E-learning and Distance Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

This write-up discusses the importance of e-learning and the situation of distance learning in the country of Nigeria. It starts by first putting across what is understood by the terms e-learning as well as distance education. It also gives a brief introduction to the historical setting of e-learning and distance learning in Nigeria. It further goes ahead to address the expectations and the challenges faced in e-learning as well as its impact on American Style University in Nigeria.

Introduction

In modern times, the term e-learning is not a new term to many individuals as it is widely used worldwide to promote education. At the moment, educational institutions in Nigeria are using e-learning to support distance learning. E-learning, according to (<<>>>>), it is the utilization of the technology of electronics in the delivery of educational services and training concepts to students. In other words, it involves learning with the help of computers. The e-learning program can either be online or offline. Online consists of surfing through the network, while studying offline may comprise listening to lectures saved in the form of audio, visuals or both audio-visual (National Universities Commission [NUC], n.d.-a).

Historical Background of Distance Learning in Nigeria

The historical background of distance learning in Nigeria was as a technique of preparing students for their exams for the General Certificate in Education. This was a precondition for London Matriculation Examinations. The program was mainly targeted to the primary and the secondary institutional stages and was used to teach the critical subjects of Science, English as well as Mathematics.

In the year of 1983 through the Act of the National Assembly of Nigeria, the National Open University of Nigeria was established as the only one of its kind and the first ever distant tertiary learning organization in Nigeria. This was formed when it was not realized that there was an increased demand for education and citizens could not meet the face-face interaction classroom delivery (National Open University of Nigeria [NOUN], n.d.).

The Development of E-learning in Schools in Nigeria

This development could be traced to the years when telecommunication began. However, a lot of alterations have been made ever since the emergence of telecom and the fast rate evolution of technology. More industries have been licensed and allowed to offer Internet services in Nigeria, and this initiative has enabled many Nigerians to improve access to the Internet.

The most common type of e-learning adopted in Nigerian schools taken by lecturers in Nigeria is that of the CD-ROM. The problem associated with this type of learning program is that the number of students using a single computer in which the facilities of learning are available are not effectual as the lecturers in the classroom do the teaching. Some of the learning institutions have adopted the utilization of intranet facilities which are not in good condition due to lack of proper maintenance. The other major challenge faced is a power problem as well as the high expense of generating the set (Eze et al., 2018).

The Need for E-learning and Distance Education in Nigeria

This is an essential matter in Nigeria. First and foremost, a good number of people in Nigeria live below the poverty level, and as such, they are rendered incapable of attending urban educational centres. Thus, they are deprived of higher education standards.

Secondly, there are individuals in Nigeria who joined the working class before the completion of tertiary education. As such, combining both work and school proved difficult, thereby leading to the need for e-learning and distant learning.

Lastly, several issues deprive Nigerian citizens of education. Such problems include early marriage life and disabilities, among others. Therefore, e-learning and distance learning provide an avenue for learning for search under-privileged persons (NUC, n.d.-b).

The Impact and Importance of Distance Education in Nigeria

Distance learning lowers the cost and reduces the hassles related to access to knowledge. Moreover, it enhances the worldwide learning of different cultures by offering equal education for all. It gives more comprehensive access to general education, but to be specific in the American Style University in Nigeria (NUC, n.d.-b).

Challenges of E-learning

The problems affecting the proper implementation of distance and e-learning education in Nigeria include:

- Technophobia is a situation whereby a large number of Nigerian students do not own computers and do not even have the know-how of how to operate them.
- The cost of internet connectivity and access to it is still very high and unaffordable to many people in most of the West African, Nigeria inclusive.
- The school curriculum that most of the Nigerian students underwent did not encompass technology studies. As such, many lack the knowledge of computer skills.
- Students' attitude towards information and communication study is wanting as they are reluctant to embrace ICT education.

(Eze et al., 2018)

Conclusion

This current century forces tertiary education organizations will rely on the use of electronics in the delivery of education services. In Nigeria, the awareness created by the government has created an opportunity that is enhancing the adoption of distant and e-learning. However, before enrolling in such programs, it is advisable to check the viability of such projects regarding cost-effectiveness to the students as well as the other parameters that are associated with e-learning and distance education (NUC, n.d.-a).

References

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