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ASSESSMENT OF UTILIZATION OF INTERNET FACILITIES BY BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN EDO AND DELTA STATES

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Abstract

The paper the utilization of internet facilities by business educators in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States. The population for study was made up one hundred and twenty six lecturers in Business Education in the six Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States. Out of which sixty were randomly sampled. The instrument for the study was the questionnaires. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and t-test. The paper concludes that utilizing the potential for the internet in business education will help to make schools more productive and efficient than they currently are, and transform teaching and learning into active process connected to real life. The paper recommends that business educators should constantly engage in training and retraining programs to update and increase their information technology knowledge and competencies to effectively utilize the resources on student learning.

Keywords: *Assessment, internet, business educators, Colleges of Education, Edo and Delta*

INTRODUCTION

The explosion of the internet in the 1990s, the emergence of a variety of low-cost computing devices and increased diffusion of computers throughout society ushered in a wave of education policies and projects in developing economies around the world designed to prepare students to effectively engage in the information age. Business educators have always accepted that change is a fact of life. From the typewriter to the transitor, 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 customers. These changes present challenges for both the learner and the instructor. However, it is the business educators that must be willing to adapt and manage these challenges to ensure successful programs for the future. (Roderick 2013)

The internet is the most recent and fastest growing part of the age of information technology. The inception of the internet actually began over 25 years ago as a United States defense department project. The internet is now a global computer network that allows millions of computers around the world to communicate through the telephone system and other communication lines. The internet is also referred to as web and the digital information superhighway (Roderick 2013), it was the invention of the world wide web by Tim Berners-lee and the lifting of the ban on commercialization that sparked such incredible growth of the internet. Two key features of the internet are, the enormous amount of information it contains and the speed at which this information can be accessed and published.

The impact of the internet is felt everywhere in society and it has become an everyday household term. Currently over 100 million people in 150 countries around

The world are using the internet (Roderick, 2013). The web may be the fastest growing internet while e-mail is the most widely used. The modern day use of the internet acts as a communication tool to provide the function of on line interaction and collaboration. Education from internet is very convenience, it promotes asynchronous learning when properly done with very low marginal cost, very good for automated types of tasks where it might be expensive to pay teachers to simply cover the same repetitive lesson over and over again (Goolsbee, 2000). The internet adds a new dimension to the curriculum that provides students the opportunities to engage in more challenging and life-like activities. The secretary of education, Richard Riley of Alton crews middle school states "the internet is the blackboard of the future and the future is here and now". Using the internet requires one to improve upon a number of skills including verbal, written, critical thinking, computer and telecommunications. The internet makes learning active, exciting and fun. Because business education Curriculum is driven by standards for and about business, teaching and using internet fit perfectly into many areas of the business curriculum.

E-mail which is a component of the internet far out-weights the usefulness and efficiency of the post office even phone conversation. Yet, e-mail is the choice of communication for more and more people (Roderick 2013) E-mail can be sent any time of the day and arrives within minutes to the desired party's mail box. E-mail computer does not need to be on to receive the message. Many students who have used e-mail to communicate with their teachers find it extremely resourceful and a wonderful way to stay in touch with their teacher when otherwise it would be difficult. It is obvious that internet e-mail can and does strengthen the bridge of communication between the educational team of teacher, parent and student.

World Wide Web as another component of the internet is a set of software tools and standards that allows users to obtain and distribute information stored on a server and connected to internet. World Wide Web (www) is a decentralized information system, in which anyone can add new information whenever he/she wants. Lecture notes and other teaching materials are placed on the World Wide Web and linking useful websites to these resources for students to access. In recent years, web and internet technologies have matured significantly by providing a uniform access media for both asynchronous and synchronous learning.

This phenomenon has significantly increased the popularity of online learning (Chen 2004). The usage of web technologies in e-learning are further enhanced with the web 2.0, which is a set of economic, social and technological trends that facilitate a more socially connected web where everyone is able to add to and edit the information space (Anderson, 2007).

Business Educators are faced with challenges of utilizing internet facilities in their lessons. The facilities are very expensive to procure. Schools have a limited amount of funds that they dedicate to internet facilities. Again, schools and organizations often do not realize a security risk is present or if they do, they may not think it is pressing. Without properly secured data, systems may be compromised and security crises can ensure. Users of internet facilities must put in the effort to prevent security failures. This entails password security for all internet devices, applications, and networks. Virus and spyware exposure are huge threats and can significantly damage technology.

Added to the above, Business Educators often continue to use machines and operating systems for years in order to save money. These outdated programs and devices damage productivity and repairs can be very expensive. Many administrators and school management rely on technically capable employees and their peers who are good with computer or technical support helplines and electronics stores to provide advice and assistance. While this may seem cheaper on the surface, it is more cost-effective to develop partnerships with trusted qualified technology experts for advice and assistance.

Statement of the Problem

The new global economy created by technological change with internet has serious implications on the nature and purpose of educational institutions. Internet facilities are powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform processes. The extent to which this has helped both access to education and the quality of that education in Nigeria requires determination.

The educational effectiveness of internet facilities depends on their use and purpose. Haddad and Brexter (2002) identified a number of levels of technology use in education and how they can address varying business education challenges. But how have these facilities been employed in expanding access to and raising quality of education (Business Education) inclusive in the six colleges of education in Edo and Delta States?

Purpose of Study

The major purpose of this study is to examine the roles of internet facilities in Business Education Programmes. The study specifically intends to:

1. Determine the internet facilities utilized in Business Education Programmes.
2. Determine the internet challenges in the use of Business Educators.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed for the study.

1. What is the extent of utilization of internet facilities in Business Education Programmes in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States?
2. What are the challenges faced by Business educators in the use of internet facilities in Business Education Programmes Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been developed for the study.

1. Business Educators do not differ significantly with extent of using internet facilities.
2. Business Educators do not differ significantly in the challenges faced in using internet facilities.

Method

Survey design was used to gather information from lecturers in Business Education Programmes regarding the extent of utilization of internet facilities in

Business Education Programmes. The population of this is made up of lecturers in the six Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta State. Sixty (60) was used having sampled. A four point rating scale questionnaires were developed by the researchers as instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by a Chief Lecturer in Business Education department, Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, and a reader in College of Education, Ekiadolor, Benin City Edo State. The questionnaires were personally administered on the lecturers and they were retrieved after one week. The results was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Any response from 2.50 is accepted while any response below 2.50 is not accepted.

Analysis of Data

Research Question 1

The extent of utilization of internet facilities in Business Education Programms.

Table 1:

Mean, standard deviation and the test of the extent of utilization of internet facilities in Business Education Programmes.

| S/N | Item statement | Always utilized | Almost Utilized | Sometime Utilized | Never Utilized | X | SD | Decision |
|-----|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| 1. | Searching and generating materials for student learning | 30 | 28 | 2 | - | 3.46 | 0.56 | Accepted |
| 2. | Electronic mails for student learning | 18 | 22 | - | - | 3.63 | 10.48 | Accepted |
| 3. | downloading information through world wide web (www) | 31 | 20 | 9 | - | 3.36 | 0.73 | Accepted |
| 4. | Facilitates teacher use of computer software like ms-word, spreadsheet in teaching and learning | 31 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 3.31 | 0.85 | Accepted |
| 5. | Use of video, tape for searching information | 10 | 12 | 10 | 28 | 2.06 | 1.16 | Not Accepted |
| 6. | Use of telex / teleconferencing for information | 20 | 10 | - | 30 | 2.33 | 1.38 | Not Accepted |
| 7. | Exams through electronic means | - | - | 28 | 32 | 1.46 | 0.50 | Not Accepted |
| 8. | Tutorial exercises on a computer rather than classroom | - | - | 38 | 22 | 1.63 | 0.48 | Not Accepted |
| 9. | On-line scoring of students | - | - | 29 | 31 | 1.45 | 0.50 | Not Accepted |
| 10. | Encourages teacher to give on line assignment (e-mail) | - | - | 21 | 39 | 1.35 | 0.48 | Not Accepted |
| | Grand Mean | | | | | 24.04 | 17.12 | |

Data in table 1 reveals that Business educators utilizes internet facilities in items 1-4 as they were accepted by the respondents while in item 5-10 they do not utilized internet facilities as the respondents did not accept the items.

Research Question 2

What are the problems faced by business Educators in the use of internet facilities in business education programs;

Table 2:

Mean, standard deviation and t-test of the problems faced by Business Educators in the use of internet facilities in Business Education Programs.

| S/N | Item statement | SA | A | D | SD | \bar{X} | SD | Decision |
|-----|--|----|----|----|----|-----------|------|--------------|
| 11. | Lack of requisite skills in internet facilities | 31 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 3.31 | 0.85 | Accepted |
| 12. | Lack of fund to procure necessary technology for internet | 22 | 25 | 8 | 5 | 3.0 | 0.91 | Accepted |
| 13. | None availability of internet connectivity | 38 | 22 | - | - | 3.63 | 0.48 | Accepted |
| 14. | Lack of requisite internet infrastructure and ICT tools | 34 | 26 | - | - | 3.56 | 0.49 | Accepted |
| 15. | Teachers inability to adapt to constant changes | 36 | 22 | 1 | 1 | 3.55 | 0.62 | Accepted |
| 16. | Unreliable power supply to facilitate the use of internet | 38 | 28 | 1 | 1 | 3.45 | 0.62 | Accepted |
| 17. | High cost of training and retraining business teachers in use of internet. | 10 | 10 | 20 | 20 | 2.16 | 1.07 | Not Accepted |
| 18. | Lack of requisite skills to access information online | 33 | 27 | - | - | 3.55 | 0.50 | Accepted |
| 19. | Inadequate time to prepare the teacher for internet usage | 31 | 20 | 9 | - | 3.36 | 0.73 | Accepted |
| 20. | Lack of interest by Business Educators in internet | 32 | 26 | 2 | - | 3.5 | 0.56 | Accepted |

In table 2, the respondents accepted all the questionnaire items except item 17 that all the problems raised in the questionnaires are actually facing business educators in the use of internet facilities in business education programs.

T-test Analysis

| Items | N | \bar{Y} | Sd | Df | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|--------|----|-----------|-------|----|-------|--------|----------|
| Male | 32 | 33.68 | 0.681 | 58 | 1.49 | 2.00 | Accepted |
| Female | 28 | 33.07 | 0.683 | | | | |

The result of the hypotheses reveals that t-calculated is 1.49 is less than t-critical of 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance therefore the hypotheses is upheld.

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study reveal that Business Educators in Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States seldomly utilized internet facilities in teaching Business Education courses as they accepted items 1-4 in table 1 but items 5-10 were never accepted as being utilized.

Business Educators are faced with a lot of challenges of utilizing internet facilities in their lessons ranging from materials expensive to procure, inability to realize that a security risk is present, usage of machines and operating systems for years in order to save money, putting trust on qualified technology experts for advice and assistance. All these are in agreement with Thonburg (2000).

Conclusion

Using the internet in teaching business courses by business educators will go a long way in improving the technology of the students as the world is technologically globalized. Exploring and realizing the potentials for the internet will help make schools more productive and efficient than they are currently are, transform teaching and learning into an engaging and active process connected to real life, and prepare the current generation of young people for the future workplace may be a key determinant of the future success or failure of business educators.

Recommendations

The paper recommends the following:

1. Business Educators should constantly engage in training and retraining programs to update and increase their information technology knowledge and competencies to effectively utilize the resources on student learning.
2. Governments at all levels should endeavour to increase funding for the education sector to enhance procurement of internet facilities for effective educational activities.
3. The regulatory body for Colleges of Education that is National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should ensure an enabling environment and adequate capacity building for effective internet utilization.
4. Professional organizations and government agencies should try as much as possible to organize seminars and conferences to update and increase lecturer's and student's internet knowledge and competencies.
5. Pedagogical, technical and cost issues should be taken into consideration for each specific technology via internet in teaching and learning practices.

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