

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN ACQUIRING MATERIAL RESOURCES FOR HISTORY INSTRUCTION IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: INTEGRATION OF ICT AS A MITIGATING FACTOR

BY

Lazarus Luka Maigoro, Ph.D.: History and International Studies Education Unit,
Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, University of Jos;
E-mail: maigoro2010@yahoo.com, lazarusmaigoro@gmail.com

Sanda Yakubu Yusufu, Ph.D.: History and International Studies Education Unit,
Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education, University of Jos;
E-mail: sandayyakubu@yahoo.com

Sadiq Mohammed Doro: History and International Studies Education Unit, Department of
Arts Education, Faculty of Education, University of Jos

Monday Adzu: History and International Studies Education Unit, Department of Arts
Education, Faculty of Education, University of Jos

Abstract

This paper discussed the constraints that history teachers and students encounter at the secondary school of teaching and learning in the acquisition of resources for the purpose of history instruction and how ICT as an instructional material can help mitigate this challenge. History is one of the difficult subjects to teach and learn because some of the events a history teacher is expected to teach the students happened years ago or even contemporary history where the events do happen without the teacher and students being there. The paper noted some of the challenges to history instruction to include the abstract nature of history, lack available books or information, lack of adequate history teachers and further discussed the role of ICT as a way of surmounting these bottlenecks to the teaching and learning of the discipline. Suggestions such as the recruitment of adequate teachers, provision of well equipped libraries and integration of ICT for the purpose of history instruction could assist in mitigating this instructional challenge.

Keywords: Challenge, History, Instruction, ICT, Materials, Resources

Introduction

History as a discipline has been perceived to be an abstract subject because most of what is being studied did not happen in the life time of the students who are learning the subject. Although there is the aspect of contemporary history which sometimes happen during the life time of the students, they may not be eye witnesses to such events and so is still been viewed in abstraction. This calls for the indisputable necessity to engage material resources for the teaching and learning of the subject. Such material resources if deployed to the classroom, are supposed to make the process of teaching and learning the subject more practical by reducing the abstract nature of the discipline. In as much as it is necessary to engage material resources for proper history instruction, sometimes there are serious bottlenecks that hamper the acquisition of these material

resources. These challenges range from lack of qualified man power to teach the subject matter of the discipline, lack of competence on the part of the teachers, financial constraints etc.

In recent times, the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in changing the fortunes of classroom instruction positively has come to the fore and teachers, especially history teachers are encouraged to integrate it in their classroom pedagogy in order to assist in the acquisition of material resources for effective teaching and learning. ICT facilities in this respect are supposed to be made available for use by the history teachers but in the current situation, the facilities are rarely available and even where they are found, the issue of teacher competence in usage, poor supply and bandwidth challenges are other constraints to its use which is affecting history instruction negatively.

In view of the above, this paper seeks to identify ways through which ICT can come to the rescue of the history teacher in dealing with this herculean task of material resources acquisition for effective history instruction. The paper will look at the concepts of history, materials and resources, types of material resources for history instruction, challenges inherent in acquiring material resources, ICT tools that can be used for secondary school history instruction, and suggestions on the way forward.

Concepts of History Materials and Resources

History is a dynamic academic discipline that must be taught in line with the modern trend in education. Sanda, Amos and Kwash (2019) pointed out that history is an academic discipline that deals with the acquisition of knowledge about man in relation to his fellow man and which strives to utilize such knowledge in bringing about solutions to the pockets of problems that confront mankind. They added that history investigates past and present events and how this can be used to understand and project into the future. Badung, Gotom and Sanda (2019) averred that the perception of students about history is that it is dull and sterile, packed in content and lacking attractiveness. Others view it as rote memorization of facts and dates. It is clear therefore that within the discipline of history, there exist widespread discontents and malcontents about the transmission mode of teaching History which results in regurgitation of factual knowledge.

The term ICT according to Maigoro, Shammah, Naymla and Gochin (2019) stands for the acronym ICT which means Information and Communication Technology and it is defined as the diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information. Thus, it is a modern technology which consists of electronic devices and associated human interactive materials that enables the user to employ them for a wide range of teaching-learning process in addition to personal use. ICT also refer to the type of technology that provides access to information through telecommunications (Galadima and Ajang, 2019). He added that ICT is described as the utility of technology to support the effort of conveying information and communication particularly in the area of education. Substantiating this view, Akpabio and Ogiriki (2017) opined that ICT is the digital processing and utilization of information by the use of electronic computers and could also refer to technologies which are being used for collecting, storing, editing and passing information in various forms. Therefore, this implies that ICT is a very important tool that if properly utilized, has the capacity of easing teacher difficulties in sourcing resources and materials for instruction as well as help in the

instruction process. Although ICT has several definitions depending on the nature it is used for, for the purpose of this work, ICT shall be defined as an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing; radio, television cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems, as well as the various services and application associated with them, such as video conferencing and distance learning. We refer to ICT in the particular context of ICT provision policy and teacher factors that variously support teaching-learning and a range of activities in the history classroom.

Material resources for history instruction on the other hand refer to the human and non-human materials and facilities that can be used to ease, encourage, improve and promote teaching and learning activities. They are whatever materials used in the process of instruction. They are a broad range of resource which can be used to facilitate effective instruction. They indicate a systematic way of designing, carrying out and employing the total process of learning and communication and employing human and non-human resources to bring out a more meaningful and effective instruction. They are also human and non-human material that a teacher uses to pass information to the learner in his class. There are three basic types of material resources for history instruction namely; Traditional resources which includes any textbook and workbook used in the classroom; Graphic organizers, which is any type of visual representation of information like diagrams, charts, tables, flow charts, and graphs and teacher-made resources which comprises any teacher-made resources like handouts, worksheets, tests, quizzes, and projects. These material resources improve students' knowledge, abilities, and skills, to monitor their assimilation of information, and to contribute to their overall understanding of the history subject matter.

Types of Material Resources for History Instruction

There are four groups of material resources that can be utilized for history instruction depending on the need of the history teachers' classroom instructional objectives. These include: The first type of instructional materials includes such objects and phenomena as minerals, rocks, raw materials, semi-finished and finished manufactured articles, and plant and animal specimens. Included among these materials are reagents and apparatus for producing chemical and other reactions and for demonstrating and studying such reactions during laboratory sessions. Also included in the first group are materials and equipment for students' expeditions and other travel, as well as supplies, instruments, and equipment for production training and for courses in drafting and the representational arts. Among such supplies, instruments, and equipment are wood, metal, plastic, and glass objects, measuring and monitoring instruments and equipment, equipment for the assembling and finishing of various products, and machines and machine tools.

The second type of educational materials, that of representations of actual objects and phenomena, includes three-dimensional materials (castings, globes, and experimental models), two-dimensional materials (charts, pictures, photographs, maps, diagrams, and drawings), and audiovisual materials (motion pictures, film clips, filmstrips, slide sequences, diapositives, transparencies, records and tape recordings, and radio and television broadcasts). Audiovisual materials, including the resources of films, radio, and television, help acquaint students with the achievements of modern science, technology, industry, and culture and with phenomena that are inaccessible to direct observation. Audiovisual materials also acquaint students with early periods of history and with distant places in the world and in space. Such materials elucidate natural and

social phenomena and enable students to study the inner world of matter and the internal motion of waves, elementary particles, atoms, molecules, and living cells.

The third type of instructional materials, that of written descriptions, includes scientific, scholarly, reference, and methodological teaching aids, as well as textbooks, books of problems and exercises, books for recording scientific observations, laboratory manuals, manuals for production training, and programmed textbooks. Another type of instructional materials is technological instructional media. Among these are equipment for the transmission and assimilation of information recorded on film or on phonograph recordings: film projectors, tape recorders, phonographs, and television sets. Monitoring devices include punched cards and various types of automatic apparatus. Teaching machines include language-laboratory machines, closed-circuit television systems, and computers.

ICT Tools and Utilisation in Sourcing Materials for History Pedagogy

The variety of ICT tools assists the history teacher in so many ways towards the attainment of the classroom instructional objectives. It is up to the teacher to select the particular tool he requires for that particular lesson. Thus, ICT can help in sourcing the following materials and resources for effective History pedagogy through the following ways: Books, online journals and articles can be accessed through the internet. As observed by Adesote and Fatoki (2013) the proliferation and widespread availability of contemporary ICTs, many restrictions and impediments of the past can now be removed as students and teachers gain access to higher bandwidths, more direct forms of communication and access to sharable resources, (Alkhaddam,2018). The capability to support these quality learning settings will continue to grow relevant information in order to engage with it or to solve a problem arising from it. The 21st Century pedagogy process requires effective utilization of ICT in order to ease access to relevant information necessary for learning. Maigoro (2013) averred that ICT provides the opportunity for overcoming historically intractable problems of isolation and lack of access to information and knowledge which are crucial to the teaching and learning of history curriculum contents. In essence, ICT enables history teachers to access vital information, resources and materials for effective history pedagogy with relative ease.

Lending credence to the foregoing, Maigoro et' al (2019) reiterate that ICT has created a situation where historical pedagogy could both occur in a virtual as well as physical environment where students could access materials from their teachers and available websites in what is regarded as digital history. They further stated that ICT has provided easy access to history materials and service, changed in History learning styles and method. They further averred that ICT facilitates access to information and resources through thousands of online journals and books made available which could be accessed through the internet without solely relying only on what the teacher can provide.

Audio and audio-visual materials can also be sourced with the aid of ICT tools like internet C-D ROM. These resources can be harnessed for effective History pedagogy. Access to ICT increases the history teacher's access to digital tools and resources worldwide. Blurton (1999) pointed out that because of advances in digital technologies, it is now possible to integrate multiple media into single educational applications. Multimedia applications on CD-ROMS and websites may be incorporated into text, pictures, audio graphics, animations, simulation, full-motion video and

lines to other software or websites greatly enhancing the learning experiences. This no doubt is one of the ways through which ICT can help the history teacher in accessing resources and materials for history instruction. He added that ICT mediated instruction. That is ICT gives both the instructor and the students the opportunity to participate simultaneously in teaching-learning process. For example, with the help of ICT, instruction may be delivered via desktop video conferencing by a history teacher located in a different university to students in another university.

ICT can also be used to contact resource persons through email. Alkhaddam (2018) pointed out that ICT brings students to the real contact with the target materials for learning by means of the electronic mail, "chats", "blogs", or spaces wiki etc. Thus, the effective utilization of this medium will aid sourcing of resource persons for history pedagogy. Blurton (1999) averred that ICT facilitates accessing remote resources which could have been difficult to access without ICT. Historically information resources are only available in libraries, schools and universities have only been the only source within the reach of students. The resources in these institutions are often in limited quantities. Because of advances in ICT, it is no longer necessary for students and teachers to be at a certain location at a specific time to acquire a physical object. The internet represents the greatest collection of human knowledge ever assembled, and it is available to every student and teacher properly equipped with ICT in an unlimited number of digital representations of physical objects that can now be made available to students at any time and from any place. Thus, ICT has broken the barrier of limited access to resources and materials for History pedagogy. ICT can be used in staff recruitment. Geoffery (2010) ICT tools such as telegraph, telephone, telefax and computer networks can be used to get information about people you will need their service.

Challenges Inherent in Acquiring Material Resources for History Instruction

History teachers encounter serious difficulties in sourcing material resources for teaching history. History by its nature is an academic discipline that pertains to the investigation of past and present events and how this can be used to understand and project into the future. So dealing with past events is not easy because of scanty evidences to substantiate some of the facts about the past. Some of these challenges include:

There is the constraint of incompetence on the use of ICT facilities by many of the secondary school history teachers and negative attitude of some teachers and students towards the subject. Sanda, Amos and kwash (2019) identified incompetence of teachers and negative attitude of learners towards the subject as a threat to the success of history instruction. Incompetence of teachers affects their ability to explore the right avenues like the ICT and other sources of information to acquire material resources for history instruction.

Furthermore, a good number of history teachers teach because they have no alternatives. They are therefore in the teaching profession until something better comes their way. This mind set had hindered many history teachers from being committed to their responsibilities particularly as it relates to acquisition of materials and resources for teaching history. Amos (2016) posits that the negative perception that many people have about history had discouraged history teachers from doing their job diligently. To many people history is a dry and dead discipline which lacks

relevance. Therefore, students seem not to have interest in the discipline and teachers feel there is no need for them to commit their time and resources on something that is not valued. Adesote and Fatoki (2013) added that many history teachers over rely on traditional method of teaching history and often depend on textbooks only for information thereby relegating technologically oriented sources to the background and this kind of mentality cannot help the teaching and learning of history in the 21st century.

Adesote and Fatoki (2013) added that the readiness of ICT in the Sub-saharan Africa is still very low with most countries experiencing strong lags in connectivity because of the insufficient development of ICT infrastructures. They added that lack of funding to support the purchase of the technology, lack of training of teachers, lack of motivation on the part of teachers to adopt ICT as teaching tools in the classroom instruction etc. have contributed greatly in posing challenge to history teachers in sourcing materials and resources for teaching history.

Suggestions

- i. The government and history teachers need to do a lot in correcting the negative perception students have about the subject by deploying the use of ICT to make his teaching more interactive for better learning outcomes.
- ii. Government, school authorities need to provide ICT tools to enable the history teacher utilize same for his classroom instruction.
- iii. There is need for the Government and school authorities to organize training for history teachers on how to use some these ICT tools for classroom goal attainment.

Conclusion

Sourcing for material resources for history instruction is one of the enormous responsibility of the history teacher which also determines the quality of history instruction at the secondary level which students rely to a very large extent on practical teaching for proper understanding of the subject matter. ICT facilities, based on this paper, can provide these material for effective history instruction. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers and students alike to ensure proper utilization of ICT in sourcing materials and resources for effective and efficient teaching and learning of history.

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