

An Appraisal of Effects of Asynchronous Learning on Clienteles' Achievement in Distance Learning Programme in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract: - The challenge of restricted access to education due to limited educational institutions, specifically at tertiary level resulted into implementation of Distance Learning programme in Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised, clientele of Distance Learning Programme (DLP) in South West, Nigeria. The sample size of the study, was Three hundred and sixty (360) respondents. The research instrument used to gather data were both the quantitative (secondary) and qualitative (primary) data were used to collect data. For the quantitative data, a self-developed questionnaire by the researchers, entitled "Questionnaire on Appraisal of Effects of Asynchronous Learning on Clientele' Achievement in Distance Learning Programme in Ondo State, Nigeria", fashioned on four Likert Rating Scale (Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (S), complemented by qualitative research instrument (Focus Group Discussion "FGDs"). The instruments were validated by two experts in Test and Measurement at Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria. The reliability of the research instrument was done, through test retest methods at two weeks interval. 0.70 Coefficient reliability was obtained for the qualitative research instrument, while, for the quantitative research instrument, two sessions of FGDs were held, using respondents who were not involved in the main FGDs for the study. Data collected on the research questions were analysed, using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, simple percentages and men), while data collected through FGDs were collected, collated and analysed on the results, conclusions were made that asynchronous learning strategy could motivate clientele to study effectively and also improve clientele' achievement. Based on the conclusion, recommendations were made that; all logistics that can make the use of asynchronous learning strategy possible should be put in place. Also, the clientele of Distance Learning programme should be encouraged to adopt Asynchronous mode as a learning style etc

Keywords: Asynchronous, Learning, Clientele, Strategy, Achievement, Distance learning programme.

I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, education has been perceived as a means of developing individuals and the society. Education is

synonymous with development. Thus, informed global agenda on education. Hence, in Nigeria, several efforts have been made to give her citizens functional education. Observable, one of the major factors besieging acquisition of functional education is lack of accessibility to education, owing to rarity of educational institutions in the country.

The existing gap and disequilibrium between educational demand and facilities openly lends credence and justification to the implementation of Distance Learning Programme (DLP) in Nigeria. Morayo (2013), noted that the problem of unfilled quest for education versus the actual supply of educational services contributed to the acceptance, growth and implementation of Distance Learning Programme in Nigeria. This situation remains a source of concern to stakeholders in the provision of education in the country most especially University Education. Okebukola (2007), posited that qualified Polytechnics should be given degree award status, while National Open University also should be strengthened to accommodate qualified candidates that desired and deserved University education. In essence, tertiary institutions that are available are not enough for the admission of qualified candidates intending to be education in Nigeria.

The rarity of tertiary institutions comparing to the numeral strength of Nigerians that are yearning for tertiary education resulted into implementation of Distance Learning Programme. Egunyomi (2015), maintained that if Nigeria is to achieve a significant progress in terms of meeting the demands of people's academic attainment, non-formal system of education, of which DLP is one of its components must be developed. The California Distance Learning Project (2011), defined Distance learning as an instructional delivery system that connects learners with educational resources which will help them to attain their academic desires.

Morayo (2013), submitted that Distance learning education is an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in both in space and time from the learner. Its features are the following; temporary separation between the learner and

teacher in time and space, the use of multi-media devices; availability of the programme to the clientele at their chosen locations, it gives room for combination of work with education; there is no restriction in terms of age, sex, goals and knowledge and host. Dennis (1997), noted that DLP has influence on personal, community and overall national development. Hence, individuals who could not have access to conventional University education will have opportunity to do so through the programme. This will positively influence their development. Hence, Brunner (1999), maintained that education itself is a means of all-round development for those that engage in it. However it is observed that the level of achievement in terms of learning outcomes in DLP in Nigeria is not encouraging. This has been attributed to several challenges that are militating against the system. These include; learning styles, study habits, instructional delivery style, clientele's perception and attitudes towards DLP and hosts. Since, DLP largely depends on mass media (Print and electronics), then asynchronous instructional delivery mode is thus seen as a means to enhance quality instructional delivery for better clientele's achievement. According to Edglossary (2013);

Asynchronous learning is a general term used to describe forms of education, instruction and learning that do not occur in the same place or at the same time. The term is most commonly applied to various forms of digital and online learning in which students learn from instruction.

This implies that it is a student-centered teaching method that uses on-line learning resources to facilitate information sharing outside the constraints of time and place among a network of people. In order words, it is a teaching process where learners are at different distance locations, using, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gadgets, such as; internet, computer etc. Er et al (2009), Harris et al (2009) and Simonson et al (2012), posited that in an asynchronous learning environment, students are able to actively participate in their own learning. It gives them the opportunity also to interact with their peer, provide peer feedback and reflect on the status of their personal learning goals and outcomes. The study also allows more time for students' interaction (Bank and Zhang, 2010; Skylar, 2009 and Meloni, 2010).

Lorenzo and Ittelson (2005), defined asynchronous learning as personalized learning tools. They further reiterated that with it, teacher can assess students' understanding and adapt the future course assignments to facilitate a higher level and more in-depth understanding of the content. Therefore, based on the mode of DLP operation, asynchronous learning can therefore be seen as an online learning method that can be used for the programme implementation. Hence, Egunyomi (1999), maintained that there is a quasi-separation between the

learners and facilitators in Distance learning education. In recent times, online learning mode is becoming frequently used or in vogue in teaching and learning more than before. However, Stephenson (2011), posited that there is a little empirical research into the effectiveness of e-learning in Distance learning programme, It is against this background that this study was conducted on appraisal of effects of Asynchronous learning on clientele's achievement in Distance Learning programme in south West, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The implementation of Distance Learning programme is not unconnected with the incapability of the available tertiary institutions to accommodate the qualified candidates that are yearning for the attainment of University education yearly in Nigeria. Observably, the achievement level of clientele of the programme is not encouraging. This has been partly associated with teachers/facilitators' learning styles, students' study habit, and hosts. Thus precipitated the use of asynchronous learning in Distance Learning programme. in Nigeria as one of the recent teaching and learning strategies that characterized with the era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the present 21st century globally. However some pertinent questions that may be asked are:

- i. will the use of asynchronous learning enhance positive collaborative learning for better learning outcomes in Distance Learning programme in South-West, Nigeria?
- ii. will asynchronous learning include better academic achievement among the clientele for Distance Learning programme in South-West, Nigeria? It is against this background this study was carried out.

Objective of the Study

Specifically, the objective of the research was on appraisal of effects of asynchronous learning on the clientele's achievement in Distance Learning programme in South-West, Nigeria. the specific objectives are to:

1. determine, whether clientele's enhanced academic performance can be achieved, using asynchronous learning strategy in learning programme in south West, Nigeria.
2. examine the effects of asynchronous learning strategy on clientele motivation to study in South West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. can asynchronous learning strategy enhance clientele's academic achievement in Distance Learning programme in South West, Nigeria?

2. can asynchronous learning strategy motivate clientele towards effective study in Distance learning programme in South West, Nigeria.

Significant of the Study

The findings of the study will be significant to stakeholders in Distance learning programme in South West, Nigeria in the following ways;

- i. The findings of the research will help the providers of DLE to establish whether asynchronous learning have any positive effects on or not on clientele's achievement in South-West, Nigeria.
- ii. The findings of the study will also provide a reliable data for justifying the adoption of asynchronous learning strategy in Distance Learning programme in South-West, Nigeria.
- iii. The study will also contribute to the existing literature for the use of researchers who will carry out studies in the area of the research in future. Thus, become a good source of reference material.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK/LITERATURE REVIEW

Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous learning is increasingly becoming popular, global due to revolution Information and Communication Technological advancement (Chen, Lo, Kinshuk and Lin, 2005). Teaching and learning must be concerned with cognitive development as with a positive learning environment and must see context, cognition, and content as integral parts of the whole (Gavvison and Anderson 2003). Innovative in electronics or virtual learning which gives way to asynchronous mode of learning can make this feasible. Online learning environment provides a room for multi-literary because of multimedia connected to a multiple word in a multiple ways. According to Walking, Carnell, Lodge and Whalley (1996), broadly speaking, effective learning refers to strengthening the relationship between learning process of collaboration, interaction, participation and responsibility, learning objectives and outcomes like, problem solving skills, critical thinking and higher order thinking.

This can be achieved through a new innovative learning strategy "Asynchronous learning". Asynchronous learning makes learning to be personal and individualized. Learners can learn on their own in different environments. Asynchronous environments are not time bound and students can work on e-civilizes. An asynchronous mode of teaching and learning has been the most prevalent form of online teaching so far because of its flexible modus operandi (Hrastinski, 2008). Asynchronous environment provide students with readily available material in the form of audio/video lectures, handout, articles and power points

presentation. These materials are made accessories to the learners asynchronous and anytime via Learning Management System (LMS) or other channels of the sorts.

In recent time, asynchronous e-learning is the most adopted method for online education (Parsal and Lewis, 2008). This is due to the fact that learners are not time constrains and can participate in learning activity at their leisure. The opportunity of delayed response allows them to use their higher order learning skills as they can keep thinking about problem for an extended time period and learners may develop divergent thinking. Therefore, asynchronous space leads to a self-paced, independent, student centered learning (Murphy – Rodriguez – Mamzanares and Barbour, 2011).

Ayeisha(2016), noted that asynchronous learning can be challenging as only a carefully devised set of strategies that can keep students engaged and interested in this sort of learning environment to facilitate motivation, confidence, participation, problem solving, analytical and higher order thinking skills. It is a self-spaced system in which the students need to imbibe a culture of self-discipline so as to keep themselves active as well as interactive keep track of e-vivifies.

Kim and Frick (2011), study reveals a strongly connection between asynchronous e-learning and students' motivation during self-diversified e-learning. Afzal, Ali, Aslam, Khan, Hamids' (2010) study also shows intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which have positive impacts on academic performance with the use of Asynchronous learning and other e-learning strategies, leaving can be explained on an educational process, using ICT to create training, to distribute learning content, communicative between students and teachers and for encouragement of study (Wagner, 2005). Scholars have linked e-learning methods including asynchronous learning with instructional delivery in Distance Learning Programme all over the world. Virtual schools rely on Asynchronous, Synchronous and Hybrid e-learning modes. Distance learning programme relies on we-based learning programme organized into a single entity or school that provides supplemental or full time online studies. Globally, today, there has been a paradigm shift from traditional virtual school. Asynchronous learning strategy provide support for self-spaced and highly independent forms of learning.

In conclusion, Asynchronous learning usage in distance learning programme said has assisted achieve Distance learning programme objectives which cardinal revolves around self-study or self-learning or independent learning.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Constructivism Learning Theory (CLT), considered relevant to the study.

Constructivism Learning Theory

The roots of constructivism can be traced back to a little known Latin treatise, *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia*, written in 1710 by Giambattista Vico (as cited in Von Glaserstela, 1991). To Vico, knowledge is knowing, what parts something is made of, as well as knowing, how they are related. "Constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning" (Brooks and Brooks, 1992, as cited by Boethel and Dimock, 1999). Cognitive constructivism stresses or emphasises exploration and discovery by the learners, while social constructivism stresses collaborative effects of group of learners (Willhelmsen, Asmul and Mestaid, 1998). Boethel and Dimock (1999) state that constructivist learning theory emphasize learning as an adaptive activity, learning as situated in the context where it occurs, knowledge as constructed by the learner; the role of experience and prior understanding; resistance to change; and the role of social interaction in learning.

The constructivism learning theory stresses that learners must be allowed to be actively involving in learning task. "You make them practice it" (Hauk, 2007). The theory attempts to create a learning environment that allows each learner to construct meaning i.e. contemporary constructivists and educators are of the belief that when learner worked together the meaning is understood rather than worked alone. The point being emphasizing is that in social constructivism, while two or more people may have common knowledge structures. In the circumstances of structuring the information lonely. Despite being in the same learning environment, two people have different information structures. The meaning can be constructed by multiple people at the same time. Some important belongs of social constructivism are:

- Students openly express their own ideas, organize and defend themselves against others;
- Students are given the opportunity to learn deeply by extrapolating, setting up hypotheses and asking questions
- Students are given the opportunity to other students who may learn the subject better and have different ideas
- Students are given the opportunity to become aware of consistent information in their learning and complete the missing parts
- Students are given the opportunity to realize that the explanations and ideas of other people have different cultural and ethnic background may be different and equally valid.

The social constructivism learning theory emphasizes that when learner gather together for learning they understand what they are learning better than when worked, individually. Thus, stresses the relevance of constructivism learning theory to this study. Since, asynchronous learning is built on the principle of sharing information and knowledge outside the

constraints of time and place among a network of people, which can result into gaining knowledge from one another among the learners and sharing of information and improved understanding. It emphasis issue of collaborative learning among the students to facilitate a proper understanding of a concept

The relevance of this constructivism learning theory to this study rests on the principle that the theory makes learners to be actively involved in learning and also enhance collaborative learning which is also the principles of Asynchronous learning and Distance learning programme.

III. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study, owing to the fact that every subject or respondent in the study population could not be covered. Therefore, data generated from the sample size of the study was generalized on the study population. The study population comprised, clientele of Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria. The sample size was Three hundred and sixty (360) respondents, selected through a multi-stage sampling technique.

From the South West region in Nigeria (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo and Oyo States). Each of the state was splitted into the three existing senatorial districts, then from each of the three senatorial districts In each state, a centre of Distance learning programme that has the highest number of clientele was selected. Then, sixty (60) respondents were selected through a simple random sampling technique. Thus, made the total respondents to be three hundred and sixty (360).

Data was collected through the quantitative (secondary) and qualitative (primary) data. Self-developed research instrument by the researchers was used to collect quantitative data, entitled "Questionnaire on Appraisal of Effects of Asynchronous Learning on Clienteles' Achievement in Distance Learning programme in South-West, Nigeria", fashioned on four likert rating scale (Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) complemented with qualitative data collected through, Focus Group Discussion (FGDs).

The research instruments were validated by an expert in test and measurement at Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria. The reliability of the qualitative research instrument was done through test retest method at two weeks interval. 0.70 coefficient reliability was obtained, while the research instrument for qualitative instrument was done by conducting two sections of FGDs, using respondents that were not involved in the main FGDs.

Data collected on research questions were analysed, using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, simple percentages and mean). Data collected through the qualitative

research instrument (primary) was collated, transcribed and analysed, qualitatively.

IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Research Question One: Can asynchronous learning strategy enhance clientele academic achievement in Distance Learning programme in South West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Showing frequency counts, simple percentages and mean on can asynchronous learning strategies enhance clientele's achievement in Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Remarks
1	Asynchronous learning strategy has improved my academic achievement	8 2.20%	10 2.80%	40 11.10%	302 84%	3.8	Accepted
2	Asynchronous learning strategy has no effect on academic achievement	253 70.20%	45 12.50%	40 11.10%	22 6.10%	1.5	Rejected
3	My level of assimilation has increased with the use of asynchronous learning strategy	6 1.70%	16 4.40%	42 12%	296 82.20%	3.7	Accepted
4	Asynchronous learning strategy retards my level of assimilation	298 83%	36 10%	20 5.50%	6 1.70%	1.3	Rejected
5	Asynchronous learning strategy do not enhance my retention rate	265 74%	53 15%	36 10%	6 1.70%	1.4	Rejected
6	With the adoption of asynchronous learning strategy the level of my retention has improved rapidly	8 2.20%	9 2.50%	31 8.60%	312 87%	3.8	Accepted
	Total	838 39%	169 7.80%	209 9.70%	944 43.70%	2.6	Accepted

Table 1 above shows the result on research question one that states that can asynchronous learning strategy enhance clientele academic achievement in Distance Learning programme in South West, Nigeria?

On item (1), 302 (84%) among the respondents responded strongly agreed, 40 (11.1%) agreed, 10 (2.8%) disagreed, while 8 (2.2%) strongly disagreed. On item (2), 22 (6.1%) strongly agreed, 40 (11.1%) agreed, 45 (12.5%) disagreed, 253 (70.2%) strongly disagreed. On item (3), 296 (82.2%) strongly agreed, 42 (12%) agreed, 16 (4.4%) disagreed, while 6 (1.7%) strongly disagreed.

On item (4), 6 (1.7%) strongly agreed, 20 (5.5%) agreed, 36 (10%) disagreed while 298 (83%) strongly disagreed. On item (5), 6 (1.7%) strongly agreed, 36 (10%) agreed, 53 (15%) disagreed while 265 (74%) strongly disagreed. Finally on item (6), 312 (87%), strongly agreed, 31 (8.6%) agreed, 9 (2.5%) disagreed while , 8 (2.2%) strongly disagreed.

Generally, the result reveals ($\bar{x} = 2.6$) as the mean of rating scale of four which is greater than the average of rating scale of four ($\bar{x} = 2.5$). this indicates that asynchronous learning strategy could enhance the clientele's academic achievement in Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria.

The result was buttressed by the submission of Afzal, Ali, Aslam, Khan and Hamids (2010) that asynchronous

learning could results into a higher academic achievement or performance. The submission was also supported strongly by the responses from the respondents during the FGDs.

A discussant stated that:

Online service has makes Distance Learning Programme very convenient and comfortable for me through asynchronous learning. I can learn at my own leisure and it also creates opportunity to share knowledge and clarifies issues with my other academic colleagues, this enhances my academic achievement.

A male discussant during FGDs in Distance Learning Programme – Ondo State, Nigeria.

Another discussant had this to say:

I am of the view that my achievement academically in recent time, especially since I have started Distance Learning Programme is not unconnected with the use of asynchronous learning.

A female discussant during FGD in Distance Learning Programme – Oyo State, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: Can asynchronous learning strategy motivate clienteles' towards study in South West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Showing frequency counts, simple percentages and mean on can asynchronous learning strategy motivate clientele's towards study in South West, Nigeria.

S/N	ITEMS	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Remarks
7	Asynchronous learning strategy creates my interest in studying	9 2.50%	25 6.90%	90 25.00%	236 66%	3.5	Accepted
8	I do not like to study due to the adoption of asynchronous learning strategies	289 80.30%	36 10.00%	25 6.90%	10 2.80%	1.3	Rejected
9	Due to the use of asynchronous learning strategy, I am always involving in reading table	15 4.20%	20 5.50%	65 18%	260 72.20%	3.6	Accepted
10	Asynchronous learning strategy is discouraging me from involving in study	180 50%	56 16%	69 19.20%	55 15.30%	2	Rejected
11	Asynchronous learning strategy makes me to be involving in study frequently	11 3%	24 7%	36 10%	289 80.30%	3.7	Accepted
12	I am seldomly involving in studying task due to asynchronous strategy	230 64.00%	68 18.90%	36 10.00%	26 7.2%	1.6	Rejected
	Total	734 34%	229 11.00%	321 15.00%	876 40.50%	2.6	Accepted

Table 2 above reveals the findings on research question two which states that can asynchronous learning strategy motivate clientele towards effective study in Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria.

On item (7), 236 (65.5%) among the respondents responded strongly agreed, 90 (25%) agreed, 25 (6.9%) disagreed while 9 (2.5%) strongly disagreed. On item (8), 10 (2.8%) strongly agreed, 25 (6.9%) agreed, 36 (10%) disagreed, 289 (80.3%) strongly disagreed. On item (9), 260 (72.2%) strongly agreed, 65 (18.0%) agreed, 20 (5.5%) disagreed while 15 (4.2%) strongly disagreed.

On item (10), 55 (15.3%) strongly agreed, 69 (19.2%) agreed, 56 (15.3%) disagreed while 180 (50%) strongly disagreed. On item (11), 289 (80.3%) strongly agreed, 36 (10%) agreed, 24 (6.7%) disagreed while 11 (3.0%) strongly disagreed. Finally on item (12), 26 (7.2%) strongly agreed, 36 (10%) agreed, 68 (18.9%) disagreed while 230 (64%) strongly disagreed.

The result generally indicates that asynchronous learning strategy could motivate the clientele of Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria towards effective study. Since ($x = 2.6$), the mean of rating scale of four is greater than ($x = 2.5$) of average rating scale of four. The findings was in consonance with the opinion of Ayeisha (2016) that asynchronous learning has no potential to keep students engaged and interested in their learning. Since, Asynchronous learning creates all sorts of motivation (extrinsic and intrinsic). Kin and Frick (2011), opinion also buttresses the results that asynchronous learning is a sort of motivation for the students, especially when it gives room for self-directed or individualized learning modes. This submission was also attested to by the discussant during the FGDs.

A discussant strongly maintained that:

The use of asynchronous learning has always been directing my mind toward studying. This is quite different from my experience in the traditional method of teaching and learning.

A female discussant during FGD in DLE – Lagos State, Nigeria

Another discussant stated that:

I always happy using asynchronous learning method whenever I am studying. The strategy makes this programme (DLP) to be quite from my previous learning experience.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the following conclusions were made. The use of asynchronous learning strategy could motivate the clientele of DLE towards effective study. Also, it enhances or promotes clientele academic achievement in Distance Learning Programme in South West, Nigeria.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion the following recommendations were made:

Firstly, the clientele of DLE in South West, Nigeria should be encouraged to adopt the asynchronous learning strategy as studying style.

Besides, the clientele of DLE in South West, Nigeria should be advised to know how to use internet services. Since, asynchronous learning strategies rely on online facilities.

Finally, DLE providers should put in place all the necessary logistics that will make asynchronous learning strategy workable .

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