

E-education: Changing the Mindsets of Resistant and Saboteur Teachers

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Abstract

Advances in information and communication technology are reshaping the ways educators convey learning experiences to learners. To date, most teachers firmly believe that the traditional method of instruction is the best. Hence, there is the need to change the mindsets of these educators towards the use of technologies in the classroom in order to meet the current demands of learners. Consequently, educators need to acquire and utilize the necessary information and communication technologies of today. Siddiqui (2008) asserts that if the technology is to be appropriately used to support student collaboration, inquiry, and interactive learning, teachers' beliefs about teaching/learning must change. This paper, therefore, highlights the need for resistant and saboteur teachers in Nigeria to change their mindsets towards the use of technologies in the classroom in order to meet the emerging cultural change in teaching and learning process in the contemporary age. It examined why teachers' are skeptical about using technologies in the classroom. The scholars' proffered suggestions to encourage resistant teachers to learn the use of new technologies in teaching/learning process. However, the benefits and the future of use of these technologies in the classroom by teachers' were concisely examined.

KEYWORDS: E-education; Mindset; Resistant teachers and Saboteur teachers

INTRODUCTION

Siddiqui (2007) opined that the emerging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) society puts new demands on the education system. The scholar further asserts that the existing education system will not be capable of meeting these demands without a major change. There is no other change than a paradigm shift from the conservative teaching methodology. since the technological revolution has transformed many aspects of life, especially the methods of teaching, so have conceptions of skills and knowledge children will need to become successful adults and the relevant educational experiences they should encounter while attending school (Siddiqui, 2007). The teaching/learning process has to change to meet the demands of the Net generation learners.

It is not an overstatement to say that the benefits of ICT in human development are very enormous, especially in the education industry. Of all the gains made by technologies in the field of education, most of the Faculty staff have a lot of difficulties adapting to the new technologies. In affirmation, Sofowora 2 new technologies in instruction. Undoubtedly, I assume that there is an element of technophobia? If that is the case, how do we wriggle out of this phenomenon in order to acquire the skills necessary for today's technological society?

Now, there is a big problem, and the problem is how to change the mindsets of academic staff towards the use of information and communication technologies. It is, however, surprising to say that in spite of sophisticated computing devices penetrating and improving the process of teaching and learning that enhance classroom experiences for pupils/students, many Faculty staff remains resistant cum saboteurs, and further advance several reasons for not integrating ICT in the education system. If we are to leap from where we are now, we need to embrace the technology of today very fast in order to race with the race of the world.

TEACHERS' SKEPTICISMS AGAINST THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In as much as few members of the teaching profession wholly welcome the use of technologies and ever ready to learn how to use them, most of them, as cited by Siddiqui (2007) advanced some skepticisms held by teachers against the use of technologies. The scholar observed that many teachers don't initially see any benefit in having access to the new technologies of teaching and learning. Some also see it as a more demand on time and a set of tools not asked for and even do not know how to use. Some teachers are of the view that they are already doing a good job in the classroom and wondered what improvements the technology will further bring.

For a better comprehension of this paper, it is pertinent to define the terms, "Resistant teachers" and "Saboteur teachers".

Resistant teachers: This refers to teachers who have no plan on using technology in their classes, even though they might be capable of using it.

Saboteur teachers: Those teachers who not only aren't interested in new programs but are actually committed to stopping new ideas, such as technology implementation (Creighton, 1997). As the author puts, saboteur' teachers can stop innovation on its track. They are very active at how best to change directions, even through enlisted support from other staff, community and board members.

There is no doubt that the computer revolution has not taken deep root in the education system in Nigeria as expected. This, as Hindal (n.d.) observed is due to a significant number of teachers' instructional beliefs. The teachers do not believe that technology is a powerful tool for teaching and learning process. It important we look at some of the reasons advanced by resistant and saboteur teachers.

Reasons for Teachers' Resistance to Technology Usage

Many educators are not convinced of the potential benefits/value of the new technologies in regards to supporting teaching/learning process. So, many reasons as outlined below have been adduced for non-adoption of technologies in the teaching-learning situation.

i. **Cultural bearing:** Some teachers argue that the technologies negate their cultural practice. This is a situation whereby the technology is provided, but the audience or the constituency to use it is not available due to some cultural reasons. So, such teachers suggest that an anthropologist should have studied the culture of the people (prospective users) so that they can advise them on what to change for the technology to be successful.

ii. **Anger:** The anger we (teachers) display when the computer crashes.

iii. **Fear:** apprehension that the computer will replace their jobs. Fear of performance is another reason. That is, "Can I do it?" Such teachers are concerned about future competencies, worries about themselves if they will still be successful after the change.

iv. **Gender fear:** (a) low disposable income. (b) Limited time for technology use. (c) Average low literacy level. In support of limited time, Hutchinson (n.d.) stated thus: "I suspect that the lack of teacher participation was due in part to a lack of time".

v. **Embarrassed:** Some teachers feel embarrassed because they are not experts. Hence, the language we use when communicating with teachers who are technology novice counts. Teachers resist technology if you use commanding language; such as, "you must use technology", instead of educating them on the benefits of using the technology. This means that you need to educate them on how the technology will enhance their jobs, and also try to show evidence of us of such technology or technologies.

vi. **Adequate time:** Teachers' resist technology use if adequate and comfortable time is not given to them to learn Azoulay-lewin (n.d.). This is because it takes lots of time to learn new tools and software.

vii. **Technology as craft:** Many teachers feel that technology is a craft, and believes in the traditional methods of teaching that they have been using for dozens of years. Therefore, wonders what technology is coming to do.

viii. **Fear of failure:** No teacher wants to be embarrassed in front of his/her students as most of them have not firmly grasped the technology. Secondly, most of their students are technologically ahead of them, adds Azoulay-lewin (n.d.).

ix. **No continuity in training:** Nolan (n.d.) observed that one of the biggest reasons why teachers face resistance is because, so many times we give instruments to the teachers, there is no follow-up or continuity for their training. The author stated that lack of support can result in an initially negative experience with technology, which permanently turns the teachers off.

x. **Lack of skills:** Some teachers feel that they do not possess the adequate skills to implement technology in their classrooms. But some of them are reluctant to admit this feeling of inadequacy (Kante, 2001).

xi. **More work:** Resistance to additional things to learn, and there is no time to do it all. The teachers believe that they have much workload to deal with already; hence, they need no additional assignments.

xii. **Excess uncertainty:** Teachers feel uninformed about where the change will lead to, and what is coming next.

xii. **Lose of control:** In the traditional classroom, the teachers do it all before now. That is, they are responsible for all class activities. But in the present dispensation, some of these responsibilities have been taken away from them. Hence, there is anger, as some of the decisions are taken out of one's hands, and power shifts to somebody else other than the teachers.

How Policy Makers Could Make Resistant/Saboteur Teachers Learn

A number of studies indicate that technology will have little or no effect if the teachers are not trained (Siddiqui, 2008). We are also aware that some educators are unfriendly with the technological innovations. Having this in mind, how can we encourage technophobia teachers to learn and use technologies that will aid teaching and learning? How do we teach educators the skills they need to thrive in the knowledge-based economy? These questions need urgent answers in order to pace with time and meet the yearning demands of the net generation learners.

There is no doubt that more teachers will embrace the technology if they know that they will be rewarded. Siddiqui (2007) however, advised policy makers to consider establishing policies that will make it convenient and feasible for a teacher to learn technologies by creating conditions under which professional development by teachers is more valuable. So, the scholar has made the following suggestions on how policy makers could motivate and support resistant teachers to embrace the technologies for teaching and learning as outlined hereunder:-

- i. Making the acquisition of needed knowledge and skills a part of teacher certificate. That is to say, the knowledge and practice of technology should be part of the teacher education curriculum.
- ii. A prerequisite for pay rise
- iii. New teachers to demonstrate technology competencies before they are hired.
- iv. The authorities should reflect negativity on those who do not use technology.
- v. The authorities should create a policy that recognizes quality performance through technology.
- vi. Teachers effective use of technologies should be part of the teachers' evaluation performance
- vii. Constant seminars, workshops, conferences, and institutes should be organized for teachers to teach and update them from time to time.

How to Encourage Resistant/Saboteur Teachers to Learn New Technologies

There is no doubt that in all spheres of human endeavour, when people are motivated, they tend to do more than originally intend to do. Thus, there is need to encourage educators to embrace the use of technology by acquiring the needed skills.

Consequently, the under-listed scholars like, Siddiqui (2007); Siddiqui (2008); Hutchinson (n.d.); Johnson, (n.d.); Wagner (n.d); Kreul (n.d); and Tiffany (n.d) have outlined some measures that could be put in place for resistance and saboteur teachers to develop interest in the use of technology.

- i. A minimum number of professional development working days should be enacted. The is to say that a number of off days in a week or month should be mapped out for the training of teachers on technology applications
- ii. A person or persons with technology training and experience should be employed to tutor the teachers in technology use
- iii. Make the learning more gradual instead of putting deadlines. In this case, teachers need incremental learning. You need to teach them one technological device at a time and not to compound issues by introducing several devices at a go.
- vi. There is a need to pet novice teachers when dealing with the issue of technology usage in the classroom. As mentioned earlier, the language we use when communicating with teachers in this category counts a lot. Teachers need not commanding languages to learn the use of technology; instead, you use persuasive language to intimate them on the benefits of using the technology, and by educating them on how the technology will enhance their jobs with living and/or concrete evidence.
- vii. Compulsory training for teachers: As Nip (n.d.) puts it, "I have also noticed that many teachers who are unfamiliar with technology are scared of it, they know technology's capabilities, but are afraid they'll destroy it if they don't use it correctly. Until our school provides mandatory training, workshops, I don't know how we can encourage teachers to use technology."
- viii. There is, however, a continual struggle to get teachers to see that technology use will not make their days more stressful; that in many ways, it will make their jobs easier," Wagner noted.
- ix. The most important thing to encourage teacher use of technology is to assign each school a technology resource teacher (TRT) to work directly in the classrooms, ask what they're doing in their classroom, and work with them to integrate technology into existing lessons
- x. "Perhaps more teachers would embrace technology if they knew they would be rewarded for using it -- versus being punished for not using it "Why not reward teachers who use technology by providing them with better equipment, software, and so on, as they show an increased interest and proficiency?"
- xi. "Access to technology also makes its use easier," Tiffany noted. "Until computers are made available for most students, teachers cannot be expected to utilize technology-based activities. There are a lot of activities I would like to do, but I am unable to do so because of a lack of resources.
- xii. "Teachers should be encouraged to use technology in useful ways for themselves and with their students -- through e-mail, listservs, tele-collaborative projects, and so on.
- xiii. Adequate training and support: Staff members who want to learn to use technology either depend on help from their peers, learn it on their own, or take courses online or at local sites," said Kreul. Tiffany, "Unfortunately, without the level of training and support they need, many teachers do not use technology to their advantage -- for grading, organizing lessons, searching for information, communicating with the education community, or in the classroom with their students.

How to Sustain Support for Teachers Use of Technology

In as much as we want the educators to use the technologies for teaching and learning, a provision must be made in order to sustain the use. Siddiqui (2007) pointed out that it is a good idea for a teacher to acquire technological skills, but emphasized that such technological skills need to be sustained to make meaning. The scholar further stressed that the initial training of teachers may not be guaranteed if there is no technological infrastructure backup support.

Consequently, the following policy issues to support the sustenance for teachers' use of technology were suggested:-

- i. Through what means can teachers find examples of good instructional practice using technologies?
- ii. What policies need go be in place to maintain the structure and operation of technology system as a dependable instructional tool for the classroom?
- iii. What kind of professional education needs to be available to teachers if they are to increase their skills in using technologies?

Benefits of Teachers Use of Technology In The Classroom

1. As Siddiqui (2007 & 2008) puts it, teaching is more efficient and effective with new types of technology-based curriculum/pedagogy
2. Teachers will no longer lose enthusiasm by being inundated with paperwork but rather now serving as instructional coordinators
3. Change in teachers roles. Teachers will now shift from being pioneers to settlers, because they were worn down by the unceasing grind of motivating students to master uninteresting, fragmented topics
4. Teachers move from isolation to collaboration with the community of professionals. Use of ICT in education enables collaborative development of skills and abilities to create knowledge, rather than work in isolation
5. Teachers will communicate effectively. In online course development, teachers need to be meticulous in their use of language, having known that what their work represents them
6. Teachers can effectively control the learning process
7. It increases flexibility. Students can access educational resources anywhere regardless of time and geographical barriers. Teachers need not gather students at a particular place (Choba Park, as the case of the Uniport) at a particular time
8. Use of ICT in education will bring a better preparation for students, lifelong learning and a better opportunity to join industry
9. ICT can improve the quality of learning and contribute to the overall economy
10. Creates more opportunity for educators to acquire technological skills
11. Course content could easily be modified and/or updated
12. Allows the use of new methods of education (Sanyal, et all (2001)
13. Accomplishment of more complex tasks
14. Increases the use of outside resources
15. Increased motivation and self-esteem.
16. Change in teachers roles
17. Improved design skills/attention to the audience.

In a study carried out in national, international, and European schools, Blanskat, Blamire, kefala (2006) observed that 86% of teachers in Europe affirmed that pupils are more motivated when computers and the Internet are being used in class. The study revealed that ICT has a significant impact on teachers and teaching processes, as it helps them plan their lessons more efficiently. In the same study, 90 % of teachers in Europe claim to use ICT to do varying tasks, such as preparing lessons, sequencing classroom activities, etc. It helps teachers to work in teams and share ideas related to schools curriculum. There is also evidence that broadband and interactive whiteboards play a central role in fostering teachers' communication and increasing collaboration among educators.

Future Use of Technology by Nigerian Teachers

A number of Nigerian universities have gone online in recent times in their quest to reach the masses, especially the less privileged minorities at the remotest areas devoid of time and space constraints, Again, as a matter of policy, the National Universities Commission (NUC), has recognized the need to approve online programmes at both national and organizational levels for mass literacy.

Consequently, the future of e-education in Nigerian seems very bright. In agreement with the above assertion, Apena (2013) stated that it be difficult and even impossible to think of the future of e-education or business environment that will be devoid of ICT. The scholar further asserts that with the on-going development and the

dedicated efforts of the developed countries to the promotion and implementation of ICT in education and training, it is a confirmation of the fact that it will affect and determine every area/aspects of human life today and in the future. In this development, education is not devalued from these aspects of human life.

Conclusion

The traditional methods of teaching are fast fading; the period of time and place-bound lectures are fast vanishing; our learners are becoming less passive, but proactive. Soon, all these will become a history. Consequently, at this time of self-directed learning, there is a need for a paradigm shift in our teaching methodologies in order to meet the challenges of the twenty-first-century curriculum. We (the educators) owe the Net generation a duty, and we must act fast to perform the duty with diligence. As educators, we must change our mindsets so as to embrace the technologies of instruction. The technologies' will be irrelevant to us and the society if we persistently remain indifferent to their use in teaching and learning. We must put a round peg in a round hole, and the 21st Century needs problem needs the 21st Century solution.

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