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**Global Challenges for Education: Politics, Policies and Progress**



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**UTILISATION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN PROMOTION OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION AMONG PRINCIPALS AND SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

Like education, technological advancement in every society translates to the all-round advancement of its life. Modern technologies have made things including poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers easier. Against the above background, the study determined the extent of utilization of modern technologies in the poverty alleviation of principals and social studies teachers in Delta State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 847 comprising 297 principals and 550 social studies teachers in Delta State. A sample of 613 comprising 242 principals and 371 social studies teachers (SST) was utilized. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The researcher found out that social studies teachers and principals agreed to the fact that UBELS' principals do not make use of modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools. Based on the findings, recommendations were made including that seminars should be organized basically on how to surf/ browse the internet for better ways of promoting poverty alleviation, workshop on the use and navigation of such modern devices as android/apple phones, electronic pad/tablets, laptops, printers, and photocopying machines should be regularly organized for principals and teachers in general.

**Keywords:**  
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### Introduction

With the economic situation of Nigeria in contemporary times, poverty alleviation has become a very important act. Individuals, government, government agencies and corporate organizations engage in poverty alleviation activities. Most times, it is in the form of giving out food or cash palliatives, creating employment opportunities, skills acquisition and small and medium scale (SMEs) business startups in form of encouraging entrepreneurship (Mezieobi&Mezieobi, 2018). Every avenue can be explored in the promotion of poverty alleviation in Nigeria, including the use of modern technologies. In the exploration of the use of modern technologies for the promotion of poverty alleviation, education is vehemently considered. The secondary schools' principals and upper basic education level schools' social studies teachers (JSS 1-3 social studies teachers) are also considered because of the roles they play in molding the future of Nigeria through moral and values development of the students. In contemporary times and in the globalised world, education has been adjudged the key with which to permanently lock/close the doors of poverty and ignorance; and simultaneously open that of prosperity in terms of economic buoyancy, social advancement and civilization. It runs on three separate tiers, also refer to as levels. The three levels of education in Nigeria are lower basic education level schools and middle basic education level schools (primary 1-3, 4-6), upper basic education level schools (JSS 1-3) and senior secondary schools and tertiary education (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education). Each of these levels has specific functions to perform in the development of both individuals and the nation, with basic responsible for preparing the children for other levels.

The term basic education (at all levels) including upper basic education has over the years been a topic of controversy, as there seems to be no consensus on what connotes basic education throughout the world. There is no general agreement on what makes up basic education. To some people it begins and end with the first six years of formal schooling, while some argue that, it stretches across six years of primary and the first three years of secondary school (upper basic education). Others believe that basic education involves all the activities geared towards the acquisition of basic knowledge, whether formally or informally (Mezieobi & Elom, 2017). No matter how it is perceived, all are right. So long as it revolves within the acquisition of basic knowledge for life activities. Strengthening the above, Nhung (2012), opined that each country interpreted the term in different ways and that led to the 2011 world revision on basic education, where a discussion paper was issued to seek clarification on the concept. However, it is noteworthy, that in spite of the said challenges in conceptualizing basic education, there are some authors, organizations/bodies that have done noble by putting together what basic education should represent in the real sense. It is a whole range of educational activities taking place in various settings that aim to meet basic learning needs as defined in the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, in Ozoagu, 2015). For more clarifications, UNESCO (2019), reiterates thus, basic education comprises primary education (first stage of basic education) and lower secondary education (second stage). It also covers a wide variety of non-formal and informal public and private activities intended to meet the basic learning needs of people of all ages. Similarly, International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, 2014), posits that basic education comprises two stages primary education and lower secondary education. National Bureau of Statistics (2010), asserts that education at this level strengthens the learner's feet to climb the educational ladder to the zenith of academic, if a solid foundation is laid. It is also referred to as educational activities designed for people to acquire necessary knowledge and skills to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in



development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning (UNESCO, 2020).” Universal Basic Education in Nigeria - Centre for Public Impact (2017), noted that before 1976 when the Universal Primary Education Program was published, education policy was still largely shaped by the colonial policy of the British. This program was said to have interfaced with many difficulties and was subsequently revised in 1981 and 1990 accordingly. According to Okpala (2017), The launching of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program was the Federal Government effort to salvage the primary education system which is the foundation stone of other educational levels and in fact, the corner stone of national development. On his own, Fafunwa in Nhung (2012) maintained that the Universal Basic Education covers non-literate Nigerians who make up 45% of our population in addition to all children of school age which represents another 20% of the population making a total of about 65% of Nigerian’s population (Mezieobi et al, 2018). For the above reason, He opted that 65% of education budget should be allocated to this level of education. Any system that neglects secondary education, which is the very foundation of the entire education system, will not have good tertiary education and neither its economy, nor its people will progress and as a result, poverty, ignorance and disease will envelop the people (Fafunwa, 1992). Basic education is more than an end in itself. It is the foundation for lifelong learning and human development on which countries may build systematically, further levels and types of education and training (UNESCO, 2019). Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC, 2012), refers to it as early childhood care and education. The scheme covers a 9-year formal schooling, adult literacy and non-formal education, skill acquisition programs, and the education of special groups such as nomads and migrants, girl-child and women, *Al-majiri*, street children and disabled people (Aderinoye cited in Mezieobi, 2020). It is therefore, regarded as free, compulsory and the right of every child. Basic Education being accorded too much importance based on the place it occupies in both individual and national lives should be made more relevant and responsive to the contemporary issues through not just inclusion but the world changing technologies.

Technology can be defined as science applied to practical purposes (Trakhtenberg et al, 2021)). According to TechQuintial (2023) Modern technology is the advancement of old technology with new additions and modifications. For example, it is impossible for the people in this decade to live with a wired telephone placed on the table. So, the mobile phone which can be taken with us anywhere is the perfect example of technological advancement or simply, modern technology. Any machine or device we see around us is the product of technological advancement. Modern technology makes things way easier than we could ever imagine (Finkel, 2013) including promoting poverty alleviation. It is all about doing things in a much quicker and efficient way by improving the workflow. Brill & Galloway (2017) posits, either it is helping humans or doing the task alone, machines/systems are always better in terms of accuracy and efficiency. It is on the count of the above development that Lortie (2020) states thus;“the emergence of modern technology has generated an expectation that all education institutions will have a virtual as well as a physical location, where students can access necessary information and acquire knowledge, teachers teach using latest approaches and leaders lead with new and acceptable ideas”. It is said to have impacted every area of our lives and become a crucial factor in our time. It may even get to a point where everything we use in our daily life is directly or indirectly related to the technological advancement of some sort (Trakhtenberg et al, 2021) reiterate. Today, technology has the ability of facilitating the education and learning process. Arvidhan (2019) opined that the digital media penetration in the education sector has now increased and such exposure (he



continued) has culminated into teacher/students-interactions throughout the clock via numerous channels accessible for various types of assignments or assistance. When digital technology increases, more apps are accessible that help the system to grow, Arvindhan (2019) stated further. TechQuintial (2023) also views Information technology as knowledge process and its applying methods, processing, transferring and making information in progress which also includes gathering, organizing, storing, publishing and using information in the form of sound, picture graphic, text, number, by using the computer and telecommunication tolls. Tinio (2013) asserts that this form of technology has impacted education tremendously in terms of acquisition and absorption of knowledge/ideas not just to teachers and students but also the school administrators. Supportively, Brill & Galloway (2017) opine that in education, the role of technology is fourfold: it is included as part of the curriculum, as a delivery system for instructional purposes and also as a managerial instrument. Lortie (2020) observes that the most notable use of modern technology is that it no longer limits activities time to the traditional four walls of the classroom/office, achieving true leadership now lingers between home and school and also alleviating poverty among the schools' management and teachers is paramount. However, Gressard and Loyd in Arvindhan (2019) found that teachers and school administrators do not always have positive views about technology and further warned that their negative attitudes will contribute to computer-based tasks both in teaching-learning, school administration and the promoting of entrepreneurship for poverty alleviation becoming ineffective. It is very clear in Nigeria that the politics and human nature has been characterized by ethnicity and tribalism which hampered the human development (Ossai & Mezieobi, 2023). This has slowed down the promotion of poverty alleviation among secondary schools' principals and social studies teachers.

Mezieobi (2016) posits that social studies as a discrete subject in schools is essential for effective living in every environment and society including Nigeria. According to Osakwe (2013), social studies is a course of study that studied human beings in various capacity of his interaction with his fellow counterparts. Social studies is a programme of study which a society uses to instill in students or learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions it considers important in the relationships human beings have with each other, their world and themselves (Mezieobi et al, 2013). Furthermore, the relative newness of social studies in Nigeria in general and in Nigerian schools in particular, coupled with varieties of persons, professional social studies educators and non-professionals or generalist social studies personnel who are associated with social studies have led to an overdose of social studies definitions (Mezieobi et al, 2018). The all-encompassing definition of social studies is as an integrated field of study which probes man's symbiotic relationships with his environments, endows man with the reflective or contemplative capacities, intellectual, effective, 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 (Mezieobi et al, 2018). On the same note, social studies teachers are the individuals employed to teach social studies as a subject in secondary schools. They are trained in colleges of education or universities in the discipline of social studies. Therefore, they are social studies professionals (social studies educationists). Also, some secondary schools engage the services of individuals that are not social studies professionals to teach social studies maybe, due to the unavailability of professional social studies teachers or lack of funds to pay salaries of more teachers. Teachers that are professionals in economics, sociology and other social science subjects are engaged to teach social studies in some secondary schools. Individuals in this category are referred to as social studies educators (Mezieobi, 2016).



Secondary schools' principals are individuals saddled with the responsibilities of managing the affairs and administering the activities of secondary schools. They give instructions and ensure that the vision and mission of the secondary schools are implemented and achieved.

In Nigeria, poverty and poverty alleviation scenario are very pathetic cases. Poverty and poverty alleviation connect together as the latter necessitates the former. Poverty is not confined to a section of the Nigerian society. From North to South, East to West, many people are in shackles and are ravaged by hunger, unemployment, destructive epileptic electricity supply (where they are available), infected drinking water in the midst of abundance. Nigerians suffer from untarred roads, deadly drum-holes, uncleared drainage system, irregular educational system, corrupt public service, non-functional hospitals, diseases, insecurity and recently unguarded faceless and inhuman deregulation policies of the federal government (Oviasuyi, 2023). It is perceived as a surprise that Nigeria is rated number 16<sup>th</sup> out of 178 in the Failed States Index 2013, placed in 153<sup>rd</sup> out of 187 in Human Development Index 2013 as revealed by the United Nations Development Programme in 2013 (UNDP, 2013). Wutofeh (2021) has pinpointed that poverty alleviation aims to improve the quality of life for those people currently living in poverty. Another term that is often used is poverty reduction. These are all measures put in place to reduce the rate of poverty in Nigeria and other parts of the world. These are some of the many inventions that are improving conditions for living in the urban and rural areas of Nigeria. According to Mubangizi (2019), poverty alleviation is one of the means of eradicating poverty and establishing ideal sustainable livelihoods. Since most poverty alleviation programmes are delivered within the public service institutional set up, the pursuit for sustainable livelihoods can only be realized if the public service delivery system is sustainable.

The importance of promoting poverty alleviation among secondary schools' principals and social studies teachers cannot be overemphasized. Every available tool including modern technologies can be explored in the quest in ensuring that secondary schools' principals, social studies teachers in particular and teachers in general do not live in poverty. Therefore, this study assessed utilization of modern technologies in promotion of poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers in Delta State.

#### Statement of problem

Poverty has become a nightmare to so many families and its members. Principals and social studies teachers are no exceptions. Due to the situations of remuneration of secondary schools' principals and teachers, they do not carry out their duties effectively and efficiently because they try to engage themselves in other activities that may earn them more money apart from salaries. In developed societies, administrative offices of principals and staff offices for teachers look and operate significantly different from what it used to be in the past two decades. Gone are the days of cumbersome paper work. Even the solitary desktop computer usually at the office tables is no longer acceptable in the world around us. The 21st Century office houses various advanced technologies from Interactive Flat Panel Displays (IFPDs), to tablets, laptops and smartphones, all seamlessly connected by Wi-Fi or Bluetooth and supported by a range of software from cloud-based to apps. In the western-world, school administration has gone digital. you hardly go physical with official assignments even at secondary school level, such things as result/ testimonial or transcripts dispatch/collections are done through mail and fax. However, it is very surprising and disturbing that in Nigeria today, offices especially those of principals and teachers still look like a deserted shrine with files and paper documents littered everywhere, even when there is the presence of technology. It is usually the antiquated desktop without internet





connection, which is usually abandoned in most cases either for lack of maintenance or that it has expired and can no longer serve. The worse of it is that most principals who have access to some of the technologies required for effective and efficient school administration in the contemporary times do not have the technical knowhow about them and by extension, lack interest in their applications. Even though, modern technology has made it lot more easier for people to carryout complex activities in a very less stressful manner, administrative tasks of the Nigerian head teachers such as payments confirmation, issuance of testimonial and certificates, organization of meetings, coordination etc., still appear very difficult and cumbersome, given the fact that they still chase after it the orthodox way. It can be highly frustrating when what could have been achieved within seconds/minutes through just a click on the systems' button or allied gadgets takes more time. It is also possible for principals and social studies teachers to take advantage of the availability of computers and internet services in their schools to learn more about ICT, enrich their knowledge of ICT and explore other entrepreneurial skills related to ICT. This will get them more engage and may fetch them more money for survival. The above, informs the decision of the researcher to examine the place of modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers in upper basic education level schools in Delta State.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The general purpose of this study was to examine utilization of modern technology in promotion of poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers in upper basic education level schools.

Specifically, the study examined the:

1. Extent to which principals and social studies teachers utilize modern technologies in promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools.

#### **Research Question**

1. What is the extent of utilization of modern technologies in promotion of poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers in upper basic education level schools?

#### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals (P) and Social Studies Teachers (SST) on the extent of utilization of modern technology in promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools.

#### **Methodology**

The study employed descriptive research design of the survey type. It was conducted in Delta State. Delta state has over 1,208 secondary schools. The population of the study is 5,616 comprising 2,416 secondary schools' principals and 3,200 social studies teachers in Delta State (Statistics Unit, Delta State Ministry of Education, 2023). A sample of 613 comprising 242 principals (P) and 371 Social Studies Teachers (SST) was utilized. The said sample was arrived





at, through simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling by balloting was used to select one education zone in each of the three senatorial districts of Delta State; comprising Delta Central, Delta North and Delta South respectively. In the second stage random sampling was used to draw 80 secondary schools in each of the selected zones. In the last stage, all the principals totaling about 242 and 2 social studies teachers each from the sampled schools numbering 371 were used. A ten-items questionnaire, titled Modern Technologies and Poverty Alleviation Questionnaire (MTPAQ) and developed by the researcher was used to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts (two from the Social Studies Unit of the Department of Social Science Education and the other from Measurement & Evaluation unit of the Department of Educational Foundations), with respect to appropriateness and relevance. A pilot study was carried out using 40 respondents, made of 20 principals and 20 Social Studies Teachers. To determine the reliability coefficient, Cronbach Alpha testing estimate was adopted and a coefficient of 0.86 was obtained and considered adequate. In conjunction with three well-briefed research assistants, the researcher administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Out of 613 copies distributed, only 585 which represents 94% were returned. Therefore, data analysis was based on the number of copies returned and not distributed. To answer the research question, a modified four point likert scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (VE), Little Extent (LE) and Very Little Extent (VLE) was adopted. This was considered appropriate because values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 were assigned to the scale respectively. The hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics.

**Results**

**Table 1: Utilization of Modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation in Upper Basic Education Level Schools by Principals in Delta State**

Principals utilize modern technology to perform the following poverty alleviation functions in upper basic education level schools.							
S/NO	ITEMS	X1	X2	X1+X2	X̄	Decision	
1	Students pay for online registration	1.7	1.8	3.5	1.75	LE	
2	Staff/students pay for biometrics (data capturing)	1.6	1.9	3.5	3.75	LE	
3	Payment for Remittance of fees collected (e-banking)	1.4	1.5	2.9	1.45	LE	
4	Charge for Organizing virtual conferences		1.6	1.8	3.4	1.7	LE
5	Staff/students are encouraged to do e-marketing		1.5	1.7	3.2	1.6	LE
6	Entrepreneurship mentality is inculcated in students	3.3	3.4	6.7	3.35	GE	
7	Students are taught marketing through zoom meetings	2.3	1.7	4	2.0	LE	
8	Students are encouraged to practice their skills		1.6	1.8	3.4	1.7	LE
<b>Grand mean</b>				<b>1.91</b>	<b>LE</b>		





Table 1 above presents the mean ratings of social studies teachers and upper basic education level schools' principals on the utilization of modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation of principals and social studies teachers in upper basic education level schools in Delta State. The analysis revealed that both social studies teachers and principals agreed to the fact that UBELS' principals do not make use of modern technologies in the promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools in Delta State, since all the posed items except item no. 6, scored means below the 2.50 which is the benchmark.

Table 2: t-test analysis of respondents in the mean ratings of social studies teachers and principals on the extent of principals' utilization of modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation among principals and social studies teachers in upper basic education level schools in Delta State

Category	N	$\bar{x}$	df	LS	$t_{cal}$	$t_{crit(0.05)}$	Decision
Social Studies Teachers	358	1.3	9	.086	.0160	.196	Not Rejected
Principals	227	1.5					

From table 2 above, it could be observed that a calculated t-value of 0.0160 at 9<sup>o</sup> of freedom at .05 level of significance. Since this calculated value of .160 is less than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected. This imply that there is no significance difference in the mean ratings of Social Studies Teachers and Principals on the utilization of modern technologies by principals in the promotion of poverty alleviation of upper basic education level schools in Delta State.

**Discussion**

From the results in table 1 above, it could be seen that upper basic education level schools' principals do not utilize modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation of upper basic education level schools in Delta State. This because, both Social Studies Teachers and Principals whose overall score fell below the benchmark of 2.50, responded to a very low extent on the subject matter. For further clarity, out of the eight item numbers, it was just one which is item no. 6 (Entrepreneurship mentality is inculcated in students) that scored great extent, while other ones (items no. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 8) scored low extent. This finding clearly reveals that Nigerian principals are still very far with respect to utilization of modern technology in the promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools in Delta State and further affirms the view of Gressard and Loyd (2019) when they noted that, teachers and school administrators do not always have positive views about technology and further warned that their negative attitudes will contribute to computer based tasks both in teaching-learning and school administration becoming ineffective. Also, the above finding agrees with Ozumba (2013) who asserts thus; the problem of humanity despite the technological, scientific and economic development has remained leadership. This is because, if all the principals in the secondary schools had keenly developed interest in and committed to the use of modern technologies in their discharge administrative functions including the promotion of poverty alleviation, a lot



could have changed in the school system and school administration could have become more interesting both to the administrators and the administered. Also, the t-test analyses on table 2 showed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of social studies teachers and principals on the extent to which principals utilize modern technology in promotion of poverty alleviation in upper basic education level schools in Delta state. It shows that the calculated t-value is .160 at 9 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance. Since this calculated value of .160 is less than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

Contemporary education encourages the utilization of technologies in all its activities. It further encourages the knowledge of technology by all its stakeholders including principals and social studies teachers. There is a constant development of new technologies going on in the world now. It is believed that a handful of these innovations are deemed to have the true potentials to revolutionize the way we do things in Nigeria in particular and the world. Education is one of the oldest fields that continue to be present even today and has time and times again come to make use of new technologies to streamline and improve its core concept. Modern technologies make for efficient and effective management. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of Social Studies Teachers and Principals on the utilization of modern technologies by principals in the promotion of poverty alleviation of upper basic education level schools in Delta State.

Based on the conclusion of this study, it was recommended that:

1. The government and schools' managements should organize seminars basically on how to surf/ browse the internet for better ways of promoting poverty alleviation in Delta State;
2. Workshop on the use and navigation of such modern devices as android/apple phones, electronic pad/tablets, laptops, printers, and photocopying machines should be regularly organized for principals and teachers in general in Delta State by the state government;
3. Operational skills on modern technologies be made a criterion for the appointment of principals and
4. Principals should be given autonomy in handling the finances of their schools by the Delta state government.

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