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UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING IN NATIONAL TEACHERS INSTITUTE RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the utilization of E-Learning in teaching NCE students of National Teachers Institute (NTI) Rivers State. The aim of the study is to determine the extent of the use of E-Learning in teaching NCE students of the institute and the attitude of the facilitators to its use. The research design used for the study was descriptive survey design. 150 respondents were randomly selected from a total population of 520. Data was collected using a questionnaire tagged (UETE) which has a reliability coefficient of 0.70. The instrument was validated by two validates from the department of education technology. Two research questions and two hypotheses were raised for the study. Percentages, Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test were used for analysis. The two hypotheses were tested at criterion mean of 2.50 significant level. 83.3% of teachers agreed to the use of E- Learning for instruction while 16.7% disagreed to its use and perceived benefits to the student's teachers of NTI. The findings show that, although the attitude of NTI facilitators towards E-Learning was positive E-Learning is yet to be adopted as instructional strategy in the National Teachers Institute, Rivers State.

Keywords; E-learning, Utilization, National Teacher's Institute, National Certificate of Education (NCE)

Introduction

Education remains a very potent tool for effecting change in human societies. Education has a significant role in creating awareness, belief in values of modernity, progress and development. There is no gainsaying the fact therefore that education is the key mechanism for development and progress in all spheres of human life. Education is a continuous complex and dynamic process. The importance of education has been realized by everyone and every nation. Lingamurthy & Srihylam (2016) It is quite evident that the strength of the country depends on the strength of education, which in turn depends on the efficiency of teachers and the process of teaching. This is because there is a close relationship between the quality of education and the quality of teachers. The quality of education depends upon the knowledge and attitude of teachers. In present times, technology occupies a prominent place in the teaching- learning processes; hence there is a growing demand for teachers who have the skills to prepare students to be successful in a technology-infused, knowledge-based society. Muputhathi (2018). E-learning can play a critical role in preparing a new generation of teachers,

as well as upgrading the skills of the existing teaching force to use 21st century tools and pedagogies for learning.

Background

The improvement of educational provision in every country is greatly dependent on the efficiency of teachers' education. This efficiency in turn, depends on the knowledge and skills obtained during their education on a first level, on the accumulation of their professional experience, its practical application and its interaction with the educational context on a second level, and on the potential offered to the teacher during his/her professional career to adapt to the new developments so that they are able to be constantly updated, improved and modernized.

In this modern times, the traditional classroom teaching cannot cater for the requirements of individual and societal needs. There is a need therefore, for teachers to explore innovative teaching techniques that make use of modern technology Aydin, (2013). It is important to maintain a system of teacher training procedures that covers the existing need, in an organized, qualitative, scientifically consistent and continual as well as offer the teachers the chance to renew their knowledge, to improve their professional skills and to modernize their teaching methods in line with the new scientific and constantly changing social factors.

According to Muppudathi (2018) the 21st century life, work, and education bring different demands. 21st century citizens, students, and teachers need to:

- ❖ Have the skills to address ongoing change and globalization;
- ❖ Have the skills to be self-reliant and independent; and
- ❖ Be able to obtain knowledge on their own and know what to do with that knowledge to create value for their communities and organizations.

In Nigeria, the National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna is a single mode distance education institution dedicated to teacher training. It was established in 1976 by the Federal Government primarily because of the pressing needs in the country for trained and qualified teaching staff at all levels of the educational system. Act No. 7 of 10th April 1978 establishing the Institute charged it among others with the responsibility of providing courses of instruction leading to the development, upgrading and certification of teachers as specified in the relevant syllabus using distance education techniques. At the moment NTI offers NCE, Post Graduate Diploma Degree in Education, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Pivotal Teacher Training Program, and recently Bachelor's degree program. There are eighteen different study centers in Rivers state. 14 NCE centers, 3 PGDE centers

Literature Review

Several scholars have given various definitions for E-learning. According to Olaniyi (2006), E-learning is all about learning that occurs at the computer. In our contemporary world, the learning through the aid of a computer simply means online knowledge acquisition through the internet or offline through CD-ROM etc. In other words, it is the use of network technologies to create, foster, deliver, and facilitate learning, anytime and anywhere. Horton (2005) defined it as the use of internet and digital technologies to create experiences that educate our fellow human beings.

Sale (2002) cited in Timothy&Salawu (2008), agrees with Horton by describing E-learning as the use of electronic technology to deliver education and training applications, monitor learner's performance and report learner's progress. Hedge and Hayward (2004), defined it as an innovative approach for delivering electronically mediated, well-designed, learner-centered and interactive learning environments to anyone, anyplace, anytime by utilizing the internet and digital technologies in concern with instructional design principles. It is all about learning with the use of computers.

In this age, learning with the use of computer is simply online ways of acquiring knowledge through the internet or through the offline – CD-ROM. The online involves the use of Internet Explorer/Navigator. It may be in form of Audio, Visual, and or Audio/Visual. The convergence of the internet and learning, or Internet enabled learning is called e-learning. The applications and process of e-learning include computer-based learning, web-based learning, virtual classroom and digital collaboration where contents is delivered via the internet, intranet/extranet, audio and or video tapes, satellite TV and CD-ROM Islam (1997).

Teacher education is the complex and complete procedure of educating or preparing persons whose profession is teaching in order to play their roles as teachers towards contributing to national development. In the words of Peretomode (1992) cited in Williams and Edet (2014), a teacher is a person recognized and employed to help learners in a classroom situation in order to achieve set educational goals. The onus is upon the teacher to practicalize the curriculum with a view to achieving educational objectives and national development.

The National Policy on Education (2004) vividly states that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that the purpose of teacher education is to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers. According to Majasan (1995), teacher educational institutions and teachers help in the development of various skills and competencies that will in turn help to equip the individuals in the society for the various roles. Thus, the teacher is the spring board for economic, social, political, cultural and scientific development.

Richmond (1997) cited in Nwana(2008) observed that, there is a great link between the curriculum and ICT and that there are three major areas that technology can influence learning, including:

- i. Presentation, demonstration and the implementation of data using productivity tools.
- ii. Use of curriculum – specific applications such as educational games, drills and practice, simulations, tutorials, virtual laboratory visualizations and graphics, representations of abstract concepts, musical composition and expert systems.
- iii. Use of information and resources on CD-ROM, online encyclopedia, interactive maps and atlases, electronic journals and other references.

Similarly, the role of ICT in curriculum implementation is recognized by the Nigeria National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004, p. 53) where it stated that, “the government shall provide facilities and necessary infrastructures for the promotion of ICT and e-learning.” It is against this background that the researcher intends to find out the extent to which e-learning is being used in teaching teacher students in National Teachers’ Institute Rivers state.

Objectives of the Study

- To determine the extent of the utilization of E-learning in NTI Rivers state
- To ascertain the attitudes of the facilitators of NTI to the utilization of E-Learning

- To determine the difference in the attitudes to E-Learning between male and female facilitators.

Statement of the Problem

Although we are in the digital age and that makes our students especially those in the primary and secondary schools to be digital natives, many of our teachers however are still in the chalk and talk era. This affect their ability to teach their students using any of the modern strategy of instruction one of which is E- Learning. The implication of this is a disconnect between teachers and students and thereby truncating the essence of the teaching and learning process. The attitudes and perception of teachers towards adopting new modern methods of teaching could be a result of the fact that teachers undergo teachers' training or teachers' education without the use of any innovative teaching technique which uses modern technology.

The problem therefore is that despite the fact e-learning in Nigeria is challenged with the problem of material devices such as computer, computer laboratories, internet and e-mail facilities, videophone systems and teleconferencing devices, fax and wireless applications, digital library, digital classrooms, multimedia systems and the problem of multimedia courseware development among others (Global Information Technology Report, 2005) . There is also a dearth of trained teachers for e-learning beginning from their training, Ikemenjima (2005) and Jegede&Owolabi, (2008). ." It is against this background that the researcher intends to find out the following;

Research Questions

- I. To what extent is E- learning being used for instruction in National Teachers Institute (NTI) Rivers State?
- II. What are the are the attitude of NTI facilitators towards the utilization of E- Learning for instruction.

Hypotheses

- 1 There is no significant difference in the attitude of facilitators towards utilization of E- learning for instruction in NTI Rivers State.
- 2 There is no significant difference between male and female facilitators' attitude towards use of e-learning for instruction

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population was 320 NCE 1 students of the National Teachers Institute Rivers State. Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised of 150 student teachers and their facilitators who were randomly selected from the total population of 520. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed 20 items questionnaire titled, "Use of E-Learning for Teacher Education" (UETE). It was structured on a four-point scale and has three sections (A-C) which sought information on the two research questions. The face and content validation of the instrument were established by two experts each in the Educational Technology Department. The reliability of the instrument was determined, and a reliability coefficient of 0.70 was obtained, an indication that the instrument was reliable for data collection. The copies of the questionnaire that were administered by the

researcher were returned and used for computation. The data collected were analyzed using frequency distribution and mean. Since the items were structured on a four-point rating scale, the decision rule was based on the mid-point of the scale, 2.50. Therefore, items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as agreed or positive responses while items with below 2.50 were regarded as disagreed or negative responses.

Findings and Discussions

Research question1; to what extent is E- learning being used for instruction in National Teachers Institute (NTI) Rivers State.

Table 1

Mean responses on the extent of use of e-learning for instruction in NTI

N = 150

S/N	E-learning materials	VHE	HE	LE	NIU	X	Decision
1	Off-line/ordinary computers	0	10	125	15	1.96	NIU
2	What Sapp/ Facebook/sms	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
3	Multimedia television	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
4	PowerPoint presentation	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
5	E-mail facilities	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
6	Copy board	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
7	Interactive board	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
8	Multimedia Projectors	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
9	Digital Library	0	0	0	150	0	NIU
10	Ready-made courseware: CD-ROM, etc.	0	0	0	150	0	NIU

Table 1 columns are labeled as follows:

S/N = Item Number; E-learning Items that could be used: =to what extent do you believe the following items are being used for teacher education in NTI Rivers?

VHE= Very High Extent it is being used;

HE = High Extent it is being used;

LE = Low Extent it is being used;

NIU = Not in use at all

X = mean score of responses for this item;

Decision = overall respondent outcome based on the mean score for the item.

The “decision” is NIU which means Not in Use or IUwhich means In Use. Table 1 shows that items 1, with mean ratings of 1.96, and items 2-10 with mean ratings of 0 means it is a negative result because its lower than the Standard Reference mean of 2.50 hence none of the items are being and therefore E-learning is not used at all for teacher education in NTI Rivers State this is in line with the finding of Nwana (2008) who conducted similar research on challenges of E –Learning in secondary schools of Anambra State Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the attitude of NTI facilitators towards utilization of E- Learning for instruction?

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Table 2

N = 150

Mean responses on the attitudes of facilitators towards E- Learning for instruction of students' teachers

S/N	E-learning	SA	A	D	SD1	%A	%D	X	SD2
	Attitude to E-learning	47	78	08	17	83.3	16.7	3.03	0.26

Table 2 columns are labeled as follows: S/N = E-learning; attitude to E-learning.

SA = Somewhat Agreed

A = Agreed

D = Disagreed

SD = somewhat disagreed

SD2 = Standard Deviation

%A = Percentage Agreed

%D = Percentage Disagreed

From the table above table, 83.3% of the facilitators agreed to the use of E- learning for instruction against the 16.7% who disagreed to its usage, this 83.3% also agreed that using E- learning to teach students teachers will prepare the students teachers to meet the challenges of the digital age in the classroom.

Hypothesis 1; there is no significant difference in the attitude of facilitators towards utilization of E-learning for instruction in NTI Rivers State.

Mean responses on the attitude of NTI facilitators towards E-Learning

S/N	E-learning	SA	A	D	SD1	X	Squares	SD2
	Attitudes to E-learning	47	78	08	17	3.03	6.12	0.26

The calculated mean based on responses for hypothesis 1 is 3.03 which is higher than the Standard Reference mean of 2.50. The sum of squares is 6.12 while the standard Deviation is 0.26 Hence it can be ascertained that attitudes of NTI facilitators towards use of E-Learning is positive. Therefore because the calculated mean is greater than the Standard Reference Mean the null hypothesis is rejected

Hypotheses 2 There is no significant difference between attitude of male and female facilitators towards use of E-learning for instruction in NTI.

Table 3: Mean responses of male and female facilitators on attitude towards use of E-learning for instruction in NTI.

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	significance at 0.05
Gender	Male	25	3.80	0.80	0.54	Significant
	Female	25	3.00	0.63		

Degree of freedom=48, Tabulated t-value at .05 level of significance= 2.02

In the above table 3, the mean responses of the 25 male facilitators who participated in the study on their Attitudes towards use of E-learning in teacher education was 3.08, while that of the 25 female teacher facilitators on their attitudes Towards use of E-learning for teacher education was 3.00 T-test conducted to find out the significance of the difference in attitude towards use of E-learning between male and female teachers educators a was found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$). This result demonstrated that scores of both male and female teacher educators regarding their Attitudes towards e-learning use in teacher education institution was 0.54 statistically significant at 0.05 level . This in line with the findings of Lingamurthy & Srishylam (2016) who conducted a research on the Attitude of teacher Educators towards E-learning.

Summary of findings.

The study can be established the following findings:

- ✓ E- Learning is not being utilized for teacher education in National Teachers Institute Rivers State.
- ✓ There is significant difference in the attitudes of NTI facilitators for teacher education in NTI Rivers State.
- ✓ There is significant difference between male and female teacher educators' (in favor of the male facilitators') attitude towards use of E-learning in teaching.

Conclusion

Although the attitudes of NTI facilitators towards the utilization of E- learning for instruction is positive E-Learning is not being used for instruction in National Teachers Institute Rivers State.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study the following are recommended;

- Teachers should be prepared to face the challenges of the digital age by being given adequate opportunities to explore the innovative teaching techniques that make use of modern technology during the course of their training.
- Education policy makers and curriculum developers should, create and implement learning objectives, and assessments for teacher education using technology for all content areas
- The teacher education institutions NTI can encourage her facilitator to use E-Learning by providing the E-Learning and internet facilities.
- Teachers in Nigeria should be motivated and encouraged to develop and use multimedia courseware and software relevant to teaching and learning.
- Workshop and seminars should be organized for teachers and students on use of E – Learning
- Teachers should be encouraged by the government through provision of adequate funds for courseware development after their teachers' education

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