



## STRATEGIES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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### Abstract

*The economic development of every nation lies in its workforce which is as a result of the education and skills received by them. The objective of business and entrepreneurship education is to produce relevant and useful skilled workforce and owner of business for the advancement of the nation. This paper discussed the strategies for the integration of technology into business and entrepreneurship education curriculum. The concepts of technology, technology integration, business, and, entrepreneurship education as well as relevance of technology to business and entrepreneurship education were discussed. In addition, provision of business and entrepreneurial education technological hub (BEETH), and provision of alternative electricity supply (solar supply of electricity) were among the strategies enlisted. The paper concluded that business and entrepreneurship education are crucial and essential aspect of education aimed at producing workforce for the economic development and advancement of the nation and for the practices and operations of the recipients of these programmes to be in tandem with the global practices and trend, technology must be fully and adequately incorporated and integrated into the teaching and learning of the courses in our various higher institutions of learning as this will enable our graduates to be relevant and competent in the world of work. The paper recommended among others that concerted efforts be made by critical stakeholders concerning the provision of business and entrepreneurial education technological hub (BEETH), and provision of alternative electricity supply (solar supply of electricity) thereby ensuring adequate integration and implementation of these technological tools in order to produce workforce who can withstand the test of time.*

**Keywords:** *Technology, technology integration, business education, entrepreneurship education, technology hub, business world*

### Introduction

The relevance of any profession in today's world can be greatly measured in terms of its technological inclination and adoption. Technology has affected every sphere of our lives and businesses which has led to tremendous changes in the way we carry out daily routine. Going by the views of Fong Fong, Sidhu, and Fook (2014) in Rusmana, Murtini and Harini (2019) 21st century competence consists of collaborative work skills, lifelong autonomy skills, information and communication technology (ICT) skills, critical and creative thinking skills, English language skills, and entrepreneurship skill. Anire and Amadi (2020) asserted that every nation these days aspire to provide not just good education to its citizenry, but a functional education that will enable an individual realize its full potential and as well as become self-reliant and contribute towards national growth and development. With a purposeful planned education and possession of the appropriate knowledge and skill an individual develop the capacity to become the desired person in life and fulfill life role in the society. Through the educational system, characters, attitudes, behaviours, skills, talents and values are modified and transform towards achieving specific or targeted objectives.

Business education can be referred to as education or training that equips an individual with knowledge and skills which enables them to fit into the world of work. Business education is a purposeful planned system of education which is aimed at updating the skill of the workforce, hence it must prepare its recipients to fit into the dynamism of the world of work.

The present world of work has made it mandatory for everyone to key into the technological trend which is evident in the operation of almost all formal and organized offices. Technology has helped to simplify jobs of the secretaries and accountants as a result of sophisticated machines and equipment. It is in view of this that Azih(2011) opined the revision of the programme is enhanced by knowledge, attitude and skills previously acquired in the course of the study were in adequate to equip the graduates with the competencies needed to adjust to the rapidly changing needs of the office. It is noteworthy that only



businesses and professions that are technologically inclined can withstand and compete actively and favorably in today's world of work. It is in view of the forgoing that business and entrepreneurship education must move with the new trend by ensuring proper and adequate integration of technology in the dissemination of instructions to the recipients which will lead to effective preparation and graduation of functional individuals who can perform effectively in the present technological driven business world.

### **Technology**

Technology can be defined as the practical application of scientific knowledge for the simplification of daily routine and to ease life. Bryant (2015) described technology as a broad concept that has come to refer to breakthrough in science that allows for a better or automated solution. Ezenwafo and Okeke in Njoku, Dikeocha and Onwuagboke(2020) explained that technology is the process by which machines and equipment are introduced in the work place to facilitate administrative process. In addition, Odesanya, Maikano, Mohammed, and Uche (2014) defined technology as an aspect of managing and processing information through the use of electronic computers and computer software to convert, store, protect, process, transmit and retrieve information. Technology is mainly concerned with the storage, retrieval, manipulation, transmission or receipt of digital data. It includes all types or components of technological tools used to provide, store, disseminate and retrieve information for effective library service delivery. The tools include internet, personal computers, scanners, printers, CD-ROMs, flash drives, floppy diskettes, photocopies, fax machines, audio/video tape players, digital projector/screen digital camera and T.V (Anyagou, 2007).

### **Technology Integration**

The concept of integration simply means incorporation or inclusion of a particular thing whilst technology integration can be defined as the inclusion of technology in a particular area or phenomenon. In the context of this paper, technology integration can be seen as the process of applying products of technology in enhancing teaching and learning of entrepreneurial and business education content which includes the application and manipulation of these products of technology. Reigeboth and Joseph in Ile et al (2015), defined technology integration as focusing on 'how' to use technology to support the way teaching and learning is currently being done in schools.

### **Business Education**

Business education can be described as an aspect of education which is purposefully planned to prepare an individual to be self-reliant. Business Education is an important part of general education which emphasizes skill acquisition for office use. Business Education is a programme of instruction that consists of two parts, namely;

Office Education - a programme of vocation for office careers, and General Business Education - a programme which provides the recipients with competencies and skills needed in managing personal business affairs and using the services of the business world (Olaoluwa, 2012). An individual who receives training in Business Education can easily develop potentials for entrepreneurship pursuits especially in this era of economic meltdown and unemployment (Ibeneme&Ikegwuani, 2010). From the above definitions, it can be deduced that Business Education is education for and about business or training in business skills. Business Education which is offered at the universities and colleges of education. It is concerned mainly with the development of relevant and saleable skills and knowledge that would enable an individual to function effectively in the world of work (Onojetah, 2012). Business Education provides employment for graduates. In Business Education programme, courses in Marketing, Management, Accounting and Office Technology and Management are offered by the students.

### **Entrepreneurship Education**

The concept refers to a creative and innovative response in economic and social ventures. It involves setting up of business ventures through willingness and ability of an individual to explore investment opportunities and being able to run them successfully, through making them profitable. It involves combining resources to increase value and introducing change and innovation into the production process of creating wealth and employment opportunities.

According to the World Bank (1999), Wikipedia, (2015) in Offiong, Caleb and Effiong (2017), education is fundamental to the construction of knowledge economy and society in all nations. It is through education that knowledge and skills are transferred to individuals, and their competencies and abilities developed. It is good to note that entrepreneurial education has been given prominence all over the world.



Through entrepreneurial education, learners are provided with knowledge, skills and innovation so as to encourage them to develop entrepreneurial acumen in a variety of settings. Entrepreneurship from a general point of view can be described as response to the diverse opportunities and potentials that exist within an individual and the environment for profit making.

### **Relevance of Technology in Business and Entrepreneurship Education**

The impact of technology can't be overemphasized as it encompasses every spheres of human endeavour. Okoye, (2005) in Offiong, Caleb and Effiong (2017) expressed that the improvement of the educational system over the years has been the concern of educators and researchers, in both entrepreneurial and business education. This yearning is not unconnected with the undisputable fact that National Development is hinged on the successful development, use and execution of research findings in the application of technology tools in teaching and learning. For the purpose of this study, technology is defined as the integration and utilization of the innovation of computer technology for the purpose of organizing, encoding, packaging and dissemination of information and skill acquisition to target destination or consumer without the constraint of time and space. This is to say that Technology-based instructional system operates a continuous lifelong training process. This definition, no doubt, implies more freedom for the teachers and more opportunity to use initiatives for the learners. The time gained by teachers will necessarily be employed for better scientific planning of instructional content and delivery strategies. In order to be innovative, business education programs must invest in the human resources and distribution mechanisms required to compete in a world characterized by hyper-competition, technological transformation, and inventiveness (Smit, 2017). Ohaka (2015) opined that the opportunities provided by the integration of ICT in the business education programme is that it helps to develop distant business education with national and global contents, develop a system of collecting and disseminating information in business education, and encourage the core principles of lifelong learning in skill acquisition and character moulding in business education through knowledge and career global interconnectivity among others.

The overall effectiveness of technology driven business and entrepreneurship education is relatively high. The multiplier benefit of a networked instructional system ensures a future of entrepreneurial educational excellence, expansion and efficiency at reduced cost. ICT removes age, distance and time constraints in any entrepreneurial educational learning and ensures immediate provision of knowledge in relevant areas with the ease and speed that could never be gotten from traditional learning system (Offiong, Caleb and Effiong 2017). Apparently, technology integration is pivotal and instrumental for delivery of entrepreneurship and business education courses.

### **Strategies for the Integration of Technology into Business and Entrepreneurship Education**

In other to improve the delivery of business and entrepreneurial education in our various institutions, there is an urgent need to integrate technology in the dissemination of instructions by adopting the following strategies;

1. **Provision of business and entrepreneurship education technological hub(BEETH):** this is what can be regarded as business and startup training technology center which can be considered as a commercial center, a graphics center, a music studio, an Internet center, a computer training center, a computer technician, a designer. Web design, computer services, internet recruitment agency, internet advertising, internet travel, videography, decoration, photography, cinema, and agriculture (poultry and aquaculture). The business center provides communication services to customers. The services provided by the business center are evolving to include more valuable services required by the service unit. Graphics center is another area where entrepreneurs and business owners use technology tools such as computers, scanners, internet and other accessories to design graphics. Internet hubs are another area where IT tools can be used. These centers provide internet service to residents at minimal cost. The services provided help improve people's living standards and also create jobs for hundreds of people directly or indirectly by entrepreneurs. Skills development is the expected outcome of education and training efforts and a catalyst for growth. As an entrepreneur, growing your business and creating a legacy is paramount. Skills development enhances employees' ability to enhance business performance within their specific sphere of influence, and thus, ultimately, to improve business outcomes. Competency development skills of each employee are the foundation for the success of entrepreneurial training. Therefore, this will help to improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of enterprises as well as improve the quality of life of workers, their jobs prospects and mobility. ICT infrastructure provides a platform upon which e-commerce is



built. Internet skills offer the technical know-how needed to develop entrepreneurial applications (Migisha, 2011). As a matter of fact, technology integration goes beyond physical assets to include intangible resources which perhaps generate competitive advantages for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial skills development and team-based entrepreneurial activities are the primary determinants of technological integration of entrepreneurial and business education in an institution. However, experimental activities in terms of testing and prototyping, videography, agriculture, photography and cinematography, access to resources, coaching and experience sharing is a key constructs that determine ICT integration and the success of entrepreneurial and business education, in tertiary institutions.

2. **Intentional and effective training/workshop for business and entrepreneurial education lecturers/facilitators:** it is very pertinent to stress that, the integration of technology into business and entrepreneurial education will be meaningless and useless without an intentional and adequate training of the lecturers/facilitators of these courses. There is an urgent need for the tutors and facilitators of the these courses to have up-to-date knowledge of the technological advancement in order to be able to deliver lessons/subject matters to their various students effectively and efficiently. This was corroborated by the study of Nwolake and Chukwuma(2019) that lack of technological skills on the part of business educators constrains integration of new technologies in teaching business education courses. Evidently, the output(graduates) from our various institutions and their functionality is greatly measured by the competency of their instructors and facilitators, hence training and retraining of business and entrepreneurial education staff as this remains the only way for the objective of this programme to be achieved thereby ensuring our graduate compete actively and thrive in the global world of work. This was further affirmed by Nwosu and Mbeazie in Timya et al (2019) that most of the teachers were not effectively taught with the latest technologies, therefore they have to be retrained in the proper use of latest technologies in instructional delivery.
3. **Provision of adequate electricity supply and the use of alternative source of power(solar power supply):** electricity is one of the essential ingredients of technological tools which can be a setback for the integration of technology into business and entrepreneurship education courses. By implication, most of these technological tools need adequate power supply and as a result there is need to provide electricity or explore other option which include the use of solar power for constant use of these gadgets as this provide a more reliable source of power supply compare to the traditional means of electricity supply. This will go a long way in ensuring effective and efficient delivery of instruction via technological tools.
4. **Reduction in cost of ICT facilities by suppliers:**the expensive nature of technological tools is of great concern which can be minimized through collaborative efforts and partnership with the suppliers for possible discounts and allowances. Good partnership with the suppliers can be a good way to cut cost which can in turn bring about an increase and expansion of the technological tools for effective integration into the teaching and learning of business and entrepreneurship education courses.
5. **Good management policies:** in order to protect and safeguard the abuse of usage of these technological tools, the management should design workable framework and policies which will protect the software and hardware of the facilities. Guidelines and proper procedures should be spelt out to avoid unnecessary violation of the policies. This will protect the tools from both internal and external attack or breach of security.
6. **Good maintenance culture:** the best way to protect and get best out of these tools is through proper handling and usage. The staff and students should imbibe good management culture in order to expand the lifespan of the machines. This will not only allow efficiency of usage but will also help to reduce the cost of maintenance.

Other strategies that can facilitate the integration of technology into business and entrepreneurial education curriculum are;

- Lecturers' and students' should maintain positive attitude
- Provision of adequate equipped offices for lecturers
- Provision of adequate computers on the basis of one student to one computer during class sessions



- Provision of adequate word processing laboratories fitted with air conditioners and good lighting.

### **Conclusion**

Business and entrepreneurship education are crucial and essential aspect of education aimed at producing workforce for the economic development and advancement of the nation and for the practices and operations of the recipients of these programmes to be in tandem with the global practices and trend, technology must be fully and adequately incorporated and integrated into the teaching and learning of the courses in our various higher institutions of learning. This will not only make our graduates and workforce to be competent, relevant and up-to-date in their chosen careers/fields but will also enables them to compete favorably and actively with their counterparts across the globe. It is in view of the above that policy makers and stakeholders should as a matter of urgency put necessary resources and apparatus as well as techniques that would yield proper integration of technology into business and entrepreneurship education curriculum so as to achieve the objective of these programmes which is to produce functional graduates and workforce.

### **Recommendations**

The under listed recommendations will help the policy makers and stakeholders of business and entrepreneurship education to adequately integrate and incorporate technology into the curriculum of these programmes;

1. Provision of business and entrepreneurship education technological hub(BEETH).
2. Intentional and effective training/workshop for business and entrepreneurship education lecturers/facilitators.
3. Provision of adequate electricity supply and the use of alternative source of power (solar power supply).
4. Collaborative efforts and partnership with suppliers of technological tools for possible discounts.
5. Planning and designing policies that will help to facilitate the use of these tools.
6. Staff and students must imbibe good management culture so as to expand the lifespan of the gadgets.

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