



VIRTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING OF BUSINESS EDUCATION IN POST COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIAN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The focus of this study is on virtual teaching and learning of Business Education programme in post COVID-19 pandemic in Nigerian higher institutions. It argued that conventional strategies of teaching are not adequate for teaching and learning during and after the COVID19 pandemic; due to the lockdown, social distancing and observing all protocols of the pandemic. Scholars are of the view that e-learning would be the best alternative: however, the conventional methods of teaching holds sway in the educational sector. In light of this, scholars believed that the Google Classroom framework, E-learning and Virtual Classroom which has been in vogue in many countries of the world could be the best alternative for and after the Pandemic in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The paper reviewed the benefits of Google Classroom, E-learning and Virtual Classroom. The manuscript also mentioned some challenges that can militate against the strategy in Nigeria higher institutions. It was concluded that Google Classroom, E-learning and Virtual Classroom are taking a basic step today, but after a decade, it might replace the traditional classroom teaching because it won't be like a robot teaching but would, be an innovation in the educational system of Nigeria. Therefore, the researchers recommended among others; that National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should strengthen their monitoring and evaluation team to ensure proper monitoring of the correct software and hardware are purchased and adequately installed in every higher institutions of Nigeria.

Keywords: COVID-19, Google Classroom, E- learning, Virtual Class room for teaching and learning.

Introduction

The emergence of Corona virus known as the COVID-19 Pandemic devastated all sectors of the global economy. Nigerian government has imposed strict measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Most face-to-face activities, including teaching and learning, were restricted. Nigerian universities, polytechnics and colleges of education have postponed the beginning of spring semester. Students are not allowed to return to campuses without approval. The educational system of Nigeria was halted because of social distancing and the lockdown. The conventional paradigm of teaching fails and teaching and learning suffers a severe setback all over the world including Nigeria. Teaching and learning in business education is evolving, many decades ago in Nigeria, the conventional methods of teaching holds sway in the educational sector (Aina & Langenhoven, 2015). In recent times, teaching and learning had developed into an electronic paradigm (e-learning) that pervaded the entire schools of the world. However, in Nigeria's higher education context the issue of e-learning is not common (Kyari, etal. 2018). The world is not static but dynamic and technology is changing human endeavour rapidly. Along with the changes are various challenges the human race is facing which makes our education fragile and weak such as the current problem of COVID-19 Pandemic. The pandemic has structures exposed the weakness in teaching and learning in Nigerian tertiary institutions because the typical teaching paradigm fails. Although, e-learning is not new in the Nigerian educational system, the quality and effectiveness are critical. One learning framework that enables students to connect with the teacher to learn outside the school context is e-learning, virtual classroom and Google classroom.

The E-Learning Intervention

The term E-learning is a generic (comprehensive or general) expression for all learning which is based on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) the term refer to the use of various technologies and tools to support teaching and learning in different contexts, including face-to-face settings and distance learning separately or in combination in which case e-learning is usually called blended learning (Otunuya, 2016). According to Wikipedia (2016) e-learning is the use of electronic educational technologies in teaching and learning. It makes use of modern tools and being accessible by using technological tools that are either web-based, web- distributed or web-capable such as desktop and laptop computers, interactive white boards, digital technology, electronic communication tools as email, discussion boards, chat facilities and video conferencing, virtual learning environments, learning activity management system, network digital devices and associated software and course were with learning scenarios, worksheets and interactive exercises that facilitate learning. Deducing from the above, e-learning can be said to be learning through computer internet connectivity which is gradually putting the conventional classroom instruction into oblivion. E-learning exploits interactive technologies and communication system to improve learning experience and has the potential to transform the way we teach across the board, which can raise standards and widen participation in lifelong learning. E-learning enhances theory by extending and supplementing face-to-face learning rather than replacing it. It enables learning to take



place when it is most needed (during corona virus pandemic) and is convenient. Learning can be provided with specific learning objectives, it is 'learner-centric' in that it can be customized to suit an individual's learning needs and learners can choose different learning objects within overall packages (Otinuya, 2016). E-learning is classified as computer-based and internet based, the type depends on the user mode. The computer-based involves the use of Information and Communication Technology ICT, while the internet-based is purely online. The computer-based e-learning includes the use of computer software and hardware while the internet-based comprises the use of e-mail, blog, and other references (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2014). Upon this, the e-learning could be classified by this paper to be blended and online learning. The definition of blended learning varies according to the individual perspective (Bryan & Volchenkova, 2016).

Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of students control over time, place, path or pace. Blended learning provides individuals with the opportunity to enjoy the best of both worlds. For example, a student might attend classes in a real-world classroom setting and then supplement the lesson plan by completing online multimedia coursework. Blended learning is also referred to as 'hybrid' learning, and can take on a variety forms in online education environments, which might utilize it as a primary teaching method within the curriculum which can be seen as learning is rotation; self blended, and enriched virtual (Bryan & Volchenkova, 2016). Cleveland-Innes and Wilton (2018) categorized blended learning into three, which are blended presentation and interaction, blended block, and fully online. Some tools are peculiar to e-learning for effectiveness depending on the type. The e-learning or online teaching and learning courses can be what are called "synchronous or "asynchronous". Synchronous courses are those in which teachers and students are in contact with each other at the same time in a form of immediate feedback and forth communication.

Online teaching can occur in a "chat room" as a type of software platform where all participants can see what each person contributes as the comment and questions appear onscreen, or in a combination computer/teleconferencing kind of classroom. Online refer to not only the accessibility but also its connectivity, flexibility and ability to promote varied interactions whereby the teacher can show and lecture information and students can type questions and comments that all can see or just the teacher can see, or the students can speak on the phone to comment or questions as the case may be, which required the utilization of some tools for instructions in higher education for its effectiveness. According to Pande et al., (2016), Weblog, Social bookmarking, Wiki, RSS, Podcasting, Instant messaging, Text chat, and internet forums are essential tools for any e-learning. The benefits or advantages of e-learning are enormous. Some of the advantages according to Pande et al., (2016), includes flexibility, efficiency in knowledge and qualification enhancement, motivation of students' interaction, cost-effective, and others. Despite the vital roles e-learning plays a verities over its unlock full potentials (Kyari et al., 2018).

E-learning attempts to shift the focus of the educational environment away from the physical teacher-student context while disseminating information (Franklin & Nahari,

2018). The e-learning in some parts of the globe is not a new phenomenon in promoting education; Nigeria higher institutions are using it to promote distance education and lifelong learning (Ajadi et al., 2019). Several studies had been documented on e-learning and how students received instructions from teachers and learn adequately at all times including the vacation period (Aina & Olanipekun, 2018). Different types of e-learning could be explored as practiced in most developed nations. The typical e-learning in most Nigerian higher institutions is the distance learning programme. It often describes the effort of providing access to learning for those who are geographically distant. Distance education uses emerging media and associated experiences to produce distributed learning opportunities these definitions recognize the changes that are apparent in the field and attributed them to the new technologies that are being made available. There are concerns about how distance learning programme could effectively teach online students by exploiting ICT technologies and collaboration to enhance in-depth interactive engagement of learning and teaching in the Pandemic Era. Some devices used for this distance learning programme are TV, CD-ROM, Radio, interactive video and audio discs, teleconferencing, video conferencing, power point presentation, web or internet services and so on (Kyari et al., 2018) and recently the android mobile phones (Aina & Olanipekun, 2018). E-learning is critical to higher education as it uses of information and communication technologies in various processes of education to support and enhance learning (Pand et al., 2016). Therefore, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the learning of business education programme in higher education required the adoption of e-learning during the period of lockdown it becomes imperative. However, due to the rule of social distancing, any learning that requires physical contact during teaching and learning may not be effective. Given this, verity of the blended learning may not be the best for education system at this period except for the full online mode. Therefore, Basher, (2017) pointed out that, making an extensive literature search shows that the best e-learning suitable for teaching and learning at this period could be the e-learning, Google Classroom and Virtual Classroom.

Benefits of E-learning as a tool for Teaching and Learning of Business Education students

The benefits of e-learning are as follow;

Increased quality of learning with deeper critical reflection and systematic scaffolding of ideas taking place, Convenient to minimal disruption of family and work life, Increase interaction with more accessible teachers and with decrease feedback turnaround time, Elimination of space, time and geographical constraints, Increase peer interaction due to a collaborative rather than competitive learning environment (Usun, 2013).

Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a Google Apps for educational system that helps the lecturers to create and organize assignments quickly, provide feedback efficiently, and communicate with their learners easily (Shaharane et al. 2016). The application has been used as e-learning and research studies indicate the application helps students to learn more electronically and teachers spend more time with students than with papers (Rabb et al.,



2018). Google classroom is an emerging technology in education since 2014 which had impacted teaching and learning in most developed and developing nations (Henukh et al., 2020). Previous studies showed that Google classroom enhances ongoing learning on the basis that the students and the teacher can be sited in various geographical contexts (Henukh et al., 2020). Previous studies had suggested that e-learning has challenges that could make them not suitable at this period of COVID-19. The inadequacy of Nigeria's weak and underdeveloped broadband infrastructure is a significant shortcoming (Trucano, 2014). According to Mohamedbhai (2020), inequalities could be one problem of Google Classroom because of the differences existing between urban and rural students; between the rich and the poor who cannot afford the cost of internet. Ajadi et al., (2019), opined that the problem of bandwidth and diversion of intention on the net are some of the problems associated with e-learning. Earlier studies show that Google Classroom enhances learning on the basis that the students and the lecturers can use it in different geographical locations (Henukh et al., 2020). Google Classroom launched less than a decade ago and has been one of the compelling ways technology in impacting teaching and learning in the world (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018). Given the above, it is apparent that one way to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in Business Education courses and any field of educational system may be to adopt e-learning mode to teach education in Nigeria higher institutions. Therefore, the online e-learning, which does not depend on traditional paradigms like the Google Classroom would be the best for instructions in Business Education programme and other educational discipline. The Google classroom framework would provide the same instructions to every student irrespective of their parent's background. It will offer the students the same classroom context as against the present situation where some students attend school well equipped with learning resources while some do not. The three fundamental menus when anyone logs in to the Google classroom account are streams, class work, or student activities, and people (Henukh et al., 2020). The stream is used for creating announcements, to discuss ideas, or see the flow of assignments, materials, quizzes from the topics taught. The lecturers use class work to make test questions, pre tests, upload materials, and hold reflections (Henukh et al. 2020). The lecturers used the people menu to invite students by using the access code that is available in the people bar. Research shows that many countries are using Google Classroom in their schools because of its effectiveness. Google Classroom has lots of educational benefits that could be excellent for Business Education programme. Hussaini et al., (2020), opined that single classroom allowed lecturers to post notes, assignments, create different groups in one class, invite some lecturers or for peer lecture to the class and it is flexible and interesting to both side.

Google Classroom can be accessed anytime and anywhere, students do not need to get to a designated building called classroom before receiving lectures, parents and guardians can track the progress of their wards (Mafa, 2018). It minimizes the paperwork for the lecturers, helps classroom management and enhances the student-lecturer interaction as well as communication (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018). However, there is no perfect system without any challenges. Google Classroom has some instructional challenges (Henukh et al., 2020). Some of the challenges may not be peculiar to it only, but to all the

e-learning strategies. For instance, laboratory experiments cannot be taught with Google Classroom except to demonstrate. Therefore, the laboratory experiment for students during the COVID-19 may not be possible through the Google Classroom. The best alternative is to teach the theory aspects of Business Education courses by demonstration through the Google Classroom while the laboratory works come later in a safe environment. Nevertheless, some factors may make the adoption of Google Classroom unsuccessful for Business Education programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Factors against the use of Google Classroom in Nigerian Higher Institutions

The first problem is the government insensitivity to innovation in the education sector. The Nigerian governments in all the three levels are not ready for innovation in educational system; the only type of innovation the government welcome is the one that would help the government official's award contracts to their cronies or family members (Nwaifo & Uddin, 2009). The people in government today and in the past also do not cherish any innovation that will not enhance their pecuniary desires no matter how credible and good the innovation may be. Many innovations in education have been frustrated because of the above point. This is the reason the nation changes from one system of education to another with every new government. The 6-3-3-4 system of education was not successful because of many reasons, one of these is the attitudes of the government and people (Nwaifo & Uddin, 2009). Another problem is the poor bandwidth, the inadequacy of Nigeria's fragile and underdeveloped broadband infrastructure is a drawback to e-learning (Trucano, 2014). This is a problem that could be attributed to the government and heads of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Funds are not made available to buy good internet facilities to improve bandwidth or broadband infrastructure. Where such monies are made available the heads of institutions often misplace their priorities. There are cases where monies budgeted for e-libraries were misappropriated due to the high level of corruption in our Nigerian institutions. The worst of the entire problem is the poor quality of the academic staff in Nigeria higher institutions. It is worrisome at this information and communication technology (ICT) age that many lecturers are not computer literates. The quality of higher education depends upon the quality of the lecturers imparting the knowledge; (Nagoba & Mantri, 2015). According to Adhikary (2018), the qualities of the lecturers are does who are active users of ICT facilities and using virtual classroom for teaching and learning as is indispensable for any quality teaching process. The use of Google Classroom cannot be successful except the lecturers are ICT and virtual classroom compliance.

Virtual Classroom (Algahtani, 2011)

A virtual classroom is not so different than the traditional classroom; in a virtual class, there is a lecturer who is teaching but not in the class and in front of a camera of a computer somewhere and the students participate in his class sitting in their room in front of their computers. In the virtual classrooms there can be an interactive session like a traditional classroom, students and lecturers can interact. Virtual Classroom can be defined as "A collaborative web conferencing tool with an online white board, breakout rooms,



and screen sharing capabilities, for teachers and tutors who want to conduct highly interactive live online teaching sessions.” [<https://www.vedamo.com/virtual-classroom/> Retrieved 2020]

Advantages of Virtual Classroom

Virtual Classroom has many advantages; the following are some of the advantages [<https://www.vedamo.com/virtual-classroom/> Retrieved 2020]

Virtual classroom are more helpful for the students who cannot attend the schools or college on a regular basis, It gives an advantage for the student to attend classes from anywhere in the world, It also reduces the classroom phobia of students, Virtual classroom is the personalized learning; students can learn at their will, It gives students and lecturer a world wide exposure. Virtual classroom are effective and efficient, and it consumes less time, unlike the traditional method of teaching in schools or colleges, If having necessary equipment, it would provide a golden opportunities to the students from the remote villages and area, It gives access from anywhere in the world, any time as per the schedule of the learner or learners, It sharpens digital skills.

Disadvantages of Virtual Classroom

The following are some of the disadvantages of Virtual Classroom:

One of the main disadvantages is that it requires a computer and a steady internet connection, it is also criticized for its technology and undemocratized nature, Virtual classroom requires students of Business Education with technological literacy, Perception of the people is that, it is made for only urban students and unavailability of regular network.

Concept of Business Education

Business Education programmes it remains relevant in providing the needs of individual and that of the society; it must embrace current trends in the academic and economic demands of the society. Nedum-Ogbede, (2016) defined Business Education as component of vocational education programme that prepare an individual for career in business and also to be an intelligent consumer of goods and services. Business Education is rooted in Vocational Education with specific mandate of providing skills, attitude and knowledge needed for employment or running a business. According to Nedum-Ogbede, (2016). Business Education is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude that are required for successful promoting and administering business enterprises. The need for Business Education as a form of education is crucial especially in this era of globalization, information and communication technology (ICT) and Covid 19 Pandemic in which work processes and institutions are getting increasingly flexible, multi-tasking and performance base. The emergence of Business Education in the global scene is necessitated by the need to provide the society with a form of education that promotes lifelong learning, innovation, need of the community, employability and self reliance, new technologies in business education are designed to help the students acquire the basic skills that will make them employable and relevant in the ever changing business environment which prepares

students for variety of careers in high-tech business offices (Nedum-Ogbede, 2016) For tertiary institutions in Nigeria, that offered Business Education programmed to deliver on their mandates, the quality of the training given to individuals passing through a course or the other should be such that can give adequate skills and information needed in the real world sense. If Business Education should serve this purpose of providing the needs of the learners and the society, there should be a continuous improvement in the implementation of the new technologies by the Nigeria institutions offering Business Education courses in order to ensure that the quality of education provided is in line with societal demands.

Teaching and Learning of Business Education courses after the COVID 19 Pandemic

Corona virus outbreak has significantly accelerated development of online education in Nigerian higher education. Internet, Virtual Classroom, Google Classroom, e- Learning, big data, Artificial Intelligence, 5G, and cloud-based platforms and so on, among other technologies, have been put into service of business education and other fields of education. However, a more flexible way of teaching and learning does not end up with infrastructures.

Rather, infrastructures are only the first step towards a new paradigm of teaching and learning in post-pandemic time. This paradigm could represent a shift from traditional, teacher-cantered, and lecture based activities towards more student-cantered activities including group activities, discussions, hands-on learning activities, and limited use of traditional lectures. This requires conceptual and philosophical rethinking of the nature of teaching and learning, roles, and connections among teachers, learners, and teaching materials, in post digital learning communities (Jandrić et al. 2018). Full Long-term integration of online teaching and learning into tertiary institutions curricula implies further attention to quality education system. The researchers' observed that higher institutions of Nigeria should focused to the following activities:

1. There is the need to continue the development of open educational platforms which allow access to the high quality of learning resources. Post digital in Business Education Programme and other fields of study.
2. There is the need to conduct quantitative and qualitative research and evaluate current models of online teaching and learning, with a particular focus to their long-term sustainability.
3. There is the need to develop teaching and non- teaching staff capacity for online teaching, and professional staff capacity for supporting lecturers and online systems.
4. There is the need to encourage cooperation between universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education, international organizations, private sectors, civil society, and other stakeholders, to promote high-quality online learning throughout the society.

Lecturers are crucial for inclusive and equitable provision of high-quality distance education. They are expected to have knowledge, skills, and ethics to conduct online teaching, and that calls for more flexible and dynamic post-pandemic teacher education. Post-pandemic national teacher education could be composed of face-to-face teacher education, blended teacher education, virtual classroom, Google Classroom, e- learning



and online teacher education (Zhu, 2020). National online teacher education could be categorized into sections which provide learning opportunities to future teachers at all levels, Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Vocational Education Sectors and Business Education Programme and so on. Online teacher education platforms could function as a traditional teacher education institute which provides pre-service and in-service programmes. This could be supported by online platforms with rich digital materials and resources. Curriculum and pedagogy need to be updated, and should become models of successful online pedagogies that could be taken into future teachers' practices. Last but not the least, it is critical to build up an enabling institutional environment for sustainable national online teacher education. There is the need to develop evidence-based policies supported by guidelines for their implementation. To provide professional reference base for online teacher education, a framework of competencies for conducting online teaching, and other standards should be developed. In our post digital context, online and offline (teacher) education cannot be thought without each other (Jandrić et al., 2018). The researchers advocate development of a holistic teacher education system, regardless of used mode of delivery, which could support present and future teachers in becoming more resilient to crisis similar to the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a huge disruption to all spheres of human life.

Nigerian higher education, have responded to the crisis with reasonable success. However, the researchers strongly believe that the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Nigerian educational system should extend well beyond tacking the current crisis—it should also bring out potential development opportunities for the future (Jandrić, 2020). The current situation requires innovation and renewed attention to more research, study, and reflection, about each sector of education in Nigeria and globally. The present researches during the Pandemic era will significantly help in developing a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable education after the pandemic era.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has changed world, and people are scared of coming out of their homes for whatever reasons. E- Learning, Google Classroom and Virtual Classrooms, could be the future schools and colleges of our world. From the history of the technology, it is obvious that its takes decades for a technology to be everyday thing ergo. Google Classroom, E-learning and Virtual Classroom are taking basic step today, but after a decade, it might replace the traditional classroom teaching because it will not be like a robot teaching. The Google Classroom, Virtual Classroom and e-Learning would, be an innovation in the educational system of Nigeria and the Nation in general.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion made, the following suggestions were made:

1. National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should strengthen their monitoring and evaluation team to ensure proper monitoring of the correct software and hardware are purchased and adequately installed in every higher institutions of Nigeria.

2. Academic personnel of every institution in Nigeria must be adequately trained and re-trained through seminars, workshops, conferences and other means of information dissemination. Those who are not computer literate must make use of staff development to update their computer's knowledge through the management of higher institutions.
3. Government should be prepared fully to adopt the paradigm without any political bias, and government should make adequate money available to strengthen and develop the Nigerian broadband infrastructure.

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