

Obi, Bibiana Irukaku & Ufondu Chidiebere Christopher
**ENHANCING QUALITY E-LEARNING IN BUSINESS
EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA:
A PRAGMATIC APPROACH**

By

Obi, Bibiana Irukaku (Sr. Mary Noeleen) Ph.D
n.obi@unizik.edu.ng

&

Ufondu Chidiebere Christopher
cc.ufondu@unizik.edu.ng

Department of Technology and Vocational Education
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State

Abstract

The study determined strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria: A Scientific Inquiry Approach. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study and descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study consists of all (105) one hundred and five business educators. The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The instrument designed for the study was subjected to face and content validation. The Cronbach's alpha method was used to obtain overall reliability coefficient of 0.79. Eighty-eight (88) copies of the questionnaire were returned after administration. The research questions were answered using means and standard deviations. The null hypotheses formulated for this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Independence Samples t-test. The study revealed that Business educator agreed that funding and effective administration could be used as a strategy to ensure quality e-learning in programme. The study recommended that curriculum planners should constantly review business education curriculum to accommodate recent development in technology.

Introduction

With the recent growth in globalization and information revolution in all sectors of the world, education is meant to create intellectual capacity for knowledge production. Keeping pace with this change requires new thinking on how to utilize learning resources to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to get and retain a good job. In Nigeria, tertiary education is expected to provide its recipients with long learning practices to compete favourably in the globe. To achieve this there is a need to change our obsolete mode of instructional delivery and maximize the juicy benefits provided by e-learning. E-learning is an offspring of information and communication technology that has made teaching and learning delivery including in business education more convenient. Business education is part of the courses offered in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Business education prepares its recipients to enter and advance in jobs within business environments. Atakpa (2011) opined that business education equips its recipients with vocational knowledge, skills, competencies for employment, and advancement in a broad range of business career¹. Business education programme was developed to produce competent, skilful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work.

To achieve these lofty goals of business education, the use of modern technology becomes paramount as a means for instructional, pedagogical delivery and learning. Nwazor (2012) have faulted the business education programme because of its inability to prepare students and graduates for real-life situations². According to Mohammad (2015) instructional delivery in business education should enable students to link school activities to what is obtainable in a work setting³. Also Mohammad (2015) observed that the advent of Information and

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Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet has greatly influenced the way knowledge is conveyed which resulted in the development of e-learning.

E-learning is an alternative to the face-to-face traditional teaching method. e-learning calls for using of electronic technology to deliver instructions, assess and monitor learners, evaluate and give feedback to relevant stakeholders. e-learning is all about learning with the use of technologies, presumably computer and other modern-day tools like technology and communication infrastructure for teaching and learning delivery (Ahmad, 2012).⁴ Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018) opined that e-learning is concerned with the holistic in the corporation of modern telecommunication equipment and ICT resources into the education system⁵.

Tertiary institutions where business education is offered lacks modern instructional facilities, to impart knowledge and skills needed to maintain quality education in our school system (Anioke, 2011).⁶ Anioke emphasizes that even when those facilities are available, it is either under utilized, not sufficient for the students, not serviced, maintained or obsolete to stand the test of time or not of the required quality. The process of students acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge through e-learning to stay relevant for successful employment can be affected if the e-learning technologies lack quality.

Quality is paramount in all human endeavours as such that all sector, organizational transformation efforts and activities focus on quality to get the best output. Okoro (2012) depicts quality and that there is direct responsiveness between standard and quality (the higher the standard, the higher the quality and vice versa).⁷ Quality in e-learning built its content, pedagogy, and learning results around technologies (Bremer, 2012).⁸ there is a shift to a system that utilizes students' needs, data, and information used for decision-making, administrative input, as well as learning outcomes' to improve the educational experience and learning (Thair, Garnett, & King, 2006) ⁹.

Quality e-learning in business education programme will provide stakeholders with access to requisite information through technology to support relevancy, growth and professionalism in business education. Nnorom and Gaius-Oke (2013) identify some criteria for measuring quality in business education, which includes quality of resource input, content, process and output. The inability of business education to operate effectively with e-learning can affect the quality of outputs from the programme¹⁰. Enhancing quality e-learning in business education would lead to innovation in teaching and learning as well as motivate students to engage actively and independently in the learning processes to fit in the social life and world of work.

Though several tertiary institutions offering business education are making positive attempts to implement quality e-learning strategies to enhance equity, quality, share instruction technology resources, compete in a global environment of higher education and meet the rising demand for tertiary education. Adelekan (2013)¹¹ and Ilechukwu (2013)¹² stated that the high cost of e-learning hardware, inadequate skilled manpower for e-learning implementation and management, incompetent instructors that can teach with e-learning facilities, inadequate funding of education as well as high cost of installation and maintenance of relevant e-learning technologies. The problems that are bedevilling business education are compelling for the implementation of quality e-learning strategies.

Olufunwa, Waziri and Olorunmolu (2013) stated that for business education programme to achieve their goals, they must put in place quality enhancing strategies that will ensure the production of quality graduates for national development.¹³ These strategies include funding, proper utilization and effective utilization. Business education is necessary for sustainable progress in intellectual capacity building of knowledge of the world of work, skills, business attitudes, concepts and self-sustainability. Thus an inquiry into strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme becomes paramount.

Statement of the Problem

The objective of business education programme is to provide training in special skills, and equip students with such competencies that will not make them only employable, but to be self-employed (Olumese, 2009).¹⁴ Also, the adoption of e-learning technologies in business education will enhance the quality of the products to fit into the workplace and business environment in this technological era (Olojo, Adewumi & Ajisola, 2012).¹⁵ E-learning is fast becoming an instructional delivery method of technologically advanced countries due to several benefits of e-learning adoption. In order to be successful in the use of e-learning (University of Craiova, 2020) stated that the instructors should be adequately prepared with the teaching strategies and techniques required to teach and conduct effective e-learning education courses/programs and the students should take their own responsibility for e-learning.¹⁶

In Nigeria, e-learning usage as an instructional method of teaching and learning in business education programme is very minimal, because it seems the instructors are not adequately prepared and students also seems not to be ready for taking their responsibilities and finally institutions seems not ready to provide the facilities needed for e-learning this is why Ezenwafor, Okeke and Okoye (2014) reported that technical and vocational education (to which business education belongs) instructors utilize e-learning to a low extent.¹⁷ The researchers further reported that inadequate provision of teaching resources, as well as lack of skills for utilizing the resources, were some of the major constraints of e-learning adoption by the teachers. The state of the availability and utilization of these e-learning has also drastically affected the achievement of business education programme. This is because no meaningfully teaching-learning process can occur without the appropriate instructional materials and facilities. According to University of Craiova the results revealed by the OECD's Programme in International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018 showed education systems of the

most countries were not at the desired level to provide online education for students, which the evidence promotes the potential for opportunity gap in education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The above observations inspired the researcher to be curious to seek strategies to ensure quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria. The researcher is worried about the rising dissatisfaction among employers of labour on the inadequate competencies and skills of business education graduates in the use of ICT technologies in their places of work. The researcher viewed these problems and hoped to determine the rating of strategies of enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme. Specifically, the study intends to determine how

1. Funding as a strategy can enhance quality e-learning in business education programme
2. Effective administration as a strategy can enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. How funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?
2. How effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education
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programme.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Concepts related to the present study are reviewed here.

Quality

Quality is an important issue in all human endeavors as such all organizational transformation efforts and activities focus on quality (Umoeshet, 2012). Quality is a direct responsiveness between standard and quality (the higher the standard, the higher the quality and vice versa).¹⁸

E-learning

According to Abdelaziz, Riad and Senousy, (2014) E-learning combines technologies such as information and multimedia which alters the traditional learning style and learning environment. Also, Garrison (2011) stated that e-learning is electronically mediated asynchronous and synchronous communication to construct and confirm the knowledge.¹⁹ E-learning means all learning situations where there is significant use of informatics and communication resources.

Business Education

Business education is that aspect of the total educational programme that provides requisite skills to perform effectively as producers, consumers. Idialu (2017) business education makes its recipient productive in teaching, paid employment and self-employment.²⁰ Business education facilitates economic development by preparing learners to impart knowledge to others and handle sophisticated office technologies and information

systems. The goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skilful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work (Odunaike & Amoda, 2018).²¹

Theoretical Framework

The following theory underpinned the study

Thorndike's Law of Effect Learning Theory

This theory propounded by Edward Thorndike (1874 – 1949) is a psychologist that introduced reinforcement for learning cats in a box. He experimented that to the formation of three laws of learning. According to this theory what should be given to the child to learn should be meaningful, to the learner in terms of personal aspiration and interests; the teacher needs to make use of instructional teaching aids and materials to make his teaching lively and interesting.

Thorndike also worked on programmed instruction. In programmed instruction, the student learns with a device while the leader provides guidance, facilities and motivation. The learner should exercise his/her reasoning ability, criticize and contribute to the learning process. Learners should be conditioned to obey simple rules from the initial state while different instructional materials should be used in the process of teaching and learning. The five senses should be used in the learning process. This theory is related to this study because quality e-learning technologies are required in the instructional process to stimulate learning. Its utilization optimizes the teaching process in line with the law of effect learning theory.

Theoretical Studies

Studies related to the present study are hereby reviewed.

Funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education

Institutions offering business education cannot enhance quality e-learning without substantial financial support from the government and other donor organizations. Relying solely on students' tuition fees and financial support from the government is always not enough, institutions should be innovative in raising funds by consulting private, public sectors, designing projects which can attract funds from different donor organizations (Dalton Kisanga and Gren Ireson, 2015).²² Institutions struggling with financial constraints use their initiatives to engage in consultancies, attract projects as well as collaborate with a partner with institutions and donor organizations. Institutions could also seek external financial assistance from NGOs, corporate organizations (oil companies, communication service providers, financial institutions etc.) and the wealthy to execute projects like provision of equipment, facilities and structures in the school to promote business education (Danko, 2006).²³ Institutions offering business education should ensure that funds provided by the government, donors are effectively utilized by various units and arms in the school for the achievement of the collective goals and objectives of quality e-learning in the school system

Effective Administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education

There is deficient support from institutional administrators, managers, few technical experts to implement and maintain e-learning in business education. There is a need for effective leadership and management and sufficient capacity in terms of systems, personnel and infrastructure; from the administrative aspect of the framework. They are the foundational pillars upon which effective and qualitative e-learning can be built and sustained (Glen, 2005).²⁴ The institution's authority or regulatory/legislative committee on e-learning needs to design effective e-learning strategies as part of the system of the institution. The

strategies must build on and strengthen core competencies and comparative advantage. It has to foster e-learning and ensure that institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment (Okorafor & Ike, 2012) ²⁵

Empirical Studies

The Predictors of Success for E-Learning in Higher Education Institutions

Ghulam, Nawaz and Shadiullah (2012) examined the predictors of success for e-learning in higher education institutions in Pakistan²⁶. The objective of this study was to measure the relationships between the indicators (perceptions about ICTs, educational technologies, development and use of e-Learning) and the criterion variables (problems, satisfaction and prospects) among e-Learning users in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of N-W.F.P, Pakistan. The study found the existence of strong relationships in terms of indicators explaining the dependent variables. However, the impact is different from one variable to another. 81% of Problems, 57% of Satisfaction and 23% of prospects are explained by the Indicators. Problems are significantly explained by all four indicators, while Satisfaction has been predicted by three of the indicators (excluding Perceptions). The study found that only two indicators (Perceptions about ICTs and Educational technologies) predict the Prospects, while Development and Use do not. The surprising finding is that Prospects are not defined by the 'Existing Development and Use Practices'. Rather, their perceptions about ICTs and e-Learning tools strongly forecast the Prospects. Both studies emphasise on the need for quality e-learning in institutions of learning but differ in the area of study which is Pakistan and Anambra State, Nigeria respectively.

Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the conduct of the study. This is best suited for studies that use a questionnaire to explore the opinions of a given population or its representative sample on existing phenomena. However, in survey research, the focus is on people, their beliefs, opinions, attitude, and behaviour. Based on this, the design is appropriate for the study. The study was carried in Anambra State, Anambra is a southeastern state, with 98% of Igbo ethnic group and 2% of Igala ethnic group, and it is the eighth-most populated state in Nigeria. The population of the study consists of all (105) one hundred and five business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The entire population was studied because the population is manageable. The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled “Questionnaire” on enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria. The questionnaire was divided into Two Sections A1, A2, covering the four research questions with a total of 14 items to examine how funding and effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme. The responses to the Clusters were structured on a 5 point rating scale of Strongly agree (SA)– 4points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The instrument designed for the study was subjected to face and content validation. The topic of the study, the purpose of study, research questions and the instrument for data collection will be given to two experts in measurement and evaluations. The Cronbach’s alpha method was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Eight-eight (88) copies of the questionnaire were returned after administration. The research questions were answered using means and standard deviations. The null hypotheses formulated for this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Independent Samples t-test

Results

Research Question 1: How funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on how funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

N: 88				
SN	Funding	<i>x</i>	SD	Decision
1	Purchasing of new gadgets for e-Learning	3.42	.798	Agreed
2	Maintaining of e-learning technologies	3.62	.748	Strongly Agreed
3	Funding of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)	3.33	.562	Agreed
4	Funding training and retraining of vocational education teachers for quality e-learning	3.10	.728	Agreed
5	Funding research and development for quality e-learning for business education	3.30	.790	Agreed
6	Sponsoring lecturers to seminars and conferences to ensure quality e-learning	3.31	.807	Agreed
7	Providing of funds for e-learning project implementation in tertiary institutions	3.27	.769	Agreed
8	Improving allocation of funds to the business education programme to ensure quality e-learning	2.95	1.005	Agreed
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		3.29	0.77	Agreed

Results in Table 1 show that one items had mean ratings of 3.62 which means that respondents strongly agreed while seven items have mean ratings ranging from 2.95 to 3.42 which shows that respondents agreed on the items on how funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business

education programme. However, the grand mean of 3.49 shows that respondents perceived funding as a strategy suitable to ensure quality e-learning in business education. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between .56 and 1.005 indicates homogeneity in the opinions of the respondents.

Research Question 2: How effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on how effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

SN	Funding	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
9	Ensuring optimal maintenance for a quality e-learning environment	2.98	.934	Agreed
10	Ensuring institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment	3.49	.743	Agreed
11	Partnering with stakeholders for quality e-learning	3.55	.710	Agreed
12	Designing a cardinal national development policy, plan, programme	2.86	.805	Agreed
13	Supervising teachers to ensure quality e-learning	2.91	.655	Agreed
14	Training and developing teachers for quality e-learning	3.42	.656	Agreed
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		3.20	1.49	Agreed

Results in Table 2 show that all the items had mean ratings of 2.91 to 3.55 which mean that respondents agreed. However, the grand mean of 3.20 shows that respondents perceived effective administration as a strategy suitable to enhance quality e-learning in business education students. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between 0. 65 to 0.93 indicates homogeneity in the opinions of the respondents

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis between the mean responses of male and female business educators on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	34	3.30	0.34	86	0.06	0.99	Accept Ho
Female	54	3.30	0.40				

The data from the table indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme ($t= 0.06$, $df= 86$, $p= 0.99 > 0.05$). the hypotheses were accepted indicating that both genders do not differ significantly in their mean responses on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis between the mean responses of male and female business educators on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	34	3.22	0.45	86	0.50	0.73	Accept Ho
Female	54	3.30	0.40				

The data from the table indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme ($t= 0.05$, $df= 86$, $p= 0.73 > 0.05$). the hypotheses were accepted indicating that both genders do not differ significantly in their mean responses on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study indicated that the respondents agreed that purchasing of new gadgets for e-Learning, maintaining of e-learning technologies, funding of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES, training and retraining of vocational education teachers for quality e-learning, funding research and development for quality e-learning for business education, sponsoring lecturers to seminars and conferences to ensure quality e-learning, providing of funds for e-learning project implementation in tertiary institutions among others are strategies through which funding could ensure quality e-learning in business education programme. This findings is in line with finding of Dalton Kisanga and Gren Ireson (2015)²⁷ that relying solely on students' tuition fees and financial support from the government is always not enough institutions should be innovative in raising funds by consulting private, public sectors, designing projects which can attract funds from different donor organizations.

The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Findings of the study indicated that the respondents agreed that ensuring optimal maintenance for quality e-learning, integrating of mobile computing devices to ensure quality e-learning, partnering with stakeholders for quality e-learning, supervising teachers to ensure quality e-learning, training and developing teachers for quality e-learning among others are strategies

through which effective administration could ensure quality e-learning in business education programme. This finding is line with the assertions of Okorafor and Ike (2012) that the strategies must build on and strengthen core competencies and comparative advantage to foster e-learning, to ensure that institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment.

²⁸ The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that strategies for ensuring quality e-learning in business education include funding to acquire the required e-learning technologies and effective administration. For business education programme to meet its objectives of equipping recipients with skills, self reliance among others, there is need to restructure the programme to enhance quality e-learning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Government at all levels should ensure that competent business educators, technologist in e-learning are employed. This can be achieved through recruiting by merit not party loyalist or tribe.
2. Curriculum planners should constantly review business education curriculum to accommodate recent development in technology.
3. Internal and external quality supervision of programme should be carried out regularly by the school authorities and NUC to ensure the compliance of the required standard for business education programme.
- 4 Adequate e-learning facilities and resources should be provided by the school authorities and government.

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