RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNET COMMUNICATION AND LECTURERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN OFFA, KWARA STATE NIGERIA

Florence O. DARAMOLA
Department of Educational Technology,
Faculty of Education,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Abstract
This paper investigated the relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. The study adopted descriptive design of correlational type. Population of the study comprised all lecturers in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a total of 70 respondents (academic staff) from different departments. A researcher designed instrument titled Internet Communication Usage and Lecturers Effectiveness Questionnaire (ICULEQ) with reliability coefficient of 0.72 was used for data collection. Three research hypotheses were generated and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Co–efficient statistical method. The findings revealed that significant relationships existed between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness as regards teaching and research or publications. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that concerted effort should be made to further encourage the use of internet in Federal Polytechnic, Offa and other institutions of higher learning through regular seminars, workshop and conferences in order to keep the lecturers abreast of latest developments on ICT for teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: Internet Communication, Teachers' effectiveness, Teaching effectiveness, Research and publication effectiveness

Introduction

The world is not static but dynamic as changes occur almost every moment on daily basis, both in the advanced and developing countries. The technological advancement, innovation and how these affect human activities is the major concern of the world especially educators, today (Adegbija & Adu, 2010). Man discovered that, the more invention are made the more comfortable life becomes. Information technology has reached the level of turning the world to a global village. Internet is one of the components of information and communication technology devices that have been used to accomplish most of the technological developments experienced in the networking world.

The word "Internet" is derived from international information networking or a world-with of networks linking computers of different types, sizes, and operating systems (Alfred, 2008). Internet communication as used in this study refers to the use of the internet as a medium of disseminating information, knowledge, skills, ideas and messages

for the purpose of instructing the students. It also involves the use of the internet for retrieving, processing and storing data or information for research or publication purposes. Internet is a vast network that connects many independent networks spanning over several countries in the world. The internet is gaining vast popularity globally in recent times, even in developing countries (Adegbija & Daramola, 2007). The wonderful world of the internet is a vast experience of information and communication. Its uses which extend mere information assessing capabilities are influencing organizations of different types and sizes, changes in institutional goals, relations and operations. The availability of multiple affordable computing and communication is making possible a new paradigm of information technology in the advanced countries in particular.

Further, consideration of technology in the educational context must be approached with some clear priorities and the major priority with the use of the internet in most third world countries is how academic staff use it and the overall impact of it in the dissemination of knowledge to the learners (Adegbija & Daramola, 2007). Also, it is essential to give priority to the nature of teaching and learning and to question the pedagogical relevance and workability of the new technologies from the third world perspectives. Research has confirmed the use of technology to support teaching and learning across the curriculum and all disciplines has the potentials to transform the learning environment.

The intelligence of computer and communication based technologies now promise to add significant value to the learning process. The new technologies can create strong impact on the ways teachers and learners engage in the perceptual communicative and intellectual domain of educational activities. The potential of the computer as a mind machine promises to do for the knowledge industries what earlier forms of machines have done for industries that relied on physical labour. The world education reports on teachers and teaching in a changing world, state that the new technologies particularly those providing access to the internet and the world wide web will enviably transform traditional schooling, the nature and type of learning available to students and teaching methods (UNESCO, 2000). The reports emphasize the danger of a widening gap in the available of computers and access to the internet between information rich and information poor countries. Indeed, in the United States, the number of web users had reached almost all the citizens at about 57 million and nearly 90 percent of all public schools have access to the internet.

One of the driving forces in the current wave of education reforms now in many industrial and developing countries is the need for the educational system to keep up with the changing world economy that is increasingly based on information rather that industrial production. Grimus (2000) opined that original purpose of ICT is to serve as means of improving efficiency in the educational process. There is a wide spread belief that integrating information technology with educational programmes can mutually reinforce teaching and learning activities and can eventually help nations to meet the information need of the society for creative thinkers and lifelong learners. In short, the

internet plays a vital role in the life of mankind; it aids the development and achievement in many aspects of human endeavor globally (Adegbija & Adu, 2010).

Considering all the merits of the internet to educational settings in the area of access to information via speed, accuracy, adaptability, flexibility and versatility, there are still some shortcomings of internet on the part of the educational system, especially in many institutions in the developing countries. Research and other academic activities including teaching have been difficult for academic staff and students before the advent of the internet facilities (Young, 1990, Alfred, 2008 etc). While a great deal of research has proven the benefits of ICT to the quality of teaching and learning, there are still different opinions as regards its impact on teaching and learning. Some still hold that traditional method is still the best because of the limits of ICT by many factors. Previous researches have examined the benefits of ICT on students' performance and teaching and learning generally. From the literature the author has access to, there is still limited literature on teachers' effectiveness and ICT, particularly, examining more comprehensive aspects of teaching and learning activities, record keeping, research and publication of polytechnic lecturers which this study was actually the focus of this study. It is in this light that this paper sought to examine how internet communication and academic staff effectiveness are related. Thus, the study was specifically geared towards finding out the relationship between of internet communication and academic staff of Federal Polytechnic, Offa which is the only Federal Government Polytechnic in Kwara State, Nigeria. The polytechnic is strategically located in such a way as to be able to accommodate students from many parts of the country. Thus, an effective instruction in this polytechnic has the potentials of influencing the country as a whole.

The main purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. That is the effectiveness of academic staff in relation to teaching and learning activities, record keeping and research and publication activities with the internet communication.

Research Hypotheses

Three major hypotheses were generated and tested for this study as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between internet communication and teaching effectiveness.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between internet communication and research effectiveness.

Methodology

The target population was the entire lecturers of Federal Polytechnic, Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria. However, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 70 lecturers for the collection of data for this study. The selection involved both male and female lecturers even though gender was not the concern of the study researchers. The

instrument was titled Internet Communication Usage and Lecturers Effectiveness Questionnaire (ICULEQ). The Section A asked questions relating to how and extent of the use of Internet Communication for teaching. Section B measured the effectiveness of the lecturers in the area of class attendance, number of periods, research and teaching etc. The instrument ICULEQ was validated by specialists in ICT in the Department of Educational Technology and Science Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin for face and content validity. After the instrument was assessed, the suggested corrections were made in order to meet the standard required for this study. The reliability of the instrument was also established using test-re-test method. The instrument was administered twice to lecturers of another Polytechnic in Kwara State, through Pearson Product Moment Correlation, a coefficient of 0.72 was obtained which was a confirmation that the instrument was reliable for the study. The instrument was administered on the seventy (70) lecturers in order to elicit information on how internet communication is associated to their academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. The researcher employed the use of the attendance, number of periods or courses allocated to the academic staff, and how they use the internet to teach, give assignments, record results, and for their research activities to determine their overall effectiveness. The data collected was analyzed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical method.

Results

The first hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa.

Table 1: Showing Relationship between Internet Communication and Academic Staff Effectiveness

Variables	No of cases	Mean	SD	df	r-Cal	r-Critical	Decision
Internet Communication	70	51.4	5.4	69	0.8615	0.233	Rejected
Academic Staff Teaching Effectiveness	70	53.8	4.8				

As revealed in Table 1, the Person Product Moment Co-efficient (r) is 0.8615 which is greater than that the critical value (r) of 2.33 at 0.05 significant level at 69 degree of freedom. Hence, this main hypothesis was rejected. Iinformation could be downloaded from the internet which will invariably increase academic staff efficiency and productivity.

Table 2: H02. There is no Relationship between internet communication and teaching effectiveness

Variables	No of cases	Mean	SD	df	r-Cal	r-Critical	Decision
Internet Communication	70	57.6	4.1	69	0.5598	0.233	Rejected
Academic Staff Record Keeping Effectiveness	70	53.1	2.6				

Table 2 shows that there is no significant relationship between internet communication and teaching effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa.

Table 3: Correlation analysis between Lecturers' Internet Communication and Research Effectiveness

Variables	No of cases	Mean	SD	df	r-Cal	r-Critical	Decision
Internet Communication	70	56	5	69	0.3296	0.233	Rejected
Academic Staff Research Effectiveness	70	59	3.8				

Table 3 revealed the calculated r-values of 0.3296 which is greater that the critical r-value of 0.233 at 0.05 level of significance at 69 degree of freedom. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there was significant relationship between internet communication and research effectiveness.

Discussion of Findings

There is a significant relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness as a whole. This implies that there was a significant relationship between internet communication and academic staff effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. The finding is tandem with the view of Grimus (2000) on the importance of information and communication technology of which internet is a component to the educational system, as making the day – day operation more efficient, assisting in the response to external changes and provision of systematic information which decision makers use. The findings also collaborate the views of Yelland (2001) and Emertaron (2001) which stated that new technological development have changed the availability of information in organizations. They all agreed that traditional educational environments that are void of internet communication facilities do not seem suitable for preparing learners to function or be productive in work places of today's society.

The result also showed that no significant relationship between internet communication and teaching effectiveness in Federal Polytechnic, Offa. This finding is in agreement with Young (1990) who itemized the following qualities as being those of an effective teacher, that is, the ability to plan and execute lesson, monitor students' learning and behaviour, contact and maintain interesting and focused rapport with students and peers. Also, the finding is in agreement with the objectives of ICT as identified by Drent & Meelissen (2007) and Adegbija & Daramola (2007) that ICT is used for the enhancement of teaching and learning process.

Another research revealed a significant relationship between internet communication and research/publication activities effectiveness. The findings gave credence to Oyedeji (1998), and NPE (2004) Section 33 which states that the goals of higher education should be pursued through research. This is in line with Alfred (2008) who observed that research activities were difficult in the past but easier now with the advent of ICT.

Conclusion

Internet communication as used in this study refers to the use of the internet as a medium off disseminating information, knowledge, skills, ideas and message for the purpose of instructing the students. It also involves the use of the internet for record keeping, retrieving and storing data or information for research or publication purposes. This study was undertaken in order to find out the relationship between the internet communication and academic staff as a whole. From the findings of the study, revealed a significant relationship between internet communication and academic staff's teaching effectiveness, record keeping and research/publication activities.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations made based on the findings of the study:

1. Conferences, workshops and seminars should be organized regularly in order to update the knowledge of lecturers and also keep them abreast of latest development in the use of the internet for teaching effectiveness.
2. Lecturers of the institutions need to be encouraged by further provision of funds to be adequately processes equipped with teaching-learning materials, (especially media that relate to the use of the internet) to facilitate and ease the dissemination of knowledge in teaching-learning and research.
3. The federal government and other stakeholders in the education sector should procure or provide more ICT facilities to facilitate more effectiveness of academic staff at the tertiary institution as whole.

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