



INTEGRATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY: KEY FOR FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

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Abstract

Business education has been recognized to play an important role not just in the production of business teachers but also in the production of workers who have the requisite skills needed to occupy various positions in the work place. These skills are updated from time to time in order to meet up with the demand of business and industry. The emergence of new technologies has made the work of office workers more sophisticated. To meet up with these present technological challenges, there is therefore need for effective integration of these new technologies in business education instructional delivery. When this is done, learners will be equipped with functional skills that will enable them face the challenges of the digital era. The paper dealt on the integration of new technologies in business education instructional delivery as key for functional skills in business education. It x-rayed concepts such as technology, new technology, technology integration, business education, instructional delivery and skill. The paper also highlighted the impact of new technologies in business education instructional delivery among which is integrating new technologies in business education instructional delivery will help produce business education graduates who are confident, effective, independent and equipped to face the challenges of the work place of today rather than producing business education graduates who are not abreast with current technological changes. Factors that will enhance effective integration of new technologies in business education instructional delivery were discussed. The paper concluded that achievement of the objective of any educational programme can be determined by the way instruction is delivered to the recipients of such programme. To these, it requires that implementers of business education adopt appropriate techniques, materials and machines that will enable the learners understand what is being taught. The paper recommended among others that new technological facilities should be made available to institutions and departments offering business education by the authorities concerned.

Keywords: Technology, new technology, technology integration, business education, instruction delivery, skill.



Introduction

Business education is known as education or training system that encourages the beneficiary to acquire skills that fit into the world of work. One of its characteristics is to update skills of the workforce. If this is true, business education should prepare its recipients in such a way that they can fit into the kind of work which presently exists. Observation has shown that the traditional method is now being replaced by new and emerging technologies. The era of typing with the typewriter and duplicate with the duplicating machine had faded away and is now replaced by word processors, computers and reprographic machines.

Today, the whole world is coming to terms with the invasion and intrusion of information technology. Almost all formal and organized offices have in recent times witnessed changes in their areas of operation because of the emergence of new technologies. The majority of jobs of the secretaries and accountants have become more sophisticated than they were. This was why Azih (2011) affirmed that the revision of the programme is enhanced by the fact that the knowledge, attitude and skills previously acquired in the course of the study were inadequate to equip the graduates with the competencies needed to adjust to the rapidly changing needs of the office. Therefore, for graduates of business education to be relevant in this era and also adapt to the workplace of now, the need to fully integrate new technologies in business education instructional delivery becomes imperative. Since business education trains and retrains workers to fit in with changes in technology, the need to effectively implement its information and communication technology (ICT) programme becomes a thing of concern.

Business today has become highly competitive and for any business to survive, it has to queue into what is presently obtainable. Emergence of new technologies has ushered in changes cutting across all human spheres and boundaries. As a result of these, business education has to rise to this challenge by making sure that these new technologies are effectively integrated in the teaching and learning of business education courses which will lead to proper preparation and graduation of skilled individuals who can function effectively in the present technological driven economy.

Technology

Technology is the practical use and application of science in a knowledgeable way to make life pleasant. Bryant (2015) defined technology as a broad concept that has come to refer to breakthrough in science that allows for a better or automated solution.

According to Ezenwafor and Okeke in Njoku, Dikeocha and Onwuagboke (2020) technology is the process by which machines and equipment are introduced in the work place to facilitate administrative processes. Buttressing more on the meaning of technology, Odesanya, Maikano, Mohammed and Uche (2014) noted that it is an aspect of managing and processing information through the use of electronic computers and computer software to convert, store, protect, process, transit and retrieved information. Technology simply involves the use of electronic and communication equipment such as telephone, computers, fax, digital cameras, audio, video, DVDs and other hard and software in service delivery.

New Technologies

New technologies are automated gadgets or computerized machines that radically change the way something is performed or work is done. They provide methods different from what is previously used. The methods provided by these computerized machines offers significant improvement in production and performance.

According to Timya, Moris and Bewaran (2019), new technologies imply new exploration and application of concepts, principles and processes for the improvement of human life. They are set of



productive technique which offer a significant improvement over the established “technology” for a given process in a specific historical context (Olayanju, 2016). New technologies consist of computers, scanners, power point, software, internet facilities, slide projectors, mobile/cellular phones, reprographics interactive whiteboard, electronic board, overhead projector, CD Rom and video diskette.

Ezenwafor in Ile, Udegbonam, Odimegwa (2015) listed the following as new technologies in teaching business education:

- a. Using broadcast materials or CD Rom for information collection and storage.
- b. Using micro-computers with software applications to write or produce documents.
- c. Skillful keyboarding
- d. E-mail and messaging
- e. Internet browsing using search engine, windows messenger, yahoo chatroom and so on.
- f. Using opaque projectors, slide projectors and multimedia projectors.
- g. Utilizing e-banking, e-commerce, e-economics and so on and
- h. Utilizing different computer software and applications such as word processors, spreadsheets, power-point, desktop publishing and graphics among others.

Technology Integration

Integration which can otherwise be called incorporation is the act of process of uniting or combining different things. In the context of this work, integration can be viewed as combining theoretical teaching (contents) of business education with practical use and manipulation of new technological gadgets in business education. Technology integration is therefore defined as the use of technology to enhance and support the educational environment (Wikipedia). Reigebuth and Joseph in Ile, Udegbonam and Odimegwa (2015), view technology integration as focusing on ‘how’ to use technology to support the way teaching and learning is currently being done in schools. Technology integration in the classroom can also support classroom instruction by creating opportunities for students to complete assignments on the computer or other new technological equipment rather than writing with pencil and paper. Since business education emphasizes more on learning by doing, classroom materials, machines and equipment that meet the standard of business education new curriculum is required during instructional delivery. This is necessary because by its nature, business education is skill oriented.

Business Education

Business education can be defined as an educational process or context which has, as its primary aim, the preparation of people for roles in enterprise: such as an employee, entrepreneur, employer or simply as self employed. It is education for vocation.

Udo (2015) viewed business education as an aspect of vocational and technical education which is designed to develop competencies in accounting, business management, banking and finance, administration, marketing, book-keeping, accounting, office technology and information communication technology, business law, economics for business, business web page design, desktop publishing, shorthand, keyboarding, digital business application, word processing among others. Business education is a comprehensive activity based education that is concerned with the acquisition of practical skills, understanding, attitudes, work habits and competencies that are requisite to success in a chosen business occupation.

Business education equips individuals with practical skills such as provision of competencies in the operation of office machines, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of the economic life.



Instructional Delivery

Instructional delivery refers to the interaction among the students, the teacher, the content and the knowledge and skills student will need to learn. It can as well be referred to as methods, strategies, approaches or techniques that a teacher employs to deliver his/her lesson to the learners.

It is a representation of pattern in which a lesson is to be presented (Lukeman, 2021). Meziobi in Wordu and Akor (2018) opined that every effort that the teacher makes in order to have a fruitful time with the students by exposing the contents, employing methods, strategies, the pupils' interaction with the environment, resources available and even the evaluation process sums up the meaning of instructional delivery.

According to Etuk and Umoh in Wordu and Akor (2018), instructional delivery is the knowledge of teaching techniques and their application for learning to take place in such a flexible manner that would not distort the original intent of the teacher for being in the classroom. Simply put it is the provision of instruction to learners by the teacher. The teacher builds on existing knowledge, differentiates instruction and integrates technology into lessons. The teacher who is the key factor in instructional delivery demonstrates to the learners' successful use of the knowledge and skills through modeling. In delivery business education courses, utilizing up to date teaching materials, multi media and technology becomes imperative. Business education students should be prepared in such a way that they can be able to fit in, in the present technological era, possessing the ability to function in the sophisticated office of today and as well in the digital business world.

Skill

Skill involves a physical demonstration of the ability to perform a given task successfully with a result that has pleasant value. Okafor and Ogbazi in Okafor, Nwoye, Nwaigwe and Nwarieji (2020) defined skill as a physical, mental or social ability that is learned through practices, repetition and reflection and in which it is probably always possible for the individuals to improve. Mshelia (2019) view skill as a quality of performance which does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental innate capacities but be developed through training, practice and experience. Buttressing more on the meaning of skill Chell (2013) defined skill as proficiency in performance that may be enhanced by practice and training. It is the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience that is needed.

Functional skills therefore are skills that help an individual to perform tasks which have practical utility on the job. They are skills that will make the human person functional in a given task. For the purpose of this work, functional skills are skills in information and communication technology that allow graduates of business education to operate confidently, effectively and independently in business and industry.

Impact of Integrating New Technologies in Business Education Instructional Delivery

The impact of integrating new technologies in business education instructional delivery are cannot be overemphasized. Integrating new technology in business education instructional delivery will provide business education students a platform for technological excellence in the face of the globalization of the world economy. Employment requirements in many establishments are changing as a result of technological impact. With this reality on ground, business education students need to be equipped with the required information and communication technology skills that will prepare them for future career. Integrating new technology in business education instruction delivery will also enable the students make critical connection to contents. It will not only improve students learning process and outcomes but will also enable them have deeper understanding of the use of the new technologies and how to apply them in the world of work. Integrating new technologies in business education will help in producing graduates who are confident, effective, independent and equipped to face the



challenges of the work place of today. When students are exposed and made to acquire skills in these new technologies, it will go a long way to sustain the relevance of the programme by providing the needs of individuals and society rather than producing business education graduates who are not abreast with current technological changes nor can make meaningful impact in their specialized area.

Again, integration of new technology in business education instruction delivery will not only prepare business education students for future employment but will also help them acquire skills that they need to survive as self-employed. This is because opportunities in information and communication technology are numerous.

Factors that will Enhance Effective Integration of New Technologies in Business Education Instructional Delivery

To enhance effective integration of new technologies in business education instructional delivery attention should be given to the following factors:

- i. Adequate ICT facilities
- ii. Training and retraining of teaching personnel
- iii. Lecturer student ratio
- iv. Funding

Adequate ICT Facilities: ICT facilities include computers, photocopiers, audio-visual aids, magnetic boards, projectors, hardware and software, internet services, digital versatile disk recorder and player, internet modem, overhead and slide, projectors, uninterrupted power supply and mobile telephones. Studies have shown that one of the challenges hindering effective integration of new technology in business education instructional delivery is inadequate ICT infrastructure. This is in support with the study by Onejetah and Utoware (2019) where they noted that there are dearth of new technologies equipment in teaching business education in universities in the South-East. Ekwue, Anyegbunam and Okpanachi (2016) also noted in their study that most of the requisite new technology facilities in tertiary institutions have not been adequately provided in business education departments in tertiary institutions.

Training and Retraining of Teaching Staff: Business education lecturers should be trained and retrained in the application of new technologies. They should be updated with knowledge of use of modern technologies as to make them fit to deliver instruction on the new technologies. Study by Nwolake and Chukwuma (2019) revealed that lack of technological skills on the part of business educators constrains integration of new technologies in teaching business education courses. If business education teachers cannot deliver business education curriculum effectively as a result of lack of necessary technological skills how then can business education graduates compete favourably in the global world and as well be relevant in the e-world. Training is necessary because well trained academic staff acquire new and improved skills that enable them perform better on their jobs. That was why Nwosu and Mbeazie in Timya, Wetnwan and Youngsunshikfu (2019) noted that most of the teachers were not effectively taught with new technologies, therefore they have to be retrained in the proper use of new technologies in instructional delivery.

Lecturer-Students Ratio

This involves the number of students a lecturer is meant to teach at a time. For practical courses like word processing, the national commission for colleges of education stipulated that lecturer-student ratio should be 1:20. But it is unfortunate to note that practical classes in various departments and schools offering business education are overcrowded. As a result of this, it becomes so difficult for the lecturer/teacher to give individualized attention to the students. To ensure effective integration of new technologies in business education instructional delivery, the number of students



assigned to a lecturer/teacher in ICT courses should be such that will be manageable. Team teaching should be adopted in ICT courses and students grouped, in order to allow for adequate usage of the machines by students in each class period. This will also enable the teacher monitor students' performances during teaching and learning and as well give individualized attention to them.

Funding: Funding is another important factor to be given attention. ICT facilities require maintenance, regular power supply, fueling of generator etc. Nwaiwu, Dikeocha and Nwagu (2015) stressed that poor funding of business education programme has resulted to lack of adequate laboratory, equipment and machines. Oguejiofor and Okeke– Ezeanyanwu (2019) in their study also confirmed that poor funding is one of the challenges confronting implementation of new technologies in business education.

Conclusion

Achievement of the objective of any educational programme can be determined by the way instruction is delivered to the recipients of such programme. The objective of business education is the production of skilled manpower who will be able to function effectively in the workplace and in the business world. Owing to these, schools and implementers of business education are expected to adopt appropriate techniques, materials and machines that will enable the learners understand what is being taught and as well be able to apply the knowledge, skill and experience gained from such instructions in the world of work after graduation.

Recommendations

1. New technological facilities should be made available to institutions and departments offering business education by the authorities concerned.
2. Institutions should provide in-service training for business education lecturers on the application of new technologies in instructional delivery.
3. Manageable number of students should be assigned to lecturer/teachers as to enable individualized teaching and learning of ICT courses.
4. Government and management of institutions should make fund available for department offering business education programme for maintenance of the available facilities.

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