Chapter 38
Education Leaders' Utilization of Information and Communication Technology for Development in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The sample is comprised of principals, vice-principals, headmasters, and teachers as educational leaders in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. The study adopted quantitative research design of the survey type to determine education leaders' perceptions on the adoption of information and communication technology. The quantitative approach in this study involves the use of research instruments consisting of closed-ended, on-line, and paper-based questionnaires (single version sent to multiple respondents). The study found out that education leaders have low perception on the adoption of information and communication technology for dissemination of information, utilization of virtual learning environments among teachers. The study also found out that lack of awareness on e-learning software and inadequate use of internet-enabled technologies or applications were highlighted as challenges in adoption of ICTs for development in Nigeria. The study recommended that educational leaders should make ICT adoption needs known to appropriate authorities.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the most populous African countries and its influence spread well beyond sub-Saharan Africa. Many of the developmental challenges experienced within the country are not unconnected to the level of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) usage. There have been a number of studies on ICT in Nigeria, most of which have focused on importance of ICTs in various sectors such as ICT in Nigerian legal system, ICT in the health sector system among others (Adeyeye & Iweha, 2005; Bamodu, 2004; Idowu, Ogunbodede, & Idowu, 2003; Olatokun, 2006). If ICT are imperative for teachers as well as enhances the quality of education, as Kwache (2007) and Akpan (2008) argued, the question, therefore, arises on the role of educational leaders in the use of ICT. In other words, is there any role being played by educational leaders on ICT usage in primary and secondary schools? Information and communication technology are electronic resources or media that are used to disseminate, receive, store and retrieve information, educational and learning content irrespective location and time. These media resources are the facilitators of educational delivery in the 21st century re-defining the specific of roles educational leaders especially in the primary and secondary levels of education.

Educational leadership is conceptualized in this paper as the involvement of school leaders and administrators in primary and secondary schools (Principals, Headmasters and Teachers) in facilitating relevant, timely, effective and equitable education. The position of educational leaders can be further seen in the context of local, national, and global changes and challenges of the 21st century. The role of educational leadership especially in primary and secondary schools have been modelled along seven critical roles, which are: facilitators of change, architects of school culture, leaders of learning, leaders for professional development, links to parents and communities, strategic communicators, and data-based decision makers (Alas, Tafel, & Tuulik, 2007; Bell & Chan, 2005; Bezzina, 2002; Deal & Peterson, 1999; English & Steffy, 2005; Fullan, 2001; Leithwood, 1996; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2008; Normore, 2004; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2008). The indispensable role that ICT play in world is not limited to the economic sector, the field of education has also been affected by the penetrating influence of new ICT such as phones, email, and the World Wide Web. Apart from enhancing teaching and learning through its dynamic, interactive, and engaging content; ICT also provide real opportunities for individualized instruction (Yusuf, 2005) bringing about new modes of instructional delivery system and bridging digital divide. ICT can make schools more efficient and productive by providing opportunities to communicate through email, mailing lists, chat rooms, learning management systems and so on. ICT also offers faster and easier access to broader and current information, and it can be used to compute mathematical and statistical calculations (Kirschner & Woperies, 2003; Yusuf & Onasanya, 2004).

Background

ICT in Nigeria brought significant changes to almost all aspects of the peoples' lives in recent years. It has transformed activities such as the way people work, communicate, shop, travel, and even enjoy leisure time. The rate of change does not indicate any sign of slowing down rather, developments of ICT and its applications to areas such as education are continuing to grow, albeit, not at a fast rate as expected. However, in a relatively short period of time, acquisition of ICT skills in Nigeria have become as fundamental to living as being able to read, write, numeric ability (Okafor & Malizu, 2014). One of the most central concerns in the current drive for ICT development is the role of school leaders in

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