Media Technology for Effective Implementation of Lifelong Learning for Adult Learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State

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Abstract

The study focused on media technology for effective implementation of lifelong learning for adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State. The study was guided by two purposes and two research questions. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 300 learners from the six registered adult literacy centres in the Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State. Census sampling technique was used to sample the entire population for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Media Technology for Effective Implementation of Lifelong Learning of Adult Learners Questionnaire (MTEILLALQ). The instrument was face-validated by three experts and the reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha estimate with an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.86. SPSS was used for data analysis to determine the Mean and Standard deviation. Findings of the study revealed that the extent to which social media can contribute to the effective Implementation of lifelong learning of adult learners was high. Also, the extent to which print media can contribute to the effective implementation of lifelong learning of adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area was high. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that there should be adequate measures to improve electricity in Nigeria, this will enhance the use of technological gadgets in running lifelong learning programmes for adults.

Keywords: Media Technology, Implementation, Lifelong Learning, Adult Learners.

Introduction

Lifelong learning is a continuous process which never ends until death. It also refers to the continuous, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for personal or professional reasons. The idea of lifelong learning especially among adult learners is that it enables adult to keep themselves relevant in the ever changing world. Supporting the above, the European Commission (2016) stated that lifelong learning is essential for sustaining a competitive economy and fostering social inclusion. The Commission emphasizes that continuous skill development helps individuals adapt to changes in the labour market and enhances their employability. In addition, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] (2019) underscores the role of lifelong learning in addressing skills mismatches and improving job satisfaction. The organization points out that adults who engage in continuous learning are better equipped to transition between jobs and industries, which is particularly important in the context of technological disruptions and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The definition of lifelong learning is as varied as the scholars in the field of lifelong learning. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] (2015) lifelong learning is rooted in the integration of learning and living, covering learning activities for

people of all ages (children, young people, adults and the elderly, girls and boys, women and men) in all life-wide contexts (family, school, community, workplace, and more) and through a variety of modalities (formal, non-formal, and informal), which together meet a wide range of learning needs and demands. This comprehensive definition underscores the inclusivity and diverse modalities of lifelong learning. Again, Schuller and Watson (2016) describe lifelong learning as a process of acquiring and expanding knowledge and skills throughout one's life to foster continuous development and adaptation to the changing demands of the society and labour market. This definition connects lifelong learning directly to personal development and socio-economic adaptability. Operationally, lifelong learning is a learning exercise which continuous from cradle throughout lifetime; it may be formal, informal, non-formal or a combination of all with the aim of keeping oneself updated.

Lifelong learning offers various benefits at both the individual and societal levels. For individuals, it enhances cognitive abilities, fosters personal growth, and increases adaptability. Research by Kyndt, Govaerts, Keunen, and Dochy (2016) found that lifelong learning positively impacts job performance and career satisfaction. Additionally, it can improve mental health by keeping the mind active and engaged, thus reducing the risk of cognitive decline in older age (Field, 2018). From a societal perspective, lifelong learning contributes to social cohesion and economic resilience. It helps bridge the skills gap, which is crucial in a knowledge-based economy (Schuller & Watson, 2016). By promoting continuous education, societies can ensure a more skilled and adaptable workforce, capable of meeting the demands of dynamic economic environments. Lifelong learning enables adult learners to keep being relevant in this 21st century.

Adult learners are people who engage in learning activity with the main aim of achieving a particular purpose. Merriam and Bierema (2014) define adult learners as individuals who engage in systematic and sustained learning activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values. They emphasize that adult learners are characterized by their self-directedness, life experience, and readiness to learn, which often stem from specific life or career transitions Also, the European Commission (2017) describes adult learners as individuals aged 25 and older who participate in formal, non-formal, or informal learning activities. This definition includes those who seek to acquire new skills for personal development, social inclusion, active citizenship, and improved employability. Several characteristics distinguish adult learners. These characteristics include self-direction; experience-based; relevance-oriented; practical application; and motivation. In this study, adult learners are defined as mature men and women who are not currently enrolled in the regular school system but seek out other means to meet their learning needs. Lifelong learning can be achieved among adult learners through the use of media technology.

Media technology encompasses the tools, platforms, and techniques used to create, distribute, manage, and consume media content. According to Siapera (2018), media technology refers to the convergence of digital computing, telecommunications, and media content, resulting in interactive platforms that enable the creation, sharing, and consumption of information. This definition emphasizes the integration and interactive nature of digital platforms. Another aspect of media technology is the multimedia. Multimedia technology is defined as the combination of text, audio, images, animations, video, and interactive content to deliver information and entertainment. As

stated by Vaughn (2019), multimedia technology involves the use of computer-based systems to present and combine text, graphics, audio, and video with links and tools that let the user navigate, interact, create, and communicate. Other aspects of media technology include communication technology, networked media, and social media. The importance of media technology includes information dissemination, interactivity and engagement, cultural exchange, and economic impact. Although media technology includes different aspects, this study concentrated on how social media and print media can be used to effectively implement lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North LGA, Enugu State.

Social media refers to digital platforms and applications that enable users to create, share, and interact with content and each other. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre (2011) stated that social media comprises a set of tools and platforms that facilitate the exchange of information, ideas, and experiences among communities of users. This definition focuses on the communal and interactive nature of social media. Social media can significantly contribute to the effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners by providing accessible platforms for education, fostering collaborative learning environments, and supporting personalized learning experiences. The integration of social media into lifelong learning strategies can enhance the engagement, flexibility, and relevance of adult education. Social media platforms offer unparalleled accessibility and flexibility, making learning opportunities available anytime and anywhere. According to Greenhow and Lewin (2016), social media enables learners to access educational content and resources on their own schedules, which is particularly beneficial for adult learners who often juggle education with work and family responsibilities. This flexibility supports the notion of learning as a continuous, lifelong process, allowing adults to learn at their own pace and convenience. Again, Social media fosters collaborative learning by creating communities of learners who can share knowledge, experiences, and resources. This collaborative environment can enhance motivation and engagement among adult learners. Tess (2013) notes that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn facilitate the formation of study groups, peer support networks, and professional learning communities. These interactions can lead to richer learning experiences through the exchange of diverse perspectives and the development of a supportive learning community.

Furthermore, Social media allows for the personalization of learning experiences, catering to the individual needs and interests of adult learners. Personalized learning is critical for adult education as it increases relevance and engagement. According to Redecker and Punie (2017), social media algorithms can curate content based on users' preferences and learning goals, providing tailored educational materials and resources. This targeted approach helps learners focus on areas that are most pertinent to their personal and professional development. Also, engaging with social media can improve digital literacy skills, which are essential in today's technology-driven world. Adult learners who use social media for educational purposes can develop their abilities to navigate digital tools, evaluate online information critically, and communicate effectively in digital environments. These skills are crucial for lifelong learning and professional advancement. Litt (2013) emphasizes that digital literacy is not only about technical skills but also about understanding the social and cultural contexts of digital media, which social media usage can enhance. Finally, Social media is a valuable tool for continuous professional development (CPD). It provides platforms for networking with industry experts, participating in webinars and online

workshops, and staying updated with the latest trends and developments in one's field. According to McCay-Peet and Quan-Haase (2017), LinkedIn and other professional networks offer opportunities for adults to engage in CPD activities that can lead to career advancement and skill enhancement. However, in Igbo-Eze North LGA, it has not been established the extent to which social media can contribute to the effective implementation of lifelong learning, hence this sought to address this issue.

Furthermore, print media can promote lifelong learning among adult learners by providing accessible, diverse, and relevant content tailored to adult education needs. Print media such as newspapers, magazines, and journals can disseminate information on lifelong learning opportunities, including courses, workshops, and seminars. This helps in raising awareness among adult learners about available educational resources and opportunities (Olawale, 2016). Print media can publish educational content specifically designed for adult learners. This includes articles on new learning methodologies, success stories of other adult learners, and features on the benefits of lifelong learning. Such content can inspire and motivate adults to engage in continuous education (Adebayo, 2018). Newspapers and magazines can include sections that focus on literacy and skills development, providing readers with basic literacy education and vocational skills training. Regular features on such topics can encourage adults to enhance their skills and knowledge in various fields (Obi, 2017).

Additionally, print media can foster a culture of learning by engaging communities through local news and features on community education programs. By highlighting local success stories and the impact of lifelong learning on communities, print media can encourage broader participation in adult education (Akinade & Ikegbunam, 2020). Continuing, print media can serve as a platform for advocating for better adult education policies and increased government and private sector investment in lifelong learning programmes. Articles and editorials can highlight gaps in the current educational system and propose solutions, thereby influencing policymakers (Eze, 2019). Print media can facilitate networking among adult learners by publishing information about study groups, learning clubs, and community education centers. This helps in building a supportive network where adult learners can share resources and experiences (Nwosu, 2017). Again, through publishing case studies and research findings related to adult education and lifelong learning, print media can provide valuable insights into effective practices and challenges. This knowledge can help educators and policymakers design better programs and strategies (Ololube et al., 2016). In addition, print media can ensure that educational content is culturally relevant and tailored to the specific needs and contexts of Nigerian adult learners. This increases the relevance and impact of lifelong learning initiatives (Afolabi, 2021). However, it is not known the extent to which print media can contribute to lifelong learning in Igbo-Eze North LGA, hence the need for the study.

Effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North LGA, Enugu State can be achieved through media technology especially, social media and print media. However, the extent to which social media and print media can achieve this lifelong learning is not known, hence, the problem of this study is to ascertain the extent to which media technology can be used for effective implementation of lifelong learning for adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal situation, adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State would have extensive access to various media technologies, including both social and print media, which would effectively facilitate lifelong learning. These media platforms would provide comprehensive and continuous educational resources, up-to-date information, skill development programmes, and community support systems tailored to the needs of adult learners. Social media would offer interactive and collaborative learning opportunities, while print media would ensure the accessibility of educational content, particularly for those with limited access to digital technologies. Together, these media technologies would promote a culture of continuous learning, personal development, and socio-economic growth within the community.

However, the extent to which social media and print media contribute to lifelong learning among adult learners in the Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area is not well-defined or optimally utilized. Social media, despite its widespread use, may not be fully leveraged for educational purposes, often serving more as a platform for social interaction rather than structured learning. Meanwhile, print media, though potentially valuable, may suffer from limitations in reach, frequency, and relevance of content. There is a lack of cohesive strategy to integrate these media forms effectively into adult education programmes, resulting in fragmented and inadequate support for lifelong learning. Additionally, there may be infrastructural and socio-economic barriers that hinder the effective use of these media technologies in promoting adult education. Hence, the study sought to ascertain media technology for effective implementation of lifelong learning for adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to ascertain media technology for effective implementation of lifelong learning for adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State. Specifically, the study assessed the:
1. extent to which social media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.
2. extent to which print media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions
1. to what extent can social media contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State.
2. to what extent can print media contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Method

 The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population (Nworgu, 2015). The study was carried out in Igbo-Eze North LGA, Enugu State, the choice of the area was to ascertain the extent to which media technology can be used to promote lifelong learning among adult learners in the area. The population of the study was 300 learners from the six registered adult literacy centres in the Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State. Census sampling technique was used to sample the entire population for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Media Technology for Effective Implementation of Lifelong Learning of Adult Learners Questionnaire (MTEILLALQ). The instrument was face-validated by three experts and the reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha estimate with an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.86. SPSS was used for data analysis to determine the Mean and Standard deviation.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent can social media contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean Responses on the Extent Social Media can Contribute to Effective Implementation of Lifelong Learning among Adult Learners

(n = 300)

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Providing accessible platforms for education	3.45	.80	High Extent
2	Fostering collaborative learning environments	3.47	.70	High Extent
3	Supporting personalized learning experiences	3.30	.72	High Extent
4	Enhancing engagement among the learners	3.01	.92	High Extent
5	Enhancing flexibility in learning	2.94	.67	High Extent
6	Facilitating the formation of study groups	3.16	.81	High Extent
7	Enhancing the acquisition of digital literacy	3.18	.77	High Extent
	Grand Mean	**3.21**	**0.77**	**High Extent**

Table 1 revealed the mean responses on the extent social media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners. The table showed that the mean ratings of the range from 2.94 – 3.47, while the SD range from 0.67 – 0.92. This showed that all the items in this cluster were accepted as the extent to which social media can contribute to effective

implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area, Enugu State.

Research Question Two: To what extent can print media contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean Responses on the Extent Print Media can Contribute to Effective Implementation of Lifelong Learning among Adult Learners

(n = 300)

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
8	Providing accessible learning content	3.13	.84	High Extent
9	Newspapers can disseminate information on lifelong learning opportunities	3.48	.64	High Extent
10	Publishing educational content specifically designed for adult learners	3.15	.97	High Extent
11	Motivating adults to engage in continuous education	3.19	.61	High Extent
12	Magazine can provide readers with basic literacy education	3.44	.68	High Extent
13	Print media can foster a culture of learning by engaging communities through local news	3.02	.87	High Extent
14	print media can serve as a platform for advocating for better adult education policies	2.88	.80	High Extent
	Grand Mean	**3.18**	**.77**	**High Extent**

Table 2 showed the mean responses on the extent print media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners. The table revealed that the mean ratings range from 2.88 – 3.48 while the SD range from 0.64 – 0.97. This showed that all the items in this cluster were accepted as the extent to which print media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of the study showed that the extent to which social media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners was high. This is because the respondents agreed that social media has the ability of providing accessible platforms for education; fostering collaborative learning environments; and supporting personalized learning experiences. This finding is in agreement with Greenhow and Lewin (2016) that social media

enables learners to access educational content and resources on their own schedules, which is particularly beneficial for adult learners who often juggle education with work and family responsibilities. This flexibility supports the notion of learning as a continuous, lifelong process, allowing adults to learn at their own pace and convenience. Again, Social media fosters collaborative learning by creating communities of learners who can share knowledge, experiences, and resources. This collaborative environment can enhance motivation and engagement among adult learners. Tess (2013) notes that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn facilitate the formation of study groups, peer support networks, and professional learning communities. These interactions can lead to richer learning experiences through the exchange of diverse perspectives and the development of a supportive learning community.

Finding further showed that social media platforms enhances engagement among the learners; enhancing flexibility in learning; facilitating the formation of study groups; and enhancing the acquisition of digital literacy. This finding is in agreement with Redecker and Punie (2017) that Social media allows for the personalization of learning experiences, catering to the individual needs and interests of adult learners. Personalized learning is critical for adult education as it increases relevance and engagement. Also, Social media algorithms can curate content based on users' preferences and learning goals, providing tailored educational materials and resources. This targeted approach helps learners focus on areas that are most pertinent to their personal and professional development. Also, engaging with social media can improve digital literacy skills, which are essential in today's technology-driven world.

Furthermore, finding from research question two showed that the extent print media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State was high. This is because the respondents agreed that print media can provide accessible learning content; disseminate information on lifelong learning opportunities; publishes educational content specifically designed for adult learners. This finding is in agreement with Olawale 92016) that print media can publish educational content specifically designed for adult learners. This includes articles on new learning methodologies, success stories of other adult learners, and features on the benefits of lifelong learning. Such content can inspire and motivate adults to engage in continuous education (Adebayo, 2018). Newspapers and magazines can include sections that focus on literacy and skills development, providing readers with basic literacy education and vocational skills training. Regular features on such topics can encourage adults to enhance their skills and knowledge in various fields (Obi, 2017).

More so, finding showed that print media can motivate adults to engage in continuous education; provide readers with basic literacy education; foster a culture of learning by engaging communities through local news; and serve as a platform for advocating for better adult education policies. Print media can facilitate networking among adult learners by publishing information about study groups, learning clubs, and community education centers. This helps in building a supportive network where adult learners can share resources and experiences (Nwosu, 2017). Again, through publishing case studies and research findings related to adult education and lifelong learning, print media can provide valuable insights into effective practices and challenges. This knowledge can help educators and policymakers design better programs and strategies (Ololube et al., 2016). In addition, print media can ensure that educational content is culturally relevant and tailored to the

specific needs and contexts of Nigerian adult learners. This increases the relevance and impact of lifelong learning initiatives (Afolabi, 2021).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the extent to which social media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State was high, and the extent to which print media can contribute to effective implementation of lifelong learning among adult learners in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State was high.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made
1. There should be adequate measures to improve electricity in Nigeria, this will enhance the use of technological gadgets in running lifelong learning programmes for adults. Again, digital literacy programmes should be implemented to help adult learners navigate and utilize social media effectively for educational purposes. This can include training sessions and workshops focusing on how to access, evaluate, and use online educational resources.
2. Educational stakeholders should ensure that educational content is distributed widely and consistently, reaching even the most remote areas. They should also collaboration with community leaders and local organizations to aid in effective distribution.

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