

# **EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FOR QUALITATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION IN NIGERIA**

**BY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Education industry in Nigeria has gone beyond verifying the role of Educational Technology in teaching and learning events. This is occasioned by the wide use of information and communication technologies (ICT). With the copious use of these technologies, students and parents have come to appreciate the unique contribution of educational technology to qualitative education, al-be-it-with some level of misconception in the use of the concept. This short discussion is meant to distinguish **educational technology** from **technology education** and **universal schooling** from **qualitative education**. It identifies various ways educational technology as a discipline could add value and quality to the education offered to Nigerian citizens.

## **INTRODUCTION**

For over three decades, the emphasis on education globally has been on access to education. This is because every nation regards education as human right issue as well as instrument for national development. At the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2009), 164 nations pledged to provide quality basic education for all children. This forum, led by the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) gave birth to the global movement, Education For All (EFA) in 2015. Nigeria was part of the convention. Again, one of the eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals specifically aimed at achieving universal primary education by the year 2015. Nigeria as one of the UN member states also endorsed this commitment. It is a known fact that education is United Kingdom's industry. Various nations have given prime position to education as evidenced in their annual budget. In Nigeria, concepts like educational imbalance, educational disadvantaged states and inclusive education have been commonly used to indicate the need to make education more accessible to the citizens. In the process, governments, non-governmental organizations, politicians and private individuals have put in place various measures to make education more accessible. To a very large extend, Nigeria has achieved "universal schooling", a situation where a large number of its citizens have gone into structured school system.

## **THE CONCEPT OF UNIVERSAL SCHOOLING VERSUS QUALITY EDUCATION**

Universal schooling emphasized number and coverage. It is common to hear of politicians' talk of "free and compulsory education" and

the percentage of school attending children in public schools as a measure of educational advancement. Attendance at formal school system without a corresponding quality product is not educational advancement. Many states may have achieved universal schooling if their mobilization mechanism is powerful enough. For instance, the Federal Government in the 2017 program broadcast report observed that the home -grown food plan of the All Progressive Congress ( APC) government has brought more children to the formal school system. Provision of school meals is therefore a good mobilisation strategy for access. However, assessment of the products from these schools will demonstrate that only few of these schools have been able to provide qualitative education to their citizens. Majority of primary school products who can neither read or write have merely achieved “universal schooling”.

Qualitative education deals with value and functionality, interestingly, the public is aware of the value of a qualitative education and is prepared to pay for it. It appreciates the fact that a high quality education provides the recipients personal fulfilment, better social skills and more diverse employment opportunities. While universal schooling, on the contrary may likely produce certificate holders who are restive and vulnerable to clandestine activities because of the poor content of their training. It would be an interesting study to investigate the number of middle class and low income parents who have sent their wards to private institutions because they want quality education for their wards. An interesting scene took place in my office two years ago when I received an invitation to attend a round table conference in UK. My office assistant spotted the word “London” in the venue of the event and

quickly remarked, "Mummy, you should attend this one, it is going to be in London". The excitement that followed the statement was due to the fact that over a time London has been associated with quality. Any product made in London would be taken as a good quality product and desirable. In analogue to a "London made product" is a desire for qualitative education. The craze to study abroad including going to Countries like Malaysia, Turkey, Ghana, and the Cameroon is all in search of some "qualitative education". Education generally is an instrument for national development, but education that can transform an individual and by extension a nation must be a qualitative one, not universal schooling. For such reasons, many great nations do not toy with or politicize their education. Similarly, teachers who are facilitators of learning and the key components for development are crucial in providing qualitative education to the citizenry.

Development in science and technology has brought to the limelight the indispensable role of the ICT in education and training, people everywhere look at ICT as the magic wand to achieve qualitative education. The challenges of large class size, dearth of teaching and learning resources, inadequate and incompetently trained teachers, and the hard-to-reach populace are enough reasons to want to integrate ICT into Nigerian schools. ICT can indeed lend themselves to meet these challenges and provide an excellent system for qualitative education output.

There is therefore a real yearning for qualitative education and educational technology is deemed as a bridge to introduce the much needed quality into the universal schooling so far provided. Of late technology education specifically computer technology in school is

regarded as one of the most fast growing educational development tools. Proprietors of private institutions use the number of computer systems they can afford to attract students into schools. Parents also assess the “quality” of schools by the number of the available computer systems and their connectivity. This development has heightened the interest of teachers in the use of technology in education. It is worth noting that mere availability of computer system in schools does not constitute educational development.

## **EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY VERSUS TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**

These two phrases are often misunderstood by many including some professionals in education industry. While the two phrases tend to sound similar, they are quite different. It is essential to bring out the distinction between them for effective application of the two in teaching and learning.

Educational technology is a dynamic problem solving approach in education industry. In 2016 the Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AECT) further endorsed the 2008 definition by Januszewski and Molenda as, “the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using and managing appropriate technological processes and resources”.

An educational technologist therefore is an individual trained in the ethical practice of facilitating learning. Such training equips the trainee to analyse, design, develop, implement and evaluate

learning process, strategies and the tools to enhance learning. ICT by themselves cannot fix problems of education; they are gadgets that should be skilfully applied to problem situations by trained educational technologist who is in position to operate according to the professional model of A-D-D-I-E.

This five phrases framework (ADDIE) gives the generic processes that an educational technologist as an instructional designer or training developer could use as guide in problem identification and remediation.

- **Analyse** the learners, the teachers, resources and other teaching and learning conditions ,and situations with the mind of identifying problems, the operating learning environments;
- **Design** course ware, learning resources and enabling learning environments as solution to the identified problems;
- **Develop** a model, prototype of what have been designed (resources and learning environments etc.);
- **Implement** or use the developed model or prototype with the target users, and observe their effectiveness in solving the identified problems;.
- **Evaluate** the outcome and make value judgement about the effectiveness of either the product, model or strategy as applicable. The key focus component in the evaluation should be learners centred.

Technology education on the other hand is a field of study for individuals trained in the development of technological tools, or gadgets for use in communication generally and depending on the focus of the production, could be designed specifically for use in instructional events. These individuals are the drivers of ICT; they

are behind the revolution of technology in teaching and learning, the inventors of smart boards, computers and various internet applications. The education sector with myriads of needs naturally become the largest market for their products. Some of the end users of their products are of course teachers, parents and students. However, at the design and development functions of learning resources, the dividing line diminishes.

### **THE STAKE IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FOR QUALITATIVE EDUCATION**

Application of educational technology system to the educational needs at any of the three tiers, education system improves the quality of educational services offered. Educational technology has the potential to add value to education and training. It ensures efficiency, as it improves the quality of teaching and learning within and outside the classroom. It could be easily used in the continuous professional development of the teachers (Ekpo, 2010). The Nigerian educational system is fraught with several challenges ranging from inadequate curricular content, to large class sizes to incompetently trained workforce. Poor pedagogy and dearth of quality learning materials.

These challenges can all be addressed by an educational technologist with appropriate interventions using ICT. The uniqueness of such intervention lies in the fact that educational technology interventions would usually be based on the results of its analysis of educational needs as opposed to technological concerns. The unparalleled quality of media resources available and accessible to both students and teachers during such interventions enhances the quality of education offered.



## **CONCLUSION**

Education generally is a proven instrument for national development. Globally, it is considered as human right for the citizenry. Educational exposure that can transform an individual and thereby cause a nation to be developed must be a qualitative one, systematically planned, and implemented. Attainment of qualitative education requires comprehensive improvement on all components of educational processes (the teacher, the learner, the learning environment and the administration). These inputs of human and material resources are what guarantee the educational system to be referred to as an instrument par excellence for national development. Where the learning environment is bereft of these components, trained educational technologists using appropriate tools of communication technology (ICT) can provide qualitative education to the teeming population of Nigerians.

## **REFERENCNS**

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