

ICT UTILIZATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN NIGERIAN
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Considering innovations in various fields of endeavor, there is need for social studies teachers to be part of the innovation in the 21st century. Hence, the paper critically presents ICT utilization in the teaching and learning of social studies in junior secondary schools: The study finds that introducing ICT to our educational system has both positive and negative effects, but its positive effects cannot be overemphasized. The paper conceptualized ICT and social studies. It revealed various suggestions and the importance of ICT to social studies. The paper itemized the problems of ICT utilization in the teaching and learning of social studies to including epileptic network, poor or unsteady electricity problem, high cost of ICT tools, teacher's inefficiency and insecurity problems. Given the above problems, the study identified measures to tackle these problems which include; regular power supply, teacher's professional development, making available internet accessibility and many more. The study conclude by stating that all hands must be on deck to ensure that the measures identified are improved on as it will enable social studies teachers to utilize ICT tools for teaching and learning solution.

Keywords:

Keywords: ICT, Junior Secondary School, Problems, Social Studies, Solutions, Utilization.

Introduction

Quality education involves awareness on the opportunities and limitations in the method of education. Rapid growth in information and communication technology (ICT) in recent years has led to vital transformation and added value to the improvements in education. Despite the progress made in the invention of ICT, it still has serious effect on teaching and learning (Cloete, 2007). This must have compelled Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2015) to lament that ICT robbed the teaching and learning process of the affective, emotional characteristics associated with such interaction". They added that "face to face interaction between the teacher and students create an affectionate and emotional bonding between the teacher and the students".

However, when ICT becomes the middle man, the bonding between the teacher and learners are erased. Be it as it may, ICT tools constitute one of the various modern methods used in the teaching and learning of social studies. On the other hand, Ogbono (2011) revealed the thought of many policy makers in education. The view is that many nations feel that to simply provide the educational institutions with ICT tools such as the computers and equally train the teachers on their use could help learners/students to measure up to modern demands. This implies that measures in providing access to information and communication technology cannot miraculously transform educational system for good. Hence, the best that could be done by policy makers in education is to seek the need for effective

utilization of ICT to its complete potential in the educational industry.

In social studies educational system, the usefulness of information and communication technology is felt in the use for demonstration and presentation, distance learning, collaborative and interactive learning, drill and practice, research and video aid. The potential of each ICT tools varies: hence the ICT tools used in social studies education include radio, television. Audio/video cassettes, computers and internet. Perration & Creed, (2002) pointed that since by 1920s and 1950s, television and radio have been used by majorly as educational tools. Currently, the computer internet have been used by social studies educationist as a teaching method to ensure effective teaching and learning. It is important to note that as social studies is undertaken at junior secondary level; most students utilize its integrative idea or approach at senior secondary level.

Therefore, for social studies education to utilize ICT tools effectively there is need for policy planners of education to make provisions that can ease those frustrating problems that negates the utilization of ICT tools in social studies teaching and learning. These problems as given by many studies includes: poor/unsteady electricity supply, Paucity of ICT infrastructure, lack of access to ICT, financial cost, teachers professional development issue (Mac-Dougall & Squires, 1997). Cisler, 2002, Sam, 2011 & Ogbono, 2011). These problems constitute highlight of the study as the paper will also present measures for ICT utilization in the teaching and learning of social studies education in Nigerian junior secondary schools.

Literature Review

Concept of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The acronym ICT means Information and Communication Technology. ICT as a concept suffers definitional deficiency. This implies that there is no acceptable definition. It also implies that many authors have given their perspective

as it suits them, but all concepts given share a similar and acceptable understanding. This paper simply defines ICT as an aid or telecom technology designed to store, retrieve and communicate information. Odedele and Egotanwa (2010) defined ICT as knowledge gained through communication, or knowledge communicated or retrieved concerning a particular fact In a clearer version, Adesina and Obadiora (2012) saw ICT as a term that consists of computer and telecommunication technology, which is used to store, create, transmit, interpret and manipulate information in various ways. Heathcote (2000) averred that means "a term which is currently used to denote a wide range of services, application, and technologies, using various type of equipment and software often running over telecom networks". Ogunsola (2005) referred to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as "an electronic-based system of information transmission, reception, and retrieval". Senn (1997) also notes that, the concept of ICT can be used to explain the ability to create, save and forwarding of data and information, while the most important components of such technology are mechanical and software equipment, networks as well as knowledge on how to use ICT tools. In his opinion Heathcote (2000) agrees that, one of major features of ICT should be its user-friendliness. Emeodu (2015), also identified some ICT tools as Computer, Radio, Television and Internet as well as other social media Platform like Facebook, Whatsapp, etc.

Concept of Social Studies

Social studies being a dynamic subject enjoy a type of vibrancy (liveliness) and an unlimited scope of definitions based on the multidimensional operations of the subject provided it is firmly anchored on human beings as its pivot. Social Studies in the view of Ogundare (2000) cited in Ogundare (2010) conceptualized social studies as a study of problems of survival in an environment and how to find solutions to them. Also, Mezieobi,

Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) defined social studies as an interactive field of study which probes man's symbiotic relationships with his environments, endows man with the effective or contemplative capacities, intellectual, affective, social and work skills, to enable him understand his world and its problems, and to rationally solve or cope with them for effective living in the society. In a separate study, Mezieobi (2017) revealed that social studies is a discipline that exposes a learner to the extent of interaction between individuals and their environment, and can go a long way in influencing their standard of living and whether or not they become comfortable in their environment through their strategies of solving their various societal needs (problems). In another dimension.

Adaralegbe (1980) cited in Irikana and Ibeh (2014). view social Studies as a discipline or study of how man influences and in turn is influenced by his physical, social, political, religious, economic, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environment. Nwoji (2016) defined Social Studies as a field of study that majorly deals with human beings interacting with one another and with their environment".

In conceptualizing social studies, Ekwe, Enaohwo, Amaechi and Amadi (2016) presented what Social Studies seek to achieve, and this includes: assisting young people make better and normal decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Secondly, social studies promote civic competence and the knowledge; intellectual processes, and democratic characters required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life. Thirdly, social studies help students acquire knowledge, master the process of learning and be active citizens. Finally, they pointed that through social studies, opportunities are provided for young people (students) to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active,

informed and responsible citizens in their country or area of residence.

Importance of Utilizing ICT Tools for Social Studies Teaching and Learning

There are numerous benefits if social studies teachers can utilize ICT tools in teaching and learning. The paper presents the following importance:

- First. ICT utilization in social studies education will aid the social studies teacher to assist many students within a given time. It can be helpful to teach large classroom size without segmenting the students. For example, the use of megaphone in teaching can help to reach many students
- An extrapolation from the view of the World Bank cited in Ekpo (2015), ICT holds out the opportunity to revolutionize teaching methods, as well expand access to quality education and advance the administration of educational systems. Hence, through the utilization of ICT tools, both teachers, learners, librarians, school administrators, and curriculum developers, can hold meaningful interaction with one another and share information to enhance understanding, access and view documents in richly formulated texts and pictures, connect colleagues, schools, friends and resource persons in almost all parts of the world. This method provides insight to social studies teachers to easily access and communicate ideas to the learners.
- Ekpo (2015) stated that through ICT, individual learners can seek explanations, compare and relate experiences, investigate problems, reflect, reason and learn many concepts in the school curriculum.
- Additionally, through ICT, social studies students or learners would learn how to study and to think about what they learnt so as to develop the spirit of self-reliance, hard work and confidence in his/her social interactions.
- Again, Social studies learners who study through social media platform,

teleconferencing, and high speed internet connection can exchange knowledge, views and opinion with other qualified teachers in the world and could share as well as retrieve information they could hardly afford. Hence, it directly entails the attainment of these skills that could enable the social studies learners seek ideas within and outside the school environment and ensure an effective utilization of such knowledge or idea.

- Also, in ensuring effective teaching and learning of social studies, it involves the effort of carrying out research for adequate and reliable information. Thus, ICT can fasten and solve this urge with ease.

Problems of ICT Utilization in The Teaching and Learning of Social Studies

- **Teachers Inefficiency:** some teachers in our education system are not versatile in ICT usability and its facilities due to lack of skills. It is on this note that the paper advised for social studies teachers' professionalism in ICT. However, study by Mezieobi (2017) revealed why most teachers cannot handle ICT and its facilities. They heaped the blame to the schools authorities for not giving the teachers the necessary privileged or resource to be trained in the usability of ICT in social studies teaching.
- **Problem of Cost:** In Nigeria, cost of ICT facilities are indeed high. The reason for this is because Nigeria is not a producer of these facilities. The ICT facilities are bought from other countries and shipped to Nigeria at high import duties. Mezieobi (2017) opined that the high impartcharge of duties inflate the prices of ICT facilities and its installation. Therefore, this cost can be seen in area of expensive nature of ICT tools such as ICT accessories and facilities like computers, laptops, etc. Based on the cost most secondary schools, learners and teachers in ICT cannot purchase the ICT facilities, hence a challenge to the learning and teaching of social studies.
- **Problem of power supply:** Insufficient power supply is also a major challenge. This is because in cases where the schools and teachers have access to ICT facilities, affordability of generating set at regular bases become a problem. In some cases, even the level of current from electricity cannot power available ICT and ICT facilities.
- **Problem of Insecurity:** Emeodu (2019) posited that insecurity is not healthy for effectsc societal growth due to its numerous effects. Thus, Sandra (2020) pointed how some community made away with some school properties (which IQT tools like Computer is included In this case, they made away with ICT tools affect and create non availability of ICT equipment in schools.
- **Immorality crisis:** Emeodu (2015) revealed that ICT brings about retrogression and progression. Immorality has become the cause of worry in the use of ICT in teaching of social studies. Students instead of using ICT for reading, information search and other positive ventures, rather indulge in immoral activities online e.g. visiting dating sites, watching pornographic movies, getting involved in terrorists' activities and so on
- **Poor management and Funding challenge:** funding of the school is crucial in maintenance of the school properties. Observably, in most secondary schools in Nigeria where government and other concerned individuals or NGOs provides ICT tools, the tools most times are not sustained, due to poor funding to secure, repair, replace and maintain those tools. Where this occurs, social studies teachers and learners cannot utilize these tools for a longer time. For example, a computer system donated to a school by parents association, government and individuals in the community later developed a problem and where they are not repaired or changed due to lack of fund for it maintenance will no longer be used by the teachers and students in their learning.

- **Epileptic Network:** According to Sandra (2020), the network problem in Nigeria has affected various institutions in Nigeria. Also, where available, internet connectivity has been very costly and the network is not too sturdy (strong) to be used. Thus, as most secondary schools have experienced epileptic network supply it makes the utilization of ICT more complex and discouraging. This explains why most social studies teachers are

Measures for Effective Utilization of ICT in the Teaching and Learning of Social Studies in Junior Secondary School in Nigeria

The paper presents measures that can improve the utilization of ICT in the teaching and learning of social studies in secondary schools. Hence, the measures include the following:

- **Training and professional Development of Teachers:** professional training is ideal for social studies teachers to measure up the challenges of 21st century inventions. Regrettably, many social studies teachers cannot handle ICT tools effectively, it affects utilization, hence are advised to engage in any professional training and development opportunities that are provided which may be an in-service and pre-service training to enable him/her to Utilize ICT tools in the teaching of social studies.
- **Ensuring Sustainability of ICT Tools:** To enable the utilization of ICT in social studies, there is need to sustain the available ICT tools, and this can be sustained through appropriate funding as well as ensuring effective maintenance culture of the gadgets. Failure to sustain it through maintenance, may lead to lose of ICT tools. Funding has been one of the statutory function of government, therefore, should allocate funds to sustain the maintenance, usage and sustainability of ICT tools to enable social studies teachers and learners to access them at any giving time.
- **Provision of Efficient and Steady Power Supply:** The imperative for the need of

power supply to run ICT devices cannot be overemphasized. This is because regular power supply through any available means can improve the efficacy and efficiency of the ICT tools, because it can take energy through electrical or power supply. However, regular and steady supply of electricity in Nigerian schools will promote technological amalgamation and improvement in the teaching and learning of social studies education in Nigeria.

- **Internet accessibility/connectivity:** For social studies teachers and learners to utilize ICT tools effectively, the schools should be located in places where internet network or connectivity would not be a major problem. Improvement in internet accessibility or connectivity will boost social studies learners to improve in their efforts to access information or data despite their location. Poor access to internet has been a challenge to social studies teachers and learners to enable them access information through video app and any platform that requires internet connection. When this problem is resolved through government, NGOs, community and schools effort, students of Social studies in the junior secondary school will begin to appreciate the role of ICT towards their enhancement.

Conclusion

Information and communication technology have modified teaching and learning processes. The fact remains that these ICT tools have not been well utilized by social studies teachers as well as learners. To achieve effective utilization of ICT tools in social studies teaching and learning, teachers as well as learners, individual's education policy makers, government and concerned stakeholders should do the needful to support ICT by providing funding, maintenance and training of staffs to meet up with current realities. Again, all the measures given should be given serious attention especially in the professional

development of teachers, steady or regular power supply, and internet accessibility amongst others. With this, ICT tools such as computer, laptop, internet, projector and other ICT facilities can now be utilized in the teaching and learning of social Studies.

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