

Assessment of the Readiness of Institutions and Undergraduates' Attitude to Online Learning Mode in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract : The emergence of the coronavirus pandemic and the rate of the spread affected a lot of activities across the world. This led to the introduction of online learning modes in several countries after institutions were shut down. Unfortunately, most public universities in Nigeria could not switch to the online mode because they were not prepared for it, as they do not have the technological capacity to support a full online learning mode. This study examines the readiness of university and the attitude of undergraduates towards online learning mode in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile Ife. It investigated the skills and competencies of students for online learning as well as the university's readiness towards online learning mode; the effort was made to identify challenges of online teaching and learning in the study area, and suggested solutions were advanced. OAU was selected because it is adjudged to be the leading Information and Communication Technology (ICT) driven institution in Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. A total of 256 academic staff and 1503 undergraduates were selected across six faculties out of the thirteen faculties in the University. Two set of questionnaires were used to get responses from the selected respondents. The result showed that students have the skills and competence to operate e-learning facilities but are faced with challenges such as high data cost, erratic power supply, and lack of gadgets, among others. The study found out that the university was not prepared for online learning mode as it lacks basic technological facilities to support it. The study equally showed that while lecturers possess certain skills in using some e-learning applications, they were limited by the unavailability of online support gadgets, poor internet connectivity, and unstable power supply. Furthermore, the assessment of student attitude towards online learning mode shows that the students found the online learning mode very challenging as they had to bear the huge cost of data. Lecturers also faced the same challenge as they had to pay a lot to buy data, and the networks were sometimes unstable. The study recommended that adequate funding needs to be provided to public universities by the government while the management of institutions must build technological capacities to support online learning mode in the hybrid form and on a full basis in case of future emergencies.

Keywords : universities, online learning, undergraduates, attitude

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