



ASSESSMENT OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS' PREPAREDNESS, READINESS AND CHALLENGES FOR ONLINE EDUCATION AMIDS COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA UNIVERSITY BAUCHI, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to assess the preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic, the study adopted qualitative research and the design used for the study was instrumental case study. The participants were final year undergraduate business education students' department of vocational and technology education Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi. The sampling technique used was purposeful sampling to select six (6) participants, three from the students and three from the academic staff. The researcher with the help of one (1) research assistant conducted face to face interview using semi structured form, with few open-ended questions. Data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis for interview and content analysis for the document. The result of the study revealed that lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education required possession of pedagogical skills to delivered online education using virtual classes and to address fear of cost, fear of acceptance, technophobia and lack of awareness as the impediments hindering online education. It was also revealed that students' preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education required ability to adapt to changes of moving to online education. The result further revealed that lecturers and student's preparedness, readiness and challenges required increase in connectivity of network and providing affordable access to network for online education. Based on the findings it was recommended that Government, Private sector, Universities, Non-Governmental organizations and Stakeholders should ensure on the job training of lecturers, sensitization and enlighten of student, supportive programmes, increase wider coverage of internet services and reducing internet charges rate to make it affordable.

Keywords: Assessment, Challenges, COVID-19, Lecturers, Pandemic, Preparedness, Readiness

Introduction

On 30th January 2020 the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and on 27th February 2020 the Federal Ministry of Health announced the confirmation of the first case of Corona virus disease in Lagos State, Nigeria. In the same communication, the Honorable Minister of Health announced that the Multi-Sectoral Coronavirus Preparedness Group led by the Nigeria Centre for Disease control (NCDC) has immediately activated its National Emergency operations Centre. Within a period of less than 2 months, Nigeria has recorded more than 50 cases across the country and updates of new cases daily. Coronavirus is a disease caused by

a new strain of coronavirus 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease, 19 for the year 2019. The virus is linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold. The Symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infected persons suffer from pneumonia or breathing difficulties. Since its emergence in late 2019, crisis has evolved into a pandemic, heavily affecting the lives of billions of people across the world with an anticipated huge impact on the global economy and the educational sector. On March 19th, 2020 a circular from Federal Ministry of Education has granted an approval for the closure of all schools for a period of one (1) month

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commencing from Monday 23rd March 2020 to prevent the spread of Corona virus (COVID-19).

Therefore, the current traditional school system of face to face teaching and learning requires moving to online education. But the challenges were how to move from traditional education to online learning and how to overcome the problem of practical courses, training, continuity planning, communications, and uncertainties. Also, maintaining educational progress with innovative educational solutions, like going online. Moving to online is not just a mere technical issue, but a multitude of pedagogical, technological and instructional challenges which needs to be address. Also lecturers and student preparedness, readiness, and technology as the means for deliverance of a successful effort to move school outside the traditional classroom requires collaboration between teachers, students and the use of technology such as virtual learning classes. Teacher Preparedness and Readiness required teachers to teach in an online environment, teaching online requires specialized skill sets including understanding of how to conduct classes in a virtual environment, use video conferencing, share content, respond to students' submissions. Student Preparedness and Readiness to learn online needs to be considered, if students are already familiar with online learning approach, moving more fully to online will be an easier lift. However, when students have limited or have no experience with online learning, it might be difficult to prepare them to be successful in a fully online school experience. Therefore, this study attempt to assess the lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 Pandemic

Statement of the problem

The closure of schools, universities, technical and vocational training institutes has also affected lecturers and students. In these challenging times, university students are at a particular disadvantage and there is a risk that progress in the increased enrolment and graduation may be eroded. Lessons drawn from other pandemic responses that included extended school closures have shown that

undergraduate students are at greater risk of falling behind. As many governments move to at-home learning modalities, many undergraduate students are at disadvantaged as they experience uneven access to online educational opportunities, computer hardware, and do not have access to support services. Preparing to move education outside of traditional physical classrooms and to move for online education amid COVID-19 pandemic is challenging and requires thought, coordination and careful decision-making. This paper will attempt to assess lecturers and student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU) Bauchi in North-east, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess lecturers and student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic for undergraduate business education students. Specifically, the study intends to;

1. Identify lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic
2. Identify student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic
3. Identify how the network connectivity, affordability and access would address lecturers and student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are:

1. Do the lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges address online education amid covid-19 pandemic?
2. Do the student's preparedness, readiness and challenges address online education amid covid-19 pandemic?
3. Does the network connectivity, affordability and access address lecturers and students' preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic?

**Adamu, I. A. and Bala, M.****Scope of the study**

The study covers the final year undergraduate business education students and academic staff of the department of vocational and technology education Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi in North-east Nigeria on the assessment of lecturers and students' preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic.

Literature Review

The related literatures demonstrate the need for readiness of countries in the cases of the pandemic in the direction of education. A study by Uscher-Pines, Schwatz, Ahmed, & Zheteyeva (2018) admits that

“During an evolving influenza pandemic, community mitigation strategies, such as social distancing, can slow down virus transmission in schools and surrounding communities. To date, research on school practices to promote social distancing in primary and secondary schools has focused on prolonged school closure, with little attention paid to the identification and feasibility of other more sustainable interventions”.

The study concludes that information is too few for the schools to develop the social distance policies and procedures and additional research is needed. Germann, Gao, Gambhir, Plunumer, Biggerstaff, Reed, and Uzicanin (2019) discussed the opportunities to close the schools during the pandemic influenza to stop the spreading and duration of possible lockdowns before the vaccines are implemented. Faherty, Schwatz, Ahmed, Zheteyeva, Uzicanin and Uscher-pines (2019) worked on the topic of school and its official's preparedness during a pandemic that included the physical re-arrangement of classes, limiting group works movement of students in class and creating opportunities for distance learning for missing days, but not the weeks or months as it is happening in 2020.

The study of Muirhead (2000) admits that online education is new in schools and can be considered for enhancing traditional schools and home-schooling. Qi (2017) has made a case study on collaborative environment for

distance teaching and learning and reviewed existing platforms as well as Baiyere and Li. (2016) has made a project enabling and facilitating collaborative teaching in information systems and found that virtual environment should be suitable for other courses as well. Another study was done on a case of English language teaching and learning using the virtual distance learning environment and came to the result that Virtual environments allow students to create a world that encompasses anything they can dream up. Interaction, simulation, and collaboration enable learning in the interactive environment (Mnyanyi, & Mbwette, 2009; Thamarana, 2016).

Although there are some examples of having a plan of using the distance/online learning during the pandemic, they are mostly concentrated on small cases and not a global crisis as it is happening in COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Especially the countries that are having the limited technologies have problems in schools are not ready for the complete implementation of the countrywide online education (Sintema, 2020). Results of different studies show that the virtual teaching environments can be successfully used in school or higher education in case of having appropriate technical environment and support.

Methodology**Design of the Study**

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. The design used for this study was instrumental case study. Instrumental case study involves study of a case in order to investigate a phenomenon, population or general condition (Creswell, 2012).

Participants

The participants in this study were all final year undergraduate business education students and academic staff of vocational and technology education department of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, in North-east Nigeria. The sampling technique used in this research was purposeful. In purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell 2012). The



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reason for carrying out purposeful sampling is that the people who have been selected for the study are final year students and academic staff. The participants in this study were three Academic staff and three students of final year undergraduate business education students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU) Bauchi.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instruments used for data collection were Interview and document. Interview was used as a primary instrument for data collection. It was conducted in a semi structured form, with few open-ended questions on how to address the challenges of students and lecturers' preparedness and readiness for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic. The interview took place in participant's home and office.

Validation of the instrument

The instruments used in this study was subjected to face and content validation by two experts, one from Department of Educational Foundation and one from the departments of Vocational and Technology Education, Faculty of Technology Education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. They were requested to study the items and assess the suitability of the language, the adequacy of the response format, the adequacy and relevance of the item in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

Triangulation and member checking were used to establish the reliability in this study. After conducting the interviewed with the participant, the data collected was transcribed and forwarded to the participant to read and ensure that the interview conducted and the transcription is alike that is member checking. Also triangulation was used to ensure reliability of the data collected from different participant in order to corroborate the data collected. Qualitative reliability refers to the researchers' approach being consistent across researchers and different projects (Cresswell, 2012)

Method of Data Collection

Data was collected in this study through interview and documents. The researcher and one (1) trained research assistants were used for the purpose of collection of data. With the helped of one (1) research assistants the researcher conducted face to face interview which was achieved using six (6) participants only.

Method of Data Analysis

The analysis procedure used for this qualitative approach was based on the two data sources that the researcher collected: interviews and document. For the interview, thematic analysis was used, and document was analyzed using content analysis. The computer qualitative data analysis software NVivo 11 (QRS international) for windows, NVivo Plus 2015 edition was used to facilitate the coding and perform complex searches that would be very time consuming if done manually. The computer software program was used for coding, generating themes, and sorting information for the analysis as the researcher goes through each line of the text and assigned codes.

Procedure

Data cleaning

The transcripts for all the participants were formatted in terms of paragraph style for the purpose of auto coding using NVivo 11 software. Auto coding automatically assigned relevant information to specified nodes/codes. It is a way of recognizing data for further analysis, with auto coding, headings with the same name and level across the transcripts were group into node. All the research questions were formatted to Heading I and the interview questions were formatted to Heading II and the responses were formatted to Normal.

Data Coding and Sorting

The transcribed data was sorted and coded using NVivo 11 software. The formatted transcripts will be imported into the NVivo 11 software, using auto coding function, the software organized and grouped the interview questions and responses of the participants based on research questions. Query functions



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such as word frequency and word tree was used to identify nodes/codes.

Validation of Codes

Codes were validated using Compound query provided by NVivo 11 software; this helped to find the content in the data sources that is close to other content. For example, a combination of text search query with a coding query was used to search for text in or near the coded content and a combination of two text search queries was also use to search for content where one term precedes another to make sure that no any important content is omitted.

Identification and Development of Emerging Sub theme (Child Nodes) and Theme (Parent Nodes) Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a

phenomenon and are associated to a specific research question (Daly & Gliksman, 1997). The themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Elimear, 2006). In Nvivo software Parent Nodes was used instead of themes and Nodes was used instead of codes.

Sub themes were developed by identifying relevant information in the data using search query functions, the information identified assigned words and phrases (concepts) that best represented the relevant information making sure that they are consistent with the research questions and were documented accordingly (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The themes were developed based on the content of the relevant information identified. Table below shows a summary of the emerging themes and sub themes.

Three Major Emerging Themes, Subthemes and Research questions

Major Themes	Emerging sub themes	Research Questions
1. The Lecturers Preparedness, Readiness and Challenges for Online Education Amid COVID-19 Pandemic	<p>Plan to move from traditional to online education in universities Do you have the qualification? “Pedagogical skills” Technological knowledge: Deliverance of teaching and learning online</p> <p>Impediments for online education amid covid-19 pandemic Fear of acceptance, Fear of cost Technophobia, Lack of awareness</p>	Do the lecturer’s preparedness, readiness and challenges address online education amid covid-19 pandemic?
2. The Student Preparedness, Readiness and Challenges for Online Education Amid COVID-19 Pandemic	<p>student preparedness, readiness and challenges versus online education Ability to adapt to the use of technology virtual classes for online education. Adapting to changes of moving from traditional to online education</p>	Do the student preparedness, readiness and challenges address online education amid covid-19 pandemic?
3. The lecturers and students’ preparedness, readiness and challenges on network connectivity, affordability and access for online education amid covid-19 pandemic	<p>Lecturers and students versus online education Increase connectivity of networks Affordability of network usage</p>	Does the lecturers and students preparedness, readiness and challenges on network connectivity, affordability and access address online education amid covid-19 pandemic?



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Theme 1: The lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi in North east, Nigeria

This section explores the reality of level of preparedness, readiness of lecturers in the Universities toward addressing the challenge of online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in (ATBU) Bauchi in North east, the participants are (academic staff and students) that have spent at least three years in the universities. In the following section, the participants' accounts demonstrated their experiences with the universities system and their perception in addressing challenges in moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in the University.

Plan to move from traditional classroom to online education in a university amid Covid-19 pandemic.

Do you have the Qualification?

"Pedagogical skills"

Fulfillment regarding the lecturer's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic is "Do you have the qualification" which is mentioned as "Pedagogical skills", emerged as one of the most prominent subthemes. When the participants were asked to describe how they feel about lecturers' preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic. They simply emphasize on the possession of pedagogical skills by lecturers to promote teaching and learning amid Covid-19 pandemic, thereby moving to online education, because without pedagogical skills the programme would be difficult. Pedagogical skills are seen as a technological know-how of online teaching and learning. Interview with Jodi, Binta and Ibro in the following passages pedagogical skills based was reveals as one of the major requirement for online education amid covid-19 pandemic.

"Pedagogical skills based for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic should be established as a guiding principle in the appointment process of lecturers in Nigerian universities. Teaching and learning online is a

process that required pedagogical skills of using computer and you cannot lobby computer to teach, you have to possess the pedagogical skills. Therefore, this allows the system open for those who possess the required pedagogical skills" (Interview with Jodi).

"Recruitment process of lecturers in universities should be based on the possession of pedagogical skills; this would contribute immensely for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic. Because without pedagogical skills to teaches online education process would be futile" (Interview with Binta)

"Lecturers preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic required knowledge of pedagogical skills to teach using computer therefore anybody that possess the pedagogical skills have met the requirement for online education. This is to tell you that the system is ready to accommodate those that possess pedagogical skills to teach using computer" (Interview with Ibro).

The participants confirmed that universities appointment should be based on possession of pedagogical skills of using computer to teach as the basic requirement for online education amid covid-19 pandemic and only those that have the pedagogical skills would be given the opportunity to serve.

Technological knowledge: Deliverance of online education

Another challenge for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in University is using technology for online education as revealed by this study. Lecturer's preparedness, readiness in deliverance of online education involves technology such as virtual classes in order to address the challenges for online education which completely does away with face to face contact. This is revealed in the following passage:



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“The lecturer’s preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a university are needed. It required technological knowledge because it is a computer based. Students can choose to submit their work at their convenience through virtual classes which required technological knowledge. Messy handwriting, distance, delay in processing etc. are unlikely to disrupt the online education process. This is a great advantage to students in rural areas and students with disabilities” (Interview with Manu).

“The technological based teaching and learning system could be reliable, efficient and eliminates chances of errors because of usage of technology. It offers lecturers and students a uniform platform for teaching and learning activities, the system gives access and opportunities to all technological usage which is central to the process. It is also open to all students irrespective of their location. You will study from anywhere because of technology the system remove distance in teaching and learning” (Interview with Kulu).

The above interviews revealed that, the online studies offer the university lecturers a uniform platform for teaching and learning activities in their studies and also provides prompts response using technology. The technology based teaching and learning system using computer could be reliable, efficient and minimize chances of errors.

Impediments for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic

Fear of acceptance

One of the sub themes that were identified by the participants when asked about the reasons that impede on plan for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a university is fear of acceptance. Fear of acceptance refers to the recognition for online education. The participants revealed that moving to online teaching and learning in a University is new and Nigerian public are always skeptical of

anything new. This is evident from the frequently asked questions by students and the public whether Universities studies online being recognized? This is revealed in the following passages:

“The online education in Nigerian Universities and the certificate issued are new in and many people doubt it. And this is usual, I can give you examples, University of Ibadan at inception was a college of university of London from 1948-1962 and all its programmes, as expected, were British oriented. When University of Nigeria, Nssuka came on board in 1962 without being affiliated to any foreign university for tutelage (a novel idea), many felt that it was an experiment in error. Many people were skeptical of its certificates, more so as the university was not British oriented.

I can go on and on with other similar examples. All I have been trying to point out is that the Nigerian public is always skeptical of anything new. The fear of acceptance currently being expressed by public about online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a University is quite normal and expected but not real. Cost and technology are other areas of concern”. (Interview with Kulu)

Fear of cost

Another sub themes that was identified by the participants when asked about the reasons that impede on online education is fear of cost which refers to the feeling induced from the perception that moving classroom to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic require huge amount of money. Interview with participants revealed that lecturers and students always expressed wrong impression of the cost involved. This is revealed in the following passage:

“Lecturers and students have wrong impression on the cost involved in moving from classroom to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a university. When the students were briefed on the cost implication, they normally expressed their bad feelings for not moving to online teaching and



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learning in the university earlier than the time because of their misperception on the cost. This misperception makes it a barrier to some students not to be enroll in online studies in universities and will continue to struggle for face to face teaching and learning in the universities” (Interview with Abdu).

Technophobia

Technophobia is the constant and persistent fear of technology and, in greater depth, is defined as “the feeling of severe anxiety associated with using anything technologically advanced, sometimes fear can be a rational response when it comes to new technology. Fear of the unknown and how it will impact your role within an organization is a legitimate feeling; People fear new technology and the fear giving up what they are comfortable with in exchange for the unknown. Technophobia is different from most other specific phobias in that; the phobic is mainly ignorant and does not welcome change. This is revealed in an interview with Abduwa as follows:

“Fear of technology is among the reasons that impede in moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a university, I have many students who confess to me that they want to joint online studies but the technology involved is there problem. You have to take time and explained to them that the system does not required much computing skills, all they need is the technique of clicking and moving the cursor. This in a great way affects some students from enrolling. They will be asking you, are online certificate being recognized? Will I continue my studies with online certificate? This proves to you how ignorant people are about the system” (Interview with Abduwa).

Technology is often paradoxical: it is meant to make our life easier, but sometimes it actually complicates it further by making the devices harder to use and learn. Technophobes tend to fear precisely these factors. They believe that, when faced with complex computers, telephone systems, or even Automatic Teller Machines,

they might have to deal with complex set of instructions. The average individual usually finds these sets of instructions easy to follow, but in case of Technophobia, the person simply freezes. Needless to say; this fear of technology is highly limiting and can affect the individual’s day-to-day life. Human-machine interaction always raises human fear of the unknown. Again, it is easier to observe this when children first attempt to control and steer a sophisticated technology, such as a bicycle or an automobile.

Lack of awareness

Lack of awareness is another sub theme identified by the participants when asked about the reasons that impede on moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic. Many people lack knowledge about the operation of online education probably because of ignorance or interest. Interview with Jebu revealed information concerning lack of awareness as an impediment that hinder moving to online education as follows:

“There are numerous misconceptions about moving to online education. Lack of awareness has slowed down the decision of many prospective students to avail themselves of the opportunities inherent in the online education. Lack of awareness and misconception of online studies, some see it as an exclusive preserve of the developed nations. Some think it is not recognized. Some think it is owned by a private organization and some other people believe it is meant for post graduate students only. However, each of these interpretations is a pointer to the lack of awareness and understanding of people about the online education” (Interview with Jebu).

Findings from Document

The statistics of business education undergraduate’s students’ enrolment in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi students is considered low, as revealed by the academic office of the university in 2016/2017 academic session only 76 students were admitted, in 2017/2018 academic session only 69 students were admitted and in 2018/2019 academic session only 71 students were



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admitted. Considering if the government would adapt to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic the universities have the capacity to admit more candidates that seek for admissions in the University. Therefore, if the University would move to online education those who could not be admitted due to inadequate educational facilities or instructional materials etc. in the university could now be easily admitted into the university because of online education which offered virtual classes. But from the discourse above it is clearly seen that the enrollment is very low as a result of the impediments that hindered using of online education.

Theme 2: Student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic

This section addresses research question two: Do the student's preparedness, readiness address the challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a University? Student's preparedness, readiness to move online education refers to a situation where students have the capacity, commitment, technological know-how for online education and how to adapt to the new system. Furthermore, it entails that the underlying challenges for online education amid Covid-19 are systematically identified and removed in order to give student the opportunities.

Therefore, the findings brought out certain themes as some of the major practices, and these themes are presented based on the participants' responses.

Student's preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic

Ability to adapt to the used of teaching and learning online

The process of moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic will provide easy access to university education. The respondents revealed that moving to online education is free from face to face contacts; both teachers and students can easily interact online through virtual classes without having to meet face to face. Therefore, the way students would adapt to the used of teaching and learning online is

challenging. This is revealed in an interview with Saratu as follows:

“Moving to online education is free from face to face contacts, both teachers and students can easily interact online without having to meet face to face, if you are ready for the study, the system will provide you with necessary information and can interact instantly through virtual classes. The system also give room for the people who are restricted due to social conditions to come in, these category of people may include among others women in purdah, prisoners, traders, farmers and rural folks” (Interview with Saratu).

With the practices of moving to online education women can study online without interacting face to face with any man. Prisoner has a similar scenario with women in purdah, they are domesticated in a place, meeting face to face via conventional way would have been difficult for them and it is now easier for them to get on with their studies online. Traders, Farmers, rural folks sometimes get it difficult to manage their schedules and at the same time hassling for studies which may demand their time and can now study online without stress in meeting face to face because of the online system of teaching and learning.

Adapting to changes of moving from traditional classroom to online teaching and learning; providing opportunity and access

The process of adapting to changes of moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic has been considered germane for online education and it is identified by the participants as one of the ways of reducing the spread of the virus in University education. Saratu revealed that:

“Both lecturers and students can interact at their own convenience, time and space. The University has a mandate to increase access to good quality education through comprehensive reach that transcend all barriers. To ensure this, no face to face contacts in teaching and learning are required, and the online policy demands that Universities admits



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all students who are considered to have a good chance of success in programmes of their choice as indicated in their interest” (Interview with Saratu).

Findings from Document

The findings from the document indicated that all the states in the country have Federal Universities to ensure all ethno geographical areas and communities are not marginalized in terms of accessing university education. Also all the states have one or two universities owned by the states government all in order to ensure accessing university education. But moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic would create opportunity to increase enrolment of candidates seeking for university education in the country

Theme 3: Increase connectivity and access to network promote online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a University.

This section deals with research question Three: How does access to network, connectivity and affordability become a challenge for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic. The poor networking system and connectivity in the country has become a serious challenge in delivering online education in the University system. In moving to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in universities across the country required total upgrade in order to improve network connectivity and affordability in the country, to make it available in all institutions and in public enterprises, rural and urban areas.

The basic idea of connectivity is to have a wider coverage of network in all the universities, rural and urban areas. Increasing access to networks for online education nationally in order to remove or ease the challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic in universities system and eventually give every Nigerian opportunity and a sense of belonging no matter anyone’s area of living and socio-economic status.

This section presents the information on how network connectivity, access and affordability for online education amid covid-9 pandemic in universities can increase opportunities for online studies. The findings brought out certain

themes as some of the major practices, and these themes are presented based on the participants’ responses.

Moving from classroom to online education versus network connectivity, access and affordability

Increase connectivity in online teaching and learning

The respondents revealed that online teaching and learning process required network connectivity, access and affordability. Abdussalam when asked about network connectivity, access and affordability for online education it was revealed that there are serious challenges of network connectivity, access and affordability in the country. Therefore, increase in connectivity, access and affordability to network will ease online education amid covid-19 pandemic said:

“Yes of course, the connectivity, access and affordability to network for online education is about increase in wider coverage of network services to create more opportunity, and is about making it possible for students from across the country to connect and study online in university at affordable rate and acquire knowledge without much hassle. If connectivity, access and affordability to networks will be given to all students from across the country, then the programme for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic would be achieved” (Interview with Abdussalam).

Online education will eliminate the inconveniences caused by disorders and exigencies, in providing deserving students a convenience that has never before been available. The spread of the online education across the nation itself is an index of development. This creates an avenue for students to access university education from anywhere around the country as expressed by Abdullahi and Abdussalam:

“Online studies are based on the use of virtual classes using computer system; and use of computer is purely based on connectivity. It does not consider your geographical location, or meeting face to



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face. Universities are spread across the country which create avenue for students to easily access online university education amid covid-19” (Interview with Abdullahi).

“Online education gives equal treatment for all communities and ethno geographical locations in the country and in addition to that, Universities are spread across the nation which gives room for all communities to have access to university education. And one can study anywhere in the country irrespective of where you are coming from or your ethical or religious background, the system allows every member of any community to have access to university education online amid covid-19” (Interview with Abdullahi).

Online education scheme requires network connectivity, access and affordability to various places and communal groups. The online study procedures of the universities give room for easy access and equal opportunities to students to be enrolled for online education amid covid-19 pandemic.

Affordability of using networks for online education

Affordability of using networks for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic is another sub theme identify by participants. Hauwau revealed that affordability of using networks for online education is about reducing the charges rate of using networks in order to ease access to online education amid covid-19 when asked about online education amid covid-19 in a university. This is revealed in the following passage:

“Online education in a university amid Covid-19 pandemic process is about reducing the charges rate of using networks to ease and create opportunity in accessing online education amid covid-19 pandemic. Since federal government has universities in all the states in Nigeria including Abuja, the process will result in increasing enrolment opportunities for Nigerian

students by providing the use of networks at affordable charges rate for online teaching and learning. Therefore, making used of networks at affordable rate for online teaching and learning will help in online education thereby easing and creating more opportunities and increase enrolment of students in the universities education” (Interview with Hauwau).

Reducing the charges rate of using networks for online education in a university will remove a lot of barriers, increase enrolment and create opportunities. Students would study irrespective of their location. Therefore, there would be increased enrolment in accessing university education online. The essence for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic is to balance national development, balance access to educational opportunities and increase enrolment in Nigerian universities.

Findings of the study

The findings of the study revealed by the participant that;

1. The lecturer’s preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic required pedagogical skills based technological knowledge of deliverance of teaching and learning online via virtual classes. The impediments that hindered lecturer’s preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 involve fear of cost, technophobia fear of acceptance and lack of awareness which also need to be address.
2. The student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid covid-19 pandemic required adaptability to the use of online education by the students and adapt to the changes in moving to online education. Addressing these challenges of fear of acceptance, fear of cost, technophobia and lack of awareness are the major reasons that impede on online education amid Covid-19 pandemic.
3. The lecturers and student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic entail provision of internet connectivity, access and affordability to networks.



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Discussion of the findings

Findings of this study suggest that the level of preparedness, readiness and challenges of lecturers for online education amid covid-19 pandemic in a university education is regarded as making sure that lecturers possessed technological base pedagogical skills to delivered online education as revealed by the participant. It was also revealed by the participant the impediments for lecturers preparedness, readiness and challenges involved fear of acceptance of moving to online education, fear of cost in moving to online education because moving to online education is considered to required huge investment, technophobia fear of the unknown and how it will impact your role is a legitimate feeling; People fear new technology and the fear of giving up what they are comfortable with in exchange for the unknown, lack of awareness could be due to misconception or ignorance of online education, some see it as an exclusive preserve of the developed nations. Similar to Meyer & Bradley (2013) freedom of education attainment and its full access refers to the unbiased and robust educational opportunities at every stage, polishing of knowledge, skills, and abilities to participate in the improvement of the society. UNESCO (2003) put “access in tertiary education” as meaning “ensuring equitable access to tertiary education institutions based on merit, capacity, efforts and perseverance”.

The finding revealed that student’s preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in universities education is ability to adapt to the use of online education. Since moving to online education is new to the students, there is fear of acceptance, fear of cost, technophobia and lack of awareness, therefore the student will face problem of adapting to the new trend of moving to online education and the will also be face with problem of adapting to the use of virtual classes instead of meeting face to face. This is in tandem with (Salman, Yahaya, & Adewara, 2011), they confirmed that for greater productivity and accelerated development in the nation, the students need to be equally empowered in all the disciplines offered in the universities as national development requires

collective efforts of the citizens irrespective of gender, tribe and inclination.

The finding revealed that the participant on the lecturers and students’ preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in a university involved network connectivity, access and affordability. The basic idea of connectivity is to have a wider coverage. Access is to have connection to networks in all the universities, rural and urban areas. Affordability of using networks for online education is about reducing the charges of accessing networks in order to ease online education amid covid-19 pandemic. In similarity with United Nation (2004), UN Global E-Government readiness report toward access for opportunity states that if we considered the desire end-goals of empowerment and opportunities, access leads to information which can lead to knowledge, leading to empowerment and opportunities.

Conclusion

Base on the result obtained from the study it is concluded that moving from traditional classroom to online education amid Covid-19 pandemic in the universities is about lecturer’s preparedness, readiness and challenges of possession of pedagogical skills, technological knowledge for delivering virtual classes and also fear of acceptance, fear of cost, technophobia and lack of awareness. Secondly, students’ preparedness, readiness and challenges of online education amid covid-19 pandemic required ability to adapt to changes in moving from traditional classroom to online education and ability to adapt to change from face to face teaching and learning to virtual classes. Thirdly, lecturers and student preparedness, readiness and challenges for online education required network connectivity and affordability of access to network which might ease the processes of online education in universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Government should ensure recruitment of lecturers that possess pedagogical skills, provide on the job training for lecturers and



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create awareness, enlighten and sensitization on cost implication, acceptance and technophobia for online education.

2. The Non-governmental organizations, Universities and Stake holders should embark on massive sensitization to educate and enlighten the students to adapt to changes of moving from classroom to online education and moving from face to face to virtual classes for online education.
3. Private sectors, Government, non-governmental organizations and service providers should ensure maximum wider network coverage and reduction of the charges of accessing internet services in order to make it cheaper and affordable for online education.

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