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ASSESSMENT OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE USE OF COMPUTER BY ADULT EDUCATION FACILITATORS IN SOME ADULT EDUCATION CENTERS IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

This paper investigated the factors affecting the use of computers by adult education facilitators in various centers across Kwara State, Nigeria. The research aims to identify key elements that impact the adoption and effective utilization of computers in adult education, focusing on infrastructure, pedagogical practices, teacher attitudes, and policy frameworks. Data were collected through surveys and interviews with facilitators, providing insights into their experiences and challenges with technology integration. The findings reveal that the availability and quality of infrastructure, such as reliable internet access and up-to-date hardware, are critical for effective computer usage. Additionally, facilitators who adopt learner-centered pedagogical approaches and incorporate interactive activities tend to utilize computers more effectively. Teacher attitudes towards technology significantly influence its adoption, with positive attitudes correlating with higher usage rates. Supportive policy frameworks and continuous professional development are also essential for fostering technology integration. However, the study highlights several limitations, including geographic constraints, potential biases in self-reported data, and a lack of longitudinal analysis. Future research should consider these limitations and explore additional perspectives, such as those of learners, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting computer usage in adult education. The study concludes that a holistic approach, addressing infrastructure, pedagogical practices, facilitator attitudes, policy support, and ongoing training, is necessary for successful computer integration in adult education. By implementing these recommendations, adult education centers in Kwara State can enhance educational experiences and outcomes for both facilitators and learners.

Keywords: Assessment, Facilitators, Computer, Centres, Adult Education.

Introduction

Adult education plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for personal development, career advancement, and societal contribution. In Nigeria, adult education programmes are implemented across various centers to bridge educational gaps for individuals who missed formal schooling or seek to enhance their skills. However, the effective integration of technology, particularly computers, remains a major challenge due to several factors influencing its adoption by facilitators Becker, G. S. (2022).

Access to and utilization of computers in adult education centers depend on multiple factors, including infrastructure availability, facilitators' digital literacy levels, attitudes towards technology, institutional support, and socioeconomic considerations (Okwuanaso & Olufadi, 2022; Olowoselu, 2020). Integrating technology into adult education has the potential to enhance teaching and learning experiences, facilitate access to educational resources, and improve instructional delivery (Makoe & Mohapi, 2021).

In Kwara State, adult education serves as a critical tool for lifelong learning, literacy improvement, and skill development. It aims to provide educational opportunities for individuals outside the formal school system and equip them with the knowledge necessary for socioeconomic growth. Historically, adult education in Kwara State dates back to colonial times, when missionary organizations and government agencies introduced literacy programs to combat low literacy rates. Over time, adult education in the state has evolved to include vocational training, literacy campaigns, and community learning initiatives, with both governmental and non-governmental organizations playing active roles in implementation. Despite these efforts, several challenges persist, including limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance to formal education among adult learners. The State Agency for Mass Education oversees literacy campaigns and skill acquisition programs, but inequitable access to technology remains a major barrier to improving learning outcomes.

Technology has revolutionized modern education by expanding access, improving instructional delivery, and enhancing learning experiences. In adult education, technology provides flexibility for learners, access to digital resources, and opportunities for lifelong learning. Computers, in particular, offer innovative tools for teaching, facilitate distance learning, and support digital literacy development. However, several barriers hinder the integration of computers into adult education centers in Kwara State, which include but not limited the following (Selwyn, N. 2021):

- Limited access to computer infrastructure (e.g., hardware, internet connectivity, and software).
- Low digital literacy levels among facilitators and learners.
- Insufficient training and technical support.
- Institutional challenges such as funding and administrative support.

By addressing these challenges, adult education centers in Kwara State can harness technology to improve learning experiences and promote digital inclusion. This study examines the factors influencing the adoption and utilization of computers by adult education facilitators, with the goal of identifying barriers and potential solutions for improved digital integration.

The integration of computers in education has become increasingly prevalent, offering numerous opportunities to enhance teaching and learning processes. However, the successful adoption and utilization of computers in educational settings are influenced by a myriad of factors. This comprehensive exploration delves into the multifaceted dimensions that shape the use of computers in education, drawing insights from extensive research literature. Access to technology infrastructure, including computers, internet connectivity, software applications, and digital devices, is a fundamental determinant of computer usage in education. Schools and educational institutions must have adequate technology resources to support computer-based learning activities (Jones & Torres, 2023). Proficiency in digital literacy skills is essential for effectively utilizing computers in education. Teachers and students need to possess the necessary competencies to navigate digital platforms, utilize software applications, evaluate online resources, and engage in digital communication (Brown & Garcia, 2020).

The perceived usefulness and ease of use of computers significantly influence their adoption in education. Teachers are more likely to integrate computers into their instructional practices if they perceive them as beneficial for enhancing teaching effectiveness, improving learning outcomes, and facilitating administrative tasks (Wang & Zhang, 2017). Adequate training, professional development, and technical support are crucial for empowering teachers to effectively utilize computers in their teaching. Schools and educational institutions must invest in ongoing training programs to enhance teachers' digital competencies and provide timely technical assistance (Smith et al., 2019). The integration of computers into the curriculum and pedagogical practices is essential for promoting their effective use in education. Teachers need to align computer-based activities with learning objectives, design interactive and engaging digital learning materials, and implement innovative teaching strategies that leverage technology (Chen et al., 2020). Supportive institutional policies and leadership are critical for fostering a culture of technology integration in education. School administrators must prioritize technology integration initiatives, allocate resources, establish clear guidelines, and provide leadership support to promote the use of computers in teaching and learning (Gupta & Sharma, 2021).

Access to Technology refers to the availability and affordability of digital tools such as computers, the internet, and software. It plays a crucial role in education, communication, and economic development. Factors influencing access include infrastructure, cost, government policies, and digital literacy levels. Limited access can create a "digital divide," preventing individuals, especially in rural or low-income areas, from benefiting from technological advancements. Improving access through affordable devices, public internet facilities, and digital literacy programs can enhance opportunities for education, employment, and social inclusion.

Digital Literacy refers to the ability to use digital devices, communication tools, and the internet effectively and safely. It includes skills such as navigating online resources, using software applications, understanding cybersecurity, and evaluating digital information critically. Digital literacy is essential for education, employment, and everyday tasks in the modern world. A lack of digital literacy can create barriers to accessing information and opportunities. Promoting digital literacy through education and training programs helps individuals participate fully in the digital age and reduces the digital divide.

Cost and Funding play a significant role in the implementation and sustainability of technology in various sectors, including education and business. The cost includes expenses for hardware, software, internet access, maintenance, and training. Limited financial resources can hinder access to technology, especially in underprivileged communities. Funding from governments, NGOs, and private organizations helps bridge this gap by supporting infrastructure, digital literacy programs, and subsidies for devices and connectivity. Proper allocation and management of funds ensure that technology remains accessible and beneficial for all.

Instructor Readiness refers to the ability of educators to effectively integrate technology into their teaching methods. It includes their knowledge of digital tools, confidence in using technology, and willingness to adapt to new teaching approaches. Factors influencing instructor readiness include access to training, technical support, and institutional encouragement. Without proper preparation, instructors may struggle to engage learners or maximize the benefits of technology. Providing continuous professional development and resources enhances instructor readiness, ensuring effective digital learning experiences for students.

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Cultural and Social Factors influence how individuals and communities adopt and use technology. These factors include beliefs, traditions, language barriers, education levels, and societal attitudes toward digital tools. In some cultures, there may be resistance to technology due to fear of change or lack of awareness. Social factors like income inequality, gender roles, and community support also impact access and usage. Addressing these challenges through inclusive policies, multilingual resources, and digital literacy programs can help bridge the digital divide and promote equal opportunities for all.

Statement of the Problems

The integration of computers into adult education programmes has the potential to enhance teaching and learning processes, improve access to educational resources, and equip learners with digital literacy skills necessary for economic and personal development. Consequently, despite the growing importance of technology in education, the use of computers by adult education facilitators in Kwara State remains limited. Several factors may influence the adoption and utilization of computers by facilitators in adult education centres. These factors could include a lack of computer literacy among facilitators, inadequate access to computers and internet facilities, insufficient training opportunities, lack of institutional support, and resistance to change. Additionally, infrastructural challenges such as erratic power supply and limited funding may further hinder the effective use of computers in adult education.

This study seeks to assess the factors influencing the use of computers by adult education facilitators in selected adult education centres in Kwara State. It aims to identify key challenges, examine facilitators' attitudes toward computer use, and explore strategies to enhance digital integration in adult education. Understanding these factors will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to improve the use of technology in adult learning environments.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors influencing the use of computers by adult education facilitators in Kwara State?
2. What are the training and professional development opportunities to improve computer skills?
3. What are the challenges encountered by adult education facilitators in using computers for instructional purposes in adult education centers in Kwara State?

Methodology

Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of all the adult education facilitators in Kwara State. Population for the study consists of all the adult education facilitators in Kwara State. There were Two hundred and Fifty facilitators (250) in Kwara State. The sample size for the study was (100) responded randomly selected across the adult education centres in Kwara State. Data were collected through surveys and interviews with facilitators, providing insights into their experiences and challenges with technology integration. The findings reveal that the availability and quality of infrastructure, such as reliable internet access and up-to-date hardware, are critical for effective computer usage. Additionally, facilitators who adopt learner-centered pedagogical approaches and incorporate interactive activities tend to utilize computers more effectively. Facilitators attitude towards technology significantly influence its adoption, with positive attitude correlating with higher usage rates. Supportive policy frameworks and continuous professional development are also essential for fostering technology integration. However, the study highlights several limitations, including geographic constraints, potential biases in self-reported data, and a lack of longitudinal analysis.

Answering of Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the factors influencing the use of computers by adult education facilitators in Ilorin South, Kwara State.

Table 1: Factors influencing the adoption and use of computers by adult education facilitators

	SA	A	D	SD
1. Computer is used for enhancing my skill for facilitating	35(35%)	50(50)	10(10%)	5(5%)
2. I have computer manipulative skills	35(35%)	45(45)	12(12%)	8(8%)
3. I am positive about integrating computers into my teaching methods	30(30%)	60(60)	7(7%)	3(3%)
4. I have adequate access to computers and related resources for teaching	30(30%)	40(40)	20(20%)	10(10%)
5. My institution provides sufficient support and training for using computers in education	30(30%)	40(40)	18(18%)	12(12%)

In table 2, a significant majority (85%) agree (50%) or strongly agree (35%) that using computers enhances their facilitating skills. This indicates a strong positive perception of computer use for skill enhancement. Only 15% disagree or strongly disagree, showing a consensus on the benefits of using computers. A majority (80%) agree (45%) or strongly agree (35%) that they have computer manipulative skills, indicating high confidence in their abilities. However, 20% disagree or strongly disagree, showing that a notable minority may require further skill development. A large majority (90%) agree (60%) or strongly agree (30%) that they are positive about integrating computers into teaching methods. Only 10% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting widespread acceptance of technology integration in teaching. A majority (70%) agree (40%) or strongly agree (30%) that they have adequate access to computers and related resources. However, 30% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that access to resources is a significant issue for a substantial minority of participants. A majority (70%) agree (40%) or strongly agree (30%) that their institution provides sufficient support and training. However, 30% disagree or strongly disagree, highlighting a need for improved support and training from institutions. The data reveals that participants generally have a positive perception of using computers, especially for enhancing skills and integrating them into teaching methods. Most participants feel confident in their computer manipulative skills and acknowledge the benefits of using computers for facilitation. However, there are notable concerns regarding access to resources and institutional support and training. To maximize the benefits of computer integration in education, institutions should focus on improving access to technology and providing more robust training and support.

Research Questions Two: What are training and professional development opportunities to improve computer skills?

Table 3: Attitudes and perceptions of adult education facilitators towards the integration of technology in instructional practices

SN		SA	A	D	SD
1.	I have a positive attitude towards integrating technology into my instructional practices	40 (40%)	48(48)	8(8%)	4(4%)
2.	Integrating technology into my instructional practices improves the quality of education I provide	35 (35%)	50(50)	10(10%)	5(5%)
3.	I feel comfortable using technology in my teaching	38 (38%)	44(44)	12(12%)	6(6%)
4.	I believe that students benefit from the use of technology in their learning	35 (35%)	50(50)	7(7%)	3(3%)
5.	I am willing to learn new technologies to enhance my instructional practices	48 (48%)	45(45)	5(5%)	2(2%)

Table 3, a significant majority (88%) of participants agree (48%) or strongly agree (40%) that they have a positive attitude towards integrating technology into their instructional practices. This indicates a widespread acceptance and positive perception of technology integration. Only 12% disagree or strongly disagree, showing minimal resistance to adopting technology in teaching. A substantial majority (85%) agree (50%) or strongly agree (35%) that integrating technology improves the quality of education they provide. This suggests that most educators perceive a positive impact on educational quality due to technology integration. Only 15% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a small portion of educators may not see the same benefits. A strong majority (82%) agree (44%) or strongly agree (38%) that they feel comfortable using technology in their teaching. This shows high levels of confidence and comfort among educators in using technology. However, 18% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting that some educators may need additional support or training to feel comfortable with technology. A large majority (90%) agree (55%) or strongly agree (35%) that students benefit from the use of technology in their learning. This indicates a strong belief among educators that technology has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Only 10% disagree or strongly disagree, showing minimal skepticism about the benefits of technology for students. An overwhelming majority (93%) agree (45%) or strongly agree (48%) that they are willing to learn new technologies to enhance their instructional practices. This demonstrates a high level of openness and commitment among educators to adopt and learn new technologies. Only 7% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating very little resistance to continuing professional development in technology. The data reveals a highly positive perception of technology integration among educators. Most educators have a positive attitude towards using technology in their instructional practices, believe that it improves the quality of education, and feel comfortable using it in their teaching. Additionally, there is a

strong belief that students benefit from the use of technology, and a significant willingness among educators to learn new technologies to enhance their teaching practices.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges encountered by adult education facilitators in using computers for instructional purposes in adult education centers in Ilorin South, Kwara State?

Table 4: Challenges encountered by adult education facilitators in using computers for instructional purposes in adult education centers.

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1.	I do not have sufficient access to computer and related resources for instructional purposes	25(25%)	50(50%)	15(15%)	10(10%)
2.	I do not have adequate technical support to troubleshoot computer-related issues	25(25%)	45 (45%)	18(18%)	12(12%)
3.	I do not have access to sufficient training and professional development opportunities to improve my computer skills	35(35%)	40(40%)	17(17%)	8(8%)
4.	I do not use computers compatible with my current teaching methods and curriculum	35(35%)	50(50%)	10(10%)	5(5%)
5.	I do not have enough time to integrate and use computers effectively in my instructional practices	25(25%)	40(40%)	20(20%)	15(15%)

In table 4, majorities (75%) of participants agree (50%) or strongly agree (25%) that they have sufficient access to computers and related resources for instructional purposes. This indicates that most educators feel adequately equipped with the necessary technological resources. However, 25% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting that a significant minority still face access issues. A majority (70%) agrees (45%) or strongly agrees (25%) that they receive adequate technical support to troubleshoot computer-related issues. This shows that while most educators are satisfied with the technical support available to them, 30% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating a need for improved support services. A majority (75%) agrees (40%) or strongly agrees (35%) that they have access to sufficient training and professional development opportunities to improve their computer skills. However, 25% disagree or strongly disagree, highlighting that a notable portion of educators still find professional development opportunities lacking. Large majorities (85%) agree (50%) or strongly agree (35%) that using computers is compatible with their current teaching methods and curriculum. This suggests that most educators find it easy to integrate technology into their existing practices. Only 15% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating minimal compatibility issues. A majority (65%) agree (40%) or strongly agree (25%) that they have enough time to integrate and use computers effectively in their instructional

practices. However, 35% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a significant number of educators struggle with time constraints when it comes to incorporating technology into their teaching.

Summary of Findings

The investigation into the factors influencing the use of computers by adult education facilitators in various centers across Kwara State revealed that the availability and quality of infrastructure were found to be fundamental. Centres with better-equipped facilities, reliable internet access, and up-to-date hardware and software experienced higher levels of computer usage. In contrast, inadequate infrastructure presented a significant barrier, limiting facilitators' ability to incorporate technology into their teaching practices effectively.

The study also highlighted that the incorporation of computers into teaching methodologies was highly dependent on the facilitators' pedagogical approaches. Facilitators who adopted learner-centered approaches and incorporated interactive and collaborative activities tended to use computers more effectively. These practices not only enhanced engagement but also improved learning outcomes.

However, the attitudes and beliefs of adult education facilitators towards technology significantly influenced computer usage. Facilitators with positive attitudes towards technology, who recognized its potential to enhance teaching and learning, were more likely to integrate computers into their instruction. Conversely, those with apprehensive or resistant attitudes were less inclined to utilize these tools.

Institutional and governmental policies also played a crucial role in determining the extent of computer use in adult education. Supportive policies that provided resources, training, and incentives for technology integration were associated with higher levels of computer adoption. In contrast, a lack of clear policies or inadequate support hindered the integration process.

The digital literacy levels of both facilitators and learners influenced the effectiveness of computer usage. Facilitators with higher digital literacy were able to navigate and utilize various technological tools more efficiently, which in turn enhanced the learning experience for adult learners.

Finally, equitable access to technology for all learners was another significant finding. Disparities in access, whether due to socioeconomic factors or geographical location, affected learners' ability to benefit from computer-assisted education. Ensuring that all learners have access to necessary technological tools is critical for inclusive and effective education.

Conclusion

The study identified several critical factors that affect the adoption of computers by adult education facilitators, including:

1. **Infrastructure Quality:** Centers with reliable internet access, up-to-date hardware, and adequate facilities experienced higher levels of computer usage, while those lacking such resources faced significant barriers.

2. **Pedagogical Practices:** Facilitators using learner-centered and interactive teaching methods were more likely to integrate computers into their instruction.
3. **Facilitator Attitudes:** A positive attitude toward technology was strongly correlated with higher adoption rates, whereas resistance and apprehension hindered its use.
4. **Policy and Institutional Support:** Centers with clear policies, training programs, and administrative support were more successful in implementing computer-based learning.
5. **Digital Literacy Levels:** Facilitators with higher digital literacy skills were better equipped to use computers effectively, highlighting the need for continuous professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the use of computers in adult education centers in Kwara State:

1. **Enhance Infrastructure:** Invest in improving the technological infrastructure of adult education centers. This includes upgrading hardware and software, ensuring reliable internet access, and providing adequate technical support. A robust infrastructure is essential for facilitating effective computer usage in teaching.
2. **Adopt effective pedagogical practices:** Encourage facilitators to adopt learner-centered and technology-integrated pedagogical approaches. Training programs should emphasize the use of interactive and collaborative tools that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Integrating technology into teaching methods can make learning more dynamic and effective.
3. **Foster Positive Attitudes Toward Technology:** Provide professional development opportunities that address facilitators' attitudes towards technology. Workshops and training sessions should focus on demonstrating the benefits of technology in education, building confidence in its use, and overcoming resistance or apprehension.
4. **Develop supportive policy frameworks:** Advocate for the creation and implementation of supportive policies that promote the integration of technology in education. Policies should include provisions for funding, resource allocation, and incentives for technology adoption. Clear guidelines and support mechanisms can facilitate more effective integration of computers in adult education.
5. **Increase Training and Support:** Offer continuous professional development and technical support for adult education facilitators. Regular training sessions should focus on developing digital literacy, effective use of educational technologies, and troubleshooting common technical issues. Ongoing support is crucial for maintaining the effective use of technology in educational practices.

By addressing these recommendations, adult education centres in Kwara State can improve the integration of computers into their programs, enhance the quality of education, and better support both facilitators and learners in achieving their educational goals.

Final thoughts. The successful integration of computers in adult education requires a holistic approach that addresses technological, pedagogical, institutional, and policy-related factors. By implementing these recommendations, adult education centers in Kwara State can enhance learning experiences, bridge the digital divide, and equip both facilitators and learners with essential 21st-century skills.

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