
**AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING
TECHNOLOGY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This paper examined the availability and the levels of utilization of E-learning technology for the teaching and learning of English language in Colleges of Education. The study covered three Colleges of Education in Nigeria, namely: Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State, Federal College of Education Umunze, Anambra State and College of Education, Agbor, Delta State. The total population for the study include all the English language teachers in the three Colleges of Education numbering forty four. Three research questions were designed to guide the study. A 30- item questionnaire with the title: Availability and Utilization of E-learning Technology for Professional development Questionnaire (AUETPDQ). The Data were analysed using mean statistics to analyse the research questions. The result shows that the availability of E-learning technology is still minimal and the level of utilization is insignificant. Based on this, it was recommended that the Federal, State and Local Governments as well as individuals should sponsor the procurement of these E-learning

materials and make it available for learning and training programmes. E-technologies workshops should be organised for teachers in form of seminars and conferences from time to time to improve teacher proficiency in the use of E-technologies for teaching and learning of English language in Colleges of Education in the country.

The importance of the use of E-technology in the teaching and learning of English language in Nigeria's educational system cannot be over-emphasized. The importance of E-learning also referred to as electronic-learning has been recognized globally in all sectors of human life such as economic, social, political, religious, education and many others. E-learning is a product of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). ICT according to UNESCO (2004) provides teachers and students access to vast stores of knowledge beyond the school with multi-media tool to complement to this stores of knowledge. E-learning technology is a product of ICT and is one of the tools that helps to enhance teaching and learning.

Clark and Mayer (2003) define E-learning as any instruction that is delivered on a computer which has the following characteristics: content relevant to the learning feature; uses instructional methods such as examples or practice exercises to help learning; Uses a variety of media element to deliver the content and methods, build new knowledge and skills which are linked to improve organizational performance. Lending weight to the above, Hedge and Haward (2004) state that E-learning is an innovative approach for the delivery of electronically mediated, well designed, learner centered and interactive learning environment to anyone, anytime and anyplace by utilizing the internet and digital technologies with instructional design principles. To Tongsakul and Meejaleum (2009), e-learning comprises the combination, implementation and relationship of teaching and learning via different ICT media such as computer, internet, multimedia projector, video tapes and CD Rom. E-technology has helped to connect the world in terms of communication and this has united the whole world today in what is known as global village. Stericker (2013) states that in a world where the power of technology resides in our pockets, the training of the workforce through outdated and traditional methods of learning is no longer acceptable. In line with this, most developed nations globally now spend a major part of their budget to get their education system revolutionized with ICT through e-technologies. This has brought a kind of social reform in the education sector. For instance, in countries like United States and Britain, cyber education is in vogue and other developed countries have followed suit.

The use of internet connectivity and technology training programmes are being initiated in African Nations. Due to the importance of e-technology learning, Nigeria has adopted it for all levels of education in the country as a delivery system in

imparting knowledge to learners. This is because the vast spread of computers, the internet and other electronic devices provide global opportunities for education, especially for learning outside the school premises (Ngwoke & Numonde, 2011).

E-learning technologies are therefore powerful tools in the hands of the teachers and learners. They help to facilitate learning and dissemination of knowledge and information in such a way that was not previously possible (Ngwoke & Numonde, 2011). E-learning has now become the most recognized and acceptable method of teaching and learning in the education sector. It was the recognition of these facts that led the Federal Government to make the policy under National Policy on Education (2014) to set standards and regulate framework for the deployment of technological infrastructure at all levels of education in Nigeria (Ilechukwu, 2013). It was based on this that Adeosun (2010) opines that the Federal Government encouraged State government to adopt the National Policy on Computer Education of 1998 with its objectives to encourage teachers' to develop a sense of rapport with computer and recognize its potentials for solving teaching and learning challenges and to entrench computer culture in all activities in institutions of learning. E-learning thus enhances educational efficacy.

There are many varieties of e-learning packages that are available for effective instructional delivery in the education sector. These packages include; computer-assisted instruction (CAI) which serves as teaching aid to provide the learner with graded drills, practices and dialogues, on-line tutorial which relies on web pages which can be accessed through browser, text and graphics on mobile device like digital assistant interactive video and audio images delivered through CD-Rom and video and audio conferencing conducted over telecommunications channels such as telephone lines, local area networks and the internet (Akubilo, 2011) E-learning is either synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous e-learning involves simultaneous participation of all learners and instructors at different location. This according to Alu (2011) is regarded as scheduled delivery of learning where every learner is expected to be at the computer at the same time receiving instructions.

Synchronous e-learning involves multi cast and real time interactive conferencing using (Moo system or IRC) while an instructor facilitates the discussion using slides or writing on a "white board" that shows on the computer screens of learners. Learners can even ask verbal questions through this screen (Welsh, Wanberg, Brown, Simmering, 2003 & Alu 2011). Synchronous learning is advantageous as it makes learners feel that they are part of the learning process since interaction amongst students and instructors is carried out at the same time.

Asynchronous e-learning, on the other hand is "pre-coded" or is available, prepared and kept and can be used when needed at anytime. It does not take place at anytime but can be delivered on demand within learner's schedule (Alu 2011). Hall (1997) states different types of Asynchronous e-learning which ranges from the less sophisticated power point slides posted on the website to the more sophisticated ones

which allows learner's how to interact such as electronic mail, on-line simulation with graphics animation video and audio components. This has prompted Asogwa (2011) to state that teachers now use e-learning packages to give and receive assignments, receive students projects online, to distributing class materials, task etc.

However, despite the importance and global recognition of e-learning, these concerted efforts by the Federal Government, it is sad to note that the availability and utilization is still not yet much felt in most Federal Government Colleges of Education. This has prompted this investigation to ascertain the extent of availability and the level of utilization of these e-learning tools for effective instructional delivery in English language teaching and learning legacy left behind in Nigeria by the colonial masters and it has since then taken firm root in the linguistic policy of the nation. This is because Nigeria is a multi-lingual nation with about five hundred languages that are mutually linguistically unintelligible. The problem of languages in Nigeria has therefore given rise to the emergence of English language as the official language of the country. The English language has thus been entrenched in the National Policy on Education as the language of Education and instruction, a core subject in all levels of education beginning from the primary through secondary to tertiary institutions (NPE 1977, 1989, 1998, 2004 and 2014). A credit pass in English language in Senior Secondary School Certificate is now compulsory for admission into any tertiary institution in the country. English language also serves as other Nigerian national cohesion such as politics, commerce, inter trade, media, film industry, science and technology, foreign relations, administration and many others.

Since English language has become so important in our linguistic community, there is need to enhance competency in the teaching and learning of the language in order to understand and be understood in the global world since English language has become a language of the global community. Various methods have been applied in the teaching and learning of English language in order to enhance competency but in all, it is still amazing and painful that despite all these efforts by teachers to enhance competency in the teaching of English language, the desired result is still unachievable. In view of this, the researcher decided to examine why this is so using Colleges of Education in the country as a case study, Colleges of Education in Nigeria were set up to run the "Teacher Training Programme" at the NCE level, which is the recognized minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria and to produce quality teachers for the Basic Education Sub-Sector". (Junaid, 2013). Since Colleges of Education are the starting point of learning how to teach, there is thus the need to look into the method used in teaching English language in such schools. However, since there are good prospects for the use of e-learning technological tools in our educational service delivery, the researcher would like to find out how much of such e-learning technological tools are readily available for teaching and learning of this core subject; English language; if the language teacher's effectively utilize these e-learning packages in their teachings and the challenges they encounter in utilizing these devices.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. To what extent are the e-learning devices available in Colleges of Education?
2. To what extent are the e-learning devices available been utilized in teaching by English language teachers' in the schools?
3. What are the challenges encountered in utilizing these e-learning devices?

Methodology

The design of this study was a descriptive survey design. Since it focused on the extent of availability and the level of utilization of E-learning technologies for professional development of English language teachers in Colleges of Education. The study was carried out in three Colleges of Education. (Two Federal Colleges and one State College).

The population for the study comprises all the English teachers in the selected Colleges of Education. The sample comprised 44 English teachers selected through simple random sampling technique from the Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Instrumentation

A 30-item questionnaire designed by the researcher with the title : Availability and Utilization of E-learning Technology for Professional development Questionnaire (AUETPDQ). The questionnaire was designed using 4-point likert scale.

The instrument was validated by three experts in measurement and evaluation in Federal College of Education (T), Asaba in order to establish the face and content validity in line with the purpose of the study. The reliability coefficient was 73 using split half and Pearson Product Moment Correlation methods. The decision rule was that any mean score above 2.50 is accepted while a mean score below 2.50 is rejected.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using mean statistics

Research Question 1: To what extent are the e-learning devices available in Colleges of Education?

Table 1: Mean Scores of E-learning Devices Available in Colleges of Education (N = 44)

S/N	E-Learning Devices	X̄	SD	Decision
1	Computer System and accessories	3.16	1.03	Fairly Available
2	Conferencing Lecture-type	1.27	0.45	Not Available
3	Multisensory aid	1.18	0.39	Not Available
4	Audio materials (radio, public recorder, address system)	2.59	1.06	Fairly Available
5	Visual materials (film strips, overhead, opaque & slide projectors)	2.48	0.85	Poorly Available
6	Word processors, graphic and database packages	2.05	0.81	Poorly Available
7	e-messages and E-mails through mobile phones	2.73	1.02	Fairly Available
8	Internet devices	3.02	1.02	Fairly Available
9	Multimedia projector	2.16	0.86	Poorly Available
10	Stand-by generating plants as back-up in case of power outage	2.82	1.19	Fairly Available
	GRAND MEAN	2.35	0.87	Poorly Available

Data presented on table 1 revealed that the grand mean score is 2.35. Which implies that e-learning devices are poorly available in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: To what extent are the e-learning devices available being utilized in teaching by English language teachers in Colleges of Education?

Table 2: Mean Scores of Utilization of e-learning Devices in Colleges of Education (N=44)

S/N	E-Learning Devices	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Computer System and accessories	2.93	1.02	Moderately utilized
2	Conferencing Lecture-type	1.48	0.51	Not Utilized
3	Multisensory aid	1.43	0.50	Not Utilized
4	Audio materials (radio, public recorder, address system)	3.00	1.03	Moderately Utilized
5	Visual materials (film strips, overhead, opaque & slide projectors)	2.41	0.82	Poorly Utilized
6	Word processors, graphic and database packages	2.70	0.79	Moderately Utilized
7	e-messages and E-mails through mobile phones	2.82	1.08	Moderately Utilized
8	Internet devices	2.75	0.99	Moderately Utilized
9	Multimedia projector	2.45	1.00	Poorly Utilized
10	Stand-by generating plants as back-up in case of power outage	2.14	0.82	Poorly Utilized
	GRAND MEAN	2.41	0.86	Poorly Utilized

Table 2 shows that the grand mean is 2.41 which implies that e-learning devices available are poorly utilized in teaching by English language teachers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges encountered in utilizing these E-learning devices by English language teachers in Colleges of Education?

Table 3: Mean Scores of Challenges Encountered in Utilization of e-learning Devices in Colleges of Education (N=44)

S/N	E-Learning Devices	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Inadequate computer systems and accessories	2.93	1.07	Agree
2	Lack of technical know how	3.00	1.29	Agree
3	Financial constraints	3.07	1.00	Agree
4	Absence of internet facilities	3.07	0.95	Agree
5	Lack of maintenance of the equipment	3.20	1.09	Agree
6	Teachers' lackadaisical attitude towards e-learning	2.70	1.17	Agree
7	Lack of adequate knowledge competence by teachers	3.27	0.73	Agree
8	Lack of on-the-job training of teachers	2.64	1.08	Agree
9	Lack of commitment by government to provide e-learning materials	3.39	0.95	Agree
10	Inadequate electric power supply	3.05	0.96	Agree
	GRAND MEAN	3.04	1.03	Agree

Analysis on table 3 reveals that English Language teachers rated all items above a mean score of 2.50 which implies that English Language teachers agreed that there are challenges they encounter in utilizing e-learning devices. This is evident in a grand mean score of 3.04 indicating the respondents' agreement on the items listed as challenges.

Summary of the Major Findings

The major findings from the study are;

1. The e-learning devices are poorly available for English Language teachers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.
2. The e-learning devices are poorly utilized by English Language teachers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.
3. The English Language teachers agreed that they encounter challenges listed on table 3 in utilizing e-learning devices.

Recommendations

Federal and state governments should assist the teachers with computer sets, and internet services should be installed in the schools for easy internet connectivity.

Government should make specific budgetary allocations in order to facilitate the provision of internet facilities.

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Teachers in Colleges of Education both federal and state should be trained and re-trained in E-learning technology in order to enhance their professional development.

Teachers in colleges of education and indeed all teachers irrespective of their place of work should avail themselves of this all important teaching and learning devices to train on the uses for a better performance and professional development.

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