

## ***Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English Medium Curriculum Implementation in Nigeria***

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### **Abstract**

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought to the modern world the easiest, simplest and fastest ways of imparting knowledge to people. ICT has all sorts of facilities that enhance and concretize learning via so many languages, more especially English in Nigeria. Thus, this article is on the role of ICT in curriculum implementation via the English medium of instruction in the country. The concept of Information and Communication Technology and curriculum implementation are discussed; National Policy on Education (NPE)'s stance on English as a medium of instruction and on ICT in curriculum implementation in Nigeria is presented. The paper equally presents some advantages of ICT in curriculum implementation in Nigeria and its challenges in the country. The article therefore proffers ways out of the problems for proper and effective ICT application via English language in curriculum implementation in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Information, Communication, Technology, English, Medium, Curriculum

### **Introduction**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) today has penetrated education industry and become like a blood in the body of any field of human endeavour. In education sector of any country, the importance of ICT in its curriculum implementation in the schools is immeasurable. ICT application is the easiest, simplest and fastest way of imparting knowledge to people in the modern world. In Nigeria, ICT has special attention in the National Policy on Education (NPE) with regard to curriculum implementation in schools, even though the country is lagging behind in ICT application in education sector (Owolabi, Oyewole & Oke, 2013).

Generally, in education sector, according to Nware (2010), the main aim of ICT is to ease curriculum implementation during the teaching-learning process through the use of relevant equipment, tools or facilities. In fact, ICT is a unique and most efficient global means of teaching and learning today, which educationists impart knowledge to their

students through the use of its facilities. ICT aims at enabling teaching and learning activity through multiple intelligence of simulation, gaming, role playing and making learners active in all senses. Aremu (2014) is of the view that ICT programme packages like Computer Aided Instruction (CAI), also called Computer-Assisted instruction (CAI), Computer-Managed Instruction (CMI), Computer-Based Education (CBE), Computer-Based Instruction (CBI), Computer Based Language Training (CBLT), Computer-Aided Language Assessment (CALA) are used via English as a medium of instruction in curriculum implementation.

### **Meaning of ICT and curriculum implementation**

ICT is an abbreviation for Information and Communication Technology or Information and Communication Technologies (Bello & Aderbigbe, 2014). Information and Communication Technology refers to the modern way of passing message or information from one point or source to another. Today, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its facilities like radio, television, hand-sets, scanners, digital cameras, multimedia programmes, image editing software, ipad, computer, projector, and internet among others, have revolutionized teaching-learning processes in schools globally (Irene, 2002; 'Sina, 2014).

In the context of Information and Communication Technology, curriculum implementation can be referred to as the stage when the curriculum content is being passed on to the learners through the use of the ICT facilities. Curriculum implementation entails sourcing, planning and putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. This involves helping the learner to acquire sets of knowledge, skills or experiences. ICT is considered to be the most effective way of curriculum implementation by many countries today, and English language is the most used language of instruction in institutions of learning across the globe, Nigeria inclusive. This means that the process of actualizing and achieving curriculum contents through teaching and learning can be done successfully by the use of ICT in English language medium (Onojerena, 2014; Tsakuwa, 2018).

### **ICT provision in the NPE on curriculum implementation in Nigeria**

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE) apports so much recognition to ICT. This is because of the multifarious functions the ICT has in the education sector in the world and the nation in particular. For this reason, the NPE (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014:17) says:

*In recognition of the prominent role of Information and Communication Technology in advancing knowledge and skills necessary for effective functioning in the modern world there is urgent need to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into education in Nigeria.*

The policy adds that the Nigerian “Government shall provide necessary infrastructure and training for the integration of ICT in the school system in recognition of the role of ICT in advancing knowledge and skill in the modern world” (FRN, 2014: 24). And to achieve the objectives set by the policy, the Nigerian “government shall provide appropriate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities” (FRN, 2014: 52) so that curriculum contents are delivered through smooth curriculum implementation for the benefits of Nigerian learners at all levels of education in the country.

### **English as a medium of instruction in curriculum implementation in Nigeria**

Regarding English as the medium or language of instruction in curriculum implementation in Nigeria, the Nigerian NPE (FRN, 2014:11-12) puts that

*The medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of immediate environment for the first three years in monolingual communities. During this period, English shall be taught as a subject; from the fourth year, English shall progressively be used as a medium of instruction and the language of immediate environment and French and Arabic shall be taught as subjects.*

Here English is given prominence right from primary school level up to the tertiary education level. Jowitt (2008) and Ben-Yunusa (2008) believe that the main reason for English to be language of instruction in the Nigerian schools is because Nigerian Western Education was introduced in English language by the British colonial masters who used the English language during the colonial era to interact with Nigerians. Furthermore, English is a global language and most of the teaching-learning materials on internet and ICT related matters are written in English.

### **Importance of ICT in curriculum implementation via English medium in Nigeria**

The significance of ICT in the curriculum implementation and the general educational system of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Educationists like Yusuf (2005), Owolabi, Oyewole and Oke (2013), Bello and Aderbigbe (2014), Yusuf (2014) and Umeagukwu and Ngozi, (2014) agree that there are quite a number of merits for using the ICT in the curriculum implementation in the country, these include the following:

1. ICT assists the teachers in their lesson planning and lesson delivery. Curriculum implementers like teachers can use the ICT facilities to source for lesson contents, organize for the lessons, save the lessons and deliver them to the learners on the right time. And of course, the teachers in this regard can easily choose the lessons contents and materials to be used via English language.

2. Since English language is the language of instruction in Nigerian schools, and the predominant language in ICT is English, students can make use of the ICT to learn faster at each level, and this makes them to comprehend knowledge easily. Using the English language, the use of ICT can give room for accurate, armful and clear information to the learners.

3. ICT arouses, captures and sustains interest and attention of the students, and makes their learning to be more concrete and permanent. This is because lessons could be accompanied with English expressions or captions on pictures, videos and other instructional resources or materials via the ICT.

4. ICT supplies updated information to the teachers and the students. In curriculum implementation, both teachers and the students can have access to new information, knowledge, skill or experience especially via the English medium.

5. In the process of curriculum implementation in English as the general language of instruction in the country, ICT provides one-to-one interaction with students and allows the individual students to proceed at their own pace in learning. It therefore provides room for individualization of instruction to students by the teachers.

6. Some ICT facilities like computers are very useful in subjects that require drilling; they allow students to keep practicing to the level of their satisfaction. This is possible and easier when the students have good command of English.

7. ICT helps curriculum implementers to teach large number of students at the same time with less difficulty; this is because the implementers use English to address the learners.

8. ICT gives privacy to shy and slow learners to learn at their own speed based on their personality. It saves them from public embarrassment during lessons in class.

9. ICT helps physically challenged learners who understand English, but are cripples, or have visual or hearing impairment, to learn at their own individual pace.

10. In curriculum implementation, ICT makes learning to be serious and students-centered in the language of implementation.

11. ICT motivates learners and gives the learners freedom to experiment with different options of questions and answers in English.

12. In curriculum implementation, students get ability to appreciate difficult concepts presented in English through multi-sensory approach of the ICT facilities.

13. ICT gives liberty, convenience and direction to students on deciding when, where and what to learn in certain contexts. So, ICT makes curriculum implementation and learning to be on continuous progress without any barrier of time or distance.

14. ICT helps in saving teachers' time and energy, and gives them room for covering a big chunk of the curriculum written in English within a short period of time.

15. In the curriculum implementation, ICT makes curriculum evaluation to be accurate, faster and easier. Therefore, teachers can employ ICT in evaluating their lessons.

### **Challenges of ICT in curriculum implementation via the English medium in Nigeria**

Despite the enormous importance of ICT in curriculum implementation in Nigeria, there are certain factors that hinder its proper application in the country especially via the English language as the medium of instruction in the schools. According to Idowu and Esere (2011), Owolabi, Oyewole and Oke (2013), Bello and Aderbigbe (2014), Edewor,

Imhonopi and Urim (2014), Ahmad and Lukman (2015) and Tsakuwa and Wen (2019), such factors include the following:

1. It has been observed that the curriculum implementers have proficiency problem in the language of the implementation. In fact, many teachers across the schools in Nigeria are not proficient in English, which is the major language of instruction in the Nigerian primary and secondary schools (Tsakuwa & Wen, 2019).

2. The Nigerian students on the other hand see English as a difficult language, and they do not have the zeal in learning it (Tsakuwa, 2018).

3. Many curriculum implementers are not well trained on ICT application. In fact, the curriculum implementers are somehow untrained on how to use the modern ICT facilities like computer, projector, hand-sets, ipad and internet among others in teaching.

4. The learners also are very handicapped in appreciating the technical know-how of ICT in learning. The Nigerian students are not well exposed to ICT facilities.

5. There is misuse of the ICT facilities on the side of the learners. Some learners tend to concentrate on social media and engage in chatting in Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc, and downloading pornographic pictures or films which leads to indecency and immorality in Nigerian academic circle (Aremu, 2014).

6. In the present Nigerian schools, there are no adequate personnel to man the ICT facilities for proper curriculum implementation.

7. There is lack of ICT computer laboratories or pools (like computerized language labs, ICT repair/practical workshops) that can ease curriculum implementation in the schools.

8. There is no constant supply of electricity in the schools that can help in the proper use of ICT facilities for successful curriculum implementation.

9. There are no sufficient ICT facilities (like computers, stable network connections, media programmes, image editing software and projector among others) in the Nigerian schools for effective curriculum implementation to the global standard.

10. In some ministries of education in the states of the federation, there is obvious lack of political-will by the leadership of the ministries in things related to ICT in the schools (Edewor, Imhonopi & Urim, 2014).

11. Many teachers are resisting the use of ICT in curriculum implementation in Nigeria. They cling to the traditional methods of lesson preparation, and of chalking and talking during lesson delivery.

12. ICT facilities are generally expensive to be purchased and there is insufficient funding in education sector in Nigeria, which hampers the provision of the facilities and their application in teaching-learning process in the country (Edewor, Imhonopi & Urim, 2014).

13. ICT facilities are normally costly to be fixed, maintained and updated. And there is rampant mismanagement and poor maintenance culture among people in the schools.

14. ICT discourages hardwork and brings about laziness in the students sometimes. Many students nowadays do not want to go to library and read book to write their academic assignments, they prefer to browse the internet in their rooms and get some ready-made answers from the internet, and they are fond of copy-and-paste of

information verbatim on their computers. This practice does not allow them to be assiduous academically.

### **Possible ways out of the problems of ICT in curriculum implementation in Nigeria**

These constraints against effective utilization of ICT facilities in curriculum implementation in Nigeria can be dealt with through the following ways:

1. The curriculum implementers should be trained through workshops, seminars and conferences on how to use the ICT facilities in teaching the students via English language in the country (Tsakuwa, 2018).

2. Students should be encouraged to learn English and be taught practically on how to get reading materials via ICT facilities.

3. Enough ICT laboratories should be provided to enhance curriculum implementation across the schools.

4. There should be constant electricity in the schools so as to make the ICT facilities functional to the curriculum implementers.

5. There should be sufficient ICT facilities in the schools so that the curriculum implementers can have smooth going of curriculum implementation (Aremu, 2014).

6. Nigerians should imbibe the culture of hard work and maintenance of government properties like the ICT facilities in the schools for maximum use in teaching-learning activities.

### **Conclusion**

The success of any curriculum implementation at any level of Nigerian school system depends largely on the proper application of the modern ICT facilities. The ICT helps in effective implementation of the Nigerian curriculum via English language medium of instruction. In the current globalization, Nigeria cannot afford to lag behind in using ICT facilities to raise the level of intellectual and creative resources of her citizens.

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