Empowering Low-Skilled Workers through ICT Training

By Yvonne LOH
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Research: Train 50 unemployed workers in ICT skills, help them find jobs

Result 1: Skills training in ICT did not directly help in job placement

Result 2: Trainees’ self-confidence in ICT skills positively affected job interview outcome.
**Premise / Hypotheses**

- **Is ICT4D for “Developing” Economies only?**
  - ICT4D historically applied to developing countries
  - Labour markets changing

- **ICT Training as a tool for Employability Policies**
  - Computers & internet essential for getting jobs (UN-APCICT/ESCAP, 2011)
  - Digital divide favours the ICT-savvy generation

- **Project in Singapore**
  - The Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) helps marginalised adults in Singapore who lack job skills to access training and then (hopefully) get better jobs.

Hypothesis

Increase Skills & Knowledge in ICT

Better Job Placement and opportunities for the unemployed worker
Methodology

Quantitative
• Surveys (n=50)
• Likert-scale items
  e.g. “I would rate my computer skills as good, average, poor...”

Qualitative
• In-depth interviews with 7 of 50 participants

Observations
• During training;
• During job interviews.
50 Participants went thru’

**Outreach**
Advertisements, call centre, e2i’s web site etc

**Industry Knowledge**
Briefing about jobs available

**Career Counselling**
To recommend training

**Job Placement**
Job Fair with > 50 vacancies in Admin Jobs

**Skills Training**
3-days ICT training
Who are these 50 unemployed workers?

**Education**: < GCE “O” Levels
**Age range**: 40 and older (84%)
**Gender**: mostly female (86%)
**Ethnicity**: 75.6% Chinese, 10.6% Malay, 10.9% Indian, 2.90% others
Hypothesis Rejected

Increase Skills & Knowledge in ICT
Better Job Placement and opportunities for the unemployed worker

Increase ICT Skills
Higher Self-Confidence
Better Job Placement
In-depth Interviews

The perceived professional need of learning ICT is one of the key determinants for them to take up the course:

“Learning Microsoft office would be a good opportunity, my teenage daughter laughed at me because I don’t know how to use Microsoft office. I am not sure what job is suitable for me”.

- Mdm Chng, aged 58.
Discussion & Future Research

Theoretical

• Be aware of alternative sociological theories and rival hypothesis on a given social problem, e.g. self-efficacy theories.

Policy & Practice

• Suggest supplementary training to ↑ self-efficacy of the trainee, e.g. job interviewing techniques, resume-writing, professional grooming etc …