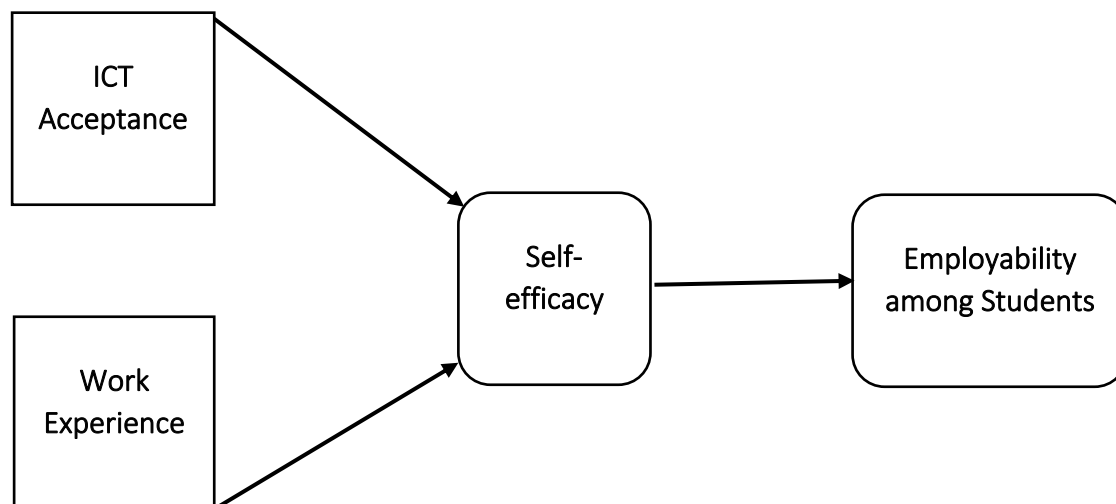


Figure 2.2 Research Framework for the Study

Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's theory of social cognition has an association with technology. As a result, the proficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) not just shows a significant part in numerous work place settings, but on the other hand is getting more and more

significant in undergraduate student's regular day to day existences particularly life-long learning and decrease in unemployment among the youths (Zhu et al., 2019).

Since ICT influenced absolutely on our regular daily activities, consequently, it is furthermore a key or meta-fitness fundamental for effective participation in the public arena (Zhu et al., 2019). Later conceptualizations are not just bound to technological literacy, that is, knowledge on software and hardware applications and understanding technological thoughts (Putra et al., 2020). Taking everything into consideration, information literacy, that is, the ability to use advanced media to get to, make, oversee and essentially evaluate information and to use it sufficiently for one's own inspirations, moreover accepts a significant role (Zhul et al., 2019; Scheerder et al., 2017).

In the present computerized knowledge society, ICT talent is required virtually in all categories of work and ICT-related skills are a fundamental component of employability (Martínez-Cerdá et al., 2020). Considering the rapidly changing technological environment, self-regulated and constant life-long learning is an essential factor for successfully remaining aware of ongoing improvements in the field of ICT and hence it's ensuing employability (Zhul et al., 2019). Technological environment is a critical perspective, because in many nations, they have accepted the possibility of regular computer usage in schools, as it bring up-to-date knowledge and skills acquisition through the digital means and this brings about achievement in the area of career success (Ndawula et al., 2020; Senkbeil and Ihme, 2017).

Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a personality's confidence in standard ability to achieve a purposes (Shakeel et al., 2021). The improvement of a strong sense of self-efficacy can allow a fundamental job in each piece of life. Life is stacked with difficulties and significant degrees of self-efficacy can assist individual to manage these difficulties even more suitably. It like manner way consolidates affirmation and assurance to beat deterrents that would intrude with using those natural abilities to accomplish targets (Shakeel et al., 2021). As affirmed by (Ma et al., 2021), individuals usually avoid tasks where self-efficacy is low yet attempt to embrace an undertakings where self-efficacy is high. Right when self-efficacy is in a general sense past real capacity, it prompts an overestimation of the ability to complete a tasks. Besides, when self-efficacy is essentially past from an overall perspective lower than certified limit, it weaken advancement and capacity improvement. Research has shown that when the ideal degree of self-efficacy is perhaps higher than capacity; people are all around empowered to manage difficult tasks and gain aptitude. Accordingly, in this study, it is normal that a successful usage of electronic information data requires some degree of trust in undergraduate students as it relies on the individual degree of information skill possession and responsibility regarding capacities which is not sufficient for powerful utilization of these resources. The individual ought to build up a basic level of self-efficacy beliefs in these capacities (Alamettälä and Sormunen, 2021; Azonobi et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020).

Self-efficacy was first developed by psychologist Albert Bandura (1977) as quoted in (Dadfar and Sanadgol, 2021). Albert Bandura initially proposed the idea, in his own words, as an individual judgment of "how well one can execute courses of action needed to accomplish forthcoming situations" (1977). Since self-efficacy was considered as the mediator can be characterized as "individuals' judgment of their abilities to arrange and execute courses of action needed to achieve chosen types of performances" (Naidoo and Naidoo, 2021).

Self-efficacy was part of the CareerEDGE model and the researcher has considered it significant to incorporate it as mediator, reason being simply the fact that self-efficacy has more widespread coverage when one compare it with other two (2) components which are self-confidence and self-esteem. Self-efficacy is as well broadest, it is additionally more practical and it is likewise founded on a sense of ability.

Consequently, it has been analysed by past studies as a mediator, so that is the reason that prompted this current study to apply it as a mediator on employability among undergraduate students (Chow et al., 2019; Bano and Vasantha, 2020). However, self-efficacy ought to be considered as a mediator to link individual related elements in the undergraduate context to their employability. Turner (2014) expressed that self-belief is vital to employability. As indicated by (Yorke, 2006), employability refers to the knowledge, skills and qualities that are seen as essential for a person to make a contribution to the nation's economy.

Methodology

Population and Sample

The main purpose of carrying out this study was to examine the mediating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between ICT acceptance, work experience and employability among undergraduate students. Consequently, the target population for this study is the final year undergraduate students in North Eastern Nigeria. Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used to analyse data for this study. On the other hand, according to (Hooper et al., 2008) for the studies on SEM, a sample of 100 to 200 is measured as medium size and 200 is large sample. However, a total of 264 respondents were used for this study. Nevertheless, out of the total population of 264 respondents, 53% were male and 47% were female respectively. Hence, the sample size requirements of the current study are met.

Instrumentation

The instruments used currently in the study were obtained from previous literature. The questionnaire were adapted and adopted so as to be in line with the current study. And all the questions were ranked to a 5-point Likert scale, while strongly disagree 1, disagree 2, undecided 3, agree 4 and strongly agree 5. Employability among undergraduate students, the scale was developed by (Rothwell et al., 2008). The items for instance are "my degree is seen as leading to a specific career that is generally perceived as highly desirable". As for Work experience, the instruments were developed by (Pool et al., 2014). An example of items in work experience are "I have a lot of work relevant experience". Additionally, ICT acceptance scale was also developed by (Afari and Achampong, 2010) and the items are "Using the computer improved my academic performance". Finally, the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSE) which was developed by (Chen et al., 2001) to measure self-efficacy construct. Thus, the sample of question is "I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself".

Results

The aim of this section was to determine whether work experience, ICT acceptance have a direct and significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students of the universities in North-eastern Nigeria. To achieve this objective, two (2) hypotheses were formulated and tested. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) of inferential statistics was employed using Amos graphics.

Moreover, based on the basic SEM provisions, the model of this study was hypothesised to have about two variables (work experience, ICT acceptance and employability among

undergraduate students). The output of the structural model was used to ascertain the relationship between the work experience, ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students. The goodness-of-fit indices are summarized as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Table Goodness-of-fit Indices of the Output Structural Model

Model	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/ DF	GFI	AG FI	CFI	IFI	NFI	TLI	RMSE A
Default Model	172.52 8	87	.00 0	1.983	.922	.89 2	.981	.981	.962	.97 7	.061
Saturated Model	.000	0			1.00 0		1.00 0	1.00 0	1.00 0	100 0	
Independe nce Model	4599.9 47	10 5	.00 0	43.809	.221	.11 0	.000	.000	.000	.00 0	.403

Note: CMIN= minimum discrepancy (or χ^2); DF= degrees of freedom; RMSEA= root of mean square error of approximation; GFI= goodness-of-fit index; NFI = normed fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index

Thus, the presentation of the results and discussion of this section was based on the final output of the structural model for this study as shown in Figure 4.1

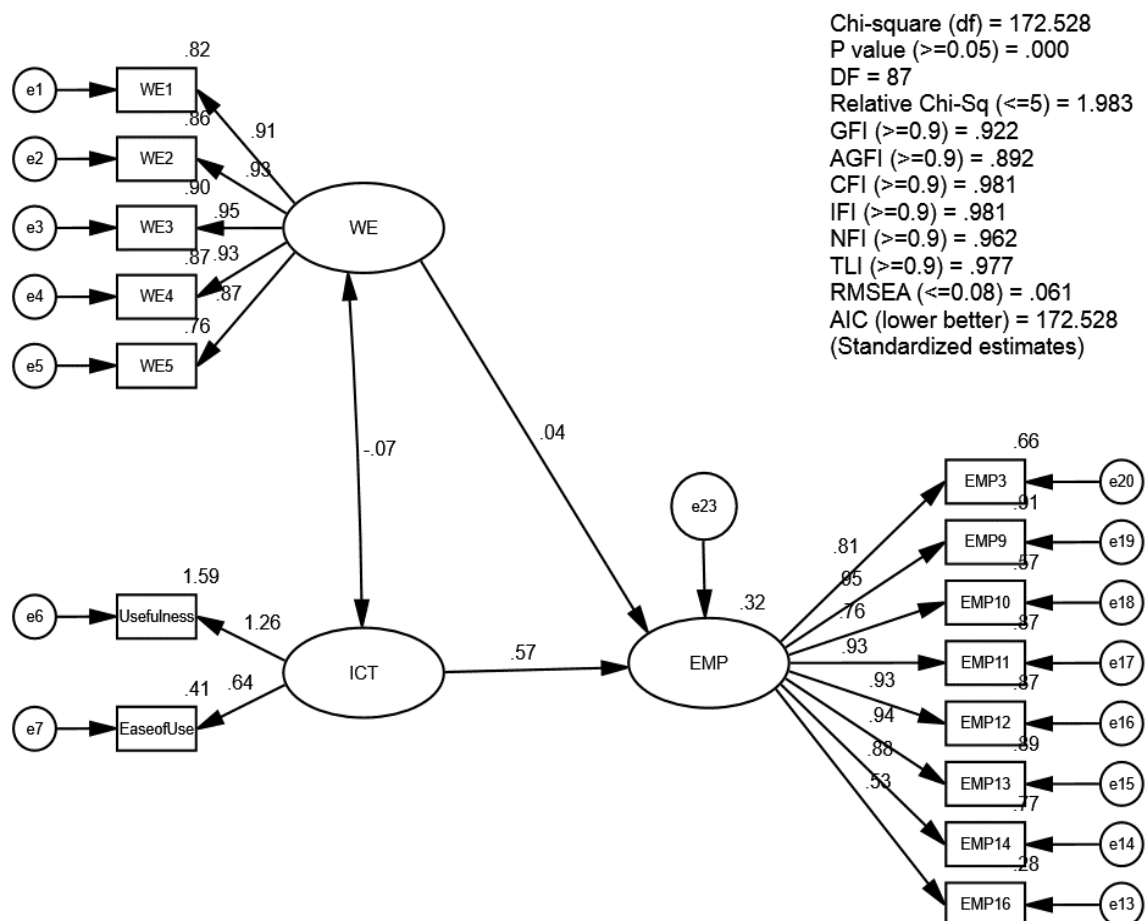


Figure 4.2 Diagram Showing Structural Model Output

Table 4.3

Unstandardised, Standardised Regression Path Coefficients and its Significance Based on p-value < 0.05 from the Output of the Structural Model

			Estimate	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypothesis
EMP	<---	ICT	.253	.570	.041	6.117	.000	Supported
EMP	<---	WE	.020	.036	.026	.769	.442	Not supported

Note: B= Unstandardized Regression Weight Estimates; S.E = Standard Error; Beta (β) = Standardized Regression Weight; C.R = Critical Ratio; P = Significant Alpha.

Hypothesis 1 hypothesizes that ICT acceptance has a significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students. Surprisingly, Table 4.2 specifies that ($\beta = .570$, $p = .000$) was positively related to employability among undergraduate students. The results suggested that having ICT acceptance was a strong indicator of employability among undergraduate students. Based on the findings, H1 for employability was supported.

Hypothesis 2 hypothesizes that work experience has a non-significant relationship with employability among undergraduate. Unexpectedly, Table 4.2 specifies that ($\beta = .036$, $p = .442$) was not positively related to employability among undergraduate students. The results suggested that having work experience was not a strong indicator of employability among undergraduate students. Based on the findings, H2 for employability was not supported.

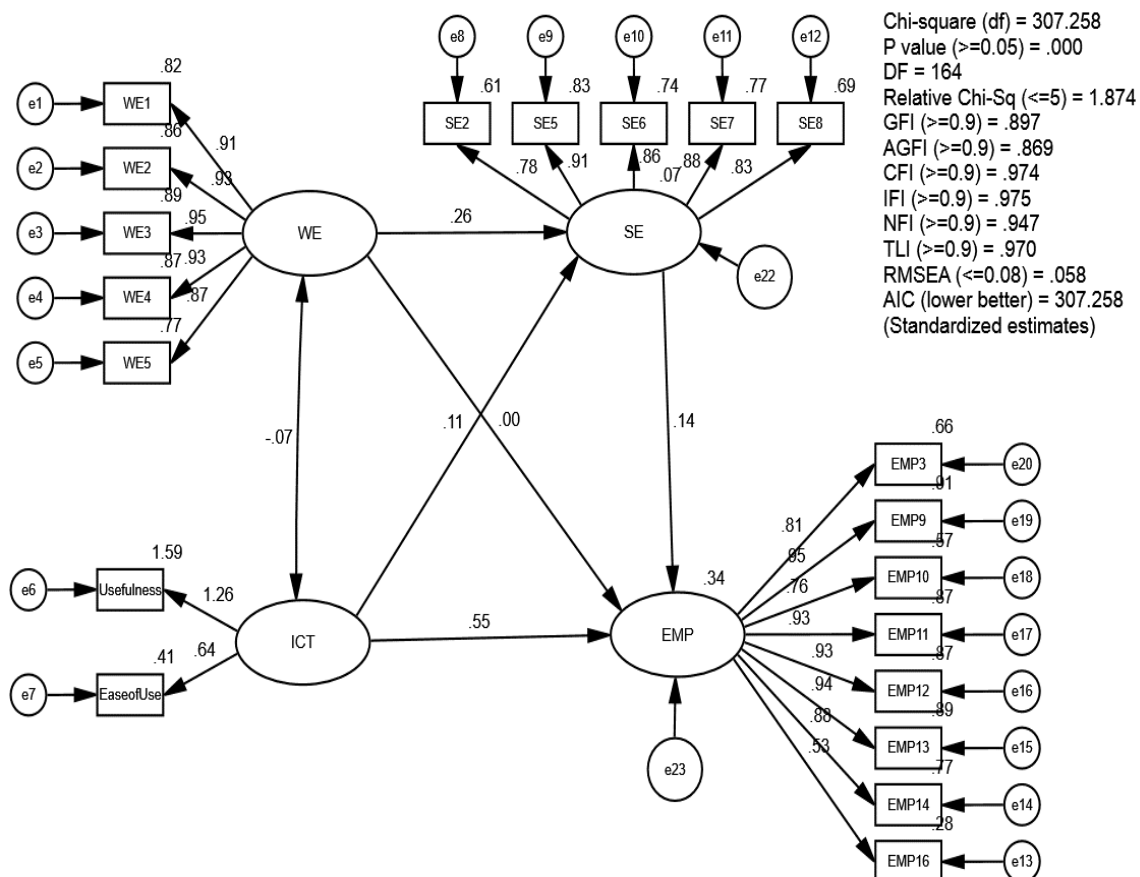


Table Goodness-of-fit Indices of the Output Structural Model

Model	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/ DF	GFI	AG FI	CFI	IFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
Default Model	307.258	16	.00	1.874	.897	.869	.974	.975	.947	.970	.058
Saturated Model	.000	0			1.000		1.000	1.000	1.000		
Independence Model	5793.903	19	.00	30.494	.228	.147	.000	.000	.000	.000	.335

Note: CMIN= minimum discrepancy (or χ^2); DF= degrees of freedom; RMSEA= root of mean square error of approximation; GFI= goodness-of-fit index; NFI = normed fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index

Table 4.8 Unstandardised, Standardised Regression Path Coefficients and its Significance Based on p-value < 0.05 from the Output of the Structural Model

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Estimate	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypothesis
SE <--- WE	.204	.258	.051	4.029	.000	Supported
SE <--- ICT	.069	.111	.028	2.435	.015	Supported
EMP <--- SE	.101	.141	.037	2.726	.006	Supported

Hypothesis 3 there is a significant positive relationship between work experience and self-efficacy among undergraduate students. Unpredictably, Table 4.3 demonstrates that work experience was ($\beta = .258, p = .000$) positively related to self-efficacy. The findings of this study suggested that having work experience has strong influenced on self-efficacy among undergraduate students. Based on the findings of the study above, H3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4 there is a significant positive relationship between ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students. Unexpectedly, Table 4.3 exhibits that ICT acceptance was ($\beta = .111, p = .015$) positively related to self-efficacy. The findings of the study suggested that having ICT acceptance has a strong influenced on self-efficacy among undergraduate students. Based on the findings of the study, H4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5 there is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and employability among undergraduate students. Predictably, Table 4.3 shows that self-efficacy was ($\beta = .141, p = .006$) positively related to employability among undergraduate students. The findings of the study suggested that having self-efficacy was having a strong influenced on employability among undergraduate students. Based on the findings of the study, H5 was supported.

Table below presents a summary of the results from the direct and full mediation models for the mediating effect of SE on the relationship between WE and EMP. Based on the decision criteria specified, SE was found to have indirect effect on the relationship between WE and EMP. Thus, H1 was supported.

Table Mediating Effect of SE on the Relationship between EO and EMP

Hypothesized Path	Beta	P	95% Confidence BC CI LB	UP
Direct Model				
WE --> EMP	.036	.442		
Full Mediation Model				
EO --> EMP	-.001	.989		
Std. Indirect Effect (SIE)	.037	.002	.011	.076

Table below presents a summary of the results from the direct and full mediation models for the mediating effect of SE on the relationship between ICT and EMP. Based on the decision criteria specified, SE was found to partially mediate on the relationship between ICT and EMP. Thus, H2 were supported.

Table Mediating Effect of SE on the Relationship between ICT and EMP

Hypothesized Path	Beta	P	95% Confidence BC CI LB	UP
Direct Model				
ICT --> EMP	.570	.000		
Full Mediation Model				
ICT --> EMP	.554	.000		
Std. Indirect Effect (SIE)	.016	.012	.002	.041

Table 4.29 Summary of Mediation Effect

Relationship	Mediation effect	Hypothesis
WE → SE → EMP	Indirect effect	Supported
ICT → SE → EMP	Partial mediation	Supported

Discussions

A study carried out which is to investigating the effect of gender, socio-economic status and settings on computer literacy among undergraduate students in Nigeria universities has demonstrated that, one of the component of ICT that is to say, computer, has a significant results among male and female undergraduate students and it is also in line with the present study (Patrick and Benwari, 2014). Likewise a study carried out in university of Calabar Nigeria to determine the level of utilization of ICT tools and the level of teaching ICT skills among undergraduate students, its result has showed that. It is not in line with the present study, because, it has indicated a non-significant result among undergraduate students who are in their 300 and 400 level in terms enhancing employability among business education students (Ajuluchukwu and Osakwe, 2019). While in the case of work experience, it has been indicated that, a study conducted by (Mayangsari et al., 2019) on exploratory study of employability factors of Indonesian Accounting Professionals was not in line with the present study. Because it has indicated a significant positive relationship as against non-significant result in the present study. Additionally, a study conducted by (Kamaliah et al., 2018) have revealed that, acquisition of employability talents by undergraduate students through the work experience has positive significant contributions. Likewise, the said findings was also not in line with the outcome of the present study. As the results of the present study has revealed that, work experiences among undergraduate students does not guarantee employability.

The outcomes of this study has exhibited that work experience has positive significant relationship with self-efficacy among undergraduate students. A study conducted by (Raelin et al., 2011) was in line with the present study, as it has proven a positive significant relationship amongst self-efficacy and work experience. That would technically mean that, self-efficacy has also proven to be beneficial in measuring developments in work self-efficacy and skills, as well as providing additional incentives for undergraduate students learning and engagement. Self-efficacy as a theoretical framework to disclose how people change in accordance with the work environment was first advanced by (Weldon and Ngo, 2019), who demonstrated that self-efficacy may assist undergraduate students with making the progress from student to specialist. He proposed that work experience can develop self-efficacy through performance attainments and such experience can bring about a feedback loop prompting expanded self-efficacy and, thus, further enhancing a person's particularly undergraduate students' performance (Reddan, 2016).

Moreover, the investigations of this study has demonstrated that, ICT acceptance has a significant positive relationship with self-efficacy. This study was likewise in accordance with an investigation led by (Akturk and Ozturk, 2019) the study on self-efficacy and utilization of electronic as a predictor of academic performance. They utilized Morgan-Tinks academic efficacy scale with a populace drawn from 700 undergraduate students (undergraduate students) in seven departments at the University of Ibadan, in Nigeria and the discoveries show a significant outcome. Added to that, undergraduate students with higher self-efficacy have better information search strategies and learnt better than those with low self-efficacy in the Internet based condition (Tsai and Tsai, 2003) as cited in (Azonobi et al., 2020). The significance of electronic information resources among undergraduate students has constrained them to figure out how to access and utilize a wide assortment of resources sensibly and skilfully utilize these resources as a research and learning tool to make progress and subsequently support employability (Odede, 2018; Azonobi et al., 2020). The present study's findings has also revealed that self-efficacy has a significant positive relationship with employability. Therefore, the findings of the present study was in line with a study conducted by (Ab Halim et al., 2019) the findings revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between self-efficacy and undergraduate student's employability. The outcomes of this study can be used as a reference for developing education and training programmes in the future, especially for students who are potential graduates.

A number of factors have contributed toward the inability of most of the variables to be significant or non-significant in the relationship with exogenous variables and the dependent variable. Whenever one would talk about North Eastern Nigeria, it is an area ravaged by Ignorance, Boko Haram, illiteracy and poverty and that has brought about serious setbacks to the region in terms of human resource development. Because people in the region are not contributing toward talent development and as such it has influenced the level of education and subsequently work.

Many studies have demonstrated a significant progress in terms of self-efficacy as mediating variable between employability among students for instance (Chow et al., 2019), and the findings above was also in line with the present study. The findings of the present study has found that self-efficacy mediate the relationship between with ICT acceptance and has an indirect effect with work experience among undergraduate students in the universities. The study has revealed that ICT acceptance and work experience have impacted on undergraduate student's employability.

Conclusion

The ultimate aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between work experience, ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students in North-Eastern universities in Nigeria. The study also examines the mediating effect of self-efficacy among undergraduate students. The results of the study shows that ICT acceptance was shown to have a significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students in the universities ($\beta = .570, p = .000$). Likewise, the result showed that work experience does not have a significant relationship with employability among undergraduate students in the universities ($\beta = .036, p = .442$). The result of the study further shows that work experience was positively related to self-efficacy among undergraduate students in the universities ($\beta = .258, p = .000$). However, ICT acceptance was illustrated to have a positive significant relationship with self-efficacy among undergraduate students in the universities ($\beta = .111, p = .015$). Finally, it was demonstrated self-efficacy was found to mediate the relationship between ICT acceptance and employability among undergraduate students in the universities ($\beta = .141, p = .006$).

Hence, conducting the study in Nigerian universities, provides more evidence on the applicability of components of CareerEDGE model in examining the mediating effect of self-efficacy and employability in the context of a developing nation. The available information on university undergraduate students has added to fill the theoretical vacuum in the field of employability. Most of the researches conducted on employability in Nigeria only covers southern part of the country and very few researches were conducted in the North-Eastern region. Unfortunately, even these areas where researches on employability were conducted, the theories fall short, which literary means that most of the publish theories which includes human capital theory and signaling theory have not addressed the concerned area. The above mentioned issue has prompted for a research in the region taking into perspectives theories that will addressed the issues of employability among undergraduate students squarely.

Limitations and Suggestion for Future Study

This study was carried out among undergraduate students in North-Eastern Nigeria. The respondents of the study were final year undergraduate students. The selected samples would represent an entire population of undergraduate students in the country. There is the need for the establishment of more ICT centers so that, it would provide opportunities for students to have ICT skills and knowledge as that would go a long way in bringing about advancement in the digital and technological industry and subsequently enhanced employability within the study context. Undergraduate students should be encouraged to partake in Internship programmes while in the universities, as it would boosts their level of employability, thereby reducing redundancy within the study contexts. Self-efficacy has given confidence to many undergraduate students to accomplish their mission of Internship programmes and this would literally enhanced their level of employability in the society. Since self-efficacy is positively related with ICT among students, it would transform learning process, thereby results in an increased learning gains for students, creating and allowing for more opportunities for students in the information technology industry. Finally, with the support of self-efficacy, students have more confidence in becoming computer literate and be a potential targets for employers. Additionally, future research needs to test this model in other regions, especially the western context, so as to find out whether it yields fruitful results as per North Eastern Nigerian context. However, the findings of the study was limited towards the understanding of employability among undergraduate students, hence future research

should incorporate youth without restrictions, as doing that may provide a wider understanding of the whole scenario.

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