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ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF E-LEARNING FACILITIES IN BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN EKITI STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study explored an assessment of the availability and utilization of e-learning facilities in business education programmes in government-owned universities in Ekiti state. Specifically, the study sought to determine the level of availability of e-learning facilities, and the level of utilization of e-learning facilities and to examine the challenges of e-learning facilities in teaching and learning Business Education at Federal University, Oye-Ekiti. Three research questions and hypotheses guided the research. The review adopted a descriptive research design. A total of 805 students from the Federal University School of Business Education, University of Oye-Ekiti, and Ekiti State University were used as the population. A sample of two hundred (200) students was selected via a simple random technique. E-Learning Facilities in Business Education Programme (EFIEP) served as an instrument. Frequency count and percentage (%) were used to answer the research questions. On the other hand, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient method was used to analyze the hypotheses that guided the study at a significance level of 0.05. The analysis showed that (1) 85% of e-learning technologies such as computer desktops were available for teaching business education in the two universities. (2) 75% of available technologies were utilized to teach business education in the two universities. (3) The main challenges regarding access and use of e-learning technology were lack of funding in the education sector, lack of electricity supply, and lack of awareness and training of students and staff. To address financial constraints and budget constraints, it was specifically recommended that the government should allocate more funds, especially for the provision of e-learning technology and resources.

Keywords: Assessment, Availability, Utilization, E-Learning Facilities, Business Education Programmes, Public Universities

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In emerging nations like Nigeria, the teaching and learning approach is increasingly shifting from chalk and talk to the use of technology. As a result of this advancement, numerous Nigerian educational sectors are currently attempting to incorporate technology into their teaching and learning procedures. E-learning is defined by Kasse and Balunwya (2013) as any ICT network, internet, and other electronic media that can be utilized to improve instruction and transmit knowledge and skills. According to Tamm (2023), e-learning refers to online education that necessitates knowledge acquisition through media and electronic technologies. The course is delivered online, allowing students to access their course materials whenever and wherever they choose.

Any country's potential economically is primarily determined by its level of technological advancement. Technology advancement and functional education are closely related. According to Edem (2012), a functional education is a component of learning that takes into account current social, political, economic, and technological trends as well as global ones. This is consistent with the claim made by Nwokike and Okoli (2015) that the necessity for more skilled-oriented courses to be included in the curricula of all tertiary institutions, including universities, was justified by the rapid growth of technology.

In Nigeria, education at the university level comes after senior secondary education. Federal, state, and private universities exist in Nigeria. According to Ibekwe (2017), federal universities are those that are run and overseen by the federal government. Ibekwe went on to say that federal universities are establishments that receive the majority of their funding and ownership from the federal government. Abuka (2017) states that one of the programs provided in Ekiti State's universities is the Business Education program.

Training the workforce required for industry, corporate, public, and private business institutions is the goal of university business education programs. Ibekwe (2017) claims that the Business Education Program serves as a roof over all business courses. As a result, it covers everything, including information technology, marketing, secretarial, accounting, and purchasing. According to Nwokike, Ezeabi, and Jim (2018), business education is viewed as a program that has developed skills that enable individuals to perform effectively and efficiently, whether as employers or employees.

Today, electronic education is used in the teaching and learning process, which requires changes in the learning process and requires students to participate more actively than before. Tummibi and Aregbesola (2015) define e-learning as the use of electronic technology for information delivery, training programs, performance monitoring, and progress reporting. According to Fayumi and Ayew (2016), e-learning is an innovative educational delivery method that is conducted electronically, with careful planning, and ensures a learner-centered and engaging learning environment. In the end, it comes down to computer-assisted learning. Today, computer-based learning is the only way to access online information through digital technology or the Internet (Eze and Chinedu-Eze, 2018). According to Ezeabii, Ile, and Ezugwu (2019), e-learning refers to learning using electronic programs and processes. According to the authors, e-learning programs and processes include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration.

A country's rate of development is determined by the availability and application of digital technology resources across all economic sectors. It would be disgraceful if the innovations that have already permeated the workplace fail to meet the expectations of business education. Nigerians nowadays are a part of the computer era. Every aspect of life is impacted by digital resources, which have an impact on our personal lives, education, government, gaming, and a host of other areas (Edem, 2012). E-learning materials, in Kattoua's (2016) opinion, are essential to students' conceptual growth, skill development, and knowledge acquisition. Ezeabii, Ile, and Ezugwu (2019) noted that e-learning technologies give students autonomy over the course material, learning order, learning environment, time, and frequent media, enabling them to customize their experiences to fit their unique learning goals. Without instructors who are conversant with the usage of CD-ROM, email, the internet, and online

database searches, education would be failing miserably. But for the goal to be accomplished, these online learning tools must be accessible.

The involvement of the business educator and the student is crucial in efficiently using e-learning technologies for instruction delivery. Both the professor and the student must be proficient in making use of these resources. Harry says several aspects of the lecturer's job can affect how e-learning technologies are created and presented. The course material, which should contain learning objectives, assignment specifications, and pertinent resources, must be developed and delivered by the lecturer according to the pedagogical demands of the students. To ensure the success of the delivery, lecturers will need to monitor the online communication resources for new postings and respond to students' inquiries in a timely and sufficient manner. The perception of lecturers regarding the importance of e-learning activities impacts the utilization and integration of e-learning technologies (Ibekwe, 2017).

E-learning's significance to teaching and learning cannot be overstated. As Eze and Bello (2018) point out, the modern world is driven by a digital superhighway—a computer network that grants access to crucial information for various purposes. E-learning has empowered teachers and learners with unparalleled access to top-notch, authentic information across all subject areas. According to Eze and Bello, e-learning has broadened opportunities for personalized learning, enhanced access to educational resources, offered flexibility in terms of time and location, and introduced more powerful cognitive tools. From this perspective, it is evident that e-learning plays a vital role in equipping teachers and students with effective teaching and learning strategies.

In Ekiti State government-owned universities, the use of e-learning resources in business education programs faces considerable obstacles. Firstly, there seems to be a notable scarcity of e-learning resources, including computers, internet connectivity, and software applications, within these institutions. Limited access to these resources inhibits students' ability to engage with online learning materials and participate in virtual classrooms effectively.

Moreover, it appears that inadequate infrastructure and technical support contribute to the underutilization of existing e-learning facilities. Outdated equipment, unreliable internet connections, and insufficient IT personnel hamper the functionality and accessibility of e-learning platforms, discouraging students and faculty from fully embracing digital learning opportunities. Additionally, there is a lack of awareness and training among both students and staff regarding the effective use of e-learning tools and platforms. Many individuals may need help navigating online learning environments, utilising educational software, or accessing digital resources, thereby impeding the integration of e-learning into business education programs.

Additionally, it was believed that fiscal and financial constraints within Ekiti State's public universities prevented investments in e-learning infrastructure and technological advancements. The lack of funding for e-learning initiatives hinders the growth of digital learning resources and restricts the ability of institutions to meet the increasing demand for online education. Consequently, this investigation is required, with a focus on the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study's primary goal was to evaluate the accessibility and uptake of e-learning resources in Ekiti State institutions' business education programs. The study specifically attempts to:

1. ascertain the extent to which Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, has access to e-learning resources for business education courses.
2. Find out how much the Federal Universities in Oye-Ekiti are using e-learning resources to teach business education courses.
3. Examine the difficulties Federal University, Oye-Ekiti faces in teaching and learning Business Education through e-learning resources.

2.1 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Do public universities in Ekiti State have access to e-learning technologies for their business education programs?
2. To what extent do Ekiti State Public Universities use e-learning technologies in their business education programs?
3. What difficulties do online learning resources present for the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti students studying and teaching business education?

2.2 Research Hypotheses

1. There is no discernible correlation between the use of e-learning tools in the Business Education program at Ekiti State University and Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, and their availability.
2. The degree of e-learning technology utilization and the difficulties associated with e-learning resources for business education instruction at Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State University, do not significantly correlate.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODS

The study espoused a descriptive research design. This design according to the opinion of Owens (2002) is used to gather information from an unprejudiced representation group of interest using a questionnaire, interview and observation. The design is considered applicable for this study because a questionnaire was used to gather data from repliers on the availability and use of e-learning technologies in Business Education programs in universities in Ekiti state. The exploration design allows the experimenter to meet the goal of the research.

The population consisted of all conceivable elements, subjects, or observations relating to a particular phenomenon of interest to the researcher (Asika 2008). According to Achumba, (2000), a population is the subject that has been looked at or considered in the study and can be represented by events, things, or individuals in a research project. The target population of the review includes all students in the Department of Business Education at Federal University, Oye Ekiti and Ekiti State University.

A sample size of hundred (200) was used in this study. A simple arbitrary slice procedure was used to elect 100 scholars each from the Business Studies Unit, Federal University, Oye- Ekiti

and Ekiti State University. This was set up to apply to the study because this fashion derives the purpose of this study.

The researcher designed a self-structured instrument titled E-Learning Facilities in Business Education Programme (EFIEP). The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B. Section A contains the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, and sections B to D consist of items in clusters from which the research questions will be answered. The researcher used a close-ended questionnaire to extract accurate data from the students of Federal University, Oye-Ekiti. The questionnaire was segmented into parts according to the research questions. Each part answers each research question of the study.

Face and gladden validity were used to validate the instrument. The instrument was presented to three experts. One Expert was drawn from dimension and Evaluation and two from experts from the Business Education Department, Faculty of Education, Federal University Oye- Ekiti-Ekiti state. Their commentary, compliances and corrections were used to ameliorate the instrument, which makes it valid.

To establish the trustability of the instrument, the test-pretest system was used. to scholars at Federal University, Oye- Ekiti and Ekiti State University and collected it back incontinently. Two weeks later, the questionnaire was re-administered to the same set of students. The data obtained from the respondents were analysed and correlated to find the coefficient. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyse the data generated and the result yielded the value of (r) 0.87 which was adjudged reliable.

The system used for the data collection of this exploration was the questionnaire. The experimenters published 200 clones of the questionnaire and 100 clones were administered to scholars of Business Education in each institution, Federal University, Oye- Ekiti and Ekiti State University. Also, a consent letter was attached to the questionnaire to inform the respondents that the research was meant for academic purposes. The researchers distributed the questionnaire to the respondents; adequate time was given to the respondents after which copies of the completed questionnaires were retrieved showing a 100% rate of return and was collected for data analysis.

Frequency counts and percentages (%) were used to answer the research questions and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Method was used to analyse the hypotheses that guided the study. The criterion for acceptance and rejection was put at a 0.05 alpha level.

4.0 RESULTS

Table 1: Frequency & Percentage Analysis of the Availability of E-Learning technologies for teaching and learning Business Education programme in Ekiti State Public Universities

Items	SA		A		D		SD	
	F	%	f	%	F	%	F	%

e-learning technologies at my school is enough to accommodate all students in Business Education Department	151	75.5	19	9.5	22	11	8	4
My school e-learning technologies in good condition to support me to achieve good academic performance	111	55.5	21	10.5	14	7	54	27
There is availability of adequate computer desktops to learn and teach business education program	56	28	49	24.5	14	7	81	40.5
e-learning technologies in my school are well monitored and maintained	134	67	42	21	9	4.5	15	7.5
My school e-learning technologies affect my learning progress to achieve my academic potentiality	132	66	27	13.5	19	9.5	22	11

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Table 1 above shows that 85% of the respondents agree that e-learning technologies at my school are enough to accommodate all students in the Business Education Department while 15% disagree, 66% of the respondents agree that My school's e-learning technologies are in good condition to support me to achieving good academic performance while 34% disagree, 52.5% of the respondents agree that There is availability of adequate computer desktops to learn and teach business education program while 47.5% disagreed, 88% of the respondents agree that e-learning technologies in my school are well monitored and maintained while 12% disagree. Finally, 79.5% of the respondents agree that my school's e-learning technologies affect my learning progress to achieve my academic potentiality while 20.5% disagreed.

Table 2: Frequency & Percentage of the Level of Utilization of E-Learning Technologies for Teaching Business Education Programs in Ekiti State Public Universities

Items	**SA**		**A**		**D**		**SD**	
	F	**%**	**f**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
I frequently make use of the e-learning technologies in my school	102	51	49	24.5	19	9.5	30	15
Business Education lecturers in my school encourage the use of e-learning technologies in my school	86	43	46	23	20	10	48	24
I use computer desktop for class exercise or assignment	97	48.5	46	23	11	5.5	46	23
I am accessible to course materials on e-learning technologies	125	62.5	52	26	8	4	15	7.5
Teaching and learning on e-learning on e-technologies are easier comfortable and time saving	137	68.5	46	23	13	6.5	4	2

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Table 2 above revealed that 75.5% of the respondents agreed that they frequently made use of the e-learning technologies in their school while 24.5% disagreed, 66% of the respondents agreed that Business Education lecturers in my school encouraged the use of virtual technologies in their schools while 34% disagreed, 71.5% of the respondents agreed that I use computer desktop for class exercise or assignment while 28.5% disagreed, 88.5% of the respondents agreed that I am accessible to course materials on e-learning technologies while 11.5% disagreed. Finally, 91.5% of the respondents agreed that Teaching and learning on e-learning on e-technologies are easier comfortable and time-saving while 8.5% disagreed.

Table 3: Frequency & Percentage of the Challenges of E-learning facilities in teaching and learning Business Education in Ekiti State Public Universities

Items	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%
Financial constraints and budgetary limitation	29	14.5	48	24	8	4	115	57.5
Lack of provision of adequate electricity supply by school authorities can enhance the use of e-learning technologies	66	33	37	18.5	21	10.5	76	38
Lack of awareness and training among students and staff	150	75	33	16.5	12	6	5	2.5
Steady internet services by network providers	117	58.5	55	27.5	16	8	12	6
Outdated and inadequate infrastructural and technical support	46	23	49	24.5	10	5	95	47.5

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Table 3 shows that 38.5% of the respondents agree that financial constraints and budgetary limitations while 61.5% disagree, 51.5% of the respondents agree that the Lack of provision of adequate electricity supply by school authorities can enhance the use of web-based technologies 48.5% disagree, 91.5% of the respondents agree that Lack of awareness and training among students and staff while 8.5% disagree, 86% of the respondents agree that Steady internet services by network providers while 14% disagree. Finally, 47.5% of the respondents agree that Outdated and inadequate infrastructural and technical support while 52.5% disagree.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation of the availability of e-learning technologies and Utilization of E-Learning Technologies in Business Education program at Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Ekiti State University

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r_{cal}	r_{tab}
Availability of e-learning	200	15.73	3.43		

Utilization ofe-learning	200	29.63	4.52	0.573*	0.195

***Significant P<0.05**

Table 4 reveals that rcalculated (0.573) is greater than rtable (0.195) at a 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the availability of e-learning technologies and the Utilization of online technologies in the Business Education program at Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Ekiti State University.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation of the level of utilization of e-learning Technologies and Challenges of E-learning facilities for teaching Business Education at Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Ekiti State University

Variable	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**r_{cal}**	**r_{tab}**
Utilization of e-learning	200	29.63	4.52		
Challenges of E-learning	200	74.20	10.70	0.827*	0.195

***Significant P<0.05**

Table 5 shows that rcalculated (0.827) is greater that rtable (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the level of utilization of e-learning Technologies and the Challenges of E-learning facilities for teaching Business Education at the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Ekiti State University.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section delves into the findings from the analysis of the availability and utilization of e-learning facilities in business education programs in public universities in Ekiti State, specifically Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) and Ekiti State University. The data collected through structured questionnaires provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of e-learning resources, their utilization, and the challenges faced by students.

5.1 Availability of E-Learning Facilities

The findings indicate that a significant proportion of respondents strongly agree that online learning technologies are sufficient to accommodate all students in the Business Education Department. This suggests that the infrastructure for e-learning is well-established in terms of quantity. However, the condition and maintenance of these facilities paint a mixed picture. While 67% of respondents believe the e-learning technologies are well monitored and maintained, 27% disagree, highlighting issues in the upkeep and operational efficiency of these resources.

According to Kasse and Balunwya (2013), the effectiveness of e-learning is highly dependent on the availability and maintenance of technological infrastructure. This study's findings support this view, suggesting that although there is a good quantity of e-learning resources, their condition needs continuous monitoring and maintenance to ensure they remain functional and effective.

5.2 Utilization of E-Learning Facilities

The utilization of web-based learning facilities among students showed promising trends. A majority of respondents agree that teaching and learning through e-learning technologies are easier, comfortable, and time-saving. This indicated that e-learning facilities are well utilized among the students of Ekiti State Public Universities. This aligns with Fayomi and Ayo (2016), who noted that well-designed, learner-centred e-learning approaches create engaging learning environments. The high percentage of students (62.5%) who find course materials accessible through e-learning technologies further underscores the utility and effectiveness of these tools.

Despite the positive responses, there are notable gaps in the regular use and encouragement of e-learning by lecturers. Only 43% of respondents strongly agree that lecturers encourage the use of e-learning technologies, suggesting a need for greater faculty involvement and support. As Tummibi and Aregbesola (2015) highlight, faculty engagement is crucial in maximizing the benefits of e-learning technologies.

5.3 Challenges in Utilizing E-Learning Facilities

The analysis reveals several challenges impeding the effectual consumption of electronic learning amenities. Financial constraints and budgetary limitations are significant, with 57.5% of respondents strongly agreeing that these factors hinder the use of online learning technologies. This is consistent with the findings by Adedoja et al. (2019), who emphasized that financial and budgetary issues are critical barriers to the adoption and efficient exploitation of web-based learning.

Another major challenge identified is the lack of adequate electricity supply, with 38% of respondents strongly agreeing that this impacts the use of virtual learning technologies. This issue is corroborated by Adelakun and Akanle (2020), who pointed out that infrastructural deficits such as irregular electricity supply significantly affect the efficiency of e-learning in Nigerian educational institutions. Additionally, the lack of awareness and training among both students and staff is a critical challenge, as indicated by 75% of respondents. This finding aligns with the observations of Ushie (2021), who noted that without adequate training, both faculty and students struggle to effectively utilize e-learning platforms. This pointed to a clear need for ongoing professional development and training programs to enhance the digital literacy and technical skills necessary for effective e-learning.

5.4 Correlation between Availability and Utilization

The study also explores the relationship between the accessibility of e-learning technologies and their use The Pearson correlation analysis shows a significant relationship ($r = 0.573$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the availability of e-learning resources positively influences their utilization. This finding is in line with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by

Davis (1989), which posits that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are critical factors in the acceptance and utilization of technology.

5.5 Challenges and Utilization

Furthermore, the relationship between the level of utilization of digital learning technologies and the challenges faced is also significant ($r = 0.827$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that the higher the level of challenges, the lower the utilization of e-learning technologies. This supports the findings of Adejumo et al. (2020), who noted that infrastructural and technical challenges significantly hinder the effective use of e-learning platforms.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The study underscores the substantial progress made by Ekiti State public Universities in establishing e-learning facilities. However, it also highlights the pressing need for improved maintenance, enhanced faculty engagement, and solutions to infrastructural challenges such as unreliable electricity supply. Addressing these issues is crucial for optimizing the use of e-learning technologies and ensuring they contribute effectively to the educational experiences of students. By adopting a holistic approach that includes ongoing training, adequate funding, and robust infrastructure, FUOYE and EKSU can significantly enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of its e-learning initiatives.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The management of public universities should establish a dedicated team that will be responsible for the continuous monitoring and maintenance of e-learning facilities to ensure they remain functional and up-to-date.
2. Allocation of additional funds specifically for the enhancement and expansion of e-learning technologies and resources to address financial constraints and budgetary limitations.
3. There should also be an implementation of regular professional development programs for faculty members to enhance their skills in using e-learning tools and integrating them into their teaching practices effectively.
4. The government should invest in reliable electricity supply and alternative power solutions to ensure uninterrupted access to e-learning facilities.

7.1 Limitation of the Study

1. The scope of the study was limited to just two public universities in Ekiti State as a result of the limited time frame which was allocated to execute this study.
2. The study was conducted within the constraints of available resources, which may have limited the depth and breadth of the research.

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