



## **Students' Perception of the Application of E-Learning Tools In Distance-Learning Business Education Programmes**

**OKORO, Patience Ewomaoghene, Ph.D.**

**Department of Business Education  
Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria**

### **ABSTRACT**

This study assesses application of E-learning tools in Distance. Business Education as perceived by the students. One research question was raised for the study, an ex-post factor design was adopted; the population of the study comprises 126 business education students who are presently undergoing degree programme at 200 and 300 levels of National Open University of Nigeria, located at Asaba and Emevor study centres in Delta State and Benin Study Centre in Edo State. The population also served as sample. The instrument for data collection was a 25-item questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts in Business Education Department and three experts in Measurement and Evaluation Department in Delta State University, Abraka. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, 18 copies of the questionnaire were administered to 18 National Open University Students, Yenagoa Study Centre in Bayelsa State. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient, which yielded a coefficient of 0.98. The data obtained was analysed using mean and standard deviation. The decision rule was 2.50, meaning any item that is less than 2.50 was declared high extent. The study revealed that e-mail, online forum, web, laptop computers, and teleconferencing are applied by the students to a very low extent. It was recommended among others that school authorities should provide adequate internet facilities for the students to use to a high extent.

**Keywords:** Application, E-Learning. Distance Education, Business Education

### **INTRODUCTION**

Business is a part of vocational education which has to do with training in business skills, competencies, knowledge and attitude to enable the recipient function effectively in the world of work. This will help to reduce the rate of unemployment among graduates. Ugwoke (2011) as cited by Nedum-Ogbede (2016) defined business education as a component of vocational technical education programme that prepares an individual for career in business and also to be an intelligent consumer of economic goods and services. Ezeani and Ogundola (2016) while citing Adesina (2007), Aluwong (2003), Ibrahim (2003), and Igboke (2000) defined business education as that aspect of vocational education programme that prepare students for knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes needed for entry into and advancement in job within business. Business education is offered at colleges of education and universities. Courses such as marketing, commerce, principles of management, business law, law of meeting, secretariat duties, leadership, taxation, auditing, typewriting, shorthand, entrepreneurship education and computer appreciation.

The objectives of business education according to Njoku (2007) include the following:

1. To empower the individual with desirable skills, knowledge and value to perform specific function so as to become self-reliant.
2. To appreciate the world around him and contribute maximally to the social and economic development of his nation.
3. To empower the individual in such a way that the individual will develop his intellectual capability that would help him make informed decisions in all spheres of life

4. To help the individual become a judicious spender and develop proper values for the achievement of healthy living and growth of the nation.
5. To understand the political frame work of a nation so as to contribute to National Economic Development

In the same vein, Ubulom (1999) in Nedum-Ogbede (2016) listed the following as objectives of business education:

1. To make available to all students the opportunities to explore and learn about world of business and the possible interest and potential careers it has to offer
2. To help develop in all students the ability to choose discriminately and to use wisely the goods and services that business has to offer.
3. To assist in developing an intelligent understanding on the art of all students of the various occupations to be found in the world of business.
4. To develop in particular ways an understanding and an appreciation of the need for his personal use
5. To prepare students to perform business activities common to many professional areas
6. To prepare students for more effective study in the field of business
7. To prepare students to become business teachers

Business education is one of the courses presently being offered in distant learning. Odili (2016) defined distance learning as a type of teaching in which learners are removed in time and space from the teacher. The National Policy on Education (2014) provides for lifelong learning through distance education and Nigeria being the largest black population in the world with literacy level of less than 60 percent is compelled to adopt Open and Distance education as a tool for achieving its developmental goals and objectives (Atolagbe, Umaru & Oparinde, 2016).

Citing the US Career Institute (2001), Atolagbe, Umaru and Oparinde (2016) listed the following as some of the benefits of adopting distance learning:

1. Many distance education programme are self-paced.
2. Students can study when and where they want
3. Employees can use distance learning to train their staff without losing them to the classroom
4. One-on-one interaction with instructor by phone or email helps individualised instruction
5. Distance learning is affordable
6. Educational institutions that offer strictly distance learning do no incur the costs of maintain a campus
7. Students do not have to give up their lobs

The functionality of distance learning is especially in business education is depends on c-learning. F-learning was defined by Koohang and 1-larman (200) as the delivery of education through various electronic media. Odili (2016) outlined the following as benefits of E-learning as a tool for teaching and learning business education course:

1. Convenient due to in minimal disruption of family and work life
2. Elimination of space, time and geographical constraints.
3. Increased peer interaction due to collaborative rather than competitive learning environment
4. Increased interaction with more accessible teachers with decreased feedback turn-around time
5. Increased quality of learning with deeper critical reflection and systematic scaffolding of ideas taking place

Odili (2016) also outlined the following as some of the tools of E-learning for distance learning:

1. E-mail
2. Online forum
3. Web
4. Desktop and laptop computers
5. Teleconferencing/teletraseminar
6. Internets
7. Video conferencing

## 8. Virtual learning environment

**E-Mail:** This is a tool used in communication between the teacher and the learner and also among learners. It can be used for the submission of assignments and projects.

**Online Forum:** This is a virtual place where discussions take place. Students can organise themselves into a group to discuss a particular subject, they can also have an online discussion with their teachers.

**Web:** This is an interconnected set of persons, places or things, which helps to interconnect the various set of learning globally to the instructor(s).

**Desktop and Laptop Computers:** These are equipment used in conjunction with the software and course ware to facilitate learning.

Utoware, Kren-Ikidi and Apreala (2016) did a study on issues and trends in the application of new technologies in teaching business education in Nigerian universities in South-South States, using questionnaire as instrument for data collection. He collected data from lecturers in the Department of Business Education. They used mean and standard deviation to analyse the research questions and t-test to test the hypothesis. The study revealed a low utilization by business education lecturers on the following new technology tools: Computers, Television, Tape recorder, Overhead projector, Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs), Compact Discs (CDs), Smart/interactive white board, E-learning centres, E-library and Internet services/facilities. Others include: printer, video conferencing, photocopies, dictating machines and electronic typewriter.

In the same vein, Mafikuyomi, Ojewale and Salami (2016) conducted a study on utilization of information and communication technology in teaching business education in colleges of education in Oyo State. They used questionnaire to obtain information from lecturers, the mean and standard deviation was used to analyse the research questions and the hypotheses were tested using t-test. The study revealed that the extent to which business educators use ICT to improve business education instruction is low. The ICT tools include internet, PowerPoint, CorelDraw, E-mail, Facebook and Whatsapp.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In business education, there is skill acquisition by the student, after a successful completion of the programme, this is as a result of provision of various facilities such as computers, keyboard and video conferencing facilities. The introduction of E-learning in business education programme requires the school management to take appropriate and timely action in adopting E-learning approach in the entire school, with the availability and utilization of E-learning facilities. Unfortunately, many distance learning programmes have no E-learning facilities to enable the students gain the required skills and competencies necessary to perform in the world of work. E-learning as a tool provides opportunity to those who could not avail themselves opportunity to go to school but are interested in acquiring knowledge of business education. However, this cannot be provided if the facilities for teaching the students are not available. The purpose of access to quality education is therefore neglected.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to assess the extent of application of E-learning tools in distance business education as perceived by the students.

### **Research Question**

The following research question was raised to guide the study:

- To what extent are E-learning tools applied in business education programme as perceived by students?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- i. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of students from Asaba and Emevor study centre on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme
- ii. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme
- iii. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of 200 level and 300 level students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

**METHOD**

This study adopted an ex-post facto survey research design. The population of the study is made up of 126 business education students who are presently undergoing a degree programme in 200 and 300 level of National Open University of Nigeria, located at Asaba and Emevor study centres in Delta State and Benin Study Centre in Edo State. The population also served as sample. The instrument for data collection was a 25 item questionnaire, which was divided into two parts, part A deals with the demographic variable of the students such as Sex, School Location, Age and level while section B comprised 21 items based on the research questions. Part B is structured in a 4-point scale of Very High Extent (VI-IE), High Extent (HE), Very Low Extent (VLE) and Low Extent (LE). The instrument was validated by 3 expert in Business Education Department and 3 experts in Measurement and Evaluation Department, in Delta State University, Abraka. In order to obtain a reliability of the instrument 18 copies of the questionnaire was administered to 18 of National Open University Students Yenagoa Study Centre in Bayelsa State. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient, which yielded a coefficient of 0.98. The data obtained was analysed using mean and standard deviation. The decision rule was 2.50, meaning any item that is less than 2.50 was declared low extent while any item that is greater than or equal to 2.50 was declared high extent.

**RESULT**

**Table 1: Mean rating of the extent of application of E-learning tools in business education programme as perceived by students**

S/N	APPLICATION OF E-LEARNING TOOLS	MEAN	SD	REMARK
1.	E-mail	2.45	0.45	Low Extent
2.	Online forum	2.21	0.34	Low Extent
3.	Web	2.38	0.28	Low Extent
4.	Laptop computers	2.20	0.46	Low Extent
5.	Teleconferencing	1.89	0.20	Low Extent
6.	Internet	2.40	0.45	Low Extent
7.	Video conferencing	1.50	0.43	Low Extent
8.	Virtual learning	2.3 1	0.34	Low Extent
9.	Audio tapes	2.30	0.50	Low Extent
10.	PowerPoint	2.48	0.57	Low Extent
11.	Mail list	1.98	0.67	Low Extent
12.	Video clips	2.34	0.51	Low Extent
13.	Computer software packages	2.48	0.54	Low Extent
14.	Film strip projectors	2.24	0.47	Low Extent
15.	Overhead projectors	2.15	0.34	Low Extent
16.	CD Rom	2.47	0.47	Low Extent
17.	Facebook	2.82	0.75	High Extent
18.	Podcasts	1.69	0.16	Low Extent
19.	Clever hoard	1.50	0.34	Low Extent
20.	Data projectors	2.42	0.75	Low Fxent
21.	Satellite broadcast	2.10	0.59	Low Extent

The table showed the extent of application of E-learning tools in business education programme by students. All the items except item 17 (facebook) are below the cut-off point of 2.50. Hence, the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme as perceived by students is low.

**Hypothesis I**

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of students from Asaha and Emevor study centre on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

**Table 2:** *t-test* result of the difference in respondents' mean rating of Asaba and Emevor study centre on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
Asaba	74	2.44	0.96	124	1.36	1.96	NS
Emevor	52	2.32	0.91				

On table 2, the calculated t-value of 1.36 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of Asaba and Emevor study centre on the extent of the application of P-learning tools in business education programme.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the extent of the application of P-learning tools in business education programme

**Table 3:** *t-test* result of the difference in respondents' mean rating of male and female students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
Male	65	2.48	0.86	124	1.41	1.96	NS
Female	61	2.39	0.97				

On the table, the calculated t-value of 1.41 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

**Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of 200 level and 300 level students on the extent of the application of P-learning tools in business education programme

**Table 4:** *t-test* result of the difference in respondents' mean rating of 200 level and 300 level students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
200	level	69	2.37	124	1.31	1.96	NS
300	Level	52	2.24				

On table 4, the calculated t-value of 1.31 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. The null hypothesis is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of 200 level and 300 level students on the extent of the application of E-learning tools in business education programme.

**DISCUSSION**

This study has revealed that e-mail, online forum, web, laptop computers, teleconferencing, internets, video conferencing, virtual learning, audio tapes. PowerPoint and mail list are applied by the students to a very low extent. Others that are applied to a very low extent include video clips, computer software packages, film strip projectors, CD ROM, podcasts, clever board, data projectors and satellite broadcast. This result has showed that the extent of the application of F-learning tools in business education

programme as perceived by students is low. The study is in line with the study of Utoware, Kren-Ikidi and Apreala (2016), which revealed a low utilization by business education lecturers on the Computers, Overhead projector, DVDs/CDs, Internet services/facilities, and video conferencing. The study also agreed with Mafikuyomi. Ojewale and Salami (2016), whose findings revealed that the extent to which business educators use internet, PowerPoint, CorelDraw. E-mail, Facebook and Whatsapp to improve business education instruction is low.

### **CONCLUSION**

Business education programme requires adequate facilities to enable the students participate effectively in F-learning in distance education programme. The availability of facilities and utilization will enable the students to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge to perform in the world of work. This will help to reduce unemployment since the graduate can set up their own business and run it without failure.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are suggested in the study:

1. School authorities should provide adequate internet facilities for the students to Use to a high extent
2. School authorities should provide teleconferencing facilities enable business education students use them to a high extent
3. Overhead projectors should be provided by the school authority to enable adequate utilization by the students
4. Online forum should be set up by the school authorities to enable the students interact among themselves in group discussion

### **REFERENCES**

- Atolagbe, A.A., Umaru, I.A., & Oparinde, R.O. (2016). The challenges of open distance learning education in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 3(2), 334-343.
- Ezeni, N.S., & Ogundola, M.C. (2016). Business education programme in Nigeria: Past, present and future in the 21st Century, *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 3(1 ) 17-33.
- Mafikuyomi, J.A., Ojewale, J.A., & Salami. S.S. (2016). Utilization of information and communication technology in teaching business education in colleges of education in Oyo State. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*. 3(2,), 166-174
- Nedum-Ogbede, P.O. (2016). New technologies in business education: challenge and the forward. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 3(2), 99-106.
- Odili, S.O. (2016). E-Learning: A tool for distance learning in Business Education. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 3(2), 42-51.
- Utoware, J.D.A., Kren-Ikidi, C.P., & Apreala, I.O. (2016). Issues and trends in the application, of new technologies in teaching business education in Nigerian universities in South-South. *Nigerian Journal / Business Education*, 3(2), 52-63.