

Challenges and Adaptations in Implementing E-learning for Second Language Acquisition in Nigerian Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Methodological Analysis

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Abstract

This study critically examines the challenges and adaptations in implementing e-learning for second language acquisition in Nigerian schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using various online platforms, the research evaluates the effectiveness and obstacles encountered in the online teaching environment. The study adapts traditional in-person language teaching methods to online formats, validating their effectiveness in the Nigerian context. Ethical considerations, including privacy concerns and the digital divide, are addressed. Through a close replication and direct comparison of in-person and online language teaching methods, the study provides insights into the discrepancies and similarities in student performance and engagement, guiding future methodological approaches in second language research.

Keywords: E-learning, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), COVID-19 Pandemic, Nigerian Schools, Online Teaching Effectiveness, Ethical Considerations

Résumé

Cette étude examine de manière critique les défis et les adaptations liés à la mise en œuvre de l'e-learning pour l'acquisition d'une langue seconde dans les écoles nigérianes pendant la pandémie de COVID-19. Utilisant diverses plateformes en ligne, la recherche évalue l'efficacité et les obstacles rencontrés dans l'environnement d'enseignement en ligne. L'étude adapte les méthodes d'enseignement en personne traditionnelles aux formats en ligne, validant leur efficacité dans le contexte nigérian. Les considérations éthiques, y compris les préoccupations en matière de confidentialité et la fracture numérique, sont abordées. Par une réplification proche et une comparaison directe des méthodes d'enseignement des langues en personne et en ligne, l'étude fournit des informations sur les divergences et les similitudes dans les performances et l'engagement des élèves, guidant les approches méthodologiques futures dans la recherche en acquisition des langues secondes.

Mots-clés : E-learning, acquisition d'une langue seconde (ALS), pandémie de COVID-19, écoles nigérianes, efficacité de l'enseignement en ligne, considérations éthiques

Introduction Background and Context

The concept of online learning, often referred to as "e-learning," is defined by Orivel & Orivel (2006, p. 5) as "any training device that utilizes a local, wide area, or internet network to disseminate, interact, or communicate." This definition highlights the intricate and multifaceted nature of e-learning, which encompasses a diverse array of platforms and technologies designed to enhance the educational experience. As e-learning continues to evolve, it serves a crucial role in transforming traditional educational paradigms, providing flexible and accessible learning opportunities tailored to meet the varied needs of learners. The integration of numerous digital tools and resources within e-learning frameworks not only aids in knowledge acquisition but also promotes interactive engagement among participants, thereby enriching the overall learning environment. Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of the nuances and applications of e-learning is imperative for educators and learners as they navigate the complexities of contemporary education.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in late 2019, has had a profound and unprecedented impact on e-learning and global education systems. As the virus spread rapidly across the world, governments were compelled to implement stringent measures to curb its transmission, including the closure of educational institutions. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, which led to the immediate suspension of in-person educational activities in many countries (World Health Organization, 2020). This abrupt halt posed a significant threat to the continuity of education, necessitating the adoption of alternative modes of instruction to mitigate the disruption.

In response to these challenges, e-learning emerged as a critical solution to ensure the continuity of education during the lockdowns. E-learning, defined as the use of electronic media and information and communication technologies (ICT) in education, became the new norm. Various online platforms, including virtual classrooms, video conferencing tools, and digital learning resources, were rapidly deployed to facilitate remote learning (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020). This shift to digital education was seen not only as a temporary fix but also as a potential long-term strategy to enhance educational resilience in the face of future disruptions.

However, the transition to e-learning was not without its challenges, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. Nigerian schools faced numerous obstacles in implementing effective e-learning solutions during the pandemic. One of the primary challenges was the lack of adequate infrastructure, including reliable internet connectivity and access to digital devices (Olusola et al., 2020). The instability of the electricity supply further exacerbated these difficulties, making it challenging for students and teachers to participate consistently in online learning activities.

Additionally, there were significant socio-economic barriers that hindered the widespread adoption of e-learning in Nigeria. Many students, particularly those from low-income families, did not have access to the necessary technological tools, such as smartphones, tablets, or computers, to engage in online learning (Olusola et al., 2020). This digital divide highlighted the inequities within the education system, where students from disadvantaged backgrounds were disproportionately affected by the shift to remote learning.

Moreover, the pedagogical readiness of educators to deliver instruction through digital platforms was another critical issue. While some teachers had received training on the use of multimedia and online teaching methods, a significant number were unprepared for the sudden transition to e-learning. This lack of preparedness impacted the quality of instruction and the overall effectiveness of the e-learning initiatives (Olusola et al., 2020).

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed a rapid and necessary shift towards e-learning as a means to sustain educational activities amid widespread school closures. While this transition offered a viable solution to maintain continuity in education, it also exposed and intensified existing challenges within the Nigerian

educational landscape. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensuring that e-learning can be effectively integrated and sustained in the future, particularly in the context of second language acquisition, where interactive and immersive learning experiences are crucial.

Rationale

Importance of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in Nigerian Education

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) holds a pivotal role in the Nigerian educational framework, given the country's multilingual landscape and the prominence of English as both an official language and a medium of instruction. The English language occupies a pivotal role in the communicative framework of Nigeria, a phenomenon rooted in the historical context of British colonialism. As articulated by Ehigie (2024:125), the introduction of English during the colonial period has significantly influenced the linguistic landscape of Nigeria, shaping not only the modes of communication but also the socio-cultural dynamics within the country. The legacy of English has fostered a complex interplay of languages, where it serves as a lingua franca among diverse ethnic groups, facilitating interactions in a society characterized by linguistic plurality. This academic exploration aims to analyze the implications of English as a colonial inheritance and its ongoing impact on Nigeria's communicative growth, highlighting the multifaceted relationship between language, identity, and societal development in the context of post-colonial Nigeria. Proficiency in English is not only essential for academic success but also for socio-economic mobility and participation in the global economy. As English serves as a lingua franca in Nigeria, mastery of the language facilitates communication across diverse ethnic groups and enhances access to higher education and employment opportunities (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020).

The acquisition of English as a second language is integral to the curriculum at various educational levels, from primary to tertiary education. This focus on SLA aims to equip students with the necessary linguistic skills to navigate academic content delivered in English and to engage in broader socio-economic activities. Consequently, the effectiveness of SLA methodologies and tools has a direct impact on the quality of education and the prospects of Nigerian students.

Need for Research on the Effectiveness of E-learning Platforms for SLA in the Nigerian Context

The COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed an unprecedented transition to e-learning, highlighting the urgent need to assess the effectiveness of digital platforms in facilitating Second Language Acquisition (SLA). This paper explores the advantages and challenges of e-learning in the Nigerian context, underscoring the necessity for empirical research to evaluate how socio-economic and infrastructural factors impact SLA outcomes. Introduction: The shift to e-learning necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed educational landscapes worldwide, compelling educators and learners to adapt to digital platforms for academic engagement. While e-learning offers significant benefits, including flexibility, accessibility, and enhanced interactive learning experiences, its applicability and effectiveness within Nigeria's unique socio-economic and infrastructural context require thorough investigation. The Nigerian Context: Despite the promise of digital education, Nigeria faces considerable obstacles in the implementation of e-learning initiatives. Infrastructure deficits, socio-economic disparities, and limited technological proficiency among both educators and students hinder the realization of e-learning's potential. As Olusola et al. (2020) assert, empirical research is vital to understanding how these contextual challenges influence SLA outcomes.

A study conducted at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), which is recognized for offering distance education, illustrates the difficulties encountered in integrating e-learning. Ajadi, Salawu, and Adeoye (2008) identify several barriers to effective e-learning, including persistent power outages, negative learner attitudes,

inadequate internet access, fluctuating connectivity, high costs, and pervasive "technophobia." The Role of Environment in E-Learning: Additionally, Qiu and Olugbenga (2020) highlight that in Nigeria's Northern region, where literacy rates are the lowest, both teachers and learners exhibit a lack of familiarity with virtual learning environments. These findings underscore the critical role that the environment plays in virtual pedagogy, encompassing all components essential to the operation of e-learning. Conclusion: In conclusion, understanding and addressing the environmental factors that influence e-learning is imperative for its successful implementation, particularly in regions like Nigeria where infrastructural and technological challenges are prevalent. Future research must focus on identifying strategies to mitigate these challenges, thus enhancing the efficacy of e-learning in supporting Second Language Acquisition in the Nigerian context.

Research on the effectiveness of e-learning platforms for SLA in Nigeria is essential for several reasons. First, it can provide insights into the specific barriers and facilitators of successful language acquisition in an online environment. Understanding these factors can inform the development of targeted interventions to enhance the quality of e-learning for SLA. Second, such research can contribute to the broader body of knowledge on digital education, offering valuable lessons that can be applied in similar contexts globally. Finally, evaluating the effectiveness of e-learning platforms can help policymakers and educational stakeholders make informed decisions about integrating technology into language education, ensuring that investments in digital infrastructure and training yield meaningful improvements in educational outcomes.

In summary, the importance of SLA in the Nigerian educational system necessitates a thorough examination of how e-learning platforms can be leveraged to support language acquisition effectively. Given the unique challenges posed by the Nigerian context, research in this area is critical to identifying best practices, addressing existing gaps, and ultimately enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes for Nigerian students.

Research Objectives

In their 2013 study, Olugbeka and Izu (p. 206) underscore the significant role of educational policy in facilitating the establishment of numerous computer centers within schools. These centers have been financed through various channels, including the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), and the STEP-B initiative. Despite the widespread availability of these computer facilities across educational institutions in the country, the implementation of virtual instruction remains notably limited. Rather than serving as platforms for online learning, the majority of these centers are predominantly employed to conduct face-to-face classes focused on computer studies. This observation prompts critical inquiries into the effectiveness of the existing educational infrastructure in fostering digital literacy and enhancing accessibility in an era that is increasingly characterized by technological advancement. The lack of integration of online learning opportunities in these centers not only undermines the potential benefits of digital education but also highlights a pressing gap in the educational policies that aim to prepare students for a technology-driven future, thereby creating a discursive room for our research objectives as follow:

To Evaluate the Challenges and Adaptations in E-learning for SLA During the Pandemic

The primary objective of this research is to evaluate the various challenges and adaptations associated with implementing e-learning for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) during the COVID-19 pandemic. This encompasses an in-depth analysis of the infrastructural, socio-economic, and pedagogical barriers that Nigerian schools encountered as they transitioned from traditional in-person instruction to digital platforms. By identifying these challenges, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the specific difficulties faced by educators and learners, as well as the strategies they employ to adapt to the new e-learning environment. This evaluation will draw on both quantitative data, such as survey responses, and qualitative insights from interviews

and focus groups with teachers, students, and parents (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020).

To Compare the Effectiveness of In-person and Online SLA Methods

A secondary objective of this research is to conduct a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of in-person versus online SLA methods. Given the rapid and often unplanned shift to e-learning, it is crucial to assess how well these online methods perform relative to traditional classroom-based instruction. This comparison will focus on several key metrics, including student engagement, language proficiency outcomes, and overall satisfaction with the learning experience. By systematically evaluating these factors, the study aims to determine whether online SLA methods can achieve comparable results to in-person instruction and to identify any significant discrepancies that may exist. This analysis will provide valuable insights into the potential long-term viability of e-learning as a complementary or alternative mode of language education (Olusola et al., 2020).

To Address Ethical Considerations in Online Education

The third objective of this research is to address the ethical considerations associated with online education, particularly in the context of SLA. The transition to e-learning has raised several ethical issues, including concerns about digital privacy, data security, and equitable access to technology. Constructivist pedagogy, as articulated by Jean Piaget (1964), is founded upon four essential tenets that emphasize the active role of learners in the knowledge construction process. This theory posits that knowledge is not passively absorbed but rather actively constructed by individuals as they interact with their environment. The adaptation of this knowledge is inherently influenced by contextual factors, suggesting that learners' modifications to their understanding are deeply rooted in their lived experiences. Moreover, the learning process is intricately tied to the specific contexts in which learners operate, further affirming the notion that education is not a one-size-fits-all paradigm. In alignment with contemporary educational research, Jones and Brader-Araje (2002) highlight that constructivism equips educators with pedagogical strategies that resonate with current understandings of learning processes.

This alignment becomes particularly significant when examining the role of technology in education. Fred D. Davis (1986) introduces the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which serves as a theoretical framework within information systems to elucidate how users accept and utilize technological innovations. According to the TAM, the acceptance and subsequent use of technology are influenced by various factors, with a primary focus on users' perceptions of the technology's utility and ease of use. The confluence of constructivist pedagogy and the Technology Acceptance Model offers a nuanced perspective on how learners interact with educational technologies in contemporary settings. By understanding the principles of constructivism alongside the factors that drive technology acceptance, educators can better facilitate the integration of technological tools in their teaching practices. This intersection not only enhances pedagogical effectiveness but also promotes a more engaging and effective learning experience for students in an increasingly digital educational landscape.

This study will explore these ethical dimensions, examining how they impact both educators and learners. For instance, the study will investigate issues such as the protection of student data, the consent processes for participating in online activities, and the measures taken to ensure that all students have equal access to the necessary technological resources. By highlighting these ethical considerations, the research aims to provide recommendations for creating a more inclusive and secure e-learning environment, ensuring that the benefits of digital education are accessible to all students, regardless of their socio-economic background (Olusola et al., 2020).

In conclusion, these research objectives aim to provide a thorough evaluation of the challenges and adaptations in e-learning for SLA during the pandemic, compare the effectiveness of in-person and online SLA methods, and address the ethical considerations inherent in the shift to online education. Achieving these objectives will

contribute to a deeper understanding of the current landscape of SLA in Nigeria and inform future educational practices and policies.

Research Questions

What Are the Main Challenges Faced by Nigerian Schools in Implementing E-learning for SLA During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

The first research question seeks to identify and evaluate the primary challenges encountered by Nigerian schools in their efforts to implement e-learning for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) during the COVID-19 pandemic. This involves exploring the infrastructural, socio-economic, and pedagogical barriers that hindered the smooth transition to online education. Specific areas of focus include the availability and reliability of internet connectivity, access to necessary digital devices, and the preparedness of educators to deliver effective online instruction. Additionally, the study will investigate the impact of these challenges on both teachers and students, highlighting how these obstacles affect the teaching and learning processes in SLA (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020).

How Effective Are Online Platforms Compared to In-person Methods for SLA?

The second research question aims to compare the effectiveness of online platforms with traditional in-person methods for SLA. This comparison will be based on various metrics such as student engagement, language proficiency outcomes, and overall satisfaction with the learning experience. By analyzing these factors, the study seeks to determine whether online SLA methods can achieve similar results to those obtained through face-to-face instruction. This question is critical for understanding the potential of e-learning as a sustainable and effective mode of language education, particularly in contexts where in-person teaching may not always be feasible (Olusola et al., 2020).

What Ethical Considerations Arise in the Context of Online SLA?

The third research question addresses the ethical considerations that emerge in the context of online SLA. The rapid shift to e-learning during the pandemic has raised several ethical issues, including concerns about digital privacy, data security, and equitable access to technology. This study will explore how these ethical dimensions impact the implementation of online SLA, examining the measures taken to protect student data, ensure informed consent, and provide equitable access to digital resources. By addressing these ethical considerations, the research aims to provide recommendations for creating a more inclusive and secure online learning environment, thereby ensuring that all students have the opportunity to benefit from digital education (Olusola et al., 2020).

The coronavirus pandemic has instigated a profound transformation in the education sector, compelling a rapid transition to virtual pedagogy. This paper explores the implications of this shift, focusing on the challenges and opportunities that have emerged as educators and students navigate online learning environments. The coronavirus health crisis has significantly altered the landscape of education, necessitating an urgent pivot towards virtual pedagogy. This transition has predominantly arisen from the comprehensive and partial lockdowns imposed by governments worldwide, leading to the prolonged closure of educational institutions, from early childhood education settings to universities. Such measures were critical for mitigating the transmission of the virus, which has been likened to a devastating plague affecting millions globally (National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases, 2014, p.1). The sudden shift to online learning environments has prompted educators and students to reevaluate traditional pedagogical practices and develop innovative strategies to maintain continuity in education during these unprecedented times. This paper examines the multifaceted implications of virtual pedagogy, highlighting both the challenges faced—such as digital inequity, lack of engagement, and pedagogical adaptation—

and the opportunities it presents for enhancing educational accessibility and flexibility. As we continue to navigate the repercussions of the pandemic on education, it is essential to critically assess the lessons learned from this transition to virtual pedagogy. Understanding these dynamics will not only inform current educational responses but also shape future practices in a post-pandemic world.

The transition to virtual education has prompted a significant shift in pedagogical approaches, compelling educators to adapt traditional teaching methods to digital platforms. This sudden transformation has raised questions regarding the efficacy of online learning, the accessibility of technology for all students, and the need for innovative teaching strategies that engage learners in a virtual environment. As we navigate this unprecedented educational landscape, it becomes essential to analyze the implications of virtual pedagogy and explore effective practices that can enhance learning outcomes while addressing the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic.

It is essential to delineate the distinctions between distance education and e-learning, as these terms are frequently conflated in contemporary discourse. Guri-Rosenblit (2005, p. 468) emphasizes that, while both concepts relate to instructional methodologies that transcend traditional classroom settings, they are not synonymous. Distance education encompasses a broader spectrum of teaching and learning practices that may include various formats and delivery mechanisms, whereas e-learning specifically refers to the use of electronic technologies to facilitate education. In this context, Nipper's (1989, p. 68) foundational research categorizes distance education into three distinct generations: correspondence-based instruction, multimedia-based instruction, and instruction utilizing communication technologies. This classification system serves to illustrate the progressive evolution of pedagogical strategies employed in distance education, highlighting how technological advancements have transformed the learning experience. The shift from static correspondence methods to dynamic, interactive communication technologies signifies a pivotal development in the field, fostering greater engagement and accessibility for learners. Recognizing these differences is imperative for educators and learners as they navigate the increasingly diverse landscape of educational modalities. A nuanced understanding of the varying frameworks of distance education allows stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding the adoption of appropriate teaching strategies and technological tools. Ultimately, acknowledging these distinctions enhances the efficacy of educational delivery, ensuring that learners receive the most relevant and impactful educational experiences possible.

In summary, these research questions are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, effectiveness, and ethical considerations associated with implementing e-learning for SLA in Nigerian schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Addressing these questions will contribute to effective and equitable e-learning strategies for SLA in the future.

Methods

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and adaptations in e-learning for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The mixed-methods design allows for a more nuanced understanding of the research problem by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The study also includes a critical analysis of existing literature on e-learning and SLA to contextualize the findings within the broader field of educational research.

Participants

The participants in this study were selected from Nigerian schools that implemented e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study includes a diverse group of teachers and students to capture multiple perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness of e-learning for SLA. For students in the surveyed population, 59% identified as female, while the remaining 41% identified as male. A significant majority of

respondents (65.1%) fell within the age range of 15 to 20 years. Following this group, individuals aged 10 to 15 years comprised 15.1% of the participants. Furthermore, those aged between 20 and 30 years represented 13.2% of the total sample, with the remaining respondents being individuals over the age of 30. This demographic distribution highlights a predominance of younger individuals within the surveyed group, particularly in the 15 to 20-year age bracket.

In examining the demographic composition of the teaching staff, it is observed that 48.7% of the respondents identify as female, while the remaining 51.3% are male. The age distribution among the respondents reveals that 10.5% fall within the 20-30-year age bracket. A significant portion, 18.4%, belongs to the 50-70 year category, whereas the largest percentage, 71.1%, is comprised of individuals aged between 30 and 50 years. This data indicates a diverse range of ages among the educators, with a notable concentration in the middle-age category, suggesting potential implications for teaching methodologies and experiences within the educational environment. Schools were chosen based on their engagement with online learning platforms during the pandemic, ensuring that the sample represents a range of experiences and contexts. In this paper, we will present our findings derived from a comprehensive analysis centered on selected critical research questions that directly align with the objectives of our study. Our investigation primarily focuses on the perceptions and influences of E-learning among students and teachers. By exploring these dynamics, we aim to shed light on how both parties engage with and are impacted by digital learning environments. The insights garnered from this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the educational landscape in the context of E-learning, highlighting the multifaceted interactions between pedagogical practices and technological advancements.

Through this exploration, we seek to identify both the challenges and opportunities that arise in the realm of online education, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of E-learning experiences.

Data Collection Tools

To gather comprehensive data, the study utilized a combination of surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. Surveys and questionnaires were distributed to teachers, students, and parents to collect quantitative data on their experiences with e-learning. These tools included questions on access to technology, internet connectivity, engagement with online platforms, and perceived effectiveness of online SLA methods. Additionally, interviews and focus groups were conducted to obtain qualitative insights into the challenges and adaptations experienced by participants. The study also analyzed the use of specific online platforms, such as WhatsApp, Google Meet, and Zoom, to understand their role and effectiveness in facilitating SLA.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection involved several steps to ensure thorough and reliable data gathering. Surveys and questionnaires were distributed via email and online, allowing participants to complete them conveniently. Interviews and focus groups were scheduled with selected participants, and conducted via video conferencing tools to adhere to social distancing measures. Data collection occurred over a specified period to capture a wide range of experiences and ensure the validity of the findings. Participants were given ample time to respond, and follow-up reminders were sent to maximize response rates.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the collected data was conducted using both statistical and thematic techniques. Quantitative data from surveys and questionnaires were analyzed using statistical methods to identify patterns, trends, and correlations. This analysis provided a broad overview of the challenges and effectiveness of e-learning for SLA. Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups were subjected to thematic analysis, which involved coding and categorizing responses to identify common themes and insights. This approach facilitated a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. Finally, a comparative analysis was conducted to evaluate the differences and similarities between in-person and online SLA methods, highlighting key findings and implications for future practice.

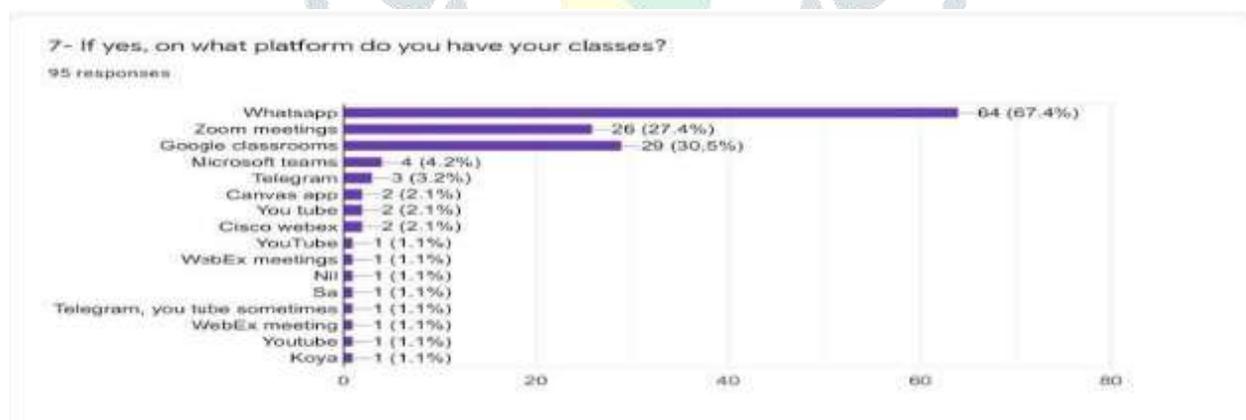
Results

Quantitative Findings

The quantitative data collected in this study provides critical insights into the effectiveness of various online platforms for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistical analysis of survey and questionnaire responses revealed significant findings regarding student performance and engagement in online versus in-person settings.

1. Effectiveness of Online Platforms for SLA:

- The data indicated varying levels of effectiveness among the different online platforms used for SLA. WhatsApp, Google Meet, and Zoom were among the most frequently utilized tools, each exhibiting distinct advantages and limitations. For instance, WhatsApp was noted for its accessibility and ease of use, particularly in areas with limited internet connectivity. However, platforms like Google Meet and Zoom were preferred for interactive sessions due to their video conferencing capabilities (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020).

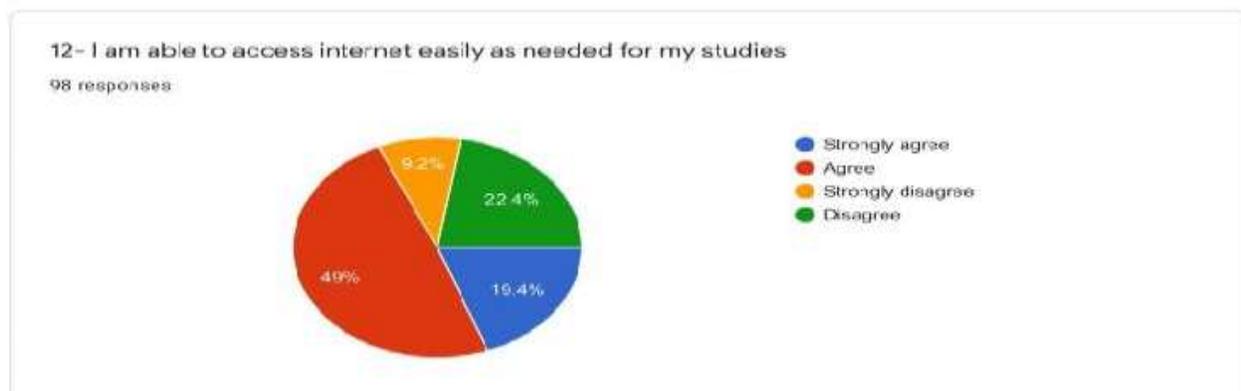
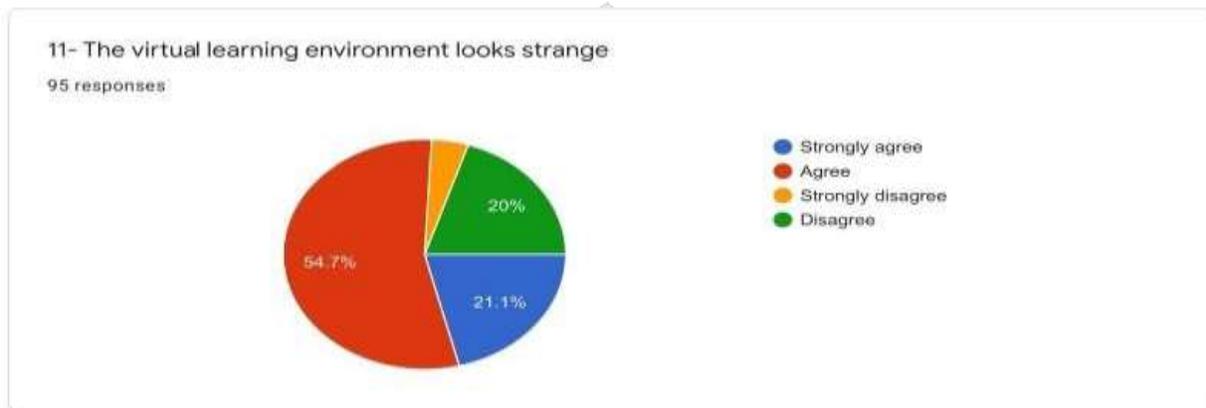


In the realm of online education, the choice of communication platforms plays a pivotal role in the delivery of course content and the maintenance of student engagement. For individuals who expressed a preference for online courses, the data indicates that WhatsApp emerges as the most widely adopted platform among educators, boasting a usage rate of 67.4%. This popularity can be attributed to WhatsApp's recognition as a leading social media application, which provides a familiar interface for both educators and students. Following WhatsApp, video conferencing tools such as Google Meet and Zoom are utilized by 30.5% and 27.4% of educators, respectively, highlighting their significance in facilitating real-time interaction and collaboration. Conversely, platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Koya are less frequently employed for virtual meetings, suggesting a gap in their adoption in comparison to more familiar applications. This pattern underscores a broader trend within

online education: educators tend to gravitate towards platforms that offer accessibility and ease of use, thereby fostering immediate and effective communication with their students. Such findings not only reflect the current landscape of online learning but also emphasize the importance of selecting communication tools that enhance the educational experience.

2. Student Performance and Engagement:

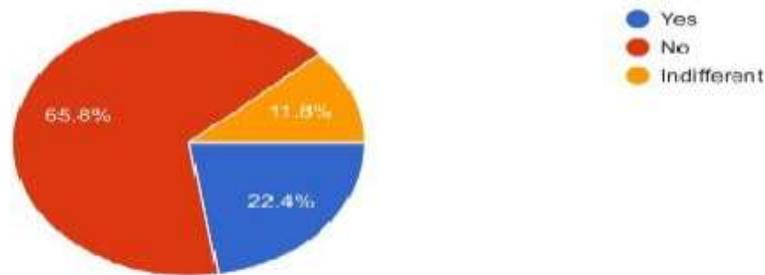
- Analysis of student performance data showed a noticeable decline in language proficiency outcomes for students engaged in online learning compared to their in- person counterparts. This decline was attributed to several factors, including reduced interaction with peers and instructors, as well as technical difficulties that hindered consistent participation. Engagement levels were also lower in online settings, with many students reporting distractions and difficulties in maintaining focus during virtual classes (Olusola et al., 2020). As proposed earlier, specific research questions that align with our objectives are shown and discussed below:



The findings reveal a dichotomy in students' perceptions of virtual learning environments, with a significant 75.8% of learners reporting a sense of unfamiliarity. In contrast, the remaining 24.2% of respondents indicate that they are comfortable navigating these digital spaces. Furthermore, the data reflects a generally favorable outlook on internet access, as 68.4% of participants affirm that they possess reliable connectivity. However, a notable 31.6% of students experience challenges in establishing stable connections and acquiring necessary data units, underscoring potential barriers to effective e-learning. Additionally, an encouraging 65.8% of learners express that they do not find the transition to e-learning particularly challenging.

20-Is it difficult for you to adapt to the virtual environment for teaching?

76 responses



Within this group, 24% describe their e-learning experience as easy, while 11.8% refrain from providing a definitive opinion. This data underscores the diverse experiences students encounter in adapting to online education, highlighting both a significant percentage of individuals who grapple with the unfamiliar aspects of virtual learning and a substantial cohort that perceives the transition as manageable. These insights may have implications for educators and institutions seeking to enhance the e-learning experience by addressing the concerns of those struggling with adaptation while building on the strengths of those who find it accessible.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data gathered from interviews and focus groups provided a deeper understanding of the challenges and adaptations experienced by participants during the shift to e-learning for SLA.

1. Challenges and Adaptations:

- Participants identified several key challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, such as unreliable internet connectivity and frequent power outages, which significantly impeded the effectiveness of online learning. Additionally, the lack of digital devices and technological skills among both students and teachers were major barriers. Adaptations included the use of more accessible platforms like WhatsApp for sharing learning materials and conducting discussions, as well as the development of asynchronous learning modules to accommodate students with limited internet access (Olusola et al., 2020).

2. Perceptions of Online SLA Methods:

- The perceptions of online SLA methods varied among participants. While some appreciated the flexibility and convenience of e-learning, many expressed concerns about the quality of education and the lack of personal interaction. Teachers noted that while they had to modify their teaching strategies to fit the online format, the lack of immediate feedback and the inability to gauge student understanding in real time were significant drawbacks. Students also reported feeling isolated and less motivated without the social aspects of in-person learning (Olusola et al., 2020).

Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data highlighted several discrepancies and similarities between in-person and online SLA methods.

1. Discrepancies:

- The most notable discrepancy was in student performance, with online learners showing lower proficiency levels than those in traditional classroom settings. This was corroborated by both quantitative data and participant feedback, which attributed the lower performance to factors like technical issues and reduced engagement.
- Engagement levels were consistently higher in in-person settings, where students benefited from direct interaction with instructors and peers, structured learning environments, and fewer distractions compared to online settings (Olusola et al., 2020).

2. Similarities:

- Despite the challenges, some similarities were observed in the adaptability of both teachers and students to new learning environments. Both groups demonstrated resilience and creativity in overcoming obstacles, such as using alternative communication methods and developing new instructional strategies to enhance learning outcomes.
- There was also a shared recognition of the potential benefits of integrating technology into language education, suggesting that with improved infrastructure and training, e-learning could become a valuable complement to traditional teaching methods (Olusola et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the results of this study underscore the complexities and challenges of implementing e-learning for SLA in Nigerian schools during the pandemic. While there are clear benefits and potential for digital education, significant improvements in infrastructure, training, and support are necessary to fully realize its advantages.

Discussion

Interpretation of Findings

Discussion of Key Findings to the Research Questions and Objectives

The findings of this study provide critical insights into the challenges and adaptations associated with implementing e-learning for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigerian schools. The primary research questions aimed to evaluate the challenges faced by Nigerian schools, compare the effectiveness of in-person and online SLA methods, and address the ethical considerations in online education.

Analysis of the Effectiveness of Online Platforms for SLA

The study revealed that while online platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Meet, and Zoom were widely adopted, their effectiveness varied significantly. WhatsApp was frequently used due to its accessibility and low data requirements, making it suitable for asynchronous learning. However, it lacked the interactive features necessary for effective language acquisition. In contrast, Google Meet and Zoom offered better interactivity through video conferencing but were hindered by poor internet connectivity and frequent power outages (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020). Overall, online SLA methods were less effective than in-person instruction, primarily due to these technical and infrastructural challenges.

Insights into the Challenges and Adaptations Faced by Nigerian Schools

The transition to e-learning posed significant challenges, including inadequate technological infrastructure, high costs of internet access, and a lack of digital literacy among both students and teachers. Adaptations included the use of more accessible platforms, such as WhatsApp, and the development of asynchronous learning modules to

accommodate varying levels of internet access. Teachers had to modify their instructional strategies to fit the online format, often relying on pre-recorded lessons and digital assignments to maintain educational continuity (Olusola et al., 2020).

Implications for SLA

Implications of the Findings for Second Language Acquisition in the Nigerian Context

The findings highlight the need for substantial improvements in the technological infrastructure and digital literacy in Nigerian schools to support effective SLA through e-learning. The challenges identified underscore the disparities in access to education, particularly for students from low-income families who lack the necessary resources for online learning. Ensuring equitable access to digital education tools and reliable internet connectivity is crucial for the success of e-learning initiatives in SLA (Olusola et al., 2020).

Recommendations for Improving E-learning Methods for SLA

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made to enhance e-learning methods for SLA in Nigeria:

1. **Infrastructure Development:** Investment in robust and reliable internet infrastructure and consistent electricity supply is essential.
2. **Training and Support:** Comprehensive training programs for teachers on effective online teaching strategies and digital tools should be implemented.
3. **Accessible Learning Platforms:** Development and use of low-bandwidth learning platforms that can function effectively in areas with limited internet access.
4. **Equitable Access:** Policies to provide affordable or free digital devices and internet access to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Ethical Considerations

Discussion of Ethical Issues Identified During the Research

The study identified several ethical issues related to online education, including concerns about data privacy, digital security, and equitable access. The transition to e-learning exposed vulnerabilities in protecting student data and ensuring secure online interactions. Additionally, the digital divide raised ethical questions about the fairness and inclusivity of online education, as many students were unable to participate fully due to a lack of resources (Olusola et al., 2020).

Suggestions for Addressing These Issues in Future Online Education Initiatives

To address these ethical considerations, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. **Data Privacy and Security:** Implement robust data protection policies and ensure that all online learning platforms comply with these standards to safeguard student information.
2. **Equitable Access:** Develop and enforce policies that ensure all students have equal access to the necessary technological resources for online learning.
3. **Inclusive Practices:** Create inclusive e-learning environments that consider the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities.
4. **Continuous Monitoring:** Establish mechanisms for continuous monitoring and evaluation of online education practices to identify and address ethical issues promptly.

In conclusion, the study underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to integrating e- learning in SLA, addressing both the technical and ethical challenges to ensure that digital education is effective, inclusive, and equitable.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings

Recap of the Main Findings of the Study

This study critically examined the challenges and adaptations associated with implementing e- learning for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in Nigerian schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. The key findings revealed significant infrastructural, socio-economic, and pedagogical barriers that hindered the effectiveness of online learning. The most effective online platforms for SLA were those that balanced accessibility with interactive features, although issues like unreliable internet connectivity and frequent power outages posed substantial obstacles. Both teachers and students faced considerable challenges in adapting to the new learning environment, which impacted the overall effectiveness of e-learning (Olusola, Anthony, & Oyewumi, 2020).

Confirmation of the Research Objectives and Questions Addressed

The study successfully addressed the research objectives and questions by:

1. Evaluating the challenges and adaptations in e-learning for SLA during the pandemic.
2. Comparing the effectiveness of in-person and online SLA methods.
3. Exploring the ethical considerations arising in the context of online SLA.

The findings confirmed that while e-learning presented a viable alternative to traditional in-person instruction during the pandemic, significant improvements are needed to enhance its effectiveness and accessibility.

Recommendations

Practical Recommendations for Educators, Policymakers, and Stakeholders to Enhance E- learning for SLA

Based on the study's findings, the following practical recommendations are proposed:

1. **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in improving internet infrastructure and ensuring consistent electricity supply to support online learning.
2. **Teacher Training:** Implement comprehensive training programs for teachers on the use of digital tools and effective online teaching strategies.
3. **Accessible Learning Platforms:** Develop low-bandwidth, user-friendly learning platforms that can function effectively in areas with limited internet access.
4. **Equitable Access:** Formulate policies to provide affordable or free digital devices and internet access to students from low-income families, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to participate in online learning.

Suggestions for Future Research Directions

Future research should focus on:

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of e-learning on SLA outcomes.
2. **Comparative Analysis Across Regions:** Compare the effectiveness of e-learning for SLA in different regions of Nigeria to identify region-specific challenges and solutions.
3. **Technological Innovations:** Explore the potential of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality, in enhancing e-learning for SLA.
4. **Inclusive Education:** Investigate strategies to make e-learning more inclusive, particularly for students with disabilities and those in rural areas.

Final Thoughts

Reflection on the Significance of the Study

This study highlights the critical challenges and necessary adaptations for effective e-learning implementation in the context of SLA during the COVID-19 pandemic. By providing a detailed analysis of the barriers and facilitators of online learning, the research contributes valuable insights that can inform future educational practices and policies in Nigeria and similar contexts.

The Broader Impact of the Research on E-learning and SLA in Nigeria and Similar Contexts

The broader impact of this research extends beyond the immediate findings. It underscores the importance of addressing infrastructural and socio-economic disparities to ensure equitable access to education. The study's recommendations offer a roadmap for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to enhance the quality and inclusivity of e-learning for SLA. By fostering a more resilient and adaptable education system, the insights from this research can help mitigate the impact of future disruptions and ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in a digital learning environment.

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