



NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND TRENDS

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Abstract

This paper discusses the use of new technologies in teaching and learning Business education programme. The concept of business education, technology, technologies in education and advantages of using technologies in teaching and learning were also highlighted. Technology in education is the effective implementation of educational technology to accomplish intended learning outcomes. The advantages of using technologies in education are promoting of individual learning and research, making educational materials accessible, improving student's attitude towards learning. The paper also identifies the technologies uses by business educators: key boarding and mail merge. Improper funding, severe outage power and insufficient supply of facilities and equipment are the major challenges to the use of technologies in business education. The government should increase the subvention fund to this programme so that adequate equipment and facilities needed are properly procured and the College management should ensure that constant power supply to be restored to allow the usage of facilities to enhance teaching and learning are among the recommendations were made.

Key Words: *New Technologies, Business Education, Issues and Trends in Nigeria.*

Introduction

New emerging educational technologies are changing the way we learn. Education has become too flexible and fun. Technology for business education is promoting individual learning and mobile learning, both teachers and students are benefiting from this new technology for education. Some of the barriers in education have been broken down by this new technology for education; students can learn from anywhere, teachers can easily reach their students from anywhere. Technology is helping to change education in a positive way; it is part of the modern world. New technology for business education is improving grades for students and it prepares



them for the future. The integration of computers and communications offers unprecedented opportunities to the education systems with its capacity to integrate, enhance and interact with each other over a wide geographic distance in a meaningful way to achieve the learning objectives. The growth of these communication and computer systems, their ease of use, the power and diversity of information transfer allow teachers and students to have access to a world beyond the classroom. It has the potential to transform the nature and process of the learning environment and envision a new learning culture. Interactivity, flexibility and convenience have become the order of the day in the ICT supported environment.

ICT opens up opportunities for learning because it enables learners to access, extend, transform and share ideas and information in multi-modal communication styles and format. It helps the learner to share learning resources and spaces, promote learner centred and collaborative learning principles and enhance critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving skills for solving Business education problems. For business education to be relevant in this technological age, teaching and learning of the programme must embrace the current trend by the use of technology. According to Njoku (2006), business education is an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operate in the environment he/she finds himself/herself. This means that business education is not static. Therefore any worthwhile programme has to move with time.

Concept of New Technologies

New technologies in business education programme, according to Achugbue (2011) have posed many challenges to business educators in Nigeria. Achugbue (2011) further opined that business education programme would achieve the goals of teaching if such modern technological teaching aids like computers, electric typewriters, television sets, projectors, internet facilities, among others are adequately provided and utilized. Many colleges of education do not give adequate priority and attention to the acquisition and utilization of new instructional technologies needed for teaching and learning. The dearth of these facilities makes it difficult to teach and prepare business education students for the use of new technologies now and in future world of work.

Integrating technology into classroom instruction means more than teaching basic computer skills and software programs in a separate computer class. Effective technology integration must happen across the curriculum in ways that deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, it must support four key components of



learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Effective technology integration is achieved when the use of technology is routine and transparent and when technology supports curricula goals. Technology also changes the way teachers teach, offering educators' effective ways to reach different types of learners and assess students' understanding through multiple means. It also enhances the relationship between teachers and students. When technology is effectively integrated into subject areas, teachers become advisers, content experts, and coaches. Technology helps to make teaching and learning more meaningful and fun.

Technology and Technology in Business Education

Technology is synonymous with computer equipment, software, and other electronic devices (Woolfe, 2010), while *technology integration* means having and using this equipment in the classroom. Davies, Sprague, & New (2008), sees technology in business education as the effective implementation of educational technology to accomplish intended learning outcomes. We consider *educational technology* to be any tool, piece of equipment, or device electronic or mechanical that can be used to help students accomplish specified learning goals. Educational technology includes both instructional technologies, which focus on technologies teachers employ to provide instruction, and learning technologies, which focus on technologies learners use to accomplish specific learning objectives.

The Advantages of using Technology in Business Education

1. Promotes Individual learning and Research

Technology for education provides us with tools which can allow us to learn on our own. Individual learning is good, because a student will not feel shy or embarrassed when they fail to learn something. It also promotes individual research and this helps students to deeply learn about a specific topic of interest. The use of computer aided instruction tools also makes students stay in control of what they learn; a student can easily make mistakes and correct them without feeling embarrassed.

2. Makes Educational Material Accessible

New technology for education has made educational material accessible to anyone around the world. Broadband internet technology has facilitated the growth of online education, which has helped students from developing countries get a chance to access valuable educational material. Technology helps people who are busy working to upgrade their academic level, found online education very flexible, because they can attend lessons during their free time after work.



3. Improves Students Attitude towards Learning

Since this new technology makes education fun, students do not get bored while learning. The integration of Gamification technology in the classroom has improved students interest in learning. Students are encouraged to play educational videos and games to solve specific puzzles. For example, Math games help students learn how to solve math equations.

4. Prepares Students for Change

Tomorrow's job market will require applicants to have technological skills. So it is of great benefit if we use new technology for education in schools. Using of computers in the classroom helps students learn how to type and spell, these two basic computer skills will be required tomorrow. Technology increases the chance of students to get well-paying jobs in the future.

Concept of Business Education

The definitions of Business education have to be looked from the past and present. This is because technology has helped to change definitions of certain things. It therefore, implies that business education, as a course of study has to move with time. According to Onojetah (2014) defined business education as a vocational discipline that prepares its recipient with skills that will enable them contribute significantly to the economic development of a nation. Business education programme is expected to possess both intellectual and vocational abilities which will help the graduate to earn a living in a contemporary and ever changing business environment. Osuala (2004) in his opinion, assert that business education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts (1) Office education, a vocational programme of office careers through initial, refresher and upgrading education and (2) General business education a programme to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the services of the business.

Esene (2012) defined business education as education for and about business or training in the relevant skills for offices occupations. Business education as a vocational subject is designed to prepare students for the world of work both as employees and as employers. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2008) defines Business education as an aspect of vocational education that equips people with necessary skills and theoretical knowledge needed for performance in business world either for job occupation or self-employment.



Similarly, Ekoh (2016), business education is education for self-reliance, self-independence, and self-sufficiency and above all, education that equips individuals with relevant and necessary skills to fit into any environment despite the situation of the economy. While Njoku (2006) opined business education as an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operates in the environment he/she finds himself/herself. It can be seen from the foregoing discussions that as the years go by; the definitions of business education continue to change. This means that business education is not static. Therefore any worthwhile programme has to move with time. However, business educators have always accepted that change is a fact of life. From the typewriter to the transistor, business curriculum has continually shaped itself to meet the needs of business. As a result, the success and survival of business education constantly depends on its ability to adapt and keep pace with the needs of its recipients. These changes present challenges for both the learner and instructor. Notwithstanding, business educators have to adopt with the use of these new technologies in order to produce the relevant graduates that met the demand of modern society change pleases with the impact of technological gadgets.

Objectives of Business Education

The Federal Republic of Nigeria in its minimum standard for Nigeria certificate in education (2014) stated the objectives of business education as:

1. To produce well qualified and competent NCE graduates in business subjects who will be able to teach business subjects in our secondary schools and other related educational institutions.
2. To produce NCE business teacher who will be able to inculcate the vocational aspects of Business Education into the society.
3. To produce NCE Business Teachers who will be involved in the much desired revolution of vocational development right from the Primary and Secondary schools.
4. To equip students with necessary competencies so as to qualify them for a post NCE degree programme in Business Education.
5. To equip graduates with the right skills that will enable them to engage in a life of work in the office as well as for self-employment.



New Technologies in Business Education

Business education like any other fields of study embraced changes by the use of new technologies to impart knowledge to the students. The following are new technological tools used in teaching and learning business education programme:

1. Key Boarding

Traditionally, keyboarding has been the primary course taught by Business Education programmes at the secondary school level. Because of the computer, keyboarding is seen by many as a basic skill needed by all students. In fact, Toppe in Business Education Forum (1991) refers to keyboarding as an “enabling skill tool needed by almost every worker in all types of organizations and at every level in the hierarchy of these organizations”. In addition, because of the wide spread prolific use of computers by younger students, the need for keyboarding has presented more challenges to Business Education programme. Keyboarding is a learned skill that involves the integration of visual and kinesthetic feedback for locating keys to produce written work (Freeman et al., 2005).

2. Use of Tools

Technology-based teaching and learning involves the uses of computer in the classroom, Class blogs and wikis, Wireless Classroom Microphone, Mobile Devices and Interactive Whiteboard which at end simplify the entire process of imparting of education. These technologies interact with the teacher in a friendly manner as to motivate students into learning achievement. Also other technologies geared towards enhancing learning achievement of students are now available. These are in hardware and software forms and include: learning software in different areas of business, iPod, CD ROMs, Modems, Laser printers, You-tube software, Digital cameras, Digital scanners, (e- How 2012).

3. Mail Merge

Mail merge is one of the classic features of Microsoft word (Ms Word) used to produce mass documents containing unique information. Some examples where it can be helpful include brochures, newsletters, or materials used in mass mailings. But with the use manual or electric typewriters, these documents must be typed one after the other no matter the number the people to receive such documents. The mail merge allows each copy to be printed with the separate recipient's personal information.



Challenges of using New Technologies in Teaching and Learning of Business Education Programme

The following are the major challenges affecting the use technologies in Business Education programme:

1. Njoku (2015) observed that the absence of proper funding does not only hamper implementation of Business education programme but also affect the quality of students produced, the operational mode of the institutions, the attitude of teachers and infrastructural development of the institutions. The economic challenges of the country affected the subvention granted by government to institutions for running of highly capital intensive Business Education programme. Hence, to give a meaningful training in Business education, the institutions giving the training must be equipped with the appliances which serve to reinforce learning.
2. Severe power outage is another economic challenge that has a great impact on using new technologies in Business education. Without constant power supply, the equipment cannot be used and virtually all the equipment like computers, projectors, electronic typewriters used in Business education are power controlled. As a result of this, the topic or courses to be taught with the use of these tools and equipment may be taught only theoretically.
3. Inadequate of facilities to cater the needs of large number of students to use these technologies in Business education programme. The computer laboratories, computers and other supported facilities are not enough and been the programme is skill acquisition-based, a standard and well equipped laboratories are not enough. For example in my college, the ratios of the students out run the number of the equipment.
4. Poor maintenance culture to maintain the availability of these technological equipment and facilities on the ground, is another disturbing challenge to the use of new technologies in teaching and learning of Business education programme.

Conclusion

Business education is an educational programme that equips an individual with functional and suitable skills, knowledge, attitude and value that would enable him/her operates in the environment he/she finds himself/herself. This means that business education is not static. Therefore any worthwhile programme has to move with time. However, business educators have always accepted that change is a fact of life. From the typewriter to the transistor, business curriculum has continually shaped itself to meet the needs of the world of business.



Recommendations

For effective use of new technologies in Business education programme, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government should increase the subvention fund to this programme so that adequate equipment and facilities needed are properly procured.
2. The college management should ensure that constant power supply to be restored to allow the usage of facilities to enhance teaching and learning.
3. Business Education teachers should also be recruited and should be allowed to go on regular training and retraining in order to be relevant.
4. The image of the business education programme should be improved by making the programme to be attractive and rewarding.
5. When many of the required equipment and facilities are procured, the laboratories should serve with adequate number of staff to take care of their maintenance.

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