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## The usage of information and communication technology in Nigeria primary schools: Problems and prospects

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### Abstract

The paper investigated the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Osun State Primary Schools. Questionnaires were administered to 100 primary school teachers. The questionnaires were designed to find out the roles of ICT in teaching and learning and problems associated with its usage in the primary schools. Results showed that the majority of the primary school teachers in Osun State lack the basic skills required for the usage of computer. In addition, the teachers support the implementation of ICT in primary schools. The results also revealed that using ICT is problematic in Osun State Primary Schools.

Keywords: information and communication technology, (ICT), primary, schools, teachers;

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## 1. Introduction

Information Technology (IT) is concerned with the use of technology in managing and processing of information. In particular, Information Technology deals with the use of electronic computers and computer software to convert, store, protect, process, transmit and retrieve information. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines information as facts or details about something or somebody. Chambers Compact Dictionary defined information as knowledge gained or given. Technology has been defined as scientific knowledge used in practical ways in the industry. Cambridge International Dictionary of English defined technology as the study and knowledge of the practical use of scientific discoveries.

The above definitions show that there is a close relationship between information and technology. Communication on its own part is an indispensable tool in all human Endeavour's, and it has been defined by Akanbi (1988) as the process of transmitting and exchanging ideas, knowledge, information and skills through symbols, writing to create mutual understanding between interlocutors. Adekomi (2004) also defined communication as the flow of information from a source to the receiver. Thus, information communication Technology is concerned with the transfer of information through scientific means.

Information technology was formally integrated into the school curriculum when the national curriculum was first devised in United Kingdom (Forman, 1987). It was quickly understood that the work covered was useful in all subjects. With the arrival of the Internet and the broadband connections to all schools, the application of information technology knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects became a reality. According to Pringles (2002), this change in emphasis has resulted in a change of name from Information Technology to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT in education can be understood as the application of digital equipment to all aspects of teaching and learning (Winglet, 2002). The growth of use of ICT and its tools in the field of education has seen tremendous growth in the recent past; technology has entered the classroom in a big way to become part of the teaching and learning process. According to Carison (1995), the roles of ICT in teaching and learning process cannot be underestimated. He therefore summarized the roles:

- (a) It makes education more child-centered by providing many alternative paths with a variety of resources so that learning can take place in accordance to the learner's study performance.
- (b) It makes learning more immediate by bridging the gap between the worlds inside and outside the classrooms by means of the experience that educational resource materials can provide.
- (c) It supplements the teacher through enhancing his effectiveness in the classroom.
- (d) It checks the provision of limited facilities like classroom, study halls, and library for learners.
- (e) It provides learning guidance through individualized learning study package system thus lessening students' dependence on teachers, enabling them to study on their own without coming in contact with the teacher.

The objective of this paper is to address the usage of ICTs in relation to primary education and relate it to sustainable development of education in Nigeria and Osun State in particular. In addition, the study will examine the problems and prospects associated with the usage of ICT in Osun State primary schools and find out the effectiveness of ICT on Osun- State Primary school education.

### *1.1. Research questions*

For this study, the following research questions were put forward.

- (i) How often is computer used in teaching and learning in your school?
- (ii) Are there problems with implementing the use of computer as a medium for effective teaching in Nigeria primary schools?
- (iii) What are the factors that may hinder the usage of computer in primary schools?
- (iv) Can other aspects of IT like slide, clip art, etc. be used apart from the usage of computer in primary school?

## **2. Methodology**

### *2.1. Subjects.*

The sample of the study consisted of 100 primary school teachers. Twenty teachers were randomly selected from each of five primary schools making up 100 teachers altogether. The schools were all from Ife Central Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria.

### *2.2. Instrumentation*

The instrument used for this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire was all about the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Osun State primary schools. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A focused on obtaining information on age, sex, position and years of service.

Section B focused on finding out the usage of Information Communication and Technology in primary school, while section C was about the problems encountered while using computer.

100 copies of questionnaire were administered to the teachers. The validation of the instrument was established by applying content sampling technique.

### *2.3. Procedure*

One hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered to the teachers by the researcher. The respondents were supposed to reply "yes" or "no" to the items of the questionnaire.

## **3. Results**

Research question 1: How often is computer used in your school?

S/N	ITEMS	YES	%		%
1.	Do you use computer in your school as supplement to chalking and talking?	68	(68%)	32	(32%)
2.	Is computer being used in teaching and learning in primary school?	72	(72%)	28	28%
3.	Do you agree with the introduction of computer into the primary school curriculum?	100	100%	-	-

Table 1 shows that 68% of the respondents use computer in their school, while 32% do not. It is also indicated that 72% of the respondents agreed that computer was used for teaching and learning in their schools, while 28% of the respondents do not use computer for teaching and learning in their schools. Lastly, 100% of the teachers agreed with the introduction of computer into the primary schools curriculum.

From the above result, it is clear that computer package is not being used by the majority of the teachers, even though a very large number of them support the introduction of IT into the school curriculum.

Research question 2: Are there problems with the usage of computer as a medium for effective teaching in primary schools?

Table 2.

S/N		Yes	%	Yes	%
1	Are there problems with the implementing of usage of computer as a medium for effective teaching	89	89%	11	11%

Table 2 above shows that 89 teachers (89%) agreed that there were problems, while 11 (11%) stated that there were no problems in the implementation. This result is in line with Bada and Bamidele (2005) who were of the opinion that computer education faced a lot of problems in Osun

State. Research question 3: What are the factors that may hinder the usage of computer as a medium for effective teaching?

The factors are itemized below, and the responses were graded: agree, strongly agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Table 3

S/O	FACTORS	A	%	SA	%	U	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Power Failure	78	78%	22	22%						
2	Disturbance from friends	66	66%			10	10%	24	24%		
3	Lack of computer skills by teachers	66	66%	34	34%			5	5%		
4	Lack of funds	85	85%	10	10%						
5	Lack of information about the use/impact it may have on teaching and learning	62	62%	38	38%						

Table 3 reveals that there are lots of problems with using computer as a medium for effective teaching in primary schools. The results show that the above listed factors have hindered effective utilization of computers in Osun State primary schools. Nevertheless, the teachers agreed that the package is available in their schools; in addition, they support the introduction of computer usage into the school curriculum.

Research question 4: Can other areas of IT like slides, clip art, etc. be used in primary schools apart from the usage of computer?

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentages
Yes	85	85%
No	15	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 above shows that 85% of the teachers agreed that other areas of information technology like slides, videos, and clip art can be used in primary school apart from the use of computer, while 15% disagreed

#### 4. Discussion

From the results obtained, it may be inferred that computer package is not used by the majority of the teachers in Osun State primary schools, even though a large number of teachers support the introduction of computer usage into the Primary schools' curriculum. It was also revealed that there are factors hindering the effective utilization of computer in Nigeria primary schools, even though some of these schools have the package. Some of these factors are constant power failure, lack of funds, lack of computer skills on the part of teachers, and lack of information about the impact of ICT on teaching and learning.

The conclusion of this study is that teachers in primary schools in Osun State will have incredible resources available if they have access to the Internet. By integrating information and communication technology into primary school curriculum, a fundamental shift in the way teachers teach and students learn will evolve. However, to integrate computer into teaching and learning in primary school in Osun State, there must be proper and adequate funding of education. Nigeria and Osun state in particular need to invest heavily in the Internet business by creating environment for primary school students to participate in downloading useful information via the Internet.

Finally, constant training in form of seminars, lectures and workshops should be organized for the teachers to enhance their competency in the use of ICT.

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