

APPLICATION OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN NIGERIAN INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This paper examined the concept of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in connection with its roles and relevance in the teaching of social studies. It also explained how it affects the quality of education and the values it can bring to the teaching-learning situation in social studies through its rational application. The paper concluded that Information and Communication Technology in education has become essential for both prospective educators and learners, as it holds inherent potential for ensuring quality education. The paper therefore recommended that, to stay current in the field of education, teachers handling different subjects should be well-equipped to access ICTs and other electronic learning devices relevant to their areas and studies, especially in Social Studies Education. It also reiterated that social studies teachers should use ICTs to effectively facilitate their teaching, so that these tools can serve as sources of information for learners.

Keywords: Application, Information Communication Technology (ICT) , Teaching, Social Studies, Nigerian Institutions

Introduction

The teaching and learning of social studies education is crucial in Nigerian institutions of learning to complement other related disciplines in promoting healthy national development. Applying Information and Communication Technology to the teaching and learning of this discipline has become essential due to the advantages it will bring to the school system. Learners can access a wide variety of knowledge from various sources. Teachers and learners of social studies can use ICT to store learning tasks,

providing students with greater access to lessons than they have in a typical classroom setting. Social studies as a body of knowledge has contributed immensely to the development of a sound mind and the promotion of civic competence. There is a need to facilitate and develop teachers' and learners' knowledge and skills in social studies education regarding the use of ICT. Hence, this paper examines the meaning of information and communication technology (ICTS) and its components, and discusses the roles and values of ICTs in the

teaching and learning of social studies education when appropriately applied and rationally.

Social Studies plays a key role in the educational system by using organized content and activities to achieve foundational educational goals. ICT significantly supports these objectives, as much of the subject's content is now sourced and enhanced through technology and online resources.

Onipede and Adeyi (2023) observed that the advantages and functions of contemporary technologies are numerous and cannot be disregarded, despite relatively slow adoption rates in developing nations' educational sectors. Their findings suggest that modern technology, underpinned by robust infrastructure, fosters a continual increase in information-centric activities integral to socioeconomic advancement.

The world is increasingly a global village as nations become more closely connected, and communication technology is central to that change (UNESCO, 2021). Rajasekaran, Adams and Tilmes (2024) argue that introducing Information and Communication Technology into education is essential for building integrated digital systems that help teachers and learners broaden their thinking and understand one another more clearly (Rajasekaran et al, 2024). Educators' competency frameworks from 2020 to 2023 present ICT as part of educators' competencies for inclusive digital teaching, assessment, and school communication, showing a shift from tools to human practice (UNICEF Educators' Digital Competence Framework, 2022). In Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education has set out a National Digital Learning Policy that emphasizes platforms, local content, infrastructure, and teacher capacity-building as essential for a resilient, inclusive digital learning system (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023, Final Draft). Local empirical studies on Social Studies instruction find that multimedia resources, computer-assisted instruction and internet-enabled teaching raise learner engagement, help pupils grasp abstract concepts

more readily, and contribute to improved learning outcomes (Atubi, 2021).

Zaranis (2016) opined that the role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in fostering the learning and development of young children and primary school students has become a pivotal focus in contemporary education. There are two significant reasons for the introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching.

Recent international analysis shows that digital tools can expand access to learning, enable more personalized teaching and strengthen education systems, provided implementation is planned carefully so it does not deepen existing inequalities (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2024)

Concept of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a broader term than Information Technology (IT). It covers unified communication and the integration of telecommunications, computers, software, storage, and audiovisual systems that allow users to create, access, store, transmit, and use information (Akyar, Moniteiro, and Fernandes, 2024).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) learning resources in education have grown and improved tremendously in recent times, aligning with global technology trends. The development of a nation is now measured by its technological advancement, which has made technology the cornerstone of progress. Any country can depend on this foundation to achieve growth and development in all aspects of life. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the set of digital devices, internet connections, and software that learners and teachers use to find, create, share, and manage information, and the ways those tools change learning in and beyond the classroom (OECD, 2015). Information and Communication Technology (ICT), in education, means both the technologies, such as radios, computers and learning platforms, and the teacher competencies needed to use them effectively in pedagogy

(UNESCO, ICT Competency Framework for Teachers, Version 3, 2018)

In the Nigerian educational context, Information and Communication Technology is referred to as tools that enable accessing, storing, transferring, processing and sending ideas, perceptions or information through computers and other communication facilities, highlighting its role in transforming traditional teaching methods towards more interactive and learner-centered approaches (Ojeniyi and Adetimirin, 2013). According to Olonikawu, (2016), as cited in Akpan, (2008), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), is seen as the process of creating, processing, storing, retrieving and disseminating information and data using computers and telecommunications, which enables electronic communication through email, voice mail, video conferencing and networking technologies such as the internet, thereby facilitating information exchange in educational environments.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in educational research refers to a diverse set of tools and resources—such as computers, the internet, and broadcasting technologies like radio and television—used to communicate, create, store, and manage information while supporting teaching and learning (Lembani, 2021). In education, ICT is a coordinated set of tools, connectivity, and digital content that national policy employs to widen access, improve quality, and strengthen education management (Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria, National Policy on ICT in Education, 2019).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is seen as a national infrastructure. It consists of networks, services, and skills that support economic and social activity, including education. ICT requires regulation and capacity building (National Digital Economy Policy and related NITDA documents, 2020). ICT is also the convergence of telecommunication, broadcasting, and computing. This convergence relies on global standards and statistics for

planning large-scale education technology (ITU Facts and Figures, 2016).

Application of Information and Communication Technology in Social Studies Education

Information and communication technology is a catalyst that significantly facilitates knowledge transfer in teaching and learning. It is also an excellent motivator for students to accelerate and deepen basic skills in writing and reading, enhancing their ability to assimilate learning. Digital content and interactive tools often increase pupil engagement, and that engagement is frequently the first step towards deeper learning, because multimedia and simulation tools tend to boost curiosity and provide rich contexts for problem solving when used with clear enquiry questions (Haleem, Javaid, Quadri and Suman, 2022). Teachers who scaffold tasks rather than simply project material see pupils engage in higher-order thinking, and the literature is clear that technology amplifies what skilled pedagogy already aims to achieve rather than replacing it (Haleem et al., 2022; DigCompEdu, 2017). Both computer hardware and software can be more useful for teaching and learning social studies than any other devices combined.

Information and Communication Technology plays a unique role in the teaching process, enhancing the theoretical and practical capacities across broad areas of study. A reasonable and rational application of Information and Communication Technology to the teaching of social studies will enhance students' comprehension of the discipline's basic facts. Equally, tutors of the

The subject's experiences will be broadened and updated. Computer hardware and software can be helpful in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Some software enhances retentive memory, such as CorelDRAW and Adobe. These can be used to illustrate content graphically. Hence, much of what is taught in the classroom will remain indelible in their brains.

In the words of UNESCO (2018), working with contemporary online sources helps pupils learn

to be critical consumers of information, because blogs, curated news archives and moderated social media activities provide authentic material for classroom source evaluation and bias detection. Also, Information and Communication Technology can enhance Social Studies by facilitating networking with other teachers. This will facilitate the teaching process, enabling ideas, resources, and improved teaching methods to be exchanged. Rapid evidence reviews from the pandemic period show that guided activities, such as structured source comparison and teacher-moderated online discussion, strengthen media literacy far more than unguided browsing does (EdTech Hub, 2020). Systematic reviews also identify teacher modeling and task scaffolding as decisive factors in whether digital civic literacy activities deliver learning gains (Aydin and Gurol, 2019).

The application of ICTs in Social Studies encourages interactions between teachers and students, as well as among teachers from different parts of the globe. These knowledge transfers might yield solutions to the social problems faced by Social Studies students. When ICTs are properly and rationally applied, they can help students and teachers access information and resources in Social Studies. They can communicate with experts and peers, making valuable contributions to knowledge through electronic publications and media.

The essence of education is to foster growth and development in learners and achieve the desired result. To achieve the desired result, knowledge must be imparted accurately and systematically using a variety of educational materials. To impart knowledge meaningfully, teachers need to use appropriate materials for learners, ensuring the total development of the three domains of learning through the selection, organization, and evaluation of these materials.

Arvantaki and Zaranis (2020) stressed that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the educational system facilitates the effective dissemination of information relevant to the field of Social Studies. Information that has been tested to be factual, current, and socially

impactful can be obtained through ICT. In other words, this could be used to present learning tasks in real-world contexts or related scenarios to enhance learning outcomes, as learners retain more of what is taught when it involves more sensory perception than learning alone (ibid). Information and Communication Technology is best understood as a mix of devices, connectivity, platforms and teacher practice, and when these are combined thoughtfully, they change what is possible in Social Studies classrooms (OECD, 2015), because digital maps and geographic information systems make temporal and spatial relationships visible in ways that textbooks alone cannot (GSMA, 2019). Digitized primary sources and archival video place pupils close to people and events they study, and that proximity helps to turn passive reading into enquiry and evidence-based argument when teachers scaffold the work (UNESCO, 2018).

Information and Communication Technology can facilitate the storage of learning tasks. This enables the learners to have more access to the classroom work than what is taught during the lesson hour. ICT enables slow learners to review the lesson several times, enhancing and facilitating understanding. Equally, the formative use of technology allows teachers to gather continuous evidence of reasoning and to give personalized feedback, which, in turn, supports learner agency and reflection (DigCompEdu, 2017).

ICT enhanced the teaching of topical issues in Social Studies. This involves developing motor skill experiences that are useful for acquiring skills in a variety of carefully and rationally selected motor activities, including values and interests. Knowledge strategies contingent upon these activities are significant to the discipline. ICT is not found wanting in this aspect of teaching and learning. Projectors, slides, video, and cameras are valuable tools in the teaching and learning process. Shooting movies and still pictures is handy in teaching social processes. The study contents and all these help learners to assimilate better.

Conclusion

The introduction of Information and Communication Technology in education has become essential for both prospective educators and learners, as it holds the potential to ensure quality education. The potential of this concept, as identified, does not exclude any discipline; hence, there is justification for applying Information and Communication Technology to the teaching-learning process in social studies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Tutors should make use of Information and Communication Technology in teaching Social Studies concepts to diversify their sources of information, individualize the curriculum, and customize it to meet learners' needs and help them achieve their potential.
2. To stay current in the field of education, teachers handling different subjects should be well-equipped to access ICTs and other electronic learning devices relevant to their areas of study, especially in Social Studies Education.
3. Teachers should attend training workshops, seminars, webinars, and online courses to stay up to date on new ICT tools, digital resources, and e-learning platforms, thereby enhancing their digital literacy and instructional technology skills.
4. Lesson plans should incorporate ICT tools such as online maps, educational apps, and simulation software, ensuring that technology integration aligns with learning objectives rather than serving as an add-on.
5. Multimedia resources such as videos, audio clips, interactive timelines, virtual field trips, and digital archives should be used to enhance students' understanding of Social Studies concepts and their meanings.
6. Students should also be given opportunities to exercise autonomy and creativity through projects that allow them to create digital presentations, podcasts, or short videos, using ICT tools that match their strengths and interests.
7. Schools should establish reliable infrastructure, including electricity, internet access, functional hardware, and up-to-date software, to support effective use of ICT in teaching and learning.
8. Teachers should encourage collaborative learning by using online discussion forums, blogs, and digital platforms to promote peer interaction, knowledge sharing, and group research projects.
9. Students must be familiar with information and communication technology (ICT), as all jobs in society now depend on it.

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