An Assessment of the Use of Technological Materials by Students to Study Social Studies in Niger State College of Education Minna

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Abstract

The paper on the assessment of the use of Technological materials by students to study social studies in Niger state college of education Minna was carried out to find out the Technological Materials resources that are available and accessible to social studies students in Niger state college of Education. The study was also to determine the factors responsible for students not using Technological materials in their school. The design adopted to gather information in this study was survey design. 85 social studies students in 200 level were used. A structured questionnaire comprising of four sections based on the research questions was also adopted. Percentages were used to answer research questions one and two, while the mean was used to answer research questions three and four. The data collected were analyzed. The result revealed that not all Technological materials are available and those available are not accessible to students except computer, internet printer and browser phones. The mean factors affecting the use of Technological materials by students include poor electricity, inadequate resources and limited time. This explains why students cannot use technological materials for their studies even though they have the interest and knowledge on what to use and how to use them. Recommendations were made among which is that efforts should be made by the administrators concern to make the necessary Technological materials resources available and accessible to students so that they can develop more interest in their study and social studies in particular.

Introduction

The study, of social studies is intended to promote the development of competent citizens who possess the critical thinking skills necessary to function in a democratic society. Social studies provide the background knowledge and experience for the students to build upon in future when he picks up any of the scholarly disciplines. Demion (2011) defines social studies as a "set of goals which describes how citizenship education content should be selected, organized and taught well"

Social studies according to Umeh (2010), is important because it explains to people who they are, and why they live, and where they live. Social studies as a subject develop people's interest in the way of the life of people by allowing individual to appreciate human achievements and aspiration. The subject teaches students the major cultural aspects of life individually and the world at large. In addition, social studies teach how those cultural aspects of life have influenced one another. For any nation to develop a sound basis for solving her present societal problems and issues, the study of social studies is necessary because it provides information on how similar societal issues and problems in this present time has been resolved.

As a set of goals which describes how citizenship education content should be selected, social studies provided explanation of change in terms of human intentions, beliefs, and motives. The study of social studies encourages an understanding of the process of change and continuity in human affairs. As a discipline, social studies contribute greatly to the personal and social education of the people. It develops in students attitudes and values necessary for toleration a range of opinions needed in unifying a diverse people such as ours. The relevance of social studies in nation development is highlighted in the nation policy of education (NPE) (2004) where the subject is integrated as a core subject in junior secondary school education.

Many reasons have been advanced for the poor academic performance of students generally in social studies subject which has led to poor enrolment of students into both college of education and university to study sociology as a course. One of the problems that the study of social studies is facing ranges from the abstracts nature of the subject which is said to be fully of values, norms and attitudes (Danto 2010). Danto went further to say that students have complained that social studies is diversify subject, and it is difficult to understand the key concept of change, consequence, cultural life of people. According to Zipas (2009) students hate social studies because to them subject is not relevant and uninteresting. He also explained that the reason students think this way is because most teachers do not use audio-visual aids which is part of Technological materials to make the lesson practicable and meaningful to the students. Jaffer (2008) lamented that many teachers of social studies do not present an existing approach to teaching social studies and suggested that social studies can be taught

effectively when instructional technology is being used. Ahmed (2007) encourages teachers of social studies to engage students when teaching social studies by using Technological materials. Umeh (2008) is of the belief that Technological materials brings changes in the way information is presented and learned with the present technology and communication explosion, it is expected that the tertiary institution should depend more on Technological materials for enhanced learning. This is because Technological materials can motivate students' interest to study the subject. The problem of social studies has threatened its future especially in Nigeria higher education which is noticed in students' low enrolment to study the subject, even when students have the required qualification to study social studies, most of them will prefer to study other subjects such as history, government and political science. According to Isiaku (2007) British higher education faced a similar situation in the 19502s and series of innovations were introduced in order to restore the glory of social studies which include the use of ICT in form of computer assisted learning (CAL) developed from spreadsheets and database use, the internet and other technologies.

Technological Materials are handling tools that can be used to produced, stored and process, distribute and exchange information (John 2006). He also stressed that Technological materials can be used to access global knowledge and communication with other complex topics and concepts and are more likely to recall information and use it to solve problems outside the classroom. In addition, through Technology, students extend and deepen their knowledge of investigation and inquiry according to their need and interest when accessed to information that is available in multiple levels. Alexus (2009) identified different types of technology that can be used to support and enhance learning. This includes video players, laptops computing and had held technologies, word processing and e-mail promote communication skills, database and spreadsheet programmes promote organizational skills and so on.

Jude (2007) stated that asserts such as cell phones that many people move about with can be useful to learn. Technological materials when used can empower students learning by enabling them improve their class work by taking notes on the computer, or by sending homework e-mail to the teacher from home, or by word processing their homework.

Many reasons have been advanced for poor academic performance of students generally which has led to poor enrolment of students into various higher institution including colleges of education and the universities to study social studies. One of the problems the study of social studies is facing ranges from the abstracts nature of the course which is said to be fully technical (Danto 2010). He went further to say that social studies is very difficult to understand because of its technical nature and technological tolls involved.

College of education Minna is as old as other colleges of education. It is gathered by the researcher that most students studying social studies did not actually apply to study social studies, but other courses. They may lack interest in this subject, but with the use of Technological equipment, the student can enjoy social studies as a course and overcome the difficulties faced in studying such course. The use of Technological materials will not be easy for the students unless the college assists by providing the resources to the students. The federal government of Nigeria has encouraged the use of Technological materials in her institution of higher learning in the National policy of education and the policy encouraged the use of ICT which the policy stated in section 4(m).

In recognition of prominent role of technology in advancing knowledge and skills necessary for effective functioning in modern world, there is urgent need to integrate the use of Technological materials into colleges of education in Nigeria. For tertiary Institutions, the federal Government in the policy encouraged that each institution should explore other sources of funding such as endowments, consultancy services and commercial ventures. Kaduna State University though new has made efforts to that direction to establish its own Technology driven projects and programmes. Recently some of the staff had opportunity to travel to India for workshop on the integration of Technology in their teaching though specifically in the sciences, it is hoped that other subjects in the arts shall follow suit. In a study conducted on Technology literacy among NCE graduates in Nigeria colleges of education discovered that internet, computer and telephone were the Technological materials mostly used by NCE graduates although more on occasional basis. The study further discovered that major factors affecting the use of Technological materials were irregular power supply, inadequate ICT and limited time for Technology use. The use Technological materials by the students will depend on their knowledge, belief and attitude towards the use of Technology. Ahmed (2009) noted that students who like Technology and belief that it is capable of helping their pedagogical objectives in the classroom can easily integrate the use of Technological materials into their classroom learning. While those who don't belief in ICT, ignore is integration in their learning. This study therefore will specifically find out whether Technological materials Resources are available and accessible for the students in college of education Minna.

Research Questions

To achieve the stated objective of the study, the following research questions will be answered.

1. What are the available Technological materials for students' use in college of education Minna?
2. How accessible are these resources to students?
3. How often do students use Technological materials for their studies?
4. What are the factors affecting the effective uses of Technological materials resource?

Methodology

This study is a descriptive survey design. This method allows the researcher to have a vivid description of how social studies students in college of education Minna use Technological materials for their studies.

The populations of the study comprised 85 social studies students in 200 level in department of social studies , this is because they have studies social studies for at least one year in the school; they will be in a better position in providing the adequate information needed for this study.

The instrument is a structured questionnaire by the researcher based on information gathered from the literature on different types of Technological materials. The instrument administration was carried out by the researcher during their lectures and was collected the same day. The data collected on the study was analyzed using frequency count and percentages for questions 1 and 2. The mean statistic was used to answer research questions 3 and 4.

Results

The result of the data collected is presented based on the responses of the respondents on the available and accessibility of Technological materials resources and factors responsible for use or lack of use of Technological materials.

Table 1: Percentage of student's responses on the Availability of ICT Resources

S/No	Technological Materials	Available Frequency %		Not Available Frequency %		Result
1	Computers	54	63.5	31	36.5	Available
2	E-mail	54	63.5	31	36.5	Available
3	Internet	59	69.4	26	30.6	Available
4	Digital Camera	31	36.5	54	63.5	Not Available
5	Scanner	32	37.6	53	62.4	Not Available
6	Video equipment	30	35.3	55	64.7	Not Available
7	Data processor	40	47.1	45	52.9	Not Available
8	Printer	45	52.9	40	47.1	Available
9	Browser phones	56	65.9	29	34.1	Available

The result in Table 1 showed that some of the Technological materials such as computers, e-mail, internet and browser phones available as indicated in items 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9 while the rest such as digital camera, scanner, video equipment, and data processor are not available an indicated in items 4, 5, 6, and 7

Table 2: Percentage of Students' Resources on their Accessibility to Technological Materials

S/No	Technological Materials	Available Frequency %		Available Frequency %		Result
1	Computers	39	45.9	46	54.1	Not accessible
2	E-mail	38	44.7	47	52.3	Not accessible
3	Internet	47	52.3	38	44.7	Accessible
4	Digital Camera	24	28.2	61	71.8	Not accessible
5	Scanner	24	28.2	61	71.8	Not accessible
6	Video equipment	19	28.4	66	77.6	Not accessible
7	Data processor	24	28.2	61	71.8	Not accessible
8	Printer	30	35.3	55	64.7	Not accessible
9	Browser phones	47	52.3	38	44.7	Accessible

The data in Table 2 revealed that the respondents have access to internet and browser phones only as item 3 and 9 indicate. Other Technological materials in the table are not accessible to the respondents are indicated in items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Table 3: Frequency of the use of ICT Resources

S/No	Technological Materials	Percentage/Number of Respondents			
		Once a week N = 85	Twice a week N = 85	Daily N = 85	Occasionally N = 85
1	Computers	16%(14)	13%(11)	51%(43)	20%(17)
2	E-mail	15%(13)	35%(30)	30%(25)	20%(17)
3	Internet	16%(13)	15%(12)	50%(43)	20%(17)
4	Digital Camera	65%(55)	11%(9)	10%(8)	15%(13)
5	Scanner	73%(62)	18%(16)	4%(3)	5%(4)
6	Video equipment	90%(77)	5%(4)	1%(1)	4%(3)
7	Data processor	10%(8)	15%(13)	70%(60)	5%(4)
8	Printer	15%(13)	35%(30)	30%(25)	20%(17)
9	Browser phones	5%(4)	7%(6)	80%(68)	8%(7)

The data in Table 3 show that the respondent used computers, internet, data processor and answer phones more than other resources. This could be as a result of the availability of these resources all around the campus and more of the respondents have their own browser phones.

Table 4: Means Responses on Factors Affecting the Utilization of Technological Materials

S/No	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	n	X	Decision
1	Students lack expertise with technology	08	21	18	38	85	1.98	Disagree
2	Students lack confidence in using Technological materials	11	14	21	39	85	1.91	Disagree
3	Students lack knowledge of appropriate software	09	20	20	36	85	2.02	Disagree
4	Students lack of how to use equipment	10	19	18	40	85	2.03	Disagree
5	Students lack knowledge on the importance of use of Technological materials for learning	15	16	10	44	85	2.09	Disagree
6	The use of Technological materials is very difficult	6	09	20	50	85	1.65	Disagree
7	Poor electricity supply	28	24	18	15	85	2.76	Agree
8	Using Technological materials is not interesting	11	03	23	48	85	1.72	Disagree
9	Inadequate Technological materials	32	16	19	18	85	2.72	Agree
10	Lack of sufficient time	38	15	18	14	85	2.90	Agree
11	Using Technological materials makes history more difficult	06	05	21	53	85	1.57	Disagree
12	Technology reduces students motivation to study history	10	04	19	52	85	1.67	Disagree

The result in Table 4 showed that the respondents disagree with items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11 and 12, but agree with items 7, 9 and 10. This means that the students are capable of using technological materials and have knowledge on what to use and how to use technology. The students also know the importance of technology. The problem is lack of availability and accessibility to technological materials; poor electricity supply and sufficient time.

Summary of Findings
Based on the data collected of this research is follows:
1. Some technological materials such as computer, e-mail, internet and browser phones are available to students I college of education Minna
2. Technological materials such as computer, e-mail, digital camera, video equipment, data processor and printer are not accessible to the students.
3. The Technological materials that used mostly by students are computer, internet, data processor and browser phones.
4. Main factor responsible for effective utilization of technology include lack of availability, poor power supply and sufficient time.

Discussion
The result presented in Table 1 – 4 showed that social studies students in college of education Minna have knowledge on the use of technology and the students' belief that technology can motivate them in their

study of social studies. The problem is on the availability of the resources. Some of the resources available like digital camera, scanner, video equipment, data processor are not accessible. David (2008) has earlier noted that available technological materials cannot be used if they are not accessible. In this age of technology advancement, students are more eager to use any technological materials within their reach. The result of the findings agree with the study carried out by Adetinirin (2011) that the factors affecting students' used of technology include, poor power supply; insufficient time and inadequate resources. The computer, internet and the browser phones are within students' reach because they can own their computer with any internet accessory and phones. Even when they don't have one, they can pay for airtime and use them. Other resources that should be provided are not there and that could affect students' information retrieval and processing. This means that students will have to do the best they can to study history if not, they will be discourage and the lesson will be boring and the problems that are threatening history will continue to discourage others by giving them the impression that history is a very difficult subject.

Recommendations

Based on the result and discussion above, the following recommendations were made.

1. College education Minna and other state colleges of education should make efforts to ensure that ICT resources are available and accessible to the students.

2. Efforts should be made by Niger state college of education to revive the study of social studies in Nigeria by encouraging students to effectively use technological materials to study social studies.

3. Lecturers should be encouraged to use technological materials to teach other subjects so that students will be encouraged to use more technological in their studies.

Conclusion

Social study is very relevant in the development of any nation. Lack of knowledge of technology skills acquisition will be like people and living in the dark. Knowledge of the people's ways of life will help them to plan for the future and can help the people be able to live together and tolerate one another. The use of technological materials helps to change the way students learn and process information.

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