

## IMPROVING QUALITY DELIVERY OF BUSINESS EDUCATION USING BLENDED LEARNING TECHNOLOGY IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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### Abstract

*The study investigated improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population for the study which was also adopted as sample comprised all twenty five (25) lecturers of business education in two (2) Public Universities in Ebonyi State, Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University. Twenty (20) items structured questionnaire titled: Questionnaire on improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts in Business education and Test and measurement. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items and coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significances. The findings showcased the blended learning technologies available for instructional delivery of business education contents and the strategies employed in delivering quality business education contents. The study further revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean response of business education lecturers in both institutions (Alex Ekwueme federal university and Ebonyi State University). It was concluded that given blended learning technologies priority while teaching will make greater impact in quality delivery of business education contents. Based on the findings and conclusion of the study. It was recommended among others that government should make blended learning technologies available in their schools and train the business education lecturers on how best to use it as tools for quality delivery of business education contents.*

**Keywords:** blended learning, instructional delivery, business education, students

### Introduction

The educational gap created by the covid-19 pandemic was a life loss to the educational and economic sector of the world. However covid-19 crisis may be considered as an opportunity for change because crisis can make innovations that seems previously impossible suddenly inevitable. Alorita, Obi and Okolocha (2022) expressed that there will be a year of reckoning that tertiary institutions need reimagining not just repairing. The above authors went further to say that change is not easy and in several cases it cause more problems than those supposed to solve. The authors concluded that moving from face-to-face to blended learning can be considered as a case of change management.

In another development, Xie, Suhedole, and Wang (2021) lend their voices that educational environments have changed with the rapid development of technology, especially during the covid-19 pandemic. Friesen

(2012) expressed that the age long method of teaching (face-to –face interaction) does not become irrelevant but needs to be in semblance with the present environment of teaching and learning. Banditivilai (2016) responded that blended learning is a valuable concept that can be used to achieve teaching goals and it allows students to develop and practice learning skills outside the classroom. Supporting Banditivilai (2016), Wong (2016), expressed that blended learning is the most beneficial means of teaching.

Hilliand in Alorita, Obi and Okolocha (2022) described blended learning as a training modality that combines traditional instruction with digital technology to improve knowledge and skills that students can transfer to the work place. Graharn in Dharmawardence (2019) equally defined blended learning system as learning system that combined face to face instruction with computer mediated instruction. The author added that the two delivery methods aim to complement each other. Dharmawardence (2019) concluded that the use of the term blended learning involves combining internet and digital media with the established classroom forms that require the physical co-presence of teachers and students. Graham in Sheerah (2020) described blended learning as a combination of ansite (i. e face –to- face) with online experiences to produce effective, efficient and flexible learning. The author expressed further that the definition provides students with ample occasions to attain actual personalised instructional delivery of business education concept.

Ugonwa (2023) expressed that the relevance of business education in the digital era cannot be over emphasized because of its potential in equipping the recipients with the relevant skills for self-employment or paid job. Business education is concerned with the teaching of skills, attitudes and knowledge necessary for a successful career in the office and business world. Business education helps to develop skills for economic success through impartation of business knowledge, time management skills, organisational skills and goal setting skills. It provides information and communication technology skills through instruction in word processing, spread sheet, data base management, digital and internet skills. It help to develop skills and attitude needed for career success by inculcating soft skills, problem solving, critical thinking and team work skills in students (Edeh & Olupayimo, 2023 )

There are many ways to applying blended learning to business education curriculum, some of the popular examples include flipped classroom model, where students learn online at home, then spend in class time participating with a teacher available to assist them, or rotational models, where students move between learns stations with at least one stations being a digital space where students can access a variety of learning resource (Moiseienko & Ozarko 2019).

Valiatham (2002) suggested other component applied in blended learning to facilitate teaching as follows, ermact, simulations, web based tests, and FAQ. The author went further to enumerate the three main model in blended learning as skill driven, attitude driven, and competency driven model. All the model entail the overview of the topics to be careered. Other combinations of blended learning components according to Kayi and Dembo (2018) are online instructions, mentoring instruction, led support, web based, course ware, simulations, job aids, webinar, documents collaboration software, knowledge management practice, audio/video streaming, web based application, blog, social network sites among others.

Kayi and Dembo (2018) also submitted that blended learning helps students learn how to work alone, how to monitor ones learning, assess one’s own learning and work cooperatively with other learners without the lecturers involvement with blended learning approach, students control their own learning and they feel that making mistakes is part of learning and is useful for achieving effective mastery. Blended learning provides more flexible content and access to instruction without putting time and distance into consideration.

Neal (2020) lent the voice of other authors and stated that blended learning offers several benefits which includes students’ takes learning where they are and can assess class through flexibility of time and space. The authors expressed further that contents and learning activities with the materials can reduce variable cost per students, provides a system to share; validate track and store various evidences formats and enable in timely manner communication between trainees, assessors, verifiers, moderators and trainee support

persons. No wonder Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) emphasized that teaching shall be practical activity based, experimental and ICT support.

Despite the importance of Blended learning to teaching and learning, research findings continued to show that business education students still graduate without skills which aggravated the increasing rate of unemployment. This apparently may be connected with the poor instructional design which relied heavily on traditional classroom instruction which has failed to yield the expected result. However, business education lecturers are still looking for a conducive learning environment and good teaching methods that will improve skills acquisition of students at tertiary levels with the aid of information and communication technology. The present level of acquisition of skills in business education programme irrespective of school affiliation calls for immediate attention. Hence, this study was therefore designed to investigate the improving quality delivery of business education contents using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

### Statement of the Problem

Quite a number of studies have been carried out to investigate the factors responsible for the business education students' poor acquisition of required skills that will make them to be self-reliance. These factors include the unavailability of resources such as the physical structure, computer internet and text books, teacher qualifications and training, learns attitude toward acquisition of required skills (Sibandze, Olayode & Pereira, 2020). Bath and Bourke (2010) in their submission expressed that using traditional method of teaching, move all students through the curriculum at the same pace regardless of mastery since the teachers have little time to assist individual students and at home students have no one to turn to for assistance thus, some learners end up not performing well.

Despite the tremendous number of projects aims to improve the quality delivery of business education contents in Nigeria Universities., the level of students understanding of the required contents remain unsatisfactory and most traditional classroom are teacher-centered. Thus students are not used to arguing, participating in open discussion of questioning others. Instead they simply sit, listening and accepting whatever the teachers say, In addition, the prominent teacher-centered approach has resulted in a lack of students' engagement and attention. For example some students talk with each other during lesson, use their laptops or mobile phones or fall asleep, so the lesson become quite dull. As a result of the draw backs of the traditional mode of lesson delivery, there is need to investigate the quality delivery of business education contents using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

### Research Questions

The study answered the following research questions in line with the specific purpose of study

1. What are instructional technologies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.?
2. What are the instructional strategies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**HO<sub>1</sub>**. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers of Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities

**HO<sub>2</sub>**. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers of Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on the instructional strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities

## Methodology

The study used descriptive survey research design. The population comprised all 25 (12 and 13) Business educators from two public universities in Ebonyi State of Nigeria. Namely Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The choice of Federal and State University business education lecturers is that many University have almost the same characteristics and present the same problems. Business education lecturers also were chosen because they are the one that will impact the knowledge to the University students through blended learning. The entire population was studied without sampling because the size is manageable. Data for this study were collected by means of twenty (20) items questionnaire developed by the researchers titled: Questionnaire on improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities (QIQDBEUBLTNU). The questionnaire was structured into three parts. Part A was designed to obtain personal data of the respondents, part B was structured to obtain data on technologies available for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities while part C was to obtain data on strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The response obtained for part B and C were structured on 4 points rating scale as follows; strongly Agreed (SA) = 4 Agreed (A) = 3; Disagreed (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by three experts in Business education and test and measurement. Internal consistency of the instrument using Cornbach Alpha yielded a reliability co- efficient of 0.80, the instrument was administered to the respondent by researchers. Twenty five (25) copies of the questionnaire administered were duly filled and returned, thus represent 100% return rate. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using mean rating, the decision rule was that any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was taken as Agreed upon while items with mean score below 2.50 was taken as disagreed. The hypotheses were tested using t-test statistic at 0.05 level of significance

## Results

### Research Question 1

What are the instructional technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers of Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on the instructional technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

**Table 1: mean ratings, standard deviation and t-test analysis of the responses of business education lecturers in AE FUNAI and EBSU on instructional technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.**

S/ N	ITEM STATEMENT	X1 Bus Edulec AE- FUNAI	SD1	X2 Bus Edu Lec EBSU	SD2	XG	Rem	t- ca l	t- lab	Rem
1	The use virtual world for instruction purpose	3.25	1.15	3.0 3	1.80	3.08	Agree d	0.71	1.96	NS
2	Using of interactive forms to create feedback and asking questions	3.17	1.50	3.6 5	2.04	3.28	Agreed	0.60	1.96	NS
3	The use of multimedia projectors for teaching purpose	3.19	1.16	3.1 5	2.01	3.56	Agreed	0.75	1.96	NS
4	The use of digital video for teaching and learning purpose.	3.29	1.66	3.2 8	1.86	3.92	Agree d	0.49	1.96	NS
5	The use of survey tools for online survey and research	3.26	1.20	3.4 5	1.25	3.58	Agree d	1.37	1.96	NS
6	The use of interactive multimedia digital for technologies teaching	3.10	1.90	3.1 1	1.83	3.24	Agreed	1.08	1.96	NS
7	The use of interacting authoring such as author were	3.21	1.92	3.1 2	1.64	3.54	Agree d	0.96	1.96	NS
8	The use of e-book for education purpose	3.23	1.76	3.2 2	1.38	3.27	Agree d	0.63	1.96	NS
9	The use of web applications for interactive teaching and learning	3.30	1.23	3.4 1	1.36	3.53	Agreed	0.97	1.96	NS
10	The use of white board orelectronic board for teach and learning	3.15	1.40	3.2 8	1.58	3.18	Agreed	0.14	1.96	NS

**Note: X1 = Mean 1, X2 = Mean 2, SD1 = Standard Deviation 1, SD2 = Standard Deviation 2, XG = Grand Means, No of AE FUNAI Bus Edu lecturers, No of EBSU Bus. Edu lecturers; NS = Not Significant.**

Table 1 showed the ten (10) instructional delivery technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities which had their mean value ranged from 3.08 to 3.92 which were all greater than the cut of point value of 2.50 on 4 point rating scale. This implied that the respondents agreed with the ten (10) items instructional technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The above table also revealed that the ten items had their t-calculated value range from 0.14 to 1.37 at probability level of 0.05 and 23 degree of freedom which are lower than the table value of 1.96. These shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the two groups (AE-FUNAI and EBSU Business education Lecturers) on the instructional technologies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

### Research Question 2

What are the instructional strategies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities?

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers of Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on the instructional strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

**Table 2: Mean rating, Standard deviation and t-test analysis of the responses of Business educators in AE FUNAI and EBSU regarding the instructional strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.**

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	X1 Bus edu lec AE FUNAI	SD1	X2 Bus edu lec EBSU	SD2	XG	Rem	t-cal	t-lab	Re m
1	Using online technology for course interaction	3.72	1.11	3.83	1.24	3.48	Agreed	0.45	1.96	NS
2	Using online technology to give and receive course works from students.	3.67	1.16	3.11	1.54	3.15	Agreed	0.54	1.96	NS
3	Upload lectures materials in the drop box for the students	3.22	1.53	3.56	1.01	3.46	Agreed	0.37	1.96	NS
4	Use you tube technologies to received feedback	3.54	1.28	3.76	1.43	3.09	Agreed	0.12	1.96	NS
5	Using of staggered approach to help students make steady progress as they become familiar with the blended learning	3.23	1.54	3.54	1.86	3.17	Agreed	0.89	1.96	NS
6	Using of the technologies before introducing it to students.	3.09	1.40	3.23	1.36	3.11	Agreed	1.25	1.96	NS
7	Showcase how blended learning will make the students more independent	3.28	1.60	3.43	1.44	3.60	Agreed	0.71	1.96	NS
8	Make the online instruments to cover its purpose and serve as a guide.	3.35	1.42	3.45	1.28	3.85	Agreed	0.61	1.96	NS
9	Allotted enough time for blended learning teaching	3.12	1.28	3.90	1.38	3.53	Agreed	0.19	1.96	NS
10	Introduce different activities in a timely manner to avoid bored	3.45	1.31	3.18	1.86	3.33	Agreed	1.37	1.96	NS

**Note: X1 = Mean 1, X2 = Mean 2, SD1 = Standard Deviation 1, SD2 = Standard Deviation 2, XG =Grand Means, NS = Not Significant.**

The two groups of respondents (AE-FUNAI and EBSU business education lecturers) agreed that the items listed above are the instructional strategies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.

The result in table 2 revealed that the mean values of the respondents on the ten (10) items ranged from 3.09 to 3.85 which are all greater than the cutoff point value of 2.5 on 4 point rating scale. This indicated that the respondents agreed that the ten (10) identified items were the instructional strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The above table also revealed that the ten items had their t-calculated value rated from 0.12 to 1.37 at probability level of 0.05 and 23 degree of freedom. This indicates that their t-calculated value is 1.96 which shows that there is

no significant difference in the mean rating of the two groups of respondents (Business education lecturers of AE FUNAI & EBSU) on the items.

### Discussion of findings

This study in respect to research question one identified instructional technologies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities to include: the use of simulation or virtual world for instructions; using interactive form to create feedback and asking question; using of multimedia projects for teaching purpose; using of digital video for teaching and learning purpose; the use of survey tools for online survey and research; using of interactive multimedia and digital technologies teaching, using of interactive authoring such as authorware, the use of e-book for educational purpose; the use of web application for interactive teaching and learning. Yusoh in Utoware, Ikide and Apreala (2016) who found that blended learning technologies support and facilitates teachers' competencies. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of business education lecturers in Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on the identified technologies for improving quality delivery of business education contents using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The findings agreed with Osakwe (2010) who agreed that there are significant benefits in using blended learning technologies for teaching and learning process as long as teachers recognize the relationship between the use of this new technologies and the overall curriculum.

The result of the analysis of the second research question which dealt with identified instructional strategies for improving the quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities to include: using blended learning for course interaction; using blended learning to give and received course work from students; using staggered approach to help students make steady progress as they become more in the blended learning instructions; clear and covering the purpose and guidance on how to carry it out; allotted enough time for blended learning teaching; introduce different activities in timely manner to avoid demotivation. The findings agreed with Banditivilai (2016) who submitted that online supplementary materials provided in blended learning offered more positive advantages by supporting time flexibility, which allowed students to practice and learn the required contents at any time convenient to them as well as take the responsibility for their learning which students strongly appreciated. Supporting the foregoing, Thai et al (2017) submitted that in the flipped classroom environment, students can spend a significant amount of time reading, watching lectures and preparing before attending face to face lectures (Picci & Poitscher, 2015). The study also found out that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers of Alex Ekwueme Federal University and Ebonyi State University on the instructional strategies for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities. The finding is in agreement with Salun (2018) who submitted that blended learning can significantly increase students' performance in vocational education which is supported by the data, indicating that the blended learning mode significantly affected the students' performance, yielding a high success rate for students in vocational education.

### Conclusion

The findings of the study provide evidence that blended learning can be successfully used to support quality delivery of business education contents in Nigeria Universities. Wong (2016) says, the blended learning method provides more opportunity for acquiring new knowledge, sub-skills and successful learning habits. In addition, the use of modern technology as part of blended learning is not only desirable, but also needful in term of learning business education contents. Making use of blended learning is a sensible courses of action as it allows students flexibility in their studies and exposes them to quality business education programme in Nigeria Universities.

## Recommendations

In the light of the findings from the study and the literature review, it is recommended that:

- Business education lecturers should implement new technologies in the course of their instructions for improving quality delivery of business education using blended learning technology in Nigeria Universities.
- Government and Universities should organize workshop for lecturers on how to design electronic courses using virtual learning environment so as to equip them with the skills necessary for designing and implementing blended learning
- Adequate funding should be provided by the government, parent forum and non-governmental bodies to procure more blended learning facilities
- The government and the management of Nigeria Universities should address the problem of epileptic power supply without further delay as most of these instructional materials are electrically driven.

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