



# **Utilization of E-Learning Technologies for the Promotion of Evidence-Based Teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the utilization of e-learning technologies for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities. Two objectives and two research questions were posited to guide the study while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The researchers adopted the descriptive survey research design for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 27 Business Education lecturers in Rivers State Universities. No sampling was carried for the study this was based on the manageable size of the population. Data for the study were gathered through the use of a self-designed questionnaire titled: “E-learning Technologies Utilization and Evidence-based Teaching Questionnaire” (ETUETEQ). The questionnaire was validated by three experts: two from the field of Business Education and the other from the field of Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established and the computation yielded a coefficient of 0.81. The research questions were answered using Mean and Standard Deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool. The findings of the study revealed that virtual reality and artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities to a high extent. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the curriculum planners of Business Education in Rivers State Universities should consider reviewing the present curriculum in order to incorporate the utilization of e-learning technologies such as virtual reality in the classroom which will also help to promote evidence-based teaching.

**Keywords:** Evidence based teaching, E-learning technologies, Business Education

## **INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary times, the electronic learning industry is experiencing a revolution due to the recent advancements in technology. The introduction of new gadgets, cutting-edge technologies and the need to integrate these technologies with the evolving 21<sup>st</sup> century evidence-based teaching methods is metamorphosing into the creation and utilization of novel electronic learning experiences that the stakeholders in the educational sector must have envisaged some decades ago. The present day’s sophisticated technological trends seem to have played a significant role both in influencing electronic learning and offering brand new ways in which knowledge and lesson contents could be delivered (Axelsson, 2017).

However, the advent of electronic learning in Nigeria started with the development of telegraphy which began in 1886, when e-cable connections were established by the colonial masters between Lagos and the colonial office in London, to transmit information and receive feedback. By 1893, all government offices in Lagos were linked up with telephone services for easy communication, and later other parts of the country were linked up (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008). But within that era, the commonest type of electronic learning adopted in Nigerian schools then was in form of lecture notes on CD-ROM which can be played when the learner desired (Njoku & Nwachukwu, 2019).

Electronic learning is a structured mode of distance learning. It is referred to as the use of electronic applications and processes to learn especially beyond the classroom setting. Electronic learning is the application of the internet to support knowledge using holistic approach which may not be limited to a particular course (Nwafor & Abuka, 2015). Thus, electronic learning which is meant to be interactive can also bring about an effective communication system between the lecturers and students; students and fellow students (Babalola, Dambo & Bupo, 2019). Electronic learning is an open access learning that facilitates independent learning that is achievable (Ezeabii, Ile & Ezugwu, 2019). E-learning includes multimedia learning, technology enhancing learning, computer based instruction, computer based training, computer assisted instruction or computer aided instruction, internet based training, web based training, online education, virtual education, virtual education environments. E-learning can take place in different forms of media that delivers texts, audio, images, animation and streaming video and includes technology applications and processes such as audio and video tape, satellite TV, CD-ROM and computer-based learning. These technologies have been a significant aspect driving the concept of electronic learning (Patil, 2014).

Electronic learning is an inclusive term that describes those educational technologies that supports teaching and learning electrically and technologically. It is a technological medium that assists in the communication of knowledge and its development and exchange. Some of the identifiable electronic learning technologies are; audio, computers, tablets, mobile devices, webcams, whiteboards, screen-casting, etc (Patil, 2014). Electronic learning applications and processes includes; web-based learning, computer based learning, virtual classroom and digital collaborations. Instructional contents in the electronic learning approaches are delivered through the Internet, Satellite, Television, Extranet, Intranet and CD-ROM with multimedia capacities. One of the indicators of online learning is the use of electronic machines and media to facilitate learning (Ezeabii, Ile & Ezugwu, 2019). Axelsson (2017) on his own part categorized the electronic learning technologies as follows: virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), artificial intelligence (AI), big data, machine learning and wearable devices. These electronic learning technologies, if well utilized simultaneously with the evidence-based teaching method, has the increased potential to offer learners control over content, coordinate learning sequence, improve learning pace, time and often media and also allows them to tailor their experiences in order to meet their personal learning objectives. That is why teachers' understanding of the need for the simultaneous integration and utilization of evidence-based teaching alongside electronic learning technologies is very significant in supporting student achievement and closing achievement gaps (Rosenshine, 2012; Kamil, Borman, Dole, Kral, Salinger & Torgesen, 2017).

Before the advent of evidence-based teaching, instructors had to rely largely on personal experience, professional judgment, past practices, established conventions and other subjective factors to make decisions about how and what to teach all of which could potentially be inaccurate, misguided, biased, or even detrimental to students (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2014). Evidence-based teaching which is also referred to as evidence-based education is a concept that holds that educational practices should be based on the best available scientific evidence rather than tradition, personal judgment or other influences. Evidence-based teaching is a concept that has come to concretize and cement the interconnectivity between teaching and research in our modern day dispensation. Evidence-based teaching in the view of Garside (2021) is a concept whose essence is to give the teachers an adequate prove that what they are actually teaching in the classroom is efficacious, adequate and capable of bringing about the desired outcome which is the instructional objectives (Garside, 2021). Evidence-based teaching is a teaching approach that is predicated on informed research which also makes judicious use of what research as a

discipline can offer especially in terms of conceptual framework for thinking about a problem and tools for critical-reflective practice (Saunders, 2017).

In evidence-based teaching, assessments can be undertaken by Business Educators to garner evidence and draw conclusions as regards the extent to which learning is taking place in the students. The objective is to use observations of students' performances and work to draw inferences about their current levels of attainment (Masters, 2018). Evidence-based teaching is an approach that encompasses the following core techniques: spaced repetition, errorless learning and N-back training. The spaced repetition technique is a theory that repetitive training that includes long intervals between training sessions helps to form long-term memory and it is usually performed with flashcards. The use of the spaced repetition technique has been proven to increase rate of learning. Although the principle is useful in many contexts, spaced repetition is commonly applied in contexts in which a learner must acquire a large number of items and retain them indefinitely in memory (Wikipedia, 2020). Engaging in evidence-based teaching provides Business Education teachers with the requisite exposure to ideas and concepts they might not ordinarily come across and this enhances their breadth and depth of understanding. This approach gives teachers the requisite positive approach towards research and inquiry-based teaching endeavours (Saunders, 2017).

The promotion of evidence-based teaching of Business Educators and how it subsequently influences their academic life has not been given much attention. The utilization of electronic learning technologies in evidence-based teaching has the ability to help business educators improve the communication between them and the students (Valasidou & Bousiou in Mbah, 2010). Also, electronic learning technologies utilization in Business Education have the ability to transform the nature of education; where and how learning takes place and the roles of students and teachers in the learning process (Abdulla, Al-Hawaj, Elali & Twizell in Mbah, 2010). Thus, considering the observed exponential increase in the development of new technologies for learning and the need to integrate electronic learning with evidence-based education becomes imminent.

Promoting evidence-based teaching through the utilization of electronic learning technologies in Business Education would require the teachers' possession and display of some basic ability to organize, co-ordinate and utilize personal qualities, objectives and competency in lesson preparation, presentation and evaluation. Besides, the Business Educator must be able to motivate the learners, make students active participants in learning, use appropriate strategies and technologies to enhance adequacy in instruction delivery. Some researchers recommended eclectic method (combination of strategies). Business Educators are also expected to implement a variety of instructional methods such as the evidence-based teaching method in order to meet the objectives of the programme as well as to address individual student interest and needs. Productive instructional delivery enhances learners' creative and intellectual development through the utilization of electronic learning technologies, for instance, in the use of multimedia images, graphics, audio, text and motion for high quality learning. In order to build on existing knowledge, electronic learning technologies today offers new tools for easy content delivery.

Stressing the importance of the utilization of electronic learning technologies in education, Olorunsola, (2017) affirmed that through electronic learning technologies, educational needs can be met. The utilization of electronic learning technologies for the promotion of evidence-based teaching can be an indispensable part of Business Education as its application makes educational institutions more efficient and productive, thereby engendering a variety of tools to enhance and facilitate teachers' pedagogical activities.

Virtual reality is an electronic learning device used in the classroom which serves as interactive content (images or videos) which enables the viewer to explore the entire 360 degrees of a scene (Immersion Virtual Reality, 2021). As a modern electronic learning technology, virtual reality makes it possible for students to experience different destinations from across the world without ever having to leave the classroom. Virtual reality is a computer-generated simulation in which people can interact within an artificial three-dimensional environment using electronic devices, such as special goggles with screen or gloves fitted with sensors. Virtual reality is a computer generated environment with scenes and objects that appear to be real, making the user feel they are immersed in their surroundings. This environment is perceived through a device known as a virtual reality headset or helmet. Virtual reality allows the students

to immerse themselves in video games as if it were one of the characters, learn how to perform heart surgery or improve the quality of sports training to maximize performance.

Virtual reality is commonly used through virtual reality classrooms or immersive classrooms. The virtual reality provides a classroom pattern where images are projected onto the internal walls of the room which creates a virtual environment within the classroom. Through the utilization of the virtual reality, students can be made to travel to different locations so as to gather some learning experiences without having to travel to those places by leaving the classroom. The utilization of virtual reality as an electronic learning technology for evidence-based teaching promotes learning abilities in students in different ways (Immersion Virtual Reality, 2021).

The utilization of artificial intelligence for evidence-based teaching is no doubt an indispensable tool for the realization of the basic goals of education and specific classroom teaching objectives. Swain (2016) stated that the utilization of artificial intelligence for evidence-based teaching promotes the uncovering of students with learning disabilities and address them at an early stage of the students' academic development. The utilization of electronic learning technologies like the artificial intelligence makes it possible for teachers to enhance teaching, customize their courses and simplify grading (Swain, 2016).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Utilization of electronic learning technologies for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education can boost teaching and learning experiences considerably. But it appears that the possible sustainability, spread and realization of this positive and meritorious influence of electronic learning technologies on the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education have not been devoid of any form of setbacks. Supporting this, Aboderin and Kumuyi (2013) categorically confirmed that shortage of online learning technologies and tools such as; internet, computers, e-mail facilities, multimedia, scanner, printer and VCD player constituted one form of challenge or the other to the use of online learning platforms for online learning. It now appears that these challenges to some extent make it challenging for the utilization of electronic learning technologies such as; virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence and machine learning for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education.

Experience has also shown that even in some instances where few of these electronic learning technologies may be available, they are not sometimes judiciously and adequately utilized for the facilitation of evidence-based teaching. In some cases, the students are insufficiently skillful and knowledgeable in the areas of computer application. This scenario however, tends to stifle the process of utilizing some of these electronic learning technologies for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the utilization of electronic learning technologies for the promotion of evidence based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State universities. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities.
2. Examine the extent to which artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent can virtual reality be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities?
2. To what extent can artificial intelligence be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which virtual reality

can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers in Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities.

## METHODOLOGY

The area of the study was Rivers State. Descriptive Survey Research Design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 27 Business Education lecturers in Rivers State Universities.

Table 1: population distribution table

| S/N | Name of institution                    | No. of lecturers |
|-----|--|------------------|
| 1.  | Ignatius Ajuru University of Education | 7                |
| 2.  | Rivers State University                | 20               |
|     | <b>Total</b>                           | <b>27</b>        |

*Source: IAUE/RSU Department of Business Education (2020/2021).*

No sampling was carried out for the study. The reason is that the population is small and the researcher considers it to be manageable. Hence, the entire population was adopted for the study. Out of the 27 copies of questionnaire distributed, 25 were retrieved. The researchers developed a 14 item structured questionnaire titled ““E-learning Technologies Utilization and Evidence-based Teaching Questionnaire (ETUETEQ)” for data collection. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two experts in Business Education and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The study adopted 4point rating scale, with span options of Very high extent (VHE) 4points, High Extent (HE)3 points, Moderate Extent (ME)2 points, and Low Extent (LE) 1point. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (PPMCC) statistical tool was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and a co-efficient of 0.81 was obtained. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviations while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean rating of greater than or equal to 2.50 was accepted as High Extent, otherwise, it was considered Low Extent. A computed t-value less than a critical value at the given degree of freedom led to the acceptance of the null hypotheses; otherwise, it was not accepted.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent can virtual reality be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities?*

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard Deviation scores of respondents on the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities

| S/N                        | Item  | IAUE (N=6)  |             |           | RSU(N=19)   |             |           |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
|                            |   | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Rmks      | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Rmks.     |
| 1.                         | Using extraordinary locations as a teacher contributes in sparking off imaginative thinking in my students.                                     | 3.33        | 0.75        | HE        | 3.11        | 1.02        | HE        |
| 2.                         | Through the use of a learning environment that engenders real life situations, my students are inspired to learn.                               | 2.83        | 1.07        | HE        | 3.05        | 0.94        | HE        |
| 3.                         | Using imaginary real life occurrences while teaching in the classroom enhances my students' understanding.                                      | 3.67        | 1.15        | HE        | 2.84        | 0.82        | HE        |
| 4.                         | Through the use of specific technologies that capture real life situations while teaching my students tends to learn better through experience. | 2.83        | 1.07        | HE        | 2.89        | 0.97        | HE        |
| 5.                         | Using technologies to create a simulated classroom opens up a whole new world of academic possibilities to my students.                         | 3.00        | 1.47        | HE        | 3.16        | 1.04        | HE        |
| 6.                         | Through the use of technologies that create real life situations, the classroom participation of my students are enhanced.                      | 3.83        | 0.37        | HE        | 3.11        | 1.02        | HE        |
| 7.                         | The use of technologies to create real life situations in the classroom makes it easier for my students to comprehend faster in the classroom.  | 3.33        | 0.75        | HE        | 3.00        | 0.97        | HE        |
| 8.                         | Using extra-ordinary locations while teaching sparks the imagination and creative thinking in my students.                                      | 2.83        | 1.07        | HE        | 2.95        | 0.99        | HE        |
| <b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b> |   | <b>3.21</b> | <b>0.96</b> | <b>HE</b> | <b>3.01</b> | <b>0.97</b> | <b>HE</b> |

*Source: Field Survey, 2022.*

The result in Table 2 above shows the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State. The respondents responded high extent to all the items. With the grand mean of 3.21 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 3.01 for Rivers state university, it implies that virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching to a high extent.

**Research Question 2:** *To what extent can artificial intelligence be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities?*

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of respondents on the extent to which artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities**

| S/N                        | Item   | IAUE (N=6)  |             |           | RSU(N=19)   |             |           |
|----------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
|                            |  | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Rmks      | $\bar{X}$   | SD          | Rmks.     |
| 9.                         | The use of simulated natural intelligence can enhance my management of possible learning difficulties in my students.  | 2.67        | 0.94        | HE        | 2.79        | 1.24        | HE        |
| 10.                        | Through the use of machines that perform human-like tasks for teaching, the monitoring and analyzes of my academic progress in real-time is promoted.        | 3.33        | 0.75        | HE        | 2.95        | 0.89        | HE        |
| 11.                        | Utilization of robotics in classroom promotes the demonstration of human-like skills for the attainment of better academic learning.                         | 2.83        | 1.07        | HE        | 3.00        | 1.02        | HE        |
| 12.                        | The utilization of robots while teaching makes it easier for my students to make informed academic decisions.  | 3.50        | 0.76        | HE        | 2.95        | 0.76        | HE        |
| 13.                        | The use of robots makes classroom interaction with my students more comfortable and convenient.  | 2.83        | 1.07        | HE        | 2.95        | 1.14        | HE        |
| 14.                        | Utilization of artificial intelligence communication tools while teaching, gives my students some sense of comfort while asking questions without the crowd. | 3.00        | 0.82        | HE        | 2.84        | 0.99        | HE        |
| <b>Grand Mean &amp; SD</b> |  | <b>3.03</b> | <b>0.90</b> | <b>HE</b> | <b>2.91</b> | <b>1.01</b> | <b>HE</b> |

*Source: Field Survey, 2022.*

The result in Table 3 above shows the extent to which artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State. The respondents responded high extent to all the items. Thus, with the grand mean of 3.03 and 2.91 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Rivers state university respectively, it implies that artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching to a high extent.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Business Educators in RSU and IAUE on the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in RSU

**Table 4: t-test Analysis of mean responses of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State Universities on the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of Evidence-based teaching in Business Education.**

| Respondents | N  | $\bar{X}$ | S.D  | $\alpha$ level | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|-------------|----|-----------|------|----------------|-------|--------|----------|
| IAUE        | 6  | 3.21      | 0.96 | 0.05           | 0.44  | 2.07   | Accepted |
| RSU         | 19 | 3.01      | 0.97 |                |       |        |          |

*Source: Field survey 2022*

From Table 4 above, it is observed that the calculated t-value of 0.44 was below the t-critical of 2.07. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted meaning that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Business Education lecturers in both institutions.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis of mean responses of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State Universities on the extent to which Artificial Intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of Evidence-based teaching in Business Education.**

| Respondents | N  | $\bar{X}$ | S.D  | $\alpha$ level | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|-------------|----|-----------|------|----------------|-------|--------|----------|
| IAUE        | 6  | 3.03      | 0.90 | 0.05           | 0.27  | 2.07   | Accepted |
| RSU         | 19 | 2.91      | 1.01 |                |       |        |          |

*Source: Field survey 2022*

From Table 5 above, it is observed that the calculated t-value of 0.27 was below the t-critical of 2.07. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted meaning that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Business Education lecturers in both institutions.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from research question 1 shows the extent to which virtual reality can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Business Education in Rivers State Universities as to a high extent. This finding is in consonance with the study of Immersion Virtual Reality (2021) who discovered that; virtual reality provides a classroom pattern where images are projected onto the internal walls of the room which creates a virtual environment within the classroom and that virtual reality serves as an interactive content which enables the viewer to explore the entire 360 degrees of a scene. The findings from research question 2 shows that Artificial Intelligence to a high extent can promote Evidence-based teaching in Business Education. This finding is in-tandem with the work of Swain (2016) who discovered that through the utilization of artificial intelligence, the academic progress of students during evidence-based teaching can be monitored and analyzed, through the utilization of artificial intelligence for evidence-based teaching the teacher can improve his professional efficiency, the deployment of artificial intelligence electronic learning devices for the practice of evidence-based teaching also gives the teacher the ability to carve out personalized learning experiences for the students. The obvious implications of this finding is that through the utilization of artificial intelligence for the facilitation of evidence-based teaching, there is the mutual simplification of classroom task. This is so because, the inclusion of artificial intelligence makes for the automation of the tasks thereby, reducing the burden of the teacher.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that: virtual reality and Artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Rivers State Universities. It was also concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Business Education lecturers in



Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education on the extent to which virtual reality and artificial intelligence can be utilized for the promotion of evidence-based teaching in Rivers State Universities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The curriculum planners of Business Education in Rivers State Universities should consider reviewing the present curriculum in order to be able to integrate the utilization of e-learning technologies such as virtual reality in the classroom which will also help to promote evidence-based teaching.
2. More awareness should be created among the students and lecturers in Business Education by the administrators of Business Education programme about the value and benefits derivable from the use of artificial intelligence in classroom teaching experience.

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