



Students' attitude to virtual teaching of the english language in secondary schools in oyo state: implications for students achievement

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ABSTRACT

*This study investigated students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language: Implications for students' achievement. The study adopted the survey research design. Three private secondary schools were randomly selected from private secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State. From each school, 50 SSII students were randomly selected making a total of 150 students. One research instrument was used for data collection: Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Virtual Teaching ($r=0.82$). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics of *t*-test. Findings of the study revealed the weighted mean of 2.499 out of the 4.00 maximum obtainable scores, which is higher than the standard mean of 2.50. This means that students had a good attitude to virtual teaching. There was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude to virtual teaching ($t = -.414$; $df=148$; $p>0.05$). Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that students should be encouraged to have positive attitude to virtual teaching of English Language. Teachers and students should be trained on how to use different virtual platforms for teaching and learning of English Language.*

Keywords : *Students' attitude, virtual teaching, English Language, students' achievement*



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INTRODUCTION

English language occupies a unique place in Nigerian education because of its significant role and status in national life, as it remains the official language of business and vital link between the various ethnic groups in the country. English language is one of the compulsory subjects at all levels apart from the fact that it is the language of instruction for all other subjects and formal education gives the opportunities to learners to learn English language (Owolewa, 2000). English language is unique in Nigerian education because of the significant roles it plays. It enhances students' educational attainment and improves their communicative competence. Nigerian government made it a core and compulsory subject for students in Nigerian school. The importance of the language in Nigeria educational system cannot be over-emphasized because it plays a crucial role. Apart from being the medium of instruction, especially at the upper primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education, it is also the language of the textbooks (Ezeokoli, 2005).

(Danladi, 2013) asserts that English language is the medium of instruction in our schools and compulsory subject that must be passed at all levels of education in Nigeria. It is the language through which all other subjects in the curriculum are taught. The state of English language as a second language in Nigeria and the importance attached to the language, compel numerous Nigerian citizens to learn and speak the language (Ogunsiji, 2004). The language has not only engineered human development through education but it has also conferred other significant opportunities on Nigerians. At different levels of education in Nigeria, students are equipped with life-long knowledge and skills that would make them realise their full potentials as human beings. The skills and knowledge provided by education for human development will not be possible without the English language which the concepts are expressed (Akeredolu-Ale and Alimi, 2012).

Schools in the country are losing long period of learning because of coronavirus outbreak. Moving smoothly from an environment of conventional education to virtual learning could not happen

overnight but because nobody knows when the pandemic will disappear, educational institutions decided to engage students at all levels in virtual teaching (Kaur, 2020). Virtual teaching is the use of all forms of electronic media and technologies to facilitate educational process. Virtual teaching has received research attention as an innovative means that influence the educational system in the world which facilitate; partially replacing the familiar face to face technique of knowledge and skill acquisition and delivery. It is a teaching process created by interaction with digitally delivered content, network-based services and tutoring support.

There are different virtual platforms available for teaching and learning: Google classroom, Zoom, You Tube, WhatsApp. Attributes of virtual teaching are flexible instruction and learning that boost independent and self-governed education. The introduction of electronic gadgets like smart phones, tablets and computers has facilitated the provision of education outside the conventional physical classroom. Availability of internet and tools such as Google Docs, Google Hangouts, Skype etc have made education more collaborative, interactive and efficient ((Sarker et al., 2019), Islam and Islam, 2019).

Virtual teaching is the use of computer and internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solution to enable learning and improve performance. It is considered as the new method of teaching rather than face to face teaching. It has the ability to offer and share materials in all kinds of formats as e-mails, slideshows, videos, PDFs and word documents (Ghirardini, 2011). It is teaching that is not confined within the walls of a classroom, but that, which expands the possibility of using internet facilities, platforms, satellite links, and related system to access, analyse, create, exchange, and use data, information, and knowledge in ways which until recently, were almost unimaginable (Lokie, 2011).

It involves teaching acquired via interaction with digitally delivered content, network-based services and tutoring support often with any type of on-line tool and media including the Internet, intranets, extranets, simulations and games, virtual worlds, clouds, satellite broadcasts, and web platforms ((Jarmon, 2010); (Schutt & Linegar, 2013); (Pelet & Lecat, 2012)). It is carried out through the use and integration of electronic discourses, such as email, portal, downloadable-executable-file, face-book, social networking, web platforms, electronic dissertations and e-portfolios, among others (Wells et al., 2008).

Despite the influx of virtual technologies, it appears that many educators do not see distant teaching as effective as traditional methods. The traditional lecture method, which many teachers currently use in teaching, is unsuitable for teaching some of the concepts in the curriculum especially in this technology driven era. Studies have generally indicated that the use of traditional didactic lectures alone cannot make students to be globally literate and succeed in this information age ((Keziah, 2012), (Piccoli et al., 2001); (Wells et al., 2008)). As noted by (Vallance et al., 2012), research in the informed use of technology for educational purposes highlights the need to go beyond replication of traditional, didactic practices to an appropriation of digital communication (Warschauer, 1998) facilitated by a constructivist pedagogy (Jonassen, 2000) to support purposeful tasks (Martin & Vallance, 2008). New methods of effective teaching and learning, which meet the expectations of the diverse student body and which engage students, should be explored and implemented.

(Ekesionye & Okolo, 2011) outlined the benefits of e-learning for tertiary institutions to include enabling students to have equal access to quality education with the rest of the world, developing interesting and variety of instructional materials like lecture notes, diagrams, pictures and textbooks, entrenching lecturers and students to the global village, exposing them to international best practices in information technology, inculcating skills for on-line information sourcing for effective teaching, learning and research as well as facilitating knowledge creation and dissemination of information to a wider community. (Nwokike, 2011) affirmed that virtual teaching facilitates the task of the teacher by promoting performance, enables teachers and students to study at their own pace, reduces the stress inherent in the conventional classroom work for both teachers and students, facilitates access to existing knowledge and skills and saves teachers and learners time and energy.

Research undertaken in the area of attitude and attitude formation shows that attitudes are essentially divided into likes and dislikes (Siragusa & Dixon, 2008). (Bhuasiri et al., 2012) found that in developing countries the most significant factors were related to increasing technology awareness and improving attitude toward virtual teaching, enhancing basic technology knowledge and skills, improving learning content, requiring computer training, motivating users to utilise e-learning systems, and requiring a high level of support from the university.

Attitude is an internal state that moderates the choice of personal action made by the individual. This means that attitude regulates all behaviours. One's behaviour at a time is not caused but is the consequences of what is going on within the individual (Lengzakka, 2006). Ochonogor (2003) notes that an attitude may be thought as an expression of a person's values which results from the influence of the environment, past and present acting upon the personality of an individual. This appears to prove that attitude of individual is learned and somewhat emotional pictures of his personality.

(Mkpa, 2001) asserts that attitude forms a part of affective domain as one of the three generally classified educational objectives. (Mkpa, 2001) pointed out that attitude is measurable at different levels adopting suitable items and indices. Attitude can be measured by carefully accepting or rejecting opinions. It is the way of feeling, thinking or behaving towards something or a situation. Attitude is expressible in words or action which depicts one's positive or negative reaction towards something or a given situation (Mkpa, 2001).

(Obodo, 2002) views attitude as a system of positive or negative evaluation of emotional feelings. Attitude can be formed from an individual's past or present and that it can be positive or negative evaluation of a people, objects, events, activities and idea about anything in the environment (Obiegbu, n.d.). (Teo, 2014) classifies attitude to be of different dimensions that are related to usefulness, confidence, anxiety and liking.

English language occupies a unique place in Nigerian education because of its significant role and status in national life, as it remains the official language of business and vital link between the various ethnic groups in the country. With the breaking of corona virus, the mode of instruction changed from conventional way of teaching to the virtual mode of instruction. Virtual teaching in secondary schools is an innovative means that influence the educational system partially replacing the familiar face to face technique of knowledge and skill acquisition and delivery. Education is not limited to the physical classroom anymore because technology (computer, internet etc.) is now offering education to learners residing anywhere in the globe. Despite the importance attached to virtual teaching in secondary schools, there are many challenges which have not made it to produce the desired results. As a way of addressing this problem, scholars and researchers have carried out numerous studies on virtual teaching and challenges facing the use of virtual teaching in secondary schools. All these studies came up with good insights to the teaching and learning of English Language in secondary schools but with less research focus on students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language: Implications for students' achievement. Therefore this study investigated students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language: Implications for students' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses quantitative methods and this study investigated students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language: Implications for students' achievement. The study adopted the survey research design. Three private secondary schools were randomly selected from private secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State. From each school, 50 SSII students were randomly selected making a total of 150 students. One research instruments was used for data collection: Questionnaire on Students' Attitude to Virtual Teaching ($r=0.82$). Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics of t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study revealed students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language: Implications for students' achievement. Through the findings of this study, educational stakeholders would be guided on identifying and working on factors that could enhance effective teaching in secondary schools. It revealed the strengths and weaknesses of teaching virtually in secondary schools. Also, the study had added to the pool of research on virtual teaching of English Language in secondary schools.

RESULTS

Research Questions 1:

Tabel 1 Responses on Students' Attitude to Virtual Teaching Questionnaire

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	M	Sd
1	Virtual teaching enhances my performance in English language examinations	19 12.7	51 34.0	63 42.0	17 11.3	2.48	.857
2	The use of virtual teaching discourages me from attending the English language classroom	19 12.7	48 32.0	67 44.7	16 10.7	2.47	.849
3	I like the use of virtual teaching because it makes me learn faster	24 16.0	50 33.3	55 36.7	21 14.0	2.51	.925
4	I dislike the use of virtual teaching because it makes me lazy.	26 17.3	50 33.3	58 38.7	16 10.7	2.57	.900
5	I like the use of virtual teaching because it increases my readiness to learn English Language	20 13.3	59 39.3	57 38.0	14 9.3	2.57	.839
6	I hate the use of virtual teaching because it is difficult to use it in teaching English Language	17 11.3	47 31.3	72 48.0	14 9.3	2.45	.815
7	Virtual teaching in English Language instruction does not make me ready to learn.	18 12	52 34.7	66 44	14 9.3	2.49	.825
8	Virtual teaching does not make me pass examinations.	9 6.0	31 20.7	79 52.7	31 20.7	2.12	.802
9	Virtual teaching mode of teaching English Language can be a boring activity.	31 20.7	63 42.0	46 30.7	10 6.7	2.77	.855
10	Virtual teaching negatively affects my performance in English Language.	13 8.7	32 24.7	76 50.7	24 16.0	2.26	.831
11	Virtual teaching does not give me the opportunity to express myself	25 16.7	54 36.0	55 36.7	16 10.7	2.59	.891
12	Virtual teaching makes the teaching of English language difficult.	19 12.7	34 22.7	76 50.7	21 14.0	2.34	.873
13	The use of virtual teaching makes me like English Language.	14 9.3	60 40.0	56 37.3	20 13.3	2.45	.840
14	Virtual teaching does not give me opportunity to learn the four language skills	25 16.7	41 27.3	64 42.7	20 13.3	2.47	.925

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	M	Sd
15	I find virtual teaching beneficial in teaching and learning of English language.	17 11.3	67 44.4	56 37.3	10 6.7	2.61	.776
16	Virtual teaching makes me find learning of English language difficult	16 10.7	39 26.0	79 52.7	16 10.7	2.37	.814
17	Network connectivity makes virtual teaching of English language to be complicated	46 30.5	68 45.3	28 18.7	8 5.3	3.01	.843
18	Virtual teaching makes me to collaborate with my mates	19 12.7	61 40.7	56 37.3	14 9.3	2.57	.831
19	I hate virtual teaching of English language	23 15.3	44 29.3	63 42.0	20 13.3	2.47	.910
20	I am encouraged to learn the English language virtually	18 12.0	46 30.7	66 44.0	20 13.3	2.41	.868
Weighted Mean: 2.49		Threshold: 2.50					

Table 1 reveals the responses of students' attitude to virtual teaching. It reveals the weighted mean of 2.499 out of the 4.00 maximum obtainable scores, which is higher than the standard mean of 2.50. This means that students had a good attitude to virtual teaching.

Tabel 2. Difference between male and female students' attitude to virtual teaching

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	T	df	p-value	Remarks
Male	46	51.5652	2.72969	.21906	.414	148	.680	Not sig.
Female	104	51.3462	3.09641					

Table 2 shows the difference between male and female students' attitude to virtual teaching using the independent samples t-test analysis. The result indicates that there was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude to virtual teaching ($t = .414$; $df=148$; $p>0.05$). This implies that gender did not cause a variance in the students' attitude to virtual teaching.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table I revealed that students had good attitude to virtual teaching. This might be because students are now aware that for them to perform well in the new normal, they need to develop positive attitude towards virtual teaching of the English Language. It might also be because they are aware that virtual teaching facilitates the task of the lecturer by promoting performance, enables students to study at their own pace, reduces the stress inherent in the conventional classroom work for both lecturers and students, facilitates access to existing knowledge and skills and saves teachers and learners time and energy. This is similar to the study of (Okeke, 2021) who reported that students had a positive attitude to virtual teaching of the English Language. It is contrary to the study of (Eriemiokhale, K.A and Idiedo, 2020) who revealed that students had negative attitude towards virtual teaching of the English Language.

Table II showed that there was no significant difference between male and students' attitude to virtual teaching. This implies that gender did not cause a variance in teachers' attitude to virtual

teaching. This is in line with the findings of (Okeke, 2021) who reported that there was no significant difference between male and students' attitude to virtual teaching. This is against the finding of (Coates et al., 2005) who revealed that there was difference between male and female attitude to virtual teaching.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that students had good attitude to virtual teaching of English Language. Based on this finding, the study has provided a better understanding of students' attitude to virtual teaching of English Language. Teachers and students should be trained on how to use online platforms for teaching and learning of English Language. Government should ensure that there is constant power supply and they should provide necessary facilities that can enhance virtual teaching and learning of English Language.

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