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Project Paper (MS-100)

The Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country Office.

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that the project titled **“The Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the Children International”** is an original work of the student and is being submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of the Master of Business Administration of Indira Ghandi Open National University. This report has not been submitted earlier either to this University or to any other University/Institution for the fulfilment of the requirement of a course of study.

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ACRONYMS

AAU	- Addis Ababa University
BPR	- Business Process Re-engineering
CBA	- College of Business Administration
CPD	- Continuous Professional Development
CRM	- Customer Relationship Management
EIS	- Enterprise Information System
ERP	- Enterprise Resource Planning
FBE	-Faculty of Business and Economics
IA	- Impact Assessment
ICT	- Information and Communication Technology
IFRS	- International Financial Reporting Standards
IGNOU	- Indira Ghandi National Open University
IS	- Information System
IT	- Information Technology
KM	-Knowledge Management
LAN	- Local Area Network
SAP	- Systems Application Products
SCM	- Supply Chain Management

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organization for children, work in around 120 countries. Save the Children strives to achieve a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. Save the children work to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives. Across all of work, pursue several core values: accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity. To achieve change for children by building evidence from innovations, partnering with key stakeholders, and being the voice for change to implement the programs at scale to impact millions of children.

Save the Children first worked in Ethiopia in the 1930s and set up its first formal office here during the 1984 famine. As well as continuing to provide humanitarian and emergency relief, focus on the following programmatic areas: health, HIV and AIDS, nutrition, food security and livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education, child protection, and child rights governance. Save the children work on emergency relief and with long-term development programs. The Ethiopia Country Office is the largest operation in the globe with more than 2,400 staff working in one of 50+ offices through the country. In 2015, more than 6m Ethiopians benefitted from the programs. Programmatic approach is to build evidence from the program innovations and then work

to enhance Government of Ethiopia systems to scale-up successful programs. Save the children typically enhance service delivery directly or through local NGO and other partners and use our successes to engage in policy dialogue at different levels. Save the children work in seven main programmatic sectors in Ethiopia targeting vulnerable children and their families mostly in rural and remote, underserved areas.(<https://ethiopia.savethechildren.net>.)

Accounting software is a type of computer software used by accounting professionals to manage accounts and perform accounting operations. Accounting is the systematic practice, work or process of communicating and recording financial information. In a business setting, this is done for the purposes of internal and external audits, required reports and financial analysis to meet legal or internal managerial requirements. Accounting may also include systematic and diverse measurement, classification, verification, summation and interpretation of financial information. Accounting software can range from simple, single-entry programs used for individual record-keeping to more sophisticated, double-entry systems that can process accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll and inventory, among other functions.

Accounting systems have changed and grown both in response to limitations and the availability of new technologies. Throughout the 21st century, an alliance between the military and various industries have existed in the development of electronics, computers and information theory. The military has historically driven such research by providing motivation and funding for innovation in the field of mechanization and computing (Mosich, 4th Edition). There are numerous evidences of record keeping and system of accounting control in ancient Egypt and in the Greek city-states. Accounting is capable of

supplying financial information that is essential for the efficient operation and for the evaluation of performance of any economic unit in society. Changes in the environment in which such organizations operate will inevitably be accompanied by alterations in accounting concept and techniques.

This days Information is recognized as one of the most important corporate resources, (Kumar, 1998: 19). Accounting information is a valuable strategic resource as weapons to defeat and frustrate competition; it has the power to reduce uncertainties, and therefore, can be used in problem solving and strategic planning. Accounting information serves the purpose of reducing uncertainty regarding the alternative courses of action in the process of decision making. Accounting information system that can properly manage the selection, collection, analysing and dissemination of financial information for timely utilization and decision making. Thus, considering the current and future needs of stakeholders, the research will provide comprehensive analysis on the challenge of graduates of universities in using accounting software in the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian country office.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Information Technologies are affecting the way in which organizations are structured, managed and operated. One of the most dramatic developments affecting organization is the fusion of business and IT strategy. Entities can no longer develop business strategy separate from IT strategy and vice versa. To maintain both the accountancy profession's credibility and capability in supporting new strategic information technology initiatives and the user's trust and confidence, the competence of accountants in IT strategy must be preserved and enhanced.

A good knowledge of Accounting Software helps Accountants, Auditors, Management Consultants and others to efficiently and effectively accomplish their duties and responsibilities. There is no doubt that Accounting software has contributed immensely to the magnitude, speed and acceleration of change in business practices. However, there will be a challenge for Accounting graduates in using accounting software after graduate from universities, which will affect all aspects of the accounting functions: including economic measurement, financial reporting, Auditing, Managerial planning and control. This study is to assess the challenge of accountants in using Accounting software in Save the children International, Ethiopia country office.

1.3 Research Question

This research has tried to address the following basic research questions:

- What are the challenges of graduates of universities in using Accounting software in save the children International, Ethiopia country office?
- What is the nature and degree of impact of Accounting software on business practices in save the children international, Ethiopia Ethiopian country office?

- What are the content and nature of Accounting software related courses provided in Accounting and Finance Curriculum of higher academic institutions in the country?
- What extent training for accounting software is available, whether software suppliers provide training on continuous basis?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the challenge of graduates of universities in using accounting software in Save the children International, Ethiopian country office.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Under the above mentioned general objective, the specific objectives of the study include:

- Identify the cause of the challenge of graduates of universities in using Accounting software.
- Examine the nature and degree of challenge of Accounting software on Accounting practices in Save the children International, Ethiopian country office;
- Assess the content and nature of Accounting software related courses provided in accounting and Finance Curriculum of higher academic institutions in the country.
- Find out what measures should be taken by Academicians and industry professionals to equip the graduates with necessary accounting software skills.

- To study to what extent training for accounting software is available.
- To examine whether software suppliers provide training on continuous basis.

1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1 Nature and Source of data/Information

This study used a descriptive research methodology for the purpose of describing the challenge of accounting software, it also used to describe their relationships with the universities, Accounting software providers and organizations regard to Accounting software training for new Accounting graduate, in the save the children International, Ethiopian country office.

To collect data required to answer research questions, the researcher collected data from the employee of Save the children International, Ethiopia country office. Some selected higher academic Universities both from the government as well as non-governmental sectors, accounting software training providers which are believed to be representatives of the subject under study.

1.5.2 Sample and Sampling technique

This research used both sampling methods in order to maintain representative of samples in the population of study. From the probability sampling methods simple and systematic sampling methods will be used, from the non-probability sampling method used purposeful sampling method. From Accounting and Finance department 60 staffs of Save the children, Ethiopian country office, from government universities Addis Ababa University (AAU) and from private sector Unity and St. Mary universities was selected as

well as from Accounting software training providers and suppliers of the software has equal chance of being selected to be representatives of the population.

1.5.3 Methods and Techniques of Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data used in undertaking this study. The primary data was collected using interviews and questionnaires. Structured interview was used throughout the study because it provides uniform information which assures the comparability of data. In addition to this mailed questionnaires was used. Direct observation was also used to gather information not otherwise obtained or validate information gained by other means. Observation of physical facilities, accounting software related equipment, Accounting information processing methods, user's preference in using accounting information as well as management practices can be important insights of the project under study.

The secondary, data was collected from different books, published and unpublished documents from universities and organizations, magazines and Internet. Thus, based on observation and compilation discussion for the selected samples, the study provided assessment on the challenge of using accounting software in Save the children International, Ethiopian country office.

1.5.4 Analysis Method (Tools and Techniques)

Both qualitative and quantitative data was analysed using Descriptive data analysis techniques to assess and estimate the challenge of using accounting software. Before the analysis begins, data quality and consistency was checked by triangulating the information gathered from primary and secondary sources.

The research data was analysed considering its quality (credibility of the source, methods used for data collection, data accuracy, and Logical consistency using some statistical techniques such as, percentage (%), tabulation, and pie chart and histogram presentations. The information from the already mentioned and other sources was collected using a well-structured questionnaire formats specially designed for this assignment. Apart from the secondary data review, the researcher conducted key informant interview with key personnel and observe some of the Accounting functional activities and informal discussions with staffs. This supplement the information collected through documents review and helps to obtain opinions about the current state of the process.

1.6 Significance of the study

This research paper helped professionals of accounting to work for a better result. Therefore, the research brought certain facts that have been unattended in the area of Accounting practice by using accounting software in save the children International, Ethiopian country office. Furthermore, it can help as a reference material for other researchers who want to make further study on this area.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

1.7.1 Scope

As stated in the research methodology section, both probability and non-probability sampling methods was used to select a sample size within a population of all higher universities in the country that teaches business and accounting courses especially

Accounting software. Though the sample size accounts only some of the population size, it is believed to be representative since the data to be collected are very homogenous in nature and scope across the board. In addition, the data to be collected from those samples easily meets the specific needs of the research under study, Save the children International, Ethiopian country office.

The reliability of the findings depends on honest feedback from respondents (Employees, managers and leaders). The researcher made every effort to explain that the outcome of this research.

1.7.2 Limitation of the study

The constraint to prepare this study had a challenge due to lack of previous research materials related to the challenge of using accounting software of graduate from universities on accounting practices.

Due to time and budget limitations, the research only depends on the analysis of the issue from Save the Children International, Ethiopia country office. The researcher was used own fund and this has limited the scope of the study. The non-response rate to the self-administered questionnaire also had a challenge and taken as limitations for the study.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research paper is organized to ensure coherent and consistent flow of ideas. To this end, the report was presented into 4 chapters. The first chapter highlighted the

introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, objectives, research design and Methodology, scope and Limitation of the study. Chapter two presented the review of the related literature. Chapter three focused on Data Analysis, interpretation and presentation. Finally, Chapter four presented summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITRETURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Technological innovations over the past 30 to 40 years have greatly enhanced accounting and finance activities, procedures and policies (Walter B. Meigs, A.N.Mositch, Charles E.Johnson). Although technology is certainly not new to accounting, advances have altered all aspects of the accounting function and control and auditing. The role of technology and computers within the organization also has changed. Local Area Network (LAN) and Wide Area Network (WAN) activities, including the internet and the many forms of Electronic Commerce and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), in addition to the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and other applications, have transformed the way accounting is done.

There is a general agreement that the environmental factors that affect the accounting environment include: culture, economic development, political system, capital market, inflation levels, tax laws, legal system, and level of education (Doupnik and Salter 1995; Meek and Saudagaran 1990; Mueller 1968). Due to the current trends, great forces are pushing change upon us than ever before.

This research thesis is about The Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country Office. The study is based on the sampling methodology from within a population of higher academic institutions in the country that teaches Accounting and Finance courses as their core streams; but accounting software is one of the forces affecting accounting education and practice.

For better understanding, let us briefly consider some of the major and current trends affecting the accounting profession. These are: **Globalization, Privatization, capital, markets, competition, new business models, specialization,** and **new educational models.**

Globalization: Globalization is a growing interdependency between communities around the world. This community includes professional accounting communities. According to FASB and other accounting literatures, accounting professional bodies are working on globalization of accounting standards, practices, and qualification programs all over the world. The standard of more developed regions or countries cannot easily operate in less developed economy. So, we need to consider the impact of globalization in designing our education policies.

Privatization is a shift of public owned ownership to a private ownership, whereby the role of government as owner/manager of business enterprises is reduced by disposition to entrepreneurs and corporations. As stated by Massoud (1998), "the successful transformation of a command economy into a market economy based on private

enterprises cannot be forced. Thus, Privatization can impact the accounting education, practice and disclosure requirements.

Capital Markets: The growth of international capital markets has been another of the great trends affecting the business community and our profession. However, another great impact of the growth of international capital markets is the emphasis being placed on finance in the accounting curriculum. In the past, this area has not been given sufficient attention in accounting curriculums, but now it is becoming an essential ingredient in the success of professional accountants, both in the public practice arena and in the management accounting arena.

Competition: At one time, much of the accountant's revenue was derived from bookkeeping services, tax return preparation, and preparation and audit of historic financial statements. These old niches are declining in their prominence and importance as revenue sources to most professional accountants. At one time, the accounting profession took advantage of its protected status as a regulated area of economic activity.

New Business Models: One of the most significant developments in recent times has been the development of new business models involving the breakdown of hierarchical organizations in favor of networks of various partnerships and joint ventures engaged in constantly self-reconstituting entities.

Specialization: No single professional can master every field of activity in which a professional services firm is engaged. Many of our educational curriculums, however, were designed for a “one size fits all” practitioner. It is becoming obvious in the business community and in the educational community that students must achieve some type of specialization in order to make them employable. As a result, there is a growing recognition that there is a need for not just post-qualification specialization, but pre-qualification specialization as well.

New Educational Models: The educational system is going through many changes. The three most important changes are Internet-based distance education, co-operative education (co-op), and competency-based models. Distance education is getting a tremendous boost through the rapid growth in the Internet and related tools for developing sophisticated web-based courses. The global reach of the Internet makes it possible to develop and share courses on a global basis in response to global trends.

The above global forces are affecting accounting education and practice and may interact with each other, creating a complex decision environment for decision and policy makers everywhere, and Ethiopia is not an exception!

2.2 Accounting Software

Accounting software describes a type of application software that records and processes accounting transactions within functional modules such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger, payroll, and trial balance. It functions as an accounting

information system. It may be developed in-house by the organization using it, may be purchased from a third party, or may be a combination of a third-party application software package with local modifications. Accounting software may be on-line based, accessed anywhere at any time with any device which is Internet enabled, or may be desktop based. It varies greatly in its complexity and cost. The market has been undergoing considerable consolidation since the mid-1990s, with many suppliers ceasing to trade or being bought by larger groups.

Accounting software is a class of computer programs that enable you to manage your business's financial transactions. Such programs can vary widely in scope, with some programs designed for little more than simple bookkeeping and some designed to manage the entire financial comings and goings of large businesses. Using accounting software helps companies to use the resources in their accounting departments efficiently, and can reduce costly bookkeeping mistakes.

Accuracy: Accounting software can help to increase the accuracy of your records by reducing or eliminating human errors in calculation. Manual bookkeeping processes involve making a lot of mathematical calculations by hand. An incorrect calculation early on in the in the process could have a great impact on the end balance. Computers, on the other hand, are virtually incapable of making such errors. However, it should be noted that accounting software is not immune to human errors arising from data entry or interpretation mistakes.

Speed: Using accounting software allows businesses to process their accounts with greater speed than manual processing. Part of this speed increase comes from the use of

computers, which are able to process figures far faster than the human brain. In addition, accounting software allows organizations to increase efficiency by introducing automation. Say, for example, that a business needs to record sales tax on all of its transactions. Accounting software could be configured to do that for each entry automatically, rather than having a staff member work out the tax longhand.

Cost: The benefits resulting from the speed and efficiency of accounting software often go hand-in-hand with reduced overall costs. The use of an accounting program allows each member of the accounting team to do more in a given time, potentially meaning that a smaller team is needed overall. This, in turn, can reduce the accounting department's payroll and administration costs. However, these savings should always be balanced against the cost of the software itself and any additional hardware needed to run it.

Reports: Accounting software helps businesses to supply the necessary members of staff with timely and accurate financial information. For example, suppose that a company's finance director needs a report of cash flow to take to a meeting in two hours. Many accounting software systems have built-in reporting modules that enable users to create this type of report by simply filling in a form or clicking a button. However, creating such a report manually would be a time-consuming process.

Tax: Filing your business taxes can be a complex process, requiring you to keep close track of all your business's transactions. Accounting software helps to make this process easier by ensuring that all of your business's financial details are in one place. In addition, companies such as Intuit and ATX produce tax return software that integrates

with their accounting programs. This allows you to calculate your return itself semi-automatically, rather than spending time and resources working out the necessary details by hand.

Accounting software is a class of computer programs that enable you to manage your business's financial transactions. Such programs can vary widely in scope, with some programs designed for little more than simple bookkeeping and some designed to manage the entire financial comings and goings of large businesses.

Implementation: In many cases, implementation (i.e. the installation and configuration of the system at the client) can be a bigger consideration than the actual software chosen when it comes down to the total cost of ownership for the business. Most midmarket and larger applications are sold exclusively through resellers, developers and consultants. Those organizations generally pass on a license fee to the software vendor and then charge the client for installation, customization and support services. Clients can normally count on paying roughly 50-200% of the price of the software in implementation and consulting fees.

Other organizations sell to, consult with and support clients directly, eliminating the reseller. Accounting software provides many benefits such as speed up the information retrieval process, bring efficiency in Bank reconciliation process, automatically prepare Value Added TAX (VAT) / Goods and Services TAX (GST), and, perhaps most importantly, provide the opportunity to see the real-time state of the company's financial position.

Types

Personal accounting/Finance: Personal accounting software is mainly targeted towards home users, supporting accounts payable-type accounting transactions, managing budgets, and simple account reconciliation, at the inexpensive end of the market.

Low-end market : At the low-end of the business markets, inexpensive applications software allows most general business accounting functions to be performed. Suppliers frequently serve a single national market, while larger suppliers offer separate solutions in each national market.

Many of the low end products are characterized by being "single-entry" products, as opposed to double-entry systems seen in many businesses. Some products have considerable functionality but are not considered GAAP or IFRS/FASB compliant. Some low-end systems do not have adequate security nor audit trails.

Mid-market : The mid-market covers a wide range of business software that may be capable of serving the needs of multiple national accountancy standards and allow accounting in multiple currencies.

In addition to general accounting functions, the software may include integrated or add-on management information systems, and may be oriented towards one or more markets, for example with integrated or add-on project accounting modules.

High-end market/Enterprise resource planning: The most complex and expensive business accounting software is frequently part of an extensive suite of software often known as enterprise resource planning (ERP) software.

These applications typically have a very long implementation period, often greater than six months. In many cases, these applications are simply a set of functions which require

significant integration, configuration and customization to even begin to resemble an accounting system.

Many freeware high-end open-source accounting software are available online these days which aim to change the market dynamics. Most of these software solutions are web-based.

The advantage of a high-end solution is that these systems are designed to support individual company specific processes, as they are highly customizable and can be tailored to exact business requirements. This usually comes at a significant cost in terms of money and implementation time.

Hybrid solutions: As technology improves, software vendors have been able to offer increasingly advanced software at lower prices. This software is suitable for companies at multiple stages of growth. Many of the features of mid-market and high-end software (including advanced customization and extremely scalable databases) are required even by small businesses as they open multiple locations or grow in size. Additionally, with more and more companies expanding overseas or allowing workers to home office, many smaller clients have a need to connect multiple locations. Their options are to employ software-as-a-service or another application that offers them similar accessibility from multiple locations over the internet.

Accounting software: With the advent of faster computers and internet connections, accounting software companies have been able to create accounting software paid for on a monthly recurring charge instead of a larger upfront license fee (software as a service). The rate of adoption of this new business model has increased steadily to the point

where legacy players have been forced to come out with their own online versions. The most recent entrants to cloud accounting software hope to achieve more rapid adoption by avoiding the need to charge a monthly subscription.

The following comparison of accounting software documents the various features and differences between different professional accounting software and personal finance packages. The comparison only focus considering financial and external accounting functions. No comparison is made for internal/management accounting, cost accounting, budgeting, or integrated MAS accounting.

An accounting application is a software program that captures and records all accounting transactions. It often divides functions into modules such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, inventory, and more.

An accounting application is a software program that captures and records all accounting transactions. It often divides functions into modules such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, inventory, and more. An accounting application may run on a locally managed set of hardware and networking equipment or rely on the expertise of a third-party-managed cloud-based infrastructure.

2.2.1. Accounting Software in Higher Education in Ethiopia

In a baseline survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, it emerged that most universities and institutions of higher learning in Ethiopia have computers. However, these computers are few and, therefore, shared at a student-computer ratio of 10:1 in most cases. The study also showed that despite the presence of computers, most of the institutions lack a network infrastructure and have limited connectivity. The lecturers are

yet to adopt ICT as a teaching tool, and only a small number of students use computers and the Internet as a learning resource.

One of the key roles that ICT has played in the higher education sector is that of distance learning through the Internet. In Ethiopia, however, most of the nation's universities have indicated they are not involved in electronic distance education (EDE) initiatives; in fact, only 15% of private universities have indicated that they use EDE. However, there has been some movement from some universities. The University of Addis Ababa, for instance, has an ICT development office charged with the sole responsibility of implementing ICT initiatives. These include developing systems and infrastructure for use by students, lecturers, and the administration. The university is also collaborating with the Indira Gandhi National Open University on electronic distance education.

At the school level, the co-ordination seems to be centralized at the Ministry of Education through the Regional Education Bureau. However, at the university and college level, it appears most activities are carried out and coordinated by the universities themselves. Other players in government include the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry of Capacity Building, the Ministry of Defence, and the Ethiopia ICT for Development Agency.

2.2.2. Accounting Software in organization practice

The current world of business and accounting is based on the computer and the information revolution. Globalization and the rapid development in information technology (IT), which has been ongoing for the past 50 years, have resulted in dramatic changes to the business environment and business education (Mohammed and Lashine,

2003). These twin drivers of change-globalization and IT- have made the world a smaller place and the accounting profession more interconnected than before. IT expenditures have become a significant item on balance sheets. It is estimated that IT expenditures amount to more than one third of all capital expenditures (Sullivan-Trainer, 1989). Being referred to as the language of business, the importance of accounting to the world of business and finance cannot be overemphasized. The changes highlighted above pose challenges for both the professional accountant and the accounting educator. With the use of technologies such as the internet, E-commerce, E-auction, powerful business software and developments in transportation, communication and instantaneous information dissemination, business transactions have not only increased in quantity, but in complexity as well. The demands of the market have increased more than ever before. According to Fermin del Valle of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), the challenges of the 21st century must be met by education. Research has shown that there is a gap in competencies between current education and skill level, and what is required in the ever-changing business environment (Mohammed and Lashine, 2003; Ahmed, 2003).

Accountants use ICT always to analyses and prepare financial statements accurately, timely and more reliable information to users. Most large business firms currently process the majority of their routine business transactions by computer. The greater efficiency of the computer, compared to human processing, has been a principal factor in the movement to automate clerical, managerial and administrative activities. Business firms are often introduced to computing once they decide to design and install everyday computer – based financial and accounting applications. Such as payroll, invoicing and

accounts payable After these applications have become operational, more complex materials control and management information systems applications are designed and installed. An interesting result of this continuing developmental process is that business firms become increasingly dependent on computer application and systems.

Accountants can perform a lot of transactions with in short period of time, provide accurate information, store and retrieve the information at any time from computers memory and perform other varied tasks.

2.3. Essential skills for a professional Accountant

Computers are rapidly changing the nature of modern business operations and thus, the work of accountants and auditors. There are accounting software packages, which integrate accounting systems and processes, and make it possible for electronic records and messages to replace certain documents such as purchase orders, invoices, bills of lading and checks. Most companies largely rely on IT in achieving their operating, compliance and financial reporting objectives. The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) has reported that there is the need for computer and information technology concepts to be part of the knowledge, skills and ability of professional accountants. It stresses the need for professional accountants to be able to apply productivity improvement software, such as spreadsheets and accounting-specific software, and be able to interpret, integrate and implement information technology.

The accountant's role has been expanding within organizations and has become part of the management and decision-making team, rather than just providers of financial information. Corporate accountants are shifting priorities from analysing past events to

acting as strategic partners, advisers and information providers. The Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) has identified four work activities that are expected to consume more of the internal accountant time namely: long-term strategic planning, internal consulting, computer systems and operations, and process improvement.

Today's accountants are evolving into providers of information on finance, technology and strategy. Changing business practices and an array of emerging technologies have transformed their role. But with change comes challenge. To adapt to their changing role, accountants must acquire skills that will enable them to deliver the new services that businesses need. The Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants identified these skills as follows:

Information delivery: Being able to present critical information in a way that is effective, precise, understandable and vital for both accountant and non-accountants.

Interpersonal skills: The ability to interact easily and work as a team can help accountants assume leadership roles.

Technological competence: Having a high degree of technical knowledge in order to assist in technology planning.

The use of IT in supporting businesses is widespread and becoming more so. It is becoming increasingly difficult to meet expectations of users of financial and business performance information without the use of IT. These challenges call for the special accountant that Ahmed (2003), calls the "hybrid accountant" (an accountant who blends IT competencies and mainstream accounting capabilities). Ahmed (2003) identified and

enumerated five main skills that professional accountants need to possess in order to function effectively in the modern world as follows:

1. **General IT knowledge** - information systems technology, computer-based accounting systems, files and databases, communications technology, information management, and e-commerce.
2. **IT skills and knowledge as user** - exposure to day-to-day applications, ability to use accounting systems packages, ability to use database service and internet for financial reporting and disclosure, ability to search online public access databases and ability to understand the structure of computerized accounting systems
3. **IT skills and knowledge as manager**- data resource structures, management of accounting information systems, global information management, executive information systems management, decision support systems, ability to use software for investment analysis, and others.
4. **IT skills and knowledge as designer**- information systems design and implementation, ability to use simple programming languages, ability to design and apply computer-assisted auditing techniques, system design techniques, ability to design financial databases, and others.
5. **IT skills and knowledge as evaluator**- internal control in computer-based systems; auditing of accounting information systems; evaluation of decision support systems; legal, ethical, auditing and information system control standards; understand Electronic Data Processing (EDP) systems; among others.

In considering the changing nature of modern business relationships and balance of power; current market demands on business performance reporting; and focus of the world on achieving world financial stability, Graham Ward, the then president of the IFAC, identified three main areas that professional accountants need to focus on in order to remain relevant to the global economy at large. Accounting is intimately tied to the development and maintenance of sound financial infrastructures and trustworthy, sustainable institutions. Professional accountants need to focus on

1. Public interest: making sure that public interest is at the fore-front of every activity.
 2. Ethics: emphasizing the importance of ethics and promoting it throughout the whole reporting chain.
 3. Thinking globally: supporting not only organizational performance but also in terms of global standards that promote transparent and useful information for decision-making.
- The values and hallmarks of the accountancy profession are sustainability and stability; consistency and credibility; objectivity and due care; as well as independence and integrity.

2.4. Other Related Concepts

Let's look at other related and important concepts on ICT and accounting which have a direct bearing on the topic that the researcher has selected to undertake, i.e. the Impacts of ICT on accounting education and Practice. This section also includes the Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) as the generation business process solutions. Let's us first start with understanding of terminologies related to ICT

2.4.1 IT and IS

According to MS-7 (information system for managers), there is a clear distinction between the confusing words of IS and IT.

- IS can be understood as a combination of resources and activities that collect, process, store and disseminate information.
- Resources include people, hardware, software, communications networks and data resources
- Activities consist of input, processing, output, storage, and control activities.
- IT includes combination of hardware, software, communications networks, and data management techniques that processes data into information for a specific purpose.
- IT is part of the broader IS concept.

2.4.2. The Benefits of IT/IS in Business

Information technology (IT) benefits the business world by allowing organizations to work more efficiently and to maximize productivity. Faster communication, electronic storage and the protection of records are advantages that IT can have on enterprise.

Information about the business is required for both internal and external use.

Information used for decision-making is often categorized into three types:

Strategic information: Used to help plan the objectives of the business as a whole and to measure how well those objectives are being achieved.

- Size, growth and competitive structure of the markets in which a business operator.
 - Investments made by the business and the returns (e.g. profits, cash inflows) from those investments.
1. Technical information: This is used to decide how the resources of the business should be employed. e.g. information about business productivity (e.g. units produced per employee);
 - Profit and cash flow forecasts in the short-term
 - Pricing information from the market
 2. Operational Information: This information is used to make sure that specific operational tasks are carried out as planned intended (i.e. things are done properly) for example, a production manager will want information about the extent and results of quality control checks that being carried out in the manufacturing process.

2.4.3. The Benefits of IT/IS in Education

In recent years there has been a groundswell of interest in how computers and the Internet can best be harnessed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education at all levels and in both formal and non-formal settings. The use of computers and the Internet is still in its infancy in developing countries, if these are used at all, due to limited infrastructure and the attendant high costs of access.

2.4.3.1. E-learning

Although most commonly associated with higher education and corporate training, e-learning encompasses learning at all levels, both formal and non-formal, that uses an information network—the Internet, an intranet (LAN) or extranet (WAN)—whether wholly or in part, for course delivery, interaction, evaluation and/or facilitation. Others prefer the term online learning. Web-based learning is a subset of e-learning and refers to learning using an Internet mainly using a browser (such as Chrome or Firefox or Internet Explorer).

2.4.3.2. Blended learning

Another term that is gaining currency is blended learning. This refers to learning models that combine traditional classroom practice with e-learning solutions. For example, students in a traditional class can be assigned both print-based and online materials, have online mentoring sessions with their teacher through chat, and are subscribed to a class email list.

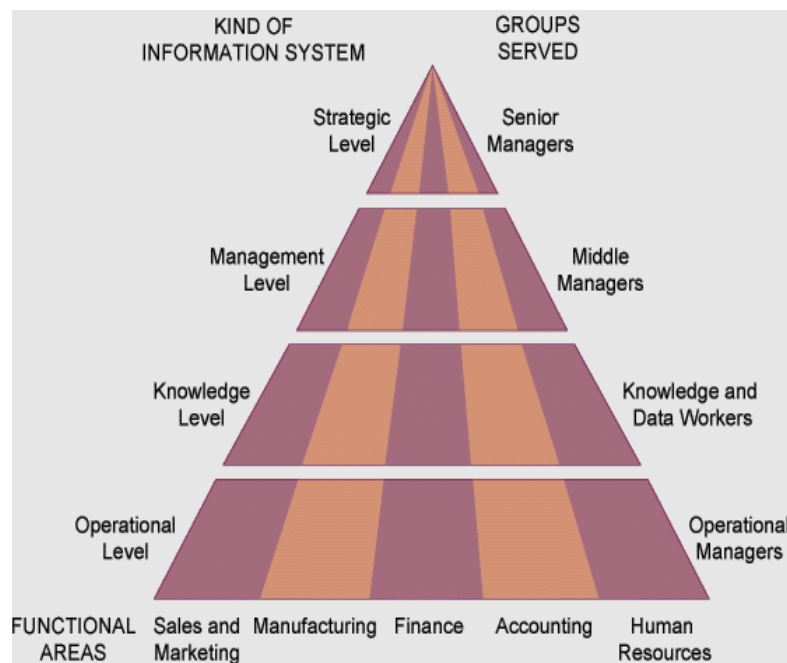
2.4.3.3. Open and distance learning

Open and distance learning is understood as “a way of providing learning opportunities that is characterized by the separation of teacher and learner in time or place, or both time and place; learning that is certified in some way by an institution or agency; the use of a variety of media, including print and electronic; two-way communications that allow learners and tutors to interact; the possibility of occasional face-to-face meetings; and a specialized division of labour in the production and delivery of courses.”

2.4.4 Major types of Information systems

According to MS-7, information systems for managers (IGNOU), the following major types of information systems are presented at different levels of management.

Figure-1: Types and levels of Information system



2.4.5 Enterprise information system

An enterprise information system is generally any kind of computing system that is of "enterprise class". This means typically offering high quality of service, dealing with large volumes of data and capable of supporting some large organization ("an enterprise").

Enterprise information systems provide a technology platform that enables organizations to integrate and coordinate their business processes. An enterprise information system provides a single system that is central to the organization and that ensures information can be shared across all functional levels and management hierarchies. Enterprise systems create a standard data structure and are invaluable in eliminating the problem of information fragmentation caused by multiple information systems within an organization.

2.4.6. Integrated Software Applications

Integrated software applications for business give you the ability to integrate the diverse information sources pertaining to your business into a single framework. This integrated information can then be shared by applications such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer relationship Management (CRM), Supply Chain Management (SCM) and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) systems. Let us see the definitions (source: <http://www.webopedia.com>) of the terms that we have used above:

ERP: Short for enterprise resource planning, a business management system that integrates all facets of the business, including planning, manufacturing, sales, and marketing. As the ERP methodology has become more popular, software applications have emerged to help business managers implement ERP in business activities such as inventory control, order tracking, customer service, finance and human resources.

CRM: Short for customer relationship management. CRM entails all aspects of interaction a company has with its customer, whether it is sales or service related. Computerization has changed the way companies are approaching their CRM strategies because it has also changed consumer-buying behaviour.

SCM: Short for supply chain management, the control of the supply chain as a process from supplier to manufacturer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer. Supply chain management does not involve only the movement of a physical product (such as a microchip) through the chain but also any data that goes along with the product (such as order status information, payment schedules, and ownership titles) and the actual entities that handle the product from stage to stage of the supply chain.

BPR: Short for Business Process Re-engineering. It is aimed to make radical changes in an organization from the ground up in an aim to improve performance and make more efficient use of resources. The concept of BPR generally includes the use of computers and information technology to organize data, project trends, etc.

2.4.7. e-business and e-Commerce

Electronic business commonly referred to as "E-business" or "e-business", is sometimes used interchangeable with E-commerce. E-commerce constitutes the narrower definition of buying, selling, transferring or exchange of products and services, between

businesses, groups and/or individuals using the internet, and intranets. It is an essential activity of business today. E-business covers a broader definition and includes e-commerce, customer relations management (CRM), and business partnerships, "e-learning and conducting electronic transactions within an organization".

Electronic business methods enable companies to link their internal and external data processing systems more efficiently and flexibly, to work more closely with suppliers and partners, and to better satisfy the needs and expectations of their customers.

In practice, e-business is more than just e-commerce. While e-business refers to more strategic focus with an emphasis on the functions that occur using electronic capabilities, e-commerce is a subset of an overall e-business strategy. E-commerce seeks to add revenue streams using the World Wide Web or the Internet to build and enhance relationships with clients and partners and to improve efficiency.

2.5 Summary

To succeed in today's information age, an understanding of accounting as an information system is vital. Information and communication Technologies (ICT) are the computing communication facilities and features that variously support teaching, learning and arranging of activities in education. It is to be noted that ICT is only one factor impacting Accounting education and Practice. Current trends of globalization, privatization, new business Model, Capital markets, new educational model and Specialization are important factors that interact with each other and create a complex decision model. ICT plays a key role in higher educations in the learning and teaching

process. Most of the institutions lack a network infrastructure and have limited connectivity, despite the presence of computers. The lecturers are yet to adopt ICT as a teaching tool, and only a small number of students use computers and the Internet as a learning resource.

We can see a number of changes in market and society, enabled (some say 'powered') by advanced information and communication technology that strongly influence the way 'the world turns'. These changes take place at a speed that cannot be compared to earlier changes in markets and society, i.e., they are more of a revolution than an evolution!

In today's computerized, interconnected, global business environment, the accounting profession must deal with a host of complex issues that never existed in the past—for instance, how to capture and record new business transactions and events, develop value-added business and information processes, create new value-chain and supply-chain opportunities, disseminate useful knowledge to a wide array of information consumers, and provide assurance services across the entire spectrum of economic activities reflect some of the more compelling topics of interest.

Accounting researchers can add value to the profession by investigating these issues, among others, and presenting results in a clear and understandable fashion to practicing accountants. This research paper is, therefore, expected to contribute its part by assessing the Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions; In the case of Save the Children International.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter provides the presentation and interpretation of data which is obtained through the distributed questionnaires and interview conducted with professionals who have closer educational qualification and work experiences in Accounting and Finance in Save the Children International Ethiopian country office and Universities of Government and private. The number of questionnaires distributed was 60 and 52 of them were filled and returned.

3.1 Respondent's Background Information

Table 1: Respondent's Gender, Age, Educational level and work experiences

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.1.1	Gender		
	* Male	29	56%
	* Female	23	44%
Total		52	100%
3.1.2	Age		
	* 18-24	6	11%
	* 25-35	27	52%
	* 36-45	15	29%
	* Above 45	4	8%
Total		52	100%
3.1.3	Educational level		
	* 10th or 12th grade complete	2	4%
	* Diploma	6	11%
	* Degree	29	56%

**MBA Research Paper on the Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions:
In the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country office.**

	* Masters	15	29%
Total		52	100%
3.1.4	Work Experience's		
	*1 to 3	16	31%
	*4 to six	6	11%
	*7 to 10	10	19%
	*11 and above	20	39%
Total		52	100%

Source: Questionnaire result 2018

As shown in Table 1, the Gender of respondents; 56% of them male and 44% of respondents are Female. The Age of respondents; 11 % of respondents 18 – 24 age categories, 52% of respondents 25-35 age categories, 29 % of respondents 36-45 age categories ,8 % of respondents are above 45 age categories. Educational level of respondents; 4% of respondents 10th or 12th grade; 11% of respondents are Diploma; 56% of respondents are Degree holders and 29% of respondents are Masters holder.

Concerning the respondents Work Experience; 31% of the respondents have 1 to 3 years; 11% of respondents have 4 to 6 years; 19% of respondents 7 to 10 years; 39% of respondents 11 and above work Experience. Hence the larger portions of these respondents have a lot of information accumulated through their longer exposure and experience in addition to their qualification. The sample professional can understand the concept of Accounting software practices that is under taken in their organization and the answer obtained from them are most likely to be reliable.

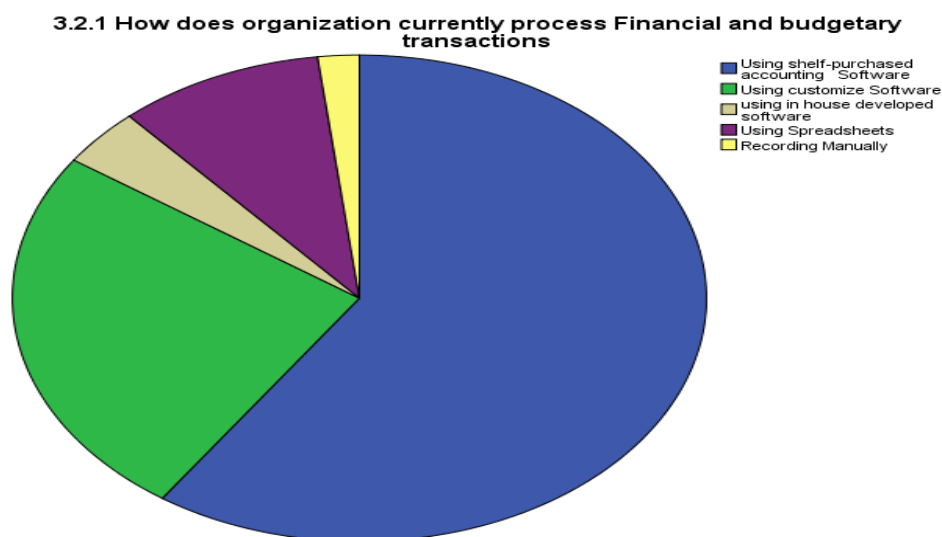
3.2. Respondent’s Feedback on specific Research Questions

3.2.1 How does organization currently process Financial and budgetary transactions

Table 2: Respondent’s feedback on Organization Financial and budgetary transaction

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.1	How does your organization currently process Financial and budgetary transactions?		
	* Using shelf-purchased accounting Software	31	59%
	* Using customize Software	13	25%
	* Using in house developed software	2	4%
	* Using Spreadsheets	5	10%
	* Recording Manually	1	2%
Total		52	100%

Source: Questionnaire result 2018



As shown in Table 2-3.2.1; (59%) of respondent's indicate that Organization currently process Financial and budgetary transactions by using shelf –Purchased accounting software; (25%) of respondent's indicate that by using Customized Software; (4%) of respondent's indicate that by using in house developed software; (10%) of respondent's indicate that by using Spreadsheets; (2%) of respondent's indicate that Recording Manually.

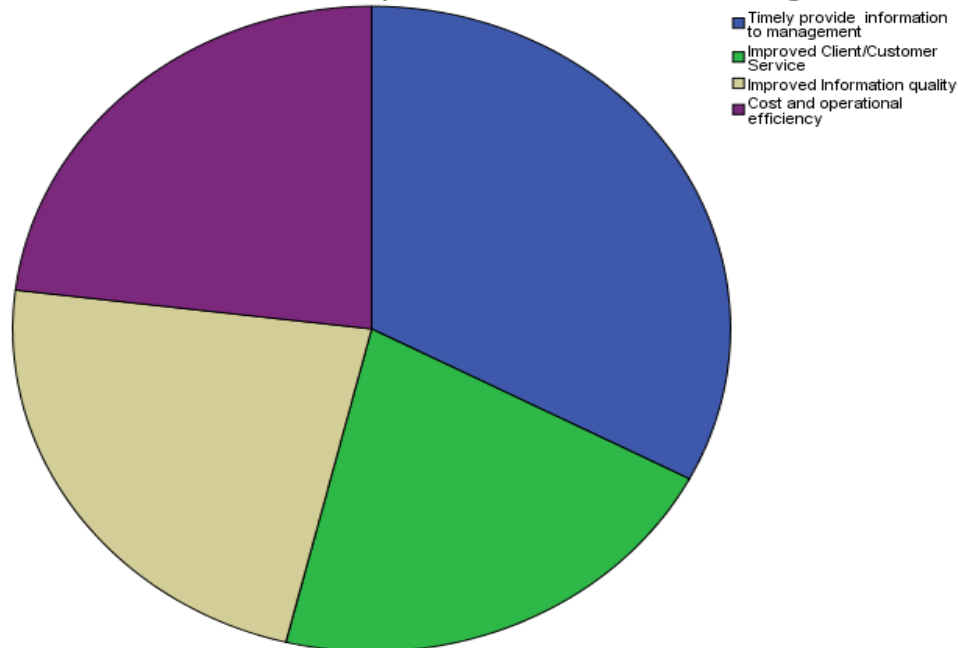
3.2.2 Important Benefit of ICT to Accounting

Table 3: Respondents feedback on Benefits of ICT to Accounting

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.2	What is the most important benefit of ICT to accounting?		
	* Timely information management	17	33%
	* Improved Client/Customer Service	11	21%
	*Improved Information quality	12	23%
	*Cost and operational efficiency	12	23%
Total		52	100%

Source: Questionnaire result 2018

3.2.2 The most important benefit of ICT to accounting



As shown in Table 3-3.2.2; (33%) respondent's indicate that the most important benefit of ICT to Accounting is Timely provide information to Management; (21%) of respondent's to improve Client / Customer Service; (23%) of respondent's to improve information quality; also (23%) of respondent's indicate that ICT is important for cost and operational efficiency.

From Interview conducted Save the children International Ethiopian country, Universities and Accounting software training suppliers, Accountants use ICT always to analyses and prepare financial statements accurately, timely and more reliable information to users. Most large business firms currently process the majority of their routine business transactions by computer. The greater efficiency of the computer, compared to human processing, has been a principal factor in the movement to automate clerical, managerial

and administrative activities. Business firms are often introduced to computing once they decide to design and install everyday computer – based financial and accounting applications. Such as payroll, invoicing and accounts payable After these applications have become operational, more complex materials control and management information systems applications are designed and installed. An interesting result of this continuing developmental process is that business firms become increasingly dependent on computer application and systems. Accountants can perform a lot of transactions with in short period of time, provide accurate information, store and retrieve the information at any time from computers memory and perform other varied tasks.

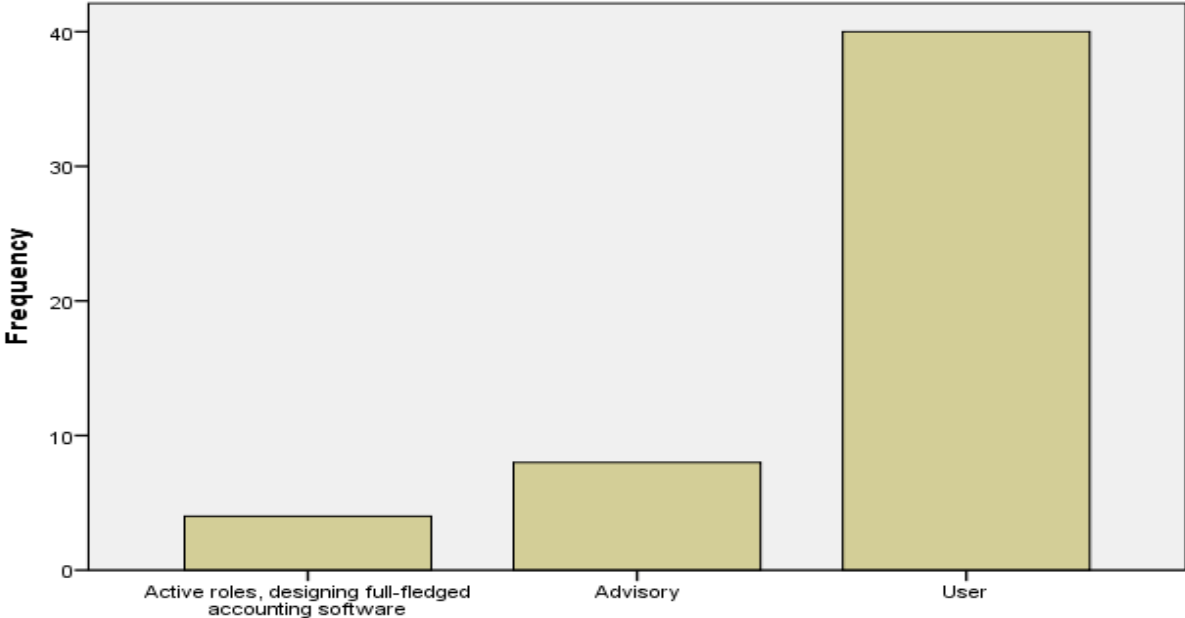
3.2.3 and 4 Accountants Role in Developing Accounting Software

Table 4: Respondent’s feedback on Accountants role in Developing Accounting Software

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.3	What do you think the role of finance /accounting staff should be in designing the Accounting Software?		
	* Active roles, designing full-fledged accounting software	4	8%
	*Advisory	8	15%
	*User	40	77%
Total		52	100%
3.2.4	Do you agree that accountants should be able to develop accounting software for their company?		
	*strongly agree	20	38%
	*Agree	27	52%
	*Disagree	5	10%
Total		52	100%

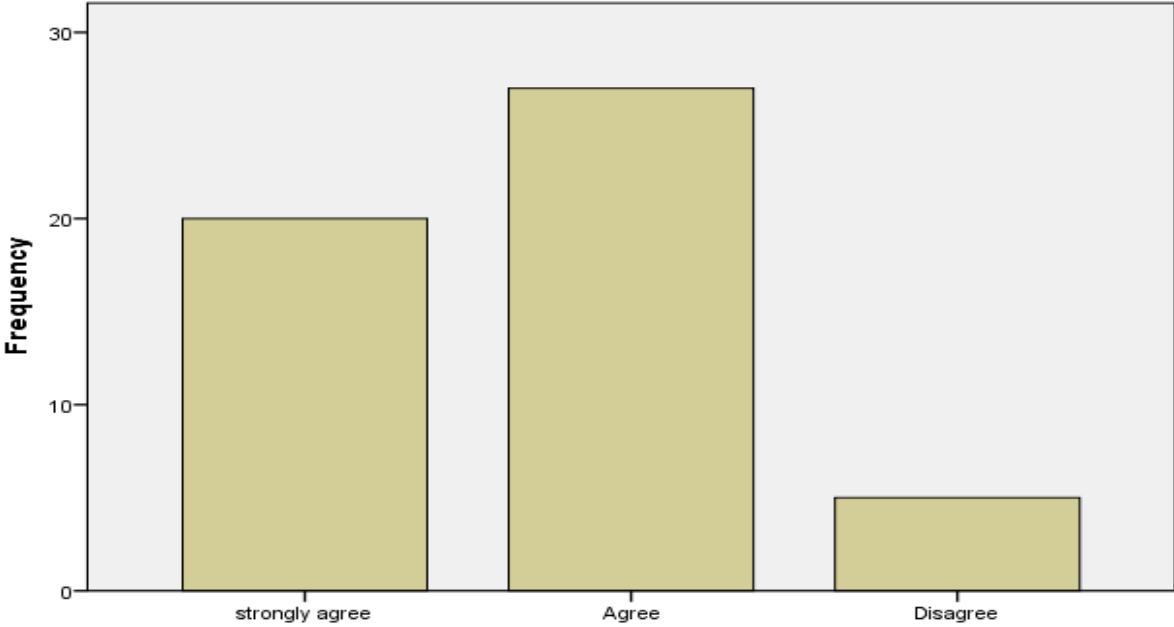
Source: Questionnaire result 2018

3.2.3 The role of finance /accounting staff should be in designing the Accounting Software



3.2.3 The role of finance /accounting staff should be in designing the Accounting Software

3.2.4 Do you agree that accountants should be able to develop accounting software for their company



3.2.4 Do you agree that accountants should be able to develop accounting software for their company

As Shown in Table 4-3.2.3; In the Role of Finance / Accounting Staff in Designing the Accounting Software (8%) of Respondent's indicate that Active roles in designing full-fledged Accounting software; (15%) of Respondent's indicate that as an Advisory; (77%) of Respondent's indicate that User of Accounting Software.

As shown in the same table 4-3.2.4; Accountants should be able to Develop Accounting Software for their Company; (38%) of Respondents are strongly Agree; (52%) of Respondent's Agree; (10%) of Respondents Disagree to develop accounting software for their Company.

3.2.5 -11 Training to Accounting / Finance Staff on Accounting Software and Knowledge and skills, Designing Accounting Software to them organization.

Table 5: Respondent's feedback on Accounting software training, knowledge and skills, Designing Accounting Software

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.5	How often does your organization provide on the Job training to the finance/accounting staff on Accounting Software?		
	* Regularly	17	33%
	* Sometimes	34	65%
	* No training at all	1	2%
Total		52	100%
3.2.6	What is the major constraint for question # 2.5 if training is NOT available?		
	* Budget	15	29%
	* Workload	30	57%
	* Lack of management commitment	4	8%
	* Lack of interest	3	6%

		Total	52	100%
No	Questionnaire	Responses		
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)	
3.2.7	State the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills required by finance and accounting professionals to be effective in their work? * High level * Medium level * Low level			
		37	71%	
		13	25%	
		2	4%	
		Total	52	100%
3.2.8	Considering the current dynamic scenario, how do you rate the challenge of Accounting software on Practice in your organization? * Very High * High * Medium * Low			
		14	27%	
		22	42%	
		12	23%	
		4	8%	
		Total	52	100%
No	Questionnaire	Responses		
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)	
3.2.9	Have you been seriously involved in the design of accounting Software? in what capacity? * As developers & designers * As advisors * As users			
		4	8%	
		7	13%	
		41	79%	
		Total	52	100%
3.2.10	Reference to Question # 2.9, what is the most likely reason for accountants if NOT actively involved in the design and implementation of accounting software for their company? * Lack of Skilled human power * Limited capital to acquire appropriate accounting software * Absence of appropriate accounting software * Reluctance of management to acquire appropriate accounting software			
		26	50%	
		19	36%	
		6	12%	
		1	2%	

		Total	52	100%
No	Questionnaire	Responses		
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)	
3.2.11	Which of the following challenges do you feel is the most serious in your organization?			
	* Lack of required ICT knowledge and skills	21	40%	
	* Workload of accountants	23	44%	
	* Lack of Management commitment	5	10%	
	* Lack of Motivation	3	6%	
		Total	52	100%

Source: Questionnaire result 2018

As shown Table 5 - 3.2.5: (33%) of Respondent's Regularly organization provide on Job training to the finance / accounting staff on Accounting Software; (65%) of Respondent's Sometimes organization provide on Job training to the finance/accounting staff on Accounting Software; (2%) of Respondent's no training at all organization provide on Job training to the finance /accounting staff on Accounting Software.

In the same table 5-3.2.6 as shown; (28.8%) of Respondent's indicate that Budget is the major constraint not training is available; (57%) of Respondent's indicate that workload is the major constraint not training is available; (7%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of management commitment; (6%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of interest is the major constraint for not training is available.

In the same table 5- 3.2.7 as shown; Level of Accounting Software knowledge and skills required by finance and accounting professionals to be effective in their work; (71%) of

Respondent's High level; (25%) of Respondent's Medium level; and (3%) of Respondent's low level.

As Shown on Table 5- 3.2.8; Rate the challenge of Accounting Software on practice in the organization; (27 %) of Respondent's indicate that Very High level; (42%) of Respondent's indicate that High level; (23%) of Respondent's at Medium level; (8%) of Respondent's indicate that low level.

As shown on Table 5- 3.2.9; Accountant seriously involved in the design of Accounting Software; (7.7 %) of Respondent's as developers and as designers; (13.5 %) of Respondent's as advisors; (78.8%). of Respondent's as users.

The result obtained from interview conducted also confirms that ICT and accounting professionals should work together when designing the system and to maintain the system, if there is any failure. However, practically there is lack of integrated work between ICT and Accounting professionals when design accounting system.

As shown on Table 5- 3.2.10; Most likely reason for accountants not actively involved in the design and implementation of accounting software for their company; (40%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of required ICT knowledge and skills; (44%) of Respondent indicate that workload of accountants; (9.6%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of Management commitment; and (5.8%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of Motivation.

As shown on Table 5- 3.2.11; (50%) of Respondent's indicate that lack of skilled human power; (36.5%) of Respondent's indicate that limited capital to acquire appropriate accounting software; (11.5%) of Respondent's indicate that Absence of appropriate accounting software; (2%) of Respondent's that Reluctance of management to acquire appropriate accounting software is the most challenge of organization.

3.2.12-14 Accounting Software courses in undergraduate accounting program

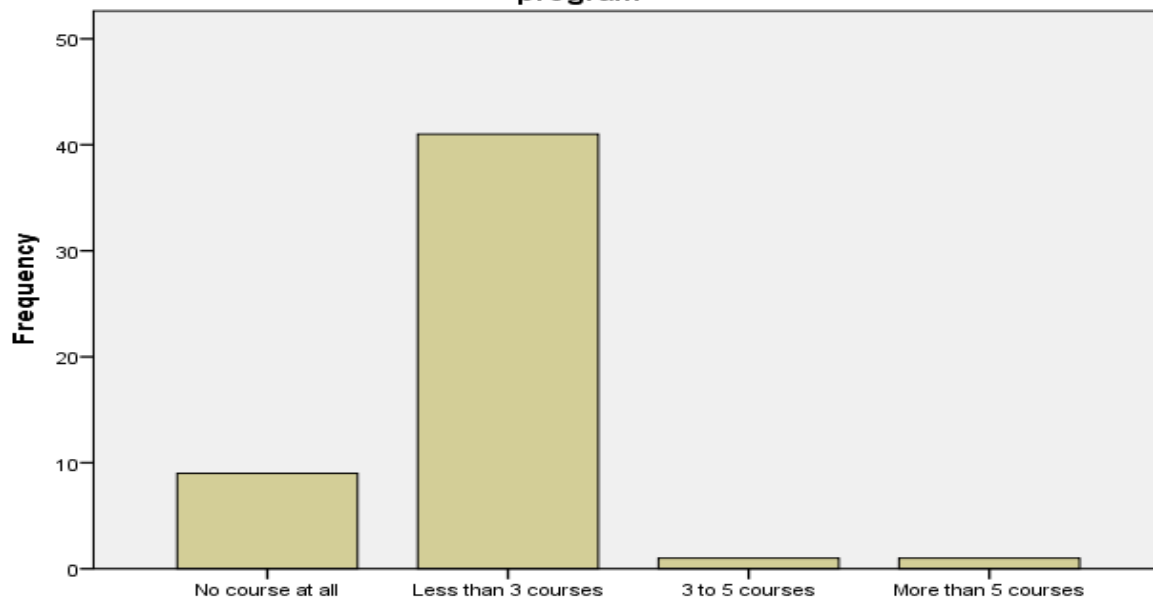
Table 6: Respondent's feedback on Accounting Software courses

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.12	How many major Accounting software courses have you taken in accounting Undergraduate program?		
	* No course at all	9	17%
	* Less than 3 courses	41	79%
	*3 to 5 courses	1	2%
	More than 5 courses	1	2%
Total		52	100%
3.2.13	Referring to question 2.12 how do you rate the level and contents of Accounting software courses in undergraduate accounting program?		
	* High level, writing program, developing accounting software, etc...	2	4%
	* Medium level, Use of Office and some accounting applications, like Peachtree.	28	54%
	* Low level, using only the Microsoft office applications	22	42%
Total		52	100%
3.2.14	Considering Q.2.13 how do you rate the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills from accounting undergraduate program?		

* High	4	8%
* Average	13	25%
* Low	35	67%
Total	52	100%

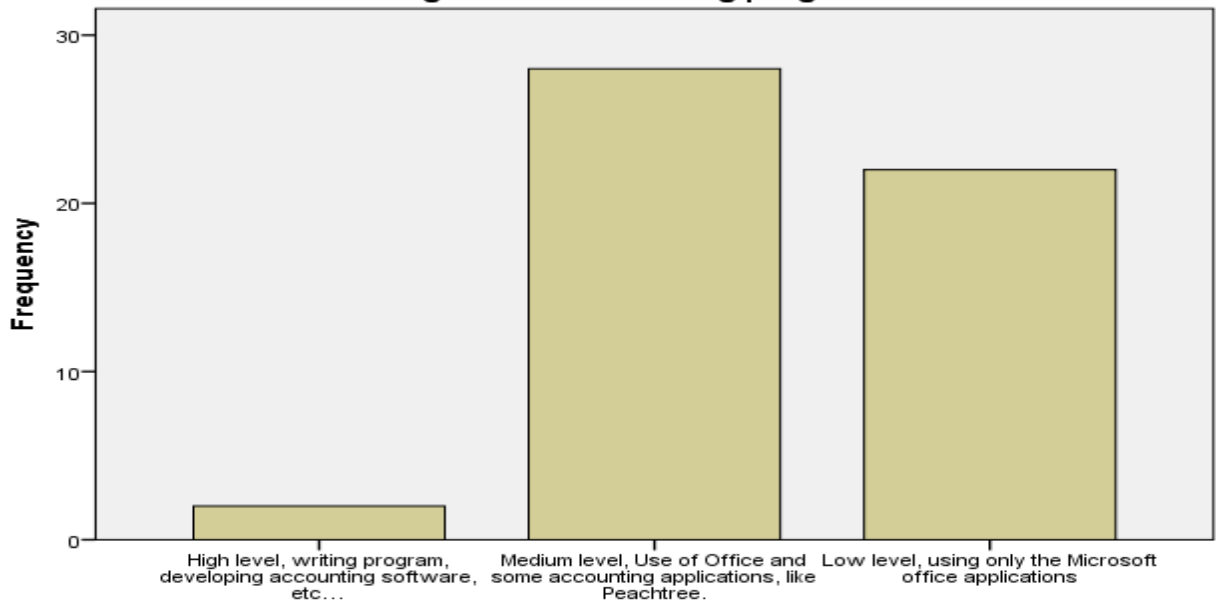
Source: Questionnaire result 2018

3.2.12 Major Accounting software courses taken in accounting Undergraduate program



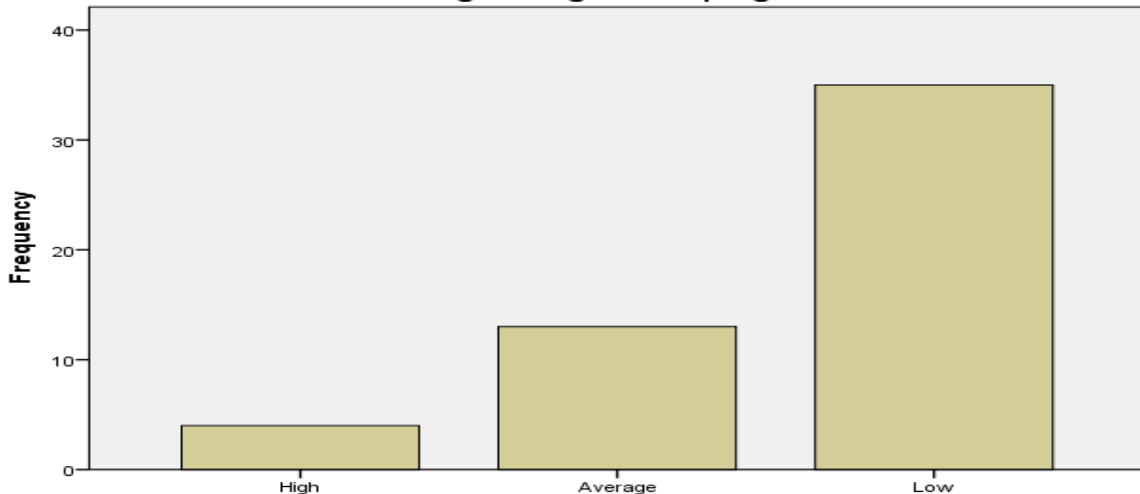
3.2.12 Major Accounting software courses taken in accounting Undergraduate program

3.2.13 Rate the level and contents of Accounting software courses in undergraduate accounting program



3.2.13 Rate the level and contents of Accounting software courses in undergraduate accounting program

3.2.14 Rate the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills from accounting undergraduate program



3.2.14 Rate the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills from accounting undergraduate program

As shown Table 6-3.2.12; Accounting Software Courses have taken in Accounting undergraduate program; (17%) of Respondent indicate that No course at all; (79%) of Respondent indicate that Less than 3 Courses; (2%) of Respondent's indicate that 3 to 5

courses have taken in undergraduate program. (2 %) of Respondent's indicate that more than 5 courses.

As shown Table 6-3.2.13; Level and contents of Accounting Software in undergraduate accounting program ;(4%) of Respondent's indicate that High level, writing program, developing accounting software, etc...; (54%) of Respondent's indicate that Medium level, use of office and some accounting applications, Peachtree; (42%) of Respondent's indicate that Low level, using only the Microsoft office applications.

As shown Table 6.3.14; Rate the level of Accounting Software knowledge and skills from Accounting undergraduate program; (8%) of Respondent's indicate that High level; (25%) of Respondent's indicate that Average level; (67%) of Respondent indicate that Low level skills and knowledge of Accounting Software.

The result obtained from the interview conforms that only introduction to ICT and Accounting application –Peachtree Accounting in undergraduate program of Accounting curriculum in Ethiopian University; Training suppliers provide continuously Peachtree Accounting, Quick books, Sun system are available and the other advanced software training not available locally. Save the Children International use Agresso Financial Management System which is shelf –purchased Accounting software. As a result of this, Accountants may not have enough Accounting Software knowledge although accounting software is very important for Accountants.

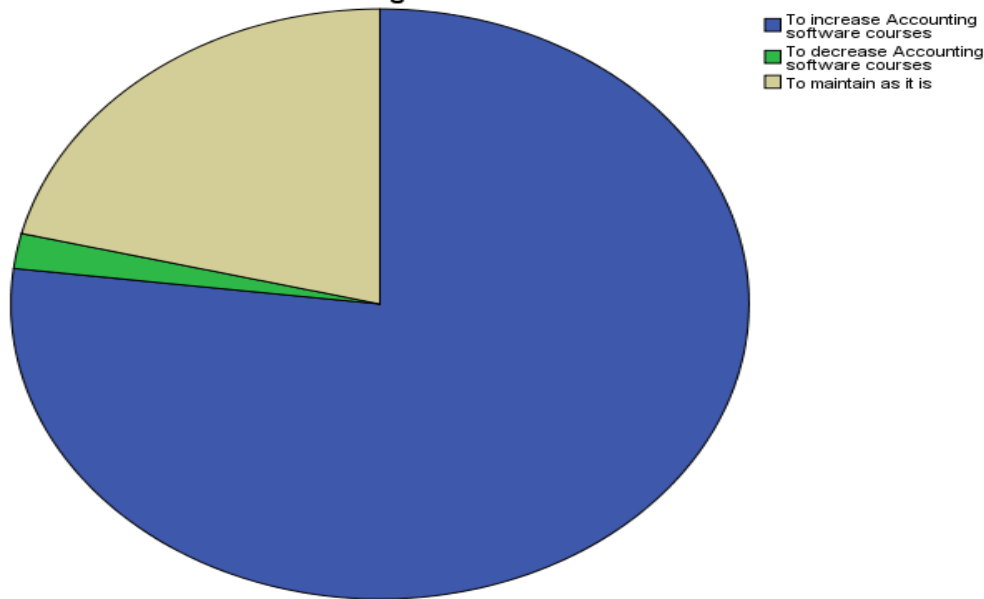
3.2.15: Suggestion to Accounting Department in relation to Accounting Software courses in their Curriculum

Table 7: Respondents suggestion Accounting software courses in Accounting curriculum

No	Questionnaire	Responses	
		Frequencies	Percentage (%)
3.2.15	What do you suggest to Accounting departments in relation to the contents of Accounting courses in their curriculum?		
	* To increase Accounting software courses	40	77%
	*To decrease Accounting software courses	1	2%
	*To maintain as it is	11	21%
	Total	52	100%

Source: Questionnaire result 2018

3.2.15 suggestion to Accounting departments in relation to the contents of Accounting courses in their curriculum



As shown in Table 7-3.2.15; Suggest to Accounting department in relation to Accounting courses in their Curriculum; (77%) of Respondent's suggest that to increase Accounting Software courses; (2%) of Respondent's suggest that to decrease Accounting Software courses; (21%) of Respondent's suggest that to maintain as it is.

Furthermore, mentioned by respondents and interviewees were: academic institutions give little attention for Accounting Software courses in accounting curriculum. In Addis Ababa Universities(AAU), there are only 2 Accounting Software courses in undergraduate program. From the conducted interview it is noticed that some private university colleges in Ethiopia have 2 Accounting software courses in their accounting curriculum, so it is observed that the number and quality of this courses do not have significant effect on accounting education and practices in the country. Therefore, the effect of lack of Accounting courses in the universities and colleges have a great impact on accounting profession practically observed that across the organizations due to lack of Accounting

Software knowledge, From Interview conduct, Graduate accountant has major challenge in preparing and communicating business information to decision makers and other users in Save the children. As a result of this, organization incur additional training costs in connection with Accounting software courses for their accountants, auditors and managers.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has revealed about the Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country office. The respondents of the study were chosen from four higher educational institutions, two from government and the other two from private sectors. 60 questionnaires were distributed to Save the Children Staffs, out of which 52 has been properly filled and returned.

Accordingly, from the findings of the study, the following conclusions have been reached and recommendation are forwarded by taking the objective of the research under consideration.

4.1 Conclusion

-As the analysis shows, Accounting Software plays a key role in today's business environment, accountants greatly on computers and Accounting software to provide accurate information to users. Currently Organization Process Financial and budgetary transactions by using shelf-purchased accounting software. Save the Children International use Agresso Financial Management System which is shelf –purchased Accounting software.

-As per analysis state that the most important benefit of ICT is provide information Timely, Improve the quality, cost and operational efficiency.

-The involvement of accountant in system designing is found to be very low, mostly as user of Accounting Software. Furthermore, the analysis portrays that the most critical problems of accountant in system designing for their company is lack of Accounting Software knowledge.

- Therefore, we can conclude that due to lack of enough ICT knowledge accountants are currently facing problems of designing Accounting Software. Such opportunities are also usurped by computer Science graduates whereas respondents agree accountant should be able to develop accounting software for their Company.

- As the analysis shows, the numbers of Accounting Software courses offered in undergraduate accounting program are less than three. Furthermore, the analysis shows academic institutions give little attention for Accounting Software courses in accounting curriculum. In Government and private Universities in Ethiopia, there are only 2 Accounting Software courses in undergraduate program. Training suppliers provide continuously Peachtree Accounting, Quick books, Sun system are available and the other advanced software training not available locally.

Therefore, the effect of lack of Accounting courses in the universities and colleges have a great impact on accounting profession practically in the organizations, Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country office incur additional training costs in connection with accounting software training for their accountants, auditors and managers.

As per Analysis state that Accounting department increase Accounting software courses in their curriculum.

From all the above issues, we can conclude that the challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions; especially for NGOs like Save the Children International to compute and easily familiar with their Accounting software without taking additional Accounting software training from training suppliers, which needs additional Cost and Time for Graduates from Universities.

4.2 Recommendation

In this research paper, the Challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the children International, Ethiopian Country office, based on the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations were given.

Based on findings the following are recommended:

- It is recommended that academic institutions should broaden Accounting Software course for accountants in their curriculum, with objective of giving students the "core "of system knowledge. Also, it is imperative to redesign accounting curricula that will train accounting students in Accounting Software and develop the proper system analytical skills. Accounting educators in the universities are called on to keep in touch practitioners working in the field in order to determine what the latest Accounting Software to incorporate them in the classroom.
- Universities should increase Accounting Software courses to Accounting curriculum rather giving only one or two Accounting applications like Peachtree Accounting to be competent in any Institutions to work after Graduation.

- To get a better result, ICT and accounting professionals should work together.

Practically, accounting professions are not as such fully and commonly participating on system designing.

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Appendix

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Questionnaire to be filled by Target Samples of Accounting professionals and Practitioners

This questionnaire is prepared to collect data for the fulfillment of MBA thesis by IGNOU Management Program. The main aim of this questionnaire is to assess the challenge of Graduates of Universities in using Accounting Software in the Institutions: In the case of Save the Children International, Ethiopian Country Office. This is research paper submitted as a Partial fulfillment for the award of Master's Degree in Business Administration. Based on the finding of this research result, appropriate solutions will be recommended. So, your comments are very important for policy makers and strategists. So, the purpose of the study is purely academic that will have no any negative effect on you as an individual or on your organization. The effectiveness of the study depends on your genuine and frank response which will be kept confidential. I, therefore, kindly request you to respond as honestly and frankly as possible.

Thank you in advance for your time to answer this questionnaire.

Note: -

- Do not write your name;
- The Questionnaire has two parts:

- **Part one:** Personal background;
- **Part two:** Work and Technical questions;
- For multiple choice questions, please tick mark (✓) the best one;
- For those questions requiring your opinion, please make a tick mark (✓) where you feel correct and write your explanations/ opinions when you are requested on the space provided, make it clear and precise.

Please tick like this



PART ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Gender

- a) Male
- b) Female

1.2 Age category

- a) 18 – 24
- b) 25 – 35
- c) 36 – 45
- d) Above 45

1.3 Educational level

- a) 10th or 12th grade complete
- b) Diploma
- c) Degree

d) Masters

e) PHD

1.4 Work experience

a) 1 to 3

b) 4 to 6

c) 7 to 10

d) 11 and above

PART TWO: SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1 How does your organization currently process Financial and budgetary transactions?

a) Using shelf-purchased accounting Software

b) Using customized Software

c) using in house developed software

d) Using Spreadsheets

e) Recording Manually

2.2 What is the most important benefit of ICT to accounting?

a) Timely provide information to management

b) Improved Client/Customer Service

c) Improved Information quality

d) Cost and operational efficiency

2.3 What do you think the role of finance /accounting staff should be in designing the

Accounting Software?

- a) Active roles, designing full-fledged accounting software
- b) Advisory
- c) User

2.4 Do you agree that accountants should be able to develop accounting software for their company?

- a) strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree

2.5 How often does your organization provide on the Job training to the finance /accounting staff on Accounting Software?

- a) Regularly
- b) Sometimes
- c) No training at all
- d) if other, (specify): _____

2.6 What is the major constraint for question # 2.5 if training is NOT available?

- a) Budget
- b) Workload
- c) Lack of management commitment
- d) Lack of interest
- e) If other, (Specify): _____

2.7 State the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills required by finance and accounting professionals to be effective in their work?

- a) High level
- b) Medium level
- c) Low level

2.8 Considering the current dynamic scenario, how do you rate the challenge of Accounting software on Practice in your organization?

- a) Very High
- b) High
- c) Medium
- d) Low

2.9 Have you been seriously involved in the design of accounting Software? in what capacity?

- a) as developers & designers
- b) as advisors
- c) as users

2.10 Reference to Question # 2.9, what is the most likely reason for accountants if NOT actively involved in the design and implementation of accounting software for their company?

- a) Lack of required ICT knowledge and skills
- b) Workload of accountants
- c) Lack of Management commitment
- d) Lack of Motivation
- e) If other, (Specify): _____

2.11 Which of the following challenges do you feel is the most serious in your organization?

- a) Lack of Skilled human power
- b) Limited capital to acquire appropriate accounting software
- c) Absence of appropriate accounting software
- d) Reluctance of management to acquire appropriate accounting software

2.12 How many major Accounting software courses have you taken in accounting Undergraduate program?

- a) No course at all
- b) Less than 3 courses
- c) 3 to 5 courses
- d) More than 5 courses
- d) If other, (specify) _____

2.13 Referring to question 2.12 how do you rate the level and contents of Accounting software courses in undergraduate accounting program?

- a) High level, writing program, developing accounting software, etc...
- b) Medium level, Use of Office and some accounting applications, like Peachtree.
- c) Low level, using only the Microsoft office applications
- d) If other, (specify) _____

2.14 Considering Q.2.13 how do you rate the level of Accounting software knowledge and skills from accounting undergraduate program?

- a) High
- b) Average
- c) Low

2.15 What do you suggest to Accounting departments in relation to the contents of Accounting courses in their curriculum?

- a) To increase Accounting software courses
- b) To decrease Accounting software courses
- c) To maintain as it is
- d) If other, (specify) _____

Interview Questions

1. What is the name of the accounting software that your Company is currently using?

2. How is the accounting software application developed in house or acquired in the market? What was the involvement of accountants?

3. Is your organization currently benefiting from the use of computerized system? If so, what are the benefits?

4. What is the challenge of graduates of universities in using Accounting Software on practices? _____

5. At what extent training on Accounting software is available and provide continuous basis regards software training suppliers?

6. What are the content and nature of Accounting software related courses provided in Accounting and Finance Curriculum?

7. What do you suggest to Accounting department in relation to the contents of Accounting courses in their curriculum?

8. How many major Accounting Software courses have taken in Accounting undergraduate program?

1.9.1 Budget Breakdown

No.	Budget line item	Unit cost (USD)	No of staff required	Total cost (USD)
1	Secretary /Data entry	50	2	100.00
2	Transpiration and travel related expenses			190.00
3	Stationary and printing cost			120.00
4	Telephone and communications (e-mail, and internet charges)			100.00
5	Miscellaneous expenses			50.00
	Sub-total			560
7	Contingency (10%)			56.00
	Grand Total			616.00

1.9.2 Time Schedule

No	Activities	From December 2017 to May 2018
1	Preparing Research Proposal	3 weeks
2	Literature Review	2 weeks
3	Desk work prior to Primary data collection	1 weeks
4	Pre-test questionnaire and interview	1 weeks
5	Explanatory interviews and questionnaire	3 weeks
6	Review of secondary data	2 weeks
7	Data editing, organization and classification	2 weeks
8	Data Analysis	2 weeks
9	Preparation of first draft report	1 weeks
10	Preparation of final report	1 weeks
	Total Estimated time of compilation	18 weeks