UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING RESOURCES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN ALVAN IKOKU FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION OWERRI, IMO STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the utilization of e-learning resources among Business Education students at Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Imo State. The study was guided by two research questions. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 360 undergraduate students in the Department of Business Education, while a sample of 180 students was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to elicit information on the availability of e-learning resources and students' competency in their utilization. The instrument was validated and administered to respondents, and the data collected were analyzed using mean and grand mean scores. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for decision-making. The findings revealed that e-learning resources such as computer systems and internet facilities were available to some extent, while essential resources such as electronic libraries, smart boards, and educational software were largely inadequate. The study also found that students possessed a moderate level of competence in the use of e-learning resources, particularly in handling computer systems, interacting with multimedia content, participating in online forums, and using digital libraries. However, their competence in the use of digital boards was low. The study concluded that although some basic e-learning facilities are available in the department, there are significant deficiencies in critical infrastructure needed for effective e-learning implementation. Based on the findings, it was recommended that university management should provide adequate e-learning infrastructure such as smart boards, digital libraries, and educational software, while ICT training should be intensified for both students and lecturers among others.

Keywords: E-learning, Utilization, Business Education, Digital Resources, Competency, ICT

Introduction

The advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed virtually every sector of society, including education. The rapid growth of digital technologies has changed the way teaching and learning are conducted, making access to information easier, faster, and more efficient. Consequently, educational institutions across the world are increasingly integrating technology into instructional processes to improve learning outcomes and equip learners with relevant digital competencies required in the twenty-first century.

One of the major technological innovations in education is e-learning. E-learning refers to the use of electronic technologies and digital resources to facilitate teaching, learning, communication, and knowledge sharing. According to Tummibi and Aregbesola (2015), e-learning involves the use of electronic technologies to deliver educational content, monitor learners' progress, and support instructional activities. Similarly, Eze and Chinedu-Eze (2018) described e-learning as the acquisition of knowledge through internet-based platforms and digital technologies. E-learning encompasses various technologies such as computers, internet facilities, digital libraries, educational software, virtual classrooms, multimedia resources, and online discussion forums that enhance teaching and learning processes.

The growing adoption of e-learning has significantly improved access to education by providing learners with opportunities to learn beyond the traditional classroom environment. It enables students to access educational materials at their convenience, collaborate with peers and instructors, engage in self-directed learning, and acquire digital skills necessary for academic and professional success. Ritonga et al. (2020) observed that students who utilize e-learning platforms often achieve better academic outcomes than those who rely solely on conventional teaching methods. Consequently, e-learning has become an essential component of modern educational systems worldwide.

In Business Education, e-learning plays a critical role in preparing students for contemporary business environments characterized by digitalization, automation, e-commerce, electronic banking, and Management Information Systems (MIS). The effective utilization of e-learning resources enables Business Education students to acquire practical technological skills, conduct research efficiently, access relevant business information, and develop competencies required in modern workplaces. Therefore, the availability and utilization of e-learning resources are fundamental to the achievement of the objectives of Business Education programmes.

Despite the recognized benefits of e-learning, its implementation in many Nigerian tertiary institutions remains a challenge. Although some institutions have made efforts to integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning, the availability of essential e-learning resources such as digital libraries, smart boards, educational software, reliable internet services, and computer laboratories remains inadequate in many cases. In addition, students' level of competence in utilizing available e-learning resources may influence the effectiveness of technology-enhanced learning. According to Olusegun, Oluwafemi, and Sushil (2016), students' computer literacy and digital competence significantly influence their ability to utilize e-learning resources effectively.

The successful utilization of e-learning resources depends not only on their availability but also on students' ability to use them appropriately for learning and research purposes. Students who possess adequate digital skills are more likely to benefit from online learning platforms, multimedia resources, virtual libraries, and other educational technologies. Conversely, inadequate access to e-learning facilities and poor digital competence may hinder effective learning and limit students' academic development.

Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, as a teacher education institution, is expected to provide adequate e-learning resources to support quality teaching and learning. However, observations suggest that some e-learning facilities required for effective Business Education instruction may not be adequately available or optimally utilized. This situation may affect students' acquisition of relevant digital competencies and reduce their preparedness for the modern technology-driven business environment. It therefore becomes necessary to examine the extent of utilization of e-learning resources among Business Education students in Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Imo State. The findings of the study will provide valuable information for educational administrators, lecturers, policymakers, and other stakeholders on strategies for improving e-learning utilization in Business Education programmes.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the Utilization of E-Learning Resources among Business Education Students of Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Imo State

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Determine the extent of availability of e-learning resources at business education.
2. Examine the competency level of students in the use of e-learning resources.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the availability of E-learning resources in business education?
2. What is the competency level of students in the use of e-learning resources in Business Education?

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey of research design. The choice of this design was based on its suitability for collecting data from respondents and describing existing conditions, opinions, and practices regarding the utilization of e-learning resources among Business Education students. The design enabled the researcher to obtain relevant information from the respondents in their natural setting without manipulating any variables.

The study was conducted at Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The institution is one of the leading teacher education institutions in the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria and offers Business Education programmes aimed at equipping students with professional, entrepreneurial, and technological skills required in contemporary business environments.

The population of the study comprised 360 undergraduate students in the Department of Business Education, Faculty of Vocational and Technology Education, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri. These students were drawn from various levels of study within the department.

A sample size of 180 students, representing 50 percent of the population, was selected for the study using simple random sampling techniques. The simple random sampling technique was considered appropriate because it provided every member of the population with an equal chance of being selected for the study. The selection of respondents was carried out through the balloting method.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of items designed to obtain information on the availability of e-learning resources and the competency level of students in utilizing such resources. Respondents were required to indicate their opinions using a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE), weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

Data collected were analyzed using mean statistics. The mean score for each questionnaire item was computed and used to answer the research questions. The decision rule was based on the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as Accepted**,** while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was regarded as Rejected. Grand mean scores were also calculated to determine the overall responses of the respondents on each research question.

Results

Research Question One: What is the availability of e-learning resources in business education?

Table 4.1: Shows the responses on the availability of e-learning resources in business education.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
1.	To what extent is computer system available in your department.	50 (200)	95 (285)	30 (60)	5 (5)	180 (550)	3.0	Accepted
2.	To what extent is internet facilities available in your department.	49 (196)	81 (243)	35 (70)	15 (15)	180 (524)	2.9	Accepted
3.	To what extent is electronic library in your department.	25 (100)	49 (147)	89 (178)	17 (17)	180 (442)	2.4	Rejected
4.	To what extent is electronic (smart) board available in your department.	0 (0)	23 (69)	83 (166)	74 (74)	180 (309)	1.7	Rejected
5.	To what extent is educational software available in your department.	0 (0)	26 (78)	97 (194)	57 (57)	180 (329)	1.8	Rejected
	Grand Mean						**2.4**	

The results in Table 4.1 reveal varying levels of availability of e-learning resources in the department. The mean score of 3.0 for computer systems indicates that computers are adequately available for teaching and learning activities. Similarly, the mean score of 2.9 shows that internet facilities are reasonably available, the mean score of 2.4 for electronic library facilities falls below the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating inadequate availability of digital library resources. Furthermore, the mean score of 1.7 for smart boards indicates that such interactive teaching technologies are largely unavailable in the department. Likewise, the mean score of 1.8 for educational software suggests inadequate provision of specialized digital applications that could enhance students' learning experiences and practical skill acquisition. The overall grand mean score of 2.4, which is below the acceptance benchmark of 2.50, indicates that e-learning resources are

generally inadequate in the Department of Business Education. This finding suggests that although some basic digital facilities such as computers and internet services are available, many essential e-learning resources required for effective technology-enhanced learning are lacking.

Research Question Two: What is the competency level of students in the use of e-learning resources in business education?

Table 4.2: Shows the responses on the competency level students in the use of e-learning resources in business education.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
6.	To what extent can you interact with multimedia content.	27 (108)	99 (297)	39 (78)	15 (15)	180 (498)	2.8	Accepted
7.	To what extent can you interact in a digital library.	25 (100)	71 (213)	67 (134)	17 (17)	180 (464)	2.6	Accepted
8.	To what extent can you interact in an online forum.	35 (140)	77 (231)	57 (114)	11 (11)	180 (496)	2.7	Accepted
9.	To what extent can you handle a computer system.	69 (276)	101 (303)	10 (20)	0 (0)	180 (599)	3.3	Accepted
10.	To what extent can you interact with a digital board.	5 (20)	41 (123)	97 (194)	37 (37)	180 (374)	2.1	Rejected
	Grand Mean						**2.7**	

The results in Table 4.2 indicate that students possess a moderate level of competence in utilizing various e-learning resources. The mean score of 2.8 shows that students can effectively interact with multimedia content, the mean score of 2.6 indicates that students can use digital library resources, while the mean score of 2.7 demonstrates their ability to participate in online forums and other virtual learning interactions. The highest mean score of 3.3 was recorded for handling computer systems, indicating that students possess a high level of competence in basic computer operations, while the mean score of 2.1 for interaction with digital boards falls below the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that students have limited competence in utilizing this technology. The grand mean score of 2.7 is above the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that students generally possess the necessary competencies for utilizing e-learning resources.

Discussion of Findings

Availability of E-learning Resources in Business Education

The first research question examined the availability of e-learning resources in the Department of Business Education, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri. The findings revealed that computer systems and internet facilities were available to a reasonable extent, while electronic libraries, smart boards, and educational software were inadequately available. The overall grand mean of 2.4 indicated that e-learning resources were generally inadequate in the department.

This finding agrees with Ezeabii, Ile, and Ezugwu (2019), who observed that the effectiveness of e-learning largely depends on the availability of relevant technological resources such as internet facilities, electronic libraries, educational software, and other digital learning tools. The authors emphasized that learners can only benefit from technology-enhanced instruction when such facilities are readily available and accessible.

The finding also supports Wagner, Hassanein, and Head (2008), who argued that the successful implementation of e-learning in higher education institutions depends significantly on the availability of technological infrastructure and institutional support. The inadequacy of critical e-learning resources identified in this study may therefore hinder effective teaching and learning, reduce students' access to digital learning materials, and limit the acquisition of practical digital skills required in the contemporary business environment.

Competency Level of Students in the Use of E-learning Resources

The second research question investigated the competency level of students in the use of e-learning resources. The findings showed that students were competent in interacting with multimedia content, digital libraries, online forums, and computer systems. However, they demonstrated low competence in the use of digital boards. The grand mean score of 2.7 indicated that students generally possessed the necessary competencies for utilizing available e-learning resources.

This finding is in line with Olusegun, Oluwafemi, and Sushil (2016), who noted that students' level of computer literacy significantly influences their ability to utilize e-learning resources effectively. According to the authors, students who possess adequate digital skills are more likely to benefit from online learning platforms, conduct research effectively, and engage successfully in technology-mediated learning environments.

The finding further supports Prensky (2001), who described contemporary students as digital natives who possess considerable familiarity with information and communication technologies. The relatively high competency levels observed among the students may be attributed to their regular exposure to computers, smartphones, internet services, and other digital technologies. However, the low competency recorded in the use of digital boards may be linked to the inadequate availability of such facilities within the department. This implies that students tend to develop greater competence in technologies that are readily available and frequently utilized.

Conclusion

The study concluded that although computers and internet facilities are available to some extent in the Business Education Department of Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, critical e-learning resources such as digital libraries, smart boards and educational software remain inadequate. Students demonstrate moderate competence in utilizing available technologies, but infrastructural limitations continue to hinder effective e-learning implementation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The university management should provide adequate e-learning infrastructure including smart boards, educational software and functional digital libraries.
2. Regular ICT training programmes should be organized for students and lecturers.
3. Internet services within the institution should be improved to enhance online learning activities.
4. Government and educational stakeholders should increase funding for ICT facilities in tertiary institutions.
5. Business Education curricula should integrate emerging digital technologies and e-learning platforms.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the status of e-learning resource utilization among Business Education students in Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education. It identifies specific infrastructural deficiencies affecting effective technology integration and highlights students' competency levels in the use of available digital resources. The findings serve as a basis for institutional planning, ICT policy formulation and improvement of digital learning environments in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

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