# Extent of Utilization of E-Learning Technologies in Preparation of Business Educators for Global Competence in Business Education Departments in Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria

**Dr. Onya Agnes Akanele**
Lecturer, Department of Bussiness Education,
Peace Land College of Education, Abakaliki, Nigeria

***Abstract:***
*This study was conducted to determine the extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in the preparation of business educators in business education department in colleges of education in south east Nigeria. One research question and one null hypothesis was formulated and used for the study. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population consisted of 110 male and female business education teachers teaching in all the colleges of education in south east Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was employed in carrying out the study. The instrument of data collection was self structured questionnaire with four point rating scale of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent was used for the study. The research question was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was computed based on Cronbach Alphas measured of internal consistency which yielded 0.92. Results from data analyzed indicated that 14 e-learning technologies available in business education were all utilized in preparing business educators for global competency. However, availability is not adequacy. Findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in the utilization of e-learning technologies based on ownership (federal or state). Based on the above findings, it was recommended that government should provide adequate number of technologies for business education programmess, business teachers should be trained and retrained on the use of technologies through workshops and conferences. The educational implication of this study include the fact that learning is made more interactive, lively and captivating through workshop and conferences; and upgrading of current e-learning technology structure in business education departments in colleges of education in South East Nigeria; business educators will be more equipped with competences that will empower them to compete globally.*

***Keywords:*** *E-Learning, E-Learning technologies, business education, global competence*

## 1. Introduction

The wealth and power of a nation is determined by the success and quality of the education of her citizens. Schofield (1982) in defining education says it is the transmission of what is worthwhile to people who will be committed to it. Education is seen as a key for unlocking the door of development. Its quality is what makes the difference between the developed and developing nations. Consequently, it is the teacher that will make the students of today ready for the workforce of tomorrow. Therefore, effectively preparing business educators for global competence is very needful in the 21st century where the whole world has been compressed into a global village. Definitely, this will help them contend with the challenge of producing graduates that will match the skill requirements of today's world of work. This synchronizes with Ziyn (2014) assertion that the production of quality graduates is directly dependent on quality of teachers and teachers' education programme. Automatically, it follows that if the quality of teachers' education is raised, the quality of school graduates generally will also be raised. Mukhopadhaya (2002) claimed that quality of teachers' education in this digital era is determined by availability and utilization of new technologies in training business teacher educators, both in pre-service and in-service programmes. Undoubtedly, change processes accentuated by technological advancements have precipitated a new global economy that is powered by information technology and driven by knowledge (Bingamas 2009). The emergence of this new global economy has notable impact on the nature and purpose of business education. The innovative technologies have warranted the creation of new educational environment that is requiring new behavior in business educators (Nwosu and Ojo, 2014). Hence, it is expected that business educators should be abreast of the technological needs of the society and in acquainting themselves with global standard of education in the 21st century.

Basically, e-learning is an emerging concept in business education. Indeed, the 'e' in e-learning is an acronym for electronic; where electronic connotes automation. By implication, e-learning denotes an automated system of learning incorporated into the mainstream of educational process to help speed up quality learning. Naidu (2006) posited that e-learning encompasses all learning activities undertaken by business educators working online or offline through networked or stand-alone computers and other electronic technologies. Obviously, e-learning depicts a new direction in

learning in which the learning environment is computer focused and the learning experiences can be obtained outside actual classroom (Umeasiegbu and Esomonu, 2012). In addition, Salawudeen posited that e-learning covers learning at all levels (formal and non-formal) that uses an information network; the Internet, an intranet (LAN) or extranet (WAN), wholly or in part, for course delivery, interaction and evaluation, among others. This means that e-learning uses technologies to deliver and facilitate learning and even conduct evaluation or assessment whenever and wherever necessary. E-learning is globally viewed as the most effective channel through which  business educators can be equipped with worthwhile global knowledge and skills necessary for effective working life in today's technology oriented society. E-learning has the potential of providing unlimited access to great volumes of academic resources via the Internet. Also, it enhances flexibility and quality of teaching and learning (Ugwuogo, 2012). Moreso, e-learning encourages collaborative, problem-solving and interactive abilities in business educators.  The implication is that urgent measures should be geared up to ensure that business educators are equipped with relevant knowledge and skills to enable them provide the necessary guidance to future generation in this globalized world.

There is no gainsaying the fact that business education is a programme of study that is well packaged for preparing and inculcating in individuals needful potentials that are prerequisites for operating successfully in this era of globalization. Of course, the potency of the potentials in business education transcends all ages; hence it is a worthwhile education programme that can contribute enormously in building a virile nation if helped to do so. Put in another form, business education is a competency and a vocation-based programme that equips its gradaunds with skills and competences that enable them to optimize their potentials and functionality in the global world of work. This synchronizes with Effiong (2005) ideology about business education, which according to Effiong aims at preparing students to become responsible and productive citizens in their society. Consequently, if business education will persevere in providing the vocational and competency needs of learners and the society at large, acceptance of changes becomes germane so that the needs of the society in the 21st century can be articulated and addressed. Besides, preparation of business educators for global competence is very germane in this era. Global competence denotes knowledge and skill individuals require for understanding today's flat world and to interconnect different disciplines for better comprehension of global events and creation of possibilities to address them (Fernando, 2009). Also, global competence entails skillfulness and proficiency in the use of media and technology within a global communication environment (Misty and Crawford, 2012). Global competence actually goes beyond knowing content to effectively applying the knowledge to situations to make the world a better place for man's habitation.

However, the relevance of preparing business educators for global competence is predicated on the fact that today, business education students are graduating into a world that is interconnected through innovative technologies as never before; all major challenges in education require cooperation across borders and boundaries for solution; Nigerian economy is so globally interconnected to the world economy that companies that employ business education graduates do not work in isolation with other companies across border. Every nation is really reorienting their pedagogical strategies to align with the new technological trend. Nigeria education cannot be exempted. Hence, business educators should be prepared for this reality. Through this approach, business educators will acquire necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and dispositions that will help them understand world conditions, issues and trends and be prepared to participate in interconnected society (Asia Society, 2008). A sound and effective teacher preparation programme is a critical factor in determining the quality of overall education system. Many factors impede the introduction and use of e-learning technologies in business education. These include: near absence of e-learning technologies (Owo, 2014); underfunding of e-learning programmes by government and ignorance of the importance of new technologies, teachers' lack of cooperation in using available technologies for the learning process and lack of skill and competency in the application of e-learning technologies.

Definitely, a business educator cannot give what he does not have; it will only take a teacher who was taught with technology in his pre-service or in-service education to effectively teach today's students with technology. Explaining further, Mukhopadhaya maintained that the use of innovative technologies in preparing business education teacher has the potentials to revolutionalize and to render traditional approach to learning ineffective. Today, experiences have shown that the traditional face-to-face teacher-oriented classroom interaction alone no longer enhances teaching and learning experiences.

The presence of the following is evidence that e-learning technologies are utilized in business education for the preparation of business educators for global competence: Computer, Internet technologies, PowerPoint, multimedia system (Akudolu, 2011). In support Osuala (2010) opined that today's widely accessible e-communication technologies could be utilized in getting prospective teachers from different countries to work together. Undoubted, effective utilization of technology in a normal course delivery and practicum placement of pre-service business education teachers is very paramount in helping them develop competences in the use of technology in teaching. Teachers that must use technology to teach business education courses must be teachers whose knowledge of computer transcends computer basics to the point of applications of computer in teaching and learning. To this effect, Matthew (2008) poised that innovative technology play a crucial role in preparing teachers for skill development; appropriately preparing pre-service business education teacher with technologies in order to primarily inculcate requisite skills and competences in them and strengthen the capacity of the-would-be teacher for high productivity and discharge of his duties and to enhance his confidence and efficacy. Besides, today, pre-service business education teachers are graduating into a world that is interconnected through innovative technologies as never before and automation in the new world of work has precipitated a crescendo of business activities in this era (Ofoegbu, 2010), that has resulted to extreme competition and competitive activities. Under the present scenario, business teacher educators should not remain analogous to old trends but to align with innovative issues in education in order to produce business education graduates whose skills will match

the requirement of this new era (Asia Society, 2008). However, the quality of business educators depends on availability of e-learning technologies and competency of their teachers in handling available technologies (Owoh, 2014).

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Quite obviously, the world is getting more competitive and technologically driven in the 21st century. E-learning technologies are rapidly revolutionizing the hitherto traditional patterns of instruction and rendering it archaic and ineffective. Ultimately, the essence of applying e-learning technologies in business education pedagogical process has become a sinequanon. The utilization of e-learning technologies in the preparation of business educators helps them to develop minds of inquiry, creativity, problem-solving abilities, a broad view and understanding of the global village; ensures effectiveness of instructional delivery and enhancement of learning outcome; opportunities to use and search the web for more educational materials, helping them compete favourably with their global counterparts. Unfortunately, a wide range of factors limit the introduction and utilization of e-learning technologies in business education. This includes inadequacy of e-learning technologies and incompetent business teachers. The utilization of e-learning technologies in the preparation of business educators for global competence is being eroded in colleges of education. Many students leave school without global skills to succeed in the automated world of work (Ojo and Oviawe, 2010). Consequently, graduates of business education are ill-equipped due to perceived gaps occasioned by new technologies. Nevertheless, what is not known is the extent available e-learning technologies are utilized in preparing business educators for global competence, hence, the need for this study.

## 3. Purpose of the Study

This is to determine the extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in preparing business educators for global competence.

## 4. Research Question and Hypothesis

The only research question used to provide answer to this study was:
To what extent are e-learning technologies utilized in preparing business educators for global competence in business education departments in colleges of education in south east Nigeria?
The only hypothesis tested was:
There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of business educators in federal colleges of education and those in the state colleges of education on the extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in preparing business educators for global competence in business education departments in colleges of education in south east Nigeria.

## 5. Method of the Study

The study adopted the survey descriptive design. The population of the study consisted of 110 male and female business teacher educators from seven colleges of education identified in the south east Nigeria. A 14 item questionnaire, titled 'extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in the preparation of business educators for global competence questionnaire', was designed for data collection. Respondents were asked to rate each of the items on a four point scale as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Very High Extent | (VHE) | 4 |
| High Extent | (HE) | 3 |
| Low Extent | (LE) | 2 |
| Very Low Extent | (VLE) | 1 |

The instrument was validated through expert judgment.
In order to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument, 30 copies of the instrument were administered to 30 business teachers outside the area of the study using test-retest method. Data collected on them was used to compute reliability coefficient index, using Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient. The index gave 0.92. The researcher with the help of seven research assistants administered the questionnaires on the spot. 93 copies, representing 84.55% were retrieved and this was the number used for the study. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for the research question which was built on four point scale of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent was as follow:
3.1 - 4.0   very high extent
2.1 – 3.0   high extent
1.1 – 2.0   low extent
0.1 – 1.0   very low extent
For the hypothesis, the decision rule was as follows: a null hypothesis was accepted if a calculated t-value (t-cal) equal or less than the critical or table value at 0.-5 level of significance. However, a null hypothesis was rejected if a calculated t-value (t-cal) is greater than the critical or table value at 0.05 level of significance.

### 5.1. Research Question 1

To what extent are e-learning technologies utilized in preparing business educators for global competence in business education departments in colleges of education in south east Nigeria?
The answer in Table 1 is used to answer the research question.

| S/N | Item | X | SD | Decision |
|-----|------|---|----|----------|
| 1. | Computer | 1.78 | 1.09 | LE |
| 2. | Internet connectivity | 2.43 | 0.93 | HE |
| 3. | Virtual library | 2.10 | 1.12 | HE |
| 4. | Personal computer | 1.92 | 1.14 | LE |
| 5. | Video conferencing | 2.91 | 0.97 | HE |
| 6. | Word processor | 2.04 | 0.92 | HE |
| 7. | Electronic typewriter | 1.48 | 1.01 | LE |
| 8. | Interactive white board | 1.67 | 1.12 | LE |
| 9. | Interactive Multimedia system | 1.77 | 0.92 | LE |
| 10. | Digital telecommunication | 2.27 | 1.16 | HE |
| 11. | Class website | 2.00 | 1.12 | HE |
| 12. | Audio-video retrieval system | 1.92 | 1.14 | LE |
| 13. | Electronic calculator | 2.20 | 1.12 | HE |
| 14. | Multimedia system | 1.77 | 0.92 | LE |
|  | Grand Mean | 1.97 | 1.07 | LE |

*Table 1: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation Scores on E-Learning Technologies*
*Utilized in Preparing Business Educators for Global Competence*
*VHE =Very High Extent, HE =High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE =Very Low extent*

The results in table1 above show that all the 14 e-learning technologies that respondents identified as available in business education are utilized in preparing business educators for global competence. However, the grand mean occurred in the region of 1.01 – 2.00; indicating that the respondents agreed that the e-learning technologies for preparing business educators for global competence are used to a low extent in business education.

*5.2. Hypothesis 1*
There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the business educators in the federal colleges of education and those in the state on the extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in preparing business educators for global competence in business education department.
Table2: gives the t-test result for hypothesis1

| S/N | Variable | No. | X | SD | Df | t-cal | t-crit | Decision | Difference |
|-----|----------|-----|---|----|----|-------|--------|----------|------------|
| 1. | Federal State | 34 59 | 1.73 2.49 | 0.86 0.97 | 91 | 1.56 | 1.980 | AcceptnHO$_1$ | NS |
| 2. | Federal State | 34 59 | 2.05 2.67 | 1.01 1.01 | 91 | 2.68 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 3. | Federal State | 34 59 | 2.41 2.29 | 0.98 0.85 | 91 | 2.58 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 4. | Federal State | 34 59 | 1.58 2.42 | 0.82 1.03 | 91 | 3.27 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 5. | Federal State | 34 59 | 1.82 2.57 | 0.93 1.16 | 91 | 3.12 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 6. | Federal State | 34 59 | 3.02 3.25 | 1.05 0.95 | 91 | 1.05 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
| 7. | Federal State | 34 59 | 2.14 2.98 | 1.04 1.12 | 91 | 3.54 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 8. | Federal State | 34 59 | 1.73 2.86 | 0.86 1.13 | 91 | 3.49 | 1.980 | Reject HO$_1$ | S |
| 9. | Federal State | 34 59 | 1.41 2.40 | 0.50 1.23 | 91 | 0.85 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
| 10. | Federal State | 34 59 | 3.05 3.23 | 1.09 0.89 | 91 | 1.00 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
| 11. | Federal State | 34 59 | 2.73 2.91 | 0.79 0.85 | 91 | 0.85 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
| 12. | Federal State | 34 59 | 3.05 3.23 | 1.09 0.89 | 91 | 1.00 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
| 13. | Federal state | 34 59 | 2.73 2.91 | 0.79 0.85 | 91 | 0.72 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |
|  | t-cal value |  |  |  |  | 1.96 | 1.980 | Accept HO$_1$ | NS |

*Table 2: t-test Result on E-Learning Technologies for Preparing Business Educators for Global Competence*
*NS = Not Significant (When t-calculated is less than t- critical or t-table)*
*S = Significant (when t-calculated is greater than t-critical)*

The mean ratings of business educators in the Federal and State colleges of Education have been compared using the t-test statistics. The result as shown in table 2 above indicated that t-cal (1.96) is less than the t-crit (1.980). Therefore, $H0_1$ is accepted, showing that ownership of school has no influence on the extent of utilization of e-learning technologies in preparing business teacher educators for global competence in business education department in the colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

## 6. Summary

The researcher was prompted to conduct this study in order to determine the extent e-learning technologies are utilized in preparing business educators for global competence. Specifically, the study identified e-learning technologies for preparing business educators for global competence. 14 items of e-learning technologies were found to be utilized in preparing business educators for global competence. However, test of hypothesis shows that availability of e-learning technologies is not pendant on ownership (Federal and State). Also that there is no significant difference in e-learning technologies utilized in preparing business educators.

## 7. Conclusion

Every nation is reorienting its educational programmes to accommodate the e-learning technologies that are rapidly pervading and revolutionalizing the traditional system of education. The hitherto traditional instructional delivery method no longer enhances learning experiences. Therefore, e-learning technologies should be given its rite of place in teaching and learning business education so that its graduates would successfully compete in the global world of work. In any case, the extent of utilize of e-learning technologies in preparing business educators for global competence depends on adequacy of e-learning technologies and competency of teachers in business education department. However, the available e-learning technologies were not even in adequate quantities that could warrant their quick access during pedagogical activities. Hence, these technologies were not utilized to a very high extent in the preparation of teachers for global competence.

## 8. Educational Implication

The educational implication of this study include the fact that learning is made more interactive, lively and captivating ; business educators will be more equipped with competences that will empower them to compete globally.

## 9. Recommendation

Based on the above findings, it was recommended that:
- Government should provide adequate number of technologies for business education programmess,
- Business teachers should be trained and retrained on the use of technologies through workshops and conferences.
- Curriculum planners should articulate needful global skills and competences and enshrine them in education minimum standard.
- Business education students should be encouraged to have their own personal laptops and computers to facilitate easy access to learning resource during teaching and learning processes.
- Utilization of e-learning technologies should focus on inculcation of global skills and competences.

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