

THE ADOPTION OF E-LEARNING TO THE STUDY OF SOCIAL STUDIES AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVELS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Social studies as an integrated discipline has been equipped with necessary vital tools for promoting and sustaining moral values in the society. The importance of social studies lies in its ability of foster the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, and values that are worthwhile in order to meet the desire and aspiration of the people in a given society. Social Studies as one of the core subjects in junior secondary schools stress those culture values that will make society grow, co-exist and develop along the modern lines through the studies of different ethnic's culture and values. However, introduction of relevant instructional materials, E-learning strategy will make the teaching and learning of social studies meaningful in order to promote harmonious living in Nigeria where terrorism is raging every now and again. The study therefore will focus on the adoption of e-learning at the secondary school level in Nigeria, especially with respects to its applicability in the study of social studies at that level. For the purpose of this study, two research questions will be formulated. Seventy social studies teachers and eighty JSS III secondary school students will form the sample for the study. Frequency distribution and mean will be used to analyze the data for the two research questions. Base on the findings, adequate recommendations were made to ascertain the adoption of e-learning in the teaching and learning of social studies in secondary school levels.

Keywords: Adoption, E-learning, Social Studies, Integrated Subject, Applicability

Background to the study

Technology is advancing and changing the ways in which classroom instructions are being planned and delivered. The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the education system, and more recently for the adoption and use of e-learning in instructional delivery, is the craze in the education sector and all over the world. People advocate for e-learning because they feel it is best suited for the demands and characteristics of today's world. For example, according to Som (2006) a key attribute of information and communications technology is its ability to enable flexible access to information and resources. Flexible access refers to the use of information and resources at a time, place, and pace that is suitable and convenient to individual learners rather than the teacher and/or the educational organization.

E-learning systems include those such as Computer Based Learning (CBL), Computer Based Training (CBT), Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL), Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), and so on. Electronic learning, popularly called e-learning, is a general term which refers to the intentional or deliberate use of networked Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning. A number of other terms are also used to describe this mode of teaching and learning. They are online learning, virtual learning, distributed

learning, and networked and web-based learning (Ugwuanyi, 2012). E-learning comprises all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline, and synchronously (all the participants engage in exchange of ideas and information at the same time) or asynchronously (participants engage in exchange of ideas and information without the dependency of other participants involvement at the same times) through networked or stand alone computers and other electronic devices.

Fundamentally, they all refer to educational processes that utilize ITC to mediate synchronous as well as asynchronous learning and teaching activities (Som, 2006). E-learning involves all forms of electronically assisted teaching and learning. The information and communication system, whether networked or not, serves as a specific media to implement the learning process (Tavanagerian, Leyphold, Nolting and Roser, 2004). E-learning is essentially the computer and network-enable transfer of skills and knowledge. Wikipedia (2011) in Ugwuanyi (2012) stated that E-learning emerged as an offshoot of distance learning. Distance learning carried with it some roles and responsibilities for both the teacher and the students. Students need to know their roles in E-learning and the use of various technologies to communicate with the teachers and how to use a microphone, and how to post information to a bulletin board. They also need to know and understand communication etiquette in accordance with the instrument demands in an online learning environment. The materials to be used must be prepared in advance by the teacher, while students must understand what is expected of them in terms of a response (Heinich, Molenda, REussel and Smaldino, 2002).

On the other hand, social studies as an integrated subject need to be approached with more teaching material that requires information from around the globe. Social studies nurtures responsible citizenship in the students. According to Edingang (2001), teaching is part of the educational process that has the aim of giving to the learner some skills, competences, and intellectual capacity necessary for him or her to lead a life useful to himself or herself and to the society in which he or she lives. The above assertion implies that in this modern dispensation is facilitated through the application of ICT. It should be noted however that the primary purpose of social studies education is to help the youths develop the ability to make informed and reasonable decisions. For the public good as a citizen of a cultural diversified world (NCSS 1993). The application of ICTs, therefore, are a necessity in the teaching and learning of social studies education. The nature of social studies education makes it imperative that it should be taught through the application of information and communication technology for guidance and better understanding. ICT which is the process of e-learning should therefore be applied to the teaching and learning of social studies education.

Cowley (2007) advices on how social studies teacher can apply ICT in social studies education is no doubt laudable, but the 45 minutes allocated for the teaching of social studies in the secondary school is not in anywhere enough time. For instance, the use of internet, work sheets, digital cameras, and video, as well as websites, will go a long way in making the students understand the processes of adopting e-learning in teaching and learning of Social Studies in the secondary school. E-learning is useful in conveying social studies education to students. It is used in conducting research and improving knowledge in social studies. In view of the fact that e-learning is the use of computer technology or ICT to instruct students and enable them to complete credit courses online, coupled with the many and varied forms of e-learning such as online, video, television, video-conferencing, blended learning and so on, e-learning is hoped to be the solution to the above outlined problems confronting the study of social studies. This is because online learning is student-centered and structured in such a way that the materials and/or content are presented in a suitable online format, with learning tasks, collaborative activities, seminars, and conferences planned by the teacher, but not teacher-led and directed

(Strunfield, Mchellan and Connolly, 2004). Also online learning uses e-mail for quick, accurate, and reliable communication between students and students and students and instructors. Students can download course assignments from the instructor and upload completed assignments to the instructor. In a subject like social studies, electronic discussion with other subject and the instructor enhance interaction and create a classroom discussion environment. The emergence of, the craze for e-learning, and the prevalence of some problems confronting the study of social studies, especially at secondary school level, forms the background of this study.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study is to a certain

- i. The possibility of e-learning being suitably applied in the Nigeria secondary education system.
- ii. The suitability of adoption or integrating e-learning into instructional delivery of social studies in secondary school education in Nigeria.

Research Question

- i. What is the suitability and possibility of adopting and deploying e-learning system in secondary school education in Nigeria?
- ii. How suitable is e-learning in the teaching and learning of social studies in secondary school in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This design was deemed suitable and usable for the study because it is suitable for collecting data from respondents (sample) in different locations. The study was based in Abeokuta South (Urban) and Odeda (Rural) Local Government Areas. These Local Government Areas were used because they consisted of urban and rural areas respectively. 154 people constituted the sample for the study. The entire population of the social studies teachers in the two Local Government Areas was 40 and 34, respectively, while a sample of 40 JSS III students was randomly selected from 4 secondary schools, purposively selected from each Local Government Area. This implies that 10 JSS III students from each of the 4 selected secondary school were randomly selected for the study. The population of JSS III students in Abeokuta South Local Government Area is 2645 in the 31 secondary school in that area. Also, the population of JSS III students in Odeda Local Government Area is 2463 in the 23 secondary school in the area. This makes a total of JSS III students of 5108 and a total number of 54 secondary school in both Local Government Area. A 25 question questionnaire designed by the researchers titled "social studies teachers opinion in activity/ applicability of E-learning in the study of social studies" was used to collect data for the study, it was divided into three section (A-C section. A on bio-data of each respondent, B is on adopting, while C is on applicability on the studying of social studies.) The questionnaire was raised in four scale like type structure namely strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with the assigned/weighted numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was validated by four experts, two from each of the School of Education, School of Arts, and Social Sciences respectively. Their suggestions and comments were integrated into the final draft of the instrument. The test, retest method using social studies teachers in Odeda Local Government was adopted in calculating the reliability coefficient which was 0.82. The kuder-Richardson 21 (K-R 21) formular was used for the calculation. The descriptive statistic,

the mean (\bar{x}) was used to answer the research question. A criterion of 2.5 and above was the critical value for acceptance and any value below if for rejection

Research Question 1

What is the suitability/possibility of adopting and deploying learning system in senior secondary education in Nigeria?

Table 1: Adoption of E-learning in Nigeria

E-learning is suitable because:

S/N	Questionnaire Item	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
1.	It suits a variety of teaching/learning situations	78	54	14	8	3.31	Accept
2.	It is multipurpose oriented individuals, group(s) students and even workers	105	45	6	4	3.55	Accept
3.	It is multi-media oriented, audio, visual, audio-visual, electronic etc	105	35	10	4	3.56	Accept
4.	It is technological innovations driven	88	50	16	-	3.47	Accept
5.	It has no perceived gender bias	94	45	10	6	3.42	Accept
6.	Nigeria has the basic infrastructural facilities needed like radio, television, internet, electricity etc	70	62	12	10	3.25	Accept
7.	It only requires a limited number	66	41	37	10	3.06	Accept
8.	It widens the horizon of studentship such as full time students as well as workers	109	33	12	4	3.66	Accept
9.	It can reduce the problem of shortage of qualified experienced teachers	64	49	35	6	3.11	Accept
10.	It can take care of some pedagogical problems like inappropriate teaching methods and inadequate use of instructional materials	64	49	35	6	3.11	Accept
11.	Nigeria is buoyant enough for e-learning	47	51	35	21	2.8	Accept
12.	It can be applied in all areas and level of education and training	76	41	19	18	3.14	Accept
13.	It is flexible in terms of time, place and pace of study	121	25	8	-	3.73	Accept
14.	It uses different pedagogical designs like scenario based, problem-based, goal based, case based learning designs etc	43	60	41	10	2.89	Accept
15.	It applied different method of assessment such as practical, oral and/or written	86	33	23	12	3.25	Accept
16.	It is an admixture of conventional as well as distance learning	107	39	8	-	3.65	Accept
17.	It is the current and reigning system of learning the world over	94	43	12	6	3.46	Accept

The analysis of data above indicates that all the questionnaire items were accepted, thereby showing that e-learning is widely considered suitable for the Nigerian Secondary Education system especially at the junior level. This assertion is based on the fact that all the items have their respective means above the critical decision point of 2.5

Research Question 2

How suitable is e-learning in the teaching and learning of Social Studies in junior secondary schools in Nigeria.

Table 2: Adoption of E-Learning for Social Studies Instructions

S/N	Questionnaire Item	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
18.	E-learning can be applied in updating and developing the content of social studies at the secondary schools level	37	47	45	25	2.62	Accept
19.	It is applicable in the teaching of all aspects of social studies	49	62	35	8	2.99	Accept
20.	E-learning embodies a lot of instructional materials	79	33	18	24	3.08	Accept
21.	E-learning will ensure uniformity of standards of social studies learner from secondary schools.	70	49	25	12	3.18	Accept
22.	E-learning will make the study of social studies to be student-centred and activity based	57	60	21	16	3.02	Accept
23.	E-learning will ensure the use of appropriate teaching methods in social studies instructions	82	57	16	-	3.43	Accept
24.	Geographical location will no longer be a barrier to the study of social studies	49	70	19	16	2.99	Accept
25.	Social studies can then be studies online or offline synchronously or asynchronously etc	84	39	18	14	3.25	Accept
26.	Social studies through e-learning, can be studies at one's convenience (time place and pace).	11	29	8	-	3.71	

The result of the above data analysis indicates that all the questionnaire items had their respective means above the critical decision point of 2.5. the result therefore indicates overall acceptance of the suggestions of the questionnaire items on the suitability of e-learning to the junior secondary school level in Nigeria especially in the study of social studies.

Discussion of findings

The finding of this study revealed that e-learning is better and preferable at the secondary school level in Nigeria and can be used to apply in the studying of social studies education. This result is inline with the National policy on Computer Education of 1988 and also the National Policy on information and communication Technology (ICT) of 2001, which stipulated that a computer should be applied at the various levels of the country's education and that ICT should be integrated in all facets of the country's life respectively.

The result of the analysis is also in line with Eboka (2011) educators that have continued to look for standards and curriculum modifications to accommodate new technologies and that school, colleges, and institutions of higher learning must endeavour to create technological content within the curriculum that connects learners, challenging them to real life activities. He also

noted that learning ought to be fun and not boring. Eboka (2011) stated that presently, the worlds music tune (with particular reference to education) is that of e-learning.

Ezeahurukwe and Johnson (2011) note that, in all countries of the world, e-learning, is not just a subject, but it is a subject that has world acclaim in which most countries educational sector have embraced as a step to bracing up for the challenges of modern life. The result is in connection with Eboka (2011) that there is need to bring in reforms and innovations that will make instruction in schools not only interesting to students but relevant to both the local and international society. In the same Vain Smith (2008) noted that, this new technology challenges the traditional process of teaching and learning in that it has the potential of opening up a wide range of opportunities for vast number of learners across the globe.

The study also indicated that there is a statistically significant difference in the view of high and low socio-economic status respondents, in the suitable of e-learning in secondary schools in Nigeria, especially in Abeokuta North and Odeda Local government Areas of Ogun State. The situation tallies in the views of urban and rural based respondents on the adoption of e-learning in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study the researcher made the following recommendations:

- i. That e-learning should be adequately planned for and introduced gradually at the secondary school level in Nigeria
- ii. E-learning should first be introduced in schools in urban areas and later in schools in rural areas.
- iii. Government should immediately begin to put in place the needed infrastructural facilities for e-learning
- iv. Workshops, seminars and conference should be organized in service training and this should precede the introduction of e-learning in secondary school in Nigeria.
- v. Government should provide the required initial capital out lay.

Conclusion

E-learning is a desirable innovation in the education sector especially in curriculum implementation. Due to the findings of the study e-learning has been formal to be preferable and suitable for teaching and learning of social studies in Nigeria. It should be therefore be adopted for both teachers and students for easy study in all education in Nigeria. The adoption of e-learning for the teaching and learning of social studies and other subjects should be preceded by good planning and installation of the pre-requisite infrastructural facilities like regular electricity supply, expansion of internet services, development of localized subject software and so on. Teachers should be made to involve in the implementation plans of e-learning system. Finally, with the adoption of e-learning, significant improvement will be recorded in the education system in terms of scope and students with all the attendant benefits.

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