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Multidisciplinary Conversations on Successes and Challenges of E-Learning

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Abstract
E learning is technology driven and has contributed to differing perceptions of what it can or cannot do. There is ongoing debate in its exact impact on the present and future of education systems. Some practitioners express satisfaction in its gains, while others feel that there is perpetual failure within most E learning projects. This paper is based on an analysis of information contributed by E learning practitioners on an online discussion forum. The study design is qualitative using narrative methods. The objective of this study was to discuss what practitioners perceive as failures and possible recommendations for best practice, thereby contribute to the discourse of E learning projects/courses. Twelve (12) members from eight (8) countries; Africa, Finland, Kuwait, United Kingdom and Australia participated. Contributions were informed by members' professional backgrounds demonstrating diversity, proportion and scale of capacities/experiences in E learning. The format mirrored that of a focus group discussion with the initiator acting as the moderator. For three (3) weeks members conducted discussions with each logging their contributions into the forum. Results illustrated the need for continued global discussions to benchmark and improve E learning courses.
Key Words: E learning, E learning practices, distance education, ICT, ICT users, universities.

1. Introduction

There are limitless options of teaching and learning processes directly attributed to E learning. There are equally numerous practices in various disciplines that refer to it. Its practice continues to grow both in diversity and imagination, enthusiasm and zeal from both technology manufacturers and users. E learning is commonly described in many contexts with varying definitions and applications. Njenga & Fourie (2010) present an array of terminologies commonly associated with E learning which they reiterate are causing ambiguity to practitioners. In their words:

> "Most educators are not sure of what E learning is. Could it be synonymous to distance education? Is it just the use of online tools to enhance or enrich the learning experiences? Is it stashing the whole courseware or parts of it online for students to access? Or is it a new form of collaborative or cooperative learning? Clearly, any of these questions could be used to describe an aspect of E learning and quite often confuse the uninformed educator" (Njenga & Fourie 2010:201).

Applications of E learning are contextual. Its definitions and meanings depend on the discipline and background of the applicator (McKee 2010). Unfortunately, this does little for research; it promotes assumptions, beliefs and myths which cannot effectively substantiate the successes or failures of E learning (Njenga & Fourie 2010). This paper is based on participant's perceptions on successes and failures on E learning. The initiator of the online discussion forum, was seeking discussions on failures/challenges and possible solutions within the practice of E learning. At the onset, it was not easy to gain consensus on how to qualify success or failure in E learning. Members conceded that without a standardised understanding, it would be difficult to make clear demarcations on successes and failures. Nonetheless, discussions continued based on experiences and observations in practice. For this study, E learning is operationally defined as learning through and with assistance of electronic media. The 'E' in E learning, being an abbreviation for 'electronic' (Gandhi, 2011).

The present forms of E learning share similarities and challenges with distance education (DE). The traditional forms of DE were founded on the premises that its students could conduct their studies anywhere, anytime, at an acceptable and negotiable pace (Nirmalani & McIsaac 2006; Moore, Dickson-Deane & Galyen 2011). Technologies adopted this and have since changed its quality and quantity giving birth to various terminologies (Reese 2015). Institutions are now drawn to establishing online learning with the hope of replacing some of the traditional forms of learning (Reese 2015; Emerson & Mackay 2011). However, this type of move is not based on scientific evidence as research that shows the effectiveness of online learning especially within controls is lacking (Njenga & Fourie 2010). In addition, there are numerous perceptions on its failures and successes (Lane & Van Dorp 2011). Some are documented (Dabaj 2011) while other remain in the minds of practitioners.

Without policies, definitions and focus in practice, research studies have lacked the yardstick and benchmarks for success and failure. It is therefore prudent that conversations, such as those in this study continue to inform best practice and contribute to future guidelines and policies.

1.1 Study Questions

1. How has interdisciplinary practice of E learning contributed to meanings and challenges in E learning practice?
2. What are the possible solutions to the issues arising in E learning that will potentially improve its practice?
3. What is the feasibility of transforming online discussion into a focus group within a qualitative study?

2. Background and Literature Review

The origins of the term 'E learning' is unclear (Moore, Dickson-Deane & Galyen 2011) but can be associated with the introduction of learning through computers and the internet. Numerous types and blends of learning formats under ubiquitous names have arisen and are in use since the mid-1990s (Liu & Hwang 2010). All modern terminologies of DE associated with E learning have one fundamental objective; to use technology to mediate educational objectives, activities and processes (Addah, Kpebu & Kwapong 2012). Therefore, regardless of the associated technology or terminology, the focus of 'learning' in the E learning should not be lost. E learning includes computer mediated systems as video technologies, television, broadcasts and narrowcasts, the world-wide web (www) and the internet (Dabaj 2011), online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, network and web-based learning (Gandhi 2011; Guilar & Loring 2008) and mobile (m) learning (Liu & Hwang 2010). Seeking to demonstrate the differences between E learning, distance learning and on line learning, (Moore, Dickson-Deane & Galyen 2011) concluded that there was frequent interchanging use of terminologies with some practitioners affirming that differences were inconsequential. Yet characterization of E learning continues to evolve with new technologies (Nyerere, Gravenir & Mse 2012; Dabaj 2011).

2.1 The Discourse of E learning

Some reasons for E learning start-ups in Africa include alternative avenues for professional development, improve teaching and learning environments, modernise education management and administration, realise the goals of inclusive education by equalising opportunities for gender, language, disabilities, information divide/rural urban education differentiations and meet SDGs through flexibility of access to education (Graber & Bolt 2011). Although predictions have shown that E learning and online learning will override all other formats very fast (Allen& Seaman 2011) it has a chequered future marked by challenges and need for caution. The uptake of full online courses may decrease due to several reasons (Bates 2011) including the continuous breakdown of the boundary between online and on campus learning, market saturation and the hidden expenses associated with E learning (Power & Gould-Morven 2011). Universities are also unlikely to cope with the cost of purchasing and the frequent upgrading of technology (Lei & Gupta 2010).

2.2 Relationship between Distance Education and E learning

There are numerous views and definitions regarding DE depending on the delivery system, the provider, technology, pedagogy, target audience and subject matter. There are misconceptions that because of the new technologies, DE and by extension, E learning, can replace the conventional face-to-face classrooms (Dabaj 2011). DE and E learning are two distinct constructs even though they are often combined in practice. The trend of using technology in both on-campus and distance learning formats have created blended modes of teaching and learning (Reese 2015). This trend needs careful consideration of associated factors including pedagogy, learning theories, technology choice and use as well as social media in education (Reese 2015). Demarcations between distance and face-to-face learning formats within the practice of E learning also need to be outlined (Power & Gould-Morven 2011).

Like DE, E learning seems to experience similar challenges. One, the challenge in meeting the needs of the new diversity of DE students (Lowenthal, Wilson & Parrish 2009). DE was previously known to cater for population of students with defined characteristics; mature in age, women, persons with disabilities and migrants (Nyerere, Gravenir & Mse 2012). Today, DE attracts a much younger student population not necessarily defined by the aforementioned characteristics (Lentell 2012). Two, attrition rates in E learning are generally higher than in those of face-to-face programmes (Lowenthal, Wilson & Parrish 2009). Three, the lack of practical guidelines and

policies in DE practice. These impact research and associated systems like learner support (Emerson & Mackay 2011; Sikwibele & Mungoo 2009). Fourth, E learning establishments face challenges of operating within optimal infrastructure and feasible budgets (Nyerere, Gravenir & Mse 2012). Most universities adopting technology-based DE systems view DE programmes as income generating sources yet without due considerations, immediate profits do not materialise (King 2012). This is the reason many single mode universities venture into DE and E learning programmes (Pityana 2009). Lastly, like DE, E learning systems are both capital and labour intensive (Lei & Gupta 2010). Yet, university administration rarely prioritise commensurate capital investment (King 2012).

3. Methods

This study was conducted within qualitative research in narrative approach. It originated from an online professional group. Each participant narrated and logged his/her experiences in the subject as related to his/her work/ research. One member of the group initiated the topic for discussion based on doctoral studies, work, studies and experiences in E learning. His study whose main objectives were:

1. To assess the main reasons behind the failure of E learning
2. To contribute to solutions to overcome the challenges in the implementation of e learning

He commenced the group discussion seeking contributions from members. While the initial objectives directed the content, and focus of contributions by group members, the discussions diversified providing more data even outside the objectives. Thus, new questions developed and informed the analysis for this paper. Narrative approach is supported by Taylor-Powell & Renner (2003) who describe qualitative analysis processes based on the following key steps:

1. Interact with the narrative data to derive research questions.
2. Focus the narrative contributions per the research questions.
3. Categorise the information into themes and patterns.
4. Refine the categories by identifying the definitive patterns and emergent themes.
5. Make interpretations based on the research questions
6. Create and write the report.

Qualitative research process can also develop from qualitative data and information (Guilar & Loring 2008). It is permissible for the researcher to conduct the study by collecting data without prior literature review and questions. This facilitates an open mind to multiple possible perspectives of discussions that can emerge from collected data (Guilar & Loring 2008). The assumption is that the data will most often indicate the presence of a problem and at the same time provide data to answer the research questions. This informed the procedure in this study; data was collected prior to the literature review.

3.1 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Sampling was by snowballing. The online professional group from which the sample was derived, is open to worldwide membership of any professional in the field E learning. Not all members of the online group participated. A focus group discussion developed from four (4) members in the first three days to twelve (12) members by the end of twenty-one (21) days. Members joined the discussions as it progressed on their own volition. The participants comprised diverse expertise and countries. Table 1 outlines group membership by participants and their pseudonyms.

Participant Descriptor	***Pseudonym***
Head of IT and Senior Trainer, Kuwait	Abdi
Senior Lecturer at a Polytechnic Institute, Rwanda	Mzinza
E Learning Systems Support Specialist at a University, Kenya	Bella
Academic Advisor at Consulting firm, Kenya/Ethiopia	Tabs
Marketing, Project Management and ICT Consultant, Uganda	Mwezi
Principal Operations Manager (Management Information System/ICT/Innovation), Nigeria	Ojuku
ICT Manager at a University, Kenya	Mwangi
Lecturer-Information/Knowledge Management at a University, Tanzania	Swale
Project planning Officer at a University, Finland	Tina
E learning consulting firm, Australia	Carol
Executive Director, professional training and coach, Tanzania	Mawazo
Managing Director of E learning Vocational Innovation consulting firm, UK	Linda

Table 5 : Focus group membership

3.2 Data Collection

The inclusion criteria were by self-involvement on two accounts. First, all participants were practitioners involved in some form of E learning. The initiator himself, having had experience in planning and implementing staff training and development on E learning platforms. Secondly, through the members' diverse professional backgrounds, members made experiential contributions from diverse projects, professions, countries and continents. Each member volunteered information based on his/her experiences on the topic. The discussion continuity was motivated by arising contributions. Sometimes, it was moderated by the initiator who acknowledged members' contribution. Other times, the initiator refocused the discussion by contributing his views on the arising content. At the close of three (3) week discussion, the initiator communicated on the progress of his study and the discussions stopped. The collective logs from each member transformed into narrative data which was analysed for questions and subsequent themes for this study.

3.3 Data Analysis

All logged entries were compiled into MS Word. Thereafter, content and thematic analysis was conducted through qualitative analysis software. The data was coded in two stages. The first stage realised 45 codes while the second stage compressed to 41 codes. The codes were then grouped into seven (7) super codes per emerging patterns. These were later refined into three (3) themes. The research questions developed as data was being analysed. The subsequent discussions seek to answer the research questions.

4. Findings and Discussions

Seven (7) super codes were contracted from the original 45 codes, namely: Challenges in E learning practice, comparisons of E learning and DE, Concepts concerning E learning, details of participants, perceived causes of E learning failure, practice of E learning and suggestions for better E learning practice. The super codes were then analysed by count of quotations (Figure 1). Concepts concerning E learning had the highest count of quotations. This may be due to the diversity of participants' backgrounds and experiences.

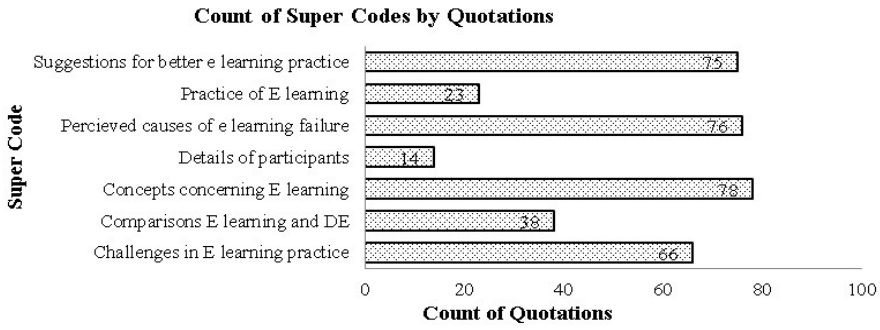

Figure 1: Count of Codes by Quotations

The seven (7) codes were further compressed by commonness to three (3) developing themes. Namely, passion for E learning, perceived challenges and experiences and strategies for future practice. Figure 2 illustrates count of quotations and codes by themes. The highest count emanated from the theme of perceived challenges and experiences. Probably, due to the focus of the study on discussions pertaining to failures in E learning.

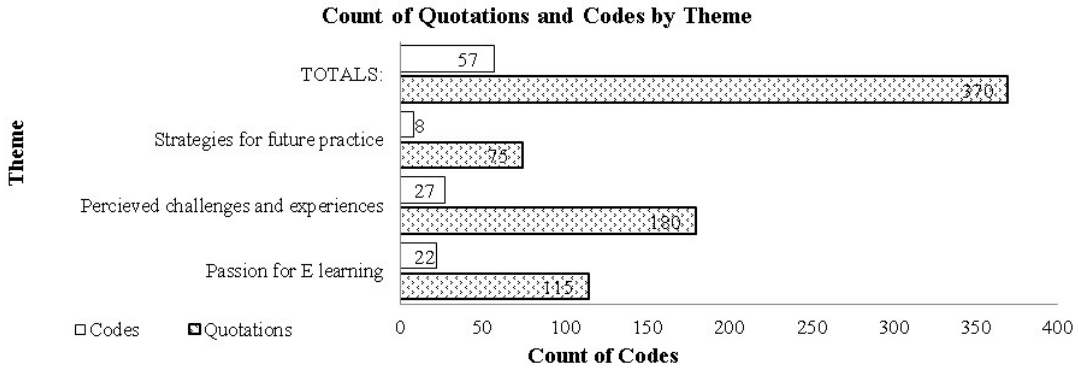

Figure 2: Count of Codes by Theme

4.1 Theme One: Passion for E learning

The content of contributions from each member exuded passion for professional space in the holistic practice of E learning. The passion and defense for the modalities of E learning applications was palpable. Participants each introduced themselves by either their work or experiences in E learning. This theme demonstrated the diversity, proportion and scale of E learning as a practice and as a construct. Diversity is positive to the concept of specialization but it is negative to that of integration. If E learning continues to be perceived as a borderless construct, challenges will continue to outgrow solutions. However, should all experiences be integrated to a common understanding, then practical solutions and implementable policies may be forthcoming. Some of the introductions included:

Linda: I have recently joined this group …. from the UK. What a brilliant discussion; I have been reading with great interest. I work as a consultant mainly in the government funded sector of post 16 education in the UK, as well as being MD of the E learning Marketplace.

Tina: This discussion and your study interest me greatly as I have been developing E learning since 2000 but not for the education, schools or university sector. Our clientele are corporate businesses and the mining sector here in Oz.

Bella: I am a computer science graduate but as I have worked with …. University in setting up the E Campus from its inception, I have interacted so often with this conflict and has informed the evolution of the institutional policy on E learning.

The discussion was initiated by Abdi who subsequently acted as the moderator. One of the first arising questions was the need to clarify the concepts of success and failure. Excerpts include:

Abdi: With my research, I am hoping to identify the key success factors and the key failure factors. Starting from design up to implementation and support. Based on this I am hoping to come up with a set of best practices and guidelines for E learning design, development, and implementation. By failure we are not speaking of absolute failure, but rather relative failure.

Swale: Although you have not specified the measurements and the determinants of failure, it is sufficient to say that there are numerous variables that interplay in any implementation of an E learning program. Could you be a bit more concrete and tell us about concrete cases?

Participants mutually agreed that it maybe decades before success or failures of E learning can be quantified. The lack of indicators maybe due to the amorphousness and ambiguity of what qualifies as E learning. Some members gave various definitions, others pointed to a connection between E learning and DE, while others remained non-committal to demarcate E learning concepts. Discussions included:

Carol: Due to the proven positive outcomes of blended learning, whether delivered in a classroom situation or in the workplace, I am passionate about this method of learning. I do a lot of work with apprenticeships and workplace learning, and in these situations, good E learning

combined with supported practical activities is hugely positive.

Ojuku: It is essential to clarify that E learning is no longer referring to taking an online course. Social media, mobiles, smart devices, interactive games, videos, webinars, etc, are all part of an e learning environment.

Bella: E learning "per se" is a service, not a product. So Mwangi is very right in using the phrase "E learning service providers". Although there are E learning products, which are used in delivering E learning, software companies/vendors have often presented E learning as a product, leading to their only interest being in aggressive marketing to scale up sales (as Tabs observed).

Tabs: E learning ought to be seen as distance learning…. A platform for distance learning. What is crucial in education is basically that learners acquire needed knowledge and skills. It is just a way to get the information across to the learner and NOT actually to teach them…. Everyone now recognises that face-to-face and e learning will only compliment access and participation.

Ojuku: Of course, E learning is complex (@Tabs). It has various shapes and shades (forms, as I earlier stated). It requires a web of human and material resources and demands consideration of many factors. So, it mustn't be implemented pell-mell. That makes multi-stakeholder engagement more imperative.

All participants had varied explanations concerning the concept of E learning. Such variability may be translated into practice and consequently, recipients of E learning will be expected to conceive the intention of the provider as opposed to conventional expectations. This is compounded by the uncertainty by practitioners in articulating E learning (Njenga & Fourie 2010). Notwithstanding, E learning is perceived to have challenges not only by participants of this study but by research (Njenga & Fourie 2010).

4.2 Theme Two: Perceived Challenges and Experiences

According to participants, there were four main justifications for E learning start-ups which, having not been achieved, have contributed to perceptions of E learning failure. One, E learning was initially expected to be the "main" way to train and develop employees and students. However, this thought was refuted numerously by participants. Reasons being that E learning depends on many variables like technology and ICT literacy (Zhang, Zhao, Zhou & Nunamaker 2004) and so is unlikely to cater for populations who are unable to afford it. Secondly, the availability of technology enabled platforms has made E learning attractive yet amorphous. The present generation of college going students are technology savvy with learning skills that are technology driven. But failures arise when the students lack self-discipline, non-transferable skills from social media to learning technologies and the majority drop out. Third, E learning has the positive attributes of malleability and adaptability into many learning formats, technologies and learning objectives. Most technology-based learning materials are easy to store and revisit. It is portable and flexible to age, sex, occupations and can be accessed everywhere with relevant equipment and technology (Ma & Yuen 2011). However, affordability for students and providers is often a challenge which leads to half-baked implementations and perceived failure. Lastly, more students can usually, easily be accommodated in one program without segregations of learning styles, pace, age, gender, disability or personalities. However, universities are often ill-prepared with sufficiently trained and appropriate number of faculty to handle the numbers and needs of students (Daniel 2012).

Literature indicate challenges within E learning to include faculty resistance and lack of training (Daniel 2012; Renes & Strange 2010), insecurities of copyright issues and acknowledgement for their work and the need to conceptualise the differences between teaching online and face-to-face (Lowenthal, Wilson & Parrish 2009). Faculty resistance is not unfounded. Many of them were employed to teach in single mode on-campus programs with straight forward modes of operation. The pedagogies for face-to-face teaching were familiar to them, having undergone training and experienced the same pedagogies in their school days. Then comes along DE which for a long time was not warmly received by both academia and the society (Lane & Van Dorp 2011). But, with the help of technology as a driver, DE has transformed itself to the extent that its position in teaching and learning can longer be ignored (Daniel 2012; Lentell 2012). The discussions that followed within this theme showed numerous categories of perceived challenges which were analysed and compressed in the following points:

***Poorly designed programs with half-installed components*:** Participants observed that students who have registered into such programs develop a dim view of E learning. In some programs, there is frequent use of one technology for all purposes resulting to narrow understanding of E learning. This negatively affects its practice.

***Poor Choice of E Learning model*:** The design and choice of E learning model, technology coupled with institutional culture and attitude. Appana (2008) succinctly explains that the marriage between faculty attitude, training and technology in the design of the E learning program contributes to the chunk of its success or failure determinants. Despite the emphasis that learning process is the core of E learning (Gandhi 2011), the presence of technology sometimes causes disassociation between the student and the instructor. Like DE formats, E learning demands both autonomy and collaboration between all participants (Reese 2015). Faculty may be ill-equipped in incorporating the aforementioned in their structure of lessons or learning materials.

***Pedagogy and course development*:** Lack of understanding of the pedagogies and learning theories applicable to learning with the use of electronic technology is a common problem (Anderson & Dron 2011). Sometimes, face-to-face programs are simply translocated into virtual formats. Institutions rarely put up course development teams to develop E learning programs.

***Policies and standards*:** Participants were unanimous that well laid down and updated policies governing the standards of E learning are lacking. There are gaps in the existing ICT and education sector policies with divergent definitions of E learning. With the exception of South Africa, most countries in Africa have not spelt out policies of how ICT integrates with education (Nyerere, Gravenir & Mse 2012). Yet the two sectors are supposed to work in tandem. Lack of standards of practice has contributed to an open field where the industry allows anyone to try and develop E Learning without a standard. Beyond schools and institutions, E learning is found in organisations and corporates (Lowenthal, Wilson & Parrish 2009) which has widened its parameters and complicated the formulation of policies and standards of practice.

Lukewarm attitude to ICT in education: Some participants reported that critical education stakeholders are afraid of the radical revolution ICT is doing in education; Teachers fear they'll lose their jobs. Administrators doubt how learners can acquire required knowledge and skills without some face-to-face interaction with teachers and other students. Students are consequently made to doubt their ability to study independently and to use computers, mobile phones, social media, Web sites and other ICTs in this direction. The generation gap between teachers and students in technology-know-how (Renes & Strange 2011) may cause intimidation to faculty, further deepening the problem.

The cost of E learning: Participants articulated the misconception that E learning is less costly than conventional learning. Planners and implementers rarely acknowledge the hidden costs involved in planning, infrastructure, installation, bandwidth, and system integration (Lei & Gupta 2010). This is related to lack of adequate planning. Often, institutions rush to buy and install equipment without careful considerations of the shelf life and what service the equipment will render.

***Mixed interests between manufacturers and consumers*:** Manufacturers may be most interested in upscaling sales because they are in business (Njenga & Fourie 2010) on one hand. One participant reported that on the other hand, implementers and university administrators often work in isolation of stakeholders and users. This hampers collaboration/partnership and increases costs. There is a competition for universities in the prestige of owning the latest technology (Njenga & Fourie 2010). This is especially pushed by manufacturers of technology with little consideration to learning outcomes (Gandhi 2011).

Donor-driven programs: Participants explained that programs fail when donors withdraw due to lack of the sense of ownership by the recipients. In addition, was the issue of culture sensitivity. Some E learning programs are imported from first world and implemented in third world countries without adequate considerations of culture differences (Graber & Bolt 2011). Donor funded programmes are sometimes not contextualised to the recipients' cultural perspectives.

***Digital divide*:** This was described by participants as an old and existing problem between the students of E learning. There are usually significant differences in access and ownership of technology based on affordability, location and government policies (Graber & Bolt 2011). One member voiced:

> Bella: I also think E learning is in a way increasing inequality among rural children, for instance in sub Saharan Africa and between the urban middle class children. It remains a fact that many children or schools still don't have any chance to get access to any kind of digital devices.

Student's preferences: Some participants explained that, even though many organizations may have decided on E learning as their main way of training, there was frequently slow adaptation to it. Students do not necessarily prefer E learning over classroom. Some students express need for some face-to-face interactions citing isolation and lack of social presence (Duranton and Mason 2012).

4.3 Theme Three: Strategies for Future Practice

Despite the identified challenges, participants also contributed possible solutions in order to make E learning viable. The resulting conversations were analysed and compressed in this theme as strategies for the future. First, universities often have their own policy on E learning, which is sometimes adapted from a national education policy and/or national ICT policies. Such policies attempt to engage the private sector and manufacturers of technology; develop and design integrated E learning curricula; provide training to faculty and implementers and support interdepartmental implementation of programmes on E learning platforms (Nyerere, Gravenir & Mse 2012). Secondly, the fabric of any DE/E learning process in founded on effective communication. Any perceived communication barriers are conceivable and should be avoided in the design processes (Dabaj 2011). The challenging tasks that need solutions in the practice of E learning thus include; limiting communication barriers, bridging the digital and information divide, clarifying the roles of professionals within the practice of E learning, redesigning courses, programmes and curriculum to suit the choice of technology in E learning and instituting effective monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure quality practice (Guri-Rosenblit 2009). Other strategies for future practice that were discussed by participants, include:

***Consultations and involvement of stakeholders in the planning*:** There is need for market research, set up of competent teams and adequate planning for E learning programs. Providers need to listen to continuous feedback from consumers to improve on quality. One member voiced:

> Ojuku: ICT and education sectors must together work out policy, plan together, design together, implement together, monitor and evaluate together. It's also not solely an "experts' business". Learners should be widely consulted, to define their needs in tandem with their circumstances/situation.

Coaching for faculty and staff in attitude change: There is need for intense coaching to change the attitude of lecturers towards technology and its use in the E learning environment. Much training and sensitization needs to be done for adoption of practical E learning models.

Formulate adequate and practical policies: E learning service providers should also be guided by common policy that integrates all sectors of government. Non-governmental organisations as well as manufacturers of technology need to incorporate educational institutions to formulate universal standards of practice. One cited that many CEOs of institutions often make unilateral decisions without consultations. This breeds contempt from implementers like faculty and staff right from the initial stages. One member voiced:

> Ojuku: Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) or their representatives must be in an E learning committee in their organizations. They must chair committees in their organizations. The reason is simple: They control their organizations' finances and will readily commit money to a cause they can understand.

***Identify suitability of learning outcomes to E learning format*:** This ought to be a standard. Before developing an E learning program, the first consideration should be the learning outcomes and the ability of electronic platforms to achieve the required objectives.

***Recognition of academic qualifications by E learning*:** Comparative researches have shown that E learning and all other formats including face-to-face formats do not have significant differences in achieving learning outcomes (Ghaffari 2011; McFarlane 2011). Therefore, discrimination of graduates based on their mode of study should be discouraged.

5. Conclusion

The deficiencies within the practice of E learning that constitute perceived failures have been discussed in this paper. Pinpointing deficiencies helps practitioners to focus on improvements and solutions. The need to modernise distance learning has not been fully realised because of reasons which include; misconceptions in the relationship of DE and E learning formats, the undefined expectations on the capabilities of E learning, unplanned E learning solutions which fail to meet the intended learning objectives. Consequently, the practice of E learning has not defined its domains and boundaries. With such openness, practitioners do not have a yardstick for progress, success or failure. It is left to each individual student to decide on these matters. It is therefore not surprising that E learning has practitioners from all disciplines hold diverse perceptions of possibilities, success or failure of E learning.

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