An Elucidation into the Perceptions of Undergraduate Students to E-learning in Jos, Plateau State

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Abstract

E-learning generally pertained to teaching and learning using electronic means. The means of learning are channeled through the use of relevant electronic devices like computers and phones. Nigeria and the world at large suffered a pandemic from 2019 through 2021 and during the national lockdown in Nigeria, students and teachers stayed at home without going to their respective schools for about a year. This was a challenge to the education sector in Nigeria and schools had to device means of teaching students using the eLearning method against the traditional means whereby students had to converge at a point and receive instructions from their teachers. Many schools struggled to realize effectiveness in teaching using eLearning. This case study research deals with the responses of students from NTA Television College Jos with regard to their experiences of eLearning. The researchers applied a qualitative approach in delivering their questionnaires in order to obtained results pertaining the students' experiences. Using the behaviorist-associationist approach in which a behavior might be changed through a particular regular activity, the researchers found out that students at tertiary institutions may in future prefer eLearning over the traditional system of learning.

Keywords: *computers, eLearning, media, multimedia, technology.*

1. Introduction

Human beings have advanced in their thinking abilities and in the use of their hands to handle tools. Early humans like homo erectus, homo sapiens and other ancestors of modern humans started tools millions of years ago (Agai 2021:29-35; cf. Hopkins 2006). In todays' world, humans now use computers to create, develop and solves problems. Schools have not been left behind in using computers to learn and to teach. This direct us to understanding the concept of e-learning. E-learning literally means electronic

learning. It is the provision of educational content (electronic) through the media based on the use of computer and other media related devices such as phones, cameras, projectors and so on and so forth (Stoltzfus 2020). E-learning allows flexibility in the use of space and time. Students might in their various homes and learn from a particular source. In some instances, the teacher might be facing the students yet teaching them through the various devices they carry (Gorbunova & Kalimullin 2017).

It is important to study eLearning because of many advantages. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Nigerian students stayed indoor for about a year and as a result, schools had to develop activities that will allow an ongoing teaching and interactions with students but not at schools. COVID-19 is an infectious Corona virus disease caused by a newly discovered virus. COVID-19 was first reported on December 12, 2019 in Wuhan (Wang, Tang & Wei 2020). E-learning became the foundation for educational activities seemed teachers and students could not meet face to face for classes.

NTA Television College is located in Rayfield, Jos, Nigeria and hundreds of students from different parts of the country come to study at the college year after year. During the era of Covid 19, NTA college also embarked on eLearning. This research is a study of the importance of internet and e-learning in the enhancement of education. In particular, the researchers evaluated responses from some students of the NTA TV College Jos pertaining their perception and understanding of the importance of e-learning to education.

2. Research Design
This research is basically qualitative research because it relies on information obtained through responses from the questionnaires shared among students of NTA Television College Jos in 2024.

3. Identification of Population
The questionnaire was designed by the research team and distributed accordingly. In all, the researchers interviewed 100 diploma students from NTA TV College Jos. All the students were in their final year. We also had an interactive-discussion that were not formally documented with few lecturers at the school in order to ascertain details of their use of e-learning and to explore their views of its impact on teaching and learning.

4. The Sampling Techniques Implored
A total of 100 students from NTA TV College Jos have been interviewed. The students were given the questionnaire on different occasions. Some of the students requested to complete the questionnaire at their respective homes while other preferred to complete it within the premises of NTA TV College Jos. The questionnaire consisted predominantly of pre coded questions with two open-ended questions, and provided information about the students' perspectives:

- background characteristics;
- use of e-learning;
- perceptions of the impact of e-learning on teaching and learning;
- views on their current experiences and practice of using e-learning;
- views on the potential of e-learning to improve teaching and learning;
- the challenges they faced especially with regard to the absence of relevant gargets that promotes e-learning;
- what about other factors that pertain to epileptic power supply, security and other environmental facts? The researchers though interviewed few lecturers yet, students' responses are the target or the goal of the research and not those of the teachers.'

5. Presentation of Results
Tabulation of the Research Outcome from the Questionnaires Distributed to Selected Students at NTA TV College Jos within the Periods January 2024 through April 2024

100 students responded and answered questions from the questionnaire						
Students Interaction with Internet				**Students Attitudes towards E-learning**		
No	Factors/Apparatus Considered	No of Students (scale)		Factors/Apparatus Considered	No. of Students (scale)	
		No.	%		No.	%
1	Adequate power/electricity supply.	30	30	Adequate power/electricity supply.	30	30
2	Experienced learning via online	100	100	Experienced learning via online	100	100
3	Most convenient means of learning	90	90	Is e-learning very important?	100	100
4	Preferred Device (phone/laptop)	90	90	Love and interest for e-learning	90	90
5	Availability of Device	60	60	Future of e-learning (very important)	100	100
6	Network convenience	30	30	Students make more impact using e-learning?	60	60
7	Price (too expensive)	98	98	NTA TV College Performance of	30	30

8	Hours use in learning/ teaching (convenient)	90	90	Teachers in e-learning Recommend e-learning to other tertiary institutions	90	90

6. Discussion of Results

The results obtained from the table above are based on a collation of data from the questionnaire. The questionnaire is actually divided into three categories: first, is the general background of the interviewee which helps in understanding the context of the individual. This context is vital because the interviewee responses could be influenced or affected by his/her background or context. A student who has a job or is financially supported by his/her parents may not complain about the type of devices he/she uses for learning.

Secondly, section B in the questionnaire dealt with the student's interaction or engagement with e-learning. The section also dealt with the student's perception or knowledge about e-learning especially with regard to his/her interaction with devices that pertained to e-learning. The section offers students the opportunity to express themselves in relation to the use of the internet and learning through virtual means. Section C deals with the students' personal thoughts about e-learning. Students were asked to express their views on whether they like or dislike this modern system of education in comparison with the traditional means of education mostly taught in the formal classrooms or face-to-face classes. The students generally expressed the view that though 100% of them admire teaching or learning via e-learning, they recommended that NTA TV College Jos need to re-organize itself in the development of relevant tools for delivering knowledge via e-learning.

The results from the research conducted have certain outcomes one of which indicated that students preferred e-learning to the traditional system of learning in a four walls classroom. The result indicated that 100% of the students interviewed found e-learning as highly commendable. This view is further shared by Galbraith (1967) who noted that students have the tendency to be more effective if given the opportunity to apply the use of computers and internet in their studies. Clark and Meyer (2003) also emphasized that student's skills and thinking abilities are more developed when they are allowed to use the internet and computers.

Another factor that dominated the interest of the student interviewed is the availability of devices used for lesson outside the classroom and that is the phone and computers. 100% of the students said that they had access to phones which they can use in learning. This might have contributed to making the students admire e-learning in and outside of the classroom. The students however were not satisfied with the system of teaching via e-learning at NTA TV College Jos, reason being that the school does not have modern devices or multimedia devices for teaching. Only 30% of the students feel like the college e-learning method is satisfactory against the 70% who disagreed.

Students were asked about whether they have a pre-knowledge of the definition of e-learning. About 80% of them do because they have certain devices like phones which they use and they know it is connected with internet or what is perceived generally as e-learning. All the students' interviewed had experienced e-learning because they still schooled during National lockdown due to the effects of COVID-19. NTA TV College continued to arrange distance or online learning program for its numerous students.

These researchers are of the view that e-learning consist both of distance learning using devices to access lecturers and also learning in the classroom using multimedia gargets. The emphasis in this research is the on the use of devices to access knowledge. In other words, all the 100 students interviewed had some knowledge or have experienced learning via the internet.

Furthermore, 90% of the students interviewed said they used their phones to access learning which suggests that most of the student each possessed personal phones while a few said they have accessed to laptops. This enabled them to access knowledge easily and readily. During the lockdown, the major medium students learned were through a social media platform called Whassap. They also mentioned that during formal classes, a number of multimedia gargets like projectors, video cameras and so on were used in teaching but that they materials are weak in delivering knowledge because they are old and outdated. They all complained about the network services they received on their devices during the online classes. Notwithstanding, 100% of the students interviewed are of the view that e-learning is the most convenient means of learning in comparison to the traditional method of teaching that made it compulsory to be in the classroom and copy or write notes. Here is some comparative look of both the traditional system of learning and e-learning.

In general, this research conducted shows that the students of NTA TV College Jos are interested in the learning using modern technology or e-learning. They enjoyed and loved it. Sadly, they complaint about their unpreparedness to buy the necessary devices for such a system of education –that is the e-learning system of education. With to the hours of learning, 98% of the students enjoyed the fact that they can study at their own convenient times when it comes to e-learning. In comparison with information obtained from many literatures considered in this research, e-learning has been upheld as the best and reliable means of leaning in the contemporary world. The researchers finally postulated that students in the modern society enjoy e-learning especially if they have the relevant devices and other privileges like the availability of data and the regular supply of power or electricity.

7. Evaluation of Case Study and Proposed Changes

The theoretical process used in analyzing and in the study of the learners' responses to e-learning at NTA TV College Jos is the *Behaviorist-Associationist* which a system of learning according to which a connection is gradually and properly established between stimuli and observable responses. Because behavior depended upon the relative strength of association between a particular stimulus and a number of responses, the Behaviorist-Associationists' description of learning logically required a memory system to retain products of learning. However, the elicitation of responses by stimulus was assumed to be an automatic process (Vongdip & Agai 2024:38-39). This theory is relevant for this research because it allows the students interviewed to interact with the modern system of e-learning and to generate responses from their experiences. This research is equally centered

on using the behavioral experiences of the students interviewed to evaluate and ascertain the importance of e-learning in our cotemporary tertiary institutions. This view of influencing knowledge through e-learning is also echoed and supported by a researcher called Glenn. Glenn (2004) noted that a new multimedia model of building using methods of e-learning to teach computer mathematics and computer graphics, and broadcast on the Internet at King Abdul Aziz University in Saudi Arabia has been effective because regular teaching using devices influences the experiences of the learner.

The students at NTA Television College Jos were influenced by a regular use of e-learning especially during the Covid 19 period and this has influenced their behavior to the point that many of preferred learning via e-learning because they have opportunities to do other things while studying. Some of them stored and shared lessons though the internet and repeatedly listened so they could understand while other had time to work and raise money to support themselves because e-learning does not require that they participate in classes at specific periods of time. It is important to note that e-learning has been demonstrated to posses' quiet extensive relevance. Some of the relevance is as follows**:**

- it has brought about the feeling of self-responsibility amongst students where they have to account to themselves when they decide to study or not. In other words, students now have the option of studying not necessarily at a time that all other students need to converge for class work;
- e-learning also enables students not only to rely on textbook information but to expand their knowledge by researching using the World Wide Web and other sites online that provide variety of knowledge or conceptualization;
- teachers also benefit from e-learning by allowing them to acquire various computer skills as well as students and this has enabled them to encourage students to apply their knowledge and skills. This principle helps in communication between teachers and students at all times;
- e-learning also increases the students' ability to study on their own and it enhances their critical thinking skills.

8. Conclusion

There is much freedom that many young people in Nigeria would love to have. One of the freedoms pertained to studying at ease or at students' preferences. The research conducted using some students from NTA Television College Jos suggest that many students preferred to learn via eLearning because during eLearning, students interact mostly with their peers than with their teachers. This allowed themselves more freely as they wish and to them, it enhances better learning. It is likely that in future, eLearning or distance learning may be the most preferred means of learning against the traditional system of learning where students had to converge at a place and adhere to all the rules giving by the teacher.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings in this research, certain recommendations have been made. They include:

a. That certain technological program should be developed to train teachers and students and school administrators

on how to make best use of the e-learning system of education;

b. The society/parents need to be engaged so they can support their children in this system of education.

c. Training for teachers need to done and be carried out regularly to update them on e-learning.

d. Tertiary institutions need to create portals for their students that carry alongside administrative responsibilities like registration and also sections on the portals where academic materials can be accessed;

e. Adequate security should be provided in schools and at different homes so that students' devices used for e-learning can be well-safeguarded;

f. The government needs to provide adequate funding for both primary and tertiary institutions so as to support the advancement of e-learning among schools in Nigeria. It is important that this system of education is provided at primary school level so that students can be prepared before they get to the tertiary level of education.

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