



Availability and Utilization of E-Learning Facilities in Business Education Programme in Universities in South-South States, Nigeria

Oghenemine, Jane Omakolo & Okoro, James

Department of Business Education, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examines the availability and use of e-learning resources in business education programs in South-South State universities in Nigeria. The study's assumption is that the Business Education program's teaching and learning are not making sufficient use of e-learning resources. Given this, the study presents two hypotheses that served as the basis for the inquiry. The investigation's design was a descriptive survey. Lecturers participated in the survey as responders. The checklist and questionnaire served as the data collecting tools. The t-test statistics were used to examine the generated data. The mean assessments of male and female respondents about the availability and use of e-learning resources in business education programs at institutions in South-South States, Nigeria, did not differ significantly, according to the findings. According to the study's findings, state-owned universities in Nigeria's South-South States have access to and use e-learning resources. In order to provide students with a more viable, robust, dependable, efficient, and cost-effective educational knowledge acquisition, the research suggested, among other things, that e-learning facilities be made more accessible, inexpensive, and accessible to them with less bureaucracy.

Keywords:

E-Learning, Facilities, Business Education, Availability, Utilization.

Introduction

Since ancient times, education has been acknowledged as the cornerstone of national growth. According to UNESCO (2020), traditional education is essential to escaping oppression, fear, and want. Assié-Lumumba (2008) claims that many countries view traditional education as the top priority. The United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Japan, Germany, and many other industrialized nations have utilized education to change their economy over the years. However, many of the underlying presumptions that have influenced and directed previous thinking on educational systems look increasingly out of date as the globe enters the first half of the twenty-first century. Globally, the educational system is undergoing fast, fundamental transformation.

According to Rosenberg (2001), those who are unable to learn, unlearn, and relearn will be the illiterates of the twenty-first century rather than those who cannot read and write. In order to make sense of their changing surroundings, societies increasingly understand that students must

respond quickly, think critically, independently, and cooperatively. Instead of fostering a culture of learning, the colonial rulers in Africa left behind an educational paradigm that was primarily concerned with creating a culture of teaching and schooling.

Seymour (1993) noted that, the educational institution, with its daily lesson plans, set curriculum, standardized assessments, and other similar accessories, has a tendency to continuously reduce learning to a set of technical actions and the teacher to the position of a technician. Unfortunately, building or maintaining school facilities and trying to attract kids into them have been the major topics of discussion in educational decision-making circles. Mainstream schools are frequently closed off from their surroundings and the communities to which they belong, and education is all too frequently viewed as an activity for the early years of life, a stage to prepare for life ahead. In light of the extraordinary demand for formal education in modern-day Africa, it is clear that the current educational paradigm is unsuited to address the issues facing the people. The use of e-learning supported by technology in educational institutions is necessary since the tripartite issues of access, fairness, and equality in education continue to be difficult.

Innovations in the educational system, such the rise of electronic learning (e-learning), have been brought about by technological improvement in many areas of life. According to Genoni (2006), e-learning is technology-enhanced and/or technology-delivered education that combines online and in-person learning methods. According to Eziugwu (2007), e-learning refers to the technologies used in information processing and electronic communications, including computers, the internet, email, computer software, satellite, mobile communication devices, and other related electronic devices for the dissemination of knowledge and information in teaching and learning. According to Adesoji (2012), e-learning includes computer and ICT resources and applications that facilitate the gathering and sharing of information. These definitions imply that e-learning does not only involve the use of electronic device for teaching, but also the presence of the instructor in the learning. Recognizing the advantages of e-learning, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) outlined the e-learning initiative in her national education policy with the goal of improving access to high-quality education for all students in order to ensure a globally competitive education system. The goal of incorporating e-learning materials into the educational system was to enhance instruction and get students ready for the information era.

Aduwa-Egiegbeen and Lyanmu (2005) assert that e-learning tools enhance people's creative and intellectual capacities by offering effective teaching and learning. With the use of these materials, educators and learners may cultivate their capacity for excellent learning and creative thinking. Users are encouraged to use internet technology to browse information through electronic learning materials. They significantly aid in interaction and learning facilitation, according to Obi (2005). Web-based teaching materials, CD-ROMs, learning software, discussion forums, email, computer-aided assessment, simulation, and online conferencing are some examples of electronic learning tools. Network technologies are also used in e-learning materials to produce, promote, deliver, and encourage learning. According to Ugwuoke (2011), it includes electronic-based face-to-face, distance, mixed, and blended delivery modalities.

From the work of Asogwa (2011), e-learning materials allow teachers to quickly and impartially assess students' performance. Teachers assess how much and how effectively their pupils are learning using a range of formal and informal methods. Teachers employ quizzes, tests, exams, term papers, lab reports, and homework for official evaluation. By using e-learning tools, the

teacher may assess students' performance and issue grades with the aid of these assessment approaches. E-learning acknowledges that there are several learning routes and various articulations of information that might be improved through research efforts, in contrast to text or print-based instructional technology.

Higher education institutions in Nigeria are starting to adopt e-learning. Because online classes are done virtually over the internet, the employment of e-learning technologies is crucial to their delivery. Additionally, e-learning technologies must be accessible and in excellent working order (Inije et al., 2013). Through a learning management system, the instructor conducts the lecture virtually. Students may examine their academic progress and course material, as well as interact with other students. Online courses are typically self-paced, giving students more freedom to finish their assignments. It is important to remember that online learning opportunities and the use of open educational resources and other technologies can boost educational productivity by speeding up learning, cutting expenses related to the delivery of business education programs or instructional materials, and making better use of lecturer time through technological or electronic learning and teaching (Nwana, 2012). Developments in Internet and multimedia technologies are the basic enablers of e-learning with consulting, contents, technologies, services and support being identified as the five key sector of the e-learning industry (European Commission, 2000).

The idea of e-learning is not well defined. Nonetheless, terms like connection, ICT infrastructure, accessibility flexibility, and online content delivery are highlighted in the literature that is currently accessible. Salmon (2002) defines e-learning as a method of using computer and communications technologies to improve and support learning. These gadgets include personal computers and other communications technology that allow students to utilize the internet for discussion boards, email, and collaborative software to support group learning. Online or offline, e-learning may be tailored to each learner's preferences. Additionally, it may target a group of students asynchronously or in real-time. In a customized, self-paced e-learning environment, the student uses an intranet or the internet to access learning materials like databases or course materials (Romiszowski, 2004). As an alternative, group-based synchronous or asynchronous e-learning can be set up. According to Okogi and Igberaharha (2023), synchronous group-based e-learning describes circumstances in which groups of students collaborate in real time over the internet or an intranet.

Romiszowski went on to say that group-based e-learning asynchronously refers to a scenario in which groups of students are working over an intranet or the internet and participant interactions take place with a time delay (i.e., not in real time). E-learning is flexible enough to accommodate each student's unique learning demands at any time and from any location thanks to these models and features. According to Eze et al. (2018), e-learning is defined as digitally enabled and technologically assisted learning tools that employ digital cameras, PCs, digital movies, tablets, projectors, OHP, software, and operating systems to promote student-teacher interaction. It has additional programs that facilitate in-person or remote learning using a computer (Olojo et al., 2012).

E-learning has evolved from traditional classroom instruction to a modern, collaborative, customized, and flexible approach that involves students, teachers, and facilitators (Falana, 2015). The learner-focused approach is centered on technology that let students distribute and obtain material on a regular basis, whereas the old approach was thought to be teacher-focused. E-learning enables students and teachers to share learning materials created in a consistent

structure (Nkanga, 2007) and covers fundamental and synergistic PC-supported scholarship processes and evaluation techniques that use cutting-edge approaches and applications to advance teaching and research (Eze et al., 2018). According to Sloan et al. (2014), e-learning is an essential tactic that all educational institutions should include into their current methods of teaching and learning for both students and community-oriented learning. According to Falana (2015) mentoring and learning are often done by students using the personal computer as a technology-facilitated learning process using digitally transported contents, and coaching support.

Liverpool et al. (2010) posited that, e-learning makes learning materials dynamic for both professors and students at Nigeria's higher education institutions. E-learning, according to Kajetanowicz and Wierzejewski (2010), is a dynamic approach that supports the enhancement of self-study, continuous testing and evaluations, and actual analysis of educational progress and intermittent accomplishment. A survey of the literature indicates that e-learning yields significant results for students' achievements. This cutting-edge approach to technology helps students studying business education develop their creativity and inventiveness (Eze et al. 2018).

E-teaching is the use of information and communication technologies, systems, and tools by educators for purposeful instruction. According to Nakajima and Hori (2016), e-teaching is the use of digital technology to communicate concepts, place them in different situations, make connections with prior knowledge, and facilitate discussions that test students' comprehension of the idea and its context. Naidu (2006) states that e-teaching is frequently defined as the teacher's use of networked information and communication technologies. In a similar vein, Carmona (2006) proposed that e-teaching is the application of ICTs (information and communication technologies) to improve teaching. Teachers and students may work together and communicate in both synchronous and asynchronous real-time modes thanks to e-teaching. E-teaching is essentially the process of transferring information and skills from a teacher to a student or learners through the use of computers, the Internet, and other electronic devices and media. In essence, e-learning is entertaining and captivating, particularly when used to the education of youth. In higher education, e-teaching encompasses a variety of options, such as interactions between students, instructors, and an expanding array of technology (Donnelley & McSweeney, 2009). With e-learning, students may take complete charge of their education.

According to Bakare et al. (2018), in order to provide meaningful academic education, the instructor acts as an interface between the learners and the e-teaching tools. Since technology is thought to be the forerunner of significant revolutions in many facets of human endeavors, including education, it has unavoidably become the most powerful instrument in practically every element of human everyday existence (Lee et al. 2018). The new paradigm of learning in the twenty-first century is the use of information technology (IT), which makes it simple for individuals to acquire, collect, analyze, and share knowledge (Darling-Hammond et al. 2020). This enables them to serve as instructors, study partners, and above all, as instruments to enhance the teaching and learning process as a whole. The phase of the whole educational system has altered, as seen by this recent development pertaining to the function of IT and the Internet. ICTs, or information and communication technologies, have enormous potential to progressively change and reshape education (Assar, 2015). ICTs ultimately have an influence on learning outcomes, content, and structure both within and outside of the classroom. According to Bader and Kottstorfer (2013), e-learning is progressively gaining importance in

higher education institutions by offering e-learning materials and enabling more students to register their profiles online.

In the opinion of Lakshmi et al. (2020), e-learning is a component and/or manifestation of e-readiness, which is the general term for utilizing computers and other electronic technologies to support teaching and learning. This can include using the technologies as part of conventional or traditional teaching, where students and teachers may never meet in person. In addition to computers and the networks that link them, technology now includes peripherals like interactive whiteboards and video cameras, as well as applications like email, online databases, and CD-ROMs. E-learning is also the use of ICT to encourage the acquisition of more effective and efficient learning resources and outcomes, make research findings and instructive articles more accessible, increase students' access to information, and hold researchers more accountable to the public and students (Eze et al. 2018).

Knowledge management and human resource development have changed as a result of e-learning (Subramanian, 2016). The expansion of the internet, a worldwide network of computer networks, has significantly strengthened ICT's capability (Teng et al. 2020). A global information society has resulted from its impact on business education practices, facilitation of learning and knowledge sharing, creation of global information flows, empowerment of citizens and communities in ways that have redefined governance, teaching and learning, substantial wealth creation and economic growth (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016; Okogi & Igberaharha, 2023). One method of planning for sustainable growth and development via the training of entrepreneurs who will propel the economy is through business education in tertiary institutions. In order to achieve progress and a higher standard of living, business education entails teaching individuals how to be inventive and creative while taking into account economic aspects in a balanced manner (Smith & Rayfield, 2016). Technology related to information and communication is essential to the effective advancement of education. ICT is necessary to provide more meaningful learning in education for newly developing civilizations. ICTs are essential for raising teaching and learning standards as well as for enhancing society. The development of effective human capital in any nation depends on improved secondary education, and in this technologically advanced era, the importance of ICT in Nigerian secondary schools cannot be overstated (Nwaukwa, 2015).

Students increasingly engage with knowledge in active, self-directed, and productive ways thanks to the use of information and communication technology (ICT), which has changed the learning environment and the teaching process. According to Nwaukwa (2015) and Okoro (2021), ICT is not only seen as a tool to supplement current traditional teaching techniques but also as a crucial device to enable innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Every human effort exhibits technological improvement, and education is no exception. In particular, the discovery of e-learning, e-library, e-payment, and all other ICT and electrically supported activities today has led to a noticeable advancement in education. E-learning resources are now a crucial instrument that every educational institution needs to support students' consistent and quick academic progress.

According to Okereke (2005), the majority of nations have employed a variety of technological tools and resources to support education. E-learning is the process of teaching and learning using the internet or studying online with a wireless connection to access course materials via a computer, smartphone, or other device. Through the utilization of internet resources like World Wide Web-based technology and other relevant applications, it offers simple access to

any kind of information needed for academic purposes. Online instruction, for instance, has the potential to offer opportunities for reflective and integrating learning outcomes and simultaneously assist in breaking the distance barrier because learners can receive instruction from any location as long as there is internet connectivity. This is seen as one of the learning approaches put in place to compensate for the problems caused by the traditional learning paradigm.

Nkanga (2007) states that, e-learning is a computer-assisted collaborative learning process that uses computers and electrical devices as its primary platform for information and communication technology (ICT) and allows teachers and students to create, advance, and share knowledge in a more common form. Based on the idea that the world is a global village, e-learning appears to be the only viable information and knowledge management solution for efficient information collection and dissemination that can successfully meet Nigeria's increasing need for equity, quality, and access to knowledge in higher education. In addition to using web-based instructional materials and hypermedia in general, such as rooms or websites, discussion boards, collaborative software, email, blogs, wikis, text charts, computer-aided assistance, educational animation, simulation, games, and learning management software, it also involves the use of mobile technologies like mp3/mp4 players and personal digital assistants. The importance of business education has been demonstrated in the twenty-first century. This program aims to educate students for the demands of the business world in the future by giving them the necessary information and abilities for the current business climate. It is essential to incorporate 21st century aspects, such as e-learning and all other components, in order to actualize the necessary skills and knowledge. This will make computers, internet services, and other technological devices easily accessible and facilitate learning.

In the view of Ipaye (2011), among the various e-learning platforms utilized in developed nations include websites, wikis, blogs, second life, email, twitters, course management systems, video/audio podcasts, Facebook, threaded discussion groups, WhatsApp, and video conferencing software. Universities' widespread adoption of e-learning resources is a sign of their appreciation for its value and significance in improving students' academic performance in Nigerian higher education (Oliver, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

In order to determine the extent to which students are receiving effective teaching, it is imperative to identify the availability and use of e-learning capabilities in Business Education programs at institutions in the area under evaluation. The technologies used in information processing and electronic communication, such as computers, the Internet, and other related electronic devices for the distribution of knowledge and information in teaching and learning, have been referred to as e-learning. Unfortunately, because of their delayed adoption for educational purposes and availability issues, e-learning facilities in Nigerian universities have remained a phantom. It is significant to mention that the lack of e-learning resources for the pedagogy was the cause of the low use of e-learning in business education. Additionally, the inadequate way that business education content is delivered to students can be linked to the instructors' disengagement from the current reality of content delivery to students, as evidenced by their failure to use e-learning resources for instructional delivery and assessment. There is a dearth of research on the use of e-learning resources in business education programs, which results in today's graduates being inept. In light of this, the availability and use of e-learning

resources in business education programs in Nigerian universities in the South-South States will be investigated in this study.

Hypotheses

There exists no noteworthy distinction between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the extent of availability of e-learning facilities in business education programme in universities in South-South, States.

There exists no noteworthy distinction between the mean ratings of respondents on the utilization of e-learning facilities in teaching-learning of Business Education in universities in South-South, States

Methodology

The research design used in this study was a descriptive survey. Teachers of Business Education programs from nine postsecondary institutions in South-South States, Nigeria, made up the study's population. The checklist and questionnaire were used as the data gathering tools. The two primary portions of the instrument are "A," which collected data on the participants' social demographics, and "B," which is further broken into three (2) sections. T-test statistics were used to assess the produced data.

Result

Hypothesis One

Findings of this hypothesis was presented in Table 1

Table 1: t-test Analysis of Availability of E- Learning Facilities

Items	N	Mean	SD	df	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Male	80	12.5	4.9	126	0.05	1.57	1.96	Accepted
Female	48	9.6	3.9					

The t-calculated value was 1.57 and the t-critical value was 1.96 at degree of freedom 126 at a significance level of 0.05, according to the data in Table 1. This suggests that both male and female respondents in the reviewed area acknowledged the availability of e-learning resources in business education programs at South-South State colleges. As a result, the null hypothesis which claims that there is no discernible difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the degree of accessibility to e-learning resources in business education programs at South-South State universities—was accepted.

The results of hypothesis one showed that the mean ratings of male and female respondents about the availability of e-learning resources in business education programs at South-South State universities did not differ significantly. This result is consistent with Oluwalola and Awodiji's (2019) investigation of the accessibility and use of e-learning resources for

management and business courses at Nigerian universities in Kwara State. According to their research, e-learning resources were relatively accessible in the institutions under consideration. According to Oluwalola and Awodiji, tertiary institutions have access to e-learning resources, which supports the current study. Additionally, the results of this study are consistent with those of Anetu et al.'s (2020) investigation of the availability and application of e-learning technologies for enhancing business education program instruction in public universities in Enugu State, Nigeria. According to their research, both instructors and students in the Business Education program have extensive access to certain e-learning resources and tools. Similarly, the results of this study are consistent with those of Okoli and Osuafor's (2019) investigation of the accessibility of e-learning resources for scientific education programs in South East Nigerian federal universities. According to their research, there is a higher percentage and quantity of e-learning resources available in science education programs at the reviewed institutions. Additionally, there is no discernible gender difference in the mean rating of science educators regarding the availability of e-learning resources for teaching science education courses in universities.

Hypothesis Two

Findings of this hypothesis was presented in Table 2

Table 2: t-test analysis on utilization of e-learning facilities

Items	N	Mean	SD	df	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Male	91	11.1	4.9	126	0.05	1.17	1.96	Accepted
Female	37	6.6	2.9					

The t-calculated value was 1.17 and the t-critical value was 1.96 at degree of freedom 126 at a significance level of 0.05, according to the data in Table 2. This suggests that, based on their experiences in business education programs at South-South State institutions, both male and female respondents in the area under examination acknowledged the use of e-learning facilities. As a result, the null hypothesis which claims that there is no discernible difference in respondents' mean assessments of the use of e-learning resources in the teaching-learning of business education programs at South-South State universities based on experience was accepted.

The results of hypothesis two showed that, based on experience, respondents' mean evaluations of the use of e-learning resources in the teaching-learning of business education programs at South-South State institutions did not differ significantly. These results are consistent with research by Okeke and Iheanacho (2017) and Okoro (2021), who discovered that e-learning materials were used in business education for both instructional delivery and evaluation. According to Okeke and Iheanacho's findings, most institutions still use e-learning tools sparingly, despite the fact that they are the newest trend in education in the twenty-first century. Additionally, the results of this study are consistent with those of Oluwasusi et al.'s (2021) investigation of the use of e-learning by agricultural students at public higher education

institutions in South West Nigeria. Despite variations in the degree of utilization due to awareness, understanding, and various limitations, they believed that more than 95.7% of institutions had already used e-learning materials.

Conclusion

It is impossible to overstate the importance of e-learning's accessibility and use in education, particularly in business education programs. Particularly in the academic setting, its use provides an ideal path to knowledge discovery. Given this, the study came to the conclusion that state-owned institutions in Nigeria's South-South States have access to and are using e-learning facilities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the research suggested that:

In order to provide students with a more viable, robust, dependable, efficient, successful, and cost-effective educational experience, e-learning facilities should be made more accessible, inexpensive, and accessible to them with less bureaucracy.

Since the availability of ICT in schools is essential for efficient teaching and learning, higher education institutions must look to the corporate sector for alternate financing sources for ICT and e-learning programs.

To ensure a smooth teaching and learning process, the government should provide institutions with state-of-the-art e-learning resources.

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