

USING ICT IN ENHANCING THE LEARNING STYLES OF STUDENTS

Onebunne, Jude IfeanyiChukwu

Department of Educational Foundations

School of Education

Federal College of Education (Technical), Umuze, Anambra State, Nigeria

juno_anyi@yahoo.com, juno.anyi@gmail.com

&

Obinwa Ann Uche

Department of Primary Education

School of Education

Federal College of Education (Technical), Umuze, Anambra State, Nigeria

&

Chukwujekwu Onyiyechukwu Nzubechukwu

Department of Political Science

School of Education

Federal College of Education (Technical), Umuze, Anambra State, Nigeria

revdtonycj@gmail.com, 08038318676

Abstract

Education is a progressive human enterprise with many dimensions as well as many forms of learning patterns which are daily challenged by different facets of scientific advancement and technological achievements and adaptations. These recent challengeable changes in education are *ad rem* with regard to holistic human development. ICT is part of this revolution and globally situates learning into human industry and integration. Using method of critical analysis, this paper discusses that education in its proper form of learning must be scientific and technologically oriented. Therefore, this paper recommends an ICT-based form of learning if we are to be still located on the global map of informed teaching, effective learning and e-learning for this generation and *generation-next*.

Keywords: ICT, School, Education, Learning, human development.

Introduction

We are in the age of hyper-technologies. Every day, the world gets more advanced and sophisticated. Many developmental human enterprises and other societal endeavours for the well being of humanity are daily fine tuned for better results. For many, however, this is the dawn of real civilization and era of authentic progress. However, the Child being developed, who is rightly at the centre of these monumental strides, remains the same personality in process of being and becoming better using what the society at any epoch has in store for him. As a major catalyst for human development, especially right from the infant stage, education should always be upgraded and updated in line with changing times and advancement as well as any significant progress made in the area of science for result-oriented achievements. We need to complement their educational status and learning styles with ICT against the next generation. This form of harmony with the latest technology for teaching and learning ought to take cognizance of the learning patterns of the children in question if it will definitely produce capable children that may be able to meet up with their contemporaries in other developing and developed worlds in line with the 4th goal of SDGs as Quality Education. This form of quality education has to incorporate the use of ICT in enhancing learning styles of our children so as to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning"

(SDGs. No.4). Application of ICT in teaching and learning styles of any child will nevertheless guarantee this needed quality education. More so, obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels (Commentary on the 4th Goal of SDG)

DEFINITIONAL APPRECIATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and Communication Technologies , an extended term for Information Technology, is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer, network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video conferencing and distance learning (www.searchcio.techtarget.com/.../ICT-information-and-communications-technology) ICTs are often spoken of in a particular context, such as ICTs in education, healthcare or libraries. We must note that information is the basis of management, planning and evaluation system. Proper and current information will definitely lead to formulation of effective educational policies and well-informed implementation. ICT, therefore, stresses the fundamental role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunication (telephone lines and wireless signals), computers as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage and

audio-visual systems, which enable the users to access, store, transmit and manipulate information (<http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/ICT>).

ERA OF THE GLORIES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

It is disheartening and shameful that in the 21st century, while our contemporaries are on the echelon and ebb of excellence with regard to science and technology, toying with products of science and technology, continued advancement and *technologization* of earth and space, Nigerian Youths, to be precise, our graduates, are still looking for three basics of life as: food, shelter and basic education. Look at the uncontrollable continuous change in our curriculum and unstable system one cannot but declare that our educational system is epileptic. Our curriculum lacks any philosophy (of education) that will guaranty that our school products will be employable. By philosophy (of Education), we mean the ability to perform a unifying function in education, critically examining the assumptions and postulates of other disciplines, determining the ends and means of education with regard to curriculum planning and development. (Ibekwe, 2008: 13, 16 & 20). Our educational system, beholds unnecessary duplicity and multiplication of courses without any critical evaluation and initial preparation. Cost of learning is simply exorbitant and the environment unattractive. The need to meet and enhance the learning styles of

our learners is unquestionable. Quality delivery and comprehensive use of ICT as our age demands complement the needful: a balance and well informed learner.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL AS A PLACE OF LEARNING

The school, as an institution that tries to bridge the gap between the old and new scientific *cum* technological order, developing and underdeveloped world, civilized and uncivilized order through teaching and learning must continue to update and upgrade itself so as to play the role of adapting to the changing situations and challenging developmental strides of our age (Igboabuchi and Ofojebe, 2010: 60). The school as an institution for resourceful human development, in its bid to enlighten our generation through her skills of acquiring, training and harnessing man power through quality delivery of lessons, ought to accommodate every aspect of information, in the words of Iroegbu (1994:109) for a holistic and *authenticautodevelopmentalization* of human being created Godlike ready to conquer the earth (Gen. 1: 26ff), all for the good of humanity.

Until the planners and developers of our curriculum take cognizance of the cognitive stages of children as learners as well as the academic need of this generation and be able to read the handwriting on the walls of this age, our educational managerial policies and plans will not be capable of meeting with the techno-scientific demands of this age but will, in the face of scientific-

technological giant strides, continue to produce celebrated uninformed half-baked academic fools who cannot compete with their contemporaries' progress.

INFORMATION AGE AND EDUCATION

ICT as a product of Information age has a bilateral relationship with education which is all about teaching and learning. Today than ever, effective teaching and proper learning entails use of functional ICT. We are in information age as well as better communication era; an age of greater computer appreciation. It is better known as digital age; an era of unified communication of information through technology; an ICT age. ICT, therefore, is an extended information; Age of Information and Computerization (searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/ICT). Like the industrial revolution, digital revolution helped to give room to this ICT Age. And if this is true as stressed, every human developmental project cannot be left out especially the educational enterprise.

ICT-EDUCATION AND LEARNING STYLES OF A CHILD

Learning is the act or process of acquiring new, modifying or reinforcing existing knowledge, skills, values and preferences. It may involve synthesizing different types of information (Wikipedia, 2012). Learning, however, has a style. This learning style or pattern to be discussed here is a concept that has been formulated and practiced for over the years for quality delivery, assimilation

and proper understanding. Learning style or modality is a particular way that a person learns easily, comfortable and perfectly (www.learning-styles-online.com/overview). Hence, learning styles group common ways that people learn. Everyone has a mix of learning styles. However, some may find out that they have a dominant or a particular and most preferable learning modality. Equally, different circumstances or methodological approaches as well as the disposition of the teacher may determine the use of different learning styles by the students. There is no right and or wrong mix or particular formulae for the choice of any learning modality save the circumstances and temperament of the learner and the teacher since teaching involves externalization of one's personality and psyche (Onebunne, 2009: 1,2). More so, the master of all who know, Aristotle rightly put it thus, "when the pupil is ready, the well-informed teacher will appear"(Nwankwo, 2011: 1-8). We must note that this readiness entails every form of discipline and truancies exhibited by the pupil wishing to learn and be taught. The quality of learning is improved if one discovers, recognizes and understands his own learning style(s).

Therefore, your learning style guides the way you comprehend; how you internally represent experiences, recall information and the words you choose as end product of learning. It has more influence on you than you may realize it.

Some of these learning styles as: Visual (spatial), Aural (auditory), Verbal (linguistic), Physical (Kinesthetic), Logical (mathematical), Social (Interpersonal) and Solitary (Intrapersonal). However, your particular learning style(s) depend on the three domains of educational activities: Cognitive (mental skills, knowledge), Affective (feelings, emotional: attitude) and Psychomotor (manual or physical). The knowledge of these learning styles will definitely dispose an educator in the proper handling of the learner. ICT, nevertheless, complements every learning style of the learner. That is to say, there are varieties of opportunities for every learner with any learning style to adopt ICT strategies taking cognizance of the fact that ICT refers to the convergence of audio-visual and telephone network through a single cabling or link system. ICT definitely helps making learning easy and manageable when you consider the handicapped students as well as those with one impediment or the other with regard to learning modalities who need some of the ICT gadgets for improved learning. ICT with particular reference to learning and its style has become a keystone in our everyday living and interaction of which there is a dysfunctional attitude without some facets of its operational technologies. The ICT is a tool for new order of academic and social movements for societal change.

ICT AND ITS PLACE FOR QUALITY DELIVERY AND LEARNING

Information and Communication Technologies are *duo-points* for any holistic meaningful development. Generally, ICT has challenged greatly and changed the mechanism of information management knowing full well that proper information leads to effective formation. Until you are informed, you continue to wallow in ignorance which is vampire. In accordance, we submit to the fact that Knowledge according to Francis Bacon is power. And it is proper that it is only through communicated information that this knowledge which is power can be felt. Technology, nevertheless, helps in its full realization. ICT, helping in information management, dissemination and sharing has changed the context of education in general and will be more appreciated properly if the learning styles of a child are managed well. ICT creates greater opportunity and give maximum access to information through communication. Unless developing Nation-states key into ICTs, it will be very difficult for some of them to develop technologically. However, "many countries around the world have established organizations for the promotion of ICTs, because its feared that unless less technologically advanced areas have a chance to catch up, the increasing technological advances in developed nations that will only serve to exacerbate the already-existing economic gap between technological *have* and *have not* areas. Internationally the United Nations actively promotes ICTs for development as a means of bridging the digital divide". We have seen many centuries of scientific cum technological development. Some of these centuries

are recorded in the Philosophical History of Science and Philosophical History of Development.

ICT IN EDUCATION

Education which is the practice and process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of occupation (Philip, 1965: 25) knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits so as to make the best of a human being character-wise is an art (Philip, 1965: 51). It is, therefore, a cumulative measure and process of personnel activity, human and national development. Education, therefore, is for whollistic development through man. To this end, education is faced with myriads of greater challenges that are global. Without education, human development would have been lopsided tilting towards mere *animality*. Education basically tames and trains the *animality* in man through different pedagogical approaches. Education in relation to ICTs nevertheless should be of functional value and tailored towards man's happiness as a well informed being. This informed man in turn organizes the society through many developmental strides to have a humane or a friendly developed society. This is why the right to education (Art 13 of the United Nation 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights) is an inalienable right to every human person mostly for children. In this sense then, one can see that education is a global need and "this new global reality is essentially a new awareness of unity" (Oguejiofor and Onah, 2005:

301). The system of meeting up with the goals may differ from one country to another but the fundamental principles of learning and essence of education is same. Education to this extent ought to be trans-cultural and complementary of other nations or countries. Owing to the fact that the world is developing every day, we need to key in into the mainstream of global civilization especially through ICT oriented-education.

To this extent, one sees the greater need to upgrade our education and its system to meet up with the global challenges. Of course, this is not possible without incorporating ICTs in our educational system. In our contemporary society today, the number of internet users doubles every day. ICT is ever present, internet users increases by leaps and bound. ICT is becoming the keystone of everyday life. Most of our lives are technologically bound. One of the Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs), which replaced Millennium Development Goals, (MDGs), is Quality Education (expanding education opportunities to all children), that is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". The achievement and sustenance of these SDGs, especially Quality Education is very possible through ICT based education. More so, with regard to promoting ICT in education, UNESCO asserted that: "Information and communications

Technology can contribute to universal access to education, equity in education, the delivery of quality learning and teaching, teacher's professional development and more efficient education management, governance and administration. UNESCO takes a holistic and comprehensive approach to promoting ICT in education" (UNESCO, 2016).

CONCLSION

ICT in our education and learning styles is simply a credit. In line with the trend of things, ICT can help expose one to other educational possibilities and strengths thereby help in strengthening healthy educational policies in the planning and management. With ICT in our educational system, there should be maximum opportunities in having access to learning, improving quality of teaching and learning, ensure inclusion and other lucrative resources. With ICT in education, the stressed hindrances of textbook updating, production and distribution are reduced. When ICT complements education and its systems, our students will be in a better position to be global learners because resources will be available through open materials of e-book and e-libraries.

References

- Ibekwe C.N. (ed), (2008), *Philosophy of Education: An Introduction*, Umuze: Annyco Publishers.
- ICT: searchcio.techtarget.com/archive/2005/9
- ICT: searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/ICT.
- Igboabuchi B.O. & Ofojebe W.N., (2010), *Philosophy and Theories of Education*, Onitsha: Lincel Pub.
- Iroegbu, P. (1994), *Enwisdomization and African Philosophy*, Owerri: International Universities Press Ltd
- Genensis, Chapter 1, Verse 26.
- Nwankwo, C.N., (2011), *Teachers' Ongoing Formation Series*, Vol. 4, Nimo: Rex Charles & Partrick.
- Oguejiofor, J.O. & Onah, G.I. (eds), (2005), *African Philosophy and the Hermeneutics of Culture*, USA: Transaction Publishers.
- Onebunne J.I. *Teachers' Ongoing Formation Series*, Vol.1, (2009) Nimo: Rex Charles & Partrick.
- Philip G. Smith, (1965), *Philosophy of Education*, NY: Harper & Row.
- SDGs: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education
- UNESCO, March 10, 2016.
- United Nation 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Wikipedia (2012): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/informations_and_commnuications_technology