

A change in University Lecturers' Perception of E-learning tools for Instructional Delivery at Midlands State University: From techno-phobic to technology savvies.

Lockias CHITANANA

Midlands State University P. Bag 9055, Gweru Zimbabwe

Tel: + 263 1 533758, Fax: + 265 1 754535, Email: chitananal@msu.ac.zw

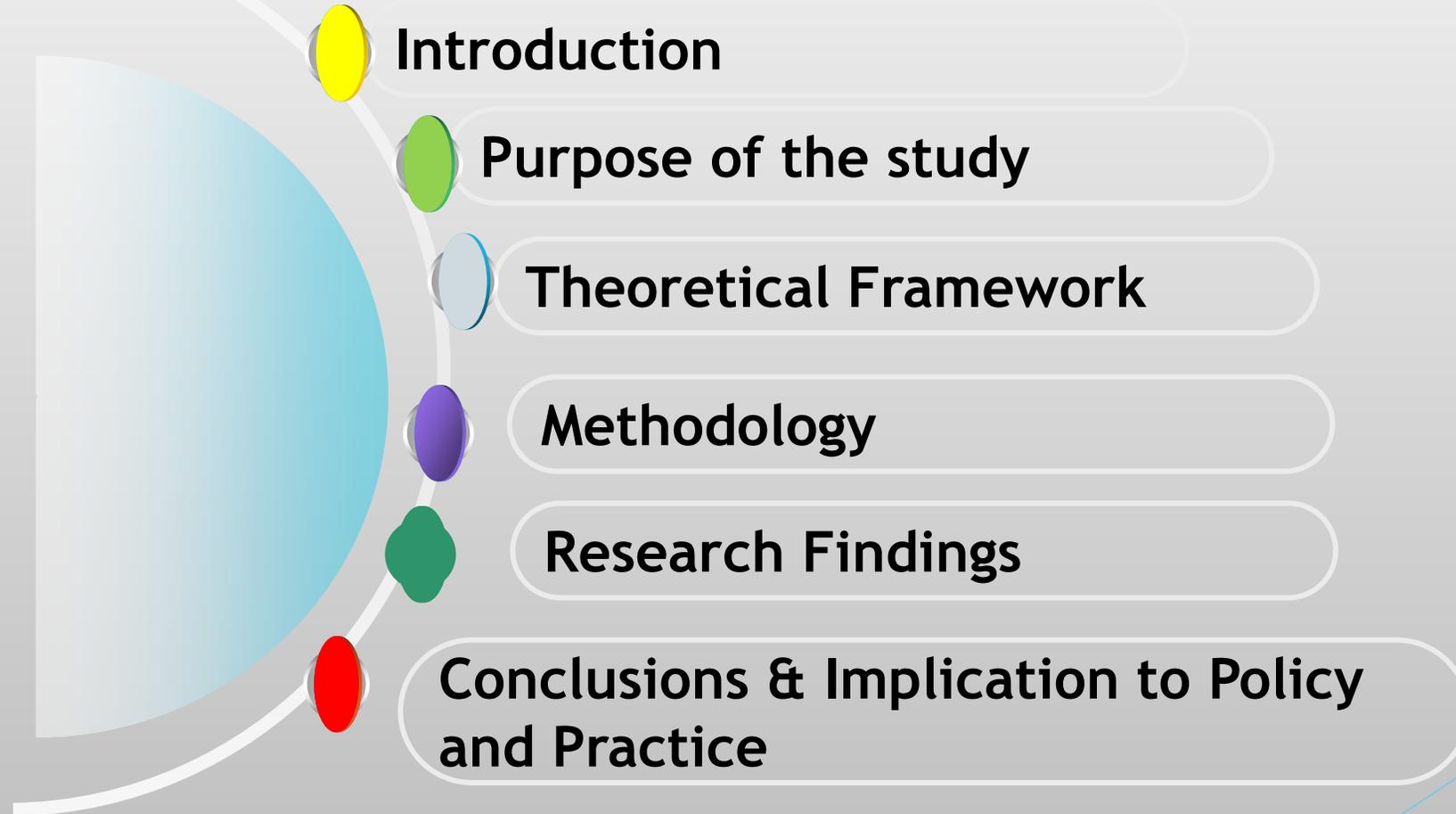
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Presentation outline



Introduction

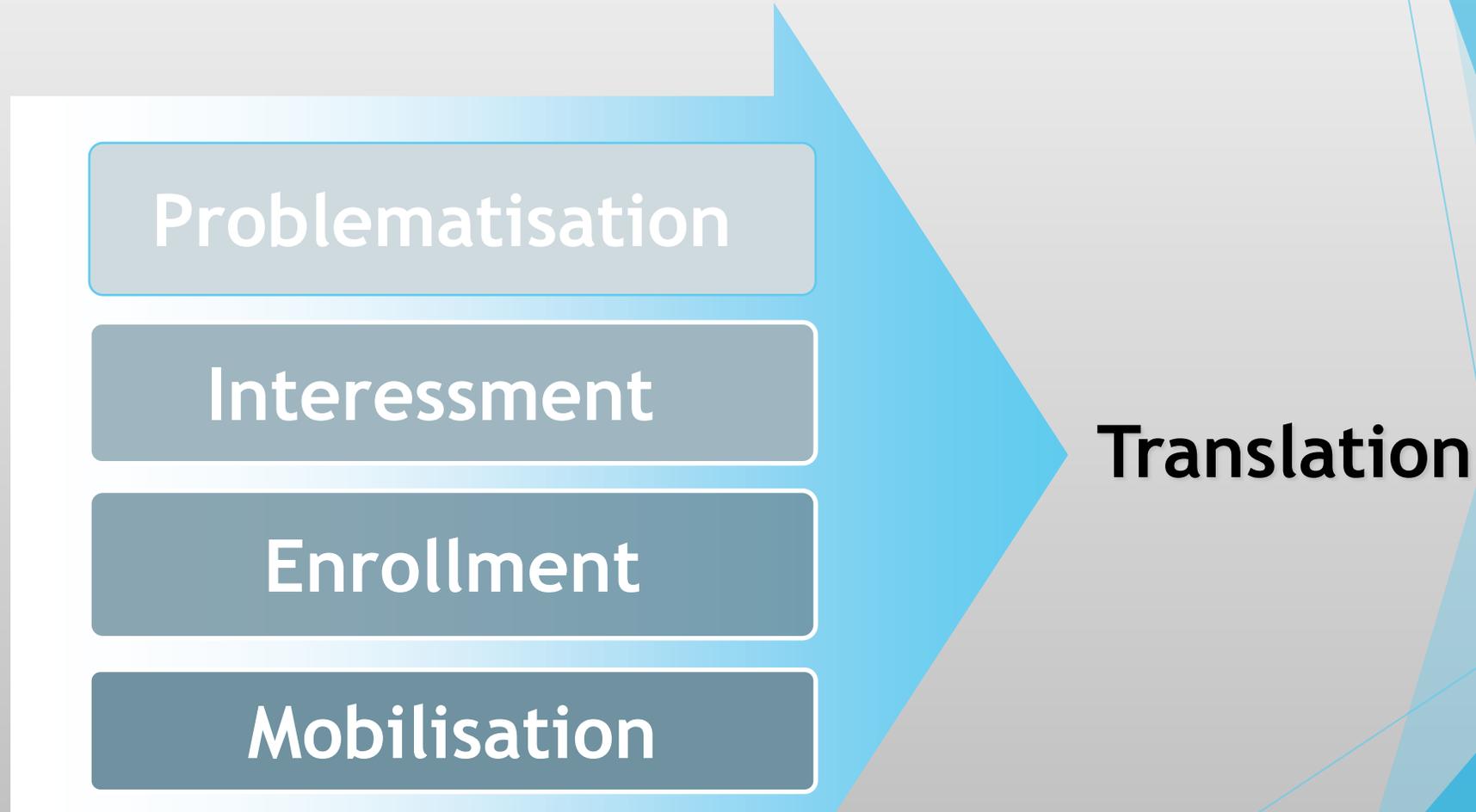
- ▶ The Nziramasanga (1999) Education Commission Report recommends the introduction and mainstreaming of computer based teaching and learning in the pedagogy of schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning.
- ▶ Zimbabwe's ICT) Policy (2005) places a premium on;
 - ▶ the importance of ICTs in education and human resource development
 - ▶ the promotion of equitable access to ICT to enable education and training in all parts of the country.
- ▶ The policy highlights the need to build skills in the sector, promoting software development, e-learning and embedding of ICT literacy in the pedagogy of schools, colleges and universities.
- ▶ Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset) identifies ICT as one of the key drivers to economic growth.
- ▶ MSU Strategic plan-Revised.



Purpose of the Study

- To explore the e-learning dynamics that have resulted in the change in perceptions of lecturers at Midlands State University (MSU).
- The main questions were:
 - ▶ What are factors that motivate lecturers to change their perception on e-learning?
 - ▶ What associations/ties are created by the actors in the MSU e-learning programme as it traverses from one node to the other?

Theoretical Framework: Actor Network Theory (ANT) - (Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, John Law)



Four Stages of Translation

1. **Problematization** - the actor (leader) defines a challenge or problem in such a way that the others can recognize it as their problem, and provides the means for resolving the problem.

2. **Interessement** - the leader locks allies into roles and gains their commitment to a set of goals and a course of action.

3. **Enrolment** - the leader negotiates, persuades, induces and coordinates allies to carry out the course of action consolidating their roles.

4. **Mobilisation of allies** - the leader creates and empowers actants to communicate (via charts, diagrams, etc. - “immutable mobiles”) progress being made toward their shared goals and actions, thus reinforcing commitments to the course of action. At this stage the leader has lined up a chain of distinctive links to perpetuate the network (Callon, 1986).

Research methodology

Following the Actors

- ▶ Semi-structured interviews.
- ▶ Participant Observation.
- ▶ Document Analysis
- ▶ Data were analysed for references to associations and ties that were formed among the actants in the e-learning network



Research Findings: Actors

- ▶ Human actors (Lecturers, Students, ITS staff, University Principle Administrators)
- ▶ Structures (Senate, Committees of Senate, Faculties & Departments, Library, Institutional policies)
- ▶ Technology (Computers, Bandwidth, Network Backbone, e-Learning systems).



Research Findings: Mapping the essential factors

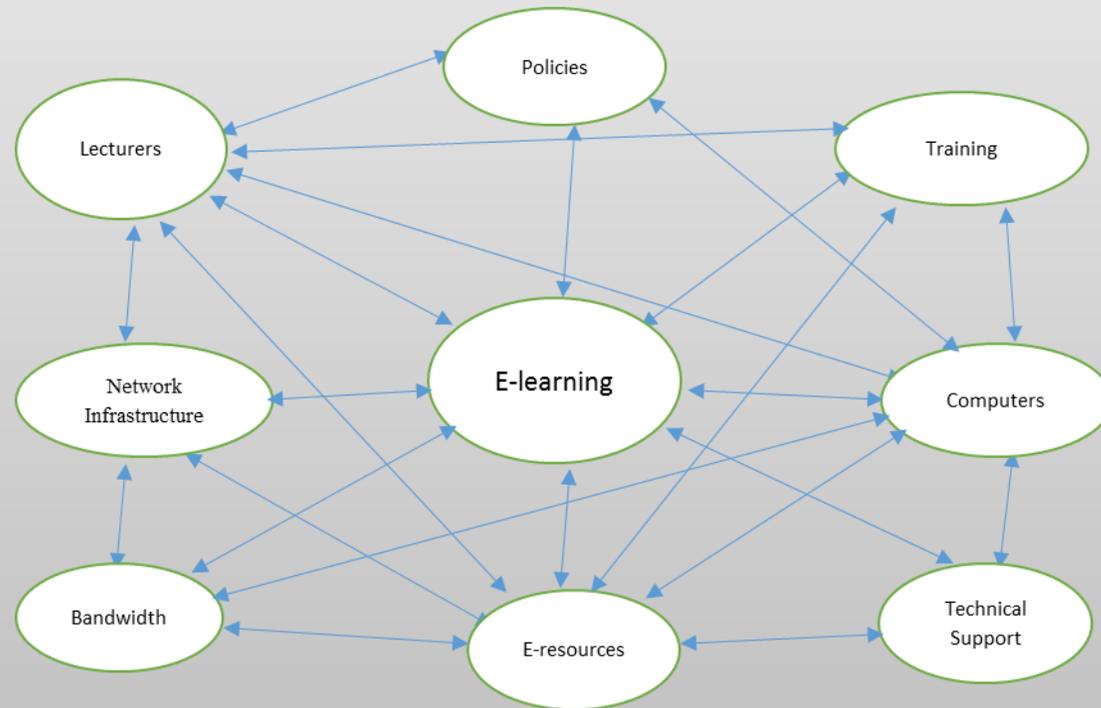
- ▶ ICT Network infrastructure
- ▶ Provision of Computers
- ▶ E-learning Portal
- ▶ Lecturer training
- ▶ Library support
- ▶ Institutional policies
- ▶ Technological Support
- ▶ University administration

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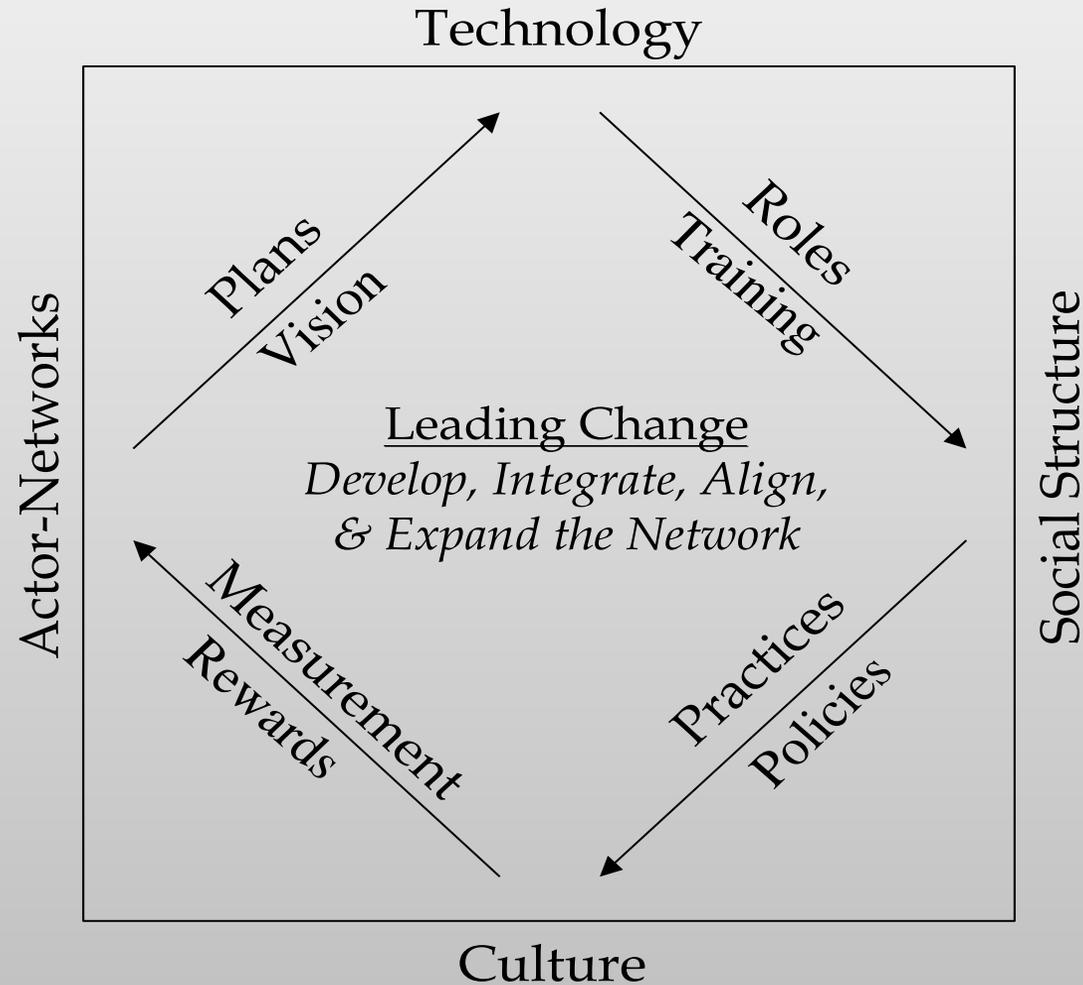


Research Findings

The Assemblage of MSU Actor Network



ANT Model for Changing Perception of Technologies



Missing Relationships

- ▶ Missing links between assessment and evaluation as agents of improvement to the e-learning programme
- ▶ Training and teaching methodologies: transmissional Versus constructivist model of teaching.



Conclusions

- ▶ The change in lecturers' perceptions may be viewed as a result of the associations created by heterogeneous actors in a network of aligned interests which results in a stable network.
- Lecturers need to be e-enabled to take advantage of the use of technology by creating an interactive environment including a clear policy for raising awareness, training program and improving infrastructure.
- Capital investment is anticipated to be high at the initial stage, Universities are recommended to adopt BYOD and to *collaborate with PPP and international communities*.
- Accessibility and connectivity and other technical issues are *temporarily* phases, emphasis should be on e-learning as a '*process*' rather than as a '*tool*'.



Implication for policy and practice

“it does not matter if the academic staff has the interest, it does not matter if the technology is in place - if there is no political will, nothing will change”

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