

## **UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) ON CAREER CHOICE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN APA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BENUE STATE**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State. The study employed descriptive survey design. The population for the study comprised teachers of Guidance and Counselling in 10 public secondary schools in Apa Local Government Area. Using Multistage sampling procedure, 100 participants were sampled from the total population of 3,000 Guidance and Counselling teachers in the local government area. Five (5) schools were randomly drawn-out of the 10 public secondary schools and 20 Guidance and Counselling teachers each were purposively selected afterwards for a total of 100 teachers. Instrument used for data collection for the study was a researcher structured questionnaire titled 'Utilization of Information and Communication Technology on Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students (UICTCCQ)'. The instrument was face validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. This instrument was also trial tested and Cronbach Alpha Reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and an overall Reliability co-efficient value of 0.97 was obtained. Research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that many of the Guidance and Counselling teachers in Apa Local Government Area are OND and NCE certificate holders with teaching experiences ranging from 1-10 years. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the factors militating against the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students. Based on the findings, it is recommended that urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers undergo workshops and seminars to enhance their use of ICT in assisting senior secondary school students with career choices. This will ensure effective utilization of ICT in the career guidance process.

**Keywords:** Information and communication technology (ICT), career choice, students

### **Introduction**

Education is a veritable instrument, which is used to measure human growth and development. The quality of life in society depends significantly on its standard of education. Education is a process of developing knowledge ability in learners in such a way that they use it to improve their society (Nwadike & Pelemo, 2019). Hence, education is a veritable instrument, which is used to measure human growth and development (Ovri, 2024). It is defined as the total development of the individual child through acceptable methods and techniques according to his abilities and interests to meet up the needs of the society and for the individual to take his rightful place and contribute equally to the enhancement of the society. Education is a process of developing knowledge ability in learners in such a way that they use it to improve their society (Zakaria, Faisal, Malini, Sobirin & Marzuki, 2024). Education can be conceived as the systematic process of developing the physically, mentally, spiritually and socially for his own benefit and benefits of the society in which he lives (Ogunode, Attah & Ebute, 2024).

In the context of this study, education is the acquisition of knowledge of cultural transmission and cultural change in the school. Education is a cultural process because children

and adults who are exposed to education are involved in a process of cultural transmission and cultural change in the school. Also, education is a behavioural process because school children and adults who are benefiting from education are involved in a process of change in behaviour to do well. However, education remains a pivot upon which the wheels of society revolve. Education is the most important investment of countries, societies, families and individuals for the future. In the global era, many Nigerians acquire education to contribute in averting the social issues like corruption, unemployment, poverty, kidnapping, cultism, police extortion, irregularities in bureaucracy in offices, election irregularities, drug abuse, prostitution, abuse of power by government officials, examination malpractice, among others in Nigeria. Social issues are one of the most topical issues in the media today. Though, social issues are global phenomena, but are considered rampant in Nigeria. All these social issues above have directly or indirectly affected the development of Nigeria as a nation and therefore there is need for utilization of Information and Communication Technology on career choice of senior secondary school students intending to acquire education (Najib & Rahardjo, 2024).

A communication network has become an essential tool in today's educational environment than ever before. Today's society is said to have entered into the age of a new social revolution, i.e., information revolution. Global era has witnessed the explosion of information technologies (Nwaoba, Uba & Ntaji, 2023). By digital revolution, technologies in computers, audiovisual devices, and communications are integrated into powerful Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Global era is characterized by rapid advances in technology and expansion of knowledge brought about through Information and Communication Technology. Information and Communication Technology is defined as forms of technology that are used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information (Kusumaningtyas, 2024). The adoption of Information and Communication Technology in education has a multiplier effect throughout the education system especially in the area of enhancing teaching and learning process and provide learners with a new set of skills which make them globally competitive, facilitate and improve the training of teachers and minimizing cost associated with the conventional instruction which ultimately leads to a better overall educational attainment (Nwaoba, Uba & Ntaji, 2023). Information and Communication Technologies foster the acquisition and easy absorption of information that gives countries especially developing ones the unparalleled prospects to expand their educational systems, formulate and execute better educational policy and more importantly, open access to education especially for those in the rural and remote areas. Education is a developmental process because of growth from a lower level to a higher level of educational attainment (Nwaoba, Uba & Ntaji, 2023).

However, students have challenges such as: Inadequate materials Information and Communication Technologies (computer desktops, personal computers, smart phones) and no facilities to enable them in embracing their career choices in senior secondary schools. The Federal Government of Nigeria, in its National Policy on Education, has encouraged investing Information and Communication Technology in guidance and counselling services in the school curriculum for the benefit of students on their career choices (Ogunode, Attah & Ebute, 2024). There is an urgent need of introducing and strengthening the Information Communication Technology in schools to meet the students on their career choices or selection of subjects to improve teaching and learning process. Hence, career, is the occupation, trade, profession and vocation that a person engages in, in order to make a living, or it refers to a person's progression through a series of jobs over the person's life time (Dawn Rosenberg, 2015). Career can be said to be the totality of work a person does in his or her life time. It is therefore a positive thing for one to think as far as possible in choosing a career as it is enduring (Ogunode, Attah & Ebute, 2024). The operational definition of career choice in this study refers to work someone accepts to do to make a living or something that is very stiff to decide,

especially as one's life will depend on it. Career choice is one of many important choices' students will make in determining future plans. This decision will impact on them throughout their lives. The essence of who the students are, who they become in future will revolve around the career they made for themselves (Onebunne & Okoli, 2020). As students try to make career choices while in schools, they are faced with problems of matching their career choices with their abilities. The choice of career has been a serious problem among the senior secondary school students in Nigeria (Onebunne & Okoli, 2020). However, there are factors militating against effective utilization of Information and Communication Technology on career choice of students. The factors are: time constraint; inadequate resources and facilities; shortage of qualified personnel; inadequate support from school administrators and stakeholders; incompetent in the use of Information and Communication Technologies gadgets; etc. (Njoh, 2018).

Inadequate resources and facilities militate against effective utilization of Information and Communication Technology on career choice of students. In many secondary schools, majority of the students are faced with inadequate resources and facilities including no rooms specifically allocated for them at their schools. Agbakuribe and Ogwuche (2021), found in their study on guidance and counselling in schools reported that there was a poor supply of guidance and counselling facilities and this influenced the efficiency of the delivery of quality guidance and counselling services in schools. Because career counsellors do not have resources and Information and Communication Technology facilities and other basic guidance and counselling facilities, it is difficult for them to carry out their duties effectively. Lack of training physical facilities and resources and inadequacy of funds are problems which seem to derail the innovative effects of career counsellors (Bashari, 2020). It also makes parents not to encourage their children to freely seek for proper career choice when necessary. Shortage of qualified personnel militate against effective utilization of Information and Communication Technology on career choice of students. If career counsellors with good knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies are in short supply it means the students will merely go to schools and leave unattended to, and feel feeble (Kolo, 2017). Attahiru and Chukuma (2016) identify the problems that led to shortage of career counselors such as: Poor condition of service in the teaching profession; low social status attached to the profession; availability of attractive jobs in the job market; drop in the number of people going into the counselling profession programme etc. Most of the secondary schools in the state have no career counsellors with knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies at all, while the few that can be found in a few schools have been assigned teaching subjects. The result of this negative attitude towards, career counselling is that most of the secondary school students in some urban and rural areas have been deprived of the valuable services which the programme offers to students in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world. The effect of shortage qualified career counsellors with knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies is very high.

Hence, to achieve the objectives of Senior Secondary School Guidance and Counselling services requires effective school administrators. Hence this study is to determine to investigate the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State. Generally, in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State, the poor utilization of Information and Communication Technology on career choice of senior secondary school students is quite clear. This is so as most students abandon their career choices due to neglect and other reasons listed earlier, and this leads to a traumatized state of mind of most students affected. This state of mind leads to wrong career choice in classrooms which is constantly recorded. The wrong career choice could be likened to the psychological state of the students, which often times is influenced by their parents. Nevertheless, the utilization of Information and Communication Technology

(ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school has not been empirically established. This unsatisfactory state of affairs informed this present study to determine the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State.

### **Statement of the Problems**

Guidance counsellors are professionals assigned to schools to provide career counseling services. Effective utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is essential for assisting senior secondary students in making appropriate career choices. However, many students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State, struggle to make informed career decisions due to several factors hindering the effective use of ICT in career counseling. These factors include time constraints, inadequate resources and facilities, a shortage of qualified personnel, insufficient support from school administrators and stakeholders, and incompetence in using ICT gadgets. These challenges prevent senior secondary school students from making appropriate career choices and hinder career counselors from meeting the students' needs effectively. Consequently, students struggle to select suitable subjects and often graduate without a clear academic or career path. Effective utilization of ICT can significantly improve career choice processes for these students. Therefore, this study aims to address the following question: What is the impact of ICT usage on the career choices of senior secondary school students?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to examine the Utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examined the qualifications and teaching experiences of Guidance and Counselling teachers in utilizing ICT on career choice of senior secondary school students.
2. ascertained parents influence in the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students.
3. identified the factors militating against usage of ICT on career choice of senior secondary school students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed for the study:

1. What are the qualifications and teaching experiences of Guidance and Counselling teachers in utilizing ICT that may influence career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State?
2. What are parents' influences in the utilization of ICT on career choice of senior secondary school students?
3. What factors militate against usage of ICT on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were provided to guide the study. They were tested at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of parents influence in the Utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of factors militating against usage of ICT on career choice of senior secondary school students.

## Method

The study employed descriptive survey design. The study was conducted in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State. The choice of this area is due to the predominant utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) among students, teacher and parent in the search for information which possibly may inform their decision and choices on Career. The total population of the teachers of Guidance and Counselling are three thousand (3,000). The sample population used for this study was 100 trained teachers of Guidance and Counselling who were implementing the same curriculum, and employed and remunerated by the same employer that is, Teachers Service Commission, from those selected through the above process and who ranged from the 23 to 55 years of age. Using Multistage sampling technique, 100 was sampled from the total population of three thousand (3,000) Guidance and Counselling teachers in the local government area. Five (5) schools were randomly selected out of the (10) public secondary schools. For all the classes only Senior Secondary School Two was sampled and twenty (20) Guidance and Counselling teachers each were purposively selected afterwards for a total of hundred (100) respondents. The instrument for data collection used was titled “Utilization of Information and Communication Technology on Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students “(UICTCCQ)”, structured questionnaire. However, questionnaire was constructed based on the three (3) research questions with a total of 15 items. Cronbach Alpha 0.97 was obtained from the test re-test reliability. The response was in four Likert scale points: Very High Extent (VHE)/Strongly Agree (SA) =4, High Extent (HE)/Agree (A) =3, Low Extent (LE)/Disagree (D) =2, Very Low Extent (VLE)/Strongly Disagree (SD) =1. The instrument was presented for face validation to three (3) research experts who are lecturers in the Departments of Measurement and Evaluation and two (2) of the experts from Department of Educational Foundations (Guidance and Counselling Units) respectively. The corrections cited by the validators were effected accordingly by the researchers. The essence of doing this is to ascertain the suitability and appropriateness of the items for achieving the purpose of the study. The researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents which they answered and were collected on the spot. A total of one hundred (100) questionnaires were administered and every copy was attended to (answered) at the moment, one hundred (100) completed copies were retrieved by the researchers. Using this method ensured a good accountability of the responses from the entire questionnaire distributed as the researchers worked hard to ensure the co-operation of all the respondents. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the three research questions. The data collected was analyzed using Frequency and Nominal value for the purpose of determining the degree of agreement or disagreement. An item is rejected or disagreed if it has a mean value between 0.5 to 1.49, strongly disagree if it has the mean value between 1.9 to 2.49. However, when the mean value comes between 2.5 to 3.49 it is Agree while a mean value between 3.5 to 4.0 is Strongly Agree. Below is the formula adopted:

## Results

**Research Question One:** What are the qualifications and teaching experiences of Guidance and Counselling teachers utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State?

**Table 1: Percentage scores of Guidance and Counsellors' Qualifications and Teaching Experiences Utilizing Information and Communication Technology on Career Choice**

S/N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE%	TOTAL
1.	QUALIFICATION			
	a. OND	64	64	
	b. NCE	24	24	
	c. B.Ed/B.A./B.Sc	10	10	
	d. M.Ed/M.A/M.Sc	02	02	
				100
2.	Teaching Experience			
	a. 1-5 years	39	39%	
	b. 6-10 years	46	46%	
	c. 11-15	10	10%	
	d. 16 and above	05	5%	
				100

Table 1 above represents the qualifications and teaching experiences of the Guidance and Counselling teachers utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area. The result reveals that 64% of the respondents possess OND certificates, 24% NCE, 10% B.Ed/B.A/B.Sc and 2% M.Ed/M.A/M.Sc. On the hand, 39% of the respondents have teaching experiences between 1-5 years, 46% have experiences between 6-10 years, 10% have teaching experience between 11-15 years and 5% have teaching experience between 16 years and above. This result is a clear indication that many of the teachers of Guidance and Counselling utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students at Apa Local Government Area, are OND and NCE certificate holders with teaching experiences ranging from 1-10 years.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Utilization on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area?

**Table 2: The mean responses of urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the extent of parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Utilization on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area**

S/N	Item Statement	Urban			Rural		
		X	SD	DEC.	X	SD	DEC.
1.	Parents utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of their children bring down life fulfillment.	2.5	0.9	Accept	2.7	0.9	Accept
2.	Parents utilization of Information and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of their children brings down self-regard.	2.5	1.0	Accept	2.5	1.0	Accept
3.	The Parents utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of their Children causes mental degradation.	2.8	0.9	Accept	2.8	1.1	Accept
4.	Parents utilization of Information and	2.7	1.0	Accept	2.5	1.0	Accept

	Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of their children makes them to score low in examinations.							
5.	The Parents utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of their children causes them to involve in crime.	2.9	1.0	Accept	2.8	1.0	Accept	
	Grand Mean	2.7		Accept	2.7		Accept	

The result in Table 6 reveals the mean responses of urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the extent of parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) usage on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area. From the analysis, all the items of research question four show a mean response of above 2.5. The grand mean for both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers were above 2.5 indicating acceptance. This is an indication that the respondents agree on the extent of parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) usage on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area.

**Hypotheses One:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) utilization on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area.

**Table 3: t-test analysis of the mean rating scores of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) usage on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area**

Location	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Urban	71	13.62	2.18				
Rural	29	13.64	2.52	98	-0.35	0.97	Not Significant

Results of the data above show that urban Guidance and Counselling teachers have mean score of 13.62 with standard deviation of 2.18 while rural Guidance and Counselling teachers have mean score of 13.64 with standard deviation of 2.52. Table 7 shows a t-calculated value of 0.35 which is less than t-critical value of 0.97. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers urban and rural teachers on parents influence the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) usage on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area.

**Research Question Three:** What are the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area?

**Table 4: The mean responses of urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area**

S/N	Item Statement	Urban			Rural		
		X	SD	DEC.	X	SD	DEC.
1.	Time constraint.	2.5	0.9	Accept	2.7	0.9	Accept
2.	Inadequate r resources and facilities.	2.5	1.0	Accept	2.5	1.0	Accept
3.	The Shortage of qualified personnel.	2.8	0.9	Accept	2.8	1.1	Accept
4.	Inadequate support from school administrators and stakeholders.	2.7	1.0	Accept	2.5	1.0	Accept
5.	Theincompetent in the use of Information and Communication Technologies gadgets; etc.	2.9	1.0	Accept	2.8	1.0	Accept
	Grand Mean	2.7		Accept	2.7		Accept

The result in Table 7 reveals the mean responses of urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area. From the analysis, all the items of research question four show a mean response of above 2.5. The grand mean for both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers were above 2.5 indicating acceptance. This is an indication that the respondents agree on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area.

**Hypotheses Two:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of urban and rural school participants on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area.

**Table 5: t-test analysis of the mean rating scores of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area**

Location	N	X	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Urban	71	13.62	2.18				
Rural	29	13.64	2.52	98	-0.35	0.97	Not Significant

Results of the data above show that urban Guidance and Counselling teachers have mean score of 13.62 with standard deviation of 2.18 while rural Guidance and Counselling teachers have mean score of 13.64 with standard deviation of 2.52. Table 8 shows a t-calculated value of 0.35 which is less than t-critical value of 0.97. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers on the factors militating against usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area



## Discussion

The findings from the study investigated the qualifications and teaching experiences of Guidance and Counselling teachers utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for career choice among senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State, revealed that 64% of the respondents possess OND certificates, 24% NCE, 10% B.Ed/B.A/B.Sc, and 2% M.Ed/M.A/M.Sc. Additionally, 39% of the respondents have teaching experiences between 1-5 years, 46% between 6-10 years, 10% between 11-15 years, and 5% have over 16 years of teaching experience. This result aligns with the study of Zakaria, Faisal, Malini, Sobirin, and Marzuki (2024), which highlighted the crucial role of teacher qualifications and experience in effectively integrating ICT into educational practices.

The findings of the study also investigated the extent to which parents influence the use of ICT in career choice among senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, revealed that the mean responses of both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers were above 2.5. The grand mean for both groups of teachers also exceeded 2.5, indicating agreement on the influence of parents on ICT usage in career choice. The data showed that urban Guidance and Counselling teachers had a mean score of 13.62 with a standard deviation of 2.18, while rural teachers had a mean score of 13.64 with a standard deviation of 2.52. The t-calculated value of 0.35 was less than the t-critical value of 0.97, indicating no significant difference between the responses of urban and rural teachers regarding parental influence on ICT usage for career choice. This finding is consistent with the study of Nwaoba, Uba, and Ntaji (2023), which found that parental involvement significantly affects students' utilization of ICT in making career decisions.

The findings of the study revealed the factors militating against the use of ICT in career choice among senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area. The analysis revealed that all items had a mean response above 2.5, with the grand mean for both urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers also above 2.5, indicating agreement on the factors impeding ICT usage. The data showed urban Guidance and Counselling teachers with a mean score of 13.62 and a standard deviation of 2.18, while rural teachers had a mean score of 13.64 and a standard deviation of 2.52. The t-calculated value of 0.35 was again less than the t-critical value of 0.97, indicating no significant difference between the responses of urban and rural teachers regarding the factors hindering ICT usage for career choice. This finding supports the study by Ogunode, Attah, and Ebute (2024), which identified similar barriers to the effective use of ICT in educational settings, emphasizing the need for improved infrastructure and support for teachers.

## Educational Implications

The results of this study carry significant implications for teachers, urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers, school administrators in Apa Local Government Area, the Benue State government, society, and students. The findings indicate a high acceptance and utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for career choice among senior secondary school students in the area. There is no significant difference between the responses of urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers regarding the influence of parents and other factors affecting ICT usage for career guidance. Given these findings, it is imperative for school administrators, teachers, and Guidance and Counselling teachers to actively monitor and support the use of ICT in career decision-making for senior secondary school students. This will ensure that students benefit fully from ICT resources, leading to more informed and effective career choices.

## Contribution to Knowledge

This study significantly advances the field of educational guidance and counseling, particularly regarding the use of ICT in career choice among senior secondary school students in Apa Local

Government Area, Benue State. It identifies key barriers such as time constraints, inadequate resources, and a shortage of qualified personnel, providing crucial insights for policymakers and educators. Empirical data from the study highlights gaps in current ICT usage in career counseling, informing targeted interventions. The research establishes a strong link between ICT use and informed career choices, underscoring the need for integrating technology into counseling practices. It also emphasizes the necessity of ongoing professional development for guidance counselors to enhance their ICT competencies. Additionally, the study offers actionable policy recommendations, such as equipping schools with adequate ICT resources and revising ICT curricula to include career counseling. By focusing on the Apa Local Government Area, the study contributes to a regional understanding of educational challenges and provides a model adaptable to similar contexts elsewhere. Generally, it demonstrates how ICT can improve career counseling services and students' career outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is crucial for the career choice of senior secondary school students in Apa Local Government Area, Benue State. ICT has become integral in Nigeria, facilitating communication and supporting administrators and curriculum planners who mandate its use in schools. The study found that many Guidance and Counselling teachers in both urban and rural areas of Apa Local Government hold OND and NCE certificates, with teaching experiences ranging from 1 to 10 years. These teachers widely use ICT to guide students in their career choices. Urban Guidance and Counselling teachers reported on various factors, including the influence of parental separation and parental involvement, affecting ICT usage for career guidance. The study found no significant difference between the responses of urban and rural teachers regarding parental influence and other factors impacting the use of ICT in career decision-making for students. Overall, the integration of ICT in career guidance is seen as essential for enhancing the career choices of secondary school students in this region.

### **Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational policymakers should develop policies to ensure all schools are fully equipped with ICT instructional materials, enhancing the quality utilization of ICT for career choice among senior secondary school students.
2. Urban and rural Guidance and Counselling teachers should participate in workshops and seminars focused on retraining in ICT to improve their ability to effectively utilize ICT in guiding students' career choices.
3. School administrators should procure ICT teaching aids to enhance the effective use of ICT in career counseling for senior secondary school students.
4. The ICT curriculum should be reviewed to incorporate its vast potential in teaching and learning, ensuring it effectively supports career guidance.
5. The Benue State government should allocate a significant percentage of the education budget to ICT and guidance and counseling programs. Additionally, the government should raise awareness about these programs through media and community associations, ensuring potential learners know about the availability and benefits of these services.

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