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Audio Books in the Nigerian Higher Educational System: To be adopted or not to be adopted? (Pp. 372-378)

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Abstract

This study discusses audio books from the point of view of an innovation. It discusses the advantages and disadvantages of audio books. It examined students' familiarization with audio books and their perception about its being introduced into the school system. It was found out that Nigerian students are already familiar with audio books. They will always prefer audio books going hand-in-hand with printed books. It is suggested that if adopted or embraced, there would be easy and relaxed instruction

Introduction

There are many write-ups today in favour of audio books. Many of such even established the superiority of audio books over the printed ones. Many see audio books as a book for the visually impaired or the blind, but whether we like it or not, it is part of the new media. Printed books have existed for a very long time. One of the challenges facing the use of textbooks however is the exorbitant prices at which they are selling. This has caused students to fall back on the internet for getting their information. This has its implications: publishing as a profession is going into an oblivion and bookshelves are getting dusty. In a developing country where most homes are still not connected to internet, students now have to queue up at the cybercafés. Lastly, having a study at home is becoming old-fashioned. In the developed countries like America and Britain however, people of all ages are reported to have been switching over to audio books and publishers

recognizing this trend are releasing the audio versions of their books.

There is no doubting the fact that people in education realize the need for changes to occur. Most people now realize that mere evolutionary growth in education is inadequate in an age when changes occur much more rapidly. New technologies are always being introduced to improve the quality of education and for their ability to stimulate students through both visual and auditory stimuli. The term innovation means a new way of doing some thing. It may refer to incremental, radical and revolutionary changes in thinking, products, processes, or organization. In many fields, something new must be substantially different to be innovative, not an insignificant change. Diffusion of an innovation is a theory of how, why and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures. Rogers (2003) concludes that “diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Bagozzi, Davis and Warshaw (1992) assert:

They further explained that attitudes towards the usage of such technologies may be ill-formed or lacking in conviction or else may occur after preliminary strivings to learn to use the technology evolve. To them, actual usage may not be a direct or immediate consequence of such attitude and intentions.

The adoption of audio books will therefore be another innovation in the Nigerian educational sector. Will the publishers agree to this?

There is “Technology Acceptance Model” (TAM). Model is an information systems theory that models how users come to accept and use a technology. The model suggests that when users are presented with a new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use it. Under this model are two things: (i) Perceived Usefulness (PU) – the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance. (ii) Perceived Ease-Of-Use (PEOU) – this is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular thing or system would be free from effort” (Davis, 1989).

Audio books or books on tape as they are sometimes called refer to recordings of literary materials read out aloud. One of the great benefits of being able to record sound is to make the books available for listening. This

has made many people to believe and conclude that 'talking books' are created for the use of the blind or the visually impaired. We may consider their advantages:

- 1 One of the many advantages is that it is downloadable. Purchasing an audio books online or downloading them from the internet is simpler and quicker than waiting for the titles to appear.
- 2 They allow students to make notes while they listen. This is much quicker than the to-an-fro process needed when reading the printed word. Note taking while listening to an audio book supports the learning process, as both the visual and aural senses are engaged.
- 3 Audio books are a great time saver for a busy lifestyle. You can listen to them while preparing food in the kitchen, while commuting to an from work or while exercising or jogging.
- 4 They are less expensive to produce than print books. Audio books are more cost effective than hard cover or paperbacks. VDU strain is a major contributor to major sight deterioration. People spend a lot of time looking at their computer screens while at work while they perpetuate the strain by sitting in front of their television screens while at home. Listening to audio books is much more relaxing than watching the television. You can lie on your back or even close your eyes.
- 5 You can select the exact track you want to listen to instead of flipping through several pages in the case of printed books. This saves a great deal of time and makes it very comfortable for you.
- 6 You can listen to an audio book when it is dark most especially when they have taken light but you may not be able to read a book when it is dark
- 7 Visual impairment: The vast majority of visually impaired people would prefer audio books to the cumbersome and sizeable books.
- 8 Space: The space you need for a hundred printed books will be more than what you need for a hundred audio books.
- 9 Nature: Those who love to conserve nature are of the opinion that if all books are audio instead hardcover and paperbacks, a lot of tree would have been saved.

The disadvantages of audio books however lie in the fact that they came in different formats, such as tapes or CD. The downloadable audio books came in digital format. There is therefore problem of delivery and dubbing. The second problem may not pay the author who must have utilized his money

and time.

The use of audio books is no longer new. They are fast gaining popularity in the education field in the developed countries. It is against this background that this study examined the level of familiarization among Nigerian University students asks the question: should audio books be adopted in our educational system?

Methodology

This is a qualitative and quantitative study that investigated Nigerian students' level of familiarization with audio books and their perception about its being introduced into the school system. The paper reports a study designed to have an in-depth consideration for a new media among tertiary education students. It carried out the study among students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in Osun state. The subjects used in the study comprised 200 University students selected from a Nigerian University. In selecting them, the following factors were taken into consideration:

- (i) University students were selected because majority of them would possess or can afford audio players
- (ii) Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife is one of the leading Universities to adopt educational innovations e.g. ICT

A three-part questionnaire, A, B, and C was used for the study. Part A contained general information guidelines and appropriate instructions about the respondents without giving his or her identity. Part 'B' of the instrument has five items relating to the technology in question while section 'C' contained a Likert-type questionnaire designed to investigate students' position about the technology. The questionnaire was administered to the selected students in the University used for the study. They were from different faculties. There was a regular follow up so as to facilitate the retrieval of the completed questionnaire.

The analysis of data was carried out using simple percentages. The responses were collected along with their percentages under the title "**Students Familiarization with Audio Books and Students Perception of Audio Books**".

Results and Discussion

Students' responses indicates that Nigerian University students are already familiar with audio books even though only a few had already listen to any or seen one. Result is presented in table 1. it is clear from this table that majority of Nigerian University students have an audio player. About a third of the respondents however confessed that they only listen to music through them. Others that have and answer 'no' could have used them for some other purposes like presentation of instruction.

A larger percentage of the respondents know what audio books are even though they might not have seen any. This suggests that as popular as audio books could have been in the developed countries, it is still not popular in the developing countries. All of them agreed that audio books have their instructional benefits.

Conclusion and Recommendation

There are several types of mediated resources that a teacher can select or create to deliver or augment instruction. Such are the audio books. They can present stimulating verbal messages from well-known people from the past or the present. As sound technology has changed, it therefore becomes imperative that audio books find their way into our educational system. Audio books are therefore recommended for adoption into the Nigerian educational system not for the sake of adopting a new technology but for its sterling advantages.

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Frequencies

Statistics

	q1	q2	q3	q4	q5
N	200	200	200	200	200
Valid	0	0	0	0	0
Missing					

Frequency Table 1: “Students Familiarization with Audio Books”

q1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	92	46.0	46.0	46.0
No	108	54.0	54.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q2				
Valid Yes	86	43.0	43.0	43.0
No	114	57.0	57.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q3				
	182	91.0	91.0	91.0
	18	9.0	9.0	100.0
	200	100.0	100.0	
q4				
Valid Yes	172	86.0	86.0	86.0
No	28	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q5				
Valid Yes	180	90.0	90.0	90.0
No	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Statistics

	q1	q2	q3	q4	q5
N	200	200	200	200	200
Valid	0	0	0	0	0
Missing					

Frequency Table 2: Students Perception of Audio Books

q1	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	34	17.0	17.0	17.0
Strongly Agree	30	15.0	15.0	32.0
Agree	20	10.0	10.0	42.0
Undecided	70	35.0	35.0	77.0
Strongly disagree5	46	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q2				
Valid	1	80	40.0	40.0
	2	40	20.0	60.0
	3	80	40.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q3				
Valid	1	60	30.0	30.0
	2	26	13.0	43.0
	3	34	17.0	60.0
	4	80	40.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	
q4				
Valid	1	70	35.0	3.0
	2	54	27.0	62.0
	3	40	20.0	82.0
	4	20	10.0	92.0
	5	16	8.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	