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## ACCEPTANCE OF RESEARCH PAPER

It is with a great pleasure that I inform you that your paper titled, "**BLENDED LEARNING AN TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: PROSPEC AND CHALLENGES**", has been accepted for publication in our Journal subject to making all minor corrections pointed out by the Reviewers. On behalf of the Department, please accept heart warming congratulations. Please proceed to payment of publication fee of 20,000 to:

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# BLENDED LEARNING AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

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## Abstract

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become an essential component of the modern world, and the school system around the world has been impacted in a variety of ways as well. Nigeria's tertiary educational institutions are heading in the direction where technology will be the main method of delivery. In order to discuss teacher education in Nigeria, the advantages and disadvantages of traditional instructional strategies, blended learning, obstacles to e-learning in Nigeria's tertiary institutions, and the future of e-learning technologies in Nigeria's tertiary educational institutions were examined. This research adopted a qualitative methodology. The developing justifications for combining traditional teaching and learning methods with virtual learning were reiterated, and policy proposals were also made.

**Key Words:** Blended learning; ICTs; E-learning; Teacher Education; Tertiary Education Institutions

## Introduction

E-learning is a term used to describe a computer-based learning process that links digital information, system-based administrations, and mentoring support to students and instructor interaction. In a similar vein, Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018); Abdulhamid, Shafiu and Murtala (2017) were of the opinion that E-learning is referred to as a computer-based learning process. Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have implemented several e-learning tools that enhance interest among students and the institutions in enhancing performance through the development of new human competences. Also, Mason & Rennie (2006); Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018); Franco and Garcia (2018) contended that an increase in e-learning platforms has led to a lot of research papers and materials that address students' educational demands.

Despite being a substitute for traditional classroom teaching techniques, e-learning has had a rocky road. Johnson, Bartholomew and Miller (2006); Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018) opined that lack of awareness, poor management support, inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructures, and abysmal management commitment to interactive learning environments as the main bottle necks to the adoption of e-learning systems by the majority of HEIs. E-learning, often known as the use of technology in education, is now a requirement for many courses. Eze ,

Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018) also stated that ICT is permeating academic institutions more and more as it gets more reliable and user-friendly.

In Nigeria's higher institutions, e-learning started with the storage of prepared lecture materials on CD-ROMs that could be played back at a later time as needed. Despite the fact that e-learning has increasingly been adopted and assisted in the creation of virtual universities in the majority of western countries, only a handful private tertiary institutions in Nigeria fully utilize e-learning for all their academic operations. Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018); Olaniyi (2006) equally admitted that despite early setbacks, Nigerian colleges of education have invested more and more in course management software to offer virtual student learning environments that would enhance and aid in the delivery of the courses. It is always encouraged for lecturers to explore ways to help students study both within and outside of the classroom. The term "e-learning" refers to the employment of digitally enabled and technology-enabled learning tools, such as digital cameras, digital movies, personal computers (PCs), tablets, and projectors, as well as software operating systems (Markus and Robey, 1998; Olojo, Adewumi & Ajisola 2012; (Eze, Chinedu-Eze & Bello 2018).

In order to transit from traditional learning methods to modern technology-driven, synergistic, and adaptive learning methods, every institution needs to incorporate e-learning. In contrast to the learner-focused approach that is centered on technology that help students distribute and access knowledge effectively, the traditional style of learning was thought to be teacher-focused.

## Teacher Education in Nigeria

The planning and structuring of contemporary society places a high priority on teacher education and this in turn necessitates that the Nigerian people and government promote teaching and teacher education as highly desirable careers. That is supported by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (N.C.C.E. 2012) which identified the following as the objectives of teacher education in Nigeria: the production of highly motivated teachers with high personal and professional discipline, integrity, and competence for all levels of the educational system; the preparation of teachers with appreciable expertise in curriculum planning, development, and delivery, as well as competence in research, guidance, and counseling; the production of professionals who can combine the use of conventional teaching methods with the use of newer technologies to enhance student learning; the production of teachers with appreciable expertise in curriculum planning, development, and delivery.

## Blended Learning

Blended learning is a form of teaching that blends conventional classroom techniques with online learning resources and chances for online participation. Both the teacher and the pupil must be there physically with some elements of student control over time, place, or pace.

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found that traditional methods of instruction promote the growth of social skills like teamwork, sharing, communication, and respect for others' opinions. Students can learn from their classmates in addition to from books and teachers in the classroom by interacting with their peer groups, the playground, and small-scale social interactions.

Despite the remarkable advantages of the conventional method of learning, it has the following shortcomings: The insufficient student to instructor ratio is mostly to blame for the failure to address the demands of each individual student in the class; It is not making the necessary adjustments to accommodate the needs of physically challenged kids; Because attendance is required and the assessment system is based on the annual exam, teachers are not prepared to handle the issues presented by irregular students. Similarly, Laliman and Kiran (2017) also outlined some of its demerits to include: lack of qualified counselors, the unsuitable attitude of the teachers, and the paucity of follow-up activities in the schools; Since not all children can attend school, universal education remains a lofty ideal; Children from underprivileged groups, from physically remote regions, and students who are medically unfit are unable to benefit from this formal, traditional manner of teaching; At the same time, pupils suffer because there are not enough teachers; courses are not routinely updated, books are not updated, and teachers are not motivated to further their education and professional development.

## Challenges to E-learning in Nigeria's tertiary institutions

Postsecondary institutions in Nigeria, particularly colleges of education, have a difficult time implementing e-learning because of Computer illiteracy, epileptic electricity, high computer costs and insufficient E-learning facilities. Olojo, Adewumi, and Ajisola (2012) also identified a high demand on learners who must be more proactive and concentrated in their study than in traditional brick and mortar learning as a drawback to e-learning. The following are the key issues preventing full implementation of e-learning: high hardware acquisition costs, high bandwidth costs, a lack of people, poor telecommunications infrastructure, and high costs associated with purchasing and maintaining e-learning equipment. Oye, Iahad, and AbdulRahim (2012) observed that the approaches to learning and teaching must be altered before the introduction of technology could be of any advantage to both the learners and the teachers,

Majority of institutions used the internet to enhance the delivery of their services, but they were unable to maintain the internet infrastructure due to the high cost of operating the computer systems. Adu, Eze, Salako, and Nyangechi (2013) also observed that the pupils are compelled to use public internet cafés as a result high cost of procuring e-learning facilities. The majority of students, according to Ajadi, Salawu, and Adeoye's (2008) observation, use public cybercafés. However, due to the high volume of students using the internet, there is an issue with inadequate bandwidth, which prevents multimedia interactivity. Despite the significance of e-learning adoption and use in Nigeria, they further argued that some universities and other higher educational institutions do not have any access to these resources.

Due to inadequate and underdeveloped technological infrastructures, the majority still find using e-learning challenging, and for some, it remains a pipe dream (Anene & Odumuh, 2014; Dubé, Fang, Fong & Luo, 2017). Although Nigerian academics have expressed interest in the adoption of e-learning facilities at HEIs, it is still extremely difficult for students to acquire the skills and

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knowledge necessary to use those services effectively even when they are available (Eze, Chinedu-Eze & Bello 2018).

## Prospects of E-learning technologies to Nigeria's tertiary educational institutions

The implications of the various blended learning models depend on the adoption's desired aims and how successfully the implementation obstacles are overcome. It is also noted that cost-effectiveness was taken into account when creating this methodology. Bryan and Volchenova (2018) equally opined that self-study might appear like an appealing delivery method to someone who is concerned with cost savings. Graham (2018) provided six explanations for why blended learning should be used, including pedagogical richness, access to knowledge, social interaction, personal agency, cost effectiveness, and ease of revision. He added that among these, instructional richness, knowledge accessibility, and cost-effectiveness have been determined to be the most common explanations.

Blended learning is dynamic for both teachers and students as a medium of learning when it is used as a technique to implement learning contents and components. It is a dynamic method that enhances self-study, ongoing testing, and assessments that spur honest scrutiny of educational development and patchy success (Kajetanowtez and Wierzejewski, 2010). Blended learning is a cutting-edge idea that combines the benefits of both traditional classroom instruction and ICT supported learning, including both offline learning and online learning, Laliman and Kira (2017) thought that learning required diligent work, the appropriate mentality, and a sufficient budget. blended It offers opportunities for computer-assisted learning, constructive learning, and collaborative learning.

From blended learning, students benefit from online learning and computer-assisted learning without losing social interaction elements and the human touch of traditional teaching, and it also provides more scope for communication. Laliman and Kiran (2017) supported that, with blended learning, students become more technologically savvy and they gain enhanced digital fluency. The students also have more time in the classroom for creative and cooperative exercises. Blended learning is a revolutionary technology that, when correctly implemented, might support a learner-centered environment. If blended learning is properly implemented by the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, it will: make collaborative learning possible by enabling learners to access all digital softcopies of academic materials without being constrained by time or distance; and lead to efficient administration of distance learning.

## Conclusion

In order to deliver services effectively and efficiently, developed nations have included blended learning into their tertiary education systems. Institutions of higher learning in Africa, particularly those in Nigeria, have not yet fully embraced the learning and research opportunities provided by ICT for both staff and students. This is due to several enduring structural issues like

the high cost of computer acquisition, a shortage of technical manpower, and the expense of bandwidth. To prepare instructors for a blended learning approach, both in-service and pre-service teacher training programs need to be reoriented. The management of educational institutions and educational authorities must commit fully to implementing blended learning. It requires a carefully thought-out design that includes everyone in the educational hierarchy.

## Recommendations

The Nigerian Government should invest in ICT, manpower development, and infrastructure. Tertiary educational institutions should invest in alternative and renewable energy sources. Institutions should provide all the fundamental and essential requirements for implementing a successful blended learning system with well-trained teachers, complete facilities, and effective technology.

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