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CHALLENGES OF PLATEAU STATE POLYTECHNIC ENGLISH LECTURERS IN UTILIZING ICT FOR MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilitates teaching and learning especially in the 21st century where online/digital resources have taken over the globe. The polytechnic is designed to train students who form the nation's manpower. This paper examined the challenges faced by Plateau State Polytechnic English lecturers in utilizing ICT for manpower development. The study was necessitated by the call from educators around the world for the incorporation and effective utilization of online resources in teaching and learning. In order to investigate the challenges experienced by lecturers in the polytechnic over the utilization of ICT in manpower development through the teaching of English, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted on the departmental WhatsApp platform of the Department of General Studies of the polytechnic consisting of eighteen English lecturers. The study adopted Computer-Aided Language Learning (CALL) as its framework. The result of the FCD revealed among others that there were so many problems hampering the utilization of ICT in the teaching and learning in the institution. These challenges principally are related to data infrastructure, knowledge infrastructure and management infrastructure. The study concluded that there was need to put in place ICT facilities in the polytechnic for the lecturers to utilize in the teaching of English being the central language of communication in the development of the nation's manpower. ***Keywords: Minimal 3 kata dan maksimal 6 kata, (kata pertama; kata ke dua; kata ketiga)***

INTRODUCTION

In this era of post COVID-19, it has become imperative for lecturers to utilize information communication technology in teaching and learning as they develop the needed manpower for the nation's development. With this new development, lecturers should be encouraged to apply technology in their teaching in line with the 21st century goal for growth and development (Rappuoli et al., 2021).

Technological innovation, automation, and the rapid spread of global information communication have greatly accelerated the rapid growth of the world economy in recent times, although the benefits of the information age have not been equally distributed in some regions, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria.(Kogan et al., 2017) . Developing countries usually do not have such favorable conditions e.g. H. Human and financial capital for the introduction of new technologies. The introduction of information and communication technology in developing countries is seen as an important step towards development and poverty alleviation. A good education is generally considered the most important developmental factor. If the quality of education can be improved through the innovative use of ICTs, this is the best justification for their use (Schrum, 2000).

Encouraging the use of technology in teaching and learning will undoubtedly facilitate the education of students who make up the majority of the country's population and workforce (Davis et al., 1974). Classrooms should be updated with ICT equipment and LCD projectors and projection screens to promote the importance of technology integration in teaching and learning. ICT provides a better learning platform for the new generation of students, especially students who are digital natives, to compete on the global stage. The integration of ICT into universities of applied sciences is not without challenges for UK Schools of Education (Razak et al., 2018).

Point out that while language teaching must capitalize on these technological opportunities, it must also consider the complex institutional and pedagogical contexts that reinforce and integrate technology into language teaching (Bo-Kristensen, 2008). One of the challenges is the high cost of building, upgrading, operating and maintaining ICT equipment, especially in a developing country like Nigeria. Self-evident factors should be considered, such as: B. costs of installing, maintaining, supporting and upgrading equipment, time required to train staff, selection and manufacturing of resources, and management of resources in the shop, life expectancy and resource requirements . To increase (Nwokedi & Nwokedi, 2018).

The development and further development of ICT has led to a paradigm shift in the education system. ICT is changing the way people learn and offers new alternatives to the traditional classroom. In this new economy, it is very important for students to have access to education anytime and anywhere. Haddad and Draxler (2002) argue that lifelong learning and work-based training cannot be confined to the traditional classroom. It is unrealistic and impossible to ask students to come to a certain place every time they need to study. ICT makes it possible to adapt education to individual needs rather than to what is on offer. Education is not limited to the four walls of the classroom, where and when students want it. (Haddad

& Draxler, 2002) claim that education is no longer a place but an activity: teaching and learning activities. ICTs can provide personalized, timely, timely, and user-centered educational activities (Haddad & Draxler, 2002)

ICT not only provides education to anyone, anywhere, anytime, but also accelerates new research and development in the field of teaching and learning technology. According to Dean (2000), Schank, the founder of the cognitive arts, believed that schools should adopt a new way of teaching. He argues that students "learn better through experiential and emotional learning than through memorizing names and dates" and teachers should therefore simulate real-world environments (Dean, 2000).The main objective of this paper is the perspective of English teachers in polytechnics on the use of ICT resources and their integration in their teaching context, because teachers are implementers, facilitators, and end users of ICT resources. The challenge for universities of applied sciences is to take existing 21st century practices and apply them to teaching (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2000).

RESEARCH METHOD

Plateau State Polytechnic's Department of General Studies has eighteen English language lecturers. A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted on the departmental WhatsApp platform to gather data for the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Status of ICT in Plateau State Polytechnic

The polytechnic has a functional ICT centre which serves the institution. The challenge however that is the internet connectivity is not accessible to both staff and students except they visit the ICT centre. What this implies is that the lecturers cannot access the internet for any online resources from their offices neither are they able to deploy it in the classroom for any form of teaching and learning. Also, the students are not able to access the institution's network in their classrooms or library for class activities or research. Apart from this challenge, the ICT centre has not effectively positioned itself for serving the institution for collaborative teaching because there is no availability of any form of e-learning portal for learning to take place. The library is also not having any online presence. Principally, the ICT centre only handles students' registration and providing information about the institution (Adarkwah, 2021).

In terms of computer and internet availability, the University of Applied Sciences has a number of desktop computers housed in the computer room for educational purposes (ICT laboratory/center) or in the administrative and management staff offices. We now describe the position of ICT in institutions quite adequately (Timóteo et al., 2021).

Universities of applied sciences need more computer and network equipment and peripheral devices such as projectors and printers. In addition, the equipment of some universities of applied sciences today is barely sufficient to allow every student to receive basic computer training.

Discussion

In teaching and learning English as a second language in Nigeria, teachers often use projectors, web cameras and other ICT tools to teach students. The availability of these resources makes the teaching and learning process interesting and productive. However, these resources are not available to university teachers. When teachers try to use their personal resources, they encounter several problems. These problems included power supply epilepsy, poor network connections and a lack of computer and ICT equipment for the college's students (Kumar & Tammelin, 2008) .

From the FGD, three important infrastructure/facilities were identified as critical for the implementation and success of ICT in teaching and learning in universities of applied sciences (Vaikunthavasan et al., 2019). These are information infrastructure, information infrastructure and management infrastructure. Information infrastructure is a hardware and software platform that includes wired systems, fixed and wireless networks, computer equipment such as servers, workstations, routers and switches, projectors, printers including all necessary system programs and applications. The information infrastructure consists of the technical personnel who manage and maintain Harden's network and software, but also support services personnel, trainers, technical end users and application support personnel, and all the users themselves. In other words, management infrastructure refers to a unit of strategic decisions, real estate management including the provision of financing. It is also related to institutional ICT strategy and policies (Ciborra & Hanseth, 1998).

Computer users are constantly reminded that machines exist to make life easier and better, but the ever-changing world of operating systems and software prevents computers from developing human capabilities. In addition, there are still people who are afraid and do not believe in the growing use of computers and the internet. College students, mostly young people who grew up with technology and are familiar with almost any technology, are called digital natives, and these digital natives are now part of the new generation. In comparison, some of the speakers mostly fell into the category of digital immigrants who entered the world of technology late. In educational settings, technology students tend to be digital natives, while teachers tend to be digital immigrants, explaining students' affinity for technology and teachers' reluctance to accept it. In this context, most students are classified as digital natives, while some faculty are more classified as digital immigrants.

Findings

Universities of applied sciences do not have good and affordable internet connections. Poor internet connection affects the daily use of online training tools and online learning. Downloading documents from the Internet can take several hours. In addition, the price of a monthly subscription to such an Internet connection is very high and almost unaffordable for a university of applied sciences.

The Internet infrastructure is completely controlled by private telecommunications companies - MTN, Airtel, Glo, 9mobile. Implementation of

learning in universities of applied sciences with ICT is a serious challenge because universities are forced to pay dearly for poor service because they have to choose an alternative.

An important issue opposing the introduction and integration of ICT in teaching and learning in universities of applied sciences is the computer skills of the lecturers themselves. Most lecturers do not have thorough ICT training and even if they do, they are not ready. keep abreast of global developments abreast of technological developments. Most teachers find it difficult to adapt to new teaching methods if they themselves do not have the necessary experience in incorporating ICT into teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

With the rapid development of technology teaching tools, ICT opportunities for teaching and learning in colleges of applied sciences must be provided if they become the basis for lecturers interested in integrating technology in their teaching. As workforce developers, faculty should be encouraged to update their knowledge and skills, but is there departmental, administrative, or team support to help them master new technologies in teaching and learning?

From the FGDs and the results it is clear that the University of Applied Sciences is facing a very big challenge - there are practically no facilities on site that allow lecturers to integrate ICT into their teaching and learning. There are quite a number of problems regarding ICT development and university admissions. The key to these questions is the issue of information infrastructure, information infrastructure and management infrastructure, which must be taken seriously if higher education faculty is to join forces with the modern teaching and learning methods adopted worldwide. These challenges must be overcome without forgetting the positive effects of integrating education services into the teaching and learning process.

In addition, English is the language of instruction at universities of applied sciences and is certainly a limitation on which our training in Nigeria is based. Therefore, as the University of Applied Sciences is engaged in human resource development, it is important for English faculty to understand the importance of their role and seek leadership to build the desired ICT facilities at the University of Applied Sciences. . engaged in teaching and learning. Thus, universities of applied sciences can produce communicative students who are able to compete with fellow students in other parts of the world.

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