EFFECTS OF BLENDED LEARNING STRATEGY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

Technological advancement is one the major factors that led to the use of blended learning. The problems of, untrained Social Studies teachers, large class and grossly inadequate facilities have accounted for the use of blended learning strategy in teaching and learning today. Blended learning is a web-enhanced instruction where students are exposed to internet and digital identified problems and enhance performance. Performance of social studies students in the state, even though satisfactory could be bettered. The general purpose of this study was to find out if the blended learning strategy has significant effect on the performance of learners in social studies in Upper-basic. The specific objective was to look at the difference in the performance of learners exposed to blended learning on the basis of gender and ability grouping and its interactive effect t. The research methodology employed for this work was in 1 x 2 x 3 non randomised quasi-experimental design. The population for this study was an Upper-basic school 11 students in Ilorin. Two schools were purposively sampled. The schools were purposively selected because of their strong and efficient elearning centre. The experimental group has a population of 33 participants while the control group has 28 participants. Researchers made use of Analysis of Co-Variance (ANCOVA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. It was found out that that the students that are exposed to the blended learning performed significantly to those taught with conventional method. On the contrary, there was no significant difference on the performance of students exposed to blended learning on the basis of gender. Further finding revealed that there was a significant difference in the performance of high, medium and low ability level exposed to blended learning Based on findings recommendations were made that Teachers should expose learners to blended learning strategies in order for the students to perform satisfactorily in teaching and learning of Social Studies amongst others

Keywords: effects blended learning, learners, performance, discipline

Introduction

Social studies as a subject whether "within the field "or "beyond the field" is centrally on the promotion of better citizenship. Without extensive knowledge of humans in their relationship with their technological environment, mastery of other social science subjects may be efforts in futile. Social studies being dynamic even in its learning strategy. Modern innovations could be incorporated into the all-encompassing subjects. Jekayinfa (2014)opines that social studies as a curriculum

area has no universal definition. It changes its focus from time to time and this accounts for the flexibility and differences in its definitions. Therefore, because of the importance of social studies in the school system, several scholars have attempted to give clarification on its meaning, aims and objectives. Odor and Nwaham (2005) supporting Adaralegbe (1975) defines social studies as an inter-disciplinary field of study in which man learn about problems of survival in its environment. He added that it is a study of how man influences and in turn is influenced by his

physical, social, political, religious, economic, psychological, cultural, scientific and technological environment. Dubey and Barths in Ukadike (2015), "Social Studies is the investigation of human activity. They further states that it studies man at home, at work, at workshop, in politics, at play, in the village, in the nation, everywhere, engage in his business programme of living". It was further stated that Social Studies in particular is interested in man's problem. It encourage him and help him solve problem emanating from his immediate environment.

Learning of Social Studies can only be achieved with the teaching strategies that appeal to various learning styles. Several studies have shown many advantages of different technology-based instructional strategy for effective teaching and learning. Therefore, many educational institutions are using blended learning as a supplementary means in developing student's knowledge due to the shortcomings inherent in ICT and classroom instruction. Blended learning strategy is a strategy that combines classroom instruction with ICT and computer assisted instruction. Hence, our students are exposed to teaching through the conventional method and supplementing it with electing learning. Blended learning strategy in teaching citizenship education has become a matter of utmost interest to social studies teachers all over the world. As against pure e-learning which implies using only electronic media to learn blended learning supplements traditional face-toface teaching and learning environments with a variety of technology-based instruction. Bielawaski and Metcalf (2003) submits that blended learning centres on enhancing achievements of learning objectives by applying the learning technologies to match the right learning styles to transfer the right skills to the right person at the right time. Gender studies on blended learning includes Ibrahim (2014), where there hasn't been significant difference between the scores of the experimental and control group but in both of the learning environment, female students have turned out to be more successful than the male students. Rouhollah, and shaffe-bin (2014) discovered that gender is a great factor influencing performance of group when exposed to blended learning.

Social studies education through webbased tools is not totally a new trend. Marsh (2012) observed that we have always used a " blend" of teaching approaches in order to provide as rich a learning environment as possible for our learners. What is new is the "expectation" of our learners to use technology in and out of the classroom as part of the learning process. Concerning the individual leaner differences and classroom instruction, Lightbown and Spada (2013) also believe that teachers can help learners expand their repertoire of learning strategies and thus develop greater flexibility in their ways of approaching learning. Hence, various instructional materials including videos, blogs, online forums and other digital tools provide students opportunities to study facts, concept and generalization of social studies relevance. Khaled, (2013) observe that the exploration in science and technology has necessitated the emergence if Elearning as a model of learning. In consequence, the traditional methods are unable to cope with these breakthroughs.

Despite the enormous advantages of E-learning, it has some limitations reflected in the lack of face-to-face interaction which necessitates the availability of a new model combining some attributes of both traditional learning and Elearning which can overcome the disadvantages of both kinds of learning. Thus, a more advanced strategy, blended learning (BL) has sprouted. It brings together the visual learning environment with traditional leaning environment as it is based on face-to-face learning as a form of learning as well as introducing information technology and telecommunications as an asynchronous model (Graham, 2006). Besides, it mixes a learning environment based on online and face-to-face traditional environment in a strategy which utilizes all possible means for both of them in the educational process (Little join &pegler, 2006).

Sandina (2015), classified blended learning into six models: face-to-face driver where the teacher drives the instruction and supplement it with digital tools, Rotation student cycle through a schedule of independent online study and face-to-face classroom time, flex-most of the curriculum is delivered through a digital platform and teachers are available for face-to-face consultation and support, Labs-All of the curriculum is delivered via a digital platform but

in a consistent physical location. Students usually take traditional classes in this model as well; self-blend students choose to supplement their traditional earning with online course work, online driver. All curriculum and teaching is delivered through a digital platform and face-to-face meeting is slated or made available if necessary. It's now depending on the teacher which model he/she is adopting.

Blended learning improves the effectiveness of learning through providing a better match between the requirements of learners and the education program offered. In this respect, one port from the university of Tennessee indicated that blended learning programs achieved better results of the levels of learning outcomes by 10% compared to the traditional form of learning inside classroom and in a time less than half the time assigned to the program and for a less cost. (Cavus& Ibrahim, 2007). Thus, blended learning strategy being learner-centred having been tried by many researchers has been proved to be the best that suit modern day education practices. It however builds on the deficiencies of both E-learning and traditional method. Due to the limitations of both "face-toface" and online learning there is the need to adopt a more robust, hi-tech and sophisticated instructional strategy blended learning. If adopted properly, will greatly enhance learning.

Since the introduction of Civics Education, preference have been given to civic education at the detriment of social studies which houses everything citizenship education inclusive. This is shown in the student's attitude to the learning of social studies. Aborisade (2013) found that our secondary schools are not properly resourced with the constraints of few teachers, untrained social studies teachers, large classes and grossly inadequate facilities, yet enrolment continues to increase each year. Teachers with their effort often needs to carry several chats, equipment specimen and others in order to teach a single topic effectively. However, these materials are often either unavailable or inaccessible; moreover, teachers do not have enough time between classes to procure and test these materials. Hence, most social studies classes are limited to uninspiring and sometimes noncomprehensive verbal lectures. More so, Olayiwola and Alimi (2015) submit that teachers are ill-prepared to integrate blended learning into their educational practice. This runs arbitrarily in meeting the demands of the 21st century. Performance of social studies students in the past 8 years in kwara state has not be consistent, thus fluctuating. Students with passes are quite numerous while failure rates are minimal. Even though those with credits are much, the performance could be greatly improved upon.

However, there is little evidence available to suggest that blended learning is pedagogically effective, though 'improved pedagogy' is often cited as a reason for blending and clearly more studies to investigate the pedagogical effectiveness of blended learning in social studies teaching -are required to provide us with the empirical findings. To the best knowledge of the previous studies conducted on blended learning were carried out in tertiary institutions like universities, nursing schools and colleges of education, in science courses and English language. Examples of such studies are carried out by Olibie (2010), Aborisade (2013), Ololobu (2015). Others are carried out abroad. Examples of things are Osakwe (2015), Khaled (2013), Alajab (2015), Mehemet (2010), Cobanoglu (2014) to mention a few. To the researcher's best knowledge, no study has been carried out in the area of social studies especially with upper basic school students as sample. It is against this backdrop, that this study is to find out the effect of blended learning on Upper Basic Students performance in social studies in Ilorin, kwara state, bearing in mind that social studies is a compulsory subject offered by all.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of blended learning strategy on learners' performance in upper basic school social studies in Ilorin, kwara state, Nigeria. Specifically, this study examined:.

- 1. Effect of blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies students.
- 2. Effects of blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies Students based on gender.
- 3. Difference in the performance of students with high, medium and low ability exposed to blended learning strategy.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the research:

- 1. What is the effect of blended learning strategy on the performance of Social studies Students?
- 2. : What is the performance of students taught Social Studies using blended learning strategy based on gender?
- 3. What is the performance of high, average and low ability Social Studies students exposed to blended learning strategy?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were generated in the study:.

- 1. H01: There is no significant effect of blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies Students.
- 2. H02: There is no significant interaction effect of gender, and blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies Students
- 3. H03: There is no significant difference in the performance of students with high, average and low ability level exposed to blended learning strategy.

Method

The research methodology was employed for this work was $1\times2\times3$ non-randomized quasis-

experimental design. The population of the research was Secondary School Social Studies Students..Two schools purposively sampled and tagged Control and Experimental groups with the population of 33 and 28 Participants. The study made use of a 50 item multiple choice test. To determine the validity and reliability of the test, the instrument was giving to Social Studies educators, statisticians and measurement experts to assess the content and face validity. Experts of measurement confirm the reliability of the test and found it appropriate for the research. The test was employed for pre-test in order to determine the level of academic equivalence of subjects and as a post-test in order to measure the potential effects of the intervention of the difference in the pre-test and post-test results. The researchers employed Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to analyze the data in the study.

Results

Research hypothesis one: There is no significant effect of blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies Students.

In other to determine the effect of blended learning, the respondents score were analysed using ANCOVA and the results are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Result of Analysis of Covariance showing the effect of Blended Learning on Students Performance in Social Studies

Source	Type III Of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Pa rtial squared
Corrected	1579.106a	3	526.369	43.474	.000	.696
Model						
Intercept	544.975	1	544.975	45.11	.000	.441
Gender	.979	1	.979	.081	.777	.001
Group	155.839	1	155.839	12.871	.001	.184
Pre- test	1305.492	1	1305.492	2 107.82	23 .000	.654
Error	690.140	57	12.108			
Total	79109.000	61				
Corrected Total	2269.249	1.60				

a.R Squared=.696 (Adjusted R Squared=.680)

Table 1 shows df (1.60) and f value of 12.871 which is significant at 0.05 alpha level. Hypothesis one is therefore rejected since P value .001 is less than 0.05 alpha level (.001<0.05).

This implies that there is a significant effects of Blended Learning Strategy and the performance of students on social studies.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no significant interaction effect of gender, and blended learning strategy on the performance of Social Studies Students.

Table 2: Result of Analysis of Covariance showing the difference between the performance of students taught social studies using blended learning based on gender.

Source	Type III Of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta squared
	1579.106a	3	526.369	43.474	.000	.696
	544.675	1	544.975	45.011	.000	.441
	.979	1	.979	0.081	.777	.001
	155.839	1	155.839	12.871	.001	.184
	1305.491	1	1305.492	107.823	.000	.654
	690.140	57	12.108			
	79109.000	61				
Corrected						
Total	2269.246	1.60				

a.R Squared = .696 (adjusted R squared = .680)

Table 2 shows df (1,60) and value of 0.081 which is not significant at 0.05 alpha level. Hypothesis one is therefore rejected since p value. 777 I greater than 0.05 alpha level (.777>0.05). this implies that there is no significant difference between the performance of other basic students taught social studies using blended learning based on gender.

Research Hypothesis Three: there is no significant difference in the performance of students with high, medium and low ability level taught using blended learning.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to find out the difference in the performance of students with high, medium and low ability levels. The result in shown in table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of variance showing difference in a performance of students with high, medium and low ability levels

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Decision
Between						
Groups	803.939	2	401.969			
Within						
Groups	307.301	3032	10.234	39.276	.000	
Total	1110.970					

From Table 3, shows the df (2,23) and f value yielded 39.276 which is significant at 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected since the p-value .000 is less than 0.05 (.000<0,05). This means that there is a significant difference in the performance of students with high, medium and low ability levels..

Discussion

Hence, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect on learner's performance on social studies was rejected. The finding of the study at variance with Khaled (2013) who discovered that there were no statistical significant differences between the experimental group and control group.

However, Abidoye (2015) was in line with this study and was in harmony with Alajab (2015) who observed that there was a significant effect of the proposed blended learning strategy on subject's achievement in the English for science. While researching on the effect of using blended learning strategy on achievement and attitude in blank among 9th grade students, I found out that there was a high level of performance achievement test as a whole after applying blended learning strategy.

The second finding of this study which states that there was a significant difference in the variance of the three ability levels who supports Mersal and Mersal (2014) who reported that there was an improvement regarding satisfactory level of achievement and decrease in the percent blank very poor of blended learning group with no statistical difference between groups.

There was improvement in student satisfaction of blended learning group regarding the course and teaching method with highly statistically significant differences between two groups. Blended learning strategies improved newly nursing students' outcomes both academic achievement and students satisfaction than lectures regarding new trend in nursing subjects at Ain Shams University.

This present study also agreed with the pervious finding as there was statistical difference in the performance of low, medium and high ability grouping. Similar findings of Abakpa & Clement (2015) also showed that mastering learning approach narrowed the study in terms of

subjects used. Mathematics was used as against social studies that was used in this study.

More findings revealed that there was no significant difference and the performance of students exposed to blended learning strategies based on gender, hence, the hypothesis was accepted. This implies that blended learning strategies are not in favour of any gender. This gives room for all types of learners, whether male or female. This is not in agreement with findings of Ibrahim (2014) which reported that female students have turned out to be more successful than the male students. Lee, and Hung, (2015) also recorded a similar finding when they researched on effects of blended e-learning: a case study in higher education tax learning settings. Though there was a statistically significant difference in the achievement among groups, neither gender nor the school system affects students' e-learning system satisfaction. Hanan, Maie-Anne, and Lori (2015) While investigating the effects of ages and gender on student achievement in face-to-face and online college algabra classes supports this finding that age nor gender impacted student's performance. Abidoye (2015) supports this finding that gender does not affect the performance of the students when exposed to blended learning. In contrast, Rouhollah, and Shaffer bin, (2014) discovered that there was statistically significant difference in the performance of groups based on gender. This variance implies that gender is a great factor in blended learning groups.

Findings on interactive effect of gender, blended learning ability and level converses with Adesoji, Omilani, and Nyinebi, (2015) who found out that the two-way interaction effects of treatment and mental ability of students achievement was also significant. It was discovered that when students learn chemistry concepts like periodicity and the rate of chemical reactions through gender pairing teaching strategy, their mental abilities to try not the effect of the teaching strategy on their performance.

Conclusion

It could be deduced from the findings of this research that blended learning strategy has impact on the performance of learners. It has proved to be productive for modern educational practice. The general performance of students was above average. Use of ICT enhanced materials and teaching strategy has made learning fascinating. This has also availed learners a great opportunity of using 21st century technology in learning. Through not alien, ICT has not been embraced in totality by blended leaning has bridge the gap. Students are exposed to learning in the classroom using the e-learning materials, in the computer laboratory and taking nots online even when at home. The internet which two students spent 2/3 of their time on was found to facilitate learning. The product of this work has in no small measure added to the knowledge bank of stakeholders in education, Social Studies experts, curriculum developers and educational technologist. The researchers deduced that students exposed to the blended learning strategy perform significantly higher to those taught with traditional teaching method. In the research, it can be established that the ability level of the students can be assessed on the basis of their performances in Social Studies. Using blended learning strategy.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, fluid recommendations made: Teachers should expose learners to blended learning strategies in order for the learners to perform satisfactorily in teaching and learning of Social Studies; Male and female students should be exposed to blended learning strategy in order to enhance the academic performance of the students in Social Studies instead of the employment of conventional method; Teachers should create enabling environment to put the learners- high, medium and low category on the same ground in other to assess the students' ability level; The curriculum planners and developers should integrate blended learning strategy in teaching and learning for improving performance of learners in social studies education; Schools both public and private schools should be provided with adequate computers and other e-learning materials to foster learning. Students should however not be deprived of their usage in classroom instruction in other to boost their performances in Social Studies

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