Influence of E-Learning on Skills' Acquisition as Perceived by Business Education Students in Universities in Edo State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of E-learning on skills' acquisition as perceived by business education students in universities in Edo State. Three research questions were raised for the study. The questionnaire was designed and used to elicit responses from the sample size of 86 respondents from both University of Benin, Benin City and Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. The Cronbach's alpha was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument after administering the instrument to 20 business education students who were not part of the sample; and it yielded a coefficient of 0.83. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.0 was used in the analysis. The descriptive statistics used were frequencies, mean, and standard deviation. Based on the analysis, it was found that E-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills, internet skills and communication skills to a large extent. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that there was need for conscious effort to be put in the preparation of business education graduates using modern e-learning facilities.
Keywords: business education, word processing skills, internet skills, communication skills and electronic learning
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Introduction

Business education is a programme that is primarily structured to expose the learners to the fundamentals of business as it relates to office administration, marketing, accounting and teaching. Several scholars have attempted to describe business education from different perspectives. Business education according to Aliyu (2006) is education for the acquisition and development of skills and competencies, attitudes which are necessary for efficiency of the economic system. Also, Atakpa (1999) defined business education as that area of education which concerns itself with the vocational and professional preparation for a career in business, teaching business subjects and also with information important for every citizenry and consumer in order that he may better understand and utilize his business and economic surroundings.

Etesike (2010) defined a skill as the special ability acquired by training. Skill is thought of as a quality of performance which does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental, innate capacities but must be developed through training, practice and experience (Adeyomo, 2009). Although skill depends essentially on learning and quality education, it also includes the concepts of efficiency and economy in performance. According to Ihebereme (2010), skill acquisition is the process of acquiring or gaining effective and ready knowledge in developing ones aptitude and ability in a particular field. It is also described as ability to show competence in what one is doing as a result of the theoretical and practical knowledge gained through training (Nwonyeh, 2010). The acquisition of business education skills is guarantee by quality education that is provided to the learners. This therefore has implication on stakeholders in the field of business education. Some of the notable skills that are acquired in business education programme include word processing skills, internet skills and communication skills.

Word processing skill is an invaluable skill that business education students are to acquire in order to boost their employability. Word processing is a modern term for typewriting, which is one of the twin subjects that is highly rated in business education and secretarial education (now, Office Technology and Management) in particular. Agomuo (2005) likened word processing to a typewriter inside a computer in that it incorporates all the duties of a typewriter which basically are: the ability to type and produce text on paper, store and manipulate text in documents and get printed copies. The need to acquiring word processing skills has continued to receive attention by business educators considering the roles it play in the running and management of office correspondence and promoting communication in the organization.

Communication skill is also another valuable business education skill. Communication may either by written or oral form. The curriculum of business education is therefore structured towards ensuring that business education students acquire appropriate communication skills that will enable them relate with persons and

organizations. The oral aspect of communication is demonstrated through spoken or verbal interactions with individuals. The written aspect of communication is demonstrated by the mails that are processed via word processors on computers. Ihmeideh, Al-Omari and Al-Dababneh (2010) explained that the development of effective communication skill is an important part of business education teaching and learning. The skill is required in every aspect of teaching and learning process. The acquisition of this skill will be assured if only there is quality business education and internet connectivity in place.

The Internet is one of the major breakthroughs in this technological era. Internet skill is another important skill area that is required by business education students upon graduation from tertiary institutions. The word internet is derived from inter- net – work (Onojaife 2006). In the opinion of Oluwalola (2006) the internet is a global collection of many different types of computers, computer operators and computer networks that are linked together through telephone lines, satellites, microphones, and all other possible devices.

For these skills to be acquired there is need for the utilization of proper technology, in the form of e-learning to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Otuka (2010) sees e-learning as all forms of electronically supported learning and teaching which are procedural in character and aim to effect the construction of knowledge with reference to individual experience, practice and knowledge to the learner. E-learning which has to do with ICT tools and internet facilities can make teaching and learning more efficient and productive by engendering a variety of tools to enhance and facilitate teachers professional activities through the effective use of internet, intranet, video tape, power point, overhead projectors and a host of others. Adrich (2004) defines e-learning as a broad combination of processes, content and infrastructure to use computers and networks to scale and/or improve one or more significant parts of a learning value chain, including management and delivery.

In recent times, there have been increasing research interest in e-learning. Most of the studies that are being carried out in the areas of e-learning seems not to emphasize the roles e-learning play in facilitating the acquisition of practical skills like word processing, communication, etc. This is an identified gap that this study has filled.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose was to examine the influence of E-learning on skills' acquisition as perceived by business education students in universities in Edo State, however the specific purposes were:
1.   To examine the extent at which e-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills in business education.
2.   To examine the extent to which e-learning influences the acquisition of internet skills in business education
3.   To examine the extent to which e-learning influences the acquisition of communication skills in business education.

Research Questions

The following research questions were therefore raised to guide the study:
1.   To what extent does e-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills in business education?
2.   To what extent does e-learning influences the acquisition of internet skills in business education?
3.   To what extent does e-learning influences the acquisition of communication skills in business education?

Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive survey research design since it was basically a detail investigation into the influence of e-learning facilities on the acquisition of business education skills in Edo State. The population of this study consists of all final year students of business education in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. The total population was 428 final year students in University of Benin and 137 Ambrose Alli University students in 2016/17 academic session. The systematic random sampling technique was used in selecting a sample size of eighty six (86) business education students which represents twenty percent (20%) of the total population of final year business education students in AAU and UNIBEN. The instrument that was used for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was used in eliciting information from the respondents and it was titled: influence of e-learning facilities on the acquisition of business education skills questionnaire (EFABESQ) it was divided into two parts-A and B. Part A consists of the demographic

characteristics of the respondents such as sex; while part B consist of 15 opinion statements designed in a 4 point rating scale showing Very High Extent (VHE) High Extent (HE),Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE), and weighted 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively. The Cronbach's alpha was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument and it yielded a coefficient of 0.83. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the concerned respondents during their combined 400 level departmental course. The researcher utilized mean and standard deviation the data. Any mean value of 2.50 and above was considered as agreed while below 2.50 was considered as disagreed. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 was used in the analysis.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

This section dealt with the presentation and analysis of data collected and the discussion of findings. The results of the analysis are presented according to the order of the research questions:

Research Question 1:   To what extent does E-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills in business education?

Questionnaire items 1 – 5 were designed to address the research question. The summary of responses is as given in table 3.

Table 1
Mean and Standard Deviation on E-learning on Word Processing Skills in Business Education

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	E-learning helps in the acquisition of word processing skills in business education.	3.31	.84	High Extent
2.	Word processing skills enhances students understanding of E-learning, which helps in building their capabilities.	3.33	.77	High Extent
3.	E-learning facilities availability in the school makes teaching and learning of word processing very interesting and comprehensible in business education.	3.49	.62	High Extent
4.	Students knowledge of E-learning facilitates the knowledge of word processing skills in business education	3.20	.76	High Extent
5.	E-learning facilities promotes business education students typing skills.	3.19	.91	High Extent
	Cluster	**3.30**	**.78**	**High Extent**

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

Table 1 shows that the mean responses ranged from 3.19 to 3.49 while the standard deviation ranged from .62 to .91, the table revealed that the respondents agreed to all the five items as the factors affecting E-Learning on the acquisition of word processing skills in Business education in UNIBEN and AAU. Since the cluster mean is 3.30 and it is above the criterion mean value of 2.50, it shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills in business education in UNIBEN and AAU.

Research Question 2:   To what extent does e-learning influences the acquisition of internet skills in business education?

Questionnaire items 6 – 10 were designed to address the research question. The summary of responses is as given in table 4.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation on E-Learning on Internet Skill in Business Education

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
6.	E-learning helps students in the acquisition of internet skills in business education.	3.43	.71	High Extent
7.	E-learning equips business education students with skills of browsing.	3.40	.65	High Extent
8.	E-learning facilities enables students to be more conscious of accessing materials online.	3.36	.71	High Extent
9.	The teachers knowledge of E-learning helps students internet skills in business education.	3.09	.92	High Extent
10.	E-learning enables students to be more proficient in internet usage.	3.31	.77	High Extent
	Cluster	**3.32**	**.75**	**High Extent**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 shows that the mean responses ranged from 3.09 to 3.43 while the standard deviation ranged from .65 to .92, the table revealed that the respondents agreed to all the five items item's as the factors affecting E-Learning on the acquisition of Internet skills in Business education in UNIBEN and AAU. Since the cluster mean is 3.32 and it is above the criterion mean value of 2.50, it shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of Internet skills in business education in UNIBEN and AAU.

Research Question 3:   To what extent does e-learning influences the acquisition of communication skills in business education.

Questionnaire items 11 – 15 were designed to address the research question. The summary of responses is as given in table 3.

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation on E-Learning on Communication Skill in Business Education.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
11.	E-learning promotes better communication skills among business education students.	3.22	.80	High Extent
12.	E-learning facilities promote speedy communication among business education students.	3.10	.75	High Extent
13.	E-learning facilities enable business education students to communicate electronically.	3.09	.83	High Extent
14.	E-learning facilities enhance business education students written skills.	3.95	.85	High Extent
15.	E-learning facilities strengthen business education student's interpersonal skills.	3.17	.88	High Extent
	Cluster	**3.31**	**.82**	**High Extent**

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

Table 3 shows that the mean responses ranged from 3.09 to 3.95 while the standard deviation ranged from .75 to .88, the table revealed that the respondents agreed to all the five items item's as the factors affecting E-Learning on the acquisition of Communication skills in Business education in UNIBEN and AAU. Since the cluster mean is 3.31 and it is above the criterion mean value of 2.50, it shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of Communication skills in business education in UNIBEN and AAU.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of research question 1 shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of word processing skills in business education. This corroborates the findings of Agomuo (2005), who stated that word processing can be likened to a typewriter inside a computer in that it incorporates all the duties of a typewriter which basically are: the ability to type and produce text on paper, store and manipulate text in documents and get printed copies. But when using computers, it deviates a little from the common typewriter.

The analysis of research question 2 shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of internet skills in business education this corroborates the findings of Oluwalola (2006) who found that the internet is a global

collection of many different types of computers, computer operators and computer networks that are together through telephone lines, satellites, microphones, and all other possible devices. It channels each computer by taking a common language or protocol called transmission control protocol/internet protocol (7cp/1p). Internet makes communication possible over the globe, once fully subscribed and communication to the Internet Service Provider (ISP), one could access any information needed in any discipline anywhere in the world regardless the distance. It allows for instant publishing of texts, graphics and picture.

The analysis of research question 3 shows that E-learning influences the acquisition of communication skills on business education, this also corroborates with the findings of Tania, (2009) who stated that business education curriculum made it clear that a student's most acquire communication skill most effectively for them to succeed in the of studies. Similarly it corresponds with the findings of Ihmedoh, Al-Omari and A1-Dababbnely, (2010) who found that development of effective communication skill is an importance part of business education teaching and learning that the skill is required in every aspect of teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

This study has exhaustively examined the influence of e-learning on skill's acquisition and based on the findings from the study, it was therefore concluded that for business education graduates to be able to fit in, in the modern day offices, there is need for e-learning facilities to be used in preparing business education students for the world of work. This will help the students to acquire the necessary skills and needed in the world of work for optimal functionality.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.
1. tertiary institutions offering business education need to be provided with e-learning facilities.
2. Computer studies should be properly integrated in the curriculum of business education programme.
3. students should be allowed to have access to the e-learning facilities provided in the departments.
4. business education lecturers should be encouraged to utilize e-learning facilities in teaching.
5. Government should provide more facilities and infrastructure to schools.

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