

The Impact of ITCs on the Workplace

In today's workplace, information technology has been embraced as a means of improving the level of communication and efficiency. The digital world as it is now known has revolutionized the business world, as it allows for real time global connectivity. This enables real time business transactions and decision making to take place. Ideally this is good, for it lends towards promoting higher levels of productivity. In this fast paced and competitive world in which we live, virtual communication through the use of emails, tele - conferencing and webinars make life a whole lot easier.

Technology serves the purpose of driving down the cost of doing business. The need for business travel can be reduced. With this being the case, it is anticipated that enterprises would make significant cost savings. Where efficient information technology communication systems are employed, these contribute to the reduction in the numbers of persons employed in an enterprise. What becomes obvious is the demand that is placed on all employees to ensure that they are proficient in the use of the various technologies which are now part of the work culture.

With the wide spread use of the various technologies, it can be expected that the training of those preparing to enter into the world of work, would be directed at ensuring that they are fit for the demands of the job. This will become a necessity, as the job market will not only place a demand on the academic profile, but on those computer literacy skills. It is expected that competition for jobs will become fiercer amongst the younger members of the workforce, who would tend to move away from the traditional jobs to those which are now more attractive and seemingly less physically demanding.

There is already a school of thought that the traditional workplace is likely to be transformed, as many resort to working from home or where ever, as internet connectivity will make it possible to complete their tasks or assignments. The use of flexi time and the ability to work at one's leisure are two of the upsides associated with the use of the technologies.

It may be a misconception on the part of some that the use of technologies will make work life easier. This thinking fails to take into consideration the demands of the job, and the pressures exerted in working through the international time zones. Evidence drawn from the American Psychological Association cited that fifty three percent of Americans work over the weekend, fifty two percent work outside designated work hours, and fifty four percent work even when sick.

Coming out of these statistics, it is evident that productivity remains a key factor in the any form of work. With the aid of technology, it would appear that work may be deemed to be easier, but it cannot be ruled out that it is not demanding and does not require equal discipline and accountability.

As a consequence of the wide use of technology, there is the possibility that there could be a slowdown in the recruitment and employment of labour. This can be counteracted by the argument that the technology requires employees with new skills and competencies. It is therefore possible that overtime the number of persons employed in various sectors and disciplines will grow considerably. It is a fact that technology will continue to shape how the business world functions. It is anticipated that ICTs will provide new opportunities for job creation, and as a consequence the reduction in jobs stands to be overshadowed by the creation of new job opportunities on the horizon.

In looking ahead, it is fast becoming obvious that the character of the workplace will continue to change as new technologies come on stream. It has been suggested that more than fifty percent of the available jobs today require some degree of technological skills, and this is projected to increase by seventy seven percent in the next decade. This is heartening from the stand point that there is hope for a down turn in the unemployment numbers in the near future.