On-Campus Students' Perception of Online Teaching in Nigeria: A Quantitative Study

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Abstract

Online teaching, especially in the context of remote learning, has become increasingly prevalent due to technological advancements. Online teaching offers flexibility in terms of time and location. Students can access educational materials and participate in classes from anywhere with an Internet connection. This flexibility is beneficial for learners who have other commitments or prefer to learn at their own pace. Despite the advantages of online teaching, its perception differs according to different people. Perceptions of online teaching can vary based on individual experiences, preferences, and the specific context in which it is implemented. This study aims to examine the Ahmadu Bello University on-campus students' perception of online teaching. Survey method was applied for this study and questionnaire were used as an instrument of collecting data. 314 students formed the sample size of the study and simple random sampling were use to select the respondents. The findings of the study indicate that the students were found to have a perception that online teaching is for business class. Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that in terms of social presence, social engagement, and satisfaction, face-to-face teaching was perceived as being superior to online teaching.

Keywords: Perception, Students, Online Teaching, Nigeria, Study

Introduction

Online teaching has become increasingly popular in recent years, particularly with the COVID-19 pandemic (Peimani & Kamalipour, 2021). While it has its advantages, such as flexibility and convenience, it also presents some challenges. One of the main advantages of online teaching is the ability to reach a larger audience and offer more courses to students who may not have had access to them otherwise (Kansal, Gautam, Chintalapudi, Jain, & Battineni, 2021). It also allows for greater flexibility in scheduling and learning pace, as students can work on their own time and at their own pace.

However, online teaching also has some disadvantages. It can be difficult to maintain students' engagement and interaction, as online classes often lack the personal connection and interaction of in-person classes (Yang, 2020). It also requires strong technological infrastructure and skills, as well as effective teaching strategies that work in an online environment. Overall, online teaching

can be an effective and convenient way to learn, but it requires careful planning and preparation to ensure that students are engaged, motivated, and able to learn effectively in the online environment (Zou, Huang, Ma, & Qiu, 2021).

On-campus Students' perceptions of online teaching are different, some have positive perception while some have a negative perception towards online teaching. The general aim of conducting this study is to investigate how on-campus students perceived online teaching in Nigeria. The researchers used Ahmadu Bello University students as a case study.

Literature Review

Perception

Perception refers to the process by which organisms interpret and make sense of sensory information from the environment. It involves the integration of sensory information, cognitive processing, and prior knowledge to form a subjective experience of the world around us (Saracini, 2022; Shanahan, Tran, & Taylor, 2019). Perception can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as attention, motivation, emotions, and cultural background (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020). For example, two people may perceive the same object differently based on their personal experiences and beliefs.

Perception is essential for survival, as it allows organisms to detect and respond to environmental stimuli, such as predators, food, and potential mates. It also plays an important role in social interactions, as it enables us to perceive and interpret nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language (Dawson, 2022). Studying perception is important in understanding how we experience the world and how we can improve our ability to perceive information accurately.

Antecedents of Online Teaching in Nigeria

The antecedents of online teaching in Nigeria can be traced back to the early 2000s when the Internet began to gain widespread use in the country (Bubou & Job, 2021; Çelik, 2020). At that time, online education was in its infancy, and very few institutions offered online courses. However, the Nigerian government recognized the potential of online learning and began to encourage the development of distance learning programs.

One of the first institutions to embrace online teaching in Nigeria is the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), which was established in 2002 to provide

education to students who could not attend traditional universities (Onwuagboke, Nzeako, & Enwereuzoh, 2022). NOUN is one of the first universities in Nigeria to offer online courses and has since become a leader in the online education space in the country.

Another important antecedent of online teaching in Nigeria is the rise of e-learning platforms. Several universities have emerged in recent years to provide online courses to Nigerians. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020, has accelerated the adoption of online teaching in Nigeria (Okafor et al., 2021). With the closure of schools and universities to contain the spread of the virus, many institutions were forced to transit to online teaching so as to ensure that students continue to receive an education.

Online Teaching versus Conventional Teaching

Online teaching and conventional teaching are two different methods of delivering education. Conventional teaching involves face-to-face interaction between teachers and students, while online teaching involves the use of technology to deliver education remotely (Singh, Steele, & Singh, 2021). Scholars like Kaur, Dwivedi, Arora, and Gandhi (2020), Ko and Rossen (2017) and (Sadiku, Adebo, & Musa, 2018) stated some key differences between the online and the conventional teaching methods. These include:

i. Flexibility: Online teaching offers greater flexibility in terms of time and location, as students can access course materials and lectures from anywhere and at any time. In contrast, conventional teaching requires students to attend classes at a specific time and place.
ii. Interactivity: Conventional teaching allows for greater interactivity between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. Online teaching, on the other hand, may offer less interaction, depending on the specific platform used.
iii. Personalization: Online teaching can be personalized to a greater extent than conventional teaching, as students can work at their own pace and focus on areas of interest. Conventional teaching is more standardized and structured, with less room for individualization.
iv. Access: Online teaching can be more accessible to students who are unable to attend conventional classes due to geographical, physical, or other limitations.

v. Assessment: Online teaching may require different methods of assessment than conventional teaching, such as online quizzes and assignments. Conventional teaching typically involves in-person exams and tests.

Challenges of Online Teaching in Nigeria

Online teaching in Nigeria, like in many other parts of the world, has become increasingly popular due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing. Researchers like Aboderin (2015), Ogunyinka, Okeke, and Adedoyin (2015) and Ogunode and Aiyedun (2020) come up with some challenges associated to online teaching in Nigeria. These include:

Limited access to Internet: Many students in Nigeria do not have access to reliable Internet services, which makes it difficult for them to participate in online classes. This can also lead to issues with connectivity, slow Internet speed, and dropped calls.

Lack of access to devices: A significant number of students do not have access to devices, such as laptops or smartphones, which are necessary for online learning. This can limit their ability to attend classes and complete assignments.

Power supply: Frequent power outages in Nigeria can make it difficult for students to attend online classes and complete assignments. This can also lead to the loss of important data and work.

Language barrier: In Nigeria, there are over 500 indigenous languages spoken, making it difficult for students who do not have some considerable competence in English to participate in online classes. This can limit their ability to communicate and engage with their teachers and peers.

Lack of digital skills: Many students in Nigeria may not be familiar with the tools and technologies used for online learning. This can make it difficult for them to navigate online classes and complete assignments.

Limited engagement: Online teaching can sometimes lack the personal touch and engagement that comes with the face-to-face learning. This can lead to reduced motivation and participation among students.

Poor network infrastructure: The network infrastructure in Nigeria can be inadequate, leading to issues with connectivity, slow Internet speed, and dropped calls.

Inadequate support from institutions: Some institutions may not have the resources or support needed to effectively implement online teaching. This can lead to issues with training, technical support, and quality assurance.

Benefits of Online Teaching

Online teaching, also known as e-learning, has become increasingly popular in recent years, some of the benefits of online teaching are:

Flexibility: One of the primary benefits of online teaching is the flexibility it offers. Students can access course materials and complete assignments from anywhere, at any time, as long as they have an Internet connection. This is particularly beneficial for students who have other commitments, such as work or family obligations that might prevent them from attending traditional classes.

Accessibility: Online teaching has also made education more accessible to students who might not have had the opportunity to attend traditional classes due to physical or geographical limitations. For example, students who live in rural areas, have disabilities, or live far away from a university can now access quality education online.

Cost-effective: Online teaching can be more cost-effective than traditional classroom teaching. Universities can save money on classroom infrastructure and other expenses associated with on-campus learning. Additionally, students can save money on transportation and other expenses associated with attending classes in-person.

Improved student-teacher communication: Online teaching can improve communication between students and teachers. Online platforms provide a variety of tools that allow teachers to interact with students in real-time, such as chat rooms, discussion forums, and video conferencing. This can lead to more effective teaching and learning.

Personalized learning: Online teaching can also provide a more personalized learning experience for students. Teachers can create customized learning paths for individual students, provide personalized feedback on assignments, and use data to track student progress and adjust teaching strategies accordingly.

Increased collaboration: Online teaching can facilitate collaboration among students. Group projects, peer reviews, and other collaborative learning activities

can be easily organized and managed online, allowing students to work together regardless of their physical location.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a theoretical framework that helps in understanding and predicting users' acceptance and adoption of new technology. It was developed by Fred Davis in the 1980s and has since been widely used in the field of information systems and technology adoption research (Marangunić & Granić, 2015). The TAM suggests that the acceptance and use of a technology depend on two primary factors: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU).

According to the TAM, both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence an individual's attitude towards using a technology, which, in turn, affects their intention to adopt it. Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative feelings towards using the technology, while intention represents the individual's plan or willingness to use it. The TAM also suggests that external factors, such as social influence, facilitating conditions, and subjective norms, can influence users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use, thereby impacting their acceptance of technology.

The model has been widely applied and extended in various contexts and domains to understand the factors influencing technology acceptance and adoption. It has provided valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and designers in predicting and explaining user behaviors related to technology adoption. Thus, TAM is used for this study, to examine the perception of the students of Ahmadu Bello University towards online teaching.

Methodology

This research employed a quantitative approach and cross-sectional design. Questionnaire was used to collect data from Ahmadu Bello University undergraduates. A simple random sampling technique was used in this research to provide the respondents with equal chance of being selected in the sample. The study used Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table to get the sample size of this research. The required sample size, according to Morgan's table, is 350. The sample size was increased by 10%, which resulted to 385. The 10% increment of the questionnaire is recommended by (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019) to

address the non-response issue and reduce sample error. Thus, 385 questionnaires were administered to the target research respondents, and 314 questionnaires were filled and returned. For data analysis, SPSS version 25 was used.

Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

Table I shows the profile of the respondents. Most respondents were female, 69.7% and 30.3% were male students. 39.8% of the respondents were aged less than 20 years. Regarding level, most respondents are level 100 and 200 students with 37.3% and 34.7%, whereas the remaining are 300 and 400 level students. Moreover, 39.8 % of respondents and 35.7% are from the faculty of social sciences and physical sciences.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Variable		Frequency	Per cent%
Gender	Male	95	30.3
	Female	219	69.7
	Total	**314**	**100.0**
Age	Under 20	125	39.8
	20-25	112	35.7
	26-30	44	14.0
	31 above	33	10.5
	Total	**314**	**100.0**
Level	Level I	117	37.3
	Level II	109	34.7
	Level III	53	16.9
	Level IV	35	11.1
	Total	**314**	**100.0**
Faculty	Social Sciences	125	39.8
	Physical Sciences	112	35.7
	Art and Humanities	44	14.0
	Medical Sciences	33	10.5
	Total	**314**	**100.0**

Student's perception of Online Teaching

Students' perception of online teaching was investigated for this study. Twelve items were developed to measure students' perception of online education. On the aggregate, the students were found to have the perception that online learning is for the business class (M = 3.61, SD = 1.195). Moreover, students perceived

online teaching as not conducive in Nigeria (M=3.75, SD = 1.283); and make students to be lazy (M=3.39, SD = 1.258); some students have a positive perception about online teaching in Nigeria. The details for the perception is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Student's perception on online teaching

Variable Items	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
I think online teaching helps in more interaction	314	3.33	1.373
I think online teaching is for high class people	314	3.37	1.365
My perception is online teaching is for business class	314	3.61	1.195
Online teaching is less qualitative compared to conventional teaching	314	3.48	1.223
Online teaching makes students to be lazy	314	3.39	1.258
Online teaching is the best compared to conventional	314	3.45	1.193
Online teaching promotes education in Nigeria	314	3.54	1.266
Online teaching demotes education in Nigeria	314	3.53	1.307
Online teaching is not conducive in Nigeria	314	3.75	1.283
Online teaching made education more accessible	314	3.35	1.211
Many students are not familiar with tools used for online teaching	314	3.15	1.238
Online teaching lacks personal engagement	314	3.39	1.303

Discussion

Higher education has undoubtedly embraced online learning, as new programs are constantly being launched. The mixed synchronous learning (a "blend" of conventional and online techniques) mode is also expanding and developing in popularity in higher education, while its impacts on the experiences of students and instructors have not yet been extensively investigated. Due to the rapid growth of transnational education market, more and more universities are

expanding their transnational education offerings, such as blended learning or distance learning, including the ones in Nigeria, where institutions like Distance learning centers can be found.

This study was set out to examine students' perception of online teaching in Nigeria, using undergraduates of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, drawn from four faculties (social sciences, physical sciences, arts and humanities and medical science). The study found that student's perception of online teaching is more of a negative rather than a positive one. This is aligned with previous studies which established how university students perceived online teaching differently (Bali & Liu, 2018; Fedynich, Bradley, & Bradley, 2015; Hung & Chou, 2015; Martin, Stamper, & Flowers, 2020).

Conclusion

Online learning has historically been thought to be less interactive than face-to-face instruction. The major causes include lack of social engagement, lack of social presence, as well as lack of student happiness. Online education has, however, been marketed as being more affordable and practical than traditional learning settings, as well as giving more students the chance to further their education. The present study revealed that in terms of social presence, social engagement, and satisfaction, face-to-face teaching was perceived as being superior to online teaching. However, this study is limited to one among many Nigerian university students. Thus, its expansion and replication from across different universities would give a chance for generalization of its findings. Consequently, there is much need to conduct further studies with wider sample at different settings and locations with the sole aim of validating the current findings.

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