FACTORS HINDERING THE USE OF ELETRONIC MEDIA FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The paper point out some values of electronic media in facilitating or enhancing the teaching and learning process at secondary schools and even tertiary institutions when used effectively. It also highlights some factors considered to be hindering the use of electronic media in the classroom instruction. The researcher recommends to the authorities and bodies piloting the affairs of education to pay much attention to the use of electronic media for instruction in the formal educational setting.

Introduction

The values of electronic media (both Projected/non-Projected) in an effective teaching /learning process cannot be over emphasized at all levels of education, because their effective use allow much learning to take place in less time with minimum difficulties.

To buttress this fact, Gana (1979) considered media (audio-visual materials) as facilitators of teaching/learning process and agents of selling ideas to the public. Ogunmilade (1984) stressed that audio-visual equipment like radio, television, video, film projectors as part of electronic media are capable of focusing attention on who and what is important and interesting to the public thereby encouraging people to contribute their quotas towards national development. Dauda (1992) Confirmed that educational technology and audio-visual materials are strong forces in facilitating effective communication, which will result in higher level of performance in any learning situation.

In medical science education, Nwamoh (1981) strongly observed that video facilities, have found their ways into the operating theatres of our health instructions and Cadaverous of our medical teaching centres. For instance during surgical operations, the practice in the past has been for the medical personnel to cluster around the surgeon to watch surgical operations. However, with the introduction of video facilities, in health institutions , surgical operations can be relayed live to classrooms, lecture theatres and viewing cubicles from the 12operating theatre using the close circuit television system (CCTV). Also, such recording can always be played back to future audience or succeeding generations of students without distortion.

Tonnie (2003) maintained that there is a special relationship between television and education which is often overlooked. It is that both institutions have indistinguishable goals of providing information, impacting knowledge, interpreting events and socializing the human mind. He remarked that information knowledge and socialization are the major components of development in all human societies.

In the same vein, Tonnie (2003), Further maintained that in a large and diverse society such as Nigeria, public participation in the political process is very much limited to occasional expression of opinions and protest, and the periodic election of leaders. Millions of Nigerians do not always have direct access to the realities of their social environment nor are they always aware of the various events that occur around them. They do not have any way of fully understanding the political and social actions taking place in their society, what is going on in their society and what their leaders are thinking or doing. The media constitute their main access which by implication means that their ''reality'' is created by the media.

However, it is the researchers view that Tonnie's discussion as mentioned above is emphasizing that the connection/or integration between Television, education and national development is obvious and important. Here the researcher is not referring to the integration of Television and education as mere presence or use of TV in school recreational Centres, students' common rooms, staff common room and other recreational outlets. But the point the researcher is making here is that Television and other electronic media should be used as mediator for educational instruction in the classroom. That is, the media being used as a means of instruction in the classroom.

Unfortunately, in spite of these glaring factors, most teachers from grass root to tertiary levels of education make little or no use of any of these avenues in the classroom teaching, even though they may be aware of their positive values in education. Instead, most teachers still cling to what Okpala (1980) called verbal symbolism i.e. chalk and talk teaching method. why is this so? The reasons are what this paper highlights. Prominent among such reasons are these factors:-

Lack of Equipment and Facilities

Media equipment that are essential for use in the classroom instruction are substantially lacking in most institutions of learning especially in some Nigeria Secondary Schools. Media equipment ranging from simple radio and other non-projected equipment to advanced projected media equipment like multi-media computed projectors are substantially lacking in our schools. Supporting this fact, a research at science secondary schools in Niger State on problems of media utilization revealed that 94% of teachers and 96% students from the surveyed schools expressed that media facilities and equipment are lacking in their schools. Therefore, the presenter deduced that governments or bodies managing our learning institutions like ministries of education (MOE), science Schools Board (SSB) or (STSB) have paid little or no attention to the provision of audio-visual equipments to schools. However, in a situation where the needed equipment is not made available automatically the use of such equipment for teaching and instruction will be impossible. Therefore unavailability of such projected and non-projected equipment forms a major obstacle hindering the use of the electronic media for formal instruction in our institutions of learning.

Facilities-: Availability of the facilities is a pre-requisite to the functions of the media equipment (projected/non-projected). However in availability, facilities such as electricity, suitable environment i.e. echo free or acoustic room, storage facilities (dust proof containers etc) hinders the use or effectiveness of media gadgets in the classroom instructions. When such materials that will facilitate the use of media equipment are lacking, it affects as well as hinders the use of the equipment because the equipment cannot function without these facilities. For instance, when slides are kept/stored in a dusty environment or in a hot room, it will hinder the use of such slides on a slide projector because when dust rest on the slides, such slides becomes invisible even when projected on the projector, likewise a hot room will gum two or more slides together when exposed to excessive heat and such can damage the slides thereby hindering their effective use on a projector.

Manpower (Human Power Factor): This is another big obstacle that hinders the use of electronic media for classroom instruction.
The glaring fact about this is that most teachers and educationists who are to use the media gadgets for instruction lack the basic operational skills which are essential for the use of media equipment in teaching. It is the view of the researcher that this problem cuts across all levels of educational institutions from nursery through primary/post primary institutions up to tertiary institutions of learning.

In the same vein, Ibitayo (1981) on developing media personnel in Nigeria has observed that what has been said about the use of communication media in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria is a good indication that media may be an important aspect of instructional strategies in these institutions in the future. However, the truth depends to a large extent upon the availability of trained and experienced staff to encourage and promote effective utilization of electronic media in the classroom. At present, most of these institutions do not execute programmes in communication media neither do they provide professional consultancy services to lecturers in other developments. Ibitayo (Ibid) went further to say that some states have indicated their intention to introduce course in education technology to training colleges producing teachers for the primary schools. The main problem these states may face is lack of qualified staff to design and teach such Courses.

Telephobia is another factor hindering the use of media equipment for communication in the classroom. Telephobia here implies having morbid fear of operating/use of technologically made equipment. In other words, some people are afraid to use technological gadgets in learning and for instruction. The fear could be due to lack of;

a. Lack of familiarization with the use of the equipments.
b. Fear of failure/disappointments in attempt to use them for instruction.
c. Fear of embarrassment in front of learners
d. Fear of being shock by electricity in an attempt to use the equipment.
e. General deficiency stemming from not being naturally, technically minded. Studies have shown that phobia in this sense is largely expressed by the females.

Cost Implications: High cost of electronic media equipment poses a problem which hinders their use in schools. The equipments such as video projectors, multi-media computed projectors are not easily affordable due to high costs. That is why government and educational bodies such as ministries of education (MOE), Science Schools Board (SSB), and also the management of some tertiary institutions often raise eye-brows when one talks about the use of electronic media in the classrooms. Questions are usually asked as to where the money for such huge investment is to come from? Expressions that usually follow are the projected and non-projected gadgets are very expensive; we cannot afford the exorbitant cost.

Indeed the fears or concerns of education bodies are quite justified to some extent considering the cost of projected and electronic media in Nigeria but the significance and the desire to achieve the objectives of simplifying and enhancing teaching/learning process should be our priority.

Inadequate Funding-: Is a big obstacle that hinders the use of electronic media for communication in the classroom. Huge amount of money has to be expended in procuring the electronic media equipment ranging from simple non-projected TV to the complex projected gadgets. These have to be procured in hundred s or thousand s of numbers for schools. This attracts huge sums of money. On the other hand, maintenance of such media equipment is additional to the cost of procurement. For these reasons, educational bodies and also the management of tertiary institutions find it difficult to expend huge amount of money procuring/maintaining such media equipment for use in the classroom.

Politics-: is the greatest uncertainty which poses obstacle that hinders the use of media equipment for instruction in formal educational setting. Here it is emphasized that government decides priorities i.e. every government has its priorities and so funding such priority is always given maximum preference so much so that adequate funding goes to such priorities no matter what policies might have been laid down. All avoidable funds may go to such government priorities while the desired needs in schools such as procurement/provision of the media equipment are ignored. In another vein, bureaucratic delays from the government also an obstacle to procurement, provision and the use of the media equipment for instruction in the classroom.

Attitude of Most Teachers and Educationist towards the Use of Electronic Media

This stresses on the fact that most teachers and educationists are familiar with what Okpala (1981) called Verbal Symbolism i.e. talk and chalk way of teaching so that most teachers might have not seen the need for the use of electronic media for instruction this is simply because of the fact that they are most familiar with the traditional talk and chalk method of instruction.

Lack of Electric – Power Supply In The Rural Areas:-

Most of rural areas in some states have no electricity and have little or no hope of having it. This is a major obstacle that hinders the use of the electronic media equipment in the rural schools. In short, this is to say that absence of electricity supply to the rural setting hinders the use of electronic media equipment for instruction in the rural schools. On the other hand, urban and metropolitan centres adversely affect the use of such media equipment for instructions because they are over stressed by the users.

Inadequate and Inflexible Curriculum and Syllabi to Incorporate the Use of Electronic Media Equipment in Schools.

This is to say that most schools curricular are rigidly planned that little or no room is provided for changes or innovations on the classroom. However, the reason why most teachers or educationists have not seen the need for the use of electronic media gadgets is because they are most familiar with traditional chalk and talk methods of instruction.

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Recommendations-:

In order to improve upon the factors militating against the utilization of electronic media in the classroom, the following are necessary:

A. Provision of media in service training-: it is suggested that government and bodies concerned with educational matters should always provide media In-service training for their staff. The In-service training should be designed and executed in order to bring about a better result on the job performance by teachers and educationists. This could be achieved through instructing them for better utilization of the electronic media. The instruction requires that teachers be taught some theory and practice of media application, new skills such as those needed for preparation of instructional materials and even simple skills like how to change a projector bulb should be taught. In other words, the media in service training should keep teachers up to date on theory and research, so as to make them more competent in the use of media instruction. It will also help to a large extent to solve the problem of technophobia among teachers and other users of electronic media in the classroom.

B. Regular workshops for teachers based on the needs they identify should be vigorously mapped out and embarked upon, perhaps jointly among the personnel of Nigeria Educational Technology Centre (NETC), Universities, and Colleges of Education (COE), State ministries of Education and Teacher Resource Centres.

C. Full-fledged instructional material media centres should be established, with sub-centres in each local government area. Between them they should encourage and co-ordinate instructional technology activities within the state. This will enable the idea of educational technology and media instruction reach the grass root and rural teachers.

D. Adequate Funding-: The states government are urged to adequately fund the training of teachers on the use of media for instruction e.g. (media in-service training) as earlier recommended. Further more, enough funds should be provided by the State Governments for the procurement and maintenance of electronic media. Management of tertiary institutions in the state like COES should follow firm applicable policies on the use, handling and maintenance of the media instructional materials in schools. It must be ensured that such policies are enforced, e.g. individuals who are found guilty of mishandling or stealing the materials should be ruthlessly punished and where individuals or collaborators are not found guilty, the head teacher or Principal should be held responsible.

E. The state instructional media centres should have their regular bulletins to acquaint teachers with progress reports, new acquisitions, exhibitions, and planned administration on the use and operation of media instructional materials. In addition, special publication may be prepared to give information on specific topics, such as how to use the overhead projector (OHP), producing tapes for use with listening centres and using the common instructional tool. General publication such as media handbook from instructional media centres (IMC) and other professional bodies like NETC or ERC might be used to give teachers an overall view of using the electronic media for instruction.

F. Ministries of Education and other bodies managing Education, parastatals and voluntary organizations should generate money from possible source like external or foreign aids and other sources to supplement the efforts of the state government in funding the use of media instructional materials in our schools.

G. Provision of functional standby generators in schools in the urban and rural schools. In the urban and metropolitan schools whenever there is electric power failure from NEPA, the reserved generating plants can be used for continuation of the lesson or programmes of instruction by electronic media. Where there are no generators, make-up lessons, programmes can be organized to compensate for the distorted/interrupted lesson due to power failure. In the case of rural schools that have no access to electricity (NEPA), the power generating plants can be used.

H. There should be a research into the achiever's units/sections of NTA and FRCN to identify potential instructional materials and be used appropriately for instruction.

I. Tertiary Institutions in the state especially teachers education Institutions or colleges should make their media centres functional. Envolve all programmes and avenues possible to sensitize teachers and the general public towards utilizing media gadgets for instruction in the classroom.

Conclusion

The researcher is calling on the State Governments and authorities piloting the affairs of education MOE, STSB, and the management of tertiary Institutions across the country to pay much attention to the use of electronic media for instruction in formal educational setting so as to enhance teaching/learning process and to achieve high level of performance in our schools. Teachers and educationists are here by urged to start using electronic media for instruction in the classroom especially for large group instruction as the students' environment in schools is increasing.

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