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Article · July 2021

DOI: 10.46827/ejhrms.v5i2.1120

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**UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING RESOURCES
AMONG LECTURERS IN NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
STUDY CENTERS IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA**

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Abstract:

Despite the effort of the Federal Government of Nigeria to enhance the quality of the learning process in Nigerian universities by introducing the use of ICT resources in schools through which lecturers will acquire knowledge and skills that would enable them source the internet and utilize e-learning resources for qualitative teaching, the attainment of the e-learning objectives in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) appears elusive. The study investigated the utilization of e-learning resources among lecturers in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study, while survey design was adopted. The population of the study comprised all the 724 facilitators in National Open University study centers, South East Nigeria. The sample size comprised 84 lecturers obtained through simple random sampling and accidental sampling techniques. Questionnaire was used to collect data. The reliabilities of the clusters in the instrument which were ascertained with Cronbach alpha method were found to be 0.71, 0.80 and 0.77. The data collected were analyzed using mean. The findings of the study revealed that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for instructional delivery, research purposes and evaluation purposes. Based on the findings, it was recommended that University administrators should promote the use of e learning among lecturers by providing technologically enhanced libraries in order to support the use of e learning for the tripartite purposes of instructional delivery, research and evaluation.

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Keywords: e-learning resources, utilization, National Open University, study centres, Instructional delivery, research purposes, evaluation purposes

1. Introduction

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was established as one of the Open and Distance Education (ODE) to fill the gap created by the closure of sub-standard outreach/satellite campuses in Nigeria. Ntuk, Idongesit and Etuk cited in Jegede (2016) posited that the learning opportunities provided by NOUN is characterized by the separation of learner and teacher in place and time. This is therefore the type of system where the learner pursues their studies independently, either in their homes or at any convenient place. The method of instruction at NOUN is by distance learning mode, and distance education involves the use of variety of media such as print, audio, television, video, computer-based, internet, etc.

Distance education by Nwagugo cited in Babagbemi (2013) is the type of study where the teacher and the students are separated in time and space but uses technology media such as television, email, DVD, internet, radio, etc. for effective communication. Open and distance education provides education for all and promotes lifelong learning in Nigeria. According to Jegede (2016), lifelong learning is one of the factors that makes open and distance learning an indispensable element. At the National Open University of Nigeria, e-learning activities started with audio-tapes, progressed to CD-ROM, interactive video and now, the University has a most standard e-learning laboratory using one of the best available Learning Management Systems (LMS) to facilitate effective interaction and learning (Anuonye & Ukegbu, 2013).

Electronic learning resources (e learning resources) are resource materials that are in electronic form which include electronic books (e-books); electronic newspapers (e-newspapers); electronic journals (e- journals) as well as internet resources which complement the print-based resources in a traditional classroom setting. According to Igbokwe, Okeke-James, Anyanwu, and Eli-Chukwu (2020), electronic learning, or e-learning, is a form of distance learning that requires the use of varieties of technology and the internet to communicate, share ideas, access information and share knowledge from instructors to learners.

E-learning is the wholesome integration of modern telecommunication equipment and ICT resources, particularly the internet, into the educational system (Nwana, 2012). In other words, the concept of e-learning is interwoven with the concept of ICT: both being inseparable entity. These resources, according to Umana (2018), include computers, internet, electronic mail, video conferencing, printing technology and online public access catalogue. Multiple accesses speed, richer in content, re-use, timeliness and anywhere access are some of the features of e-learning resources. In a similar view, electronic resources according to Tekale and Dalve (2012), have the following features: available any time of the day; provide hyperlinks; huge information reservoirs; quick

information; various search options; easy citations; ease in uploading and updating; ease in storage and dissemination; flexibility; time, space and cost are not major hurdles; ease of archiving. The interactive and multimedia components provided by the electronic media somehow offer multiple learning experiences than conventional (paper-form) documents. E-learning resources find relevance in effective instructional delivery, research and evaluation.

E-learning resources contribute to sustainable development of the nation, since timely and effective provision of useful information can assist libraries in provision of information which is very critical to development of the various sectors in the nation (Adebayo, Ahmed & Adenira, 2018). Electronic resources have the potential power to increase teachers' learning opportunities when they are made accessible to them. Students and teachers get a better chance of reaching out to books and journals that are made available on the internet. A broader interaction is gotten from the outside world through interaction on the internet (Edna & Francis, 2013). More so, access to online journals is made possible through e-learning.

Despite the availability of wide opportunities offered by the advent of e-learning resources, Ikwuka (2015) observed that e-learning facilities are not adequately available in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, and that the available e-learning facilities are not used for lecture delivery. These problems seem to have hindered the utilization of e-learning resources among lecturers for the purpose of evaluation of their students' performance. More so, the afore-mentioned problems are capable of impeding the utilization of e-learning resources in the delivery of training applications as well as monitoring students' progress in learning.

Utilization is the art of putting things or resources that are tangible or intangible to proper use (Okolocha, 2012). Utilization of e-learning resources involves searching, browsing, examining and visiting an e-resource and/or service by the user. Utilization of e-learning resources is influenced by teachers' use of the library. The more teachers use the library the more familiar they become with its resources.

The utilization of e-learning resources among university teachers is reinforced by the fact that Federal government has introduced Universal Mandatory Information Technology Training (UMITT) which is being embraced by universities. Anaraki and Babalhavaeji (2013) noted that the greatest obstacles to the utilization of e-learning resources were inadequate information about the existence of these databases and lack of training. This is because, when a potential user has adequate information about the existence of e-learning resources, it would eventually culminate in its utilization. The utilization of e-learning resources among lecturers in National Open University is a matter of debate.

Lefuma (2017) carried out a study on the access to and use of electronic information resources in academic libraries of the Lesotho Library Consortium (LELICO) using a sample of nine institutions. Lefuma (2017) study revealed that e-resources which were accessed and used mostly were e-mail, search engines and websites, followed by

the OPAC, e-journals, full-text databases, IRs, reference databases. The study further found that main uses of e-resources were for communication, to support teaching and learning activities, such as professional research, assignments and lecture requirements. Sivasubramaniyan and Batcha (2012) examined the use of e-resources by 800 faculty members of Pondicherry University and its affiliated Colleges in India using survey research design was employed for the study. The findings showed that the uses of e-resources are very common among the faculty members of Pondicherry University as well as to the faculty members who are in affiliated colleges. It is clear that majority of faculty members are dependent on e-resources to get desired and relevant information. Yunana (2011) investigated the availability of electronic resources and services and the extent to which these resources were being used in the selected tertiary institutions in Kaduna state using a sample size of 1323 obtained through simple random sampling technique. The findings showed among others that all the selected institutions had the following e-resources – computers, VCD/DVDs, Internet access, full text articles, online data bases, e-journals, e-books, multimedia, CD-ROMs, and flash drives and that the following electronic services – e-mails, online references, electronic alerts were being used.

2. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the e-learning resources utilized for instructional delivery among lecturers in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria?
2. What are the e-learning resources utilized for research purposes among lecturers in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria?
3. What are the e-learning resources utilized for evaluation purposes among lecturers in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria?

3. Method

This study employed a survey design. The design is considered appropriate for the study because, according to Nworgu (2015), it seeks to collect and analyze data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The population of the study comprised all the 724 facilitators in the 10 National Open University study centers in South-East Nigeria.

The sample size comprised 84 facilitators from four study centers. Simple random sampling was used to draw four out of the 10 study centers, while accidental sampling was used to draw the sample size. The instrument “Utilization of E-learning Resources among University Lecturers Questionnaire (UERULQ),” which was constructed by the researchers was used for data collection. The UERULQ was validated by three experts. The reliability of UERULQ was ascertained by administering the UERULQ to a similar

group of 20 facilitators in Asaba NOUN study center, South-South, Nigeria, which was outside the study area. The second test was administered two weeks after the first on the same sample. The two sets of scores were used to compute a correlation co-efficient using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient formula. The correlation co-efficient values of 0.71, 0.80 and 0.77 were obtained respectively for clusters one, two and three. The researchers visited the four study centers during their meetings and administered the questionnaire to facilitators who were present. Mean was used to analyze the data collected. The cut-off point for accepting mean score was put at 2.50, with the decision rule that any weighted mean score from 2.50 and above was interpreted as high extent while weighted mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as low extent.

4. Results

Table 1: Mean Scores of Respondents on their Utilization of E-Learning Resources for Instructional Delivery in National Open University Study Centers in South East Nigeria

S/N	I utilize e-learning resources for instructional delivery to:	Mean	Remark
1.	Electronic Journals (e-journals)	2.51	HE
2.	Electronic Books (e-books)	3.67	HE
3.	E-dictionaries	4.09	HE
4.	E-newspapers	2.73	HE
5.	E-magazines	2.65	HE
6.	Compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROM) databases	2.63	HE
7.	Indexing and Abstracting Databases	2.61	HE
8.	Reference Databases (Biographies, Directories, Dictionaries and Encyclopedias)	4.18	HE
9.	Numeric and Statistical Databases	1.54	LE
10.	Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs)	1.50	LE

Data in Table 1 show that Item 8 has the highest mean score of 4.18 which indicates that the respondents are of the view that reference databases (biographies, directories, dictionaries and encyclopedias) are the most utilized e-learning resources for instructional delivery in National Open University study centers. This is followed by item 3 with a mean score of 4.09 which indicates that a good number of respondents are of the view that e-dictionaries is being utilized by them to a high extent for instructional delivery. Other items that are utilized for instructional delivery to high extent include: e-books, e-newspapers, e-magazines, compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROM) databases and indexing and abstracting databases. Items 9 and 10 have mean scores of 1.54 and 1.50 which indicate that the respondents are of the view that numeric and statistical databases as well as Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs) are utilized to a low extent for instructional delivery.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Respondents on their Utilization of E-Learning Resources for Research Purposes in National Open University Study Centers in South East Nigeria

S/N	I utilize e-learning resources for research purposes to:	Mean	Remark
11.	Electronic Journals (e-journals)	2.78	HE
12.	Electronic Books (e-books)	3.72	HE
13.	E-dictionaries	4.10	HE
14.	E-newspapers	2.84	HE
15.	E-magazines	2.56	HE
16.	Compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROM) databases	2.96	HE
17.	Indexing and Abstracting Databases	1.95	LE
18.	Internet websites	4.32	HE
19.	Numeric and Statistical Databases	1.93	LE
20.	Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs)	2.61	HE

Data in Table 2 show that Item 18 has the highest mean score of 4.32 which indicates that the respondents are of the view that internet websites are the most utilized e-learning resources for research purposes in National Open University study centers. This is followed by Item 13 with a mean score of 4.10 which indicates that a good number of respondents are of the view that e-dictionaries is being utilized by them for research purposes to a high extent. Other items that are utilized for research purposes to high extent include: compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROM) databases, e-books, e-newspapers, e-magazines, e-journals and Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs). Item 17 and 19 have mean scores of 2.53 which indicate that the respondents are of the view that indexing and abstracting databases as well as numeric and statistical databases are the least utilized e-learning resources for research purposes.

Table 3: Mean Scores of Respondents on their Utilization of E-Learning Resources for Evaluation Purposes in National Open University Study Centers in South East Nigeria

S/N	I utilize e-learning resources for evaluation purposes to:	Mean	Remark
21.	Servers	2.81	HE
22.	Short message service tracking device	2.58	HE
23.	VSAT	2.67	HE
24.	Closed circuit television cameras	2.50	HE
25.	Computers	4.47	HE
26.	Electronic detectors	2.65	HE
27.	Phone signal jammers	2.56	HE
28.	Faraday cage	1.31	LE
29.	Electronic monitoring service device	2.72	HE
30.	Engrade	1.13	LE

Data in Table 3 show that Item 25 has the highest mean score of 4.47 which indicates that the respondents are of the view that computers are the most utilized e-learning resources for evaluation purposes in National Open University study centers. This is followed by Item 21 with a mean score of 2.81 which indicates that a good number of respondents are of the view that servers are being utilized by them for evaluation purposes to a high

extent. Items 28 and 30 have mean scores of 1.31 and 1.13 which indicate that respondents are of the view that Faraday cage and Engrade are utilized to low extent for evaluation purposes. Other items such as closed circuit cameras, phone signal jammers, electronic monitoring service device and electronic detectors are e-learning resources for evaluation that are utilized to high extent.

5. Discussion of Findings

Based on Table 1, the findings of the study revealed that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for instructional delivery in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria to a high extent. The finding of the study corresponds with the position of Lefuma (2017) that teachers' main uses of e-resources were for communication, to support teaching and learning activities, such as professional research, assignments and lecture requirements. The finding of the present study may not be unconnected to the fact that modern day students are in tune with the digitalization of the educational sector and can best relate with what is being taught with e-learning resources. This trend is not also surprising given that the use of computers and other technological devices like cell phones have become an extension of their fingers.

From Table 2, the findings of the study revealed that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for research purposes in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria to a high extent. The finding of the study aligns with the assertion of Lefuma (2017) that teachers' main uses of e-resources were for activities, such as professional research, assignments and lecture requirements. This is against the backdrop that e-learning provides the relevant platform for teachers to develop capacities for high quality research and teaching which increase their ability to innovate. It goes without saying that the use of e-resources for research purposes among lecturers aid their lesson planning and presentation.

In line with Table 3, the findings of the study revealed that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for evaluation purposes in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria to a high extent. The finding of the present study is consistent with the assertion of Zakka (2014) that CBT is employed in diverse applications such as admission selection, driver's license theory tests, language proficiency and technology certification assessments. The finding of the present study is not unconnected to the fact that ICT competence among lecturers could be a motivating factor in their use of e-learning resources for evaluation.

6. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for instructional delivery and research purposes in National Open University study centers in South East Nigeria to a high extent. It was further concluded

that many of the lecturers utilized e-learning resources for evaluation purposes to a high extent.

6.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations are fallouts of the findings:

- 1) University administrators should promote the use of e-learning among lecturers by providing technologically enhanced libraries in order to support the use of e-learning for the tripartite purposes of instructional delivery, research and evaluation.
- 2) Lecturers need to take advantage of available adaptations to help them use e-learning resources effectively in instructional delivery, research and evaluation purposes.
- 3) Government should provide more e-learning resources that are usable by all lecturers to facilitate their research.
- 4) University administrators should create more awareness among lecturers so as to sensitize them on the available technology means of literature access and by extension, improve its information and communication technologies infrastructure for better utilization of its resources and services in evaluation of students.

Declaration of Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests and that the manuscript is original and the data contained herein are authentic.

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