



# ICT Based Business Management Concept by East African Youth

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## Abstract

The usage of information and communication technology among young people in the East African community varies, with some seeing it as a way to communicate with family and others seeing it as a diversion. Young people may use information and communication technology to start enterprises. Young professionals shouldn't just assume that they'll find employment elsewhere; instead, they should look into opportunities in small and medium-sized businesses. Young professionals in the East African community are unable to compete with one another because their perspective on conducting business via small and medium-sized enterprises is taken into consideration. The economies of these nations are at different levels, and they operate in different ways. The inspiration for this piece comes from the fact that the study examined young professionals in the East African community who are knowledgeable and communication technologies, and regrettably, they utilize them in a manner that does not allow small and medium-sized businesses that are successful. The primary objective of this research is to characterize information and communication technologies as an chance to purchase or sell products or services through medium- and small businesses. This study will offer a improved comprehension of the speaker, particularly among young professionals, to absorb knowledge and communicate it viewing technologies favorably as a chance to expand business through small and medium-sized businesses and to understand the method for marketing goods and controlling consumer behavior via their demands. young people in their careers by exchanging business ideas and forming connections with firms both domestically and abroad, one must acquire industry knowledge. knowledge transmitted through information and communication technology.

**Keyword:** ICT Integration, Marketing Strategy, Young Generation, Motivation, Professionals.

## 1. Introduction

The young people of the EAC have always been lauded by the regional authorities, who have frequently referred to them as "leaders of tomorrow" rather than giving them such upbeat names, they should be given the education and skills they need to be more productive for the future which never comes (Redecker et al., 2011); (Voogt et al., 2013). Collis & Hussey (2009) argue that youth unemployment rates ranging from 6.5% in Uganda to 23% in Rwanda, as seen in table 1 youth unemployment rates are typically higher than the national averages, with the exception of Uganda. In comparison, the unemployment rate for the general public varies from 7.4% in Kenya to 17.8% in Rwanda. Furthermore, in every country, unemployment rates for young women and the entire population are higher than those for men (EAC Secretariat). The ICT in the EAC has numerous limitations, including a lack of a regional ICT master plan, inadequate coverage of rural and distant areas, deficient frameworks for fostering public-private partnerships in sub-sector, and



insufficient national ICT policies to address the challenges of the rapidly changing technological world (Curtain, 2001); (Ndou, 2004).

Increased investment in the ICT sector, which is appealing to young professionals, will not only generate a significant potential for jobs, but automation will also improve the operation and delivery of services, which will in turn attract more private sector investment and lead to more job creation (Fjose & Green 2010); (Ndou, 2004). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been recognized as a key driver of poverty reduction and development (Grobe, 2017) since they are responsible for a large number of employment and income-generating opportunities worldwide. SMEs make up the majority of the African economy, accounting for more than 90% of enterprises and employing around 60% of the workforce, the majority of whom are women and young people (Futrell, 2009). However, African SMEs, like many in developing nations, are less productive than bigger businesses and frequently struggle to survive and expand. However, increased SME productivity is essential for future development (Kroeze, 2011). But SMEs in the ICT sector encounter a number of significant challenges, such as restricted access to regional and international markets, limited early-stage funding, and limited business and technical skills (Prasanna et al., 2019). Furthermore, these organizations must navigate a regulatory landscape that is both complicated and undeveloped. Notwithstanding these difficulties, it is clear that small and medium-sized businesses have the potential to contribute to a number of emerging growth sectors, such as value-added, locally relevant content, as well as software and mobile apps (Maquire & Magrys, 2007).

Table 1: Youth generation 15-24 Years Unemployment

	Kenya	Uganda	Rwanda	Tanzania
Total Population	7.4	9.4	17.8	10.3
Male	5.3	8.0	15.2	8.2
Female	9.6	11.0	21.0	12.3
Youth (15 to 24 Years)	17.7	6.5	23.0	13.7
Male	17.1	5.5	20.4	8.9
Female	20.9	7.4	26.0	14.4

Source: KNBS Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey, 2017/18; NISR Rwanda Labor Force Survey 2018

Using ICT to conduct business is a chance for young professionals to expand their business to a wide audience. experts from throughout the globe (Akram & Kumar, 2017). Business development depends on a wide range of variables. This involves providing a excellent customer service, minimizing operating expenses, and maximizing revenue. Technology can aid businesses in a variety of ways, including: increase efficiency and productivity to cut costs and maximize revenues that may be used to expand the business (InfoDev, 2011). Despite the benefits of technology for business, manufacturers must nevertheless develop strategies to satisfy customers' needs. demands. As specific strategies, tactics will be required if we want to compete with other manufacturers and gain than previously. In order to achieve this, producers permit customers to be influenced by their products and to broaden their offerings to include a wider audience a large number of experts (Peterson et al., 1997). The six members of EAC share some traits, but they are also very different histories, economic resources and infrastructures, and political systems (Kariuki, 2011); (Kroeze, 2011). The East Africa mission to improve the quality of life for the community, economic, political, social, and cultural integration must be broadened and intensified. Increased competitiveness, value-added production, trade, and investments will benefit East African professionals. According to Johnston & Marchall (2013) EAC understood the significance of ICT in globalization, supporting the regional integration agenda, regional

development, establishing regional legal frameworks for the deployment of submarine networks to enhance international connection cyber legislation, the creation of a roadmap for the seamless move from analog to digital broadcasting, and the growth of a plan to change the postal sub-sector (Martin, 2005). Significant difficulties arising from the ICT industry have also been brought to light. The convergence phenomenon. Currently, the ICT industry is characterized by rigid boundaries between sectors. vanished. In turn, it's calling for a radical reassessment of the established sectoral frameworks (O' Guinn, 2013).

## **2. The Art of Research**

New devices, machinery, and methods that are based on current knowledge are considered technology regarding computers and science Matambalya (2001). The majority of young people in East Africa experience difficulties in finding employment, starting a business, and obtaining education. due to restricted access to ICT, exorbitant costs, and inadequate and poor infrastructure, there are restricted educational and employment possibilities development, particularly in rural regions (Kroeze, 2011), (Mayor, 2010). ICT is the term used to describe the collection of mostly digital technologies created to gather, arrange, keep, analyze, and transmit data both within and outside a company, and in our instance small and medium-sized businesses (Kabanda & Brown, 2017); (Kalan & Ünalir, 2016). Insufficient ICT is the primary barrier to the integration of ICT into socioeconomic indicators in the EAC restrictions on universal access to infrastructure, insufficient understanding of the laws and ICT, and deficient legal and regulatory framework minimal ICT usage in commerce, e-government, and electronic security, as well as institutional frameworks for these activities the detrimental effects of globalization, bad spectrum management in the face of evolving, and operations in the services and commodities industries lack of preparation for the arrival of new technologies and technology (Saunders et al., 2009). A small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) is one that: not a subsidiary of a public limited firm, with no more than 150 employees (O' Guinn, 2013). Some people's attitudes Small and medium-sized firms are sure to produce uneducated professionals, particularly young ones. When lettered experts are directed towards small and medium-sized businesses. The environment has an effect because factors like variations in territorial potential and the intensity of competition can limit a salesperson's motivation. In our situation, the ability of young professionals to perform at a high level. But the surrounding environment can In our scenario, young professionals are influenced by their outlook on the probability of success, which in turn affects their readiness to work hard (Yin, 2003).

Starting a business presents a variety of challenges for young professionals. Although many of these issues are typical of anyone launching a new business, others are specific to the entrepreneur's young age. Compared to older professionals, young professionals have fewer business connections and contacts. Additionally, they have less access to financial resources since they have not had enough time to save money or buy real estate. Additionally, they may encounter ageism from finance providers, consumers, or suppliers (Southern, A., & Tilley, 2000). In addition to these issues, small and medium businesses in many developing nations generate a sizable portion of employment and output and are thus directly related to poverty reduction. Particularly in developing nations, the globalization of production and the change in the relative importance of different drivers of competitiveness provide challenges for SMEs (Martin, 2005); (O' Guinn, 2013). Because a large number of professionals own a cell phone and this is a decent platform for providing services, young professionals should pay particular attention to mobile technologies.



geographical information systems for governments or international organizations, young professionals with the necessary ICT skills are well positioned to create their employment (Yin, 2003).

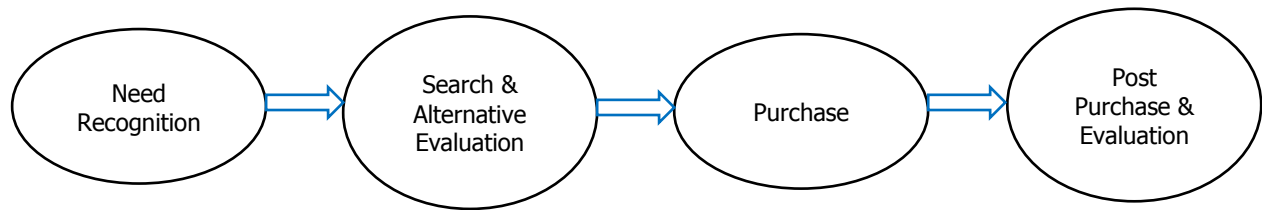


Figure 1. Young Generation Perception and communication process for ICT

The EAC's SMEs lack rules and regulations that would help young professionals start a business, teach them how to handle clients' actions, and encourage them to be creative by using ICT. There are several limitations with the ICT itself in the EAC, including a lack of a regional ICT master plan, subpar spectrum management in the face of evolving technology, and insufficient preparation for the introduction of new technologies, which also contributes to the ineffectiveness of young professionals in the EAC in terms of strategic importance within SMEs. The laudatory statements of regional EAC leaders do not indicate that young professionals are helped to obtain the education and skills necessary to be productive. They also lack the desire to find work since they can see that, overall, youth unemployment rates are higher than the national averages. Compared to older professionals, younger ones have fewer commercial connections and contacts, which may prevent them from reaching a big market where they may sell their goods. Young professionals in the EAC face a number of limitations in business networks that prevent them from maximizing their time using ICT as a marketing tool. Generally speaking, the majority of young professionals lack the knowledge of how to develop business networks and establish enduring connections with their customers. Some customers view them as incompetent because of their traits and the issues of age discrimination against young people in the workplace.

## 5. Discussion

To educate young professionals on how to create strategic goals that support the growth of EAC's small and medium-sized businesses, regulations and laws must be strengthened. Motivate professionals to want to purchase a product via on-the-job training, seminars, upskilling classes, and other means. Efforts for business development. The regional leaders in the EAC should interplead on how to inspire young professionals by doing the following: introducing government initiatives that encourage young professionals to be active in small and medium-sized enterprises and they should also carry out raise awareness about how ICT may be used by young professionals to express creative and unique ideas by giving them a live online discussion and exchange of ideas. About using ICT as a chance to purchase, to communicate with young professionals. Young professionals require training and skills to sell goods or services through small and medium-sized businesses. Since they are children, they are able to develop a sensitive awareness of using contemporary technology. The ICT of the SMEs should create a culture that encourages creativity and embraces technology. Next, young professionals in the EAC need to come to understand and appreciate the value and significance of ICT in small and medium-sized enterprises. The regional Leaders in EAC have the ability to by making business more, establish an ICT culture in the company that works for all EAC member nations. dependent upon technology. To comprehend the significance of ICT in the EAC, young professionals require training sessions. The business aspect and SMEs. Knowing ICT as a key to SMEs'.



## **6. Conclusion**

The results of this study demonstrate that ICT is utilized by young professionals the most as an since there are no regulations or laws in the East African Community that can support young entrepreneurs. experts to provide competitive advantages and, as a result, business expansion. The use of ICT as a means of communication also appears to be the case. The chance for growth among small and medium-sized businesses is not developed to provide young professionals the benefit of the opportunity to gain easy access to helpful information about the products and services offered to SMEs. Unemployed young professionals the prices demonstrate that investing in the education and talents of young professionals is insufficient to be productive. Because of the necessary ICT skills, young professionals are not in a good position to create their own employment. This may be partly because of the comparative constraints on ICT's widespread availability in the East African Community and the dearth of the demand for product updates and the monitoring methods that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) use as a target for their customers. The age of the young professionals in the EAC and the manner in which they employ ICT to foster the expansion of the region may be seen as a barrier to this study enterprises in small and medium-sized firms. Furthermore, some features might be considered a restriction, such as insufficient time and data updates at the unequal ICT implementation across EAC nations and the researcher's removal. The absence of sufficient understanding of ICT and obtaining more information from young professionals from EAC and SMEs utilized. The most that can encourage young professionals to take advantage is current monitoring technology to create in small and medium-sized businesses. There are exchange products and services between young professionals in the EAC utilizing the advantages of numerous complementary factors, such as establishing and connecting into extranets inside small and medium-sized enterprises. ICT, utilizing the internet as a benefit of market prospects to forge strategic partnerships among SMEs.

This study has several limitations, for example: One, the data used in this study comes from self-reports on several sources that potentially contain subjective bias. Two, limited internet access and ICT infrastructure in several regions in Africa may affect the concept of ICT-based business management. Three, this study is cross-sectional, so it cannot measure changes in conceptual understanding longitudinally.

The findings of this study can serve as a basis for governments and training institutions in East Africa to develop more inclusive and affordable ICT literacy programs, particularly in the context of business management. By understanding the limited access and knowledge of local youth, training programs can be designed in a more practical way, such as through offline modules or hybrid learning, to reach areas with limited digital infrastructure. In addition, these findings can also encourage collaboration between the private sector and education to create ICT-based curricula that are relevant to the needs of the job market, so that East African youth can be better prepared to compete in the digital era. The startup industry and MSMEs can also use the results of this study to design more effective internal training strategies to improve ICT-based business management skills for young employees.

## **Acknowledgments**

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