

ELECTRONIC LEARNING AS AN INNOVATION IN NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

By

N. H. UZO-OKONKWO
*Federal College of Education (Technical),
Umunze.*

And

B. A. OKEKE
*Federal College of Education (Technical),
Umunze.*

Abstract

There have been transformations recorded in the formal education sector, as well as in other fields that are important for enabling people to develop new capabilities necessary for the society. This transformation has been linked to electronics learning occasioned by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The adoption of ICT in education has often been premised on the potential of new technological tools to revolutionaries an outmoded educational system so as to better prepare students for the information age, and accelerate national development effort. E. Learning as a learning strategy which adopts the products of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is essential in making information available to learners, the internet consisting of millions of computers has an important role and great potential in Education life. From the forgoing, it is no gainsaying to conclude that the benefits of E. Learning outweighs the problems associated with its use. This paper therefore recommends that every teacher and student should learn to access, analyze and communicate information effectively through the use of E. Learning facilities so as to actualize the goal of modern classroom.

Educators saw the use of Information Communication Technology in the classroom mainly as a way to teach computer literacy. A broader role can be seen as that of delivering many kinds of learning at lower cost and with higher quality that traditional methods of teaching allows. In addition, schools and universities use ICTs as

do other large organizations to reduce the cost and improve the efficiency of administrations.

Ogbonna (2003) listed some of the advantages of ICT as follows:

- Provision of speed and easy access to information
- Provision of round – the clock access to users
- Provision of access to unlimited information from different sources.
- Provision of information flexibility to be used by any individual according to his or her requirements.
- Facilitation of reformatting and combing of data from different sources.
- Provision of remote access to users.

Electronics learning as the name implies basically boils down to how learning is facilitated and supported via Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) defines E. Learning as a broad set of application and processes which includes web-based learning, computer learning, visual classroom and digital. Much of this is delivered via the Internet; satellite broadcast, interactive TV and CD ROM.

Meyer (2003) defines E. Learning as a strategy, which adopts the product of Information and Communication Technology to make information available to learners and researchers. Indeed E. Learning is a technology that is capable of taken over substantial portion of the teachers role more efficiently leading to cost reduction in instructional delivery.

Therefore, the common feature of most ICT objectives globally seems to be to empower people through the provision of excellent computer and information technology know-how and to teach them to render services with an unbeatable quality of customer services. Generally, the major objectives include to:

- a) Make people know the immense benefits of ICT and hence sensitize them on the need to quickly bridge the digital divide.
- b) Provide the University Community and the general public with a multiple and varied opportunities to Education, Learning and Research including the provision of a graduated learning opportunity from the basics through intermediate to advanced levels in a broad spectrum of Computer and Information Technology application area:
- c) Provide ICT empowered training towards self-employment. ICT entrepreneurship, international certification and the realization of ICT products for export Inyiama (2006).

No doubt, the information-driven age in which we live has its own challenges and opportunities, but there are effective strategies to address these to the benefit of our teeming rural populations. Definitely re-education and continuous learning is required to understand what is going on and to keep abreast of the implications of the current rapid changes in Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The Role of E-Learning in Education

E-learning as a great potential in education plays a major part in making the teaching and learning environment actualize the goals of a modern classroom, with this fact taken into consideration Ajunwa (2011) pointed out that the Anambra State Government has flagged off the training of the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Teachers recently by the State Government. The training according to him is part of the measures taken by the State Government to properly equip the teachers for effective teaching in school and to improve academics. The fact remains that developing countries all over the world are beginning to adapt to this current revolution of ICT. A large number of views have shown that electronics education gives result equivalent to or even better than direct teaching.

Onyekamni (2011) recaptures the activities of some parastatals under the Federal Ministry of Education, which formed part of the events that shape the Educational Sector in 2010. Among this activities is the introduction of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in our Training Programmes, and more so the launching and distribution of a number of ICT items, such as Television sets at distributing centers and they also have development centers where teachers are update their knowledge with the use of modern techniques in Training.

According to Omaru (2003), he said that computer assisted instruction are designed to provide instructional sequence. The computer talks to the student, the student talk to the computer by typing his or her message through the keyboard, but it is only possible if the student has a pre-knowledge of how to operate a computer. So it is important that both the teachers and students are exposed to the use of Information Technology (IT) Tools.

A large number of experiments have shown that television education gives result equivalent to or better than direct teaching. It has shown that television teaching can be successful in teaching subjects like Mathematic, Accounts, Computer Science, Agricultural Science, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology etc that is why we urged that this new development should be applied in the teaching and learning to children both in tertiary, secondary and even in primary schools. Anderson (1997), states that there is need to brace up new challenges and system of education through the development of ICT in schools. Some science subjects deals mostly on collection of data, addition and subtraction of figures, balancing observation of principles. Evidence proved, ICT as the solution to these problems associated with some courses like accounts, mathematics, physics, chemistry because of its capable of collecting data, storing data collected and it is able to retrieve any information stored in it whenever it is needed. It is also best used for calculation of higher figures; in fact all complex subjects are best handle with ICT/computer/internet. Evidence has proved that students learn more faster with the use of this recent development. Successful in school and more motivated to learn and have increased self confidence and self esteem when using computer assisted instruction (CAI). This is particularly true when the teacher allows the children to control their own learning. It is also true, across variety of subject areas, and is especially not worthy when the children and in at-risk group special education, or students from rural school.

Problems of E. Learning to Education

Below are some of the problems hindering the proper integration of Information Technology tools in our educational system.

1. **Finance**

E. Learning gadget are cost affective, when used to reach very large number of students, when used as a base for research management purposes. They all involve high initial cost to prepare teaching materials and recurrent cost to replace hardware and software.

2. **Lack of Manpower Development**

The use of ICT tools in Learning/Teaching requires computer skills and training. So it demands that the teachers undergo some technical programmes in ICT for effective use of ICT facilities. Most of our educational outlets are not yet computerized and therefore the professionals do not have access to the different Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

3. **Lack of Quality Programme**

Another problem is that of quality of the available program. Teachers can develop their own programme, but the hitch is that many of them lack the training to develop even simple program let alone complex ones.

Conclusion

E. Learning is an innovation in education, as a product of Information and Commercial Technology (ICT) its facilities should be seen as a useful material in the teaching and learning exercise. It is a useful material in that it makes teaching and learning easier by eliminating the artificial nature of the traditional classroom and making learning more functional.

The use of ICT is being explored in many schools despite the many hindrances, which range from high cost of computer and its programs to lack of computer training by the teachers and students. Since the use of computer is rapidly permeating the society, it is important that every teacher and student of Nigeria learn to access, analyze and communicate information effectively through the use of E. Learning facilities. Doing this will help in the actualization of goals for modern classroom.

Recommendation

1. Government should train all those saddled with the task of imparting knowledge in computer application so as to be attained with the modern classroom since ICT is the capital and engine that would drive the future of the world.
2. Educational institutions that already have some of the ICT tools should encourage their teachers to make use of them in teaching and learning in their classrooms.

3. Teachers should encourage and give students assignments that require the use of ICT facilities and help them appreciate and acquire skills on locating and using ICT to improve learning.
4. Government at all levels should strive to provide schools with high quality teaching material such as computers, Internet, and other computer software.
5. Government and its agencies should help schools in acquiring computers and other related gadgets where it becomes too cost intensive.

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