

Web-Based Training in Business Education: Tool for Effective Teaching in the Post-Covid-19 Era in Kwara State, Nigeria

Afolabi, Oluwatumise Ayo^a, Salami Sarafadeen Segun^{b*}

^a *Department of Business Education, School of Vocational and Technology Education, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu – Ode, Ogun State.*

^b *Department of Educational Management and Counselling, (Business Education Unit) Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Kwara State.*

*Corresponding author: salamisaradeensegun5@gmail.com

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Abstract

The technological revolution swiftly changes how the world communicates and how society learns and carries out day-to-day activities. In modern society, web-based training cannot be overlooked as a result of technological innovation. This study investigates web-based training in Business Education that involved tools for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era in Kwara State, Nigeria, based on three research questions. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The questionnaire used for data collection was validated by three experts and distributed to 80 business educators. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha, and a co-efficient of .79 was obtained. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the null hypothesis was analyzed using a t-test. The findings showed that a shortage of skilled manpower, insufficient internet links and service hampered the usage of web-based training. The researchers recommended curriculum planners in education to make web-based training a discipline under information and communication technology based on the findings. Business educators should be acquitted with the use of web-based training software to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in teaching and learning processes.

Keywords:

Web-Based Training, Business Education Tool, Effective Teaching, Post-COVID-19 Era

INTRODUCTION

Education is considered a path through which society prepared contributors to its development. Nigerian education is for all as the major impetus behind any fundamental changes or transformation. The world of work kept changing as the dictation of society demand new services. The form of education that considers suitable to cater to the ever-changing demand of society is the Business Education programme. Amoor in Afolabi (2018) described Business Education as a subset of vocational and technical education intended to serve or inculcate necessary skills and competency in the students. They should be able to perform their job satisfactorily in the place of work and at the same time become a productive worker through Business Education. It is seen as education for and about business. Education for business is a form of Business Education programme designed to make students a complete confidential

secretary who understand in and out of the secretaryship. On the other hand, education about business provides technical know-how and operational techniques of how the economy of any society works. It also deals with the series of knowledge needed to understand better any financial interpretations.

The quest for Web-based Training (WBT) is increasing nowadays, but the number of qualified teachers of WBT is low (Adeleke, Afolabi and Araoye, 2020). This mismatch was due to the sudden COVID-19 pandemic occurrence that appears to be a big lesson for every stakeholder in the education sector. As a result of the devastation caused by this pandemic to the education sector and the process of curbing it, the government directed school closure. Consequently, technological innovation in education starts emanating, and this leads to instructional delivery through technological means.

Therefore, Business Educators' knowledge of WBT poses a serious problem to Business Education delivery in Nigerian tertiary institutions where Business Education programme are offered. WBT is highly versatile, easy to set up for effective teaching processes. Despite the great benefits of WBT and the tremendous widespread usage of the new technology in teaching, higher institutions in Nigeria is still on the lower step of the international digital ladder as it has not made any significant efforts to integrate WBT into the school curriculum. Accordingly, it causes setbacks in the educational system compared with other countries in the world (Afolabi, 2018). However, the implementation of WBT in enhancing effective teaching and learning of Business Education courses seems indefinite. Hence, there is a need to examine WBT in Business Education as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era in Kwara State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business education

Business Education is a programme that comprises many ideas, and it has the prerequisite to internalize its recipients with ideas that could lead to unprecedented development in any given society. Umoru (2015) claimed that Business Education encompasses understanding, values, knowledge, business skill, and technical skill, which formed the conditions for attaining the business goals. Teaching is the way to impart knowledge/skills to students. It is the profession of a person who teaches. In short, it is described as an act of passing information to the students from unknown to known, simple to complex (Sonal, 2018). Effective teaching prepares the students for their problems. It makes them secure more strategies to solve problems without external influence. Duktur (2015) noted that effective teaching is a well-arranged instructional activity geared towards preparing students with the relevant and functional knowledge necessary for continuous development in any undertakings. It means that effective teaching focused on a problem-solving approach, especially in the post-COVID-19 era.

To buttress this fact, Okoro in Oluwadare, Adekunle and Ebiniyi (2019) indicated that the students' ability to formulate economic policies and develop self-efficacy to become an employer of labour is one of the key objectives of Business Education. Web-based training is imperative through modern technology to achieve this goal during the period of the pandemic.

Web-based training

The aspect of modern instructional technology capable of passing information through the internet is WBT. This technique allows materials to be accessed through the application of Web technologies. This technology is a collection of software that uses animation, text and graphic,

audio and video to work satisfactorily. WBT is a classification of courses that could be offered online and web-based instruction. WBT is a system where anything done in the classroom is replaced with work done online. Lectures are published online, then downloaded and even printed out to be read by the students.

Kilby in Oduma, Onyema and Akiti (2019) defined WBT as an innovative approach in which the internet and intranets transform computer-based training. Business Education is a part of the vocational programme considered as a technological-based programme. It is flexible in terms of the contents and means of instructional delivery. This flexibility is important as it will allow the acquisition of new knowledge and skills by the programme recipients even in the unprecedented time of pandemic COVID-19. The utilization of WBT creates, fosters, delivers and facilitates learning. The training in WBT can be individualized or grouped and allowed the use of smartphones to easily controlled and updated the contents.

WBT can be used to present Business Education content live and in a structure promoting self-directed and self-paced instruction on any topic at any distance. It is a discussion forum via electronic mail (e-mail), video conferencing, and live lectures with relevant software such as google classroom, talent learning management system, iTunes U, think fit, Schoology, etc.

According to Edet (2019), google classroom gives room for teachers and students interactions, grade assignments and at the same time provide students with information on their performance. Permission for students, guidance and co-teachers are acceptable with the use of google classroom. Talent Learning Management System (TLM) was designed to aid a blended learning curriculum that mix self-paced learning and instructor online teaching. Moreover, iTunes U is another notable software for free educational content that promote teaching-learning processes. The use of iTunes U allows teachers to send the course materials to the students in different forms where one-on-one chat functionality is included. It enables the teachers to see when students have finished their assignment. On the other hand, Thinkific is software for teachers who set up a place for their students to learn from home. Meanwhile, Schoology software combines instructional tools, assessments, collaboration features and advanced analytics into one comprehensive learning management system platform.

Moreover, a review of the literature and statistical inquiry pointed out that every facet of the Nigerian educational system is besieged with problems. For instance, Adewuyi in Oluwadare (2019) opined that the quality of education in Nigeria is fast deteriorating as a result of teachers' inability to make use of modern technologies for teaching and learning, poor governance, unsuitable learning environment, inadequate funding, shortage and outdated resources and the like. Nowadays, Business Education students must be adequately equipped with WBT by the lectures that will enable them to stand out in the world of work and survive in this post-COVID-19 era. It is on this notion that the researchers sought to investigate WBT as a Business Education tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Gender

Gender has been frequently associated with the use of e-learning, a part of WBT. In the early 2000s, male instructors were said to use computers for teaching more than the female counterpart. They also had the better capability in using computers and teaching technology and thus had higher self-efficacy to adopt e-learning. Nevertheless, recent evidence suggested that this gender gap is no longer present. For example, Almanthari, Maulina and Bruce (2020) discovered no significant evidence of male dominance in using e-learning over female.

Additionally, Suri and Sharma (2017) failed to prove gender effect on Indian teachers' attitude towards computers. In parallel, gender did not have a significant relationship with the intention to use e-learning among Nigerian teachers (Omotayo & Tiamiyu, 2017). Frequent exposure and familiarity with the internet, computers and other technological teaching aids since their introduction could have narrowed the gap in WBT between male and female instructors and teachers. Universities have also recognized the importance of technology as a game-changer in teaching and learning and consequently revamped the universities' curriculum to include it. However, not much is known on the effect of gender on Nigerian teachers' perception of WBT benefits, particularly in the sudden occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. For that reason, the following hypothesis is developed.

H₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the benefits of web-based training as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID 19 eras in Kwara State.

Based on the previous argument, this study aims to identify the difference in the mean rating of male and female teachers towards WBT benefits. Furthermore, this study investigates WBT as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era in Kwara State, along with the benefits and challenges of WBT among teachers. The next section will discuss the methodology adopted by this study.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The approach provided an opportunity to vividly describe the information gathered from a population sample without manipulating any variable (Afolabi, Salami & Fawale, 2021). The study population consists of eighty (80) business educators from Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. A purposive random sampling technique was used to proportionately sample the whole population made up of 44 males and 36 female business educators.

Research instrument

The researchers developed a thirty-five (35) items self-structured questionnaire called the Web-Based Training in Business Education: A Tool for Effective Teaching in the post-COVID-19 era Questionnaire. The instrument was divided into two sections: Section A and Section B. Section A collected the respondents' demographic information. Section B was divided into three (3) more parts. Part 1 contained ten (10) items on WBT software as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era, whereas Part 2 consisted of fifteen (15) items on the WBT benefits. Part 3 contained ten (10) items on WBT challenges. The instrument was designed using a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) with numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively.

Validation reliability of the instrument

The instrument was validated by three (3) experts from the Department of Business Education, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State. They examined the items in the instrument and made suggestions for improvement. Twenty (20) copies of the research instrument were administered to business educators in Ogun State, outside the actual data collection sample. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to determine the reliability index, and the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.79.

Methods of data collection

With the assistance of some of the tertiary institutions’ staff, the researchers participated in data collection with a two-week ultimatum for the respondents.

Method of data analysis

This study used descriptive statistic (mean and standard deviation) for the research questions and a t-test to test the hypothesis. Any item obtained 2.50 or above was interpreted as agreed, while items that fell below 2.50 was considered disagreed (Afolabi and Salami 2021). On the other hand, the null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value obtained was greater than the 0.05 significance level.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 revealed the WBT software as a catalyst for effective teaching and learning, with mean ratings ranged from 3.31 to 4.33 and a weighted mean of 3.90. Item 7 (Floor) has the highest value of 4.11, and item 8 (Todoist) has the lowest value of 3.31, indicating agreement. On the other hand, the standard deviation ranged from 0.63 to 1.30, indicating the closeness of all items.

Table 1: Respondents mean and standard deviation on WBT software as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID 19 era

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Interpretation
1.	Google Classroom	4.07	0.74	Agreed
2.	Talent learning management system,	3.64	0.76	Agreed
3.	Zoom	3.80	0.74	Agreed
4.	Edmondo	3.86	0.93	Agreed
5.	Thinkific,	3.66	0.71	Agreed
6.	Slack	4.08	0.63	Agreed
7.	Floor	4.11	1.17	Agreed
8.	Todoist	3.31	1.30	Agreed
9.	Prezi	4.09	0.73	Agreed
10.	Schoology	4.33	0.72	Agreed
Weighted Mean/SD		3.90	0.84	Agreed

Source: Fieldwork (2021)

Table 2 depicted the mean ratings and standard deviation on the benefits of WBT with a mean score ranged from 2.83 to 3.44 and a weighted mean of 2.88. Item 14 (ease of content update) has the highest value of 3.44, and item 9 (reduces travel cost and time to and from school) has the lowest value of 2.83, indicating agreement. The standard deviation of all items was ranged from 0.72 to 0.99, indicating the closeness of all items.

Table 2: Respondents mean and standard deviation on the benefits of WBT as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Interpretation
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1.	Enhance students' academic achievement	3.00	0.96	Agreed
2.	Acquiring Occupational and social skills	3.19	0.99	Agreed
3.	Collaborative and exploratory learning environments	3.09	0.78	Agreed
4.	Easy and affordable training delivery	3.08	0.89	Agreed
5.	Increasing personal and social competence related to work in general	3.21	0.86	Agreed
6.	Enhances students' motivation	3.11	0.81	Agreed
7.	Maintains the quality of education	3.01	0.88	Agreed
8.	Adapting and modifying learning content according to the needs and capabilities of the learner	3.04	0.90	Agreed
9.	Reduces travel cost and time to and from school	2.83	0.85	Agreed
10.	Web browsers and Internet connections are widely available	3.08	0.89	Agreed
11.	Direct access to many other training resources	3.21	0.86	Agreed
12.	Clean interface which facilitates learning	3.11	0.81	Agreed
13.	Inexpensive worldwide distribution	3.01	0.88	Agreed
14.	Ease of content update	3.44	0.72	Agreed
15.	Enhance active distance learning	3.21	0.88	Agreed
	Weighted Mean/SD	2.88	0.86	Agreed

Source: Fieldwork (2021)

Table 3 showed the challenges faced in using WBT. The mean score ranged from 2.83 to 3.85, and a weighted mean of 3.37 was obtained. Item 4 (lack of reliable storage facilities) has the highest value of 3.85, and item 9 (high-fixed costs of data) has the lowest value of 2.83, indicating agreement. Based on the findings, the standard deviation of all items was ranged from 0.65 to 0.90, meaning closeness of all items.

Table 3: Respondents mean, and standard deviation on the WBT challenges to effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Interpretation
1.	Lack of well-designed web-based training curriculum for Business Education programme	3.47	0.68	Agreed
2.	Teachers' lack of Web-based training skills	3.61	0.69	Agreed
3.	Low level of internet connectivity	3.44	0.75	Agreed
4.	Lack of reliable storage facilities	3.85	0.65	Agreed
5.	No personal access to the internet	3.43	0.66	Agreed
6.	Insufficient peripherals	3.49	0.67	Agreed
7.	Insufficient internet links and services	3.48	0.68	Agreed
8.	Poor funding of Business Education programme	3.04	0.90	Agreed
9.	High-fixed costs of data	2.83	0.85	Agreed
10.	Epileptic power supply	3.08	0.89	Agreed
	Weighted Mean/SD	3.37	0.74	Agreed

Source: Fieldwork (2020)

Hypothesis testing

The result in table 4 showed the result of t-test. The *p*-value was greater than 0.05 significance level, thus the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected. This result implies that male and female respondents do not differ in their responses regarding the benefits of WBT.

Table 4: T-test analysis of respondents on the benefits of WBT as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID-19 era

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	<i>p</i>-value	Alpha	Decision
Male	55	2.89	0.79	78	0.11	0.05	Fail to reject
Female	25	2.54	0.53				

Source: Field Survey 2020

DISCUSSION

The findings showed in Table 1 revealed that google classroom, Zoom, Floop, Slack, talent learning management system, Todoist, think fit, Prezi, Schoology and the like were tools for effective WBT post-COVID-19 era. The findings of this study agreed with that of Edet (2019), who posited that google classroom gives teachers ample opportunities to organize classes, teach and evaluate students. In addendum to the above-stated software depicted by this study, the use of iLearn, Facebook, video conferencing, YouTube, Zoom Application, 2go, SMART Board Interactive Whiteboard, WhatsApp messenger, Twitter, Respondus, Wikis, LinkedIn, Flexible Learning Tool Boxes, Skype, Instagram, Imo and Blog are notable social media platforms that business teachers can employ for teaching Business Education courses (Oladeji, 2019).

Concerning Table 2, the study discovered the benefits of WBT, including (1) enhancement of students’ academic achievement, (2) acquiring occupational and social skills, (3) increase good inter-personal relationship in the place of work, (4) enhance active distance learning, (5) adapting and modifying learning content according to the needs and capabilities of learner and the like. This study agreed with the findings of Njoku (2013), who asserted that WBT is emphasized in Business Education to teach a series of work-related habits and specific occupational competencies. Moreover, Oduma, Onyema and Akiti (2019) asserted that students in distant areas can be trained through the use of the internet, television and satellite disk and that new ideas and skills can be acquired for improving teaching-learning processes in Business Education programme.

The findings showed in Table 3 described challenges facing the use of WBT namely teachers’ lack of knowledge of WBT, low level of internet connectivity, lack of reliable storage facilities, no personal access to the internet and others. This finding corroborated Adegbesan (2010), who asserted that adequate educational facilities should be provided to establish quality education in Nigeria. Hence, where the government fails to empower their teachers to integrate new technologies in policy implementation in this technological era, it will lead to a poor outcome.

Also, the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected, meaning that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the benefits of WBT. This result attests that the respondents’ opinion on the benefits of web-based training as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID 19 eras in Kwara State based on gender was accepted.

The finding verified Almanthari, Maulina and Bruce (2020), who discovered no significant evidence of male dominance in using e-learning over female.

CONCLUSION

The occurrences of the coronavirus pandemic seriously affected instructional delivery globally. This inevitable event called for the adoption of WBT for teaching in tertiary institutions. This attempts to reduce its adverse effects on educational administration throughout the world, Nigeria inclusively. Adequate knowledge on WBT will lead to appropriate utilization of WBT tools as a means of teaching effectiveness, and its benefit will be reaped maximally. The integration of these tools by the business educators will assist them in completing the curriculum and allow them to be technological savvy. It can be concluded from this study that the benefits of WBT as a tool for effective teaching in the post-COVID 19 eras cannot be overlooked.

Based on the findings and discussions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Curriculum planners should make web-based training a discipline under information and communication technology.
2. Business educators should be acquitted with the use of WBT software for easy teaching and learning processes.
3. Business Education is capital intensive. Therefore it should be adequately funded by governments and other stakeholders.
4. The Business Education curriculum should be reviewed from time to time to reflect societal needs.
5. Business Educators should collaborate in online training and retraining with other faculties around the world.

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