ASSESSMENT LEVEL OF E-LEARNING STYLE OF EDUCATION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF YENAGOA STUDY CENTRE, BAYELSA STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract - The paper focused on the assessment level of e-learning on the academic achievement of students of National Open University of Nigeria. The paper used National Open University, Yenegoa study Centre as a case study. The paper adopted a descriptive survey research design in selecting Two hundred (200) students of the University who were used for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were constructed and formulated to guide the cause of the study. At the same time, students' oral interview was also adopted to illicit information from the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using t-test statistical method of data analysis. The study revealed that some of the students have knowledge of Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills prior to their admission into the University, though not very competent. The study also revealed that e-learning style of education has greatly improved the academic performance of students in National Open University Education progamme. The study revealed some challenges affecting e-learning programme in the University, challenges such as:-Inadequate infrastructure, unsteady electricity light, insufficient e-learning facilities such as Computer, Soft wares.Based on the findings, recommendations were made:

- Conducive learning environment to be provided
- E-learning facilities such as computers to be increased and provided.

Keywords - Assessment Level, E- Learning, style of Education, Academic performance, undergraduate, Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Gradually the teaching and learning practices of our country are undergoing a shift from the traditional methods to extensive usage of e-learning style. It has been observed that the use of e-learning is becoming more and more wide spread in higher education. It has become very imperative to assess the impact this learning style of education has on students' academic performance.

One of the ways by which electronic technologies have helped to define education is through electronic learning (e-learning). The term "E-learning simply refers to the use of computer technologies in education, whether, in face-to-face classrooms, blended and hybrid courses, in mediated distance education contexts or on online learning environments. Gabadeen, Alabi and Akinnubi (2012) defined e-learning as the use of electronic information technologies (ITCs) in formallearning contexts. E-learning is alearning programme that makes use of an information network such as the internet, an internet (LAN) or extranet (WAH) whether wholly or in part, for course delivery, interaction and / or facilitation. Olugbemi(2019), concurs that web-based learning is a subset of e-learning which is learning with the use of an internet browser such as the model (Modular object oriented dynamic learning Environment), blackboard or internet explorer.

Tinio (2002), Olugbemi (2019), agree that today we now have blended learning which combines the traditional face –to-face classroom practice with e-learning solutions. It is very easy today for a teacher to facilitate the students learning in class contact and at the same time use the module (modular object-oriented Dynamic learning Environment) to facilitate out of class learning.

Electronic learning refers to a learning situation whereby the students and the teacher use electronic technologies to interact and participate in teaching – learning process. With the emergence of World Wide Web (www) in the 1991, teaching has adopted it as one of its main innovations, and this is seen as a panacea for problems of access and quality educational delivery.

E-learning is used interchangeably in a wide variety of contexts. Amadi (2014) informs that in companies, it is referred to the strategies that use the company network to deliver training courses to employees. In distance education institutions such as National Open University of Nigeria, it is defined as a planned teaching / learning experiences that uses a wide spectrum of technologies mainly internet to reach learning at a distance. In most Universities of recent, e-learning is used to define a specific mode to attend a course or programme of study where the students'rarely attend face-to-face or have on-campus access to educational facilities. Sharma and Mishra in Amadi (2014) inform that such students usually study on line.

E-learning is very flexible for students in terms of when to study and at what space.Infact, its benefits are too enormous, no wonder students that are

engaged in e-learning style of Education in National Open University perform well with excellent grades.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The demand of producing high man power need for the development and growth of Nigeria economylies squarely on the shoulder of University Education. This placed a premium on Nigerian Universities in producing and training the caliber of students that can use their scientific and technological problem solving ideas and place Nigeria on a global map. The style of learning or means through which such certificates are issued to students matters a lots. The Paradigm shift in learning on conduct of examination from the manual-based to computer-based in National Open University of Nigeria makes it highly imperative that teaching methodologies are supported by appropriate e-learning technologies for effective teaching and learning in National Open University for global competitiveness.

The E-learning system of Education in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is faced with so many challenges which if not tackled squarely may hinder the University from delivering qualified education through e-learning style of education. Such challenges include:

- Limited expertise, that is inadequate trained technical staff to Mann and maintain the few system
- Inadequate e-learning facilities
- Financial constraints that is inadequate funding which hinder the procurement of necessary ICT / e-learning facilities.
- Internet connectivity –Inability to access the internet in Nigeria is still a serious problem.
- Unavailability of some soft wares. Some soft wares are costly and not available and affordable for use in so many Universities.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to assess the level of e-learning style of Education on students' academic performance in National Open University of Nigeria. Specifically the study assessed,

1. Extent to which e-learning has effected students' academic performance in National Open University of Nigeria.
2. The challenges affecting e-learning style of Education in National Open University.

Research Questions

Two research questions were formulated to guidethe course of the study:

1. To what extent has e-learning style of Education affected undergraduate students'academic performance in National Open University of Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges affecting e-learning style of Education in National Open University of Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

Two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

1. There is no significant relationship between the mean rating of e-learning style of education and students' academic performance
2. There is no significant relationship between the mean rating of the challenges in National Open University of Nigeria and students' academic performance.

Significance of the Study

E-learning style of Education that is known to be a learner – controlled with self-spaced education environment will enable the students have greater authority over the learning environment thereby allowing such students to work at their pace and convenience.

E-learning style of Education will continue to go a long way to be a tool that is being used to remove geographical barriers and facilitate everybody to learn anytime as well as improving students' academic performance.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research method in selecting the respondents. Two hundred (200) both male and female undergraduate students of National Open University of Nigeria was chosen as a casestudy, this is because NOUN is the only University presently in Bayelsa State of Nigeria that is computer based.

All learning and exams in the University is fully computer based while other Universities still operate the conventional face -to-face system learning.

Selection of Respondents

Radom sampling technique was used in selecting Two hundred (200) undergraduate male and female students from the University. Some of the students used for the study were also staff of the university.

Instruments Used

The instruments used for the study were structured questionnaire items titled: Assessment levels of E-learning style of Education on academic performance of undergraduate students of National Open University of Nigeria (ALELSEAPUSNOUN).

The questionnaire items were constructed from the research questions. Oral interview conducted on the students formed part of the research instruments used for the study.

Validity of the Instruments

The research instruments were vetted by researchers' colleagues in the University who are experts in measurement and Evaluation unit of the University.

After thorough vetting, with necessary corrections, the instruments were recommended as valid instruments to be used for the study.

Administration of Data

The questionnaire items were administered to the respondents personally by the researchers and were retrieved back for analysis. The interview was one on one with the students

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analyzed using t-test 4 point mean, standard deviation statistical method of data analysis.

Research Question One:

To what extent has E-learning style of Education affected the students' academic performance?:Extent to which E-learning style of Education has affected students' academic performance.

Items Level of Reponses

		SA	A	D	SD	X	DECISION
1.	Electronic learning style (E-learning) has greatly improved my knowledge in technology	150	50	0	0	3.75	Accepted
2.	Materials for learning and class assignments are easily accessed through internet	20	180	0	0	3.10	Accepted
3.	Internet connectivity helps to make contact with other students internationally	30	170	0	0	3.00	Accepted
4.	It is very easy to get academic assistance from students in other Universities in Nigeria and beyond through Internet	180	20	0	0	3.90	Accepted
5.	Through E-learning, intellectual skills and computer know ledge is perfected	40	160	0	0	3.20	Accepted
6.	Administering exams on line is much easier and faster than the conventional manual exams	45	155	0	0	3.23	Accepted
7.	E-learning style gives me the opportunity to study at my own pace	200	0	0	0	4.00	Accepted
8.	E-learning does not give room to exam malpractice	65	135	0	0	3.33	Accepted
9.	There is no victimization from male lecturers against female students in the e-learning programme in NOUN	25	175	0	0	3.13	Accepted
10	The threat of "no exam" for students who did not meet up 70% attendance in the conventional University is not heard of or implemented in the e-learning style at NOUN	30	170	0	0	3.00	Accepted

11.	Students that study through e-learning at NOUN are not victimized by lecturers for not buying their text books	180	20	0	0	3.90	Accepted
12.	Students' scripts are not claimed to be missing under e-learning style programme as being experienced by some students in the conventional University.	70	130	-	-	3.35	Accepted
13.	There is no favouritism in terms of awarding scores by Lecturers to students in NOUN e-learning style programme	66	128	6	0	3.30	Accepted
14.	Over population of students in a lecture hall is not being experienced in e-learning style programme in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)	25	175	0	0	3.30	Accepted
15.	The teaching challenge where Lecturers shout and stress their voices when teaching is not being experienced in NOUN	50	150	0	0	3.25	Accepted

Table One: Extent to which E-learning style of Education affect students' academic performance.

Research Question Two

What are the challenges affecting E-learning style of Education in NOUN?

1.	Unconducive learning environment such as insufficient / spacious classrooms, unsteady electricity light, inadequate e-learning facilities are some of the challenges affecting e-learning style of Education in NOUN	180	20	0	0	3.90	Accepted

TableTwo: Students' Responses on the challenges affecting E-learning style of Education in NOUN

Analysis

The tables above have clearly indicated that students at National Open University of Nigeria(NOUN) studying through E-learning style of Education are great academic achievers, this is seen from their responses where all the items from 1 to 15 accepted that they are comfortable studying through e-learning. This is because the mean score of the items are above 2.50, and the mean score of 3.40 is above the decision criterion 2.50. This has shown that E-learning style of Education in National Open University of Nigeria has greatly affected the students' academic performance.

Table 2 on challenges affecting E-learning in NOUN, the students mean score responses was 3.90 which is above the decision criterion 2.50, indicating acceptance that uncondusive learning environment and unsteady electricity light is posing serious challenge to E-learning in National Open University.

Students' Oral Interview

The students were interviewed on the following questions:

1a. Did you have knowledge of computer before enrolling

Into the National Open University Education programme?

b. If yes, what was the level of your computer skills, that is how competent or your speed of

accuracy in handling Electronic learning facilities prior to your admission into the University?

2a. Has E-learning style of Education in National Open University in any way affected your academic performance as a student?

b. If yes, explain in one or two sentences.

3. As a student or student staff of National Open University of Nigeria, what are some of the challenges you have observed that are affecting e-learning style of Education in the University?

Responses

The student' responses were analyzed and reported as follows:

Question one (1a) on students' having knowledge of computer before enrolling into the University. Eight two (82) or 41% out of the Two Hundred (200) students used for the study responded on the negative, meaning they have no knowledge of computer before enrolling into National Open University. Seventy five (75) or 37.5% of the students responded that although, they had knowledge of computer, but their speed of accuracy in handling electronic learning facilities prior to their admission into the University was slow. Only 43 or 21.5% of the students had speed of accuracy in typing and handling electronic learning facilities including accessing website and webpage.

Question Two (2) on how E-learning in National Open University has affected the students' academic performance, all the Two Hundred (200) or 100% of the students used for the study responded in the affirmative, indicating that e-learning style of Education has really improved and enhanced their academic performance.

b. On how E-learning has improved or enhanced the students' academic performance, the following were their responses:

- It has helped me to communicate and get academic informations from students in other Universities locally and internationally.
- Academic performance is faster and easier through e-learning because the process is flexible and convenient.
- The ability to do my research work and class assignments is easier and faster.
- I easily have access to local and international research work for references which boosts my academic performance.
- We don't always depend on the facilitators because the computers are there to assist and provide informations, we just go on-lines to get whatever academic information we need from professionals.

Question Threeon challenges affecting E-learning in National Open University.

The following were the students' responses:

- Poor power supply, that is unsteady electricity light
- System failure
- Programming errors
- Obsolete Softwares
- Sever inadequacies (Insufficient Server)
- Students' inability to login to their portal
- Inability to have face -to-face contact with course mates
- Unavailability of course materials much earlier even after payment is made
- Insufficient computers
- High cost of computer.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that E-learning style of Education in NOUN has actually improved the students' academic performances. This is seen from the students' responses where all the Two Hundred (200) students used for the study attested to that. Their responses were in agreement with Emesini (2018), Mbachu (2011)who concur that E-learning style of Education plays great significant role on students' academic performance in this era of globalization.

The study also revealed that some of the challenges affecting E-learning style of Education in NOUN include:

- Insufficient spacious classrooms
- Unsteady power supply, this has been a serious problem that has bedeviled every sector of economy in Nigeria.

Findings from the oral interview also revealed that a greater percentage of the students had knowledge of computer before enrolling into the programme. The study also revealed that the University does not have enough computers, most of the softwares are obsolete, students find it difficult to log into their portals. University does not make the course materials available for studentsas at when due. There is always system failure.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

E-learning style of Education has become a panacea to most of the teething problems confronting students in higher Education. It is believed that quality learning will be greatly enhanced if all Universities in Nigeria will borrow a leaf from National Open University by adopting E-learning style of Education in totality.

It will go a long way to improve students' academic achievement and restore our ailing higher Education system in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations have been made.

1. The light system in the University should be improved.

2. The University should procure new E-learning facilities such as computers;softwares to replace the obsolete ones.
3. More classrooms shouldbe provided.
4. Students course materials should be made available for them as at when due.

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