



CHALLENGES OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN UNIVERSITIES IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This paper examined new technologies and its challenges in Business Education programme in Universities in Rivers State. It addresses new technologies in Business Education, technological changes and challenges associated with its implementation. The reforms in the nation's education delivery have led to the tinkling of the programme requiring the utilization of new technologies. The impact of these new technologies on the programme, therefore, cannot be over-emphasized. Where the impact is positive, it indicates that the objective for integration is worthwhile; where it is negative, it shows that there is a serious problem demanding some actions. Education across the globe is now centred on new technologies hence; Business Education cannot ignore the importance of utilization of new technologies. The conclusion drawn was that a worthwhile programme of Business Education ought to provide learning experiences that will equip the graduate(s) with requisite competencies in the use of new technologies and students ought to be trained to meet the market demands of the various occupations. The researchers went further to recommend amongst others that new technologies like overhead projector, video conferencing and computer (integrated multimedia consisting of stand-alone computer based work-station), Internet, Intranet, Local Area Network (LAN) and Wide Area Network (WAN) should be applied in Business Education for both teaching and learning.

Keywords: *New Technologies, Challenges, Business Education Programme.*

Introduction

Technology is a many-faceted phenomenon in materials created and advanced by man to free him from endearment by nature, but which, when undisciplined, enslaves its own creator. Technology, according to Nwoji (2012), could be seen as the application of scientific method to solving problems in our daily life. Agreeing with that, Akpomi and Ordu (2009) viewed technology as the entities, both material and



immaterial, created by the application of mental and physical effort in order to achieve some value. In this context, Amesi and Akpomi (2013) viewed technology to be tools and machines that may be used to solve both real world and educational problems.

Redmann and Kotrlik (2008) in Appah and Oyeyemi (2018) defined technology as the making, modification, usage, knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems and methods of organization in order to solve a problem, improve a pre-existing solution to a problem, achieve a goal, handle an applied input or output relation or perform a specific function. Utoware and Amiaya (2014) postulated that technology is the application of the scientific method to solving problems in our daily life. Technology helps to advance man's course in his environment but moderation and control ought to be exercised to direct its usage to solving problems of man, if not, may be misleading in itself. Technology in one form or the other has always been part of the teaching and learning environment. It has been part of the teacher's professional toolbox which is one of the resources they use to facilitate students learning (Iheukwumere, Uteh & Nkoro, 2018). Technology has changed dramatically over the years and its increasing variety and accessibility has expanded the toolbox and the opportunities teachers have. Baba, Ameh and Ezeahurukwe (2018) opined that technology has the potential to revolutionize the traditional teaching and learning process. Baba, Ameh and Ezeahurukwe argued further that technology can eliminate the barriers to education imposed by space and time, and dramatically expand access to lifelong learning. Students at this stage, will no longer meet in the same place at the same time to learn together from an instructor.

New technologies connote new innovations and applications of concepts, principles and processes for the improvement of human life. Today, the use of new technologies in teaching and learning is fast becoming a common phenomenon in all fields of study especially in Business Education because of its numerous benefits. According to Amiaya (2016), new technologies have become an important instructional tool to enhance accessibility, efficiency and quality of teaching and learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as improve remote exchange and collaboration. Amiaya further buttressed that new technologies in education have become resources for networking environments and communications among teachers, giving them the possibility to update themselves, share experiences, create reformative materials and theoretical improvements. Onojetah (2014) remarked that



new technologies are also known as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), electronic technologies and e-learning which are used to facilitate and support teaching and learning. Nedum-Ogbede (2016) opined that new technologies revolve round the use of internet and other technological resources which are aimed at improving productivity, and the application of these facilities in teaching and learning helps to improve the delivery process and in turn assists to better students' performance in the education system.

Over the years, the social, economic and technological developments around the globe, have led to advancements in the way organizations operate. Particularly, improvements in Information Technology (IT) have assisted the emergence of new organizational forms, work practices, training methods and educational practices. This as a result, has aided teaching and learning methods in our educational institutions in general and in particular Business Education which is a form of education that equips its recipients to adapt to the changing world of work which is vocational in nature. (Ebirim, Mbaji, & Iwuozor, 2012; Grant, 2014). According to Okoli (2010), Business Education is an important part of the general education which emphasizes on skills and competencies acquisition for use in offices and business related occupations. Abdulkadir (2011) highlighted one remarkable, important and functional characteristic of Business Education programme which is that, its products can function independently as self-employed and employers of labour. For Business Education programmes to remain relevant in providing the needs of individuals and that of the society, it must embrace current trends (new technologies) in the academic and economic demands of the society. For Business Education to serve its purpose of providing the needs of the learners and the society, there ought to be continuous review in its curriculum in order to ensure that the quality of education provided is in line with societal demands. Nwagwu (2016) asserted that the programme of Business Education which is the vehicle through which Vocational Education hopes to accomplish her objectives is susceptible to changes which are associated with the innovations in technologies, especially those used in modern offices and schools. Nwagwu further buttressed that these noble objectives of Business Education could not be achieved without utilizing new technologies in the training of its learners. Business Education curriculum will therefore integrate new technologies that can help in passing the desired and required skills to the learners to make them employable and as well relevant in the ever-changing business environment (Utoware & Kren-Ikidi, 2013).



Therefore, the use of technology in Business Education entails the application of scientific method to solving problems regarding impartation of skills to learners to meet the changing needs and demands of the society. New technologies in Business Education are designed to prepare students for variety of careers in high-tech business offices. In Business Education, there existed technology in a crude form but there has been a dramatic and significant change in the methods used by Business Education to address the changing needs of the society. Jude and Anita (2014) opined that the technological changes in Business Education are basically from Information and Communication Technology (ICT) perspective which almost all the nations of the world are now driven and in order to keep abreast with this change, there must be a restructuring in the knowledge and skills given to learners or students in Business Education. Electronic office (E-office) is one of the emerging phenomena of the 21st century which is geared at a paperless office in which every office work is done with the use of computer. It is based on this that most Business Education departments in Nigeria's tertiary institutions are building ICT centres, improved computer laboratories as well as offering professional courses in computer studies to produce students or graduates that can easily adapt in their ever-changing business environment in which the use of typewriter is almost fading away. No doubt, the emergence of new technologies such as the computer, word processor, the internet, automated teller machines, reprographic machines, micrographic machines, accounting machines, modern telephonic systems including handset and multimedia, among others, have not only revolutionized the office environment but have also brought changes in the ways people are doing things.

Technological Changes in Business Education Programme

According to Utoware and Kren-Ikidi (2013), Business Education has embraced enormous changes in technology in a bid to providing quality education to its students. These new technologies which revolve round the use of internet and resources have emerged and are aimed at improving productivity. E-How (2012) listed typical examples of internet teaching and learning media that facilitate teaching and learning in Business Education to include: Projectors, E-mail, Smart boards, Mimeo boards, Teleconferencing, Video Conferencing, E-book Reader and Streaming Videos.

Ezenwafor (2012) highlighted some of the new technologies in teaching and learning Business Education subjects to include:



1. The use of broadcast materials or CD-ROM for information collection and storage.
2. Usage of micro-computers with software applications to write or produce documents.
3. Skilful keyboarding.
4. Emailing and messaging.
5. Internet browsing using search engines, windows, messenger, yahoo, chat room, etc.
6. The use of opaque projector, slide projector and multi-media projector.
7. Utilization of e-banking, economics.
8. Utilization of different computer software applications such as word processors, spreadsheets, power point, desktop publisher, graphics, etc.

Challenges Associated with implementation of new technologies in Business Education

With the introduction of new technologies in Business Education programme, some of the challenges associated with its usage have been identified according to Nedum-Ogbede (2016) as follows:

1. **Resistance to Change:** Most Business Educators have not accepted society's entrance into the information age. The inability of most schools to resist change has also affected the effective utilization of new technologies in Business Education. Since modern offices have since transited from the manual operations to mechanical, and then to the present electronic era, some Business Educators are still finding it cumbersome to adapt to the rapidly changing techniques and new equipment in the work place. Oliver (2008) observed that since modern offices and organizations operate with and employ e-office processes, only workers who possess electronic office operations skills will remain relevant.
2. **Inadequate Funding:** One of the major challenges of implementing new technologies in Business Education is fund. Inadequate funding has affected the acquisition and in-service training of business educators for utilization of new technologies in higher institutions of learning. This is why most of the Business Education students do not possess the required skill to interact with information using appropriate technology in an expert and friendly manner. Supporting that, Drucker (2010) remarked that "knowledge workers are now needed by knowledge organizations that operate in knowledge economy".



3. **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Most of the institutions offering Business Education course are faced with inadequate new technologies such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to effectively utilize the opportunities offered by the internet. Though, personal computers are available to students in most Nigerian institutions, but they are not readily accessible and in most cases, not connected to the internet for surfing.
4. **Inadequate Skilled Manpower:** Shortage of qualified lecturers or trained personnel in some departments of Business Education in our institutions has posed a big challenge in the learning and teaching of Business Education courses using the new technologies. Some teachers are faced with myriad challenges occasioned by the introduction of new technologies. Global philosophy on education now includes these new changes in society. The teacher's approach to the classroom has got so much to do with what the learner learns.

Furthermore, Amesi and Akpomi (2013) listed the challenges of implementing new technology in Business Education as follows:

1. Avoiding technology for Technology's Sake: What problem(s) does this solve for my department'? And, 'Does this add value compared to a low-tech alternative'?
2. Creating a vision: Who will use the technology? How will they use it? What is the goal? How will you measure progress?
3. Money! Money!! Money!!!: Will the new technology benefit the students? It is for intervention? Can it be used for after-school programme or not?
4. Professional development: How to get a professional developer that will inspire the lecturers in the department instead of condemning them, share best practices, and also guide your implementation to success.
5. Get everyone on board: Every implementation seems to have a couple naysayers who try to bring down the rest of the group.
6. Scheduling for success: Will the technology always be scheduled, or is it also available for impromptu use? Will students go to the technology or will it come to their classrooms?
7. Systems and procedures: How will devices be charged? What happens if something isn't working or breaks? Will students be allowed to print or access other hardware?



8. Unlocking lecturer or student motivation: Will the lecturers or students receive commendation? When the shiny has worn off, and technology has become the norm for lecturers or students, how will they be motivated?
9. Data and progress monitoring: Regular progress monitoring is one of the biggest keys to a successful technology programme.
10. Maintaining the enthusiasm: provision of professional development in order to meet the goals of the department.

Conclusion

Application and utilization of new technologies in Business Education is very important and necessary as Business Education programme is for and about business. New technologies bring about innovations and application of concepts, principles and process for the improvement of human life. Challenges arise with regard to new technologies based on resistance to change, inadequate funding, and inadequate infrastructure amongst others. The researchers viewed new technologies and its challenges as an important issue that needs to be treated with urgency and ensure that the requisite skills, knowledge and attitudes to live and work in a technologically and dynamic society is been put in place. It is therefore concluded that new technologies be recognized as very vital in adding easy teaching and learning in the educational system and Business Education in particular. Information technologies have always held great promise for transforming our teaching, thinking and learning. In spite of the role of new technologies in Business Education programme, there are quite a number of challenges associated with the use of technologies in teaching and learning of Business Education programme.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations were made;

1. New technologies like overhead projector, video conferencing and computer (integrated multimedia consisting of stand-alone computer based work-station), Internet, Intranet, Local Area Network (LAN) and Wide Area Network (WAN) should be applied in Business Education for both teaching and learning.
2. The curriculum of Business Education in universities should be enriched to include topics in information and communication technology, data



management, web page design among others at all level or classes. This will help enrich the knowledge and the skill base of the students during training and prepare them adequately for the world of work.

3. Institutions and organization should upgrade facilities and equipment in Business Education studios, laboratories, and workshops where the facilities are considered obsolete.
4. Government should allocate adequate amount of money to Business Education. This would greatly help in acquisition of new technologies in Business Education by the institutions offering the course.
5. The image of the Business Education programme should be improved by making the programme to be attractive and rewarding.

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