THE PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDENTS ON E-XAMINATION AND ONLINE (WEB- BASED) LEARNING

Dr. Onyeka IWUCHUKWU
School of Arts and Social Sciences,
Victoria Island Lagos, NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of students on the implementation of e-examination and their preparedness for facilitation through a web-based learning platform at the National Open University of Nigeria. Information gathered from the year three and year four students who registered for courses in English Literature in the undergraduate English Programme and Law at the Lagos Study Centre of the university was evaluated. This group of students has participated in the e-examination as well as the pen on paper (POP) examinations so are in a better position to evaluate the e-examination. The investigation was carried out through interviews, focus discussions and questionnaires and the result indicated that the students' perceptions of online examination were generally positive and that they were enthusiastic about online facilitation but skeptical about its workability at this stage of our nation's technological development.

Keywords: E-xamination and online (web- based) learning, NOUN, perception.

INTRODUCTION

Courses in the Department of English (Literature) involve the studying of many texts, novels, plays and poems, in addition to critical works. For instance in my third year in the university, I studied thirty novels in the course "African Novel", twenty four plays in "African Drama" and twenty two poems in "African Poetry". So when the NOUN decided to adopt e-examination for the students, I had some misgivings on the appropriateness of the e-platform for the final semester assessment of students who are taking literature courses because they need to read and analyze, at least, some aspects of the set literary works. Some professors of English Literature also expressed their doubts and asked me how I expected to produce literary critics and writers when they would not be given an opportunity to practice literary criticism and creative writing which may not possible on the e-platform since students would not have an opportunity to write detailed essays. I was also asked to bear in mind, a need to ensure the provision of quality learning, the focal point of many higher educational institutions. These fears were expressed because the e-platform adopted by the university, Maple Ta/ ILMS, provides for the setting of objective-type questions and fill-in-the gaps. We therefore wondered how to set the questions to ensure that quality was not compromised because "some aspects of complex achievements are difficult to measure using objective-type questions" (Valenti, Cuc chiarelli, and Panti. 2002). Fortunately, all the vital aspects of each course were addressed when the questions were set. However, the university re-introduced the pen-on-paper (POP) examinations for students in year three and above in accordance with the guidelines of the National Universities Commission (NUC) which is the regulatory body for university education in Nigeria.

152

In some respects, the POP supplemented the e-examinations and filled the gaps in a blended examination mode. This mode of examination in seems adequate for the students. Many studies(Ayo et al 2007); (Okonkwo 2008); (Okonkwo & Okonkwo 2008); (Reju & Adesina 2008); (Okonkwo 2010b & 2010c); (Adewale et al 2011); (Osang 2012); have been carried out on the conduct of e-examination in general and the perception of students and academic staff on e-examination in NOUN but none available to me has tried to elicit the opinion of the students after the re-introduction of POP in 2012 and their views on the proposed online facilitation This research is to fill that gap.

Facilitation is the nomenclature adopted by NOUN for her mode of tutorials which is expected to be a face-to-face interactive session between the learners and the instructor whereby some aspects of the course materials which the students do not understand are explained. It is therefore different from the conventional teaching where the lecturer is expected to give out a course outline and teach all aspects of the course to the students. In facilitation, the students are expected to have been studying autonomously because the instructional materials are designed to be interactive, of "...high quality, self-directed, learner-centred" (Ojo & Olakulehin 2006) but there may be some aspects of it that need further clarifications which the facilitators provide.

DISTANCE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Distance learning has been part of educational process in Nigeria since the colonial and post-colonial period in Nigeria as many Nigerians then obtained intermediate and advanced level certificates through correspondence in colleges in United Kingdom (Owoeye, 2004). However this practice waned with the attainment of independence and the subsequent establishment of more secondary schools and universities in Nigeria. Then and now, many distance learners have full time employments so have the challenges of creating a balance between their jobs, their family lives and their studies.

However as the nation grew, more colleges and universities were established and the correspondence studies decreased and fizzled out gradually. Unfortunately, with the astronomical rise in population, the universities became grossly inadequate for those seeking tertiary education among who are "young school leavers and some older individuals who for some specific circumstances like lack of finance and early marriages, lost the opportunity of tertiary education early in life, but desired to go back to school."(Iwuchukwu 2013)

This led to the establishment of distance education which started initially as sandwich (holiday) programmes for teachers and was extended to other professions later. This programme transformed gradually into the dual mode distance learning system known then as Continuing Education Programme (CEP) and the target group was the working class who needed to further their education. The programme became very popular in the nineties as several universities established outreach/satellite campuses in various towns. The mode of instructional delivery in these satellite campuses remained face-to-face but the learners attended lectures on weekends to avoid conflict with their jobs which normally run during the week. Gradually, there was a proliferation of these satellite campuses and the Federal Government closed them down because of the fear that this proliferation might lead to the lowering of academic standards in terms of quality assurance of content, instructional delivery and credible assessment. NOUN which was established as "National Open University (NOU) in 1983 ...but before it could take off it was suspended in 1984...but the law establishing the University was not abrogated".

153

This paved way for the lifting of the suspension and the resuscitation of the University in 2002 and its empowerment to offer quality distance education to the populace. "With the resuscitation, the university became known as National Open University of Nigeria" (Tenebe 2013)

E-LEARNING

Information and communication technologies have affected the lives of people in various ways, socially, politically educationally and even religiously. This could be attributed to the need for people to obtain information from beyond geographical boundaries (Vincent 2006), (Abbaszadi et al 2010). With accelerating developments in educational technologies in Nigeria, distance learning is becoming more convenient than it was in the Colonial period and shortly after independence because these rapid developments in information technological has led to many radical changes in education. The major development is the advent of computer and internet technology in education which has given rise to e-learning and subsequently, e-examination. E-learning offers great opportunity to those individuals who have little time to spare because of their jobs, to earn their living while studying.

E-learning is a method of instructional delivery that is electronic centred and conducted mainly through computer-mediated technology and has been variously described by scholars as "the acquisition and use of knowledge distributed and facilitated primarily by electronic means" (Wentling 2008). The adoption of e-learning technologies have provided opportunities for higher education institutions to enhance learning environments for students especially in an Open and distance learning institutions like National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). E-learning in NOUN is delivered through instructional materials in print, CD-ROMS or and uploaded online. The online materials could be downloaded in a computer and circulated through flash drives. In addition, instructional facilitation is carried out when necessary but is optional for students. In spite of this, the use of such technologies is still scanty in the distance educational delivery in Nigeria because "...most citizens still grapple with problems inherent in the digital divide; access to instructional technology and capacity to use such technology is negligible compared to those of developed nations" (Yusuf and Falade, 2005). This explains why the introduction of e-examination by NOUN was seen as a landmark in the educational process in the country and is now being copied by other tertiary institutions and examination bodies. For instance, the Joint Matriculation Examination Board (JAMB) is gradually introducing e-examination in the conduct of their examinations.

E-EXAMINATION

Electronic examination as the name implies, is basically an examination conducted with the use of information technology especially computers, "through the web or the intranet". E-examination reduces a large proportion of workload on examination, training, grading and reviewing, thus bringing the ability for the institution to release examination results in record time.

This is because where ordinarily, the lecturer would spend weeks marking scripts manually, the computer would grade the students as soon as they finish their paper. (Ayo et. al. 2007). It is for this reason, especially to ensure the prompt release of student's results that prompted the Management of NOUN to introduce e-examination in 2010.

The prompt release of students' grades completes the teaching and learning process in formal education. Apart from the need to release students' results promptly, the scope of end of semester examination in NOUN is enormous. For instance, a total number of 491,933(Four hundred and ninety one thousand, nine hundred and thirty three) students registered for 2877 courses to be taken in the 2013 June/July semester examination in forty nine (49) study centres located in the thirty-six (36) states of Nigeria. Without e-examination, the marking of the scripts, grading and compilation of result would have been an uphill task given the number of academic staff employed in the university. Although with the blended mode of e-examination and POP, the number of scripts to be marked has reduced considerably thus eliminating the problems encountered in the conduct of the examination in the pre e-examination era was very "… cumbersome and be-decked with 'hydra headed' problems, such as: dearth of skilled academics, finances, prompt marking of scripts and collation/processing of acceptable results leading to release of incomplete or meaningless results…" (Okonkwo, 2011). In view of these problems associated with the POP examination, Reju and Adesina (2008) opined that the use of technology-based assessment was inevitable for NOUN. It was prophetic because it seemed as if it was in response to this and such other calls, as well as the need to conduct an examination that would be qualitative, effective and at the same time less problematic for both the university and students, that NOUN embraced e-examination in 2010. Prof. Olubgemiro Jegede, the former Vice Chancellor of the University, commenting on the introduction of the e-examination said that it was introduced to address series of anomalies being encountered in the manual tests and hoped that the e-examination would remove all human errors inherent in manual conduct of examination and create opportunity for students to access their results immediately. Concluding, he stated with the new e-platform, the university has overcame the problems associated with the compilation of answer scripts and movement of examination papers from one part of the country to another. Another important advantage of examination on e-platform "it would be difficult for students to carry out any form of examination malpractice". (Awosiyan 2010).

Basically, there are three types of e-examinations which are e-based examination, online examination and computerized adaptive examination. The e-based examination is administered through a local server connected in the Local Area Network and the online and computerized adaptive examinations are administered through the Internet. Currently NOUN has adopted the e-examination by which the local servers connected to the Local Area Network at the Headquarters in Lagos are taken to the study centres for the conduct of the examinations. Initially, the e-examination in NOUN was conducted using Maple ta software for the end of Semester examination while integrated Learning Management System (iLMS) was used for periodic class assessment known as Tutor Mark Assignments (TMA). However the Maple ta was quite "challenging for the academic staff " (Osang 2012) so the platform was changed to Exam Pro+, designed specifically by Cyberspace for NOUN, and this has been in use for both the semester examinations and TMAs since 2012.

Fortunately the method of the POP that was re-introduced has elements of e-examination as the questions are sent electronically, via email, by the Directorate of Examination to the Study Centre Directors, few minutes before the commencement of a particular examination. The Director accesses the questions using a given code, downloads and prints the questions, thus elimination the problem of transferring the question papers from headquarters to other cities where the centres are located. At the end of the examination, each director transfers the scripts to the headquarters where the lecturers grade them and collate the scores immediately to ensure prompt release of the results.

ONLINE FACILITATION

Over the last decade, educational tools and technologies have continued to improve exponentially in order to achieve an effective and engaging online learning environment. New "features have been added to existing online course management to enhance both synchronous and asynchronous learning process" (Arah 2012). These improvements and the growing body of evidence regarding the effectiveness of these various systems for online learning, an increasing number of institutions have been adopting these systems for their educational programs as a way to provide just-in-time learning anywhere and anytime (Saribas 2010)

With the advent of the internet and the popularity of other information/technological and computer mediated tools, the concept of e-learning has been entrenched in education process, especially in ODL institutions. Initially, the focus was on the model that was based on instructional delivery via such electronic tools as CD ROMs, flash drives, and mobile phones. But as the internet became widespread, web-based instructional delivery was introduced and has since gained popularity all over the world thereby enlarging the space and convenience for distance learners. Apart from instructional delivery, web based tools are also used in instructional design and "the progress of web based tools which are used to develop course material by instructor increases the effectiveness of the instruction" and the growth of new technologies like Learning Management System (LMS) in web based environments, increased the possibilities for instruction oriented communication." (Akman & Karaasian 2010). Through the use of LSM, the instructor could arrange the course content and realize curriculum planning. The use of various evaluation tools such as quizzes, online exams, assignment tools, many conveniences in the process of student evaluation which are (Altun, Guilbahar and Madran, 2008) available on the Internet have made online learning a successful venture. As online learning becomes increasingly adopted by many universities, there is need to take leaning effectiveness into consideration by considering the needs of the students too.

Many distance learners have full time employments and other engagements which impede on their studies to the extent that they may not have the time to study except if there is a kind on compulsion like face-to-face contact with instructors. This group of students would therefore be happy with the tutorial or facilitation which seems to force them to study. Yet some of them are unable to squeeze out time to attend the tutorial or facilitation in the designated locations.

The proposed online facilitation becomes a welcome development for them it would become easier for them to interact with the facilitator and other students without having to go to the study or tutorial centre. With an internet modem, Wi-Fi , smart phones and tablets the student can participate in an on-line learning anywhere, anytime as students may not have to go to cyber cafes for tutorials. The online tutorial provides a specific type of distance education in which the instructor and students communicate mainly through web-based media which include interactive tools like simulations, email and discussion groups.The student may therefore choose the most appropriate location for his/her.

Online tutorial therefore provide opportunities for online learners to learn at their convenient time and place (Xu & Wang 2006) and by getting used to the Internet would be in a position to access resources online and other online environments that have many interactions and collaboration options that students can benefit from especially the student-student interaction before an examination. This is an advantage which non-online learners do not have because they only study autonomously.

156

Although successful distance learner is one who can work with some degree of autonomy, most learners do not know how to work with some degree of autonomy, so need guidance from appropriately designed materials (Altunay & Mutlu 2010) and this necessitates the introduction of online instruction delivery in distance education.

Presently, technology mediated instructional delivery methods in NOUN include CD-ROMS, TV and radio broadcasts which are different from online instruction being proposed. In this new proposal the instructors are as important as the learners, if not more important because it is a kind of teaching that involves a "direct human-human communication, with the computer acting simply as a transaction router, or providing simple storage and retrieval functions" (Zane L Berge 1995). What is important in this computer-mediated teaching is the new and challenging role of the online tutor who acts as a guide, a facilitator as well as a moderator without an overbearing teaching or right in your face kind of presence (Arah 2012). This may not be a problem because NOUN takes the training of academic staff very seriously so as to "...help academic staff (most of them are from the conventional universities) to be conversant with their responsibilities and to be interested in developing their own skills and understanding of the importance of their roles ...." (Iwuchukwu 2010) in the new academic environment. There is therefore no doubt that the staff and other facilitators would be properly trained for the online facilitation at the appropriate time. However, that is not the focus of this study which is targeted at the students, to elicit their reactions and perspectives on the proposed online facilitation in NOUN.

The need for online facilitation arises because the nature of distance education which, although has variously been defined, remains the human situation where both students and teachers are in different places for all or most of the time that they learn and teach. Being in different places, they depend on some kind of technology to deliver information and give them in a way of interacting with each other (Moore & Kearsley 2005), this explains the opinion that online instruction is a critical component of any effective distance education (Arah 2012). Because of their geographical separation, lack of face-to-face direct communication and physical contacts, and the reliance on and mediation of computer or other forms of media technology, course design and development has to be such that the students and their tutors would be able to exchange and share information with some measure of ease. The instructional material is therefore expected to be structured in such a way that academic knowledge is gained through interactive and effective communication. In such situation, teaching and learning could still take place without physical contact in a face-to-face interaction between students and teachers on-line.

An online environment is a structured and rigorous academic environment where teachers and students meet (not physically) to teach and learn. Online teaching make this kind of non-physical and geographically separated meeting to take place because it offers an environment for an effective communication and interaction which some scholars refer to as "interactive communication" in various forms (Arah 2012).

Moore (1993) calls it "instructional dialogue" that can "occur when one gives instruction and others respond" but goes on to address the fact that this is a useful and intellectually rewarding kind of interactive communication between students and teacher in a sense that it is purposeful, constructive and valued by each party" (23-24). Many higher are therefore adopting the online mode of instructional delivery and NOUN do not want to be left out.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

This study is designed to elicit students' perceptions about e-examination which was introduced in the university in 2010 and the online facilitation which is being proposed. This is necessary because knowledge of learners' characteristics is very important when deciding on the type of media by which the content will be delivered and the structure of distance courses by which diverse students will be accommodated (Khan, 2005; Laulliard, 2001). Scholars also opine that students' perceptions of technology have great influence on the acceptability of the technology (Keller and Cernerud, 2002; Samuel and Bakar, 2006). It is therefore important for NOUN to seek students' views on the adopted e-examination and proposed online facilitation to evaluate the former and before the latter is introduced.

Significance

It is hoped that this study would help to refute or affirm the claim that e-examination makes the conduct of examination less burdensome for staff and students and also that it aids the prompt release of students' grades.

In addition it is believed that the study would contribute to the debate on the reasons for adopting or not adopting online facilitation not just by NOUN but by other institutions and establishments. It is expected that the findings of the study would encourage NOUN management and other stake holders to take students choices into consideration while taking a final decision on propositions that affect them before the implementation of such proposals.

Finally, is hoped also that this study would help in the evaluation e-examination in NOUN but more importantly it would help to evaluate the degree of readiness of the university to embark on online facilitation.

Research Questions

- ➤ **What technological tools are the students familiar with?**
- ➤ **Why do they use such tools?**
- ➤ **Do they support e-examination?**
- ➤ **Do they support online facilitation?**

METHODOLOGY

Response from the participants was through questionnaire discussions and interviews. The questionnaire consists questions on level of computer knowledge, preference of exam, access to internet, availability of power supply, regularity of power supply, alternative power supply, opinion on e-examination and online facilitation. During the discussion, six students who were about to join the POP group were given practical test in creative writing.

The participants consist the 400 level law students who took their last e-examination in 2011 and 300 and 400 level English students. The questionnaire was administered a total of 245 students who form the target group but 225 were returned the students who were willing were interviewed. The initial target group was the students in English but the decision to include law students was to enlarge the respondents as the number of students in the English Programme is very low.

Law students was chosen because, in addition to the GST courses in English, the Law students also took elective literature courses like ENG 282-African Novel; ENG 111: Introduction to Literature and Literary Criticism and ENG 111 & 112 Introduction to Nigerian Literature 1 & 11. In all these courses and some others for the students of the Department of English, students need to read literary works.

These students experienced the face-to-face facilitation services and also participated in the e-examination in their first and second years but study autonomously in their present years of study and the mode of their examination is pen on paper (POP).

DISCUSSION

Table: 1
Familiarity with information technology tools

	Never		Rarely		Regularly	
PC/desktop	0	0%	185	82.2%	40	17.8%
Laptop	0	0%	32	14.2%	193	85.8%
Tablets	122	54.2%	69	30.7%	34	15.1%
Mobile phones	0	0%	0	0%	225	100%
e-mail	0	0%	100	44.4%	125	55.6%
Wiki, blogs, Facebook, twitters etc.	25	11.1%	90	40%	110	48.9%
Reading or downloading literary works online	56	24.9%	125	55.6%	44	19.6%
Use of virtual library	200	88.9%	20	8.9%	5	2.2%
CD ROMS, Flash drives and other storage or transfer devices	0	0%	100	44.4%	125	55.6%

What Technological Tools Are Students Familiar With And Why Do They Use Such Tools?
This question is very important as it would help to highlight the level of computer literacy of the students which in turn determine their preparedness for the programmes which are technological-driven.

Students' response in the table above indicates that all the students are familiar with computer as either desktop or laptop but majority use laptops. 17.8 % of the students use desktops regularly while 82.2% use laptops regularly.

Only 15.1% of the participants were familiar with tablets while all the respondents use mobile phones. 24.9% of the participants admitted to have read or downloaded literary works online.

In an interview, a significant number said that they use the Internet search engines a lot but not just for Literature but also in their other courses.

159

Very small percentages, 12.1%, of the participants are familiar with virtual library. All the participants use CD ROMS, Flash drives and other storage devices.

It is interesting to note that many of the students, 44.4% and 55.6% use e-mail, and the social media but during the interview a significant proportion reported that that the social media were not being used for academic purposes but for communicating with their friends, getting abreast of events all over the world and networking with some professionals.

Table: 2
Advantages of e-examination

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am forced to read the entire course material.	187-83.1%	21-9.33%	13-5.78%	4-1.78%	0-0%
I learn more	187-83.1%	21-9.33%	13-5.78%	4-1.78%	0-0%
It reduces examination malpractice	157-69.8%	32-14.2%	10-4.44%	21-9.33%	5-2.22%%
I am forced to learn how to operate the computer	174-77.3%	21-9.33%	0-0%	8-3.56%	22-9.78%
The examination scores are released promptly	110-48.9%	70-31.1%	10-4.44%	2-11.1%	10-4.44%

This study shows that majority of the participants are in support of the e-examination because, according to them, the questions, multiple choice, are set to cover all aspects of the course material.

Any student therefore, who aspires to get very good grades, must have to read the course material thoroughly and by so doing gains the expected knowledge and acquires the necessary skills and competencies embedded in such materials.

A significant proportion of the participants, 83.1% reported that e-exam mode forced them to read the entire course material thereby learning more. 80% of the participants agree that it has reduced the incidence of examination malpractice to the barest minimum because in e-examination, each student faces his or her computer and the questions are shuffled or scrambled.

In this case, two students from the same programme sitting together in an examination view different questions.

Actually, in the university, the lecturers set the questions which are stored in a question bank from which questions are randomly selected for each student's examination portal.

In this scenario, it becomes very difficult for students to discuss or exchange views in the examination hall.

The other form of examination malpractice by which fraudulent students go into the examination hall with pieces of paper with possible answers is also eliminated because each student enters the hall with just his/her identity card and examination registration slip. Even if anyone smuggled in any piece of paper, it would be difficult for the person to bring it out because there is no answer script inside which it would be hidden.

A significant proportion of the participants, 86.6% admitted that the adoption of e-examination by the university forced them to learn how to operate the computer. Another 80% of the participants praised the e-examination because the results were released promptly.

Table: 3
Disadvantages of e-examination

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I do not need to read much	10-4.44%	8-3.56%	4-1.78%	60-26.7%	143-63.6%
I do not learn much	10-4.44%	7-3.11%	5-2.22%	60-26.7%	143-63.6%
It does not reduce examination malpractice	10-4.44%	8-3.56%	4-1.78%	60-26.7%	143-63.6%
I do not need e-exam to force me to learn how to operate the computer	60-26.7%	68-30.2%	5-2.22%	26-11.6%	20-8.9%
The release of examination result is delayed	0-0%	5-2.22%	7-3.11%	100-44.4%	110-48.9%

On the disadvantages of the e-examination, the findings show that there was no significant proposition against the e-examination. However 56.9% of the students do not see the familiarity with the computer as an advantage of e-examination as they were already computer literate before the e-examination.

Table: 4
Advantages of Online Facilitation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I can listen to lectures from anywhere	200-88.9%	20-8.90%	5-2.22%	0-0%	0-0%
I can interact with my instructor	200-88.9%	20-8.90%	5-2.22%	0-0%	0-0%
I can get instant feed backs	200-88.9%	20-8.90%	5-2.22%	0-0%	0-0%
I can interact with my classmates	100-44.4%	83-36.9%	27-12.0%	15-6.7%	0-0%
I will not be shy or afraid to ask questions	65-28.9%	60-26.7%	100-44.4%	0-0%	0-0%

This study reveals that majority of the students, 87.8% opted for online facilitation because it would afford them the opportunity to interact with the instructors from any convenient location. In fact, during the interview they were very enthusiastic about it and actually, two of the students were also enrolled in online courses in foreign university. One of them narrated his experience especially the interaction with the instructors and students. His only misgiving was the non-physical contact with the instructor but is consoled that he has connected with him and his classmates on Facebook and therefore interact with them also on Facebook. Another advantage of online facilitation highlighted by the participants is the fact that they can get instant feedback to their assignments and also feel free to ask questions. 87.8% of the participants also agree that they can interact and get instant feedback from the instructors while 55.6% felt that with the online mode of instructional delivery, they would not be shy or afraid to ask questions in class.

Table: 5
Disadvantages of Online Facilitation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I may not be available at the time of facilitation	15-6.67%	10-4.44%	0-0%	100-44.4%	100-44.4%
Power holdings may decide to hold electricity supply at that time.	225-100%	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%	0-0%
The Internet services may not be available.	100-44.4%	105-46.7%	20-2.22%	0-0%	0-0%
I do not know much about internet	27-12.0%	10-4.44%	5-0.02%	102-45.3%	55-24.4%
My knowledge of computer is very limited	107-47.6%	20-8.89%	0-0%	81-36.0%	17-7.56%

The study reveals that there was no significant disadvantage of online facilitation but the participants were unanimous 100%, in their opinion that electricity power supply and the unreliability of the internet 46.7%, would be a major hindrance to online facilitation in Nigeria for now.

They contend that, to a large extent, online facilitation could be successful in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and other few major cities in the country where cyber cafes would be available for students who do not have personal access to internet services.

On the other hand, there are states in the country where such facilities exist only in some parts of the capital cities. However, a sizeable percentage claims that their limited knowledge computer and internet may also be a hindrance for them.

Creative Writing Test
The students were asked to write ten things that come to their minds about themselves. Based on theirs lists, each person was asked to produce the beginning of a short story, a play or a poem. The result was fantastic as one of them produced a poem instantly which is reproduced below.
The Poem

Creative Writing 1 is a second year course and they sat for the examination through e-examination. This means that the university could produce literary artists and critics contrary to expectations.

CONCLUSION

As seen from the above results, the students of National Open University of Nigeria are positively inclined towards the e-examination and the proposed online facilitation. However they are skeptical that the online facilitation may not work for all the students because of unreliable electricity power supply and Internet access.

The recommendation of this study therefore is that there is need for the university to define and identify the indicators which could be harnessed to attract the most meaningful result therefore should take the following into consideration before embarking on the proposed online facilitation:

162

- ➢ **The technology and man power resources needed for its implementation;**
- ➢ **The fragile and sometimes unavailability of electricity supply in the country**
- ➢ **The internet services that are sometimes unavailable or epileptic in some parts of the country**
- ➢ **A pilot project should be carried out before it commencement**

The university may have to start with the proposal of a model of online facilitation by the English Programme of the University which may be close to online facilitation. The proposed is expected to provide a platform for lecturers to conduct a live face-to-face facilitation using the students of Lagos study centre as a representative sample. The facilitation would be recorded and distributed via YouTube and CD/DVD to be the distributed to all the study centres where students registered for specific courses and a link for access to the You Tube provided on NOUN website. With this, the students can watch and listen to the lectures at their own convenience.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the AUTHOR

Dr. Onyeka IWUCHUKWU
School of Arts and Social Sciences,
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way,
Victoria Island Lagos, NIGERIA
Phone: +2347032760885
Emai: onyifranca4@gmail.com

REFERENCES

Adesina, S. (1988). *The Development of Modern Education Nigeria*. **Heinemann: Ibadan, Nigeria.**

Akman, E. & Hasan Kasaaslan (2010). Student Perceptions on Learning by Design Method in a Learning Management System IODL&ICEM 2010 Joint Conference and Media Days Conference Proceeding October 2010. 23-33.

Altun, A., Gulbarhar, Y. & Madran, O. (2008). Use of a Content Management System for Blended Learning Perceptions of Pre-service Teachers. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Educationn-TOJDE* **,Vol. 9 No 4 Article 11 October 2008 138-153.**

Altunay, D. and M. Emin Mutlu (2010). "Use of ICT in Distance English Language Learning: A Study with Anadolu University, Open University EFL Students"IODL&ICEM 2010 Joint Conference and Media Days Conference Proceeding October 2010. 65-78.

Arah, B. (2012). "The Challenging Function of a New Online?Distance Education Instructor in a Computer-mediated Asynchronous". An Unpublished Position Paper Outline

Awoseyan and Kunle, (2010). "Stress and Success of NOUN examinations," *Nigerian Tribune***, July 1, pp.10, 2010**

Ayo, C. K., Akinyemi, I. O., Adebiyi, A. A. and Ekong, U. O. *The Prospects of e-examination implementation in Nigeria***.**

Berge, Z. (1998). "Barriers to Online Teaching in Post-secondary institutions. Can policy Fix It?" *Online Journal of Distance Learning Adminisrtration*, 1(2), 1-13. Retrieved on 11/5/2007 from http//nurs.wesga.edu/-distance/ojdla/summer12.pdf

Iwuchukwu, O. (2010) "Effectiveness of Training on Instructional Development for the Academic Staff of the National Open University of Nigeria" IODL&ICEM 2010 Joint Conference and Media Days Conference Proceedings October 2010. pp 417-424.

Iwuchukwu, O. (2013). "Dislodging the 'University of Nkwo Nnewi through Open and Distance Learning'", *African Research Review*, Vol. 7(1)No. 28 January 2013 271-284

Karaman, S., Sevda Kucuk, Serkan Yildrim, Melike Aydemir, Abdullatifi Kaba (2010)"Effects of Flexible Online Exams on Interaction in Distance Learning" IODL&ICEM 2010 Joint Conference and Media Days Conference Proceedings October 2010 pp453-466.

Laurillard, D. (2001). *Rethinking university teaching: A framework for the effective use of educational technology*. London: Routledge.

Khan, B. H. (2005). *Managing e-learning: design, delivery, implementation and evaluation*. Hershey: Information Science.

Moore, M. G. (1993). Theory of transactional distance. In D. Keegan (Ed.), Theoretical principles of distance education. New York: Routledge, 22-38.

Moore, M. and Kearsley, G. (2005). *Distance education: A systems view, (2nd Ed.).* Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Ojo, D. Ol. and Olakulehin, Felix Kayode. (2006). "Attitudes and Perceptions of Students to Open and Distance Learning in Nigeria", in *Athabasca University Canada Open University Open Journal System* June 2006.

Okonkwo, C. A. (2010b). Using e-Assessment to Enhance the Operational Efficiencies of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). *Journal of Educational Assessment in Africa* (AEAA) 8th Annual Conference of AEAA. Publisher: The Association of Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA), 5, 117-138.

Okonkwo, C. A. (2010c). Sustainable assessment and evaluation strategies for open and distance learning. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE),* 11 (4), 121 – 129. Publisher: Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey.

Okonkwo, U. M. & Okonkwo, C. A. (2008). Meaningful learner assessment: Evaluating the quality of test items. A paper presented at the International Association of educational Assessment (IAEA) 34th Annual Conference, Cambridge, United Kingdom (UK), 7-12 September, 2008. Online publication. Assessed on Monday 30th March 2009. http://www.iaea2008.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/ca/digitalAssets/164765_Okonkwo_UM.pdf

Olubiyi, A. A., Ajadi, O and Inegbedion, J."Perception of learners on electronic examination in open and distance learning institutions: case study of national open university of Nigeria, US, China", *Educational Review Journal*. Viewed April 2011.

Osang, Francis "Electronic Examination in Nigeria, Academic Staff Perspective—Case Study: National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)", *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, Vol. 2, No. 4, August 2012.

Owoeye, J. S. (2004) An Overview of Distance Education in the University of Ibadan. In O. A. Afemikhe and J. G. Adewale (Eds.) Issues in *Educational Measurement and Evaluation in Nigeria*. ERSG: Ibadan.

Pennington, Martha C. (1996a) *The Computer and the Non-Native Writer: A natural Partnership*. Cresskill, NJ Hampton Press

Reju, S. A. and Adesina, (2008). Institutional Planning for Online assessment, Using Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS). A Paper Presented at the Commonwealth of Learning/RETRIDAL Workshop on Strategic Policy and Management of Assessment in ODL for the West African Sub Region, 19th-23rd, May at NOUN, Lagos.

Sahin, S. (2008). "The Relationship between Student Characteristics, Including Learning Styles, and their Perceptions and Satisfaction in Web-based Courses in Higher Education". *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education-TOJDE*, January 2008 Volume: 9 Number: 1.

Saribas, L., ikknur Akyildiz "Student Engagement while using course Management System" IODL&ICEM 2010 Joint Conference and Media Days Conference Proceedings October 2010 pp.35-44.

Tenebe, V. A. (2013). Convocation Address in *NOUN News Bulletin* Vol.18, No. 18.

Vincent, L. (2006). "e-Learning integration in our European Higher Education Area" Current Developments in Technology Assisted Education. Retrieved on 13th July 2008 from **http//www.formatex.org/micte2006/pdf/412-415.pdf**

Wentling, T Waight. C., Gallaher, J., La Fluer, J., Wang, C., & Kanfer A. (2000) E-learning- A Review of Literature. Retrieved on 17th August 2008 from **http//learning.nesa.edu/papers/elearnlit.pdf**

Xu, D., Wang H. (2006). "Intelligent Agent Supported Personalization for Vitual Learning Environments", *Decision Support Systems*, 42(2), pp825-843.

Yusuf, M. O. and Falade, A. A. (2005). Media in Distance Learning: The Nigerian National Teachers Institute Distance Education Programme. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education* 6(4). Retrieved June 5, 2006 from: **http://tojde.anadolu.edu.tr/tojde20/pdf/Volume6Number4.pdf**