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Enhancing Teaching and Learning of Social Studies Curriculum Using Technological Tools

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Abstract
The paper examines ways of enhancing teaching and learning of Social Studies curriculum using technological tools. In recent years, technology has changed dramatically, due to the increasing need of mankind in his environment and most especially in teaching and learning as it has expanded the toolbox and provides opportunities to the teachers. Technological tools such as: Google Classroom, YouTube Videos, Google form, Zoom Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Near Pod, Mentimeter, Google Hangouts Meet and Easy Class, to ease teaching and learning process. The paper also focuses on the benefits derived from the use of technological tools as it provides teachers the opportunities to direct, communicate instruct, impact and

influence academic performance of the students. It also helps connect those devices and also connects students in the classrooms, in schools or around the world. The paper also x-rays various challenges faced in the course of applying these technological tools in teaching-learning process such as: misconception, lack of finance, inadequate time, lack of quality materials, lack of infrastructure, resistance by the traditional teachers, inadequate spare part and poor maintenance culture etc. The paper identifies solutions to the challenges faced in the application of technological tools, as well as conclusion and the ways forward were proffered.

Keywords: Teaching, Learning, Social Studies, Curriculum and Technological tools

Introduction

Education is the means by which every society attempts to achieve development. Through the educational system, valued beliefs, knowledge and artifacts are transmitted across generations. However, with the ceaseless changes in the environment and improve understanding of scientific principles, the educational system is perpetually under pressure for determining what to handover to the succeeding generation, hence effective performance of the learner is tied to the instructor and quality of instructions being delivered.

The preparation of teachers for the various levels of instructional delivery in our school systems and, indeed, teaching itself have continued to undergo rapid changes in many ways. Some of these changes over time have to do with introducing teacher education process and presage factors in response to the increasing complexities of what teachers are expected to do when they graduate and start teaching. Also, Olumba (2017), observed that the many challenges faced my education system as a result of changes in the goals and objectives of education resulted in the scientific developments and other innovations. New educational resources have been discovered and produced for the teaching-learning process. Such resources like computer, internet facilities, radio television, etc. have been made available in the teaching-learning process and these are aimed at facilitating learning process.

The reforms in the educational system led to the introduction of special instructional methods such as programmed instruction, team teaching, computer-assisted instruction, individualized instruction and so on. These are applied to ameliorate the burden of the teacher, thereby enhancing a more effective instructional process (Eziegwe, 2010).Without doubt, these new resources or tools for teaching-learning process call for an immediate change in the traditional role of the teacher, especially now that the teaching-learning process is child-centered.

What are technological tools?

The word "Technology" originally came from Greek word techno logia, which means "the study of skills or the science of craft. It was first used in the seventeenth century. Many people think that the word technology only means mobile, internet computer, laptop etc. Technology encompasses language modernization, the building of new websites and the new creativity in the field of computers (Ranasinghe & Leisher, 2009).

Technological tools according to Januszewski (2021), are electronic media that aid teaching and learning. It can also be characterized as the use of technical tools to investigate data, improve learning through construction, and improve teaching and learning efficacy. The goal of utilizing technological tools is to provide valuable assistance in the teaching learning process so that the best possible results can be achieved with the available human and non-human resources.

According to Majid (2019), for effective teaching and learning of social studies curriculum, the teacher must use various technological tools which would help enrich teaching-learning process. Teachers in the teaching-learning process of this curriculum can use these modern technologies to build their assessment, to convey the tasks to the students for which it is made. Majid (2019), further identified some important technological tools for effective and efficient teaching-learning process to include:

1. **Google classroom:** It is an online teaching-learning platform and a free web service that has been developed by Google for schools. Here, the teachers can create online classrooms where they can upload the teaching material and can conduct online quizzes. The main aim of Google Classrooms is to update and share the files between teachers and learners. It is a combination of Google Drive, Google docs, slides and sheets for writing. Gmail is used for communication and the Google calendar for scheduling. The students are invited for joining a Google classroom through a code to enable them to participate.
2. **YouTube videos:** YouTube started as a video distribution platform in the year 2005 and now, it has become most popular and most visited site across the world. It is an important tool of teaching and used mostly by educators for the purpose of teaching-learning process. Educators can make their classroom channel and all the lectures uploaded in videos in the form of content, audios and videos.
3. **Google form:** Google form is used in the area of business and educational purposes. It is a free online teaching and learning platform which everyone can easily use. It is used mostly by the educators which allow them to create forms, quizzes, result declaration grading, item analysis, surveys and collaborative editing (Adavbiele, 2016).
   Google forms are also used for assessing the students and for checking the child's previous knowledge. These forms can be applied for giving and receiving feedback from the

students and parents also. Similarly, the students can make use of Google forms for accessing their learning and they can fix the learning goals for collecting data for research projects.

4. **Zoom classroom:** zoom classroom is the web-based video conferencing and digital classroom system which allow face to face, two-way video & audio communication, where up to 100 people can join. They can be in small groups or large groups. For using the zoom platform as a teacher, instructor or an educator we need a device with the microphone and a camera. It increases student's participation and learning retention with the combination of virtual and hybrid classrooms and the micro-learning. Zoom has many innovative features that help a teacher in delivering online lessons.
5. **Microsoft teams:** It is a hub for teamwork in office which brings everything together where people can work in teams by cooperating and collaborating. It includes various options like chatting, knowing the opinions and each other's personality along with the use of emoji's, gifts and stickers. In this case, a team of people or group of people can access each other, and it does not matter where they belong. Margaret (2018) noted that there is also a calling option in Microsoft teams where the calling is done in teams and even, they all can collaborate in one place no matter whether they are from different regions or any part of the country.
6. **Near pod:** Near Pod is one of the technological tools that is made for the student's Engagement. It is a Platform where the interactive lessons are being practiced by the teachers. Near pod offers teachers an easy-to-use tool for creating interactive lesson plans, presentations, assessments, and digital content.

   Near pod allows teachers to create digital lesson plans, share it with students during class, and track individual progress. Lessons are comprised of teacher-created slides that can include text, video, images, websites, questions, quizzes, polls, and assignments. Students can follow the lesson on their own devices at their own pace or teachers can lead a synchronized session where students can follow the lesson in real-time.
7. **Mentimeter:** Mentimeter is an interactive learning platform which makes the learners feel involved by enabling them contribute to the teaching and learning process either with the use of computers or smartphones. A Swedish company that finds innovative ways to create presentations with real-time feedback. The web and app interface enable users to share knowledge and real-time feedback on mobile. Mentimeter has a lot of other options like presentations, polls or brainstorming sessions in classes, meetings, gatherings, conferences and other group activities. A teacher after uploading the desired PowerPoint Presentation creates a unique six-digit code. The students who want to access that content are directed to enter the unique code to start viewing the PowerPoint on the web.

8. **Google Hangouts Meet:** Google Hangouts Meet is a video communication service that was developed by Google. It is a combination of two apps. One is the new version of Google Hangouts, and another is the Google hangouts chat. The new meet experience provides the outline for connecting with people on campus or outside the campus. You can have five peoples joining your conference at a time Through the use of Video Conferencing the students and teachers are connected for the purpose of teaching and learning.
9. **Easy class:** Easy class is a free and simple online learning management system that is made specially for educators and students. Here, educators can create online courses for students, which can be accessed at any time, and at any pace. Teacher can make important announcements and share materials and files in a well-organized and systematic manner. It includes assignments, class discussions, quizzes, and even exams and results. The grade points of the students are also being updated including the feedback to the students that is provided at the end of the exam and then it is displayed to the students by utilizing this platform. This tool provides opportunities to the teachers for engaging the students in different activities through which a dimension for interaction and the learning increases and becomes efficient. The main aim of this online platform is to democratize and to promote global education among the learner community by providing them with free access to the platform.

Social studies curriculum

Social studies curriculum like every other subject curriculum is the complete experience of the learner in relation to man and his environment provided under the guidance and direction of the school. It is the process of planning and learning opportunities intended to bring in the learner desired changes and assessment of the extent to which the desired changes have been realized. This include: what is being studied, how the study and teaching are carried out and the methods of instruction. Social studies curriculum also has three basic elements/programmes which are, programmes of study that consist of social studies courses and content offered by the school, programme of guidance that encompasses the individual needs, psychological and vocational and academic needs, progamme of activities that deals with actual life experiences that students acquire as they undertake the course in social studies programme.

Unimna, Udeme, Abunimye, Ejikpese and Assoh (2021), asserted that Social Studies curriculum is essential for learners of all category because of its pivotal role in the remodeling of the learner in relation to his environment. It provides the learner with the necessary skills and potentials which include: promotion of cooperation among learners, development of virtue of tolerance, development of leadership skills, development of critical thinking skills, as well as the developments of both the social, mental and physical skills for day to day activities.

Benefits of technological tools in teaching and learning of social studies curriculum

These technological tools provide opportunities for the teachers to engage the students in different activities through which a dimension for interaction and the learning increases and becomes efficient. The main aim of these technological tools is to democratize and to promote global education among the learner's community by providing them with free access to the platform (Williams, 2020).

Williams (2020), identified the following benefits of using technological tools in teaching and learning:

1. Technology in teaching and learning provide the opportunity for the learner to develop a complete and total systems approach to instruction, with specific and measurable objectives. These include diagnostic testing, prescription planning and diagnostic teaching.
2. It creates sequential programmes of skill development with opportunity for the learner to completely master one step before proceeding to the more difficult or more involved step.
3. Provision of opportunities for the teachers with limited experience and background for self-directed growth through continuous in-service training. Application of technology in teaching and learning creates a basis for valid instructional judgements.
4. All learners are given the opportunity to learn based on their needs, aspirations and interest.
5. There is provision to change the instructional programme as instructional circumstances may require and to meet the continually changing needs and interest of the learners.
6. It ensures a more productive education in that; the speed of learning is increased.
7. Instruction is given a greater scientific base; as it enhances fast and easy learning in a relaxed mood.
8. Learning is made to become more real and permanent, with the use of instructional materials.
9. There is individualization of instruction as the child learns at his own natural pace, using the programmed instruction.
10. The application of technology in teaching and learning arouses and sustains interest of the learners, especially when the teacher uses aids that are new and attractive.
11. Mass education is made possible. The teacher, with the use of the tools of educational technology can comfortably and successfully teach a large class or different groups of learners at the same time. This is a great advantage, especially during this era of distance education and Universal Basic Education (UBA).
12. The application of technology reduces the cost of education through improvisation. Here, the children may be involved in the construction of some local instructional materials. This makes room for instant understanding of the concepts and facts by the learners.

Challenges to the use of technological tool in teaching and learning of social studies curriculum in Nigeria

Olumba (2016), identified the following bottlenecks to effective utilization of technological tools in Nigeria. These include:

1. **Misconception**: The term technology has for years been misunderstood and misinterpreted by both the implementers of it in education and the learners. This has in no small measure, let to the varied definitions, thus, leading to loss of focus.
   Technology in education is quite new in the field of teaching and learning. At present, there are few fully trained and competent technologists in Nigeria. As a remedial measure, some educational institutions have no option than to employ unqualified hands who cannot advance and propagate the new concept of technology in education.
2. **Lack of finance:** As a result of biting economic crunch in Nigeria, the true implementation of technological tools in teaching and learning is yet to see the light of the day. The government's vote for the programme is grossly inadequate and this has adversely affected the areas of proper planning maintenance and morale. The purchase of essential materials and equipment is facing a lot of stress due to poor funding of the programme.
3. **Inadequate time:** The time allotted for the practice of technology in teaching and learning process in Nigerian higher institutions is quite inappropriate. For instance, in colleges of education, educational technology as a course is given two credit units, implying that it should be taught and practiced for only two hours in a week. It appears that the educational planners must have lost sight of the fact, that educational technology, as a course, requires enough time for actual practical work. More so, with the increasing school enrollment as against the very few existing qualified teachers, it has become extremely difficult to cope with the little time given for the course.
4. **Resistance by the traditional teacher:** One of the greatest hurdles facing the effective utilization of technology in teaching and learning is inertia. There is much resistance to change among some of the users of technology in education. The new baby, technology is not uniformly welcome by the academic community. For instance, in some higher institutions of learning, some teachers who attained great heights in education before the era of electronic learning (e-learning) prefer to teach as they were taught. They completely resist the use of electronic gadgets in their day-to-day academic activities, because of poor value system. This conservative posture of some academic is a great obstacle to the growth of technology, especially now that there is much emphasis on Information and Communication Technology.
5. **Lack of quality materials:** Due to the exorbitant cost of most materials and equipment used in the course of utilization of educational technology, its growth and development have been undergoing snail's movement. This problem is conspicuous in private schools and colleges because the owner of these institutions, in an attempt to maximize profit,

neglect any venture that is expensive at the detriment of quality education. Possession of high technology media such as computers, projectors, internet facilities and the like, has been a mirage in most schools. This gross inadequacy of the essential materials and equipment has been a great obstacle to the effective implementation of educational technology.

6. **Lack of infrastructure:** The necessary infrastructural facilities required for the true execution of the principles of educational technology are not present and where they are available, they are quite inadequate and unreliable. It is amazing to disclose that most rural areas in Nigeria do not have the basic amenities like electricity, telecommunication facilities, accessible roads, etc. some few areas, mainly the urban towns that have electricity do not make effective use of it due to its epileptic nature. The global system mobile telephone network providers have made matters worse. In spite of the high cost of their services, they provide telephone services that are not always available when needed. In a nutshell, the insufficiency of the infrastructure in Nigeria is posing great resistance to the effective realization of the objectives of educational technology.
7. **Inadequate spare parts:** Another great constraint associated with the efficient and effective utilization of technology in education in Nigerian school system is the inadequacy of spare parts. According to Olumba (2016), most of the equipment and facilities used in educational technology are imported with little or no spare parts. The spare parts, even when found are either quite expensive or of low quality. The use of low-quality spare parts makes the equipment prone to occasional breakdown.
8. **Poor maintenance culture:** More so, maintenance culture is not a tradition in Nigeria. Most Nigerians prefer buying new equipment to maintaining the old ones. This has never been in the favour of technology, because of the prevailing economic crunch. At the end of the day, the very few available equipment and facilities continue to reduce in both quantity and quality because of lack of repairs and replacement of damaged parts.

The rate of robbery and vandalization of government equipment and facilities is on the increase in Nigeria now. Telephone and electronic gadgets, pipelines, etc. are all prone to occasional theft or vandalization. The worst is that the government has not met the requirement for the security of these high cost facilities which are not easily replaced when lost or damaged. The security problem has in no educational technology in Nigeria, because of continuous depletion of the essential materials and equipment.

Remedies to the challenges of technology in teaching and learning in Nigeria

The application of technology in teaching and learning is synonymous with the achievement of the educational goals and objectives of any nation. This is why Olumba (2017) asserts that any educational system without a functional technology is bound to collapse. If this is true, any effort made to revive and sustain effective technology should be seen as a round peg in a round hole.

At this juncture, it has become paramount to examine some of the remedies to the challenges associated with the effective utilization of technological tools in Nigerian school system. Some of these remedies includes: provision of facilities, orientation programmes, training programmes, motivations, adequate security, etc.

1. **Provision of facilities:** The major impediment to the true realization of the objectives of technology application in Nigeria is paucity of the essential facilities and materials. As a matter of fact, and urgency, all hands have to be on deck in the provision of mainly the expensive materials and facilities like, radio, television, projectors, computers, models, software, etc. Thus, government, non-governmental organizations, communities, and individuals are advised to make the essential facilities, machines, equipment and materials available to schools, college and resource centres.
2. **Provision of infrastructure:** In view of the fact that most of the equipment and materials needed in the application of technology is if some basic amenities are provided, the government and stakeholders should ensure regular supply of such infrastructural facilities like electricity, telephone, pipe borne water, good roads, etc. If these facilities are extended to rural areas and their supply made regular, educational technology will excel most especially in the areas of distance education.
3. **Orientation:** Technological application will attain greater height if the misconceptions enveloping it are cleared and prevented. They should be occasional orientation programmes for student-teachers, teachers and staff associated with the utilization of technological tools. Such programmes should focus on the correct definition, nature and functions of technology.

   Application of technology is quite new in the educational sector. Being a new baby, it is yet to be associated with adequate manpower. As a remedial measure, the governments, organize seminars, workshops, conferences, and in-service training so as to update the knowledge of the users. This will also create the avenue for the training of fresh technology compliance teachers.
4. **Motivation:** Many progremmes in Nigeria have either collapsed or decline due to non-motivation of the participants and the parties involved. Educational technology is both tedious and strenuous. It consumes a lot of time, energy and resources. More still, the use of some of the equipment and materials exposes the users to much hazard. If these parties must put in their best, they sincerely need commensurate rewards in form of special

allowances, promotions, prizes, etc. This motivation factor is a necessity because it is in line with the biblical belief that "to whom much is given, much is expected". This of course implies that if the users of technology in teaching and learning are adequately rewarded, they will never have option for greater responsibilities.

5. **Provision of security:** As explained earlier, security of the gadgets and equipment has posed a great problem to technology application. Since the governments cannot provide security for the facilities and equipment, especially in the rural areas, efforts must be made to safeguard the available things. The onus lies on the communities to provide their own local security for the technology centres located in their areas. In this era of community policing, the town and village heads should liaise with the governments' security for effective security of life and properties in their localities.
6. **Provision of innovative teaching-learning materials:** The achievement of the objective of technology to enhance teaching and learning has not seen the light of the day due to the use of traditional instructional methods. Some of these methods are outdated, thereby obstructing the exploitation of the modern facilities available in the educational sector. Innovations in teaching methods like computer-assisted instruction, programmed instruction, individualized instruction etc. should be imbibed as this will enhance the tapping of the potentials or the developments in technology. Okafor and Olumba (2017), are of the view that the use of computer-assisted instruction and programmed instruction helps to overcome the problems posed by individual difference that exists among the learners. This being a great obstacle to learning, if eliminated or reduced, will lead to the attainment of one of the objectives of educational technology, which is effectiveness and efficiency in education.
7. **Adequate funding:** All the problems of educational technology take bearing from poor funding of the programme. It has thus become necessary for the three tiers of the government of make special budget for the implementation of educational technology. Enough money should be budgeted for the purchase of equipment, employment and training of staff and for administration and supervision of the programme.

Recommendations

1. Teachers of all level of teaching should be encouraged to acquire the needed skills that will help them use modern technologies in the teaching/learning activities.
2. Government should endeavor to make adequate provision of ICT resources and infrastructures to help the teachers in keying into the change in technological development of education.

3. Teachers should be assisted to have access to these modern technologies by giving them the need support in form of sponsorship to workshops and conferences to enhance their productivity and long service to their employer.
4. The government should provide adequate security for the facilities and equipment, especially in the rural areas to safeguard the available ones.
5. finally, the ministry of education should facilitate the inclusion of innovations in teaching methods like computer-assisted instruction, programme instruction, individualized instruction etc, as this will enhance the tapping of the potentials of the developments in the use of technology in teaching and learning process in Nigeria (Olumba, 2017).

The way forward

The application of technological tools in teaching and learning is aimed at identifying, analyzing and solving educational problems. The use of these technological tools with its potentials for improving education is still at its infancy in Nigeria, due to some inevitable constraints. It has been established that no nation survives without sound education. Thus, the use of technological tools in teaching and learning should be given unparalleled attention and support, since it is the nucleus of effectiveness and efficiency in education.

To address the challenges of technological tools in teaching and learning, the researcher proffered the following way forward:

1. technology should be integrated into the school curriculum design.
2. Teachers should be trained with the basic digital skills.
3. The government should invest in basic IT infrastructure (computer, tablets, internet).
4. Online teaching and learning should be mandatary for both the teachers and the students.
5. The government should partner with adaptive software and analytics.
6. Schools networks and internet should be upgraded to the modern standard.
7. Digital literacy programmes should be developed for both teachers and students.
8. Smart classrooms technology should be implemented.

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